

KOREA TESOL JOURNAL

Volume 7, Number 1



Korea Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages

Korea TESOL Journal Volume 8 Call for Papers

Korea TESOL Journal, a refereed journal, welcomes previously unpublished practical and theoretical articles on topics of significance to individuals concerned with the teaching of English as a foreign language. Areas of interest include:

1. classroom-centered research
2. second language acquisition
3. teacher training
4. cross-cultural studies
5. teaching and curriculum methods
6. testing and evaluation

Because the Journal is committed to publishing manuscripts that contribute to bridging theory and practice in our profession, it particularly welcomes submissions drawing on relevant research and addressing implications and applications of this research to issues in our profession.

Action Research-based papers, that is, those that arise from genuine issues in the English language teaching classroom, are welcomed. Such pedagogically-oriented investigations and case studies/reports, that display findings with applicability beyond the site of study, rightfully belong in a journal for teaching professionals.

Korea TESOL Journal has been awarded a 'B' rating by the Korea Research Foundation.

Korea TESOL Journal prefers that all submissions be written so that their content is accessible to a broad readership, including those individuals who may not have familiarity with the subject matter addressed. The Journal is an international journal, welcoming submissions from English language learning contexts around the world, particularly those focusing upon learners from northeast Asia.

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The *Korea TESOL Journal* invites submissions in three categories:

I. Full-length articles. Contributors are strongly encouraged to submit manuscripts of no more than 20-25 double-spaced pages or 8,500 words (including references, notes, and tables).

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To facilitate the blind review process, do not use running heads. Submit via email attachment or on diskette in MSWord or RTF file. Figures and tables should each be in separate files, bitmap files (.bmp) are preferred. Hardcopy versions may be requested at a later time.

Inquiries/Manuscripts to: Scott Jackson (Managing Editor) at scott.honam@gmail.com

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Korea TESOL Journal

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Motivation: A Key to Successful Reading Instruction	1
<i>Sang Kyeom Hwang</i>	
Promoting Peace in the EFL Classroom	21
<i>Andrew Finch</i>	
Cooperative Action Research: a Developmental Project at Shanghai Normal University, China	49
<i>Pedro Luis Luchini</i>	
Process Syllabus Development: A Study with University Freshmen	75
<i>Kevin L. Landry</i>	
The Problems of Korean EAP Learners' Academic Writing and the Solutions	93
<i>Eun-young Yang</i>	
Reading for Comprehension: Moving from Accuracy to Fluency	109
<i>Gerry Lassche</i>	
Reviews	129

About KOTESOL

Korea TESOL: Korea Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (KOTESOL) is a professional organization of teachers of English whose main goal is to assist its members in their self-development and to contribute to the improvement of ELT in Korea. KOTESOL also serves as a network for teachers to connect with others in the ELT community and as a source of information for ELT resource materials and events in Korea and abroad.

Korea TESOL is proud to be an affiliate of TESOL Inc., an international education association of almost 14,000 members with headquarters in Alexandria, Virginia, USA, as well as IATEFL, an international education association of over 3,500 members with headquarters in Canterbury, Kent, UK.

Korea TESOL was established in October 1992, when the Association of English Teachers in Korea (AETK) joined with the Korea Association of Teachers of English (KATE). As stated in the Constitution and Bylaws of Korea TESOL, .The purpose of Korea TESOL is a not-for-profit organization established to promote scholarship, disseminate information, and facilitate cross-cultural understanding among persons associated with the teaching and learning of English in Korea. In pursuing these goals KOTESOL shall cooperate in appropriate ways with other groups having similar concerns.

KOTESOL is an independent national affiliate of a growing international movement of teachers, closely associated with not only TESOL Inc. and IATEFL, but also the Japan Association of Teachers of English as a Foreign Language (JALT), Thailand TESOL (ThaiTESOL), ETA-ROC (English Teachers Assn of the Republic of China/Taiwan), TESL Canada, Far East English Language Teachers Association (FEELTA, Russia), and most recently with the English Language and Literature Teachers Association of Singapore (ELLTAS).

The membership of KOTESOL includes elementary, middle and high school, and university level English teachers as well as teachers-in-training, administrators, researchers, materials writers, curriculum developers and other interested persons. Approximately 40% of the members are Korean.

KOTESOL has nine chapters: Seoul, Gangwon, Suwon-Gyeonggi, Cheongju, Daejeon, Daegu-Gyeongbuk, Busan-Gyeongnam, Gwangju-Jeonnam, North Jeolla, as well as International members. Members of KOTESOL hail from all points of Korea and the globe, thus providing KOTESOL members the benefits of a multi-cultural membership.

Visit www.kotesol.org for membership information.



Editor's Note

The Korea TESOL Journal is very pleased to introduce six insightful articles dealing with issues specific to Northeast Asian EFL (English as a foreign language) education. The articles deal with both specific issues and issues of a more general nature. Special thanks goes to the hard work so very apparent by the authors: Andrew Finch, Pedro Luis Luchini, Sang Kyeom Hwang, Kevin L. Landry, Eun Young Yang, and Gerry Lassche.

In today's highly competitive world, Andrew Finch points out how important it is to steer away from creating anxiety and stress in the classroom. His article, entitled "Promoting Peace in the Language Classroom," takes a look at how we can incorporate sensitive awareness, collaboration and humanistic values into our lessons.

Pedro Luis Luchini, in his article entitled, "Collaborative Action Research: An Experimental Project at Shanghai Normal University, China," tells us a familiar story of outdated EFL teaching methodology. The research conducted in this paper shows us that China has put a new emphasis on the acquisition of the English language, but lacks the experience of modern practices. Therefore, this paper elucidates ways of collaborating with the Chinese teachers of English to update methodologies.

Sang Kyeom Hwang in her article entitled "Motivation: A Key to Successful Reading Instruction," points out how test-driven most education systems have become. It's a well-known fact that Korea is extremely test-driven, but it may be surprising to read about how test-driven the United States really is as well. This article conducts research into how an educator can balance a test-driven system with life-long learning attributes through reading. At the end of the article, the author shows us how we can incorporate the research into the EFL classroom as well.

Kevin Landry gives a very insightful analysis of how to better an English conversation syllabus for a Korean university freshman. His article, entitled "Process Syllabus Development: A Study with University Freshmen," points out the problems that most freshman English conversation teachers are faced with -- those being, for example, the pressure the students have upon them to pass the course; mixed levels in the classroom; huge diversity in English conversation education experience. The author indicates research for freshman-level teachers to address these problems, and more, to balance a syllabus befitting the class.

It's always interesting to read something written by a Korean student of EFL in English. The Korean and English writing strategies are incredibly different based partly on the fact that the Korean and English languages in general are considerably different. Eun Young Yang, in her article entitled, "The Problems of Korean EAP Learners' Academic Writing and the Solutions," interviews students and teachers faced with the task of English writing. Much information is uncovered that can greatly help the reader of this article address the problems that arise. This article also includes suggestions on how to deal with some of the problems.

Just as Pedro Luis Luchini addresses the issue of out-dated practices in the EFL classroom in China, Gerry Lassche approaches the same situation in Korea on a more specific topic through his article entitled, "Reading for Comprehension." In this article, the author explains at the high-school level, the type of materials used for teaching EFL reading skills. He analyses the approach taken and suggests how this can be improved to a more modern practice. It's very interesting to note that his research suggests that the Korean high school student learns how to read on a word-for-word level, but does not get appropriate experience in understanding how the text works as a whole. Through this research, the author suggests a more pedagogically sound approach to teaching EFL reading skills.

Putting together an academic journal requires the assistance of several people. The Korea TESOL Journal is no exception, and we would like to thank everyone who contributed to the success of this volume. Special thanks must go to Dr. Robert Dickey and Dr. David

THE KOREA TESOL JOURNAL VOL 7, No 1

Shaffer for their inexhaustible advice and guidance. The board of editors and editorial staff are to be thanked for their long commitment to the success of this journal. We would also like to thank the referees for their endless hours of contributing to the quality of all the articles. Finally, the editorial assistants and production staff deserve a round of applause, for without them, the Journal would not have been possible.

We are very pleased to be a part of this team and our congratulations to all.

Hee-Jeong Ihm, Editor-in-Chief
Scott Jackson, Managing Editor

Motivation: A Key to Successful Reading Instruction

SANG KYEOM HWANG

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ABSTRACT

This study points out that the essence of motivation is tied directly to elementary students' enjoyment of reading. Classroom teachers are concerned with issues of gathering information to help their children learn better. Besides linguistic experience, cognitive experience, and socio-cultural influences, affective influences must be considered. They include interests, attitudes toward learning, and motivation. The study introduces a motivation questionnaire to assess students' motivation and uses insights by college students who actually used it. The information that was obtained by the motivation questionnaire offered the teachers or the college tutors invaluable insights when planning future lessons. Several hands-on activities are included for classroom teachers that can be used for increasing motivation. Some of the activities include activating prior knowledge (Mystery Books, Book Bits, What's Behind the Door? Step by Step, and Who Said That?), using sequencing activities (The Chain Game, Paper Chain, Switch, Locomotion, and Scrambled Sentences), and inferring main ideas (Getting the Gist and Making Connections). The study also presented some ideas for those who are learning English as a second or foreign language at the end.

I. INTRODUCTION

Assessment is getting a great deal of attention from classroom teachers and administrators, as well as parents. Teachers and schools are evaluated by the state and the district, based on the results of high-stake formal tests. This school accountability seriously matters to

all educators who are deeply involved in it. However, effective teachers continue to seek a more balanced approach so that their students will become life-long learners. They not only gather successful strategies for better outcomes with the use of formal tests, but also collect relevant informal data to obtain maximum amounts of information to assist their students.

Flippo (2003) defines the term 'assessment' as all observations, samplings, and other informal and formal, written, oral, or performance-type testing that a teacher might do in order to gather information about a child's ability, interests, motivations, feelings, attitudes, strategies and special socio-cultural considerations (p. 5). Assessment is an ongoing process that enables a teacher to gather meaningful information concerning a child's reading of school-related research as well as recreational materials. Good assessment strategies help teachers teach effectively and efficiently.

There are four different areas to consider when assessing children's reading: Linguistic experience, cognitive experience, affective influences, and socio-cultural influences (Flippo, 2003). Among those experiences, affective influences are the factors that relate to the child's interests, attitudes, feelings, needs, and motivations. Classroom teachers tend to emphasize linguistic and cognitive experiences to increase students' academic achievement. However, sometimes the influences go beyond these academic aspects. Good teachers collect useful information about students' interests, attitudes towards reading, and motivational strategies, and boost students' achievement as well as the teacher's satisfaction as an educator.

The study presents the power of motivation as a prerequisite to successful reading instruction. It will analyze a motivation questionnaire that was actually used at a public school in a mid-western state in the US. The study will further examine the motivation survey, in terms of the quality that the information provides to the classroom teachers, and will extend to students who are learning English as a second language both in the US and abroad. Finally, the study will present practical activities and strategies for classroom teachers to help their students increase motivation to learn.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Recent research on learning, motivation, and instruction has important implications for the nature and use of classroom assessments. It becomes increasingly clear that effective instruction usually does much more than simply present information to students (McMillan, 2001). Teachers need to be aware that there are other things to consider outside the school environment. It is necessary that teachers conduct individual conferences with the students to obtain their background information, discover their personal interests, and find ways to motivate them to learn. Assessing areas relevant to students' interests, attitudes, and motivations is not difficult and can be natural for the classroom teacher through observations, interviews, and samplings. Valuable information can also be gleaned from discussions with parents or other family members as well as with the children.

Wigfield & Guthrie (2004) argued that motivation for reading was a crucial part of reading engagement. The issue, regarding motivation, has always been the strongest emphasis not only in reading, but also in learning in general. Studies have shown that the intrinsic dimensions of reading motivation relate most strongly to children's reading frequency. Intrinsic motivation should be developed for intense involvement, curiosity, and a search for understanding, as the learner experiences learning as a deeply personal and continuing agenda. Wigfield (1994) also pointed out the fact that learners must be intrinsically motivated and curious to be engaged in an activity for its own sake, and find personal meaning in reading (intrinsic motivation), rather than reading simply to get external rewards (extrinsic motivation). Wigfield & Guthrie (2004) also indicated that students' intrinsic motivation for reading and learning is closely connected to their feeling of social support in the classroom. With a caring teacher in a safe learning environment, students are more likely to be motivated to read. The encouragement from the teachers will facilitate reluctant readers to get involved in active reading and get them interested in learning.

McMillan (2001) argued about the essence of constant feedback, stating that motivation is highly dependent on the nature of the feedback from the assessment. Feedback is a critical component of the assessment process. Cunningham and Allington (2003) discussed the role of the teachers when children lost their I can do anything attitude. They mentioned that transforming the negative attitudes towards more

positive ones is the challenge that the teachers are facing in the classrooms today. As always, the teachers are the keys to make the best decisions for students' academic success. Teachers are required to do the best they can and at the same time need to collaborate with other experienced colleagues to update information and learn more from each other.

III. METHOD & PROCEDURE

The study conducted a motivation questionnaire with students at a public school, ranging from 1st to 7th graders, for consecutive semesters. During the spring semester of 2004, twenty-eight education major students visited a school in a mid-western state in the US, and provided tutoring sessions to individual students in a one-on-one basis. During the summer semester of 2004, another group of twenty-nine college students selected their own students and worked with them individually in a college setting. In total, fifty seven students administered the motivation questionnaire at the beginning of their tutoring sessions to gather useful information, regarding children's interests, attitudes, and motivation, assuming that the collected information would provide helpful ideas when selecting texts and preparing meaningful activities over the period. The study modified a motivation questionnaire that was used by Mori (2002) in a practical manner (see Appendix A).

IV. THE RESULTS OF THE STUDY

1. Reading Efficacy

89.7% of students in Spring 2004 responded positively (SA + A) to question 1, and believed that they would do well in reading next year. 82% of students in Summer 2004 also expressed positive responses to the same statement. It was interesting to note that 96.6% (SA + A) of respondents felt that they were good readers, but 34.5% of them in Spring 2004 did not feel as smart as others in reading. To do well in reading, 71.5% of students (D + SD) in Summer 2004 responded that it was not necessary to get the teacher to like them. 69.0% and 57.1% of each respondent (SA + A) in Spring and Summer 2004 knew how well they were doing before they received their pa-

pers back.

TABLE 1. READING EFFICACY: SPRING 2004-1ST LINE; (SUMMER 2004-2ND LINE)
STRONGLY AGREE (SA), AGREE (A), DISAGREE (D), STRONGLY DISAGREE (SD)

	SA	A	D	SD
1. I know that I will do well in reading next year.	48.3% (46.4%)	41.4% (35.7%)	10.3% (14.3%)	0% (3.6%)
2. I am a good reader.	48.3% (39.3%)	48.3% (35.7%)	3.4% (21.4%)	0% (3.6%)
3. Sometimes I don't feel as smart as others in reading.	6.9% (10.7%)	27.6% (17.9%)	51.7% (42.9%)	13.8% (28.6%)
4. To do well in reading I have to get the teacher to like me.	24.1% (14.3%)	13.8% (14.3%)	17.2% (42.9%)	44.8% (28.6%)
5. I know how well I am doing before I get my paper back.	13.8% (25.0%)	55.2% (32.1%)	20.7% (28.6%)	10.3% (14.3%)

2. Curiosity:

The next section provides very useful information for teachers and tutors, regarding students' interests, favorite topics, curiosity, and reading habits. 93.1% of students (SA +A) in Spring 2004 and 82.2% of students (SA +A) in Summer 2004 responded that they would read more if the teacher discussed something interesting. By the same token, 79.3% and 75.0% of students (SA +A) said that they did not care how hard a book was as long as it was interesting. More than 85% of students reported that they have favorite subjects that they like to read about. The important fact from this information is that the teacher needs to know each student's favorite topics as well as their interests to provide the best instruction, which in turn will increase motivation to read and spark their curiosity.

TABLE 2. CURIOSITY: SPRING 2004-1ST LINE (SUMMER 2004-2ND LINE)

	SA	A	D	SD
6. If the teacher discusses something interesting, I might read more about it.	48.3% (28.6%)	44.8% (53.6%)	3.4% (14.3%)	3.4% (3.6%)
7. I have favorite subjects that I like to read about.	51.7% (50.0%)	37.9% (35.7%)	10.3% (14.3%)	0% (0%)
8. If I am reading about an interesting topic, I sometimes lose track of time.	48.3% (17.9%)	44.8% (39.3%)	6.9% (28.6%)	0% (14.3%)
9. I like to read about new things.	37.9% (50.0%)	58.6% (39.3%)	3.4% (7.1%)	0% (3.6%)
10. If a book is interesting I don't care how hard it is to read.	41.4% (32.1%)	37.9% (42.9%)	20.7% (17.9%)	0% (7.1%)

3. Compliance:

The surveys were collected in two different settings. The first group of students was referred by the classroom teachers. The college students selected the second group of students of their interests and were not necessarily identified as troubled readers. Based on questions #11, 13, 14, and 15, the second group of students demonstrated more voluntary reading habits with higher scores in the positive responses (SA + A). However, both groups realized that it was important for them to do their reading work carefully.

TABLE 3. COMPLIANCE: SPRING 2004-1ST LINE (SUMMER 2004-2ND LINE)

	SA	A	D	SD
11. I read things that are not assigned.	17.2% (14.3%)	24.1% (53.6%)	58.6% (21.4%)	0% (10.7%)
12. I read because I have to.	20.7% (25.0%)	20.7% (35.7%)	31.0% (14.3%)	27.6% (25.0%)
13. It is important for me to do my reading work carefully.	62.1% (60.7%)	34.5% (32.1%)	3.4% (7.1%)	0% (0%)
14. I always try to finish my reading on time.	41.4% (46.4%)	37.9% (39.3%)	13.8% (10.7%)	6.9% (0%)
15. I do schoolwork so that the teacher can make sure I am paying attention.	44.8% (28.6%)	34.5% (53.6%)	17.2% (14.3%)	3.4% (3.6%)

4. Recognition:

Basically, most of the students wanted to get positive comments or encouragement from others. 100% in the Spring group (SA + A) and 92.9% in the Summer group (SA + A) liked to get compliments on their reading. 89.6% in the first group (SA + A) and 92.8% of the second group (SA + A) liked having the teacher say they read well, whereas 93.1% of the students in Spring 2004 (SA + A) and 82.7% of the respondents in Summer 2004 (SA + A) expressed that their parents often told them what a good job they were doing in reading. It was obvious that these students wanted to get strong recognition with their reading.

TABLE 4. RECOGNITION: SPRING 2004-1ST LINE (SUMMER 2004-2ND LINE)

	SA	A	D	SD
16. I like having the teacher say I read well.	72.4% (60.7%)	17.2% (32.1%)	10.3% (3.6%)	0% (3.6%)
17. My friends sometimes tell me I am a good reader.	37.9% (39.3%)	48.3% (32.1%)	10.3% (21.4%)	3.4% (7.1%)
18. I like to get compliments for my reading.	69.0% (53.6%)	31.0% (39.3%)	0% (3.6%)	0% (3.6%)
19. My parents often tell me what a good job I am doing in reading.	65.5% (46.4%)	27.6% (35.7%)	3.4% (10.7%)	3.4% (7.1%)
20. I don't care about getting rewards for being a good reader.	55.1% (28.6%)	34.5% (25.0%)	3.4% (32.1%)	6.9% (14.3%)

5. Social:

This section provides how important the literacy environment is. Less than 50% of students (SA + A) in both periods visited the library often with their family, and about 60% of students (SA + A) liked to trade things to read with their friends. However, 93.1% of the respondents (SA + A) in the Spring group and 82.1% of the respondents (SA + A) in the Summer group loved to tell their family about what they were reading. This proves that having an audience to read to provide the purpose to read, and ultimately offers positive motivation to read more.

TABLE 5. SOCIAL: SPRING 2004-1ST LINE (SUMMER 2004-2ND LINE)

	SA	A	D	SD
21. I visit the library often with my family.	13.8% (14.3%)	34.5% (21.4%)	41.4% (28.6%)	10.3% (35.7%)
22. I often read to my brother or my sister.	17.2% (28.6%)	41.4% (42.9%)	24.1% (7.1%)	17.2% (21.4%)
23. My friends and I like to trade things to read.	34.5% (25.0%)	27.6% (39.3%)	31.0% (25.0%)	6.9% (10.7%)
24. I sometimes read to my parents.	37.9% (46.4%)	37.9% (42.9%)	24.1% (0%)	0% (10.7%)
25. I like to tell my family about what I am reading.	51.7% (50.0%)	41.4% (32.1%)	3.4% (10.7%)	3.4% (7.1%)

6. Competition:

The competition section shows that the students in the study were not competitive. Although they believe that it is important to see their names on a list of good readers, less than 50% of the respondents (SA + A) in both periods hated it when others read better than them. 68.9% in the Spring group (SA + A) and 60.7% in the Summer group (SA + A) responded that they were willing to work hard to read better than their friends.

TABLE 6. COMPETITION: SPRING 2004-1ST LINE (SUMMER 2004-2ND LINE)

	SA	A	D	SD
26. It is important for me to see my name on a list of good readers.	55.1% (42.9%)	20.7% (46.4%)	20.7% (3.6%)	3.4% (7.1%)
27. I like being the best at reading.	34.5% (39.3%)	34.5% (28.6%)	20.7% (28.6%)	10.3% (3.6%)
28. I like to finish my reading before other students.	20.7% (14.3%)	37.9% (35.7%)	27.6% (39.3%)	13.8% (10.7%)
29. I hate it when others read better than me.	24.1% (10.7%)	20.7% (25.0%)	24.1% (46.4%)	31.0% (17.9%)
30. I am willing to work hard to read better than my friends	31.0% (28.6%)	37.9% (32.1%)	24.1% (25.0%)	6.9% (14.3%)

7. Reading Work Avoidance:

The final section, reading work avoidance, offers essential elements

to consider when selecting materials to read, what types of activities the teacher needs to plan and so forth. From 50% to 60% of the respondents (SA + A) in each period did not like to have activities, such as reading aloud, the use of worksheets, writing, and reading more challenging books. However, these students also did not care about the number of characters in the story. 68.9% of students in the Spring group (SD + D) and 75% of the Summer group (SD + D) disagreed to the statement they did not like it when there were too many people in the story. As long as the content was of interest to them, they would read the story no matter how many characters there were.

TABLE 7. READING WORK AVOIDANCE: SPRING 2004-1ST LINE (SUMMER 2004-2ND LINE)

	SA	A	D	SD
31. I don't like to read out loud in class.	34.5% (21.4%)	20.7% (39.3%)	24.1% (25.0%)	20.7% (14.3%)
32. I think worksheets are boring.	34.5% (28.6%)	27.6% (21.4%)	20.7% (28.6%)	17.2% (21.4%)
33. I don't like having to write about what I read.	17.2% (21.4%)	37.9% (39.3%)	34.5% (28.6%)	10.3% (10.7%)
34. I don't like reading something when the words are too difficult.	17.2% (25.0%)	55.1% (25.0%)	17.2% (28.6%)	10.3% (21.4%)
35. I don't like it when there are too many people in the story.	6.9% (7.1%)	24.1% (17.9%)	24.1% (50.0%)	44.8% (25.0%)

It is obvious that these college students gained valuable insights from the questionnaire and accordingly, the information allowed them to plan appropriate lessons. Some of the comments from the college students included:

I really liked the Motivation Questionnaire because I think that anytime the teacher can get into the mind of a student they are more effective in meeting each student's needs. And I really see how important it is that we can relate to their 'little worlds.'

I did learn some new information about my child with the motivation questionnaire. I knew that he did not think too highly of himself as a reader but I didn't know that he did think he was a good reader. I believe his parents should be a little more involved by having him read a portion of his favorite book to them, or read the

same book together so that they can discuss it. I feel this would really motivate him.

I was surprised about some of his answers on the questionnaire. He always complains about reading, saying he hates it and is bad at it, yet that is not how he answered many of his questions.

Erick seems to really enjoy reading and is willing to read new books. I could tell he thinks he is a good reader and has confidence. I now have better ideas of what type of books to get for him. My next step from here is to try and find books that will interest him.

This questionnaire helped me to understand a lot about Colby's reading interests, concerns, and feelings. I understand now that Colby likes to read about things that interest him and he doesn't like it when he is told to read something that he is not interested in. He likes to be noted as a good reader and to receive praise. His family seems to be involved in his reading experiences.

I learned what my student likes about reading and writing as well as his dislikes. This motivation questionnaire really gave me a good insight into what type of reader he is. It helped me see some information on his likes and dislikes with reading and writing. I will definitely use this information to help me write my upcoming lesson plans for my student so it will strike his interest.

The classroom teachers or individual tutors work very hard to create the best outcomes for their students throughout their teaching experiences. They continue to search for balanced ways to collect information, to present it for the best products, and to reflect on their teaching, using a variety of assessment [gathering informal data] and evaluation [formal judgment of what he or she has collected] tools (Block, 2003). The self-motivated students simply need to be challenged by clear guidelines and relevant feedback. However, students with special needs, limited interests, negative reading attitudes, and lack of motivation require a more hands-on approach, and more active strategies.

IV. SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES FOR INCREASING MOTIVATION IN THE CLASSROOM

The study argued how important it is to get useful information for motivating students' interests and providing opportunities for students to have a positive experience in reading and learning. It demonstrated that more creative hands-on activities and active involvement in learning would increase the motivation of students who are easily distracted and have less exposure to literature. In this section, the study will share some motivational activities to hold students' interests, increase their motivation, and keep a positive attitude towards reading, hoping that classroom teachers get practical ideas when they apply them to their own classrooms. These ideas involve strategies for predictions, sequences, and main ideas with practical hands-on activities.

1. Activating students' prior knowledge

To make reading personally meaningful, teachers must provide some time to connect the texts to students' prior knowledge, using a variety of prediction strategies. The prediction strategies include activities before reading (Mystery Box, Book Bits, & What's Behind the Door?), make prediction during reading (Stop and Make more Predictions, Revise your Predictions, etc.), and check your prediction after reading (Step by Step, & Who Said That?).

1.1 Mystery Box

Mystery Box is an excellent pre-reading strategy that helps students predict the story by increasing students' curiosity of the topic that the teacher is going to introduce. The teacher has some objects in a box that are closely related to the selection. As each new item is drawn from the box, students' predictions about the selection are revised. With each unveiling, the teacher asks the students if they can guess what the story will be about.

The procedure for this activity includes: 1) Choose a box with a lid, 2) Decorate the box (If this is used in a group, students may put illustrations that reflect the setting, the theme, and each character outside the box as they read more chapters), 3) Place the objects you have collected into the box, 4) Decide the order in which you will remove the objects and what, if anything, you will say about each one,

and 5) Present your Mystery Box (Pearman, Camp, & Hurst, 2004).

Some possible objects in the story, Holes (Sachar, 2002) might be a shovel, sneakers, an onion, jar of peaches, handcuffs, sheriff's badge, and so forth. With the story, Jumanji (Van Allsburg, 1981), the teacher may take objects from the box such as a piece of vine, a tiny tree, a plastic rhinoceros, a pair of dice, and a game board spinner.

2.1 Book Bits

The concept of Mystery Box may be modified to Book Bits as the teacher puts sentences or phrases in the box, instead of objects. The teacher selects a number of sentences or phrases throughout the text and writes each on a small strip of paper. There should be as many quotes as there are students in the group so everyone can participate. They should be quotes that are significant to the text. For instance, using the book of The Very Lonely Fireflies (Carle, 1995), the suggested sentences could be: 1) It was growing dark; 2) Something flickered there; 3) I shut my eyes tight and put the pillow over my head; and 4) The jar glowed like moonlight.

Students will have a great time figuring out what kind of topic they are working on in a group. This Book Bit activity can also be used with advanced students by allowing them to put the sentence strips in the box in order.

3.1 What's Behind the Doors?

Before reading the story to the class, the teacher would have them make some predictions while playing this game. He or she may have prepared 6-8 different pictures of items from the story covered behind a door. A volunteer can uncover a door to see what is behind it. Behind each door is a clue to what the story is going to be about. After each door has been uncovered, students will then make some predictions out loud to the class.

4.1 Step by Step:

In this activity one student will take on the role of a character in a story. The other students will try to guess what character the student is by asking a maximum of 10 yes or no questions. For example, Are you a person? Do you have fur? or, Are you really short? The student who can guess the right character gets to pick another character to

portray and answer the same kinds of questions.

5.1 Who Said That?

Put a quote on strips of paper (a different quote for each student). Place the strips of paper in a bag and have each student draw one without looking. Each student will read over the quote and find out who said it, either by memory or by looking back in the story. Have the students stand up one at a time and read the quote aloud, the other students should guess who said it.

2. Using Sequence Activities:

2.1 The Chain Game:

Helps students organize the story by sequence after reading it. The teacher creates questions and answers in order. Write Welcome to the Chain Game on the first card, and the first question after that on the same card. The second card has the answer from the first question. Those who have the answer on his or her card, stands up and reads it aloud. The game continues until it says Congratulations!

2.2 A Paper Chain:

You read a book and have different parts of the story written on strips of paper. You have the student put the pieces in order and make a paper chain. This is a fun way to check for comprehension and to review the story while you are making the chain. It also helps the child with chronological order.

2.3 Switch:

After reading the text to the students, students will be given a piece of paper with a sentence from the story. Students will all line up at the front of the classroom in any order they desire. Whoever lines up at the front of the line will read the sentence that they have. If the class thinks that the sentence is not the first one from the story, then they will shout out Switch. This will continue until everyone is in the correct order, and then everyone will read his or her sentence in the correct order to complete game.

2. 4 Locomotion:

Read the story to the class. After reading the selection, give al-

ready made cards to the class that has events of the story. Tell the class to listen carefully to each other and figure out whose event comes next. Turn on the song Locomotion and have children make a train around the room, grabbing whoever follows them in the story to join. At the end, line the class up and have them read from one end to the other, checking to see if their story makes sense.

2.5 Scrambled Sentences:

The teacher would write a summary of the story on strips of paper, but instead of having complete sentences the teacher would have fragments. The end of sentence would be on the next sentence strip. Then the teacher would mix them up and hang them on the board with magnetic strips. Students would collaborate to figure out which fragment comes next to make sense. This helps students' grammar skills and sequencing of events.

3. Inferring main idea:

3.1 Getting the Gist:

Getting the gist is a summarizing strategy that the students decide the most important *who* or *what* in each paragraph. Next, they tell the most important thing that happened to the *who* or *what* in each paragraph. When they have decided these two things, they create a summary statement of the paragraph using ten words or less.

This activity enables students to get the main points of the story rather than focusing on details that do not add to overall comprehension.

3.2 Making Connections:

When you make connections to your own experiences, books that you read before, and special events that remind you of, reading becomes personally meaningful and is easier to understand. **Questions:** Does anything in this book remind you of something that has happened to you?

- a. Reader/Text connection: This book reminds me of my 10th birthday . (w/ personal experiences)
- b. Text/Text connection: This story reminds me of the book that I read two years ago.
- c. Text/World connection: It reminds me of 911 (or the Civil War).

V. CONCLUSION & DISCUSSION:

Effective teachers gather ideas from other professionals, such as more experienced teachers, administrators, ESL teachers, special education experts, and other educators, as well as from many available resources such as reading articles, attending professional workshops, corresponding via emails and sharing each other's experiences. Although academic information based on linguistic and cognitive experiences are essential to plan appropriate lessons in the classroom, the additional data, such as affective influences, must be added for best outcomes. Among the choices in affective influences, motivation provides the essential opportunity for teachers to extend their lessons even more successfully. Whenever creating practical activities or strategies, motivational issues should be the teachers' main priority. When students' motivation increases, learning increases as well.

As we discussed in this study, it is obvious that motivation is an important factor in the success of any reading program. Then, how about the influence of motivation to learners who are learning English as a second or foreign language? Many researchers have reported the results of the study that motivation for first language learners and motivation for second or foreign language learners equally important in any reading instruction (Mori, 2002; Day and Bamford, 1998). Day and Bamford (1998) have attempted to create a theoretical model of motivation to read in a second language, including expectancy and value components. The former is concerned with constructs regarding materials and reading ability whereas the latter contains attitudes toward reading in the second language and socio-cultural environment. Selection of their own appropriate reading materials and readers' attitudes are the critical influences on motivation. Mori (2002) asserted the multidimensionality of reading motivation and suggested that it is rash to label certain students as either motivated or not motivated to read. She demonstrated the necessity of further study of the relationship between reading motivation and reading behavior.

The present study would like to suggest some ideas for the use of the motivation questionnaire for students who are learning English as a second or foreign language. This can be modified and adapted for the needs of your own purposes in any contexts.

Reading Efficacy:

1. Reading English is easy.
2. I feel stupid when I read in English.
3. If I like the teacher, I like to study in English.
4. I don't think I will do well in English next year.

Reading Curiosity:

5. I like to read about new things.
6. I enjoy the challenge of difficult reading passages.
7. I like reading English newspapers and/or magazines.
8. By learning to read in English, I hope I will be able to read English novels.

Reading Involvement:

9. I read because I have to.
10. It is fun to read in English.
11. I tend to get deeply engaged when I read in English.
12. If I am reading about an interesting topic, I sometimes lose track of time.
13. It is important for me to do my reading work in English carefully.
14. I always try to finish my reading in English on time.
15. I am learning to read in English merely because I would like to get good grades.
16. Learning to read in English is important because it will make me a more knowledgeable person.
17. It is a waste of time to learn to read in English.

Reading Avoidance:

18. Long and difficult English passages put me off.
19. I do not have any desire to read in English even if the content is interesting.
20. It is a pain to read in English.

Integrative Orientation:

21. I am learning to read in English because I might study abroad in the future.
22. I would like to get a job that uses what I studied in English class.

23. I think learning to speak and/or listening is more important than learning to read in English.

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APPENDIX A

MOTIVATION QUESTIONNAIRE: MODIFIED VERSION

Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), Strongly Disagree (SD)

*Record '4' to the most positive response and '1' to the least positive response.

READING EFFICACY	SA	A	D	SD
1. I know that I will do well in reading next year.	4	3	2	1
2. I am a good reader.	4	3	2	1
3. Sometimes I don't feel as smart as others in reading.	1	2	3	4
4. To do well in reading I have to get the teacher to like me.	4	3	2	1
5. I know how well I am doing before I get my paper back.	4	3	2	1

CURIOSITY	SA	A	D	SD
6. If the teacher discusses something interesting, I might read more about it.	4	3	2	1
7. I have favorite subjects that I like to read about.	4	3	2	1
8. If I am reading about an interesting topic, I sometimes lose track of time.	4	3	2	1
9. I like to read about new things.	4	3	2	1
10. If a book is interesting I don't care how hard it is to read.	4	3	2	1

COMPLIANCE	SA	A	D	SD
11. I read things that are not assigned.	4	3	2	1
12. I read because I have to.	1	2	3	4
13. It is important for me to do my reading work carefully.	4	3	2	1
14. I always try to finish my reading on time.	4	3	2	1
15. I do schoolwork so that the teacher can make sure I am paying attention.	4	3	2	1

RECOGNITION	SA	A	D	SD
16. I like having the teacher say I read well.	4	3	2	1
17. My friends sometimes tell me I am a good reader.	4	3	2	1
18. I like to get compliments for my reading.	4	3	2	1
19. My parents often tell me what a good job I am doing in reading.	4	3	2	1
20. I don't care about getting rewards for being a good reader.	4	3	2	1

SOCIAL	SA	A	D	SD
21. I visit the library often with my family.	4	3	2	1
22. I often read to my brother or my sister.	4	3	2	1
23. My friends and I like to trade things to read.	4	3	2	1
24. I sometimes read to my parents.	4	3	2	1
25. I like to tell my family about what I am reading.	4	3	2	1

COMPETITION	SA	A	D	SD
26. It is important for me to see my name on a list of good readers.	4	3	2	1
27. I like being the best at reading.	4	3	2	1
28. I like to finish my reading before other students.	4	3	2	1
29. I hate it when others read better than me.	4	3	2	1
30. I am willing to work hard to read better than my friends.	4	3	2	1

READING WORK AVOIDANCE	SA	A	D	SD
31. I don't like to read out loud in class.	1	2	3	4
32. I think worksheets are boring.	4	3	2	1
33. I don't like having to write about what I read.	1	2	3	4
34. I don't like reading something when the words are too difficult.	1	2	3	4
35. I don't like it when there are too many people in the story.	1	2	3	4

Key Words: Motivation, Assessment, Affective Influences, and Hands-on Activities.

Promoting Peace in the EFL Classroom

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ABSTRACT

Humanistic principles of education, which received growing attention in the 20th century, can be traced back to Aristotle and Confucius. However, they are increasingly relevant to a modern society in which competitive, individualized and intellectualized education serves only to enhance the destructive tendency of a technology-based corporate-owned world. This paper argues that the promotion of humanistic values, at all levels of education, should be a prime goal of educators, in order to develop in students interpersonal and intrapersonal skills, which, in addition to problem solving, critical thinking and responsibility, are essential if they are to make a positive and peaceful contribution to the "race between education and catastrophe" (H.G. Wells, 1920). It is the responsibility of teachers to model and promote a peaceful society in their classrooms, so that root causes of corruption, institutional aggression, poverty and sickness may be examined, and learning experiences internalized in the "safe" community that is a microcosm of world society.

Language classrooms are, however, known for promoting anxiety, stress and competition, rather than the collaboration and sensitive awareness. This paper therefore suggests how teachers might identify and address sources of negative affect in their classrooms, and how they might promote humanistic values through appropriate learning materials, and a non-threatening learning environment.

I. INTRODUCTION

Before investigating the rationale for peace in the classroom it is necessary to ask what is meant by peace? Why is it desirable? What

does it have to do with language learning? Here are some definitions from two English Language Teaching (ELT) dictionaries:

- i) If you have peace, you are not being disturbed, and you are in calm, quiet surroundings. ii) If you have a feeling of peace, you feel contented and calm and not at all worried. iii) If there is peace among a group of people, they live or work together in a friendly way and do not quarrel. (*Collins Cobuild English dictionary for advanced learners*, 2001)
- i) A condition or period in which there is no war between two or more nations. ii) The state of freedom from disorder within a country, with the citizens living according to the law. iii) A freedom from anxiety or troubling thoughts. iv) In a state of quiet or calm. (*Longman dictionary of English language and culture*, 1992)

Classroom peace thus implies cooperative work without disorder, the participants being unworried, free from anxiety, calm, and not quarreling. This is obviously a description of a desirable learning environment, but is it an end in itself, or is there a deeper aspect to the issue? This paper proposes that peace is a desirable state for society as a whole, that this state has not been (and will not be) achieved by means of competitive and exclusive educational policies and methods, and that humanistic educational goals, approached in a holistic setting, offer a path to the realisation of such a state. This issue is not simply one of making life comfortable for the greatest number of people, for the current destructive potential of weapons technology and the corporate plundering of the world's resources have made it increasingly a matter of preserving the human race:

Human history becomes more and more a race between education and catastrophe. (H. G. Wells, 1920)

Now the whole question of the educator's role in dealing with planetary crisis becomes prominent. (O'Sullivan, 2001, p. 46)

Some type of holistic, or participating consciousness and a corresponding sociopolitical formation have to emerge if we are to survive as a species. (Berman, 1981, p. 23)

Establishing lasting peace is the work of education; all politics can do is keep us out of war. (Montessori, cited in McCarthy [Ed.], 2001, p. 35)

II. THE PRESENT SITUATION

The society in which we live is based upon aggression: the “market economy” espouses the survival of the fittest; international politics bows to the superiority of the aggressor; and competition is a fact of life in which the winner takes all. Violence is the language of governments as they oppress weaker states, squeezing them of their natural resources in return for dubious aid and huge debts; genocide, domestic violence (human rights abuses), pollution, and corruption, are routinely overlooked as countries rush to share the spoils of global trade; developed countries supply arms to the rest of the world (the United States supplies 75% of the weapons used in current conflicts [*The Baltimore Sun*, 1999, as cited in McCarthy, 2001, p. 92]), and defense budgets dwarf those for education and welfare (the Pentagon receives more than \$700 million a day from Congress [*ibid*]). Also in the United States, 22,000 murders are committed annually, and the leading cause of injury for women is being beaten at home by a man (*ibid*). In the Republic of Korea, official statistics tell us that one murder is committed every nine hours, and one rape every two hours (*Korea Times*, November 26, 2000). When we consider how this overall situation is mirrored in education, we find that children are continually educated for violence (*The Washington Post*, September 28, 1999). History is delineated in terms of battles, war-heroes are praised above peace-makers (Harris 2001, p. 37), and test-driven teaching promotes mutually exclusive competition. Even when they go home, children learn violence in cartoon books, movies, the news media, the internet, and family relationships.

Budding members of society learn quickly that success is about being first in the queue, gaining more than others, and preserving rights and possessions through the use of force. There is always something to be gained, and always people (competitors) to take from (before they take something from us). Educational systems preserve these “realities” by equating academic success with competition and exclusionism; students who cannot (or will not) perform the intellectual contortions demanded of them for the purposes of gate-keeping (entrance to a “good” high school, university, job, etc.) are defined as failures by society. This waste of human resources is exacerbated by the fact that most such students buy into the great deception, and see

themselves as under-achievers. After all, the institutions that they have encountered for most of their lives have used education as a means of selective discrimination, glorifying intellectualism over other qualities, ensuring that only the required number of students progress to tertiary education, and that the remaining students (the majority) see themselves as failures.

This view of the role of education is pervasive in Korea, where even advanced EFL students, who have successfully jumped through all the hoops required of them by the education system, and who often go on to study in America as “straight A” students, seem convinced that they are “poor” learners. As for the high school graduates who find themselves in third-rate universities or colleges, and who see only a life of non-achievement ahead, the EFL classroom holds no promise, being simply “more of the same”, rather than an empowering experience in positive attitude change. If language educators are serious about helping such students to break out of self-confirming, negative perceptions about self and society, then language programs and syllabi must focus on promotion of self-esteem, mutual respect and social responsibility, and on the implicit promotion of these in the language learning environment, teacher/student relationships, and learning materials.

Educational success as measured by the criteria of a university entrance test or a TOEFL score is not an accurate predictor of important life skills such as problem-solving, critical thinking skills, or even teamwork. Even those who have been defined as “successful” by the educational system “typically do not display an adequate understanding of the materials and concepts with which they have been working” (Gardner, 1993, p. 3). Instead, the society that has preferred industrial pragmatism over the original humanistic definitions of education has produced and perpetuated a selectionist, intellectualized, competitive society in which monetary gain is the only mark of success. In doing this, education has failed even by its own standards (Gardner, 1993). While technological advances have produced jetliners, cable TV, the internet, and travel to the moon, over one billion men, women, and children (more than four times the population of the United States and Canada combined) do not have safe water to drink and therefore cannot live a healthy life (*Global Water*, 2005). Almost three billion people - half the world’s population - live on less than two dollars a day (Ramonet, 1998).

III. PEACE IN THE CLASSROOM

In this situation, it is the responsibility of the EFL teacher to consider whether he/she is compounding an undesirable state of affairs through linguistic and cultural imperialism (Phillipson, 1992; Tomlinson, 1991), or whether the content and process of English language teaching can positively affect society. This paper therefore explores the concept of the EFL classroom as a non-threatening learning environment, based on the premise that the classroom is a microcosm of society (Dewey, 1966, p. 163; Lantieri & Patti, 1996, p. 46), and that the recognition and exploration of social problems and impediments to learning in the safe environment of the classroom can promote development of the social mores and qualities -positive self-images, a sense of responsibility for self and others, a capacity to trust others (Harris 2001, p. 42) - which are essential for future world citizens. This premise follows from a series of assumptions:

- i) state education systems have not been successful in producing informed, responsible, creative members of society (Gardner, 1993, p. 5);
- ii) state education systems have focused on intellectualism and competition, rather than on interpersonal and intrapersonal skills (emotional management, interdependence, personal/social responsibility) (Krishnamurti, 1992, p. 2);
- iii) teachers need to teach according to their beliefs (Williams & Burden, 1997, p. 54);
- iv) teachers are agents of social change (Finch, 2002, p. 52);
- v) classrooms should model a society based on mutual respect, trust and accountability, promoting responsibility and collaboration above individuality, exclusion and competition (Harris 2001, p. 42);
- vi) a humanistic perspective on education, implicitly present in holistic syllabi, non-threatening learning environment, and appropriate learning materials, empowers students to think about the world and their place in that world (Legutke & Thomas, 1991, p. 45);
- vii) a teacher/student (T/S) relationship built on mutual respect (T-S, S-S, S-T) impacts favorably on future relationships (long term), in addition to enhancing learning in school (short term) (Siccone & Lpez, 2000, introduction) The introduction to this

- book has no page numbers); and
- viii) a peaceful language-learning environment reduces affective filters in the classroom (short term), and prepares students to become responsible members of society (long-term) (Finch, 2001, p. 145);

How can a peaceful learning environment be set up? Are teachers to reject everything in the current educational system, or are they to work within the system to change it? Luckily, there are professional options besides moving to an “alternative school” such as Summerhill A. S. Neill’s “free school”, founded in 1921. or Brockwood Park One of the Krishnamurti Foundation’s Private Schools.. These options involve working directly on the immediate learning environment.

Firstly, the classroom can be transformed into a non-threatening learning environment (Finch, 2001) in which students can learn to become responsible members of society. With the teacher present as counselor and mentor, students can learn social skills (e.g. collaboration) through trial and error, reflecting on their mistakes, and turning them into learning experiences. Counseling skills (Kelly, 1996, pp. 95-96), take on crucial importance for the teacher in this situation, being essential for the development of a stress-free, mutually respecting learning community. In such an environment, the growth of the “whole person” is primary, with language acquisition following naturally, as an outcome of personal and social growth, and the role of the teacher/counselor becomes one of:

- i) encouraging realistic expectations about accuracy and errors (Foss & Reitzel 1988);
- ii) offering training in affective strategies, to help students manage anxiety and improve performance (Crookall & Oxford, 1991);
- iii) reassuring students that they are not alone in their affective reactions and that these feelings are normal (Foss & Reitzel 1988; Campbell & Ortiz 1991);
- iv) showing that the teacher/evaluator understands the tension caused by being anxious about appearing anxious (Phillips 1992, p. 20);
- v) employing “alternative” evaluations involving partner and small-group work, interviews, problem-solving, and role-plays, which are usually enjoyed by students (Phillips, 1992, p. 21; Young 1990) and can reduce anxiety-raising competitiveness (Bailey, 1983) and apprehension (Foss & Reitzel 1988); and

- vi) developing a stress-free climate, helping students to relax, developing peer-support networks and promoting self-confidence (Moskowitz, 1978; Horwitz & Young, 1991; Legutke & Thomas, 1991, p. 35; Scarcella & Oxford, 1992).

Secondly, teachers can recognize that they are social, affective and cognitive role-models for their students, who pick up verbal and non-verbal signals the teacher and often discuss these outside of class. If the teacher appears distrustful, arrogant, autocratic, nervous, bored, or uncommitted, students observe this, and will react accordingly. Thus, arriving late to class, while demanding punctuality from students, is not an effective motivational strategy; strictly enforcing deadlines for assignments and then not marking them on time, does not enhance mutual respect; punishing students for plagiarism and then photocopying teaching materials in contradiction of copyright, sends mixed messages to future world citizens. On the other hand, if the teacher offers trust, respect, honest concern, and a passionate love of learning, students will react positively. A first step in the promotion of a non-threatening learning environment, therefore, can be for the teacher to perform a “peace-in-the-classroom” reflective analysis, and to thereby examine the teaching practice from a humanistic perspective (Appendix A). Thirdly, a number of learning environment deficiency analyses have been devised by researchers, and are offered here as appendices B to E. These questionnaires are designed to examine teacher/student perceptions about the learning environment and to identify differences and preferred changes. The first of these questionnaires is the *Classroom Environment Scale (CES)* (Fraser, 1986), an adaptation of which can be seen in Appendix B. The purpose of this instrument is to discover how students and teachers perceive the learning environment. Questions focus on affective aspects of classroom activities and on T-S roles. The *Classroom Learning Environment (CLE)* (Pine & Boy, 1977) (Appendix C) looks at the classroom from a humanistic perspective, focusing on personal identity, trust, love and concern, while the third deficiency analysis (Appendix D) is the *Classroom Environment Questionnaire (CEQ)* (Fraser, 1986), which is concerned more with classroom management, and is in two parts: *preferred* and *actual*. In the first part, students and teachers record the sort of learning environment they would like to experience, and in the second part, they give their perceptions of the environment as it ac-

tually is. This data can provide feedback, not only on discrepancies between the *preferred* and the *actual*, but also on differences in perception between teachers and students. Finally, Appendix E shows the *Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS)* (Horwitz et al., 1986), in which causes of student anxiety are researched.

These questionnaires focus on the learning environment itself, on the assumption that “without a positive learning atmosphere, students may well gain little or nothing from new curricular infusions” (Mantle-Bromley, 1995, p. 383), and also in view of Ely’s claim that:

[there is] considerable evidence to support the general proposition that the nature of classroom environments does have an important influence on students’ achievement of cognitive and attitudinal goals often beyond that attributable to student characteristics such as pretest performance, general ability or both. (Ely, 1986, p. 118)

Other needs analysis-related issues that might be examined in the language class include learning preferences (Finch & Hyun, 2000a), beliefs about language learning (Horwitz, 1988), teacher needs (Hills, 1976), and student needs (Hills, 1976). Whatever the issues, it is important that students and teachers participate equally in their examination, so that differences in perception may be identified and feedback utilized formatively.

IV. PEACEFUL LEARNING MATERIALS

In the questionnaires mentioned above, the learning materials focused on learning issues, in what might be termed a self-referential loop. Students involved in these activities were not only learning English through English, but also actively influencing the characteristics of the English classroom. This section thus examines how learning materials on any given topic (such as those that regularly appear in language-learning textbooks) might be adapted to emphasize personal identity and social responsibility. It is important to note here that a focus on humanistic ideas and methods does not mean that these must be explicitly taught before appropriate social behavior can become a criterion of membership in the learning community. Just as learner training and student autonomy can be incorporated into the EFL curriculum, so a humanistic/holistic ethos can be made implicit

in everything that occurs in the language classroom. This emphasis begins with the learning environment and extends to T-S/S-S/S-T roles, self-direction, diversity, alternative (non-competitive) assessment and collaborative learning, in addition to the learning materials.

There is insufficient space in this paper to discuss principles of material-design in depth. However, it is relevant to note that appropriate materials play an important role of the promotion of peace, in terms of format, content, and underlying assumptions. In contrast, many published materials (school textbooks and language learning course books) utilize a teacher-centered format, which immediately sends a message to all participants that language learning occurs in a linear manner, that the teacher will (autocratically) lead the students through a prescribed sequence of events, and that this process will result in fluency and proficiency in the “successful” students. Such a format encourages the teacher-fronted classroom, in which the teacher micromanages every utterance, while defining and competitively assessing “acceptable” language learning. “Peaceful” language learning materials, on the other hand, are directed at the learner, and

- i) empower the student as an autonomous learner;
- ii) promote self-esteem;
- iii) reduce affective filters;
- iv) develop personal and social responsibility;
- v) include linguistic goals;
- vi) include learning-for-life goals; and
- vii) encourage personal reflection on cognitive, affective and social achievements.

While it can be claimed that language learning materials to date have largely ignored these factors (Sinclair, 1996, p. 149), it can also be said that humanistic learning materials *per se* have paid little attention to learning content in their “experience-activating exercises” (Legutke & Thomas 1991, p. 64). This section therefore examines how the two concerns might be brought together, combining Siccone & Lpez’s (2000, Introduction) fourfold approach to humanistic learning materials (Figure 1), with Tudor’s (1996) three main target areas for learner training instruction: i) language learning and language learning processes; ii) language structure and language use; and iii) the learners themselves as language learners.

FIGURE 1. A CLASSIFICATION OF HUMANISTIC LEARNING MATERIALS. (SICCONE & LPEZ, 2000)

Others	Interdependence	Social responsibility
Self	Independence	Personal responsibility
	Experience (Internal)	Express (External)

The classification in Figure 1 is based (as with other humanistic approaches) on the general school classroom in the U.S.A., but it provides a useful framework for the EFL classroom, and will be followed in the following presentation of sample activities.

1. Independence

The first activity to be offered here is adapted from Siccone & López (2000, pp. 3435), and concentrates on one of the areas in Figure 1: Independence/Self/Experience. Students investigate the aspects that they like and dislike about themselves, and record these on paper. On one side of the paper they write the things that they like about themselves, using (if possible) colors that they like. On the other side of the paper they write the things they don't like, using colors that they don't like. In the final stage, they return to this side of the paper, writing "I love myself even when..." above the aspects they do not like. This activity combines social and linguistic goals, with very little need for adaptation. Students are encouraged to value themselves (development of self-esteem) during the activity itself, and they do this in the context of controlled language: "I like ? and "I don't like." Listening comprehension is involved when the teacher tells an appropriate story, and further, when partners dictate the instructions to each other (comprehension of imperatives, plus classroom language "What did you say?" "One more time please." "How do you spell it?" "Like this?"). The amount of acceptable disclosure (affect) can be controlled by the students, who can work together (pair-work), or who can sit back-to-back. Finally, this activity has meaning to the students, since it focuses on an important aspect of their lives; it is more than a language activity, though it rehearses a common grammatical goal.

The second activity ("A Good Thing," Siccone & Lpez, 2000, pp.

42-43) recognizes that the language classroom is known for producing stress (MacIntyre, 1995, p. 90), and focuses on trust-building and relaxation, thus reducing affective filters, and easing language learning. Students practice deep breathing and “Stop-thought” techniques, and listen (with their eyes closed) to a text about transforming negative thoughts into positive ones. The student-centered instructions contain simple imperatives (linguistic goal), and can be developed into similar activities in which students examine commands and directions. Actions performed by the teacher can be reassigned to students, thus promoting collaborative learning. A similar activity (*Accentuate the Positive*) appears in Moskowitz’s excellent book (1978, p. 89). Here, affective goals are “To encourage students to think positively and to look for the good in their daily lives” and linguistic goals are “To practice the past tense” and “To practice superlatives.” Students tell their group (in no more than three sentences) about the most positive thing that happened to them last week. They then tell each other about something that they did last week that made someone feel good. Finally, students identify good events (however seemingly insignificant) that occurred today. Both these activities fall in the “Independence” section of Figure 1, though they have aspects of interdependence.

2. Interdependence

A more explicit examination of interdependence occurs in the “Learning Contract” (Appendix G). In this activity, students identify aspects of the learning environment that they can positively affect by their classroom behavior. In addition to promoting “a classroom community based upon shared values and respect” (Siccone & Lpez, 2000, p. 93), along with a focus on personal responsibility within the group, this activity uses “should” in a consistent manner, and can be developed to examine modals (should, could, would, must, have to). In this case, the language is being rehearsed in a meaningful way, with appropriate learning content. Humanistic goals for this activity might include a focus on acts of friendship, with a preparatory activity also utilizing modals:

- i) What could/should/must/ought we do to make everyone feel supported in the classroom?
- ii) What could/should/must/ought we do to make the class start on

time?

- iii) What could/should/must/ought we do to help the teacher?
- iv) What could/should/must/ought the teacher do to make everyone feel comfortable?

“That’s what friends are for” (Siccone & Lpez, 2000, pp. 82-85) develops the theme of interdependence further, by examining desirable qualities of friends. Students (in groups or pairs) discuss friendship, and brainstorm what they like in friends. They choose the top six qualities that they feel are important, and write them separately on memory notes, placing the notes on their worksheet, in order of importance. They are then given situations to consider, in which different characteristics of friends might be appropriate (e.g. spending a long vacation together or visiting a friend in hospital). After further discussion, students rearrange their preferences and share these in new groups. The humanistic goal here is for students to consider the distinctions that expand the sense of self, and to receive feedback on their own values. Initial ideas are expanded in “further discussion” sessions, and students finally regroup and share their ideas, leading to a class consensus, which will minimize surface dissimilarities and focus on positive attributes. The linguistic goal (in addition to interactive use of the target language) focuses on positive adjectives which can be applied to people, these adjectives being discovered and rehearsed as students brainstorm, decide, review and share.

3. Personal Responsibility

“What if...?” (Appendix H) is about decision-making and personal accountability. The activity presents “Event” words, “Response” words and “Outcome” words in a game format, encouraging students to link them in any way, using appropriate conditionals such as *If, when, whenever, then* and *and* (e.g. *Whenever I become ill, I get married, and learn to drive.*). In a possible follow-up activity, the humanistic element can become stronger, if students are asked to actively consider how outcomes are dependent upon events and responses. In this case, students can be encouraged to see that they can positively influence outcomes by modifying events and personal responses. For example, students might be asked to write down all the excuses they can think of for not doing their homework, for not coming to class on

time, for not meeting someone at the agreed time, etc. These excuses (which will draw attention to the linguistic element of cause and effect statements) can then be examined, and alternative perceptions suggested.

Personal responsibility includes self-respect in addition to empowerment, and “Highlights of My Life” (Siccone & Lopez, 2000, pp. 45, 156-160) explores this aspect by encouraging students to make a vision of their future success in life. A listening activity gets students in the mood to think about possible positive outcomes in their lives; they then draw (on a movie story-board) three events in their past, three that they would like to occur within five years, and another three which they hope for within ten years. Students are motivated to set goals for themselves, to learn the importance of envisioning success, and to realise the power of choosing results over excuses. A final group activity debriefs students about their visions.

Self-respect, achievement and empowerment can also be promoted through an “I Can’t/Haven’t yet...?” type of activity, encouraging students to see perceived failures as steps along a path to achievement. Students are asked to write down at least five things they cannot do and then to change the sentences they have written into ones containing the phrase “I haven’t yet...?” The substitution of “I haven’t yet” for “I can’t” is also an interesting example of how a simple language exercise (substitution drill), taking the students’ immediate lives for its subject (meaningful activity).

4. Social Responsibility

A familiar language learning activity is one in which students are asked to choose alternatives from given options. This appears in textbooks in the guise of choosing (for example) which articles should be taken to a desert island, which patient should receive a heart transplant, and even which passenger should be thrown out of a sinking hot air balloon. This format can be successfully adopted to promote cooperation rather than competition. In “Share the Wealth” (Appendix I), the situation is again very immediate, and students are asked to decide how to allocate \$500 that has been donated to their class. This activity promotes group responsibility through the identification of ways in which students might directly affect their immediate surroundings. It also functions as an exercise in mutual respect, learning how to listen

to and accept each other's opinions (SHARE, Appendix I). Finally, the linguistic function practiced here is one of agreement and disagreement.

5. Action Research

The author has been examining the effects of a collaborative, non-threatening, "peaceful" learning environment on student attitudes and perceptions, over the past three years. A number of instruments have been used to carry out this research (Finch, 2005), among which the *Classroom Environment Questionnaire* (CEQ) (Fraser, 1986; Appendix D) is a notable indicator of attitude change. In this activity, students first decide to what extent they would like the statements in the questionnaire to be true. This is done on a 1-5 scale, ranging from "1 = We would be happy if this never happened in class" to "5 = We would be happy if this always happened in class." Having recorded their "preferred" version, they then examine the same statements in terms of how often they are true in actuality. Responses now range from "1 = This never happens in class" to "5 = This always happens in class."

Since the statements on this instrument mostly describe positive, student-centered events and outcomes, it is not surprising that the "preferred" results (n = 146) showed many average scores above 4 ("We would be happy if this often happened in class"). The highest average score (4.55) went to "1. Students come early to class," followed by "19. The atmosphere of the room is friendly" (4.54) and "13. The teacher is friendly to the students"(4.49). The statement scoring the lowest average (1.93) was "4. The teacher decides where students sit in class." Punctuality and friendly teacher-student relations were apparently very important to the students.

When comparing the results of the "preferred" CEQ with the "actual" version, it is to be expected that reality will not match up to desired conditions, since "the grass is always greener on the other side of the fence." In this respect, most results did show a slight downward trend. Item 2, for example ("Students talk in English before the teacher arrives") scored 3.99 in the "preferred" version and "2.55" in the actual version, showing that this activity did not occur as frequently as the students wished it to. Item 7 ("Students choose which tasks to do") also moved down, from 3.51 to 2.99, showing that students would like

more autonomy in choosing and sequencing tasks. These were the most extreme examples of the downward trend. Most items, however, did not show significant differences between the two versions. Thus, item 4 (“The teacher decides where students sit in class”) moved from 1.93 to 1.92. On the other hand, a number of items showed a reverse trend. Item 8 (“Students work together in groups”) moved from 3.7 to 4.07, and item 10 (“Students are responsible for the assessment in this class”) moved from 3.78 to 4.01, showing that students had been asked to work in groups and to assess each other more than they wanted. Overall analysis of this instrument showed that students were satisfied with their actual (student-centered, non-threatening) learning environment, and that there were no significant discrepancies with their preferred learning environment.

Students who took part in this study showed a general movement away from traditional views of language learning and teaching, along with high awareness of learning needs and learning strategies. They expressed a growing comfort in and with the language classroom, were conscious of the importance of confidence and motivation, strong in intrapersonal intelligence and weak in interpersonal intelligence. An ability to reflect meaningfully and autonomously on their learning was evidenced in their individual journal reflections and in their self-directed class discussions.

Just as these results confirm Littlewood’s suggestion that “educational contexts” are more responsible for Asian learning styles than the learners themselves, it can also be said that violent learning contexts are also responsible for competitive learning styles, and that these can be “unlearned.” This in turn leads to the conclusion that if the institutional learning conditions are changed in a humanistic way, then the performance skills and preferences of the students will also change in a beneficial manner.

V. Conclusion

A return to humanistic guiding principles of education is essential in order to prepare students for society by developing in them qualities of personal and social responsibility, qualities that will empower them to positively address root causes of discrimination, corruption, poverty, sickness, and violence. Establishing a non-threatening learning environ-

ment is a practical and effective means of promoting such peaceful language learning; in which learning materials can be designed to incorporate both humanistic and linguistic goals.

While many would agree that a humanistic approach to education needs to be present in every aspect of the learning environment, from government policy making, to program design, syllabus considerations, T-S/S-S-T relationships, learning materials and alternative assessment, it is nonetheless easy to despair of ever realizing such goals, in view of the exam-driven lessons EFL teachers often feel required to supervise. However, governments are beginning to acknowledge that education of the heart is essential for the growth of a healthy society, and official policy documents, such as the Korean 7th National Curriculum, are describing educational objectives in terms of “the ability to achieve an independent life and acquire the qualifications of democratic citizens, and to be able to participate in the building of a democratic state and promoting the prosperity of all humankind” (Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development, 2001, p. 3). The well-educated person is further defined in terms of well-rounded and wholesome development, creative ability, broad intellectual knowledge and skills in diverse academic disciplines, an understanding of the national culture, and contribution to the development of the community. Teachers can therefore take heart from such developments, and can, in addition to setting up their own peaceful learning environments, push for humanistic and holistic reforms in education, safe in the knowledge that their demands are sanctioned by Ministry policy documents.

If we are to reach peace, then we must teach peace. (McCarthy, 2001, p. 35)

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APPENDIX A

PEACE IN THE CLASSROOM: REFLECTIVE NEEDS ANALYSIS

Perform this questionnaire twice.

- The first time, check the boxes which reflect your actual teaching practice.
 - The second time, check the boxes which reflect your desired teaching practice.
- 1 = Yes, of course; 2 = Yes, in general; 3 = Maybe; 4 = Not really; 5 = Not at all.

In my (actual/desired) teaching practice, it is important to...	1	2	3	4	5
1. ...develop a stress-free climate.					
2. ...develop peer-support networks.					
3. ...help students to relax.					
4. ...promote self-esteem.					
5. ...promote social responsibility.					
6. ...offer unconditional trust.					
7. ...inspire confidence, motivation, and independent learning.					
8. ...reflect on the assumptions that I take into the classroom.					
9. ...examine the hidden agendas in the classroom.					
10. ...focus on counseling skills and management of affect.					
11. ...not focus on competence or performance.					
12. ...focus on what students can do, rather than on what they can't.					
13. ...reappraise teacher/student roles.					
14. ...act as a language resource and counselor.					
15. ...promote interaction as learning content.					
16. ...promote alternative assessment.					
17. ...design or choose learning materials which treat the learners and their perceptions as valid and meaningful.					
18. ...design or choose learning materials which allow students to direct their own learning.					
19. ...promote a non-threatening "workshop" learning environment.					
...reflect a holistic, socio-cultural view of language-learning as education.					

APPENDIX B
CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT SCALE (CES).
ADAPTED FROM FRASER, 1986.

① = I strongly agree; ② = I agree; ③ = No comment; ④ = I disagree; ⑤ = I strongly disagree	①②③④⑤
---	-------

- This class is well organized.
- Information for this class is easily available on the home page.
- This class is student-centered.
- Students are responsible for much of the assessment in this class. (self-assessment, peer-assessment, portfolios, etc.)
- Students put a lot of energy into the class.
- Students get to know each other very well.
- Students often talk about English class.
- Students daydream in class.
- Students decide what to do in class.
- Students always want to leave early in this class.
- Students pay attention to the teacher.
- Students do a lot of study outside of class.
- The teacher takes a personal interest in every student.
- The teacher spends time talking with the students individually.
- The teacher spends time talking with the students in groups.
- The teacher is like a friend.
- The teacher tries to help the students.
- Many friendships have been made in this class.
- The class is often noisy.
- The atmosphere in the room is friendly.

APPENDIX C
CLASSROOM LEARNING ENVIRONMENT SCALE (CLE).
ADAPTED FROM PINE & BOY, 1977

Y = Yes; M = Maybe; N = No; ? = No opinion - we've never thought about this before.

Our learning environment	Y	M	N	?
1. ...encourages us to be active.				
2. ...encourages us to discover our personal meanings of ideas.				
3. ...emphasizes the uniquely personal nature of learning.				
4. ...encourages differences as good and desirable.				
5. ...recognizes our right to make mistakes.				
6. ...tolerates ambiguity (allows for apparent contradictions).				
7. ...views evaluation as a cooperative and personal process.				
8. ...encourages openness of self rather than concealment.				
9. ...encourages us to trust ourselves.				
10. ...is one in which we feel respected.				
11. ...is one in which we feel accepted.				
12. ...permits confrontation.				
13. ...allows the teacher to lose the teaching function.				
14. ...attempts to meet individual needs, interests and abilities.				
15. ...provides meaningful and relevant learning materials.				
16. ...promotes personal interests and exploration.				
17. ...provides materials that need interaction and investigation.				
18. ...does not promote competitiveness.				
19. ...allows us to make mistakes and still feel competent.				
20. ...helps us to grow socially, emotionally and intellectually.				
21. ...nurtures respect, trust, love and concern for one another.				
22. ...views the teacher's role as facilitator.				

APPENDIX D

CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT QUESTIONNAIRE (ACTUAL/PREFERRED)

- ① = This never/I would be happy if this never happens/ed in class.
- ② = This rarely/I would be happy if this rarely happens/ed in class.
- ③ = This sometimes/I would be happy if this sometimes happens/ed in class.
- ④ = This often/I would be happy if this often happens/ed in class.
- ⑤ = This always/I would be happy if this always happens/ed in class.

<i>How often do you want these things to happen in class?</i>	①	②	③	④	⑤
---	---	---	---	---	---

- Students come early to class.
 - Students talk in English before the teacher arrives.
 - The teacher comes early to class.
 - The teacher decides where students sit in class.
 - The teacher decides which students should work together.
 - Students choose their partners for group work.
 - Students choose which tasks to do.
 - Students work together in groups.
 - Students work at their own speed.
 - Students are responsible for much of the assessment in this class.
 - The teacher explains how to do tasks.
 - The teacher explains grammar.
 - The teacher is friendly to the students.
 - The teacher talks and the students listen.
 - The teacher helps students who are having problems.
 - The teacher joins in class activities.
 - The teacher considers students' feelings.
 - The teacher talks with students individually.
 - The atmosphere of the room is friendly.
 - The room is a comfortable temperature.
- Adapted from Fraser (1986).

APPENDIX E
FOREIGN LANGUAGE CLASSROOM ANXIETY SCALE (FLCAS).
ADAPTED FROM HORWITZ, 1986.

① = I strongly agree; ② = I agree; ③ = No comment; ④ = I disagree; ⑤ = I strongly disagree	① ② ③ ④ ⑤
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- I am nervous when the teacher speaks to me in English class.
I am embarrassed when I answer the teacher in English class.
I worry about making mistakes in English class.
I get nervous when speaking in English in class.
My heart pounds when I do something in class.
I feel self-conscious when speaking in English with my classmates.
I am afraid that others will laugh at me when I speak English.
I feel that the other students are better than me at speaking English.
I get so nervous in class that I forget everything.
I get nervous if I haven't prepared for English class.
I feel anxious even if I have prepared for English class.
I worry if the teacher corrects me in class.
The more I study English, the more I get confused.
I worry if I can't understand every word the teacher says.
In pair-work, I worry if my partner is better than me at English.
In pair-work, I worry if my partner is worse than me at English.
I worry about English tests.
I worry about failing English class.
The English class makes me most nervous (more than other classes).
I often daydream in English class.

APPENDIX F
MY LEARNING PREFERENCES. FINCH & HYUN, 2000A.

<i>How do I like to learn English?</i>	No	Maybe	Yes
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1. I like to learn by reading in class.
2. I like to listen to language cassettes in class.
3. I like to play language games in class.
4. I like to learn by speaking in class.
5. I like to learn by watching English-caption movies.
6. I like to have a textbook.
7. I like to write in the textbook.
8. I like the teacher to explain everything.
9. I like to the teacher to tell me my mistakes.
10. I like to study in pairs in class.
11. I like to study in groups in class.
12. I like to study outside of class.
13. I like to study grammar.
14. I like to study new words.
15. I like to study pronunciation.
16. I like to study writing.
17. I like to watch TV in English.
18. I like to talk to native speakers.
19. I like to study western culture.
20. I like to go to English clubs.
21. I like to think about my progress.
22. I like to visit the teacher in his/her room.
23. I like to find foreigners to talk to in English.
24. I like to ask the teacher for help.
25. I like to ask other students for help.

APPENDIX G
LEARNING CONTRACT. FINCH & HYUN, 2000A.

In our English classes...

1. We should
2. We should
3. We should
4. We should
5. The teacher should
6. The teacher should
7. We should not
8. We should not
9. The teacher should not
10. The teacher should not

APPENDIX H

WHAT IF? ADAPTED FROM FINCH & HYUN, 2000B, P. 57.

- Choose an “Event” word, a “Response” word and an “Outcome word”.
- Make a sentence, using the words at the bottom of the worksheet.
E.g.: “If I go to China, then I will buy new clothes, and I will get married.

Event	Response	Outcome
Go to China	Buy a Car	Go on a diet
Become famous	Become a monk	Change my job
Go to a disco	Have a party	My teacher will be angry.
Live alone	Lose weight	Get restless
Become ill	Make new friends	Get married
Sell everything	Study hard	Eat no meat
Become a movie star	Never study	Learn to drive
Get fat	Start the car	It starts to rain.
Take it easy	Buy new clothes	Go to hospital
Go to sleep	Watch TV	My boss will get angry
Lose my job	Get a new hairstyle	Emigrate to Australia

If I ever If I don't When Whenever As soon as By the time Unless Then
And

APPENDIX I
SHARE THE WEALTH.
(ADAPTED FROM SICCONI & LPEZ, 2000, PP. 191-194).

- Your class has received a \$500 donation from a wealthy member of the community.
- Your group must decide on how to spend that money, from the options listed below.
- You have 20 minutes to decide, or the money will be given to another class.
- The group must agree 100% on the choice.

During this activity, practice effective listening skills:

S: Be Still; be Silent

H: Hear what others are saying; Hear what they mean.

A: Allow others to speak. Accept what they say as true for them. Pay Attention.

R: Restate what you heard the other person say, to be sure you understand.

E: Encourage others to speak.

Options:

1. Divide the money equally among all the class members.
2. Use the money to pay for a field trip for a class project.
3. Give the money to the Education Department for more educational resources.
4. Use the money to buy toys for local poor children and orphans.
5. Donate the money to an organization that provides meals for beggars.
6. Use the money to buy blankets and give them to homeless people.
7. Use the money to set up a recycling program to help save the environment.
8. Use the money to set up a scholarship for poor students.
9. Spend the money on a fun party for the class.

Cooperative Action Research: a Developmental Project at Shanghai Normal University, China

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ABSTRACT

This paper reports an action research project conducted by two non-native teachers of English working cooperatively at Shanghai Normal University in China. In this study the collaborative efforts of these two instructors were explored to illustrate alternative ways of organizing teaching and learning in the English language classroom. The participants of this research consisted of sixty Chinese college students attending a course of general English, their teacher in charge, and another teacher (myself) with some experience in research methods, working as assessor and facilitator for the implementation of change. A puzzle area was identified, baseline data were collated and interpreted, and some form of intervention took place. Finally, the results were critically analyzed and in the light of the findings obtained, the importance of professional development and the contribution to knowledge that research projects of this type may bring to the improvement of teaching practice were discussed.

I. INTRODUCTION

For a long time, many language educators in China overlooked the significance of teaching and learning English as an essential tool to establish purposeful communication in global contexts. However, during the last two decades, pushed by the rapid advance in business, technology and education, together with the shifting political situation and its new open door policy, the People's Republic of China has begun to lay strong emphasis on the teaching and learning of English as a sec-

ond language. Nevertheless, the fact remains that, in some cases, the methodology used for English Language Teaching, (henceforth, ELT), rooted in traditional approaches, combined with the use of dated teaching materials and the lack of teacher professional development programs, have hampered the effectiveness of both teaching and learning the target language.

In this study, two non-native teachers of English—one from Argentina (myself) and the other from China—will systematically explore and critically analyze processes of teaching and learning in their own contexts. These processes will be initiated by the definition of an existing puzzle, the collection of relevant baseline data and their interpretation, followed by the development of some form of intervention to existing teaching practice, along with a way of evaluating the effects of this change.

This paper will take the format of a cooperative action research project where one teacher with some training in research methods will provide some assistance and support to another colleague in need of effecting a change in her current teaching context. In the first part of this paper, I will refer to the importance of professional development and to the contribution to knowledge that research projects may bring to the improvement of teaching practice. In the second part of this study, I will define the puzzle area and refer to the steps taken in the research process. Finally, after analyzing and interpreting the different data gathered some avenues for further teacher development will be highlighted.

II. ELT IN CHINA: A BRIEF ACCOUNT

Pushed by globalization nearly all trade and professions around the globe need people who are able to use a foreign language efficiently and effectively in varying degrees for communicative purposes. Learning a foreign language is conducive to the development of cultural awareness thus allowing for establishing international communication with the outside world, an indispensable requisite to operate in today' global era.

For a long time, many people in China failed to see the importance of learning a foreign language, a fact which would have enabled them to open their doors to the outside world much earlier. However, over

the last twenty years, alongside with the changing political situation in China and her open door policy, foreign language education, in particular the teaching and learning of English as a foreign language (henceforth, EFL), has received much more attention than ever before.

Nevertheless, EFL in many educational institutions in China is still unable to meet the needs of the political and economic development of the country as many school leavers find it difficult to communicate in English effectively after spending many years studying the target language. Traditional teaching approaches, out of date language material, the strictness of teaching and learning to written exams, over crowded classrooms (sometimes more than 60 students in one class), and the lack of teacher professional development programs, among other factors, may have contributed to hindering the effectiveness of both the teaching and learning of English as a foreign language (Liu, 1995).

During the last decade, there have been considerable developments in the theory and practice of English language teaching worldwide. More emphasis has been put on the ability to use a second language effectively for communicative purposes than on knowing about the language. Moved by this new trend, language teachers and researchers in China have united with other local and foreign academic experts in their desire for a thorough reform of foreign language education all throughout the country.

Indeed, in 2003, and as a way of aligning with this new movement, Shanghai Normal University (henceforth, SNU) - in China - has developed a new English language program to be run by foreign English language teachers, purposely designed to help learners build up their oral skills in the target language. Thus, in my capacity as English language teacher, I was invited by this university to participate in the implementation of this new program. During my stay at SNU, the school authorities appointed a local Chinese teacher of English to work together with me as a co-teacher with whom we formed a very supportive professional team. After a few weeks of observing and later on analyzing together some of the instances that took place in my classes, my co-teacher expressed the need of bringing about a change in her teaching style so as to come into line with more communicative teaching practices.

With the aim of exploring her situation of context and thus be able to determine the extent of her present state of affairs, we both decided

to undertake cooperative action research (henceforth, CAR). This, we thought, on the one hand, would encourage improvement in her teaching situation, and, on the other, help both of us promote further reflection and awareness of our professional status.

Action research, as Somekh (1993) puts it, is not only a research methodology but also a means of supporting professional development through which teachers are enabled to become self-monitoring or reflective practitioners (in Edge and Richards, 1993). CAR mainly aims at integrating change and development within the research process, and this, in turn, it might be argued, is the only viable and flexible methodology for carrying out meaningful research focused on a social situation in different contexts whereby it is employed (Somekh, 1993).

In broad terms, according to Somekh (1993), CAR is an eclectic research method which consists of the following features:

- ✓ There is a deliberate stage of data collection. This enables participants to reflect on the situation after the event, in a concentrated way, with some kind of record or 'memory jog' (emphasis on original) which prevents them from being locked into one set of perceptions and one set of memories.
- ✓ Use is made of the process of triangulation which places one piece of data against another, and then a third, so that differences in perceptions are revealed and made available for reflection.
- ✓ There is cooperation with a partner—sometimes called a facilitator or critical friend—who is a co-researcher, although likely to be concerned more with his or her own role and intentions in the situation. This is, as much as possible, an equal relationship in which each adds to the perspective of the other. Among other things, it provides support if and when the action research process reveals mismatches between intentions and outcomes and consequent loss of self-esteem for either partner.
- ✓ There is honest debate and problem-sharing, in a situation of trust, promoted by a written ethical code setting out the conditions under which data may be released for publication and how it may be used. This ensures that an inequality in status between the research partners is not used consciously or unconsciously to manipulate the weaker partner.

(in Edge and Richards, 1993, p.30)

Although Wallace (1998) and Freeman (1998) acknowledge that when doing action research, collaboration or cooperation is an optional element which may bring along a number of potential benefits, Burns (1999) insists that sharing and using other practicing teachers as co-workers is an essential part of this teacher-initiated research methodology (in Dickey, 2001). Nunan (1992), on the other hand, considers that collaboration should not be seen as a defining characteristic of action research since many teachers who are interested in exploring processes of learning and teaching in their classes are, for different reasons, incapable of or reluctant to do cooperative action research, and these cases, should not be necessarily disqualified as action research. On similar grounds, Nunan (1992) also disputes the assertion that action research must unavoidably be concerned with change. He goes even one step further to claim that a descriptive case study of a particular classroom, group of learners, or even a single learner counts as action research if it is started by a question or puzzle area, is supported by data and analysis, and is conducted by teachers investigating aspects of their own contexts and situations (Nunan, 1992). As this study incorporates all these elements, including cooperative work and the need for effecting a desired change, thus, it could be said that this investigation qualifies as action research.

The assumptions and principles underpinning this section will be partly used as criteria throughout this paper to carry out the present study.

III. THE CONTEXT AND PARTICIPANTS

Ada I will be using her English name to protect her identity is my co-teacher who, as said above, is in need of implementing a change in her teaching methodology. She graduated as a teacher of English some time ago but she has been involved in the teaching profession for only three years now. Ada is very willing and enthusiastic about bringing about a change in her current teaching practice, a fact which will hopefully empower her professional development in the future. I will be working together with her in my capacity as assessor, facilitator, or both for the implementation of her change.

Ada is in charge of four classes at Shanghai Normal University.

However, this time she will focus her attention on only one of these groups to carry out her investigation in depth. In this class there are sixty students, and all of them are freshmen pursuing different majors. Their level of English competence ranges from low-intermediate to upper-intermediate. She meets this class twice a week for two periods of forty minutes each. The teaching material that she uses is a course book (Qu Xiang, 1997) which is supplied by the school authorities. This course book mainly aims at training students to pass their College English Test Band 4 (henceforth, CETB4), which is designed and administered by the Chinese National Educational authorities.

China has a very rigid national college English exam system. At present, exam papers are mainly knowledge focused, and in some cases, neither listening nor speaking competence is tested. This, as a consequence, may play an important role in teaching practices since, on the whole, teachers find themselves teaching to a test rather than helping their learners to develop their basic communication skills. The result is that, oftentimes, students may score high marks in their tests, but they fail to use even simple English for real communicative purposes.

1. The Action Research Project

This action research process, which lasted approximately eight weeks, was started by the acknowledgment of something that my co-teacher Ada - found puzzling in her teaching context. Throughout this paper, I have adopted the term “puzzle” coined by Allwright (1993) in preference to “problem” in order to avoid the possible negative connotation of the word “problem.” The second step consisted in the gathering of baseline data through a preliminary investigation, which was designed to recognize what was presently taking place in her classroom without trying to modify the current state of affairs. Based on the findings obtained coming from the baseline data, a research question was framed. The next step was the development of some form of intervention or change to the existing practice, together with a way of evaluating the effects of this change. The last step was the reporting stage of the outcomes of the intervention. Finally, some recommendations for future action were given (Nunan, 1993). Table 1 below shows the duration of each one of the stages involved in this cooperative action research project:

TABLE 1. THE DIFFERENT STAGES DURING THE RESEARCH PROJECT

Stages	Activities done	Length of time
1. Identifying the puzzle area	Meeting with co-teacher	1 week
2. Baseline data collection to frame the research question	Classroom observation Interviews to students Questionnaire to students	2 weeks
3. Analysis of baseline data	Meeting with co-teacher	1 week
4. Design of plan of action (intervention)	Reading of literature related to main areas of concern (oral tasks and interaction through group work)	1 week
5. Implementation of change	Class observation	2 weeks
6. Data gathering (during and after teacher intervention)	Class observation notes Interviews to students Questionnaires to students	3 weeks
7. Analysis and interpretation of findings. Recommendations for plans for future action based on final outcomes.		1 week

2. Defining the Puzzle Area

During my stay at Shanghai Normal University, I taught spoken English classes to third-year college students. One of Ada's responsibilities as a co-teacher was to observe my classes in order to write a final evaluative report which, at the end of the academic term, she had to submit to the school authorities. After a three-week period of observation, approximately, Ada devised a puzzle area related to her own teaching practice which might have emerged from those periods of observation and later reflection. Late, we held an informal meeting where she expressed a strong need of effecting a change in her teaching style in order to align it with more communicative teaching practices. At our meeting she said:

The problem I have is that I cannot afford time for the students to practice oral English or let them express their own opinions. I have to complete all the units in the syllabus. I explain the lesson, do

intensive reading together with the students, and teach them almost sixty new vocabulary items per class. Students repeat aloud and do the exercises in the book, and, then, I correct them. I often feel exhausted after each class, and the students tend to get tired too. However, I am afraid that if I let them discuss in class, the classroom will get into a mess and there will not be enough time for them to express themselves in class since there are too many students in class. As regards the listening material, some students find it too easy, but some find it difficult.

It seems that Ada was aware that the implications underlying the use of a very rigid teaching system rooted in a traditional approach deprived her students of using the target language for communicative purposes. After analyzing Ada's account, we both decided that if we meant to produce a change in her teaching methodology, so that her learners would be able to use the target language communicatively, we should center our attention on the design and later implementation of both fluency- and accuracy-focused tasks aiming at promoting effective communication. This, in turn, we thought, would help Ada contribute to reducing her class workload and fear of losing control of her big class, and, primarily, encourage her learners to develop their oral competence in English.

With the puzzle area identified, we then set about collecting data on what was happening in Ada's classroom. We decided to use her freshmen students, partly because that was one of her largest groups of students and, partly, because they seemed to be well-motivated, being conscious that without a good level of English, their chances of passing the CETB4, a fact which would lead them to obtain a reasonable job in the future, would be considerably limited. We also agreed that in order to help her understand her work and that of her learners more adequately, she would need to explore relevant literature related to her puzzle area as a way of serving her pedagogy. At one of our meetings we both agreed that she should focus on two main pedagogical issues related to her current classroom situation: *oral tasks and interaction through group work*. This, we assumed, would facilitate the process of making informed decisions leading to a potential improvement in her teaching practice. The rationale underlying these two main pedagogical aspects of language learning will be dealt with more in depth together with the implementation of change (see below Implementation of change: Some pedagogical implications)

3. Methods of Data Collection

The data from the study came from evaluative questionnaires, class observation reports, and students' interviews. In the following section of this paper, the information obtained from these elicitation instruments was classified and analyzed according to whether they were collected before or during the implementation of change to the existing teaching practice (all the questionnaires, class observation reports, and taped interviews are available).

4. Findings before the Implementation of Change

4.1 Evaluative Questionnaire

The students were given an evaluative questionnaire (Appendix A), aiming at eliciting their opinions and perceptions with regard to their reasons for taking their English class, their expectations about it, the type of activities they thought would be more beneficial for their learning process, those areas in English they considered they needed to work on more, and what they would do if they were in charge of this class.

This questionnaire was piloted first with my own students before we administered it to the sixty students who participated in this study. On that day, all the sixty students were present. After the pilot stage, a few changes had to be made to this instrument to obtain the information we were actually in quest of.

For practical reasons, the most significant information coming from each one of these five questions was classified and grouped into major categories according to the number of responses obtained for each question. Table 2 below shows the results obtained:

TABLE 2. RESULTS OF QUESTIONNAIRE BEFORE INTERVENTION

Questions	Type of answers classified into categories according to students' responses	Number of Students in percentages
1. Reasons why students take this course	Pass CET Band 4 (test)	70%
	Improve their English	65%
2. Students' expectations of this course	Speak more fluently	75%
	Increase their vocabulary	33%
3. Type of activities students consider most beneficial for their learning process	Activities that promote speaking	61%
	Listening to English songs and watch movies	40%
4- Areas that need to be worked on more	Speaking	93%
	Vocabulary	51%
	Listening	46%
	Grammar	36%
5- What students would do if they were in charge of this class	Motivate students more	87%
	Promote Conversational Skills	97%

On looking at Table 2 above, of the sixty students participating in this study, 70% agreed that the main reason why they were taking this course was mainly to pass the CETB4. However, 65% of the students acknowledged the importance of mastering English as an international language for communicative purposes, and added that they hoped this class would help them improve their present level of English in that sense.

Regarding their expectations about this course, 75% of the students answered that after taking this course, they wished they would be able to speak English more fluently, and 33% expressed their desire to be capable of increasing their vocabulary repertoire. Concerning the type of classroom activities they thought would be more beneficial for their learning process, 61% of the students said they would like to have more chances to speak in class, while 40% reported that they would like to listen to tapes and watch videos in English.

When the students rated those areas in English they considered

they needed to work on more, speaking topped the score with 58 responses (93%). Vocabulary, however, rated 31 (51%), while listening and grammar scored the lowest rates, 28 (46%), and 22 (36%) respectively.

When asked about what they would do if they were in charge of this class, most of the learners (87%) recognized that if they were more motivated to learn the language, they would surely be able to make more significant gains in their acquisition. They also insisted that the chances they were given to use the language in class were very limited so they could not see the purpose in learning it. In reference to this, some students pointed out:

“Give them more chance to speak and talk in groups”

“Develop students’ interest then they’ll interested in English and learn it well”

Thorough analysis of these data illustrates that these learners felt a strong need to develop further and more actively their speaking skills as well as their vocabulary range so as to be able to communicate effectively and purposely in the future. They also acknowledged the need of motivation to learn English in their classes. Learners motivation can be boosted by making them work in small groups. Indeed, the use of collaborative tasks in the language class promotes a low-anxiety environment, free from tensions and inhibition of speaking in front of the whole class or the teacher, where learners are allowed to express their thoughts and opinions in the company and with the support of their peers (for more details about the implications of interaction through small group work see The Implementation of Change: Some Pedagogical Implications section below).

4.2 Class Observation Report

Before Ada effected the desired change in her teaching practice, we both agreed that I should observe some of her classes to record some interesting instances in action which could serve as points of departure for future discussion and later reflection. This technique, known as “simulated recall” (Nunan, 1993, p.94), in which the researcher records and transcribes parts of a lesson and then gets the teacher to comment on what was happening at the time that the teach-

ing and learning took place, allowed us to discuss and reflect on the various interpretations of what was taking place in her classroom and their direct link with our focus of study.

After observing some of her classes, I noticed that Adas role in her classes was that of a controller. The adoption of a constant teacher-fronted approach deprived her students of participating in interactive communicative tasks, which, indeed, were the ones that, according to the information obtained, they earnestly longed for. In fact, only those students seated at the front of her class were addressed by the teacher while those in the back, upon feeling unnoticed and, perhaps, bored resorted to chatting or sleeping. Most of the times, she used English to explain endless lists of vocabulary items, drilling or reading aloud passages intended for comprehension. However, the moment she felt she was about to lose control of her class, she immediately turned to Chinese.

Close examination of the above instances that took place in Adas classes, revealed that the adoption of a traditional approach to teaching English overlooked her learners' strong desire to participate actively in class, and as a result, denied them the possibility of developing their communication skills. This same evidence was also present when analyzing the students' responses to the evaluative questionnaires earlier, and acknowledged by this same teacher as she initially defined her puzzled area (see Defining the Puzzle Area above).

4.3 Students' Interviews

Four students randomly chosen were interviewed before Ada implemented her change in her teaching practice. The information collected from these "semi-structured interviews" (Nunan,1992, p.149) produced interesting evidence which was used to compare and contrast the data coming from the other elicitation instruments used in this study. On being asked about their expectations about the course, two learners pointed out:

"English is very important in Shanghai, especially if you have to get a job in the future?"

"I hope I can learn English to speak with foreigners, English is international so it is important to know it"

With regard to the type of activities that they regularly do in their English classes, two students suggested:

“I study English for eight years. I can write English but I can’t explain my meanings in words. Is very important to express my meanings. If I want to speak with somebody, I have to speak with him?”

“students in class are not active. I want to talk with teachers more. We can play some games. We, students, should speak more in the class. Little listening and writing and more speaking. We don’t speak because we do exams by writing. This is why speaking not good.”

When enquired about the changes that they would bring about in their classes, two respondents said:

“I would, first, want to know what students want to do. Second, combine their ideas with facts, and last, I let them have a class let them become the teacher can let class interesting students can have a class and they will like it.”

Although the number of students interviewed may not be entirely representative of the whole community under study, after examining these responses coming from four learners involved in this research, it can be inferred that they acknowledged the importance of developing their spoken English as a crucial tool for establishing effective communication. Furthermore, they recognized that throughout their school years they had been taught exclusively to pass written tests, a fact which has denied them real opportunities of using the target language for communicative purposes.

On exploring some of the students’ reactions, it can be seen that much of the information yielded from these interviews matches the data collated from the other elicitation methods used in this research. This process of data triangulation contributes to strengthen the validity and reliability of the focus of this investigation.

5. The Implementation of Change: Some Pedagogical Implications

In this section, the teacher's intervention in her teaching practice and some of its implications will be discussed. As was said earlier, once the puzzle area was identified, and the baseline data analyzed and interpreted, Ada set about effecting her desired change in her classroom. After exploring some influential literature on how to sustain interaction through group work, and some of the principles underlying communicative oral tasks, Ada made a number of informed decisions in her class.

First, she decided to settle her students into ten fixed groups of six students each. The rationale underlying this decision lied in the fact that with traditional methods, language tends to be limited to initiation only by the teacher in an artificial environment whereby he/she lectures, explains grammar points or vocabulary items, conducts drills, and oftentimes leads whole-class discussions in which each student may have a few seconds of a class period to talk.

However, when students work collaboratively in groups they are pushed to use language to learn as opposed to simply demonstrate what has been learned. Consequently, group work offers more informal language use and student-centered styles and strategies for learning that are generally subdued during teacher-directed instruction. (Johnson, 1995)

Although some researchers and teachers may feel that learning occurs only between teachers and students and that student-student interaction represents off-task behavior, discourages achievement, and leads to classroom chaos, others sustain that cooperative learning may be more important for educational success than teacher-student interaction. Constructive student-student interaction influences students' educational aims and success, develops social competencies and encourages taking on the perspectives of others, enhances students' self-esteem, and contributes to improving not only the relationship among students but also to generating a positive attitude toward school (Johnson, 1995)

Indeed, small groups provide opportunities for student initiation, for real interaction, for practice of "negotiation of meaning" (Courtney, 1996, p.3), for comprehensive conversational exchanges, and for students adopting roles that otherwise would be impossible (Brown, 1994). The motivation of participants also improves when they work in small groups. This may be to a degree due to the release of inhibition and tension of speaking in front of the whole class, or to the

teacher.

Most students, especially those who are shy, find themselves at ease when they can express their ideas in front of a small group of their peers. More importantly, group work may lend itself as “game-like activities” (Ur, 1981, p.8) since nearly any task-centered exercise can be turned into a game by simply adding a component of anxiety such as arbitrary time-limit or inter-group competition, among others (Ur, 1981).

Secondly, she assigned each group a communicative task to complete. Nunan (1989, p.10) defines a communicative task as “*a piece of classroom work which involves learners in comprehending, manipulating, producing or interacting in the target language while their attention is principally focused on meaning rather than form*” (emphasis on original). With this notion in mind, Ada asked each group to perform different collaborative tasks related to a topic of choice they had already discussed in previous lessons.

Thus, on one occasion, Ada chose the theme of love from a reading passage with which they had already worked in earlier classes. She then selected a short story which revolved around this same theme, and used it as a trigger to engage her students in a reconstruction task. When choosing this story, the teacher looked for a plot according to her learners interests and language competence. She also considered a plot which would allow her students to come up with different interpretations, a fact which, she thought, would contribute to generate plentiful opportunities to use the language interactively and purposively.

She prepared ten sets of copies of this story, one for each group. Before she handed them in, Ada cut each set of copies into six different sections, that is, she divided the story into six different parts. So each group received a complete set containing the six different sections in which the story had been divided. In this way, all six members in each group received a different piece of the same story.

After that, Ada allotted her students a few minutes to read by themselves the parts assigned. Next, she asked them to put their reading material aside, and, in groups, exchange their ideas in order to reconstruct the story from memory. Right after each group had come up with their own versions, the teacher picked out at random two members from two different groups to report their findings to their classmates. During the report session, the rest of the students were

asked to listen to their classmates presentations so that, later on, they would be able to compare and contrast their outcomes with those belonging to their peers.

Once the students discussed the differences and/or similarities found, the teacher selected two other learners from two other groups to report their findings to the whole class. After that, Ada asked her learners to go back to their readings and, with them at hand, compare and contrast their own versions with that of the model in its entirety. Once more, Ada chose another two members from two other groups to present their findings to the whole class. After the last report session, a whole class discussion followed.

The starting point of reconstruction tasks is a text provided by the teacher which the learners have to read and then reconstruct. The reconstructed version is then available for matching with the original. The implication underlying the use of reconstruction tasks is that learners, when pushed to use the target language, deploy their existing linguistic competence, which is prone to fall short of the target model. However, the effort students make to craft their own texts in an attempt to come as close as possible to an original version, it might be argued, may in itself trigger noticing.

The task of producing the target language may encourage second language learners to become aware of some of their existing linguistic problems that might call for improvement. Indeed, the advantage of using reconstruction tasks may be in the matching exercise whereby learners are made to use the language to compare and contrast their versions with a given model, and, by doing this, they are pushed to notice gaps in their outcomes, a fact which might eventually help them convert input into intake and, consequently, restructure their developing linguistic competence (Thornbury, 1997).

On looking at this section, it transpires that Ada eventually managed to produce a significant number of changes in her teaching practice which combined, in general, the use of assorted communicative activities aiming at promoting oral skills and interaction through group work. In the next section, the data gathered during her intervention will be analyzed and lastly reported.

6. Findings during the Implementation of Change

6.1 Evaluative Questionnaire

After having introduced a number of important changes in her teaching style, Ada gave her learners a second evaluative questionnaire (Appendix B) to elicit their feelings and perceptions regarding the new methodology used in their classes. On that occasion, the students were asked; first, to choose whether they preferred using the traditional approach or the group work technique, and; secondly, what they thought could be some of the advantages and disadvantages of using group work for their learning process. Lastly, they were asked to report and give reasons whether they would be willing to continue doing collaborative tasks in the future.

Much of the data coming from this post-intervention questionnaire yielded interesting and valuable information which, to a considerable degree, supported our initial hypothesis and also correlated with some of the findings obtained before the implementation of change. Table 3 below shows the percentages obtained for each one of the questions asked:

TABLE 3. STUDENTS' RESPONSES TO QUESTIONNAIRE DURING INTERVENTION

Questions	Students Responses	%
1. Traditional Approach or the Group Work technique?	Traditional Approach:	23%
	Group Work Technique:	77%
2. Advantages and Disadvantages of the Group Work technique:	No. of students who favored the use of the Group Work technique:	89%
	No. of students who were against the use of the Group Work technique:	11%
3. Reasons to continue using the Group Work technique in their classes:	It is more motivating:	83%
	It promotes interaction (opportunities for speaking in class):	92%

On looking at Table 3, it transpires that of the fifty seven students present the day the questionnaire was submitted, 77% agreed that they preferred collaborative activities to the old traditional approach:

“I like group work because can talk to each other in English and

exercise our Spoken-English”

“The lessons became more interesting and fresh. We can say more and practice more.”

“I can improve my Spoken-English”

However, 23% (13 students) suggested they would rather stick with the old traditional system:

“I like the traditional way because we can obtain more knowledge and we don’t depend on each other”

“The traditional way help me exam well”

After interpreting the these responses, it emerges that most of the students participating in this study seem to favor collaborative tasks where they are made to use their interactive skills instead of adopting a passive role. However, considering that in this project the implementation of change is at its preliminary stage, it could be true that the transition from one approach to the other should be done progressively and in small doses.

As regards the advantages of using group work, most of the respondents (89%) highlighted the importance of being given now the opportunity to use and thus practice with their peers the target language in a low-anxiety atmosphere:

“Group work provide us with enough chance and prove our oral English.”

“By this way, I find I have known many other students and I can learn the text better than before.”

“Group work let us relax to learn”

These learners also acknowledged that if they were to bring an improvement in their oral skills, these opportunities - where language is actually used for communicative purposes - should abound and be reinforced with other type of classroom activities such as watching movies or listening to songs in English:

“We can learn more if singing English songs with groups”

“I learn more if see English films”

Regarding the disadvantages of using group work in the classroom, few students (11%) pointed out:

“Sometimes it appears something disorder”

“Some of the students have no chance to perform”

“The group is too big, the members are too many”

“The time of prepare are so short”

Among the numerous reasons the students gave for wanting to continue working with the group work technique, the ones that were the most recurrently mentioned in their reports were the opportunities it creates for interaction and its direct bond with motivation. This information, once more, shows a strong correlation with the findings coming from the other methods of data collection used in this study.

It is evident that, at this early phase of the project, where both the teacher and her students may fall short of many of the skills and strategies required to operate successfully in communicative classroom settings, these and other shortcomings - as the ones presented above by some of the students participating in this research - will come into view. However, the very many constructive and valuable advantages of sustaining interaction through group work in class (see The Implementation of Change: Some Pedagogical Implications section above) go far beyond these and some other daunting remarks. Although it could be argued, only after having gained some more experience using this teaching approach, both this teacher and her students will hopefully be able to cope with these and other classroom complexities as they will eventually come in.

All in all, on looking at the students responses, it can be inferred that they responded well to the changed introduced. Once more, upon cross-referencing these data sources with the other findings obtained in this study, it can be said that the adoption of this new technique for language teaching was, at least at this stage of its implementation, effective. However, as was previously suggested, more research would

be needed to be able to claim that the completion of this action research project was beyond doubt beneficial for both teacher and students alike.

6.2 Class Observation Report

During her intervention, I was able to observe only two of Ada's classes. Although the number of classes observed might not be significant, it should also be mentioned that we also talked about and reflected on those in-between unseen classes. The data yielded from these post-lesson discussions and the actual classroom observations provided us with helpful information related to our focus of study.

Ada's main innovation was founded on the introduction of group work as part of her class dynamics. The learners, arranged in groups, were given a chance to perform some oral tasks such as role-plays, and short dramatizations which required the use of their interactive skills. In reference to this, Ada pointed out:

"The students have more chances to speak and the atmosphere has become more relaxing now"

This, as a consequence, reduced her class workload since as these more communicative oral tasks unfolded; she was pushed to adopt different roles changing from that of a controller to that of a facilitator or assessor. With regard to this she said:

"I feel less tired now"

However, I could also observed that she purposefully decided not to use group work all the time:

"I feel that at the beginning I can only use small dozes of group work"

Now and then she would turn to her conventional teacher-fronted approach, a fact which, I assume, might have made her students and herself feel a bit more at ease, at least at this preliminary stage in the implantation of change. Following one of her lessons, we held an informal meeting where I invited her to make some comments on any aspects of her class she was particularly interested in, and she said:

“The students are somewhat not used to this new form of group work”

Although her students, throughout their school years, had not been introduced to the technique of group work before, it could be observed that most of them responded fairly well to its implementation. This positive result, it could be argued, could be partly attributed, as Flower drew (1998, p.323) puts it, to “the extension of their Confucian values of co-operation and their concept of face,” a common characteristic of the Chinese culture.

6.3 Students’ Interviews

During the implementation of change, the same four students were interviewed again. Upon analyzing their responses, the four of them agreed that now they have more chances to speak in class and this makes their classes more enjoyable:

“Classes now are different; we enjoy the class more than before. We have more group work talking and have more chance to speak English?”

As regards the type of activities done in class, they said:

“We do English performances, for example?”

“I’m interested in the short plays it can improve our English?”

“Now we can listen to music, we can discussion. Good!”

It transpires that the inclusion of more communicative oral tasks in Ada’s class provided useful practice in the kinds of language the learners may eventually need to use in similar situations outside the classroom, and this raised the students’ motivation and interest since, as Ur suggests “student motivation and performance are dependent to a large extent on the interest and enjoyment generated by the activity” (1981, p.15).

When the learners were asked about whether their teacher should continue with this new teaching approach, they all agreed but suggested that it should be implemented gradually:

“...may be she should change more, but now sometimes, then more!”

“...I need more, we must receive some time, so I think it needs more time?”

On looking at these comments and at the rest of the data gathered in this study, there seems to be a strong correlation between the learners' perceptions and their teacher's feelings about the existing intervention. However, more research would be necessary to truly assert the extent to which the implementation of this new approach to teaching English was in fact effective.

IV. FINAL DISCUSSION

Apparently, Ada's great enthusiasm for this particular project made her classes more interesting. Her students certainly responded well, but if in the future all her energies are being devoted to one particular group doing a specific project; I wonder if the rest of her classes will be short-charged.

I hope that after some time, Ada will be able to use this new methodology for teaching English with all her groups. This, in turn, will have a two-fold aim; first, it will hopefully enable all her students to be motivated and will allow them for equal chances to develop their interactive skills. Secondly, an experiment involving all her students would provide a wider and more valid sample.

However, upon completion of this research project, the doubt will still remain whether in the future this teacher will continue using this new approach to teaching her classes or she will revert to her own traditional mode of teaching which, to some degree and for the time being, seems to provide her with a safer environment away from getting involved in risky and daring undertakings.

Despite these slightly off-putting observations, not all is gloom and doom. After all, Ada found this research project particularly useful and relevant. Bringing about a change in an existing teaching practice, as the one reported in this study, should be effected systematically, step by step, and in small doses without adding significantly and unacceptably to teachers' workloads. Innovations of this type also need to be made in supported and low-anxiety environments. Conducting re-

search in and into one's classroom may mean the risk of discovering things that one perhaps rather not have to face, and this may pose a potential threat to one's self-esteem (Allwright, 1993).

Although, at this preliminary stage, and perhaps due to the complexities of classroom life, Ada was not able to bring about all the changes she had originally planned. The information elicited from this study suggests that this teacher found, throughout the development and later implementation of this action research project, a rich source of valuable models and ideas for informing her own practice. The consequences of this will surely be helpful for both the teacher and the students involved in this project.

Thorough examination of the implications underlying this project, reveals that teachers' classroom research has not become widespread in mainstream teacher education at pre-service, in-service or graduate levels, at least in this particular context. A situation like this suggests the need of developing and implementing an inset program at some point aiming at equipping teachers with techniques for self-evaluation, and with the knowledge and skills for ongoing renewal of their own teaching practices.

V. CONCLUSION

This paper reported and critically analyzed a CAR project carried out between two non-native teachers of English working at Shanghai Normal University in China. Based on the findings obtained some important assumptions can be made.

First, CAR encouraged both teachers involved in this developmental process to identify and generate alternative ways of organizing teaching and learning, a fact that contributed to promote reflection and awareness of their professional roles. Second, through CAR, both teachers were allowed to integrate successfully change and development within the research process, and this, as a consequence, turned out to be a workable and useful research methodology which contributed to the enhancement of professional development. CAR enabled these two teachers to be concerned with their own roles and intentions and to add to the perspective of one another during and after the implementation of this project. Indeed, by pulling their efforts together, both teachers developed a close bond of understanding and support

that strengthened their self-esteem and self-confidence in and outside the classroom setting. Finally, most of the learners participating in this study acknowledged the changes brought about by their teacher in charge of their class as these allowed them for opportunities to use their communication skills through interaction and negotiation of meaning, basic golden rules for second language acquisition to occur.

In view of these assumptions it could be said that the implementation of cooperative action research was considerably effective. However, far more research would be needed in this area to be able to lay fair claim that upon the implementation and later evaluation of a similar project conducted in any other Asian context, where two teachers pull efforts together to generate a change in their teaching practices, the results obtained would be comparable to the ones presented in this study.

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APPENDIX A
EVALUATIVE QUESTIONNAIRE ADMINISTERED
BEFORE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF CHANGE:

1. Why are you taking this class?
2. Which are your expectations about this class?
3. Which type of activities do you find more beneficial for learning English?
4. Which areas in English do you think you need to work on more?
5. What would you do if you were in charge of this class?

APPENDIX B
EVALUATIVE QUESTIONNAIRE ADMINISTERED
DURING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF CHANGE:

1. Do you prefer learning English by using the traditional approach or the group work technique?
2. List the advantages and the disadvantages of using group work for learning English.
3. In a few lines state the reasons whether you would like to continue working in groups in the future.

Process Syllabus Development: A Study with University Freshmen

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ABSTRACT

Process Syllabus design negotiated with learners is rarely feasible in any established language program since it seems vague and insubstantial. In an odd mix of chance and opportunity, this study applied Action Research to develop and investigate learners' improvement. Students' exposure to previous curricula was drawn upon to search for a genuinely useful foreign language experience. Although worthwhile, the fluid nature of adapting plans to better assist a class is not easily documented. Observations in a teaching log and feedback from learners allowed heightened awareness and criticism of directions chosen. Learners were exposed to public speaking, experience with drama, listening and script writing, development of critiquing and additional rising of confidence toward foreign languages and concepts. Occurrences of acquisitions are not easily measured quantitatively. However, they do add to a learner's ability and a student's qualitative self-assessment is worthwhile feedback. Students had plenty to say in their responses and were able to assess areas of their development that deserved attention.

I. PROCESS SYLLABUS DEVELOPMENT: A STUDY WITH UNIVERSITY FRESHMEN

1. Problem

This is a study of the development of a one semester English course for freshmen at the Catholic Medical College in Gangnam.

The aim of this study was to make the time spent in English class for a specific group of learners worthwhile by consultation. Students

were asked to present on topics they were interested in presenting in teams. They also developed situations elicited from other classmates. Besides this, at mid-semester, suggestions were required and evaluated on the final class. It was expected that including learners in the process of designing activities would heighten their sense of involvement and encourage them to take more responsibility for their language learning. According to Breen (2001, p. 172) language learning explanations have to account for learner's contributions to the process, data available to learners, interaction, and actual outcomes.

Freshmen at the Catholic Medical College were divided into three groups (A, B, and C) and attended "Conversation class" once a week for 16 weeks to further their English. Usually, visiting professors are usually required to follow a set syllabus and teach from a specific textbook but this course was different. It was taught at the *Song eui* campus and in the process of rotating instructors and fluctuation of department heads, earlier orientation packets were misplaced.

The difficulty in teaching freshmen English arises from a combination of challenges. Firstly, at the Catholic Medical College of Korea, freshmen must pass this class or they are forced to repeat their entire year, so there is a great deal of pressure for them to do well. This in itself would seem helpful but as there are no stated course objectives to complete it becomes stressful. There is not a level test by which to select the students for the conversation class, so mixed levels ensue. However, there is an entrance test (CSAT, see Kwon & Lee 2001, p.4) for university and a fairly high combination of scores is needed to enter, so many students can use English quite well. Lastly, there is a limit on class time of 45 minutes per week and the size of the class is rather large so it is difficult to establish a personal connection with each student.

II. LITERATURE

A 'needs analysis' of this group is necessary since they were without exact profiles. Korean University students have certain similarities with one another and to other university students abroad, but specific special purposes for these freshmen may elucidate their expectations and ambitions. For this study, a 'target situation analysis' (Hutchinson & Waters 1987, p.12) seemed to be a good place to start an inquiry.

The target situation analysis is designed to find the situation the language learners will use their language in and by a juxtaposition with a learner's current ability, can determine their language needs.

Awareness of the learners' needs begins to answer the question of what is going to be done in class. For the potential of a needs analysis to be realized, the content has to be made acceptable (Hutchinson & Waters 1987, p.53). A 'Communication Needs Processor' (Munby, 1978) seems reasonable to elicit the target needs of a group but their elusive nature becomes apparent. The CNP produced a list of linguistic features from the target situation but neglected to address reaching them from learner's current level of mastery (target needs) nor how (learning needs). Ongoing refinement and adaptation requires a more rigorous approach.

Action Research (Kemmis & McTaggart, 1988) is a continuing process of investigation whereby planning, acting, observing, and reflecting in a cyclical manner results in improvements through directed change. The main goal of acquiring English for outside the classroom (Davies & Pearse 2000, p.5) is not easily achieved, but by making goals and objectives apparent to learners, perhaps their interest can be held and they will become active participants. Finch's (2001, p.128) use of Action Research seemed to be in response to needs analysis procedures failing to connect with methods and material development. The freshmen students examined by Finch (2001, p.131) show similarity to those at CMC: strong background in grammar, written vocabulary, are arriving from high school and expect to develop conversation skills with a native speaker.

The term "Syllabus" means very different things, ranging from a detailed plan ready made and handed down to a loose collection of guiding methods. White (1988) divides syllabuses into two types: A and B. Type A answers the question of what is to be learned. Type A is concerned with knowing about the language; being able to remember the rules, following the plan and achieving the objectives laid out. Type A includes grading content using criteria such as frequency, coverage, range, and learnability. Everything in Type A is organized and ordered according to focus like content, situation or skill to be learnt. Type A is defined in advance by the teacher as an authority and assessed by the learner's eventual mastery of the subject.

The Process Syllabus is an approach to syllabus design sometimes thought of as 'task-based' or 'procedural' (McDonough & Shaw 1993,

p.60). This syllabus accepts the evolving nature of competence and adapts as it emerges gradually. Type B answers the question of how language is to be learned. It breaks with convention and opposes selection of content based on grading parts of language. Type B is more concerned with the methodology in terms of processes of learning and “procedures of teaching” (White 1988, p.94).

Task based designs are far from being all the same and have even been separated into three types: procedural, process, and task syllabus (Long & Crookes 1992, p.27). White’s definition (1988, p.94) of Type A syllabuses: “based on the pre-selection of content” does not describe task-based designs. The procedural syllabus is teacher directed and the process one is learner-led. The process syllabus seeks educational rationales rather than linguistic ones (White 1988, p.96-97). It is an acceptance of negotiation that occurs between the teacher and students from the beginning of a course to the end. The Procedural Syllabus is a Type B syllabus, but differs from the Process model in that the focus is on the task and is learning centered instead of learner-centered (White 1988, p102).

The Process Syllabus attempts to consider the successes occurring in class and improves upon a program by evaluating, and modifying what is done in class to suit the learner’s needs and apparent interests. It basically is student centered rather than prescribed content for the learners to master. A Process Syllabus approach adjusts and responds to students throughout the semester because their development is ongoing and a class plan requires modification if the ability and direction of learners is not known in advance. Attempts at implementing Process syllabuses have been met with resistance by teachers, due to fear of losing control. Administrators seem to feel more comfortable knowing what is planned and expect the teachers to follow a safe plan from point A to B. The process syllabus sounds too vague to them, and does not easily answer the question, What have the students learned? once completed.

Who are the “administrators?” Do you mean the public servants who run the courses on a daily basis, or the course designers? To whom is the teacher accountable? Why does this person (these people) not know the merits of the process approach? There are many questions to be answered here. “What have the students learned?” is usually measured by a proficiency test at the end of the semester. How the teacher prepares for that test is usually (as in this case) up to the

teacher.

By implementing a Process syllabus I was attempting to reach those students whose English was very good and at the same time offer activities that allowed those with less skill participate and grow in general. English Education in Korea at the university level has no benchmarks and there is not a clear goal or purpose for learning English. Students at the Catholic Medical Center have already passed their university entrance exams and gaining a letter grade seems the rationale for attendance. This study tries to show that at the university level a flexible syllabus is a viable option to encourage student involvement and nurture participation in their education.

1. Method

Action Research has negotiated meaning between students and teacher in order to identify a direction forward and satisfy both parties, acting as an example for other classes to follow. Action Research is was appropriate in the situation described in this study, because it starts with inquiry in and about the learning environment and can be aimed at changing things (Nunan 1992, p. 17). The lack of specific stated goals of the course led the researcher to consult with the participants during class time and draw upon past experiences in other classes to guide everyone toward an open environment. Learner input was valued and utilized for week-to-week development of our syllabus. It was hoped that together, their perspectives and the provision of a forum to address them, would accommodate divergent opinions and create a sense of trust between all involved.

The further development of an English course with the cooperation of students seemed the only suitable direction. Students had already finished the first semester with a different teacher and seemed eager to interact. The students had been alphabetically divided into three classes of 40 members. Activities in the second semester included: speaking in small groups, planned speeches, interviewing, reporting, creating a skit, evaluating others, and suggesting improvements. The exposure to using English to actually communicate was encouraged and learners often worked together in teams.

Although the name of the class was ‘Conversation class,’ writing was mainly used to gather reactions online and students were able to view comments critiquing class exercises. Besides writing, it was as-

sumed that students read other postings and talked either about class or about what they were going to write with other classmates. The underlining goal of allowing viewing of comments made by other students was to foster openness and create trust. An honest exchange of ideas and suggestions between all involved was thought of as more of an achievement in terms of successful class than could be measured by a response scale.

III. RESULTING TEACHING LOG

1. Day I August 28th 2002

In the first class learners were asked to ponder the reason why they were there and what they thought we should do. This introduced their first questionnaire taken from Nunan (1999 p. 322-323). Students were given time to read through the choices and decide which uses of language were important for them. The reasons were discussed in groups and the most popular responses were elicited.

Class A reported that they wanted to do further study, talk to friends, communicate, make travel arrangements and attend interviews. They did not want to talk about education, talk to children's teachers, real estate agents or salesmen. Class B chose "watch TV, do further study and talk to doctors." Some members of their group did not want to deal with salesmen, talk about them selves or watch TV. Finally, Class C selected "watch TV, talk to friends" and "reading to learn," rejecting fusing "talking to bosses, neighbors, and government officials." Part 3 of Nunan's (1999, p. 324-325) needs analysis was assigned as homework due the second week of class.

2. Day II September 4th 2002

We gathered in the Seminar Room on the fourth floor of the OMNI BUS Building. The attendance sheet was handed around for those present to sign in and as 13:15 approached the door was shut and we began with the third part of the handout from last week. The theme for this class was Beliefs about Language Learning and learners were asked to compare their answers with a partner. After time was given to do this responses were reported to the class as a whole.

Those beliefs that were marked “strongly agreed to”, “disagreed with”, or “interesting to” were discussed together as a class. Of the three classes A (names 1-40), B (41-80), & C (81-120), all decided upon different directions, for example: A (13:00-14:00) wanted no corrections, B (14:05-14:50) some, and C (14:55-15:40) chose “always”. After agreeing to try and make class worthwhile learners were paired up and asked to Interview their partner and prepare a paragraph about them to read aloud to the class next week. Thirty students attended A class, 28 came to B class and 30 came to C.

3. Day III September 11th 2002

Presentations were given according to presenter’s names alphabetically in front of the class. In most cases a paragraph was read aloud as the brief speech. The rest of the class listened and the information expressed both introduced the class to the new teacher and gave some idea of overall proficiency. The presentations took almost the entire period to complete. Students were told they would take part in group work in week four and work as a team to report on a topic of their choice.

4. Day IV September 18th 2002

Groups were designated according to table. Moving tables together before class changed the regular arrangement of three students to a table so groups ranged from 4-6 members. Students were told to suggest three topics to their team and select two to report on as a group for next week. A sign-up sheet was circulated and filled with times and team names. The Instructions were given orally in addition to being already written on the board.

5. Day V September 25th 2002

The teams’ first presentations were scheduled and written up on a program beginning at 1:20 and continuing in five-minute intervals until 1:45. Group B was scheduled from 2:10–2:35 and C from 3:00-3:30. As the presenters completed their talk, the teacher gave advice and problems were elicited from the audience. An e-mail address was printed on the bottom of the program so that shy classmates could of-

fer additional remarks.

6. Day VI October 2nd 2002

Other members of the teams did their presentations on this day and had had the benefit of having seen the previous week's presentations. It seemed the experience of observing other classmates perform improved the presentations for this week. None were marked, but comments on them pointed out strengths, weaknesses and suggestions. The Class's Yahoo community address was circulated and the instructions for the Mid-term examination were explained towards the end of class.

7. Day VII Mid-term exam online.

This message sent Tuesday September 24th, 2002 at 9:06 am was posted on the Yahoo site and was automatically sent to all those members of the Community. See Appendix C.

8. Day VIII October 16th 2002

The feedback from the submitted essays led to implementing changes based on suggestions to make better use of class time. The first noticeable difference was a strict taking of attendance only by the teacher by asking each student their class number as they sat at their desk. It was more time consuming but reassured those who showed up that their effort would not be overlooked. It made the class more accountable and mainly was for those who take the class seriously to continue to do so. The second implementation was to attempt an 'English only' policy.

The question: How to enforce the 'English Only Day' was raised at the beginning of each class. Three suggestions were offered and explained by the teacher. Number one was: pay a fine if you are caught speaking another language. (Perhaps the student catching you could keep the money). Number two was leaving the room for a time out. Number three was no penalty, only self-control. The three classes showed their diversity by each selecting different rules but were not strictly adhered to. The purpose of developing class guidelines was to encourage communication with English.

The task for today was to divide the class into different groups and in each brainstorm different situations in which people talk. Questions were written on the board to elicit common and unusual times when people talk. Three times per table (one of which should be unusual) were required and were written on the board. After the situations were on the board they were randomly assigned back to different groups and the homework was for each group to prepare 3 skits to perform next week.

9. Day IX October 23rd 2002

Groups performed their first skit. The teacher took digital pictures while they occurred and others acted as an audience. Topics ranged from buying a subway ticket to finding someone in your garden. We then watched each group perform their second skit in front of the class, and then their third. Not much time was spent critiquing choice of language or grammar but the thrill and fear of being in front of a large group of peers seemed to unite the class and instill a kind of liberty as the themes were sometimes rather strange. It was stressed that the performances were an opportunity to use English and comedy was welcomed.

10. Day X October 30th 2002

Once again the class was divided up into groups: this time by random letters to create teams with members who had close friends on other teams. Each group was given blank paper and asked to write down the names of three characters and descriptions. Once this was completed the papers were exchanged with another group and those characters were used to write the beginning of a story. After the beginning was written papers were exchanged with another group who wrote the middle and a final exchange to write the ending. The teacher collected the stories at the end of class.

11. Day XI November 6th 2002

The piecework stories from last week were handed out to new groups and students were told to write a script for a short screenplay from them. Each team would write the script and choose actors from

another team to perform it next week. It seemed a little confusing but one table wrote a script for the table beside them to perform based on last week's stories and actor roles were chosen by the writers. Since friends were scattered throughout the room personal quirks were emphasized and odd scripts were completed. These scripts were given to the proper performers and were to be acted out the following week.

12. Day XII November 13th 2002

Strange characters and stories were acted out and themes ranged from animated hamsters to alien supermarkets and triangle love stories. Interesting characters included famous golf stars, lions, eggs, and historical figures. All levels of English were encountered and body language on the stage determined good acts from bad more so than the maturity of writing.

13. Day XIII November 20th 2002

The concept of a debate was introduced and groups were asked to discuss and suggest two topics for next week's debate. These were then written on the board and groups were instructed to select one and create a questionnaire to find out what other members from outside the group felt about the issue. Groups broke up and walked around the room finding out others' opinions.

14. Day XIV November 27th 2002

The topics from the previous week were organized into a program and students were asked to write their class number beside the topic they were interested in debating. They had to approach the board and write it on either the 'for' or 'against' side. Only those topics with both 'for' and 'against' marks were chosen to be enacted. Tables were assigned for the various issues and different sides. Participants were given time to prepare a statement and rebuttal then some very quick stand offs were staged. There was not much time but discussions were heated and emotions were charged. On that note class ended and students were instructed to submit their final exam by email.

15. Day XV Final Examination online

Final Exam Instructions posted Thursday, November 21st, 2002 at 3:54am. (see Appendix D)

IV. ACTION

The initial needs-analysis was mainly used to initiate discussion about the students' methodological preferences and different ways to conduct class. It quickly became evident that learners seemed to prefer small groups, and no homework. However, other considerations did not achieve consensus. Style of learning, correction, media, activities, and satisfaction differed too vastly to find similarity. It was intended that individuals would realize that some of their expectations differed from other ones held by other classmates. Discussing these expectations led to better understanding the experiences of other students and was expected to begin a process of contribution to class. The focus on needs was mainly to emphasize why they are here and help them realize the opportunity they have in class to develop the skills they feel are necessary for their own future. It seemed most were interested in English academically and wanted to enjoy their class time. There does not seem to be a purpose to learn English for everyday use in Korea since the Korean language is prevalent. Although their friends do are able to speak Korean, English may be used to communicate with foreigners, when traveling abroad, or for understanding articles in international journals, movies, and taking English tests.

Three midterms (the first, the middle, and the last) representing the 115 submissions were selected to gauge learner impressions. MT#6 (see Appendix A) reported enjoyment of group work and presentations, but requested guest speakers and more chances to speak. The problems of late students and unequal class size were also mentioned by MT#6. MT#67 found group study and presentations efficient and said that many other classes were boring in comparison. MT#142 was late but felt conversation class should be informal. He liked the group conversation assignments and found class humorous. He complained that there were too many people in class though, and that 45 minutes was too short of a time. Their responses can be divided into impressions, strengths, weaknesses, and suggestions. Three examples may seem like a small sample size but are representative of the other

responses used for feedback. Other responses were omitted due to constraint of space but may be viewed by contacting the author. The collection allowed the students to become part of a decision making team influencing the policy of their English class. The midterm was given with the intention of getting student input that would affect the last half of the course.

Three results (first, middle and last) from the final exams (message #157, #226 and #281) give some idea of the class's sentiment. The author of #157 (see appendix B) found the class educating and interesting. She agreed with opinions stated in the e-mail she responded to that presentations were important. She reported that 45 minutes is too short and concluded that this semester is only a limited success needing an innovation for next year. She mentioned the time taking attendance seemed to be wasteful, and perhaps could be done after class. She appreciated the debate, interview and enjoyed the presentations. She found it difficult not to revert to using Korean in small group discussion. She suggested watching a film on screen, debating it and writing an essay on it for homework. She ended with a suggestion to create an English cafe where professors and students could speak English in a comfortable atmosphere.

The learner who wrote #226 apologizes for not doing her best but felt our class was efficient. She read an account of another student saying that presentations were not listened to and agreed that more natural actions occurred in the second half of the semester. She liked the activity of debates, making scripts and performing was funny. #281 started by saying that he was sorry for being late. He read a message by a girl who said we needed more speaking time. He said that we seemed to have more speaking time since the midterm. He ended by saying class was fun but efficient and thanks for your good teaching me.

Responses from the final exam can be divided into agree, problems, summary, and suggestions. Learners reacted to impressions, strengths, weaknesses, and suggestions that were given by other students weeks earlier. The responses allowed an evaluation of the messages written by peers and were intended to encourage reflection on syllabus design and implementation. Learners were empowered by being consulted and were able to voice their concerns. Using English to express their feelings and discuss their thoughts on what should be done in class revealed many possibilities for other classes yet to come.

V. CONCLUSION

Although, the four skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing are often referred to as distinct divisions, they overlap and are quite integrated. The natural relationship (Davies & Pearce 2000, p. 75) between them was exploited and replicated in our classroom. Writing is a strange measure for a conversation course though as a consolidation of language learning shows refinement. Many skills were required to participate fully in class when creating scripts for skits, stories, and planned speeches. , Listening, reading, and writing were complementary facets of class emphasizing conversation.

The three examples of the mid-term and three from the final represent the others and seem to show that learners took an active role in class direction. The process of development by including learners in decision-making is somewhat unpredictable. However, it creates an ongoing system to address the development of a class. Constant adaptation of lesson ideas to please each student unavoidably leads to alienating some and lack of qualitative proof for a process-based syllabus is not easily defensible. Next year there will be a new teacher for the first semester and these freshmen will have gone on to their second year. Knowing the feedback from this year's freshmen will most surely assist next year's class.

The lack of firm objectives and restrictions led to an opportunity usually avoided when programs are well defined. The learners' stated desires were taken as invaluable data when organizing the course. An analysis of what was done in class and students' opinions of what should be done shows the learner's role in learning and assisted the teacher in discovering what to do. Hopefully, treating learners as important members of the class has involved them meaningfully and substituted the teacher's customary role as sole controller.

AUTHOR

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APPENDIX A
THREE EXAMPLES FROM THE MID-TERM EXAM
(FIRST, MIDDLE, AND LAST)

MT#6	MT#67	MT#142	
great class. Enthusiastic. we all have learned a lot	your lecture type was very interesting	you are so humorous and friendly. That motivate me	Impressions
chances speaking in English unequal distribution late students	'groped studying and presentation' is a kinda efficient	too many people in one class for 45 minutes	Weaknesses
enjoyed group works	competent teacher	more group-conversatio n-assignments	Strengths
continue more group work and presentations, guest speakers	your group-presenting type lecture	more small class	Suggestions

APPENDIX B
THREE EXAMPLES FROM THE FINAL EXAM
(FIRST, MIDDLE, AND LAST)

F#157	F#226	F#281	
presentation new learning experiences 45 minutes' time is too short	Taking a debate in groups was very efficient way to speak English	your group work.	Agree
wasted too much time checking who attended	most students didn't pay attentions to others' presentations	real situation conversation and to know proper words	Problems
the role play, interviewing other students, and the debate	making scripts and performing that script was very interesting and funny.	i think our class had more speaking time than that time.	Summary
check attendance in the end of the class. a short film and text	have only good memories about us.^;.	atmosphere in this class.-free but efficient	Suggestions

APPENDIX C

MID TERM FEEDBACK INSTRUCTIONS

Dear All,

Your Mid-Term assignment is to post a paragraph discussing our course. Explain your impressions of the class, any weaknesses, and strengths, and suggest things you would like to see for the second **half of the semester.**

APPENDIX D

FINAL FEEDBACK AND EVALUATION OF CLASS DIRECTIONS

Dear Students,

Log in to our web site and read the message that corresponds to your number in class. After you have read it, reply to it with a message of your own reacting to its contents. Make sure you give your opinion of both what you read and what has occurred in class since October 9th. In addition, you may like to suggest innovations for next year's course. The deadline is 5pm Wednesday the 4th of December 2002.

Please reply to the message number that is the same as your class number on the attendance sheet (1-115).

The Problems of Korean EAP Learners' Academic Writing and the Solutions

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ABSTRACT

This paper studies the problems of Korean EAP (English for Academic Purposes) learners' academic writing and tries to find the background of a series of problems. Issues that will be addressed are as follows: different writing styles, the difference between English and Korean rhetorical structures, vocabulary choice, and the lack of writing strategies/skills from the lack of writing instruction. This study includes an interview with three Korean students at a university in Calgary, Canada and an interview with an ESL teacher at an ESL school in the same city. The difficulties Korean EAP learners have are pointed out and some suggestions are also provided to help readers, especially EAP teachers, find their way to teaching Korean EAP learners' academic English writing. The absence of English writing instruction was found to be the biggest reason for the problems and the appropriate writing instruction is suggested as the solution.

I. INTRODUCTION

Choi (cited in Cho, 2001) and Armitage (cited in Cho, 2001) investigated the difficulties of Korean students in Australian universities. The research showed that student's perception in their English language competence is closely related to their perception of study genres. Cho (2001) observes:

The main difficulties students encounter while studying abroad involve not only acquisition of English language but also the way language is used in the academic context. Moreover, the use of similar labels for study genre, such as essays or exams may mislead

Korean students to expect something similar to those genres found in their home country. (p. 1-2)

This paper deals with the difficulties regarding academic writing the genre with which Korean learners have problems. What are the problems Korean EAP (English for Academic purposes) learners have in terms of English academic writing? This paper investigates the ins and outs of Korean EAP learners' academic writing. The purpose of this paper is to help EAP teachers and Korean EAP learners to become aware of Korean students' problems in academic writing, and to find some solutions to those problems.

II. METHOD

Three Korean students at a Canadian university and an EAP class teacher at an ESL school in Canada were asked to share their ideas during two interviews. Interview 1 was designed to discover what and why Korean students struggle with English academic writing, and to find out the way to solve the problems from the view of the students. Interview 2 was designed to explore the problems and the solutions from the point of view of an EAP class teacher.

1. Interview 1

This interview dealt with the difficulties in academic writing at the post-secondary level, but mostly focused on the differences between English and Korean rhetorical structures. Three female Korean students studying at the University of Calgary participated in this interview. Student A (age 22) is a first year undergraduate student who has been living in Canada for about 2.5 years and has taken EAP classes for one year. Student B (age 22) is a graduate student majoring in Economics who has been living and studying in Canada for about 3.5 years and transferred to this university after studying at a Korean university for 2 years. Student C (age 33) is a graduate student majoring in Fine Art who has been living in Canada for about 2.5 years and has taken EAP classes for a year. They were allowed to talk about anything they want to say regarding English academic writing and to share their ideas; therefore it was more like discussion than an

interview.

Student A said that one of her professors commented that she should simplify her writing in her papers. She also reported that she has had instruction on outlining and organizing ideas from her professors, but she is still not used to outlining and planning before writing and it is difficult for her to organize ideas in English.

Student B talked about the differences between Economics journal essays in Korean and English. She commented that the English texts have a simpler structure and make clearer points, whereas Korean texts appear to have redundant parts, and the points are presented less clearly. When she started reading Korean journal articles recently, she felt uncomfortable with the structure for the first time, but she soon got used to it. She assumed that she had been accustomed to English structure/style. She thought that she was able to get used to Korean rhetorical structure quickly because Korean is her mother tongue. She also reported that when she read Korean students' writing, it sounded strange in English, but it sounded OK if she translated it into Korean. She pointed out that Korean students should not translate their ideas directly from Korean into English verbatim.

Student C reported that she has not read any well-written Korean papers recently: They all had unnecessary parts and the structures were not well organized. She attributed that to her becoming accustomed to English rhetorical structure. She talked about her friend who took EAP classes in the States, and used to be a freelance writer for an art magazine in Korea. According to student C, she often complained about the writing classes in the States saying, They do not understand my metaphors or expressions and they just want me to follow the given structure and to write simple and very dry sentences. She thought English writing seemed very structured and that the writing style in North America was strongly emphasized throughout all levels of the educational system elementary, secondary, and post-secondary; however, the instruction on the writing style is never stressed in Korea. For example, she referred to her experience in taking an "effective writing course" that university students are required to pass.

This interview showed the distinguishing differences between Korean and English rhetorical structures, and that students were aware of the differences. Student B and C, who criticized Korean rhetorical structure, said that they were able to point out some weak points in the Korean texts because they were more familiar with English rhetor-

ical structure now. Then we might be able to say that it is not about ‘good or bad’, but about “familiarity.” This interview clearly suggested that (a) writing instruction is definitely needed, (b) students need to be exposed to English texts as much as possible to be accustomed to English rhetorical structure, and (c) the direct translation from Korean into English should be discouraged.

2. Interview 2

This interview with an EAP class teacher showed some other aspects of Korean students’ problems in essay writing. The teacher was teaching an EAP 2 class in Mount Royal College in Calgary. She considered flowery sentences as a particular problem of Korean students’ writing and added:

Korean students try to put too many adjectives before nouns to make the sentences beautiful. However, the adjectives look strange to native speakers because of the differences between Korean and English collocations; Korean students use adjectives differently than native English speakers do. Though grammatically correct, native speakers would find the usage awkward. I ask my students not to use bilingual dictionaries (Korean-English and English-Korean) and to read more to become more familiar with English sentences to solve the problem. I mark the students’ essay writing according to five categories: organization, grammar, mechanics, sentence fluency (vocabulary choice), and content. Some students had almost full marks for organization and content, but missed points for sentence fluency due to weird expressions, which native speakers would not use. Students understood the organization of writing after three months of instruction of English writing, but achieving sufficient language proficiency using correct English took a long time; three months was not enough.

(Rhodes, personal communication, October 2, 2003)

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

From the results of the interviews, this study found some points to focus on: the difference between Korean and English rhetorical structures, different writing styles, vocabulary choice, and the lack of writing strategies/skills from the lack of writing instruction. The following

shows how the points are studied further.

1. Korean Writing Practices

Lee and Scarcella (1992) found that most Koreans' concepts about expository essay writing are different from Native English speakers from their research results. In Korean expository essays, writers do not usually state their thesis directly. Rather, they often allow the reader to interpret the thesis from hints within the text. Korean is called a reader-responsible language (Scarcella & Lee, as cited in Lee & Scarcella, 1992, p. 150) since Korean writers expect readers to be responsible for actively interpreting texts. Non-native writers have to learn that effective written communication in English is the sole responsibility of the writer (Hinds, 1987, p. 72).

Romaine (1984) pointed out that Stating one's opinion too strongly is usually considered arrogant to Koreans (Romaine, as cited in Lee & Scarcella, 1992, p. 149). This is another characteristic of Korean writing. By mitigating personal opinions, Koreans save others' face as well as their own. Koreans have not grown up with the traditions of verbal play and debate. At home, many Asian children are expected to listen and obey rather than express their personal opinions freely (Cheng, as cited in Lee & Scarcella, 1992, p. 149). Ransdell (1998) described Asian speakers' writing as follows:

Asian speakers tend to "hide" their theses late in the essay if they include one at all. Even if the students were convinced it was appropriate to state a thesis, they would expect to slide it in, mid-paragraph, near the end of the essay. Another problem for many Asian speakers is that they are so unused to putting "themselves" in an essay that they can't bring themselves to do it, or do it poorly. Again, this problem stems from a cultural norm. In the minds of Asian readers, talking about yourself is egotistical because your own opinion is not as important as the consensus of the community, so you are expected to hide your "persona" when you write.

Lee and Scarcella (1992, p. 149) stressed that the reluctance to state a personal opinion and the emphasis on face-saving might explain the popularity of poetry and the short novel over the more explicit expository essay. Thus, Koreans are less familiar with academic writing

than fictitious genres like short novels, which appear to include sentimentalism and exaggeration. This explains why Korean ESL/EFL students' academic writing sometimes shows these emotional characteristics. In addition, they often try to use metaphors in academic writing due to their insufficient knowledge about academic writing. Also, well-known Korean writers do not edit and revise extensively. Once they compose their essay, they do not revise it again and again, composing a finished product the first time around. (Lee and Scarcella, 1992)

Surprisingly, Korean students have little instruction in academic writing, even in Korean academic writing, and they rarely have opportunities to write academic papers. Instead, they are required to write a daily journal which are collected approximately once a week, but neither corrected nor graded and students are asked to read books among the lists they are given and asked to hand in reports on the reading. Students are rarely asked to write expository essays in elementary and secondary schools. Big classroom size makes the correction of essays difficult, teachers should focus on preparing their students for the college entrance examination, and many teachers do not feel qualified to teach this genre due to their lack of experience writing expository essays. Likewise, there are few writing requirements in most college courses. (Lee and Scarcella, 1992)

Eggington (1987, p. 157) too suggested that Korean students would have difficulty writing in English because they were not exposed to formal instruction on writing styles. Cho's research (2001) also showed that Korean students needed more writing instruction. She conducted research with Korean students studying in Australian universities to investigate their strategy uses. Some students stated that essay writing was the most difficult task, as they had never written an essay in Korea. Despite the claim by several students that the essay genre is consistent across the two countries, the report, the most common type of written genre in Korea, is somewhat different from English essay. According to one exchange student, two or three written assignments (reports) per week were required in her home institution, but no feedback was given. Even though she had ample experience of writing in Korea, she still claimed that writing was difficult in Australia. She maintained that the difficulties came from the different style that was required, and also the length of essays. In Korea, a written assignment was usually short, and she did not spend much time

on each since a large number of assignments were required each week (Cho, 2001).

2. The difference between Korean and English rhetorical structures

Kaplan claimed, “The foreign student who has mastered the syntax of English may still write a bad paragraph or a bad paper unless he also masters the logic of English” (Kaplan, 1966, p.21). Korean discourse structure is seen by him to be turning and “turning in a widening gyre. The circles or gyres turn around the subject and show it from a variety of tangential views but the subject is never looked at directly.” (Kaplan, 1972, as cited in Eggington, p. 153). Kaplan also described Korean rhetorical structure as *Ki-Sung-Chon-Kyul* - (1) introduction and loose development (2) a statement of main idea, (3) concepts indirectly connected with the argument, and (4) a conclusion of the main theme. (Grabe & Kaplan, 1996, p, 188,189) Kaplan referred Korean writing style to “indirect”, “out of focus”, “lacks organization”, and “lacks cohesion” from the point of view of native English speakers (Kaplan, 1966, p. 13).

Choi (1988) compared the text structure of Koreans’ English writing and NES’ writing in her study. Choi pointed out that Korean ESL students need instruction in learning the preferred structure in English argumentative texts – claim + justification + conclusion – in order to make their writing in English more comprehensible to native speakers of English (1988, p.136). Koreans usually hesitate to claim strongly and directly because it might make them look arrogant or impolite. That may be one of the reasons why Koreans’ English writing is called “circular”.

Eggington (1987) stated that Korean writers might have to adjust concepts developed in the preferred rhetorical style of English to fit the rhetorical patterns of Korean. Eggington conducted research with thirty-seven Korean adults newly arrived in the United States. One group of the subjects was asked to read a paragraph, which was written in Korean with linear rhetorical style and the other group was asked to read a paragraph written in Korean with non-linear rhetorical style. The result was that subjects were able to recall about the same amount of information from both the traditional text and linear text two minutes after reading the texts. However, in the delayed condition

— after a week — the subjects recalled the non-linear text much better than the linear text (Eggington, 1987, p.165, 166). This research suggested that the rhetorical structure impacts on the recalling information, and it might influence on reading comprehension.

Should the rhetorical structure of English be taught in ESL/EFL classes? Kaplan (1966) implies that those who want to learn English should learn the logic of English as well. In that case, English rhetorical structure should be taught in ESL/EFL classes. But is Kaplan correct? Rhetoric is a mode of thinking (Kaplan, 1966). Does everyone who wants to learn English have to think in the same way as native English speakers? The idea that the rhetorical structure of English should be superimposed upon the traditional Korean mindset raises a sensitive issue. It has been said that teaching English rhetorical structure to ESL/EFL students is “composition and Colonization: (Land and Whitley, 1989, as cited in Matsuda, 1997, p. 247). While this description has some merit, the English texts written by ESL students are supposed to be read and understood by English speakers. Writers should be aware of their readers when they are writing. As Leki (1992) stated, much of the difficulty that non-native speakers (NNS) experience in writing in English stems from the differing expectations and rhetorical conventions contained in the internalized patterns of culture, with an emphasis on the reader’s expectations. Kaplan pointed out, The foreign-student paper is out of focus because the foreign student is employing a rhetoric and a sequence of thought which violate the expectations of the native speaker” (Kaplan, 1966, p. 21). Matsuda also suggested, “Teaching ESL students to organize L2 writing should be considered as a way of raising ESL students’ awareness of various factors that are involved in structuring the text, including the reader’s expectations of certain organizational patterns.” (Matsuda, 1997, p. 251)

In Korean, if the repetition is well structured, the audience is guided subtly to the student’s conclusion even though that conclusion may never be stated. However, when this student writes in English, an American reader may be kept wondering when the student will make his or her point or why the student seems to keep repeating almost the same idea. While the student understands the material and how to think about it according to Korean linguistic and cultural patterns, the instructor must help the student reorganize the material for a reader or listener who expects academic English: a

linear structure and a stated thesis or conclusion (Bliss, No Date).

As Kaplan (1988, pp. 296-297) pointed out, students should recognize that their rhetoric styles are different from the one of English, and that teachers should make students aware that there exists a set of conventions that the student is expected to be able to manage. It would be more reasonable to teach desirable organizing styles being employed in English academic writing to students than to try to teach the logic of English to them.

3. Vocabulary choice

Conducting research on the reactions of 178 professors to two 400-word compositions, one written by a Chinese student and the other by a Korean student, Santos (1988, p. 84) pointed to lexical errors as the most serious problem of the composition. The problem is that lexical errors impinge directly on content. When the wrong word is used, the meaning is very likely to be obscured. He argued that non-native English speaking students, including Korean students, needed to improve the skills that directly affect content such as organizing, developing, and supporting their ideas and arguments, and units on vocabulary building and lexical selection should be incorporated into an ESL writing course. This can be accomplished through the use of vocabulary exercises such as cloze and word form exercises, through requiring students to keep a vocabulary notebook based on their readings and lectures, through emphasis on the importance of lexical selection and the elicitation or presentation of synonymous forms of expression, and through the textbooks that deal with vocabulary for academic purposes (Santos, 1998, p. 85). Raimes (1985) also put emphasis on vocabulary: "What is always in short supply in the ESL writing classroom is time that is needed for attention to vocabulary. To generate, develop, and present ideas, our students need an adequate vocabulary" (Raimes, 1985, p. 53).

Most Korean university students have vocabulary guide books, such as "Vocabulary 22000" or "Vocabulary 33000" to build up their vocabulary knowledge, but the problem is that they just memorize those 22,000 words or 33,000 words mechanically without context. They do not know how to and when to use those words, and in addition, they do not have the opportunities to use them.

One more problem is that the word which students memorized in Korea is being used differently in English speaking countries. Shim (1999) argued that what is learned and tested in Korean schools is different from American English, and she referred to the contents of Korean English textbooks as 'codified Korean English' (p. 250). These differences, however, become errors when the students use them to produce language in their speaking and writing. Thus, teaching codified Korean English causes students to make errors, and teaching students incorrect English becomes a very serious problem.

Shim categorized three aspects of the differences - 'Lexico- semantic differences', 'Morpho-syntactic differences', and 'Pragmatic differences' - between codified Korean English and American English, and presented some examples of the first category, from middle school and high school English textbooks and an English-Korean dictionary. Differences in this category include words and expressions that are used in contexts that sound unusual, awkward, or incorrect in American English. (e.g. "We go to school day by day. / Koreans eat rice day by day.")

Shim demonstrated incorrect definitions and examples in an English-Korean dictionary and pointed out that the use of bilingual (English-Korean and Korean-English) dictionaries seems one of the biggest problems in Korean students' writing. Teachers could demonstrate some of these examples to students, letting them know that there are many mistakes in the dictionaries, and they should encourage students to use "English-English" dictionaries. Ideally, Korean-English and English-Korean dictionaries, providing appropriate all possible - definitions and examples for each word, needed.

4. Writing strategies/skills

Kim (1996) investigated the differences between native and non-native "advanced" writers, and between non-native "advanced" and "basic" writers. The research results showed that basic level non-native writers focused more on "what to write", while advanced native English speaking writers focused more on "how to write". The research results can be summarized follows:

- 1) Linguistic differences: the native advanced writers wrote longer essays, used more subordinate conjunctions and prepositions,

less pronouns and discourse markers than non-native writers. He found that Korean writers tended to begin a sentence with a discourse marker, while native speakers used a variety of ways to develop topical materials.

- 2) Rhetorical differences: Native advanced writers used more counterargument, impersonal closing, assertive questions. They dealt with a few arguments deeply rather than introducing many different sub-points just at surface level.
- 3) Strategic differences: Native advanced writers revised more, used more written outlines, and paid more attention to overall organization while writing than Korean writers.
- 4) Native advanced writers focused on planning while Korean non-native writers focused on transcribing.
- 5) Most Korean basic level writers generated their ideas in Korean and translated them into English.
- 6) Those who had English writing instruction scored much higher than the students who didn't. (Kim, 1996)

translation-free writing, focusing on writing coherence, and self-initiated writing were good strategies that NNA writers employed... certain elements of English persuasive writing such as cohesion devices, counterarguments, impersonal closings may be more problematic for non-native English writers due to their lack of exposure to formal discourse in English... Both modeling (especially self-initiated writing) and instruction in the writing) and instruction in the writing structure of English texts may be effective in improving their L2 writing quality. (Kim, 1996, p. 30, 31)

From the results of this research it can be inferred that teachers should encourage students to use more prepositions and subordinate conjunctions, and use fewer personal pronouns and discourse markers, especially for coherent writing. Teachers should also encourage students to expose themselves to English as much as possible through reading and listening. Without enough exposure to English texts, students cannot avoid the translating process.

IV. CONCLUSION

Marriott pointed out:

The analysis of difficulties and the implementation of appropriate adjustments could occur only after students note the difficulties or

deviation. In some cases, students do not notice their deviations and become frustrated when unexpected outcomes occur. In most cases, it takes awhile for students to become aware of the existence of deviations. (Marriott, as cited in Cho, 2001, p. 321)

EAP teachers who have Korean students should guide Korean students to become aware of the differences between Korean and English academic writing styles, and help them solve the problems, which are generated from the differences.

In view of this situation, what should Korean EAP students keep in mind when they are writing academic English texts?

- Most of all, they need explicit academic writing instruction.
- They need to know the different styles for different genres.
- They should learn how to organize their ideas through modeling the desirable English academic text structures.

Secondly, they should know the different rhetorical styles. Native English speaking writers state opinions directly and strongly, while Korean writers state opinions indirectly. Korean writing is reader-responsible while English writing is writer-responsible. Korean EAP learners should be instructed to state their theses clearly and directly at the beginning and make explicit conclusions at the end of the writing with the structure “claim + justification + conclusion” in mind; remembering not to include redundant details. Students need to make clear, well-organized statements to make sure that their readers understand what they write. (English Composition: Some Cross-cultural Considerations, No Date)

Thirdly, Korean EAP students need to improve their writing skills by examining the features of good writing; they need to be taught about how to write rather than what to write. Teachers should encourage students to use more prepositions, subordinate conjunctions, counterarguments, and impersonal closings, and use fewer personal pronouns and discourse markers. They need to focus more on planning and outlining before writing; they should revise and edit more.

Fourthly, Korean EAP learners need to use dictionaries more carefully. Most ESL/EFL students lack natural input through speaking and listening. They therefore often need “instant input” by using dictionaries to write what they want to say. For that reason, they some-

times need to use Korean-English dictionaries, but they need to check the correct usage of the word with concordancers. Teachers should let students know there are many mistakes in the dictionaries by showing some examples to students.

Fifthly, Korean EAP learners should build up their vocabulary knowledge through accurate examples, which are currently being used by native speakers, and by producing sentences with the words. EAP teachers should help them distinguish the nuances and slight differences between the words, which could make students confused.

Last but not least, EAP learners need to be exposed to as many English texts or discourses as possible, especially the formal discourse in English. It is imperative that they learn to use appropriate words and expressions, to write translation-free sentences, and to solve all the other problems of English writing mentioned above.

AUTHOR

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Reading for Comprehension: Moving from Accuracy to Fluency

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ABSTRACT

In this paper, I paint a picture of the current Korean high school classroom condition, and the conflicting pressures and expectancies therein. A more pedagogically sound rationale for extended fluency-based reading comprehension is provided. Existing Korean method and textbook design is evaluated, and further question categories are suggested. The result is a methodological rationale for placing this fluency-based model within a curriculum suitable and flexible enough to fit the varied needs and skill levels of students and teachers within an EFL context, specifically in Korea.

I. INTRODUCTION

Many Korean high school textbooks include reading exercises that do not challenge students beyond finding right or wrong answers at a word or phrase level, the “text-level” question, as described in Lassche (2001). This could also be referred to as an accuracy-based approach to reading. As a result, students do not learn how texts “work”, why texts appear the way that they do, and what functions they fulfill (cf. Feez, 1998). One danger of an accuracy-based approach is that students will not be able to make the language learning application to real life situations (Kwok, 2004). This leap requires students to take their accuracy-based practice to deal with real-life, real-time manipulation of texts in order to do some kind of communicative work with them. As Kim and Margolis (2000) noted in their survey, most Korean students have had very little listening and speaking practice in communicative settings, which is probably connected to the types of textbooks in use.

Without having had the fluency-based experience, students will suffer from communicative deficits. This is a position not in agreement with the Ministry of Education's stated objective for learning in general (cf. Kwok, 2004; Finch, 2001). This mission statement can be found at <http://www.kice.re.kr/english/eindex.htm> (click Information on Curriculum and Evaluation, then click National Curriculum). The philosophy is to develop creativity and contribute to the development of culture at home and abroad that is, the notion of *hankukingan*.

It is the purpose of this paper to provide a rationale for extending current textbook design and classroom usage into the realm of fluency work, thereby fulfilling to a greater degree the kind of critical thinking skills and creative development demanded by *hankukingan* students. A review of relevant classroom research in Korea will indicate the need for a new treatment of reading comprehension. This rationale will be provided and applied to a case study text.

The concepts "accuracy" and "fluency" deserve further comment. An accuracy-based approach to reading comprehension requires students to analyse and comprehend idiosyncratic surface or text-level features. By this, I mean facts and details which are particular to the text, and which would not be found in another text (names, dates, etc.). When students identify or recall such facts from the reading, their answers can be categorized as "right" or "wrong", with the text itself acting as the final arbiter. Any grammar practice derived from the reading is usually done in an uncritical, mechanical fashion also, without reference to personal meaning. That is, students do the assigned questions and exercises without regard to personal interest or choice. When interaction happens in the classroom, it is usually teacher-fronted.

A fluency-based approach foregrounds student-led interpretation of text, and requires an imagined appreciation of the situation surrounding the text. Answers are assessed in terms of their appropriacy to context by the text, with the students and the teacher working together. Students produce their reflections on the text as it relates to their own personal views and beliefs, oftentimes working together in groups which they lead, to heighten the variety and amount of idea flow. Brown (2003) proposed that the idea of fluency needed expansion, and this paper builds on his contribution.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

1. Background

Textbook and classroom practice. Kwon (2002) found, in her corpus study of lexical content in middle school textbooks comparing the 6th and 7th curriculums, that there was twice as many new grammar forms in the more recent version. From the 6th curriculum, the Ministry of Education has insisted upon the learning and teaching of language function (Korea Education and Research Information, 1998), and so the continued disproportionate space given to accuracy-based work would seem surprising, but for two crucial facts. First, Zeng (1999) and others (ie Kim, 2001; Finch 2004; Kwok, 2004) describe the huge impact that the College Scholastic Aptitude test has, and the impact on classroom teaching, hence “teaching the test”. The nature of the test design has remained virtually unchanged throughout the various curriculum versions, as multiple continues to be the question format of choice. Although reviews and studies about the test remain scarce, Korea Institute of Curriculum and Evaluation’s website indicates the English portion of the test contains 50 multiple choice questions (<http://www.kice.re.kr/english/eindex.htm>). Although Kwon’s (2002) study was limited to middle school textbooks, given the exam pressure in high schools, would not high school textbooks have even a higher proportion of grammar content, given its value on the exam?

Classroom methodology follows a similar suit in many Korean classrooms, where classroom work is controlled by the teacher or the textbook. Students have little choice about what texts to read, what questions to answer, or how questions can be answered. A recurring observation, made here by high school teacher Joshua Park (2004), is that “courses [are] completely lecture-based, [students are] assigned no homework, and [teachers] relied exclusively on midterm and final examinations for grading.” This observation is echoed by Kwok (2004) and Kim S.A. (2002). Kim S.A.’s study was unique, in that it was based on video-taped portions of classroom teaching, in addition to self-report, which lends greater validity to her findings, although this is greatly limited by the sample size (three model classes). She reports that teaching was largely controlled by the teacher, involving accuracy-based exercises (or what she refers to as “skill-getting”).

Kim (2001) investigated the motivating beliefs of 15 Korean high school teachers, and the resulting analysis provides a useful description of the traditional teaching style still in use today. Shim (2002) similarly investigated teachers' core pedagogical assumptions, and found a similar result: academic achievement by their students is central to a teacher's sense of efficacy, and thus passing the exam is paramount. To these teachers, grammar knowledge is key to passing the exam. Kim Y.S.'s (2002) study of 14 teachers and their 552 students characterized the nature of teacher language in the classroom. He observed that, in these lecture-oriented classrooms, Korean was used exclusively for the teaching of grammar. From the position of a teacher trainer, Guilloteaux (2004) found that her trainees tended to equate quality of teaching with quantity, even within a CLT framework for teaching. This finding was repeated in the Kim S.A. (2002) paper cited earlier. An approach which emphasizes rapid exposure to many texts and exercises at an accuracy-based level I characterized as multi-text in Lassche (2002). Such an approach is predictable practice, if one considers that cramming for an exam means exposure to as many items and practice activities as possible.

Taken altogether, these findings do not bode well. The new curriculum has twice as much grammar, Korean is exclusively used for teaching the grammar, and test preparation is the primary responsibility of high school teachers; this adds up to a class driven by grammar-focused classes conducted in Korean language with little relevance for actual English performance, something Lee (1991, as cited in Finch and Hyun, 1998) already noted 15 years ago. With observations of model classes thrown in for good measure (Kim S.A., 2002), can there be little doubt as to the nature of today's typical Korean high school English classroom, that it appears to be largely unchanged from Lee's day?

Materials evaluation. An evaluation of materials is relatively a newcomer in Korean EFL research literature. It is also not as valued traditionally in research for publication because it involves so-called soft evaluations, with qualitative conclusions, bereft of more valued statistical data. But such evaluations are needed for non-native speaking (NNS) teachers, who need help translating theories and data into applications relevant to the classroom (Guilloteaux, 2004). While some materials reviews have been done before, they tend to deal with the results of surveys *about* textbooks, without dealing with the textbooks

themselves. Park and Suh (2003) is a case in point. In their review of teachers' opinions of 7th curriculum textbooks (rather than a corpus study of the books themselves), they found that individual activities took up about 78% of space and time, about 63% dealt with basic tasks. While this highlights the need to move towards more fluency-oriented work, their suggestions were limited to making classes more meaningful and communicative, without specifying what or how. Kim's (2004) observations on materials evaluation could be faulted for the same short-coming. While giving rankings for "quality", "appropriacy", and "interest/relevance," these concepts are not defined, nor are they clarified with examples for teachers to apply.

On the other hand, Finch has done several studies of a qualitative nature on aspects of classroom teaching in Korea; for example, on testing (Finch, 2002); on the CSAT preparation booklet (Finch, 2004). It is in the same spirit and style of these exposes that I evaluate reading comprehension in a Korean high school textbook case study.

2. Review of question types

Books and papers on materials design, which seek to clarify and expand the information categories which reading comprehension can explore have been many, but detailed discussion of exactly what information needs practicing is rather scarce. McDonough and Shaw's (2003) book on materials design provides a brief discussion of reading comprehension, mentions rhetorical structure and vocabulary coverage, gives excerpts of questions from various textbooks on the market, and that is it. Nuttall (2000, p. 149 ff) provides much more detail on information categories, but then does not apply these suggestions with specific examples. Aebersold and Lee-Field (2001) provide an excellent rationale for teaching reading in their core chapters, following a popular structure that I will use later in my proposal (pre-, during and post- stages), but again do not clarify specific text features. Although their textbook is aimed at second language classrooms, many of the kinds of activities and issues they suggest for practice seem to require an advanced oral proficiency, echoing the problems with the genre-based approach in Australia (see point 3.2 below). Day and Park (2005) and Sheng (2000) provide excellent summary of information categories, or comprehension question types as they refer to it. My paper goes further than these, by giving additional categories, specific

examples, and providing an overall rationale for organizing and sequencing question design. Incidentally, Sheng (2000) is the best source I have yet seen on comprehension types in the TESOL literature.

3. Proposal

3.1 Rationale

Many have written on the need to change the current form of reading comprehension exercises (cf. Day and Park, 2005; Brown, 2003). Song, M.J. (2003) found that extensive and creative journal writing (which is compatible with a fluency-based approach) benefited students at least as much as regular reading comprehension questions when students' performance was measured for reading achievement. Joh (2004) found that the activation of prior knowledge in pre-task activities, as well as study time spent on the rhetorical structure of texts, and not just syntax and vocabulary, enhance student reading comprehension. From this, he concludes that comprehension plus construction (or what I would call accuracy plus fluency), has greater benefit for reading mastery than comprehension through answer selection alone. He also found that fluency-related work tended to increase student's interest and motivation, despite the additional cognitive burden fluency work would be suspected to cause.

It is the position in this paper that initial questions and exercises about the reading can be located at the accuracy-based level, for testing student identification of surface level features of the text. It is crucial, however, that students are brought further than that. They should be asked questions which gradually challenge them to exercise greater and greater fluency or choice with the text analysis. The alternative to an accuracy-based approach is to grade reading practice along a continuum of accuracy versus fluency. This is shown in Figure 1 below.

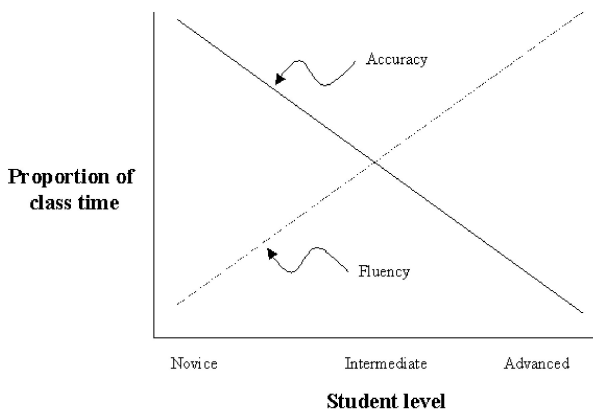


FIGURE 1. PROPORTION OF ACCURACY AND FLUENCY ACCORDING TO STUDENT LEVEL

The process of graduating along this curriculum needs to be assessed by the teacher in the local classroom setting, allowing for classroom-specific learning curves and learning needs (Nunan, 1999, p. 17 ff). Most novice-level students may not be ready for full-fledged fluency work. The idea is to begin the process, and gradually increase the fluency load proportion, shown in Fig 2 below, over the course of the lesson and the language program. In other words, there is no need to balance accuracy and fluency at the 50/50 level right away. At the beginning, students probably need mostly accuracy-based teaching to begin their study, with corresponding exercises having a pedagogical, pre-communicative orientation, as Widdowson (1979) has long recommended. As time goes on, however, teachers should be increasing the fluency demands on their students, with greater attention to authentic practice and a communicative, meaning-based orientation. Incidentally, by the time students get to high school, after years of English language study, the proportion of fluency-based work should be much larger than it is.

Figure 1 could also be categorized as a trade-off between accuracy and fluency over classtime. Song J.W. (2003) exploratory research with student performance is suggestive here, and indicates that such trade-offs are useful for reducing the cognitive load on students; that is, fluency and accuracy need to be integrated to encourage the complete language development of the learner. As Guilloteaux (2004) suggests, this concept is fully compatible with CLT theory. In her survey

of pre-service and in-training teachers, she found that many teachers believe CLT values only fluency work, and seem surprised that accuracy has any role. Perhaps teachers feel that teaching can exist at two extremes, one form emphasizing accuracy (mostly taught by NNS teachers), the other fluency, undertaken by native speaking foreign teachers. The rationale implied in Fig. 1 encourages attention to both concepts, with the balance determined by the particular mix of students in the individual teacher's class, which also follows Song J.W.'s (2003) and Nunan's (1999) recommendations.

In Figure 2, the fluency categories are shown: contextual comprehension (extrapolating the situation surrounding the text, such as the author choices and intended audience), and evaluation and appreciation (personally reacting to the text and author's choices). These categories are fleshed out in more detail in the case study (see 4.0 below), with specific reference to an example text.

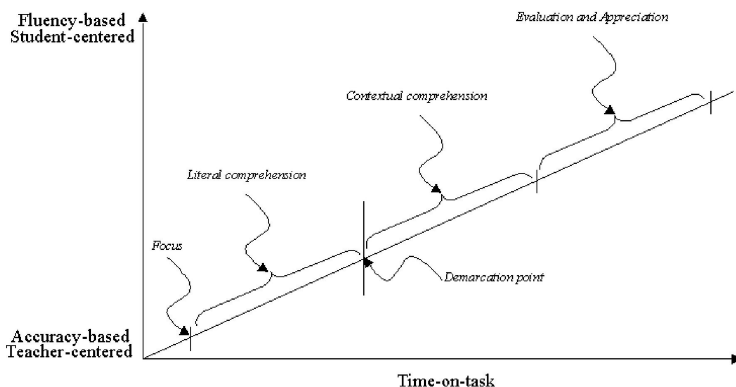


FIGURE 2. EXTENDING ACCURACY INTO FLUENCY

3.2 Problems

Apart from the test-oriented learning environment described earlier, there are some other formidable and problematic issues in an EFL situation associated with applying a methodology based on this approach. For example, identifying the context of situation can be a very complicated affair in genre-based approaches (cf. Eggins, 1996, p. 49 ff), involving things like register, tone and mood, if one follows the systemic functional approach to text analysis. Some of these issues are

listed briefly as follows:

- (1) Teachers and students must possess a pre-requisite oral proficiency in L2;
- (2) Teachers and students must learn a meta-language (ie the terms of systemic functional linguistics) for textual description, in effect an L3;
- (3) Teachers should have enough time in the curriculum to progress through the text-based syllabus, such as defined in Feez (1998);
- (4) Teachers should have enough resources at their disposal to serve as genuine language models, such as described in Callaghan, Knapp and Noble (1994).

In light of these obstacles, I suggested a more simplistic model in Lassche (2001), which I feel is a more realistic one for dealing with non-native low-proficiency learners in EFL environments, for use by NNS teachers. For this model, I also draw from Sheng's (2000) model for teaching reading comprehension. While her paper outlines a valuable database for question types, I add to her suggestions by fitting this model into a curriculum perspective for an EFL context, and provide examples in case study format.

Lassche (2001) suggests that contexts can be described simply in terms of "who, what, where, when, how, and why" at three levels: the textual, the contextual (text-user), and the contextual (text-writer). These correspond to the three levels of question types given in Fig 2 above. That is, the textual refers to literal comprehension; text-user to contextual; evaluation to text-writer. I provide a complete text analysis in Lassche (in press) for the interested reader. In Lassche (2001), I appeal to the popular connotation of "context" without the technical jargon, recalling the recommendation from Widdowson (1984) that students should be trained as language users, not as linguists.

4. Case study

4.1 Typical high school textbook reading practice

In appendix 1, the first half of the reading text "Alone against the cold" is presented, taken from the high school English textbook written by Shim et al (2000). The full text runs some 800 words. The text is narrative genre, describing the exploits of the swimmer, Lynne Cox.

The text is a simplified version of an original story written for *Child Life* magazine, aimed for a native speaker audience in the United States aged 9-11. The comprehension exercises aimed at the reading text are comprised of “scanning questions” (4 items), multiple choice questions (5 items), and a writing section based on the reading (7 items).

In the textual dimension, students can consider the 5 WH questions targeting information contained within the text. Korean textbooks are usually replete with items like these, and figures 3 and 5 (below) serve as examples. The first task students are asked to perform when exposed to the text are the scanning questions, in figure 3. In the scanning section, students are asked to fill in the blank with a number, which they can find by referring directly in the text. Students may be able to find the needed information without even understanding the question. By matching local features in the answer stem (that is, the phrase “years old” with the same phrase in the reading), they can simply put in the missing element for the answer. In the case of item (1), the answer would be “eight”. This type of matching-language test-taking strategy is the type of discrete language process characteristic of accuracy-based approaches.

1. Scanning

- (1) How old was Lynne when she started swimming?
 _ _ _ _ _ years old.
- (2) How long did it take Lynne to cross the English Channel?
 Under _ _ _ _ _ hours.
- (3) What was the temperature of the water in the Bering Strait?
 _ _ _ _ _ degrees _ _ _ _ _.
- (4) How long did it take Lynne to cross the Bering Strait?
 _ _ _ hours and _ _ _ minutes.

FIGURE 3. SCANNING QUESTIONS

The ideal intent of such questions is to judge whether students comprehend the denotative meaning of the question (the meaning as

it would appear in the dictionary), which only scratch surface comprehension of the reading (Sheng, 2000). In this particular case, that would be the meanings of the following phrases: “How old & started swimming” “How long & to cross” (2x, with place differentiation); “What & temperature”. As well, the answers the students provide are either correct or incorrect, with the text providing the final answer. Students do not have choice of which questions to ask, or of which information is of most interest to them.

2. Multiple Choice

A. Choose the one that is not true to the story.

- (1) What made Don Gambriel see that Lynne was a special swimmer?
- (a) She had large bones.
 - (b) She had huge shoulders.
 - (c) She had great energy.
 - (d) She was overweight.
- (2) When she was just fifteen, she _____
- (a) broke a World Record for a woman
 - (b) broke a World Record for a woman or a man
 - (c) broke a World Record in crossing the English Channel
 - (d) swam from Alaska to Siberia
- (3) When Lynne swam across the Bering Strait, she did not apply the grease to her body because _____
- (a) many other ocean swimmers did not use it either
 - (b) she knew it would not work
 - (c) it smelled so bad that it made her sick
 - (d) her crew would have trouble pulling her out of the water

B. Choose the one that is true to the story.

- (1) When her father suggested to her that she swim across the Bering Strait, she hesitated because _____
- (a) it is too great a distance
 - (b) nobody had ever done it before
 - (c) the water is too cold to swim in
 - (d) the Soviet government did not permit her to do so
- (2) At the end of the swim, the Russians _____
- (a) looked very stern and stared at her
 - (b) were not smiling and seemed angry
 - (c) welcomed her like an old friend
 - (d) told her, “You made it, Lynne!”

FIGURE 4. MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS

In the multiple choice items, seen in Fig 4 above, there are recall of details (A1, A2, B2), as well as an attempt to get the students to demonstrate awareness of some cause/effect relationships (A3, B1). Again, with the answer stems (that is, options a,b,c,d) available to the student, there is less likelihood that students will demonstrate authentic awareness. They probably would resort to the item-answering strategies mentioned above. Not providing students with the answer stems would improve student comprehension, because it would require greater participation in answering, with longer discourse.

1. 본문에 나오는 이야기를 “I”를 주어로 하여 바꿔 써 봅시다. 빈 칸을 채워서 다음을 완성하세요.

- (1) I fell in love _____ when _____.
- (2) When my family _____ California, I joined a swim team.
- (3) I had large bones, _____.
I could swim _____ and never _____.
- (4) I got tired of _____ between the walls of a pool. I loved to swim in the ocean. Swimming in the ocean was like _____.
- (5) When I was fifteen, _____.
I swam _____ in just under ten hours.
- (6) One day my father _____ a map and pointed _____ between Siberia and Alaska. And he said, “_____.”
- (7) Finally I _____! I would dare to swim from _____ to _____ Siberia.

2. 1번에서 Lynne Cox 를 “I”로 바꿔 쓴 요령으로, Lynne Cox 가 The Bering Strait 를 횡단한 이야기를 간추려서 “I”를 주어로 바꿔 써 보세요.

FIGURE 5. WRITING PRACTICE

In the two writing exercises, shown in figure 5 above, students are encouraged to “re-write the events of the story into sentences with the subject ‘I’”. In item 2, they are to “write a summary of the story based on the procedure used in item 1.” Again, the sentences are literal sen-

tences taken verbatim from the story. The students compare the item stems with language from the text, and fill in the blanks. At most, the exercise has the students manipulate grammatical or lexical structures.

Though item 2 appears as a fluency-based item, with greater discourse length required, upon closer inspection the likely result would be repetition of the phrases given above, with minimal modifications of content (word switching with synonyms). Without any parameters for performance, students would likely place minimal effort in this exercise. Indeed, item 2's location at the bottom of the page provides room for little more than three or four sentences of student output. Another issue is why the instructions are given in Korean. Having students understand the exercise requirements in English is just as important in terms of developing overall student L2 proficiency. It also encourages the students to engage in L2 in meaning-based exchanges more often in class.

4.2 Suggested extended practice

What follows is recommended additional information categories that could serve as additional and extended practice. For a discussion of how to vary question format, that is, picture completion, dictation, multiple choice, matching, etc., I recommend Aebersold and Lee Field (2003), Nuttall (2000), and McDonough and Shaw (2003). Such variety is very important for maintaining the interest of the reader, when faced with potentially so many tasks, as Day and Park (2005) note.

In contrast to practice implied by Shim et al's (2000) textbook, initial scanning questions, I recommend that students be given a single task just prior to first-time exposure to the text. This focus question could be accuracy-based, literal comprehension question which requires the students to find a single of surface-feature, readily-apparent detail or fact from the text. A fact that can be easily scanned from the text would be suit this purpose, such as "How cold was the water in the Bering Strait?" Noting that this is a purely pedagogical purpose, the focus question may change from accuracy-based to a more fluency-based question type as student level develops, or as student familiarity with the particular genre grows. (Bear in mind also that recommended practice also involves previewing the text before the reading, a process I do not have time to discuss but recommend Aebersold and Lee Field (2001) and McDonough and Shaw (2003) for an excellent discussion). The students then read the text to find the answer.

The details required by the focus question should be sufficiently accessible for all the students to find, independently, in order to give them a sense of initial success with the text. The degree of collaboration among the students required to answer an accuracy-based question is a standard for item difficulty. For example, if a teacher finds that her students are talking among themselves to answer the question, are translating parts of the text or the question, or are using other coping strategies to deal with the item, then the item is too cognitively demanding to serve as an initial probe of the text. The item may be more suitable as a later literal comprehension question, though.

In the case study examined here, bearing in mind the narrative text type (ie genre), other literal comprehension questions could be formed after repeated exposures to the model text. These include questions such as:

- Who are the actors in the story? (Lynn Cox, her coach, her friends, the Russian captain)
- What happens in the story (ie recall details and events)? (swimming achievements)
- Why do these events occur (ie describe the cause/effect relationships in the story)? (character traits, effects of weather conditions)
- How does the story unfold (ie describe / identify the sequence of events)? (larger and larger challenges)

These questions correspond to categories suggested by Sheng (2000), as follows:

- a. *Recognition or recall of details*: identifying or recalling such facts as the names of characters, the time a story took place, the setting of a story, or an incident described in the story
- b. *Recognition or recall of the topic sentences/main ideas*: locating, identifying, or producing from memory an explicit statement or main idea from a selection
- c. *Recognition or recall of sequence*: recalling the order of incidents or actions explicitly stated in the material
- d. *Recognition or recall of descriptions*: identifying some similarities and differences in the text which are explicitly described by the author
- e. *Recognition or recall of cause and effect relationships*: identifying reasons for certain incidents, events, or characters' actions

explicitly stated in the selection

In the contextual text-user dimension, readers consider their own reading experience, self-evaluating how they are responding to the text. For example:

- What kind of texts do you like to read? Did you enjoy this reading?
- What kind of person is the main actor? Do you like her?
- How is the information organized in the story? Is it easy or difficult?
- Why are you reading this story?

These questions correspond to categories suggested by Sheng (2000), as follows:

- a. *Personal impression*: reacting to the context, events, and characters
- b. *Recognition of rhetorical devices*: identifying the rhetorical devices in the material and explaining their functions
- c. *Reactions to the style*: describing and reacting to the writer's use of language and stylistic devices
- d. *Evaluation of imagery*: identifying and assessing the effectiveness of the writer's sensory images

In the contextual text-writer dimension, the students are brought to an awareness of what Widdowson (1990) called the "reciprocity of writing." In this process, students consider the text development from the point of view of the writer. Since this information is not provided in the text, students have to infer from what information is provided, and evaluate form that basis. For example:

- How does the writer describe the main actor: positively or negatively?
- Why does the author include this information, but not that information?
- Why did the author write the text?
- What changes would you make to the story, if you wrote it?
- What evaluation can you make of these choices the writer has made?

These questions correspond to categories suggested by Sheng (2000), as follows:

- a. *Inferring supporting details*: guessing about additional facts the author might have included in the selection which would have made it more informative, interesting, or appealing
- b. *Inferring the main idea*: providing the main idea, theme, or moral which is not explicitly stated in the selection
- c. *Inferring consequence*: predicting what would happen in cause-effect relationships, or hypothesizing about alternative beginnings to a story if the author had not provided one, or predicting the ending of the story before reading it
- d. *Inferring cause and effect relationships*: guessing what caused a certain event and explaining the rationale
- e. *Objective evaluation*: judging the soundness of statements or events in the reading material based on external criteria, such as supporting evidence, reasons, and logic
- f. *Subjective evaluation*: making judgements about the statements or events presented based on internal criteria, such as one's biases, beliefs, or preferences
- g. *Judgements about appropriateness*: determining whether certain selections or parts of selections are relevant and contribute to resolving an issue or a problem
- h. *Judgement of worth, desirability, or acceptability*: judging the suitability of a character's actions in a particular incident based on the reader's personal values

III. DISCUSSION & CONCLUSIONS

This process echoes the critical literacy espoused by the genre-based approach, but without the technical jargon. In answering questions of this type, students are considering issues of context and resorting to their own creativity and reading experience. Such student responses do not have right or wrong assessments. Instead, students can be provided feedback on the clarity response, and whether students can adequately provide evidence in support of their ideas. Again, the amount of the expected response would be graded according to student L2 proficiency level. In dealing with younger students, proficiency in L1 may also be a factor, as students may not yet be able to demonstrate inference and logical causation due to their level of cognitive development.

Another important issue with regard to this process of considering the context of situation is the dynamic of student participation. In the accuracy-based classroom, the classroom dynamic tends to toward a teacher-fronted, teacher-controlled setting. In the fluency-based class, however, as students are analyzing contextual issues, peer interaction should be encouraged, and is in fact essential, to draw out deeper appreciation and multi-faceted exploration of the literary choices available to the writer and readers. As students come to appreciate what their fellows have to say, in contrast to their opinions, they have progressed along that negotiated learning curriculum from Nunan (1999, p. 19 - 24) mentioned earlier, and cited in full below:

- Step 1. Make instruction goals clear to learners.
- Step 2. Allow learners to create their own goals.
- Step 3. Encourage learners to use L2 outside the classroom
- Step 4. Raise awareness of learning processes.
- Step 5. Help learners identify their preferred learning styles and strategies
- Step 6. Encourage learner choice.
- Step 7. Allow learners to generate their own tasks.
- Step 8. Encourage learners to become teachers.
- Step 9. Encourage learners to become researchers.

I do not think that Nunan is suggesting here that developing a fluency-based curriculum proceeds in lockstep fashion according to this outline above. Instead, I think it more reasonable to see students as developing on all these “steps” simultaneously, and in fits and starts, rather than as a smoothly negotiated continuum. In terms of the reading curriculum discussed in this paper, students are becoming more aware of the writing process (step 4), are exploring their own literary preferences and those of their peers (step 5), have developed tools for exploring and evaluating texts through the examples the context-oriented questions provide (step 9). The collaborative nature of fluency-based exercises, and the definitive absence of right/wrong assessment of such exercises, places a premium on the exchange of opinions for their own sake. That is, the opinion of the students and their peers carry as much authority as that of the teacher, essentially fulfilling the mandate of step 9 as well.

In this paper, I have painted a picture of the current Korean high school classroom condition, and the conflicting pressures and expect-

ancies therein. A more pedagogically sound rationale for extended fluency-based reading comprehension is provided. Existing Korean method and textbook design is evaluated, and further question categories are suggested. The result is a methodological rationale for placing this fluency-based model within a curriculum suitable and flexible enough to fit the varied needs and skill levels of students and teachers within an EFL context, specifically in Korea.

The present effort has been made in order to encourage experimentation with the model suggested here, for teachers and students alike to react and respond, and by doing so continuing the dialogue for better teaching/learning models and better applications.

AUTHOR

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Reviews

BOOKS

- Task-Based Language Learning and Teaching** 131
Rod Ellis
Reviewed by Andrew Finch
- Group Dynamics in the Language Classroom** 139
Zoltn Drnyei and Tim Murphey
Reviewed by Douglas P. Margolis
- Rules, Patterns and Words: Grammar and Lexis in English Language Teaching** 145
Dave Willis.
Reviewed by Michael Duffy
- Questionnaires in Second Language Research: Construction, Administration, and Processing** 149
Zoltn Drnyei
Reviewed by Jin Sook Lee
- Teaching with Technology** 153
Lara Lomicka and Jessamine Cooke-Plagwitz (Eds.)
Reviewed by Gerry Lassche
- The Native Speaker: Myth and Reality** 157
Alan Davies
Reviewed by Tory S. Thorkelson

**Second Language Teaching: A View from
the Right Side of the Brain** 161

Marcel Danesi

Reviewed by Cheryl Choe

Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English 165
(4th ed.)

Della Summers (Ed.)

Reviewed by David E. Shaffer

SOFTWARE

**Streaming Speech: Listening and
Pronunciation for Advanced Learners
of English** 173

Richard Cauldwell

Reviewed by James Trotta

Task-Based Language Learning and Teaching

Rod Ellis.

Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003.

Pp. x + 387. (ISBN: 0 19 4421597 Paperback)

REVIEWED BY ANDREW FINCH

Rod Ellis has successfully continued his authorship of definitive treatises in this excellent book, in which he investigates the many issues of task-based language learning and teaching in depth and at length. The wealth of food for thought between the covers includes much needed reviews of relevant research for those interested in navigating the mine field of task-based theory and pedagogy, as well as informative and instructive expositions of the *what*, *why*, and *how* of Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT). In addition to extensive description of various issues, such as focused tasks and SLA (Chapter 5), Sociocultural SLA and tasks (Chapter 6), and the relation between tasks, production and language acquisition (Chapter 4), the author deals with (and derives) methodologies of task-based teaching (Chapter 8). He then takes us further, into task-based course design (Chapter 7) and task-based assessment (Chapter 9). The reader is thus given all the tools (and rationales) for using tasks in the language classroom, both at the local level (e.g., sequencing of tasks in individual lessons), and the more global ones (how to design task-based courses, how to use task-based assessment).

Ellis begins this book with an explanation of his reasons for writing it:

- * “Task” serves as the most obvious means for organizing teaching so that students can experience how a language is used as a tool for communicating.
- * “‘Task’ has served as both a research instrument for investigating

L2 acquisition and also as a construct that has been investigated in its own right” (p. 1).

- * The author’s wish to see Second Language Acquisition (SLA) studies become practical and inform language teaching.

The scheme of the book is thus mapped out, and the reader can expect a study of the ideas and research behind language-learning tasks, along with principles for their practical application. Because of the extensiveness of this investigation, Ellis might also have added that this book fills a gap in the literature, that there are very few books available on the pedagogy and practice of tasks as language units. Willis’ *A Framework for Task-Based Learning* (1996) and Nunan’s *Designing Tasks for the Communicative Classroom* (1989) remain the most well-known and widely used TBLT texts, with other ground-breakers such as Crookes & Gass’ *Tasks and Language Learning and Tasks in a Pedagogical Context* (1993a & b) hard to find in libraries and bookstores. I was happy to see, therefore, that Ellis acknowledges the general confusion of definitions and approaches in TBLT and strives “for a rounded, balanced view of how tasks have figured in both SLA and language pedagogy” (p. 1). He also mentions that:

This is not a “how to” book. It is a book about task-based research and teaching. It seeks not to instruct, but to illuminate, and hopefully to challenge. It attempts to identify the problems as well as the advantages of task-based teaching. (pp. 1-2)

What follows in Chapters 1 to 10 is an excellent investigation into the contributing factors leading up to the present state of TBLT research, along with valuable practical insights for the language teacher. This exploration begins in Chapter 1 by looking at various definitions of the term “task,” so that the author can derive his own definition. Since “task” has suffered the fate of the associated term “communicative,” in becoming all things to all people, this is a valuable exercise, and having reviewed some of the many definitions in the literature, Ellis presents his own “criterial features” (pp. 9-10), which are worth quoting here:

- * A task is a work plan.
- * A task involves a primary focus on meaning.
- * A task involves real-world processes of language use.

- * A task can involve any of the four language skills.
- * A task engages cognitive processes.
- * A task has a clearly defined communicative outcome.

These features lead to a “framework for describing tasks” (p. 21), which Ellis refers to during the rest of the book:

TABLE 1. A FRAMEWORK FOR DESCRIBING TASKS

Design feature	Description
1. Goal	The general purpose of the task, e.g., to practice the ability to describe objects concisely; to provide and opportunity for the use of relative clauses.
2. Input	The verbal or non-verbal information supplied by the task, e.g., pictures, a map, written text.
3. Conditions	The way in which the information is presented, e.g., split vs. shared information, or the way in which it is to be used, e.g., converging vs. diverging.
4. Procedures	The methodological procedures to be followed in performing the task, e.g., group vs. pair work, planning time vs. no planning time.
5. Predicted outcomes: Product	The “product” that results from completing a task, e.g., a completed table, a route drawn on a map, a list of differences between two pictures. The predicted product can be “open,” i.e., allow for several possibilities, or “closed,” i.e., allow for only one “correct” solution.
Process	The linguistic and cognitive processes the task is hypothesized to generate.

Chapter 1 then continues with an extensive history of TBLT research, from the early 1970s to the present day, showing how the use of tasks for language learning has been closely linked to developments in the study of second language acquisition. This review takes us from early descriptive research to later more theoretically based research, and covers a wide spectrum, from Corder’s “clinical elicitation” (1973) to Krashen’s Input Hypothesis (1981), Long’s Interaction Hypothesis (1981), and the associated sociocultural approach to learning which has

emerged from the work of researchers such as Vygotsky (1978).

Chapter 2 focuses on “Tasks, Listening Comprehension and SLA,” offering an interactive model of listening comprehension. Chapter 3 then considers “Tasks, Interaction and SLA,” delving deeply into the pros and cons of the Interaction Hypothesis and presenting a review of research investigating the interactions that tasks give rise to. This review is typical of the rest of the book in that it is extensive and serves as a good reference for interested ELT educators. Indeed, the whole book does a very good job of presenting the issues involved in TBLT and SLA, and it is good to see these expounded so comprehensively and understandably. Chapter 4, “Tasks, Production and Language Acquisition,” also has a review of research, covering design factors and task implementation factors. While Ellis notes that this research says little about acquisition, he says that “task-based research that has examined learner production is of both theoretical and practical relevance” (p. 137). Thus:

There is evidence that task design variables influence fluency. Tasks that (1) provide contextual support, (2) have familiar or involving topics, (3) pose a single demand, (4) are closed, and (5) have a clear inherent structure are likely to promote fluency. In contrast, design variables do not seem to impact so much on accuracy, although (1) tasks without contextual support, (2) open tasks, and (3) tasks with a clear inherent structure have been found to lead to more accurate language use. (p. 127)

In terms of task implementation, “Providing learners with time for online planning appears to encourage accuracy. In contrast, the opportunity for strategic planning affects fluency and complexity more strongly” (p. 136).

While Chapters 3 and 4 examine unfocused production tasks, Chapter 5 looks at “Focused Tasks and SLA,” a particularly relevant topic for ELT practitioners in Korea, where “form-focused instruction” has recently become a buzz word, threatening to re-institute the teacher-fronted Grammar-Translation Method in a different guise. When it is the *tasks* that are form-focused, rather than the *teaching method*, there are a number of advantages, not least of which is that learning occurs in an interactive environment:

Focused tasks are of value to teachers because they provide a means of teaching specific linguistic features communicatively under real operating conditions. (p. 142)

Having examined the psycholinguistic rationale for focused tasks through another research review, this time of cognitive theories of language acquisition, Ellis looks at the factors involved in designing focused tasks. These include (a) structure-based production tasks, (b) comprehension tasks, and (c) consciousness-raising tasks. The chapter continues with a discussion of “explicit methodological techniques” (p. 170) and concludes by noting that focused tasks serve three major purposes:

They can be (1) “language activating/fluency stretching” or (2) “knowledge constructing” ... That is, focused tasks can be directed at providing opportunities for learners to use targeted features that are already part of their repertoire or they can be aimed at enabling learners to acquire new forms or to restructure their interlanguage. (3) Focused tasks can also contribute to the development of explicit linguistic knowledge. (p. 172)

In Chapter 6, “Sociocultural SLA and Tasks,” Ellis explores a very interesting recent development in SLA research, i.e., the “sociocultural theory of mind” (p. 175). Rather than seeing the human mind as a “‘black box’ which ‘contains’ the knowledge that results from processing linguistic input and is then accessed for output” (p. 175), this view of learning presents a very different model, in which “mediated minds” are developed out of social activity. According to this model, learning, including language learning, is seen as emerging from dialogs (including “private speech”), and development is not so much a matter of the taking in and processing of knowledge but rather taking part in social activity. The primary means of mediation is verbal interaction, and the “language acquisition device” is located in the interaction that takes place between speakers, rather than inside their heads (p. 177). This approach has important implications for language teachers, since it suggests that “tasks can be seen as tools for constructing collaborative acts” (p. 178) and that they can cater for learning by providing opportunities for learners:

* To use new language structures and items through collaboration

with others;

- * To subsequently engage in more independent use of the structures they have internalized in relatively undemanding tasks;
 - * To finally use the structures in cognitively more complex tasks.
- (p. 178)

The “sociocultural theory of mind” has grown out of the work of Vygotsky (1978), among others, and focuses on the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) as a means of scaffolding learning. Since scaffolding and activity theory (Lantolf, 2000) involve attending to both the cognitive demands of a task and the affective states of the person attempting the task, sociocultural learning has other important implications, in that it is not the tasks themselves that create the context for learning, but rather the way the participants carry out the task. Thus, the activity becomes a tool that can be used by learners to identify what sort of assistance can allow appropriate ZPDs to be created. Van Lier’s “learning affordances” (Van Lier, 2000) come to mind at this point. He offers the analogy of a leaf in the jungle. To an ant, this leaf might be a source of food; to a bird, it might be useful in nest-building a frog might want to sit on or under the leaf, while a caterpillar would probably want to eat the leaf. A medicine-man would use the leaf for its healing qualities. Each user has a different purpose and method of using the leaf, and these are all appropriate. This enables us to see tasks as learning affordances, offering learning opportunities to language learners and enabling them to take what is most appropriate for them out of the task. The implementation of such an approach to teaching and learning takes us into a language classroom in which a structured series of tasks can be used by different groups for different purposes, according to their differing ZPDs. It also means that tasks can be viewed on different levels and can even be performed a number of times, offering different learning opportunities to the participants each time:

...the same task can result in very different kinds of activity when performed by different learners and, also, ... it can result in indifferent activities when performed by the same learners at different times.

(p. 185)

Despite the wealth of issues and practical suggestions offered by this stage of the book, its scope continues to become more and more

comprehensive, as Chapter 7 takes us into “Designing Task-Based Language Courses,” Chapter 8 looks at the methodology of task-based teaching, and Chapter 9 deals with task-based assessment. These are all weighty subjects in themselves, and Ellis deals with them in the same detailed manner as he does in the rest of the book. Having explained the issues involved, he reviews the relevant research, presents alternative possibilities, and summarizes the current situation. Finally, after a “Review of Task-Based Pedagogy” (Chapter 10), the book contains a very useful glossary of task-related items.

In conclusion, *Task-Based Language Learning and Teaching* is a comprehensive reference book relating to every aspect of the task-based paradigm. It covers the often-confusing field of “tasks” in a logical and informative manner, providing useful research reviews for readers interested in studying various aspects in greater depth. While being a valuable addition to the library of any TEFL practitioner, this is not to say that the book contains solely reference material. In his endeavor to make SLA research more practical, Ellis has succeeded in making his findings useful for language teachers and course designers alike. In all, there is a huge amount of detailed information in this book, and it would take many more pages to do justice to the attention and effort that has gone into its making. From every perspective, this book is highly recommended for all ELT educators interested in including the principles and techniques of task-based learning and teaching in their practices.

THE REVIEWER

Dr. Andrew Finch is currently assistant professor of English Education at Kyungpook National University. Andrew was born in Wales and educated in England (M.A. music), where he had various middle school teaching positions before coming to Korea (1989) to learn *baduk*.

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Group Dynamics in the Language Classroom

Zoltan Dornyei and Tim Murphey.
Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003.
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REVIEWED BY DOUGLAS P. MARGOLIS

FACING THE GROUP

In 1998, Konkuk University in Seoul asked me to teach pronunciation skills to an eager class of English majors that numbered 138. Fortunately, Konkuk University has since changed to smaller class sizes, but at the time, there was nothing to do but accept the challenge and, resisting the institutional design to become a lecture course on phonology, commit to teaching pronunciation through practice activities even to such a large group.

To accomplish this, I relied on insights from group dynamics learned during my undergraduate days. Few works in the ELT field have focused on group dynamics, which refers not to small group work, but rather to the dynamics of the whole class as a group. One, Jill Hadfield's (1992) *Classroom Dynamics*, pioneered attention to this topic in the L2 field. A second work, Ehrman and Dornyei's (1998) treatment of interpersonal dynamics, offered a research synthesis that provides a theoretical overview of related concerns. Yet apart from these two works, there has not been book-length treatment of this subject in our field. Dornyei and Murphey's *Group Dynamics in the Language Classroom* fills this gap.

Dornyei and Murphey define group dynamics as "the internal characteristics [of a group] and its evolution over time" and they argue that group dynamics "determine[s] the climate of the classroom" (p. 4). They further underline the importance of group dynamics for teachers by observing that "groups have been found to have a 'life of their

own'—that is, individuals in groups behave differently from the way they do outside the group" (p. 3). Thus, access to group dynamics knowledge provides critical insight about group strengths and weaknesses that can direct teachers' efforts to improve class effectiveness.

Dornyei and Murphey see group dynamics as more than a domain of knowledge. They suggest that teachers need a "group sensitive approach and attitude" (p. 2). They argue that "in a 'good' group, the L2 classroom can turn out to be such a pleasant and inspiring environment that the time spent there is a constant source of success and satisfaction for teachers and learners alike" (p. 3). In this sense, group dynamics may have a great influence on language acquisition.

CONTENTS

The book is part of the Cambridge Language Teaching Library, a series dedicated to covering central issues in the ELT field. The authors target teachers, not researchers, so practitioners in Korea should find the material straightforward and practical. Rather than merely theorize about groups, Dornyei and Murphey aim to give to teachers tools, or strategies, that can be employed in the classroom. They do provide theoretical background, building upon the foundation offered by Ehrman and Dornyei (1998), but emphasize application, offering examples from their own teaching experiences to illustrate key issues.

The book is divided into ten chapters, plus a preface, introduction, reference list, and helpful index. The authors use the preface to introduce themselves and explain how the book project was initiated. The introduction provides rationale for a book on group dynamics while also aiming to recruit the reader into a radical attempt to practice group dynamics and community building even within the constraints of the static pages of a book.

Those who have read Dornyei's (2001) *Motivational Strategies in the Language Classroom* will recognize a similar structure of callouts, reflective questions, activities, examples, introductory chapter outlines and chapter summaries to help readers digest the material. Some readers might find the sidebars and callouts too much at times, perhaps producing a cluttered appearance, yet the information they provide is relevant and interesting.

Chapter 1 examines what a group is and how individual students

become a group. Dornyei and Murphey identify factors that enhance “intermember” attraction and acceptance, and suggest several techniques for promoting acceptance, including ice-breakers, encouraging students to learn each other’s names, and moving students frequently.

For teachers with disciplinary concerns, Chapter 2 explores issues related to managing the class, including establishing rules, norms, and discipline, which Dornyei and Murphy contend to be an important part of the group formation process. In Chapter 3, they return to Ehrman and Dornyei’s (1998) framework of four primary developmental stages: a) group formation, b) transition, c) performing, and d) dissolution. The chapter briefly discusses the stages and important concerns for teachers to prioritize during each.

Chapter 4 looks at the pros and cons of group cohesiveness and how good group relationships can enhance productivity and learning effectiveness. In addition, the chapter provides strategies that can help teachers promote group cohesiveness in their classrooms.

In Chapter 5, readers may recognize a little overlap with Dornyei’s (2001) book on motivation as he and Murphey analyze the classroom environment’s contribution to group dynamics. Issues, such as spatial organization, temperature, light, decoration, and the like are discussed to reveal environmental strategies that might enhance group dynamics.

A chapter that may prove more useful, especially for those with little leadership training experience, is Chapter 6, where Dornyei and Murphey discuss the teacher’s role as group leader and the different leadership choices teachers need to make. They provide several different views of leadership, including a personal favorite, from Lao-tse:

But of a good leader, who talks little when his work is done, his aim fulfilled, they will all say: “We did this ourselves.” (p. 99)

The chapter describes different leadership styles and lists the attributes of effective facilitators. The authors emphasize that student commitment to the group is a function of the teacher’s own investment and belief in the group’s importance.

After the exploration of the teacher’s role in the group, the authors turn their attention to the students’ roles in Chapter 7 and the importance of modeling and helping students fulfill their roles effectively. They discuss potential role problems that students may experience and how teachers might address them.

Chapter 8 looks beyond student roles and examines potential problems that might arise, such as apathy or conflicts. The chapter serves as a trouble-shooting guide. First they examine possible causes and then consider tactics that might resolve the issue. Teachers who have experienced walking into a classroom where nobody is willing to participate or where hostility seems bubbling at the surface might find this chapter particularly helpful.

An area that many teachers take for granted, and may ignore because the value to the learning enterprise is not so visible within the context of the current class, is providing closure to the group at the end of the semester. That's the topic of Chapter 9. Proper closure, Dornyei and Murphy argue, affirms the group's work, helps motivate students for ongoing learning, yields important feedback for improving the course, and facilitates emotional maturation for each participant.

Finally, chapter ten concludes the book with a handy summary, a brief note about considering the whole school environment when practicing the suggestions detailed in the book and a short closing statement to round out the books' group dynamic.

VALUE

The book is a useful resource for teachers, especially those with little experience or confidence in handling groups. The ideas presented in the book can improve not only the language class experience but also one's group experiences in general. Rather than offering quick fixes and gimmicks, the book elaborates a four-staged model of group development and highlights how teachers can enhance group effectiveness at each stage. For teachers with a class of 138 students, or hopefully smaller classes, the book offers practical ideas to enlist student support in the project of creating worthwhile and efficient learning communities.

THE REVIEWER

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Rules, Patterns and Words: Grammar and Lexis in English Language Teaching

Dave Willis.

Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003.

Pp. viii + 237. (ISBN: 0 521 536197 7 Paperback)

REVIEWED BY MICHAEL DUFFY

Most language teachers will be familiar with the “learning paradox”. They have taught their students a language form, such as *do*-questions or verb inflections; the students have practiced it and appear to have learned it thoroughly, but then when they need to produce the form spontaneously, they consistently fail to do so, coming up with sentences like *What means this word?* or *My brother live in Seoul*. Obviously, there is some mismatch between what teachers teach and what learners learn.

What Dave Willis sets out to do in this book is to try to narrow the gap between these two. He starts from the premise that second language learning is, in Halliday’s (1975) words, “learning how to mean,” not merely learning to produce correct sentences. The first stage in the learning process, he suggests, is improvisation rather like a child acquiring its first language, second language learners deploy their limited stock of words and phrases as best they can to communicate meaning. The task of the teacher is to manage the phase between this and the final stage, spontaneous use. Willis terms this intermediate stage “consolidation.”

The core of the book (Chapters 4 to 7) is a detailed description of English grammar, heavily influenced by the research of the COBUILD grammar corpus project. Willis covers the traditional territory of grammars under the headings “the grammar of structure” (clauses, noun and verb phrases, negation, questions) and “the grammar of orientation” (determiners in the NP, tense, aspect, and modality

in the VP). He points up some inadequacies in traditional labels (present and past tenses, for example, do not necessarily refer to present and past time), but I think more interestingly for the teacher, he emphasizes the close relationship between grammar and lexis corpus data makes it possible to identify classes of words having similar or related meanings which behave in the same way syntactically. For instance, there are a number of “double object” verbs like *give*, so that the pattern “give”+N+N (*Give me the book.*) can also occur with *send*, *bring*, and *sell*.

Knowing what class a lexical item belongs to enables the language user to predict what kinds of words and structures may follow it. The predictability of language is even more apparent in the case of lexical phrases and patterns, or “chunks.” “Most discourse,” Willis observes, “is made up of frequently occurring phrases” (p. 144). These include items that are commonly covered in course materials, like “polywords” (including phrasal verbs and adverbial phrases), frames (like *from a . . . point of view*), fixed sentences (*Hi, how are you?*), and sentence stems (*Do you mind if I . . .?*). More original is the final category that he distinguishes, “patterns.” These are phrases or frames linked with particular classes of words, and they constitute the largest and most complex category of “pre-assembled” language. For teaching purposes, they can be organized in various ways: structurally, functionally, or notionally. One example from the many that Willis gives concerns the use of the preposition *for*, for which he enumerates three distinct meanings: How long? (either time or distance), Why? (including *wait/look/ask for*), and Who wants or needs? (*I’ll do it for you It’s good/difficult for you*). While he proposes that systematizing such collocations will be pedagogically useful, Willis concedes that “the main problem with phrases is that there are so many of them . . . they simply have to be learnt” (p.166).

Given that Willis sees improvisation as the starting point for learning, it is not surprising that he advocates a task-based approach to teaching. He identifies three phases in each task — recognition, system building, and exploration with the balance between them depending on the area to be learned. Some aspects of structure will be readily assimilated; Japanese learners, like Koreans, have no great problems with English word-order, for example. Others, such as the distinction between the past simple and present perfect tenses, or the use of the passive voice, are more complex and subtle, and call for more in-

dependent exploration on the student's part. Where should this exploration be directed? Willis strongly commends using the "pedagogic corpus," in other words, texts that the student has already encountered, as these will be more meaningful than something chosen arbitrarily. Texts will also be more suitable for exploration, he suggests, if they are authentic rather than concocted for the classroom. In any case, all parts of the system will be learned gradually, so all will need to go through the entire learning cycle.

A particularly interesting part of the book (Chapter 9) deals with the differences between written and spoken language. Speech has a looser structure than writing, additive rather than embedded, with ellipses, fillers, formulas and colloquial discourse markers like *okay* and *well*. Willis suggests that it is unfair to students to teach only a language based on written style, and that to prepare them for the real world, there is a need to provide spontaneous speech data in the classroom. Reading this, I was reminded of the difficulty that many Korean students have with the meaning of the discourse marker *by the way*, something that would seem to call for the help of authentic input.

In conclusion, Willis notes that teachers, like learners, move from improvisation to consolidation to spontaneous use. To extend the analogy with his analysis of teaching and learning, I suppose that reading this book should count as an occasion or opportunity for recognition an acknowledgement that there is a gap in one's approach to teaching waiting to be filled. One test of its usefulness would then be to see to what extent readers will take on board the teaching program he espouses. I feel it is a book that makes considerable demands on the reader. Willis is certainly a lucid writer, but the ideas he presents are not simple. Therefore, I would say that the target reader is a teacher of some years' experience, and preferably of a grammatical bent. Some might feel that the author's proposals should best be taken as counsels of perfection, protesting that institutional and time constraints would make it exceedingly difficult to implement such a thoroughgoing program in its entirety. Nevertheless, second language learning is undeniably a slow and demanding process, and I am sure that many teachers will find something in Willis' detailed ideas, and especially in the more than forty examples of teaching exercises which he gives to illustrate his approach, which they can take into their classrooms.

THE REVIEWER

Michael Duffy holds an M.Phil. in Psychology from Southampton University and has been teaching in Korea for since 1988. Before that, he taught English in the UK and Hong Kong. He is currently a visiting professor at the National Railroad College in Uiwang, Gyeonggi-do. Email: mgduffy45@hotmail.com

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Questionnaires in Second Language Research: Construction, Administration, and Processing

Zoltn Drnyei.

Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2003.

Pp. viii + 156. (ISBN 0 8058 3908 9 Paperback)

REVIEWED BY JIN SOOK LEE

The most commonly used instrument in the study of language learning attitudes, motivation, and strategies is questionnaires. Yet, the depth of knowledge needed for the construction, administration, and analyses of questionnaires has generally been overshadowed by a false perception that “anybody with a bit of common sense can construct a good questionnaire” (p. 1). Zoltn Drnyei’s *Questionnaires in Second Language Research* is a much needed reference that unpacks questionnaire-related methodological issues for second language researchers. Written in a concise and clear manner, this introductory book is divided into four main chapters covering (a) the definition and methodological pros and cons of questionnaires, (b) the format and construction of questionnaire items, (c) the sampling and administration process, and (d) the coding, analysis, and reporting of questionnaire data.

The personal touch of Drnyei’s insights from his experiences with over 10,000 language learners’ questionnaire data differentiates this book from other social science texts that have dealt with questionnaires. For example, he provides helpful hints about how certain types of questions such as rank order items are difficult to analyze because “we cannot simply count the means for each item across the sample” (p. 45). He also shares an account of inaccurate data analysis that resulted from the poor wording of a question and advises readers to avoid items that are likely to be answered in the same way because

statistical programs treat them as missing data (p. 55). Although insights like these are extremely helpful, the reader is often left wondering how he solved such unanticipated problems. Engaging in research involves not only a thorough understanding of the theoretical frameworks and empirical methodologies, but it also requires a great deal of problem-solving skills. I was initially attracted to this book because I wanted to see how an expert researcher like Drnyei approached the task of constructing, administering, and processing questionnaires. Despite his few attempts to share some of his insights, I finished the book with a feeling that a fuller and more candid documentation of the procedures would have been much more useful for novice researchers in demystifying the processes and issues faced by researchers in real-life situations.

This book is one of the first attempts focusing on questionnaire usage in second language research along with Brown's *Using Surveys in Language Programs* (2001). One of the merits of this book lies in the breadth of topics that Drnyei covers from details such as reminders to thank the participants to content layout of the questionnaire items to broader issues of validity and reliability. He takes the reader, step by step, through the entire process of questionnaire design, use, and analysis, including a section on how to present and report survey data with examples and guidelines for construction charts and tables. Drnyei brilliantly summarizes key guidelines for questionnaires based on his own experiences and those of other scholars, such as Oppenheim, Gillman, and Brown, with a specific focus on second language-related research issues. Moreover, the appendix has a list of references to sample questionnaires categorized by various topics such as needs analysis, language learning strategies, and attitudes. In light of the author's advice that the virtue in questionnaire writing is to plagiarize good quality questions, with proper acknowledgement, of course, this is a great resource for second-language researchers (p. 52). What I appreciate most about Drnyei's coverage of questionnaire use is his attempt to incorporate open-ended questions, which has generally been discouraged within the quantitative tradition. His vision of the benefits of mixed-methodological approaches to the study of second language research is a statement that deserves much attention. Based on my personal experiences with both open-ended and close-ended items, I can say with confidence that it has often been the open-ended items that have provided some of my most insightful data that has helped to ex-

plain the patterns that were to be found in the quantitative analysis.

As I read the book, I was somewhat confused about the audience of readers that the author had in mind. It was apparent that most of the explanations throughout the book were written for novice researchers, yet the sections that covered analytic procedures such as item and factor analyses presumed a fairly high level of knowledge about various statistical procedures. It seems that the author at times compromised depth for breadth. For example, in the data analysis sections, the brief summaries did not provide readers with enough information to develop a clearer understanding of how to process questionnaire data. Drnyei explains that the simplest way of selecting items is “to compute correlation coefficients for each potential item with the total score” (p. 63), but does not explain how the total score is computed. Further guidance to specific readings on the statistical techniques involved in second language research would add great value to this reference book. In addition, future editions of this book need to address the use of questionnaires in cross-cultural and cross-linguistic studies. How can we identify culturally-biased items? How can we ensure that the translated version of the questionnaires will measure the same constructs? Is there a methodologically sound and rigorous way to translate a questionnaire? As an educator working with students who are interested in comparing language learners and native speakers across different cultural groups, these are critical issues that need to be addressed in order to produce reliable and valid data.

It is clear that Drnyei invested a lot of time and energy to make the content of this book easily accessible and comprehensible with the use of bullets, summary headings, checklists of main points, and illustrative examples. I recommend this book to individuals who are seeking a simple and short orientation to the ins and outs of questionnaire use in second language research. However, for the reader that is seriously considering the use of questionnaires in his or her research, this book may fall short of the details needed for a clearer understanding of the “what to do’s” and “how to do’s” of questionnaire use.

THE REVIEWER

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Teaching with Technology

Lara Lomicka and Jessamine Cooke-Plagwitz (Eds.).
Boston: Heinle & Heinle, 2004.
Pp. viii + 271. (ISBN 1 4130 0046 0 Paperback)

REVIEWED BY GERRY LASSCHE

Teaching with Technology is the first publication of Heinle and Heinle's newly launched Professional Series in Language Instruction. The volume is best used as a main reading for a CALL course. Teachers without prior experience in using computers in the classroom and familiarity with the latest terms and software would be advised to start with easier reading. Teachers who want to investigate more of the nuts and bolts to such approaches are advised to start with something like Bard William's (1997) *Web Publishing for Teachers*, due to the cryptic nature of the descriptions (25 chapters in about 260 pages of text) provided in this volume, which focuses on describing various techniques in the form of various technological applications for implementing language learning.

The book is divided into five sections. Section 1, covering four chapters, describes various technological applications for the classroom. These descriptions tend to be quite technical, and are provided without much methodological rationalization. Section 2, comprises six chapters, and discusses how technology was implemented into course design. These chapters are more anecdotal and interesting to read, but the program specifications tend to be quite unique, and so applicability to the reader is sometimes difficult to imagine. Section 3 has six chapters and concentrates on the use of web-based, streaming technology for L2 classrooms. This section again tends toward the use of technology-specific language, but does present some convincing arguments for developing independent learning strategies in students who use technology. Section 4, of five chapters, is to me the most interesting section, due in large part to the strong thematic, comple-

mentary connections between the articles. They discuss issues that have seen little attention elsewhere, including comparisons of technology options on language learning, and text analysis of various CMC interactions. The last section has four chapters and tries to sketch out important areas that are in need of further research.

Several observations struck me as I was reading: first, the lack of a connection to an EFL setting; second, the lack of seasoned contributors and reviewers; and third, the application of technology to what seemed to me to be largely high-intermediate- or advanced-level students only. First, references were made continuously to ACTFL, and almost none to TESOL. Whereas TESOL is clearly an international organization, ACTFL (*American Council for Teachers*) is US-centric and oriented toward ESL only, thereby excluding EFL from the discussion.. According to the author information included in the book, each of the authors was based in an American university. Many expatriate teachers find themselves in conditions where English is not the operating language for software; this is critical, since article after article added the caveat that technological applications require substantial amounts of time investment to manage the courseware. This investment would increase exponentially when conducted in a language not spoken by the expatriate teacher. Secondly, in scanning the reviewers and contributors, no familiar names, except for that of Chapelle, were to be found. Noticeably absent were names such as Warschauer, Levy, Salaberry, and Blake. This is not necessarily good nor bad, but it is a bit curious. Thirdly, the classroom applications described were, in the majority, designed for upper-language-level classrooms. In the EFL context, teachers will more often find themselves working with young learners (not mentioned at all in this volume), or with lower-level students (Kim and Margolis, 2000).

Upon opening the volume and being greeted by a font size that almost required the use of a magnifying glass to read and text that required the use of supplementary explanations and appendices that were only available online, my expectations of the volume were not met. There was also a lack of pedagogy: background concepts did receive scholarly citations, but once classroom processes were described, any underpinning pedagogical principles were left unsaid or assumed. Thus, the emphasis seemed to be on the “technology” rather than the “teaching,” which the title of the volume asserted.

For the reasons stated above, I find it possible to recommend this

book to only seasoned, tech-savvy enthusiasts in Korea who work in upper-level language classrooms. Suggestions I have made elsewhere (Lassche, 2000) are applicable here as well: future volumes in the series should take care to not limit themselves to the endorsement of fashionable techniques, or to such highly specific classroom conditions. As well, a more balanced approach to issues, with more obvious pedagogical support, would be advisable.

THE REVIEWER

Gerry Lassche, (MATESOL, RSA CELTA), at the time of writing this review had been in Korea for eight years and was the lecturing professor of TESOL methodology and TESOL practicum in Ajou University's TESOL Certificate program. His publications include issues in materials design, language testing, and e-based language learning. He is now at Miyagi Gakuin Women's College in Sendai, Japan. Email: glassche@yahoo.ca

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The Native Speaker: Myth and Reality

Alan Davies.

Clevedon, UK: Multilingual Matters Ltd.

Pp. x + 237. (ISBN: 1 85359 622 1 Paperback)

REVIEWED BY TORY S. THORKELSON

In his preface, Alan Davies states that *The Native Speaker: Myth and Reality* is “a kind of introduction to aspects of sociolinguistics using the native speaker as the focal point” (p. ix). In doing so, he examines who the “native speaker” is, what he/she knows and the relationship between being a second-language learner and native speaker and whether the “later can become the former” (p. 6). Undoubtedly, this is a very large area of enquiry for a book of only 237 pages but, through a solid overview of the relevant research in each chapter, he certainly managed to deal with many of the issues related to his chosen topic and leave the reader with some definite food for thought.

The ten chapters of the book cover the relevant research areas (including psycholinguistics, linguistics, sociolinguistics, communicative competence, assessment, and SLA research) as each relates to the native speaker as both a theoretical concept and as a real speaker of a given language, or languages.

In Chapter 1, the author discusses whether a true definition of “native speaker” exists and what the dominant model is for language-teaching and other institutionalized language uses. Chapter 2 deals with psycholinguistics and the question of whether non-native and native speakers use separate or different systems as their language develops and also how second language acquisition (SLA) occurs. The author’s conclusion is that the native and non-native speakers both behave differently linguistically and that both have fully developed and functioning language systems. Next, Chapter 3 deals with the theoretical question of the kind of grammar a native speaker uses and how it differs from that of a non-native speaker’s. This also leads to a dis-

cussion of various pedagogic grammars which try to explain how a non-native speaker's grammar is ultimately and intentionally molded to match that of a native speaker. In Chapter 4, the theoretical question of the extent to which being a native speaker is a social construct composed of choice of identity and membership in the linguistic community (which is, in turn, created as much by attitude as by language ability and knowledge) is dealt with. Chapter 5 asks whether it is possible to be a native speaker of more than one language or of no language at all. While non-native speakers can in principle achieve native-like proficiency, communicative competence is a separate issue dealt with in Chapter 6. The theoretical question of Chapter 6 is whether the native speaker is privileged in terms of communicative competence, and the link between language and culture is discussed briefly. Next, Chapter 7 explores norms and intelligibility, and asks the question of whether intelligibility depends on there being established norms and, if so, what status these norms should have. A badly constructed view of language would state that certain forms are correct and others not correct in all situations. This cannot be so since correctness is based on context, if at all. Chapter 8 evaluates the concept of the "native speaker" as postmodernism and post-colonialism have affected it. The issue of "centrality language" in loss of identity is raised as it pertains to francophones, for example, and it is concluded that coping with and accepting a dominant global language like English depends on the individual community confidently accepting and pursuing their own method to resolve the linguistic and cultural challenges. Next, Chapter 9 examines the contribution of language assessment to our understanding of the native speaker and looks at evidence of second language acquisition research (SLAR) into the idea of the exceptional learner. Recent evidence suggests that there is no discrete boundary and that the native speaker/non-native speaker relationship is, in fact, a continuum. Finally, Chapter 10 serves to clarify the overall view of the native speaker and link the native speaker to the preceding discussion of identity, and in turn, to the idea of standard language and proficiency. The question is asked whether an adult non-native speaker can become a native speaker of a target language.

While Davies comes forward with a number of characteristics for both the native speaker (one who acquires their native language in childhood and has intuition, fluency, grammatical knowledge, and so on) and the L2 learner (one who has not acquired the target language

in childhood, but can still develop all the relevant and necessary skillsto become a speaker of their chosen second or other language), in the end, he argues that an L2 learner can become proficient in a target language of their choice but only rarely can become a native-like speaker given the time, effort, and exposure to the target language they must make up for when compared to a native speaker who has been actively developing and using their language since childhood.

In the end, the author concludes that the native speaker/non-native speaker distinction is a power relationship involving confidence and identity. A relationship wherein someone who is a native speaker of a given language cannot be a non-native speaker and is, in turn, defined and perceived negatively as both someone who does not view themselves as a native speaker of the target language and someone who is not viewed by native speakers as such. This, in turn, gives a real sense of power, confidence, and identity to the native speaker that is exclusionary of the non-native speaker. Ultimately, membership in the target language group is both an issue of acceptance by the native speakers themselves as well as the development by the non-native speaker of a strong sense of confidence and identity in the target language.

As I read his book and considered his arguments, it was not always easy to accept what Davies had to say. I certainly agree that second language learners who are accepted as “native speakers” are rare indeed. However, much as I deplore the idea of an exclusionary, powerful group of native speakers keeping non-native speakers from attaining the sense of identity to complement their burgeoning linguistic skills, it certainly comes as no surprise to me, as someone who is in the process of learning a different language for the third or fourth time. One issue that I think is key both to Davies’ book as well as the struggle I see many of my students going through with English is the desire to measure their success against the yardstick of the native-speaking English speaker or teacher. So long as the second-language learner is reaching for such a lofty (and unrealistic) goal, there is little chance of them ever feeling the sense of confidence, power, and identity (not to mention achievement) that the author talks about. By debunking the myth of the “perfect” native speaker as well as putting the non-native speaker’s needs and sense of identity back into the equation, Davies has indeed put the question of who the native speaker is and what his/her role should be in and out of the class-

room back into perspective.

THE REVIEWER

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Second Language Teaching: A View from the Right Side of the Brain

Marcel Danesi.

Dordrecht, Germany: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2003.

Pp xi + 214 . (ISBN 1 4020 1489 9 Paperback)

REVIEWED BY CHERYL CHOE

Danesi's *Second Language Teaching* offers a practical introduction to the application of neuroscience to the teaching of a second language. It provides information on the relation between how the brain learns and how this can be used to construct classroom language-learning activities. It evaluates methods and approaches from the perspective of brain functioning, and it also illustrates how teaching can unfold with actual examples from several languages.

In the first chapter of the book, Danesi describes the traditional methods whose inadequacies have led to experimentation with neuro-linguistic methods in second language teaching (SLT). He describes traditional methodology as creating a "hand-me-down" syndrome, eventually causing second language instructors to be confronted with the limitation of the language theory, i.e., the realization that psychology and linguistics do not have all the answers. Danesi refers to this phenomenon as the SLT Dilemma — despite considerable research and pedagogical advances, students still rarely achieved high levels of proficiency. As a result, second language acquisition research has turned to the neuroscience domain to solve the mystery of learning a second language. Neuroscience has established that the brain's two hemispheres are designed anatomically to process information in a complementary fashion. Each hemisphere is specialized to handle a certain particular type of stimulus, but it does so in tandem with complementary or parallel processing patterns taking place in the other hemisphere and in other parts of the brain. Although Danesi does cata-

logue brain functions into left-mode and right-mode, he recognizes that cognition, and language learning, is interhemispheric.

Chapter 2 is an introduction to the human brain and its relation to language learning. Brain structure and theories of brain function are described, including the cerebral dominance theory and the complementary hemisphericity theory. Also discussed are what Danesi labels the *neorolinguistic methods* of second language teaching: Suggestopedia, Total Physical Response, and the Natural Approach. This discussion differs from those found elsewhere in that it describes how these methods draw on the neurosciences and how they activate the right side of the brain. Here the universal grammar debate is brought up as well as the cognitive linguistic stance that language is merely an extension of the sensory processes.

In the third chapter, Danesi describes concepts and methodology to make SLT “brain-compatible.” To do this, he posits the Modal Flow Principle, the core to his neuroscientific view of pedagogy, which states that learning is more efficient when the brain is allowed to process from the experiential right hemisphere to the analytical left hemisphere. Experiential learning of new input should be followed by formalization and practice of that input, which in turn should be utilized in creative ways. This leads to Danesi’s *conceptualization principle*, which describes the rationale for implementing the neuroscience approach in SLT. It states that when students create a second language (SL) message on their own, they tend to think the message out in terms of their native language (NL) conceptual system. The result is a message that is structurally SL but conceptually English NL. The instructor must ensure that the two systems, which are the linguistic and the conceptual, are interrelated during all aspects of instruction and practice.

Danesi draws on cognitive linguistics in Chapter 4 for his discussion of conceptual aspects of language acquisition. He posits a *conceptual competence*, defined as the ability to verbalize concepts so as to construct messages that have a culturally appropriate structure regardless of the syntactic or morphological form. It is considered to be the complex of ideas and images that come to mind when thinking of some abstraction, and the kinds of words, syntactic structures, and verb forms in a specific communicative context. Three subcategories of conceptual competence are metaformal, reflexive, and associative. Metaformal competence is described as the ability to use the con-

ceptual system of a language appropriately in speech. Reflexive competence is the ability to transform concepts into language categories (e.g., syntactic, morphological, etc.), and associative competence is the ability to associate metaformal concepts to other metaformal concepts and to cultural perceptions. Danesi contends that the SLT Dilemma has never been resolved because a notion of conceptual competence was never taken into account. The importance of the role that conceptual metaphor theory plays is also dealt with at length.

Research studies presented by Danesi show that language student discourse invariably seems to lack the conceptual appropriateness that characterizes native speaker discourse. For example, students “speak” with the memorized formal and communicative structures of the SL. However, they “think” in terms of their native conceptual system. Students typically use SL words and communicative protocols as “carriers” of their own native language concepts. Only when the NL and SL conceptual systems coincide, is student discourse assessable as “natural.” When NL and SL do not, an asymmetry between language form and conceptual content is manifested. Danesi contends that student discourse often lacks this conceptual fluency, a vital component that needs more research in SLT. Learning something new involves *cognition*, Danesi states, whereas memorizing involves *recognition*.

In the final chapter, Danesi offers and describes five techniques for implementing the neurolinguistic, or brain-based, learning approach: structural, visual, ludic, humor, and role-playing techniques. The aim of the structural technique is the development of some aspect of linguistic, communicative, or conceptual competence. The aim of the visual technique is similar to that of the structural technique but is based on visual imagery and thus entails right-modal processes in tandem with left-modal ones. The aim of the ludic technique is to employ game-playing and problem-solving to enhance linguistic, communicative, and conceptual learning. Humor techniques are right-modal techniques (e.g., jokes, cartoons, etc.) that promote conceptual fluency. Finally, the aim of the role-playing technique is the application of intermodal stages of language learning. The various neuronal structures in the brain work in an integrated fashion, influencing each other reciprocally. Danesi contends that during a modal flow stage, the entire neuronal network, or synaptic system, is presumably operative. However, during a focusing stage specific “inactive” areas of “modules” within that system are activated. Therefore, the use of the-

techniques in terms of the flow, focusing, contextualization, and conceptualization principles will ultimately act on the entire brain over a period of time.

In conclusion, the goal of this book is to inform second language instructors and researchers of an alternative approach to SLT. For researchers intrigued by the brain-based learning approach, this book provides a stimulating overview of this novel approach in learning and acquiring a second language. The book is, however, very dense and the abstract concepts rather difficult to digest, requiring readers to have some prior knowledge of psycholinguistics, neuroscience, and language development. Nevertheless, this approach is very stimulating because it aims to empower language instructors to more actively engage the learner's brain in learning a second language by applying these novel techniques and methods, of which many are described in detail in the last chapter of the book. This book is therefore highly recommended for language instructors who are passionate about applying the brain-based learning approach. For those interested in further reading in this exciting area of second language teaching, the volume provides an extensive, 28-page general bibliography of works cited and those constituting related research and theory.

THE REVIEWER

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Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English (4th ed.)

Della Summers (Ed.).

Harlow, Essex, UK: Pearson Education, 2003.

Pp. xvii + 1949. (ISBN: 0 582 77648 1 Flexicover + CD-ROM, 2.0 x 6.0 x 9.0 in.)

REVIEWED BY DAVID E. SHAFFER

Eight years is a full generation in dictionary terms, and 2003 marked the arrival of another — the 4th edition of Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English (LDOCE-4), the publisher's advanced learner's dictionary (ALD). Longman is known for the quality of the dictionaries that they produce, and the latest edition of LDOCE carries on that tradition. LDOCE-4 builds on the quality of its predecessor, LDOCE-3, to provide an ALD that is up-to-date, that provides more information in a larger variety of modes, and is user-friendly. Throughout this review, LDOCE-4 will be compared with LDOCE-3 as well as with the other major ALDs. The review will look at individual entries for headwords, general features of the dictionary, and the packaging of the product.

INDIVIDUAL ENTRIES

LDOCE-4 contains references to 106,000 words and phrases, more than any of its counterparts — CALD 75,000, OALD 80,000, MED 100,000, CCED 110,000 — and it defines them with a defining vocabulary of only 2,000 words (pp. 1943-1949). Only CALD has a defining vocabulary so small; the other ALDs use a defining vocabulary of 2,500 or 3,000. This use of a smaller defining vocabulary makes definitions of words and phrases especially easy to understand.

The way in which LDOCE-4 chooses to word its definitions is

most appealing. It uses a mixture of phrasal definitions and sentential definitions, but does not include abbreviations that may lower readability(e.g., OALD; see examples below).

- LDOCE-4: **cloud**. **1.** to make someone less able to think clearly or make sensible decisions. **2.**If someone's eyes or face cloud, or if someone clouds them, they start to get angry, sad, or worried. (p. 283)
- OALD: **cloud**. **1.** if sth **clouds** your judgement, memory, etc., it makes it difficult for you to understand or remember something clearly. **2.**(of sb's face) to show sadness, fear, anger, etc.; to make sb look sad, afraid, angry, etc. (pp. 223-224)
- CCED: **cloud**. **3.** If you say that something **clouds** your view of a situation, you mean that it makes you unable to understand the situation or judge it properly.
5. If your eyes or face **cloud** or if sadness or anger **clouds** them, your eyes or your face suddenly show sadness or anger. (p. 275)

CCED, on the other hand, uses sentential definitions for all of its word meanings. The use of sentential definitions requires additional text, and it has been found that this often tends to impede rather than aid in the understanding of word meanings (Wingate, 2002). LDOCE-4 therefore limits its use of sentential definitions to about one in ten, employing them only when it is considered that doing so leads to better understanding.

All the major ALDs are now corpus-based, LDOCE-4 being based on the Longman Corpus Network of over 245 million words. The sense definitions of polysemous words are arranged according to frequency, with the most frequent sense appearing first. The consequence of this ordering is that figurative meanings appear first in some cases while literal meanings appear first in others. In LDOCE-4, more figurative meanings tend to appear first than literal meanings. The problem with this, as Van der Meer (1997) points out, is that the word which appears first tends to be considered by the learner as being the most important. But it is literal meanings that are basic and the sense from which figurative senses arise. If the basic sense appears first, this importance is expressed. However, in many cases in LDOCE-4 this relationship between figurative and literal meaning is lost due to sense ordering of more frequently used figurative meanings before literal

meanings. For example, for *mecca*, it is the common noun that appears first and the proper noun second (p. 1023). Because of this order, the idea that *mecca* derives from *Mecca* is lost, making the sense of *mecca* less easily understood. This reviewer would prefer that a literal (basic) to figurative order for polysemous words be adopted.

Unrelated senses of polysemous words, i.e., homographs, appear under the same headword if they are the same part of speech. Thus the definitions for *fast* (of movement), *fast* (of color), and *fast friends* all appear under the same headword. “Signposts,” or guide words, highlighted in blue are employed to distinguish the different senses, but the practice of setting up separate head words for semantically unrelated homographs, as done in CALD, seems more intuitive.

It is very much worth mentioning, though, that the way the “signposts” are presented in LDOCE-4, in bold font and highlighted in light blue, is a great visual improvement over the dark-blue bold font of LDOCE-3 and makes its guidewords much easier to detect than those of any other ALD. However, what detracts from this is that LDOCE-4 has, based on frequency of use, chosen to intersperse phrasal expressions among the different senses of a headword, making it more difficult to find the sense one is searching for. For example, for the headword ***fast* (adj.)**, the first ten senses include five with signposts and five expressions including *fast*: 1. MOVING QUICKLY, 2. IN A SHORT TIME, 3. CLOCK, 4. fast track, 5. fast road, 6. fast film/lens, 7. COLOUR, 8. SPORTS, 9. fast and furious, 10. sb is a fast worker. Having the expressions employing the headword, in this case *fast*, follow the signpost senses would do more to facilitate finding the sense of the word one is looking for than strictly following-frequencies of use when so many different uses are involved. Phrasal verbs, however, do follow at the end of a headword entry in a separate group.

LDOCE-4 covers both British and American English. (Australian senses of headwords are also included.) When British and American pronunciations of a headword differ, the British pronunciation precedes the American pronunciation. The same ordering is followed for the different senses of head words; e.g., the British English meaning of *flat* (=apartment) appears before the American English one (=flat tire). Definition text is also written in British English. This preferential treatment accorded British English may be a mild inconvenience for the many learners of American English, such as in Korea, but it is to be

expected of a British-based publisher.

The new edition of LDOCE boasts of 106,000 words, 26,000 more than in LDOCE-3. It does quite well in including new words and word senses that have recently come into use in English. Among six new words referring to people *alpha male*, *anorak* (BrE), *cybersquatter*, *cyberterrorist*, *cyberwidow*, *digerati* LDOCE-4 contains all but *digerati*. By comparison, CALD contains only two; MED has three; and the earlier publications, OALD and CCED, one each.

GENERAL FEATURES

What is very noticeable when paging through LDOCE-4 is that it contains more boxed material set off from the individual entries. Included in LDOCE-3 were only Usage Note boxes; LDOCE-4 contains Word Choice boxes (close/shut, clothes/ clothing/cloth), Word Focus boxes (containing synonyms and other words related to a headword), a limited number of Grammar boxes (when to use *the they, them, their* as singular), collocation boxes (heavy traffic/heavy rain/heavy fighting/heavy drinking/heavy fine), and Spoken Phrases boxes (for heaven's sake/heaven (only) knows/heaven help sb/heaven forbid).

This select, boxed material all consists very useful information, but is somewhat limited in number of boxes and scope. The Word Choice and Grammar boxes do include some common errors, but to a limited degree. The common confusion between the usages of *fun* and *funny*, for example, is not treated. Separate and numerous "common learner error" boxes such as those employed in CALD would be a welcome addition to LDOCE-4. Also absent are the useful Metaphor boxes found in MED, even though it has been shown that conventional metaphor is central to the way we use language (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). A Metaphor box in MED, for example, explains that "being angry is like being *hot* or *on fire*(fiery temper/heated argument/flare up/boil"; p. 46). LDOCE-4 would have also done well to have included some additional information boxes such as those included in OALD: Vocabulary Building boxes (bunch/bouquet/bundle), British/American boxes (holiday/vacation, have you got/do you have), and Word Family boxes (force/forceful/forcible/enforce).

LDOCE-4 does include word frequency boxes, for both spoken and

written use, that are very useful. However, they are very limited in number and space consuming. The frequency grids of LAAD or the frequency bands employed in CCED, both located in the page margins are much more thorough in representing word frequencies. LDOCE-4 does, however, represent the 3000 most common words in spoken English with red, instead of blue, headwords followed by coded information.

LDOCE-4 bills itself as “the living dictionary” with “full colour throughout,” and it is not an overstatement to say that it lives up to its billing. The colors and shading make LDOCE-4 distinctly more reader-friendly than its competitors. The change from the dark blue of LDOCE-3 makes the headwords seem to say “look at me” instead of making the reader have to look for them. Different shadings of the boxed information makes it readily distinguishable from other text. But what makes LDOCE-4 most alive is its full-color illustrations dispersed throughout its pages. Instead of limiting illustrations to nouns, a substantial proportion are of verbs (polish, shiver, share) and adjectives (injured/wounded, taut/slack) to make an understanding of them much easier. LDOCE-4 has dispensed with the full-color pictorial sections bunched together in the center of many recent ALDs and instead placed full-color pages by the appropriate headword so that they are readily available when the learner needs them.

Although LDOCE-4 compares well with most other ALDs in its treatment of grammar, it is not as extensive as CCED. An “advanced” learner’s dictionary should tell us, for example, that *rumored* occurs only in the passive form and that *abreast of* is a phrasal preposition; LDOCE-4 does not. Impressive, though, are its sixteen pages of Language Notes in the middle of the volume. They are clear and express some of the most recent linguistic thinking. For example, the explanation of idioms reflects the recent view: “Idioms can be seen as metaphors that have become fixed phrases” (p. 976).

THE PACKAGED PRODUCT

Though we have a proverb warning us not to judge a book by its cover, this is not heeded by the majority of language learners. Among Korean English learners, the physical characteristics of a dictionary rank very high (Kent, 2002), and therefore, cannot be ignored.

LDOCE-4 is a few millimeters taller than LDOCE-3 and about 200 pages thicker, making it as big or bigger than any of its peers except CCED. Its size makes it still very practical for a desk reference but too large to be easily carried to and from school. However, electronic dictionaries have nearly replaced the print dictionary in the classroom already. The quality of the paper used, the type size, and the hue of the blue head words all contribute to make the readability of LDOCE-4 even higher than that of LDOCE-3, and equal to or better than that of the other ALDs mentioned here.

Web support for LDOCE-4 includes access to the entire dictionary at <http://www.ldoconline.com/> with accompanying technical support. A few teacher and student resources are also available, but these appear to be the same resources made available for LDOCE-3. The accompanying CD-ROM, however, is outstanding. In addition to containing the full text of LDOCE-4, it contains the full text of Longman Language Activator, 80,000 extra dictionary examples, and interactive exercises that include practice for several standardized tests. Headwords can be heard pronounced in both American and British English, and learners can record their own pronunciation for comparison.

Priced at US\$37.00 with CD-ROM at Amazon.com, LDOCE-4 is considerably more expensive than earlier published ALDs with CD-ROMs CALD \$21.78, CCED \$20.99, MED \$19.11, OALD \$21.98 but with time, it too will likely receive a discount off list price. [For more on OALD, CCED, MED, and CALD, see Shaffer (2000, 2001, 2002, 2003)]. LDOCE-4 is an ALD well worth its price a dictionary that this reviewer has felt quite comfortable and satisfied with during months of test driving, a dictionary no English learner should regret having available for improving their proficiency.

THE REVIEWER

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Key to Abbreviations Used

- CALD = *Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary*.
- CCED = *Collins COBUILD English Dictionary for Advanced Learners* (3rd ed.).
- LAAD = *Longman Advanced American Dictionary*.
- LDOCE-3 = *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English* (3rd ed.).
- LDOCE-4 = *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English* (4th ed.).
- MED = *Macmillan English Dictionary for Advanced Learners*.
- OALD = *Oxford's Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English* (6th ed.).

Streaming Speech: Listening and Pronunciation for Advanced Learners of English

Richard Cauldwell.
SpeechinAction, 2003.
[<http://www.speechinaction.com>]

REVIEWED BY JAMES TROTTA

DESCRIPTION

Streaming Speech is a CD-ROM and workbook for adult upper-intermediate or advanced English learners. This software specifically targets English teachers, people studying to become English teachers, people studying for high level English exams, and people who plan to study in an English speaking country. The goals are to improve listening and pronunciation skills.

To help learners improve listening and pronunciation, *Streaming Speech* provides natural and fast (220 - 500 words per minute) speech from four male and four female British and Irish native speakers. This natural speech is used for listening exercises, raising learner's awareness of how native speakers produce spontaneous utterances, and pronunciation practice.

Streaming Speech consists of an introduction and ten chapters. The introduction provides information on the eight native speakers whose utterances provide the basis for the learning activities, explains the goals of the software, lists the types of students who will benefit from the software, and shows how the software helps students achieve the goals. The introduction also discusses fast spontaneous speech and speech units, the theory behind *Streaming Speech* (heavily influenced by the work of David Brazil), and the format of each chapter.

Chapters 1-8 begin with listening exercises. Next, students focus

on discourse features of the utterances; this consists of recognizing and imitating an aspect of pronunciation that indicates a speaking strategy is being used. Then students work on pronouncing individual sounds followed by speech units. Each chapter ends with self-assessment checklists based on the goals of the chapter; in the student's book one writes the "greatest success" and "most difficult part" of the chapter.

Chapter 9 consists of additional pronunciation practice; learners choose one of the native speakers and try to mimic that speaker's pronunciation. Learners record their own pronunciation, compare it to the native speaker's pronunciation, and evaluate themselves using self-assessment checklists. Chapter 10 is designed for teachers and includes information about the size of speech units, prominence and word-stress, and intonation. Then there are dictation exercises for which the goal is to write accurate speech unit transcripts.

TECHNICAL ASPECTS

It is very easy to begin using *Streaming Speech* software, which begins running automatically once the CD-ROM is inserted. Navigating through activities is also simple thanks to a navigation menu on the left and forward and back arrows at the bottom of each screen. It is also easy to stop using the program; there is an "exit" button on the top right corner of every screen.

Streaming Speech uses dark text, light backgrounds, and legible font to present attractive and easily readable screens. Where different types of information are presented on the same screen, different colors are used. The recordings used in *Streaming Speech* are high quality. Input methods consist of clicking on answers during listening exercises and drag-and-drop intonation exercises where learners drag up, down, and horizontal arrows into boxes next to certain utterances. Both methods of learner input are simple and effective.

PEDAGOGICAL ASPECTS

1. Overview

Streaming Speech seems to emphasize behaviorism, as learners spend much time trying to mimic native speakers. Elements of cogniti-

vism are evident also: learners receive information about specific features of English pronunciation and self-correct their attempts to incorporate these features into their own pronunciation. Pronunciation drills can help learners become more accurate, which should lead to more confidence when communicating in English.

The use of sound, text, and animation should appeal to students with varying learning styles, but the lack of video is notable as it would have helped visual learners. This software is likely to appeal to field independent learners or learners who favor using intrapersonal intelligence as most work is done alone; there is no need for communication between learners to complete the tasks in *Streaming Speech*. Some learners may lack motivation when there is no chance to express their ideas regarding the topics or metalinguistic knowledge being studied.

Many learners will not intuitively know how to use *Streaming Speech*. The author suggests showing students how to use the software in class and then letting students work at their own pace. Once students have seen how to work through activities, there should be no problem because the first eight chapters follow the same format. Successfully working through the activities independently and frequent self-assessment should help learners become more independent.

2. Listening

Each chapter begins with a listening exercise based on natural, colloquial speech. Setting the scene for listening exercises allows learners to access their knowledge of the world and apply top-down processing to the listening task. However, it is not clear how much information is needed to activate schema. With *Streaming Speech*, learners choose how much information they need before they listen. Before, while, or after they listen, learners can:

1. Read a brief introduction.
2. View an outline.
3. Read a transcript.
4. Read the questions.

Other aids for top-down processing, such as predictions, are not used, and there is a strong emphasis on bottom-up processing, or hear-

ing every word in every speech unit. Another indication of the focus on bottom-up processing is the lack of video; learners cannot see speakers talking.

One strength of these listening exercises is the focus on intonation. *Streaming Speech* studies intonation patterns in great detail after each listening exercise. In one exercise learners listen to a section of speech as they read the transcript. At the beginning of most speech units is an up, down, or horizontal arrow indicating the speaker's pitch. Several speech units are missing arrows, and learners must click on the appropriate arrow and drag it into a box at the front of the speech unit. Focusing on the intonation of speech units helps students listen to natural speech from native speakers.

In *Streaming Speech*, feedback for listening exercises is immediately available, indicates if the learner's response was correct, and shows the speech units in which the answer can be found. Learners can listen again to speech units in isolation or to the entire passage. The opportunity to listen to only those speech units that can provide an answer makes the feedback better than average.

3. Pronunciation

Streaming Speech provides many opportunities for learners to drill specific sounds and strategies through repetition. The absence of video is notable, and could have provided learners with useful information on how to imitate certain sounds. Learners record their efforts and compare themselves to native speaker models. Opportunities for using the language communicatively must come from another source.

Through self-assessment, learners are responsible for determining how much their pronunciation is improving. This may discourage learners who lack confidence, although it is likely that most advanced learners, for whom this software was designed, have developed a certain degree of independence.

Mimicking native speakers may seem unnecessary because many teachers question whether learners need to sound exactly like native speakers. However, Healey (1999) notes that with pronunciation, "sheer repetition can be helpful and the ability of the computer to repeat as often as the learner desires is a great asset" (p. 129). Learners can listen to and imitate the speech samples in this software as often, or as little, as they like. For learners who are motivated to mimic na-

tive speaker pronunciation, this will be an authentic experience.

CONCLUSION

The best way to use *Streaming Speech* is to spend one or two classes showing learners how to use the software and encourage learners to work alone. Completing the tasks in *Streaming Speech* will benefit advanced learners who are motivated to understand and mimic British and Irish accents. The listening exercises provide good practice with colloquial speech and intonation, but should be complemented by listening exercises that focus on top down processing, visual clues, and predictions.

The pronunciation exercises may be less motivational to learners who do not want to sound like British or Irish native speakers. This may seem to indicate that its usefulness in Korea is limited to learners who work for Irish or British companies and learners who plan to study in, visit, or emigrate to Ireland or Great Britain. However, the author, Richard Cauldwell, argues “the kinds of things that are revealed about speech in *Streaming Speech* are of value whatever accent you are preparing yourself to handle” (personal communication, May 30, 2004).

It is true that the strategies and intonation patterns will be useful for advanced learners regardless of accent, and these are the most valuable exercises in *Streaming Speech*. They will give learners a much better chance of understanding rapid speech, because learners will be aware of the strategies being used. Also, learners will be better able to employ the strategies when they produce their own utterances if they can transfer the imitation practice to real communicative situations.

MINIMUM OPERATING SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS

Windows 95, 98, NT (SP4 or above), 2000, ME, or XP with Internet Explorer 5 or later with 350MHz or faster processor, CD-ROM, Windows-compatible sound card, microphone, and headset or speakers.

THE REVIEWER

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