



## **KOTESOL Proceedings 2002**

***Crossroads: Generational Change in ELT in Asia***

*Proceedings from the 10th Annual KOTESOL International Conference  
Seoul, Korea, Oct. 5th - 6th, 2002*

*Korea Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages  
(Korea TESOL / KOTESOL)*

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**The 10th Annual KOTESOL International Conference**  
**Seoul, Korea**  
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## FOREWORD

The 2002 Korea TESOL International Conference was held at Sookmyung Women's University in Korea's capital, Seoul. Spanning two days - October 5th and 6th - under the theme "Crossroads: Generational Change in ELT," the conference was underpinned by plenary presentations by Dr. Martin Bygate and Dr. Andy Curtis, and featured speakers Pauline Rea-Dickens, David Carless, Gwyneth Fox, Isobel Rainey del Diaz, and Aleda Krause. With 132 different presentations, participants of widely ranging interests had much to choose from. Presenters came from Korea and Japan, Hong Kong, Malaysia, the Philippines, Egypt, Iran, Thailand, the UK, Canada and the US. Conferences are a never ending series of upgrades, returns to the past, and adjustments: during this Conference we returned to offerings of a poster session, and a wider range of presentation time slots (20, 50, and 70 minutes) were offered.

The twenty-two papers in this volume provide a good taste of the range of topics discussed during the Conference, with many emphasizing classroom research. We begin this volume with Andy Curtis' plenary presentation paper on managing change in programs. The next article is an "In Memorium" dedication, recognizing the numerous significant contributions James Gongwer made to Korea TESOL, not least of which was his solid, teacher-oriented scholarship.

The initial section of articles is entitled "Course Design," discussing various program design issues, including research dealing with anxiety, cross-cultural issues, and learner independence. The next section, "Assessment," discusses issues relating to assessing oracy, orientation to language learning, measuring students' noticing of paralinguistic features of language, and washback effects. "Teacher Education" includes a paper on the selection and retention of native speaker of English teachers in various Asian settings, and another on the effects of teacher training on teaching practice. "Issues in Teaching" comprises discussions on learner styles, collocations and learner interference, and accidental research. The last section presents various techniques and materials for classroom use: using the Internet, video, magic and idioms.

It is my hope that the papers presented within these *KOTESOL Proceedings 2002* will supplement the enjoyment and understanding of presentations for conference participants. As well, I hope that this volume can provide a lasting record of the achievements and hard work for all the attendees, volunteers, and presenters, academic and commercial alike, who made the Conference such a success.

Gerry Lassche  
Proceedings Editor/Coordinator  
*KOTESOL Proceedings 2002*

# ***KOTESOL Proceedings 2002***

## ***Crossroads: Generational Change in ELT in Asia***

Proceedings from the 10th Annual KOTESOL International Conference, Taegu, Korea  
October 5th - 6th, 2002

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# Using Models to Visualize Change in Language Education

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**ANDY CURTIS**

*Queen's University*

## ABSTRACT

This paper proposes a visual representation of models of educational change as a way to enable busy English language teachers to process complex series of relationships between many different change agents and influences. The paper starts with a brief consideration of educational change in the Asia-Pacific region, followed by an overview of some familiar models of educational change from the literature, leading into a discussion of the value of visual representations of such models. Eight examples of visual representations are created, transforming the more standard written account into visual displays. Following this, one particular model of educational change is looked at in more detail, as this model proposes a way of targeting support for language teachers implementing and managing change. The paper concludes with a summary of the limitations and the value of such representations.

## INTRODUCTION

In education, Fullan's *The Meaning of Educational Change* (1982), revisited a decade later (1991), is often taken as marking the emergence of change as a distinct area of study within the field (see also Fullan and Hargreaves, 1992). However, if the ancient Chinese text, the *I Ching*, or *Book of Changes* (Wilhelm, 1960) and the principles of Tibetan Buddhism are taken into account (Novick, 1999), it might even be claimed that, far from being a twentieth century 'western' concern, the formal and systematic study of change has been an ancient and 'eastern' concern for a great deal longer.

Whatever the origins of this concern, change is a constant, and may even be a universal. However, this may be especially true in education, and may be especially true for countries in Asia, as they have, in many ways, experienced greater societal change in the last 20 years than most other countries. Townsend and Cheng (2000) brought together educational researchers from around the Asia-Pacific region, who considered educational change and development in this region and identified 14 patterns and trends recurring within the educational change contexts they examine (p.319), including:

- the development of new curricula and methods of learning and teaching
- the changes in examination and evaluation practices
- the search to enhance teacher quality
- the need for continuous professional development for teachers and principals

Understanding the change processes and mechanisms in each of these areas constitutes a major undertaking because of the complexity of interactions. However, busy language teachers rarely have the time to pour over the ever-increasing number of texts on change – individual, institutional and international – emerging in the literature. One way of addressing this could be to use visual representations of complex models, which is discussed below.

### VISUAL REPRESENTATIONS OF MODELS AND FRAMEWORKS OF EDUCATIONAL CHANGE

There appear to be no shortage of models in education. For example, Hargreaves and Fullan (1992) made use of ecological models as a way of understanding teacher development and teacher change (pp.13-16). Carneson (1994), looking at changes in classroom practices in England, developed a model (p.95) based on a matrix of continuing and temporary pressures – public, personal and professional – on different stakeholders, linked to an institutional matrix in relation to a four-part typology of change: incremental, evolutionary, institutional and revolutionary (pp.109-111).

Stanford (1998) used maps and charts as the basis of her book on school reform, in “mapping resistance to change” (pp.28-30), “mapping dangers and opportunities” (pp.37-52) and “charting conflict” (pp.87-100). Similarly, Tuohy’s book (1999), designed to “help teachers respond to the demands for change” (p.1), is built on Senge’s (1991) “mental models” for use in corporate “learning organizations.”

Working with primary schools in the Netherlands, Geijsel, Van den Berg and Slegers (1999) developed their “model of the innovative capacity of schools” (p.175), in relation to “high innovation” and “low innovation” schools, based on four components: the school context; teacher collaboration; transformational school leadership; the school as a learning organization. In contrast, a more theoretical, efficacy-based change model was put forward by McKinney, Sexton and Myerson (1999), based on the assumption that as teachers move through different stages of change implementation, they express different concerns related to the efficacy of the process.

In relation to educational leadership, Leithwood, Jantzi and Steinbach (1999) developed a model based on the relationships between 11 variables linking administrators’ action and teacher development activities (p.162). In terms of the implementation of educational change, researchers such as Markee (1997) and Dooley (1998) have made use of “diffusion of innovation models”, which represent a more dynamic and less linear approach to modeling change.

However, Lueddeke (1999), who created a complex, 18-part, 3-layered Adaptive-Generative Development Model (p.249), states that: “Although attention on effecting successful [educational] change has been growing, judging from the international literature on change practice...*there appear to be few useful models to guide the process*” (p.239) [emphasis added].

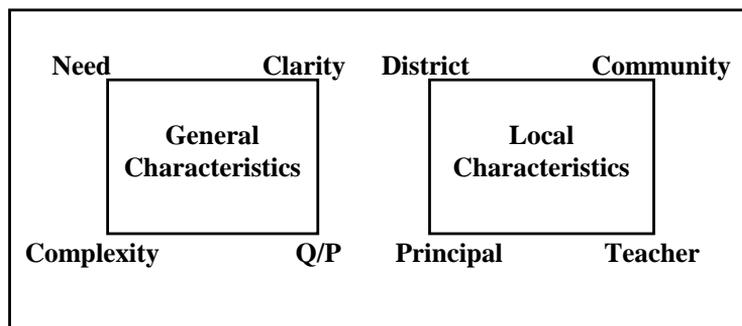
One way of accounting for Lueddeke’s assessment is to distinguish between number and usefulness. Although many models may have been created, their usefulness may be limited, as the complex explanation of the models may make them comprehensive but render them of limited use. This may be especially true for NNSE teachers of English, and may also be true for NSE teachers of English who simply have limited time to work through such descriptions.

Here, visual representations (VR) may be useful. Without any kind of ‘dumbing down’ or over-simplification, it may be possible to illustrate a great many relationships between different aspects of the education change processes with minimal text. To explore this possibility, we will look at eight existing and commonly cited models and frameworks of educational change, using visual representations.

**VISUAL REPRESENTATIONS OF EIGHT EDUCATIONAL CHANGE MODELS AND FRAMEWORKS**

Some of the best-known models of change have been put forward by Fullan (1991), and one of his more complex models involves nine interactive factors affecting implementation of educational change (p.68). There are four general characteristics – need, clarity, complexity and quality/practicality; four local characteristics – district, community, principal, teacher; and one overarching category of external factors – government and other change agencies. This number of factors means that more than 70 relationships are possible, which makes for a heavy cognitive processing load. However, all of these can be represented by the following visual representation (VR1):

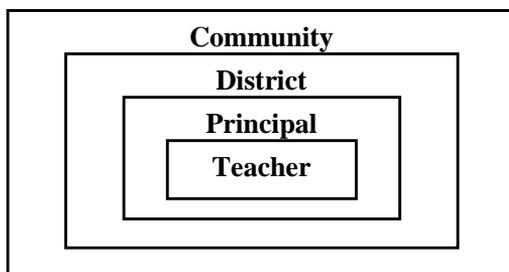
FIGURE 1. VR1 - A REPRESENTATION OF FULLAN’S (1991) EIGHT CHARACTERISTICS UNDER GOVERNMENT AND OTHER CHANGE AGENCIES



When using such VR, questions arise regarding the relative size of these factors. In this VR, the general and local characteristics are represented as being of equal size, but in reality, it is likely that the two sets of characteristics would be of different relative sizes at different times. Although the question of the differing magnitudes of the characteristics might arise anyway, in the natural course of consideration, it is possible that such issues are more likely to arise and are made clearer and as a result of such representations.

Another sets of relationships that emerges from VR is seen when the right-hand side of the diagram is re-presented in this way:

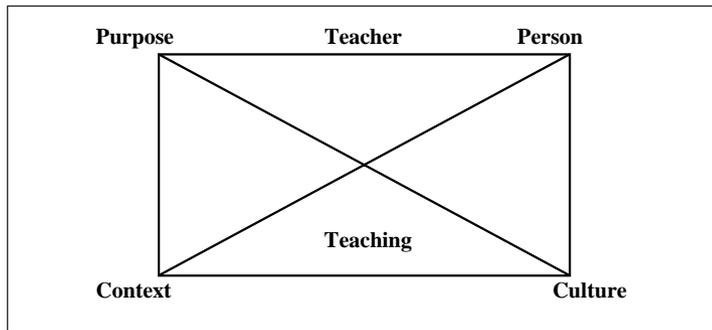
FIGURE 2. VR2 - A RE-PRESENTATION OF FOUR OF FULLAN'S (1991) EIGHT CHARACTERISTICS



In VR2, the increasing domains of influence, from the teacher to the community, are illustrated in the layered boxes. However, an alternative view of this VR might be that it shows the teacher to be at the heart of the educational change process. As Fullan (1991) puts it: “Educational change depends on what teachers do and think. It is as simple and as complex as that” (p.117).

In terms of the number of factors, Fullan and Hargreaves (1992) later describe a simpler framework for educational innovation, based on four main elements: the teacher’s purpose; the teacher as a person; their teaching context; their teaching culture (p.5). Even with just four factors, at least a dozen relationships are possible. In the most basic VR, shown below, in VR3, the teacher and their teaching are separated out, making six factors rather than four, but all are connected internally within a simple box. In the standard textual listing of the four factors, although the relationships between the teacher’s purpose and person are clear, and between the context and the culture clear, the tripartite relationships between person+context+culture and between purpose+culture+context become much more obvious when represented visually.

FIGURE 3. VR3 - A REPRESENTATION OF FULLAN AND HARGREAVE'S (1992) FOUR FACTORS IN EDUCATIONAL INNOVATION



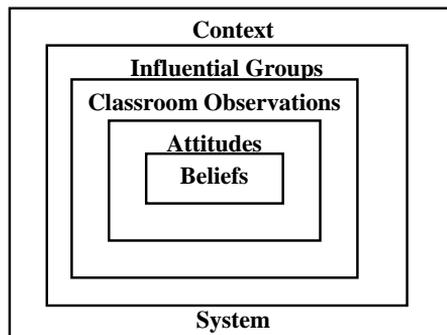
Based on their work with English language teachers, Kennedy and Kennedy (1996), in their paper on *Teacher Attitudes and Change Implementation*, pose the question: What conclusions can we draw about change and its evaluation? In standard written text form, their six-point answer looks like this:

1. Beliefs about the innovation, about its consequences and the contextual variables associated with it are all important in determining behavior...
2. We should beware of using attitudinal measures alone as indicators of future behavior...
3. We need to take a systemic view of change...
4. We should include observation of classrooms in any evaluation of implementation of change...
5. In any change process it is important to involve respected/powerful groups that may influence teacher behavior...
6. We should design around the context rather than impose a change on it

(pp.359-360)

This approximately 100-word answer to their question can be summarized in as few as eight words in the kind of layered box used in VR2 above:

FIGURE 4. VR4 - A REPRESENTATION OF KENNEDY AND KENNEDY'S (1996) ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ABOUT CHANGE



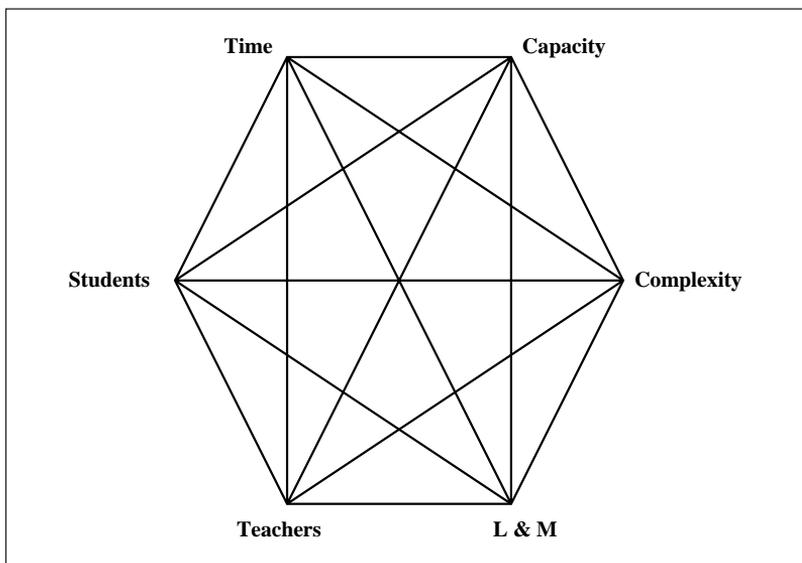
As was stated earlier, the use of visual representations in professional development texts could be of considerable help for both NNSE teachers of English and for teachers of English who are NSEs, but who are simply too busy to plow through the ever-increasing professional development literature. Here, though, an additional advantage can be seen: highlighting of important recurring points and/or reduction of repetition. In Kennedy and Kennedy's paper, *context* is identified in both the first point and the last, and the importance of the system in the third. As *context* and *system* both refer to the environment, they can either be included under *environment*, or both terms can be given, as in VR4 above.

Another six-part educational change model was put forward by MacGilchrist, Myers and Reed (1997), based on "six key interrelated messages" (p.9) related to managing educational change in schools:

- change takes time
- a school's capacity to change will vary
- change is complex
- change needs to be well led and well managed
- teachers need to be the main agents of change
- pupils need to be the main focus for change

The 30 relationships possible with six factors can be summarized as in VR5.

FIGURE 5. VR5 - A REPRESENTATION OF MACGILCHRIST, MYERS AND REED'S (1997) SIX KEY INTERRELATED MESSAGES REGARDING EDUCATIONAL CHANGE



This hexagonal view of institutional change shows that, even though some of MacGilchrist et al's individual points may seem obvious, such as *change takes time* and *change is complex*, what makes educational change so difficult, and fre-

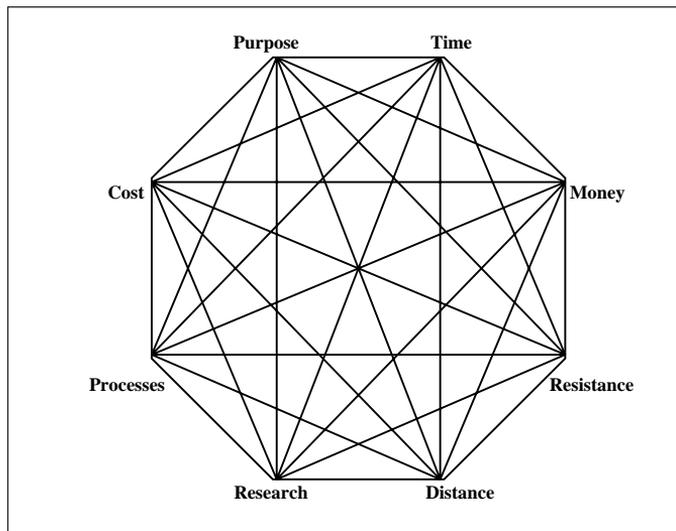
quently unsuccessful, is the complexity created as a result of the interconnectedness of the individual factors. This model, unlike many others, highlights the importance of students in the change process, as well as the teachers, without positioning either as more important than the other. The model also highlights the importance of leadership and management in the bringing about of positive and lasting educational/institutional change.

A kind of opposite to the nine-part model presented by Fullan (1991), represented in VR1 above, was presented by Curtis (2000, pp.3-7), in a discussion of nine of the main ‘mistakes’ made in the management of change in language education. Whereas Fullan, like most researchers, tries to identify what is needed for successful educational change, Curtis (2000) looks at what is missing from many of the unsuccessful attempts at bringing about positive change:

1. Change for the sake of change
2. Need for periods of stability and continuity not realized/addressed
3. Change more politically and economically driven than pedagogically driven
4. Resistance to change
5. Change initiators ‘too far’ from everyday classroom ‘realities’
6. Change uninformed by teacher/learner-generated, classroom-based research
7. Changes in our understanding of language teaching/learning processes not reflected in changes in approaches to management of change
8. Lack of awareness or misunderstanding about educational change processes
9. Emotional and personal effects of professional change underestimated or not realized/addressed

Using a similar VR to the kind used in VR5 above, it is possible to represent the 70-plus relationships between the nine different mistakes in this way (Figure 6):

FIGURE 6. VR6 - A REPRESENTATION OF CURTIS’ (2000) MAIN MISTAKES IN THE MANAGEMENT OF CHANGE IN LANGUAGE EDUCATION



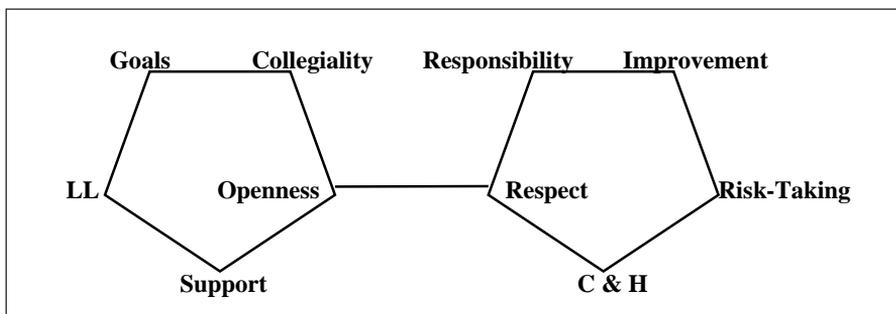
Dean (1999) focused on change and innovation at the primary school level, and proposed a framework based on Stoll and Fink's (1996, pp.92-97) ten characteristics of successful change:

- |                   |                            |
|-------------------|----------------------------|
| Shared goals      | Responsibility for success |
| Collegiality      | Continuous improvement     |
| Lifelong learning | Risk-taking                |
| Support           | Mutual respect             |
| Openness          | Celebration and humor      |

(Dean, 1999, p.108)

Here, nearly 100 hundred relationships are possible, and to list and describe all of these could take a number of pages of regular, written text. However, although a ten-sided figure (decahedron) is possible, it might be clearer to create and connect two fives, i.e., to create two joined, pentagonal views, aligned across a common thread. In this case, the thread being the connection between openness and respect (Figure 7):

FIGURE 7. VR7 - A REPRESENTATION OF DEAN'S (1999) TEN CHARACTERISTICS OF SUCCESSFUL CHANGE (FROM STOLL AND FINK, 1996)



The eighth and final VR in this section is based on the biological models of change used by Bailey, Curtis and Nunan (2001) to explore the relationships between individual and institutional change underlying the professional development of language teachers. In this organic model, language classrooms are seen as:

living entities, as they involve the same kind of impossible-to-predict-with-certainty interactions that characterize not only living organisms, but also communities of living entities. So, for us as language teachers, bringing about planned change in our professional development is difficult but necessary

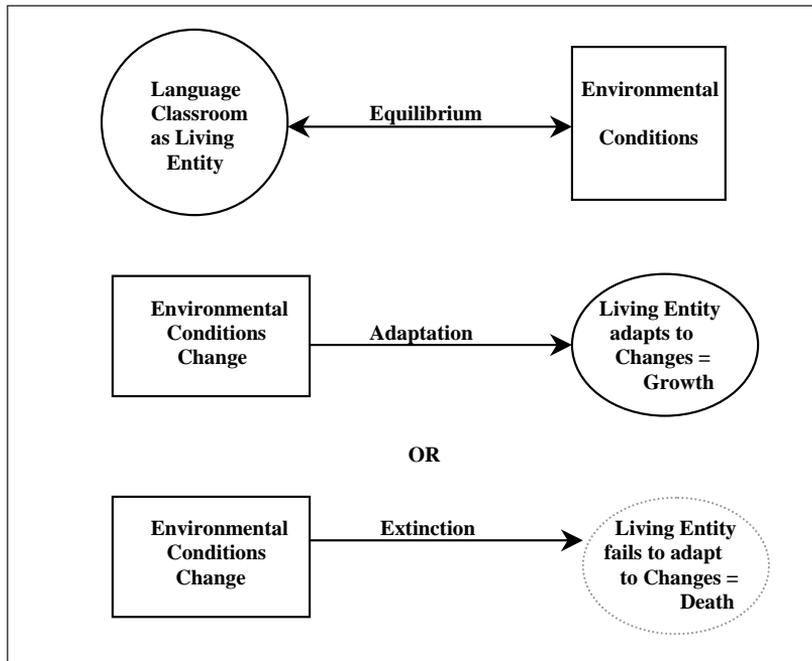
(p.242)

It is possible that one of the most grotesque twists of scientific language was the misuse of the Darwinian notion of *survival of the fittest* in Nazi Germany during World War II. Although this phrase was taken to mean only the strongest

should survive, *fittest* as used by Darwin actually meant *best suited* to survive changes in conditions. When conditions change, the living organisms best suited to the new environment will thrive and live longest.

Bailey, Curtis and Nunan (2001) used this biological sense of equilibrium, adaptation or extinction to illustrate a relatively simple three-part representation, as depicted in VR8.

FIGURE 8. VR8 - A REPRESENTATION OF BY BAILEY, CURTIS AND NUNAN'S (2001) BIOLOGICAL MODELS OF EDUCATIONAL CHANGE



Having taken eight existing models of frameworks for understanding educational change and what is required for it to be successful, we can now consider in more detail another VR designed to provide support for English language teachers implementing and managing change.

### AN **ARROWS** MODEL FOR TARGETING SUPPORT FOR LANGUAGE TEACHERS MANAGING CHANGE

Although there are clearly many key stakeholders in the educational change process apart from teachers, including learners, parents, government, publishers, etc., this model is similar to VR2 and VR3 above in that it is more teacher-oriented, because of the key position they occupy in the system. Fullan (1991), for

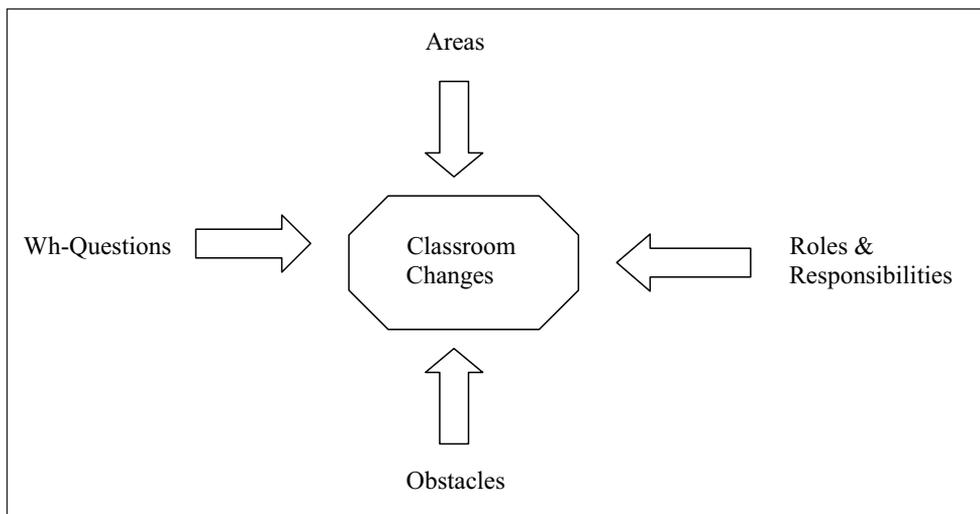
example, identifies teachers' professional development as the "single factor crucial" in the educational change process (p.289).

Bolam and Pratt (1976) highlighted the role of resistance and obstacles (p.9) in effecting educational innovation, exacerbated by teachers "not having a clear understanding of what was expected of them in their new role" (p.11) as well as a lack of materials and equipment. More than two decades later, Churchill et al. (1997) made a similar observation, pointing out that "The pressure for change in teacher-education faculties is undeniably pervasive" (p.156) and that "many teachers feel unprepared, unwilling or unskilled in, and for, the roles they occupy in their responses to change initiatives and directives" (p.157).

Developing and drawing together some the recurring themes in the visual representations presented above, a relatively simple four-part, teacher-centered model of classroom change and innovation was developed.

ARROWs is an acronym for the four arrowed parts of the model: Areas, Roles & Responsibilities, Obstacles and Wh-Questions.

FIGURE 9. VR9 - AN ARROWs MODEL OF CLASSROOM CHANGE



In this model, 'Areas' has two meanings. One is the physical location, whereas the other meaning relates to the area of teaching and learning which is the focus of the change, such as, materials, activities, medium of instruction, examination systems, curricula, syllabi, etc. The roles and responsibilities here are those of the classroom teachers who are tasked with preparing for the change, implementing it, then monitoring, managing and eventually evaluating the change in relation to the original aims and objectives. Each change or set of changes may require the teacher to take on different roles and responsibilities at the same time, or to take on similar roles and responsibilities for different changes.

Although it may seem somewhat negative to assume that all educational changes will entail obstacles, there appear to be few, if any, educational changes that do not encounter some kind of hurdle or barrier. If this is so, then like the roles and responsibilities, the obstacles will also relate to and be a function of the area of change occurring. The fourth arrow feeding into classroom change and innovation in this model is the Wh-Questions plus How. These questions are frequently taught as language items by language teachers, but appear to be frequently overlooked by those initiating changes in language education, especially if the initiators of the change are far removed from the everyday realities of the classrooms in which the changes will take place (Curtis, 2000). The questions will depend to some extent on the context and areas of change, but they should include the following:

- What *exactly* is the change that is desired?
- Why is this change desired? Why is it thought to be necessary?
- Who will be most affected by this change, and have these parties been fully consulted?
- Where, within this education system, will this change take place?
- When is each of the stages of this change to be implemented?
- How – by what mechanisms and processes – is this change expected and assumed to occur?

Although such questions may seem obvious, there appears to be no shortage of examples where such questions are *not* asked, leading to unsuccessful – and even counterproductive – attempts to bring about positive, lasting change (Curtis, 2000).

## CONCLUSION

Although there are limitations to using such visual representations, it is possible that the benefits outweigh the limitations, especially for busy language teachers who are, on the whole, good at making and creating relationships in their work, for example, between students and teachers, between test and task, between school and community, but who have limited time, and who might have limited second language capabilities. Such visual representations may miss some of the subtleties and complexities of some aspects of the change processes, but they may well capture more than enough detail to enable a rapid and reasonably thorough understanding of difficult and challenging models and frameworks for change.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENT

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## A pilot study to investigate the impact of a Teacher Training Workshop on a teacher's pedagogy

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**The membership of Korea TESOL memorialize the sharing spirit of scholar and friend James Gongwer, who passed away May 27<sup>th</sup>, 2003, by dedicating this volume to his memory.**

### ABSTRACT

This is a study about the process of a teacher implementing a communicative language approach in a Korean classroom after a teacher-training workshop. The study focuses on two parameters: 1) documenting the use of elicitation (E), repetition (R) and metalanguage (M) hereafter called (ERM) by a teacher to modify his teaching in light of a teacher-training workshop; and 2) the classroom interaction between teacher/student and student/teacher focusing on two randomly chosen students. The data was gathered through ethnographic field notes, observations, interviews, tape recordings, and written notes from the teacher's diary.

“Teacher research need not mean that teachers must assume researchers' ways of thinking, talking, framing questions, or seeking answers. Teacher research should refer to the process by which teachers seek interpretations and give voice to what they know by virtue of their experience, combined with close and disciplined examination of their practice.” (Donald Freeman 1989:107).

### INTRODUCTION

The impetus for this study stems from two factors. First was the perplexity of witnessing teachers leaving teacher-training programs without follow-up work by the workshop trainers or the director. What happens in the real classroom after the workshop? Do teachers really try the methods discussed and practiced in the workshops? What kinds of problems do non-native speakers encounter in trying a western teaching style, communicative language teaching (CLT), in the classroom? Second was the unwillingness of teachers to maintain contact with trainers who wanted to assist them in implementing the newly learned techniques. This unresolved factor seems related to embarrassment of the teacher(s) who may have

been unwilling to try the new ideas or who was unsuccessful in implementation. Coupled with this is the insecurity and resistance of teacher(s) to actually try other pedagogic approaches than the traditional rote learning of vocabulary and dialogue(s) along with intense drills in grammar rules (Lee & Park, 2001; Choi, 2001; Han, 2001).

Such insecurity is understandable with non-native teachers being exposed to the literature of “new ideas” of teaching a foreign language. The literature is replete with approaches/methods for second language teaching and advocating one approach over the other. The work from researchers can be confusing to even the most informed native teacher. The ambiguity of the studies and the resulting debates often lead to confusion (Lee & Park 2001, 71) rather than direction and clarification for the non-native speaker (NNS) language teacher. Hence the danger, with the amount of conflicting literature, is that a teacher is told to be eclectic. This then becomes a catch all attitude and practice for doing anything you want in teaching the language.

The implementation of successful CLT is relative to understanding the theory it is supposed to represent. Some important questions need to be asked. Does the teacher use the activity in the way the theorist intended and as explained in the workshop? How has the teacher actually changed or modified her classroom pedagogy? What effect does the teacher’s attitude and beliefs have on CLT?

This search for practical answers for the classroom teacher is rooted in the work of the theorists. Krashen’s ‘*i + 1*’ and the ‘comprehensive input hypothesis’ has taken this search into the practical realm of the classroom. Additional work of Long and Swain in the 1980’s expanded on this theory. Long (1980-1983) took this concept to the next step with the ‘interaction structure’ of conversation in relation to SLA. He argues that it is the ‘negotiation of meaning’ in conversations between native and non-native speakers that produced language acquisition. Since then studies of Varonis and Gass (1983) have looked at non-native/non-native conversation, and found similar types of negotiation modifications. These insights and research developments have played an important role in the development of task-based activities, indirect methods and student-centered classrooms of SLA advocated today.

One of the goals of a foreign language teacher-training program is to provide both insight into the work of such researchers as Skehan, Long, Yule and others, and ways that language can be taught. Clarifying the ways a teacher formulates and constructs a lesson, the opportunities they provide for students to interact and language usage is imperative in the effectiveness of SLA. One very important factor in this awareness is what happens in implementation of CLT. Consequentially the interaction between students and teacher/student can be as important as the lesson itself. Samuda (2000) reinforces this and Ellis (2000, 207) prudently comments that ‘the same task might also result in very different kinds of activity depending on the role the teacher plays in the interactions that arise at various stages of a lesson.’

The impetus of this study is in how the process is started. Are there certain steps, stages, strategies that a non-native teacher goes through in trying to adapt new approaches within her classroom pedagogy? Is the lack of willingness to implement based on personal insecurity or on pedagogical practice? If pedagogical, what are some strategies that can be gleaned from this study?

## THE CLASSROOM SITUATION

Classroom research is a new area in Korean education and the existing research is in Korean, however, this is beginning to change as demonstrated by the previously mentioned work of Lee & Park, Choi, and Han (op cit). In being part of this change, this study suggests it is important to look at the *process* of teaching, to look at the interactions by the NNS that lead to SLA. Spada's (1986:137) definition is, "(process) focuses on what the programme accomplishes in terms of instructional practices and procedures." Allwright (1983) and Long (1984) provide additional historical comments about the effectiveness of product/process research. Opponents (cited in Spada 1986:138) of 'process studies' have centered on their orientation towards content-based observations and their relation to teacher training. The intention of this study is that classroom interaction/process, such as teacher/student and elicitation, repetition, and metalanguage, of the NNS needs to be observed, especially after teacher training to enhance teacher-training programs. Spada (1986:138) states, "Little research has been undertaken to demonstrate that there is a relationship between specific instructional practices and second-language achievement."

In trying to understand what makes a successful teacher, we need some insight into how the teacher plans a lesson and what changes happen during the lesson, Donald Freeman's (1989) statement, 'to tell the story one must know the story,' is apropos in that a lesson has both a planned goal and a implementation reality and these need to be investigated through the perspective of the teacher. This is especially true with NNS teaching English (Shin 2002) and the process dynamic. Kiely (2001:242) mentions the *process* as becoming "a fabric of shared and unshared experiences, of diverse strategies and agendas." This "fabric" of the NNS in communicative language has not being examined sufficiently in the reality context of the Korean classroom.

## APPROACH

An ethnographic case study approach is used as it can provide a rich source of information that will in this case study (1) focus on one teacher, (2) be an exploration to discover insights into the teacher's developmental process, (3) provide support for deeper understanding of CLT and the NNS, and (4) in turn provide insights into strengthening future teacher-training programs. Kiely (2001), Bailey

(1996) and others have written about the role and validity of ethnography in English language teaching. Ethnography is the means by which insight can be developed: the theoretical understanding, the thoughts and behavior of the teacher, and the pedagogy of the teacher/student interactions. Ethnographic research in Korea is timely as she is only now beginning to have teacher-trainers who are both skilled enough and knowledgeable enough to work with teachers in the areas of classroom evaluation. It therefore is prudent to talk with and work with teachers in the real classroom situation in regards to CLT as it involves NNSs not only having to alter their way(s) of thinking in lesson presentation, but also their value system (Shin 2002) on how a teacher should teach and interact with the student(s). Krushner (cited in Kiely 2001:244) describes this as a teacher having to balance teaching principles with teaching values. This study is constructed to re-enforce what the teacher had been exposed to in the teacher training and also to give confidence to the teacher to “free-up” lessons from basic textbook constraints and perhaps past classroom values. The documentation from field-notes, diary input and observation are to serve as clarifiers, not as an evaluation of being a good or bad teacher. The work of van Lier (1990) also supports and argues forcibly for the emic and holistic approaches of gathering information because of the very complexity of the classroom.

The criticism of ethnographic researchers is that many are untrained in ethnography and the data collected is biased or superficial. The problem then is not in the validity of the technique but rather in the ability of the researcher to ask the correct questions, to take meaningful notes and to be unbiased in the interpretation of the data: an obvious statement that applies to every aspect of research gathering.

## RESEARCH DESIGN PROCEDURES

### I. Research Procedures

The data was collected in four main ways: observation field notes, interviews, audio recordings and diary entries. These were referenced to CLT and the ERM (elicitation, repetitions, metalanguage) techniques demonstrated and presented in the teacher-training workshop Audio recordings were made of the lessons and interviews for later cross-referencing and establishing validity.

**1. Observation field notes:** Data was collected by note taking of techniques (elicitation, repetition and metalanguage) used by the teacher for student classroom participation. The lessons were tape recorded for later analysis of teacher/student responses to ERM.

**2. Interview:** The interview, both live and recorded, was used as a reflective but informal exchanged between the researcher and the teacher. Sample questions, in random order, included: How did you think the lesson went today? How would you describe the student participation/interaction? Did you use ERM in your lesson today? Did you change your lesson today from what you had planned?

What was your purpose/goal? Today seemed to be a specifically good/bad day, what did you do differently? What skills from the workshop were you using in the lesson? Were these skills successful with the two student participants?

These and other questions provided insight to what the teacher was thinking/rationale at the time of a lesson. The collection of this data was used in the analysis of the *process* of CLT and using ERM based on the evidence of the recordings.

The interview plays such an incremental role in understanding the part of learning that cannot be quantified. Nunan (1996) has argued the teacher's voice "dramatizes" the events of interchange and alterations within a lesson and with students over time. Clearly then, the interview as a research tool also enlarges the meaning of a lesson where tabulating responses and statistical coefficients cannot. This study looked at why the teacher asked the question asked in the classroom in relation to ERM and the recently attended workshop.

**3. Audio Recordings:** Recordings of the classroom lessons and interviews were used to collaborate the data from both sources. The recordings also serve as documented evidence to tabulate: 1) the frequency of ERM use with the two students; 2) the "do or doesn't" responses of the students; and 3) classroom situations where ERM was used.

**4. Diary:** The crucial aspect of the diary is for the teacher to be as honest as possible and to conscientiously document her feelings and reactions to the implementation of ERM and the workshop concepts. Some sample questions and entries, randomly stated, are: What did I (teacher) do today that was different? What did I (teacher) do that worked/didn't work? What (How) do I want to change my implementation of ERM? I used to think...but now ERM...; Today I tried ...for the first time...; I didn't know how to say...in English today in class; Today in class I noticed S1/S2 ...; my learners can not ERM...

The diary is a source into the inter-workings of the teacher's mind: frustration, joy, confusion, fear, and uncertainties to name a few. A professional teacher is always evaluating and interpreting what has happened in her educational world. The comments of a diary permit the researcher into the thinking process of the teacher, and it also serves as a clarifier and as a cathartic platform. Knowing how to use ERM involves an enormous range of behavioral knowledge of how to do things in the classroom, in this case how or what to incorporate into a lesson, re-evaluating the action taken or not taken to control the class or to inspire the class. Because of this complexity it is important that a written record be made. Thus when a teacher makes a conscious record a risk is taken. A risk to be open and vulnerable to examine what Freeman (1989, 103) calls the "messy complexities of classroom practice." The role of the diary then should serve as an avenue for deeper introspection and inquiry. It can serve as a discipline for the daily record of seeking and analyzing the teaching process, thereby providing direction on what to do under various circumstances.

Although Freeman (1989, 107) argues for the validity of using personal accounts as a tool in research, he also presents the view of Misher who questions the

validity and the trustworthiness of such accounts; ‘In this view, validity is linked to the creation of a canon of what are sometimes termed *objectively truthful findings*,’ (Misher 1990, cited in Freeman, 1989, 107). There may be a bias in what is recorded by the diarist, but the role of this research tool can serve to clarify such personal accounts and thereby help cross the bridge from theory/workshop to classroom. It is the very revelation of intimacies from the diary of teacher/student that is critical to the understanding of what makes a method/approach work. To ignore these accounts demeans the teacher as being insignificant.

In conclusion on the procedures, a statement on CLT is apropos. Since CLT as a teaching concept, with ERM as part of that concept, was used in the teacher-training workshop, it serves as a referent for the information flow or *process* between teacher/student(s) student(s)/student(s) student(s)/teacher. It sets the “stage” for the process of implementation. In this study it provides the basis of questions related to implementation concerns and problems.

## II. Participants

The study consists of a male teacher with two years experience and with 20 sixth grade students for eight weeks. Two students randomly chosen, by pulling two numbers from a pool of numbers 1~20, by the researcher will be the focus of CLT-ERM implementation. The English class meets once a week for 40 minutes. It is important to note that the government has mandated that English be taught to all students beginning in the third grade.

The school is somewhat isolated being 20 minutes from the nearest town of 50,000 people and about two hours from Seoul, Korea. Most of the residents in this rural setting have graduated from high school, but only a few have gone to college. In spite of the isolation of the community and the seemingly irrelevant local need of English, there is a positive attitude from the parents on having English as part of the curriculum.

Due to the rarity of foreigners in this rural area and the intense curiosity about foreigners, a buffer period of three visits was made. The purpose is to satiate the curiosity needs so that students act more natural in the class in order to gain valid and reliable results. A second factor in having pre-visits is the need to be sensitive to the basic shyness and embarrassment of Korean students upon first encounters.

## III. Research Questions

This research study investigated the preliminary stages of the *process* of a non-native speaker to CLT and ERM. The focus was on three research questions:

1. What efforts are made by the teacher to elicit words or simple sentences from students?
2. How did the frequency of use of elicitation, repetition and metalanguage affect the types of responses from S1 and S2?

Examples of elicitation, repetition and metalanguage are as follows:

a. Elicitation:

- Did the teacher use completion of their own sentence i.e., It's a...;
- Using questions to elicit correct forms i.e. How do we say this in English?
- Asking students to reformulate i.e.,

S – It is cold outside

T – Today it is ....

S – cold

b. Repetition:

S – It is hot today.

T – It is **hot/hat** today?

S - It is hot today.

c. Metalinguage:

S - It is **a cold** today.

T – It is cold today.

3. What personal pedagogic changes did the teacher make in teaching English?

#### IV. Operative Data for Analysis

Ethnographic field notes observations and interviews, were cross-referenced with the audio recordings as these help establish what transpires in the teacher's adjustment and the process of using ERM concepts in language learning. The analysis consisted of three parts:

1. **Descriptive:** What is the ERM interaction between teacher/student(s)? How many ERM's were used with S1/S2. What S1 does? What S2 doesn't do?
2. **Interpretative:** Why does S1/S2 react this way? What kind of response does S1/S2 give? Are S1 and S2 more focused as the study progresses? Is the teacher clearer on how to use ERM?
3. **Implementation:** What changes were made in the lesson? What attitude changes did the teacher make in reference to ERM? What changes occurred in the teacher's self-confidence? What changes occurred in the teacher's teaching self-awareness?

The analysis is to establish and detect any relationship(s) across the teacher/learner that relate to the *process* of instructional practice and procedures. As Spada (1986:137) comments, there is a difference in how a lesson is presented to the students; in the kinds of activities used, the way questions are formulated between teacher and student, hence the teacher's awareness of this is paramount in understanding the process. The aforementioned documentation provides a research bridge of relating this classroom process to the workshop training.

The diary entries are used to gain deeper understanding into the *process* that a NNS teacher had in implementing the ERM aspects of language development. The diary helps to see what correlation, if any, exists between the interview, ethnographic notes, recordings, and to look for patterns and significant events that might interweave with the workshop training. Since the diary is a delayed record

of the lesson it can provide the most insightful reaction into the process of instructional practice and procedures.

The tape recordings provide an objective record that is not predetermined nor biased of what happens in the classroom. The recordings are used for checking teacher/student interaction, for contextual analysis of the process, and for cross analysis verification with ethnographic observations. The audio recordings have a significant role in re-setting the situation for clarification of what the class dynamics were at a particular time. Moreover, they complete the triangulation that is important in qualitative research.

## STUDY FINDINGS

The relative short learning time period of the study will not account for great changes in the second language acquisition of the students, but it is a window into the change that happened to a teacher's implementation of a process. The simple counting of interactions of teacher-student gives some insight to the classroom process, but when triangulated with other information the results are significant.

TABLE 1

40 Minute Class Session					
Elicit	Cls Rspnd	Unkn Ss	S1	S2	
L#1	13	5	0	0	S1 & S2 involved in 0 of 18 interactions
L#6	11	10	2	3	S1 & S2 involved in 5 of 26 interactions

TABLE 2

40 Minute Class Session					
Elicit	Cls Rspnd	Unkn Ss	S1	S2	
L#1	35	12	0	0	S1 & S2 involved in 0 of 37 interactions
L#6	13	0	0	1	S1 & S2 involved in 1 of 14 interactions

TABLE 3

40 Minute Class Session					
Metal	Cls Rspnd	Unkn Ss	S1	S2	
L#1	2	6	0	0	S1 & S2 involved in 0 of 8 interactions
L#2	7	12	2	1	S1 & S2 involved in 3 of 22 interactions

## I. Descriptive

In the first class, Table 1, the teacher called upon the targeted students one time during the 40-minute class and neither could give an answer as they were playing around with their classmates. The teacher used elicitation with the whole

class 13 times and with other students 5 times, none with S1 or S2. Repetition, Table 2, was used 35 times with the class and 12 times with other students, but not with S1 or S2. Metalanguage, Table 3, was used 2 times with the class and 6 times with other students, none with S1 or S2.

*In Contrast, in lesson six S1 is spoken to 4 times, an example follows:*

- Teacher: S1 “How are you?”
- S1: In a very quite and shy voice S1 answers “So so”
- T: “Can you remember...?”
- S1: No response. Classmates give help and S1 answers in Korean. The teacher repeats the answer in English.
- S is asked to read the textbook, and he reads in English. Later, the teacher asked another question and S1 looks to his classmates for help, the teacher helps him understand.

*S2 is spoken to 5 times during lesson six, an example follows:*

- T: “How are you?”
- S2: *Pretty good.* (Is very attentive. She speaks Korean to the teacher who then asks her to speak in English.
- T: “Can you express yourself in English?”
- S2: No and does an exercise alone, but then begins to work with her classmates and becomes involved in the lesson.

## II. Interpretive

The reactions of S1 and S2 appear to be obvious as more attention is given to them the more they become involved in the lesson. However, upon closer inspection the more attention given to S1 and S2 seems to focus the teacher more on the details of students interaction in the language lesson/teaching as clarified in the diary in the first lesson, “I couldn’t find any fun in the students’ faces. It meant we learned too much within a limited short time...I took only several students to the front and demonstrated the meanings. I was sure it was not so interesting to them...I think it’s more desirable to have a class with an adequate learning amount and activities all students can participate (sic) in.” *In Contrast*, for lesson six the teacher wrote, “Today we had a class ...for having food...As soon as students saw the picture cards they could speak them in English...Familiarity seemed to attract interest.” The taped lessons revealed that elicitation, Table 1, was increased slightly from 18 to 21, however 10 of the elicitations were with unknown students and 5 with S1 and S2. This student involvement was noted in the ethnographic notes; L#1 students were uninterested in the lesson and were generally talking in Korean with their classmates; L#6 students were actively involved in the exercise and helping each other. The tapes also revealed a dramatic increase of hearing English used by the teacher. The triangulation data (ethnographic, interview and tape) of R, Table 2, showed a decrease usage from L#1 when compared to L#6. This appears to be due to the fact that L#1 was a first presentation on the material and L#6

was a continuation of a previous lesson, hence the class as a whole was more familiar with the vocabulary and topic. There was no difference in S1 and S2 response rate from L#1 and L#6, both being 0. Repetitions increased from 0 to 1 for S2 in L#6. Triangulation data of M, Table 3, showed an increase in usage from the class; 8 times in L#1 to 19 in L#6. Analysis also shows that M was used 0 times with S1 in L#1 and 2 times in L#6; for S2, M as used 0 times in L#1 and 1 time in L#6. It is worth noting that as the teacher becomes focused on the two target students, the other students become more involved in the lessons and this in turn enhances the class lesson as a whole. This appears to be related to what good teaching practice is, that as the teacher explains in more detail to S1 and S2 the class benefits from the deeper clarification as well.

### III. Implementation

As Spada (1986: 137) comments, there is a difference in how a lesson is presented to the students; in the kinds of activities used, the way questions are formulated between teacher and student: hence the teacher's awareness of this is paramount in understanding the process. The aforementioned documentation provides a two-way bridge of relating this classroom process to the workshop training. The diary above shows the awareness the teacher developed and changes manifested by the involvement of S1 and S2 in using ERM in the lessons. The teacher and the classroom changed from being teacher centered and in the words of the teacher, "it's more desirable to have a class with adequate learning amount and activities all the students can participate (sic) in...familiarity seemed to attract interest."

### CONCLUSION

The data gathered provided a rich source of information on the changes that a NNS teacher experienced in implementing a new way of teaching. Teaching is a dynamic process; consequently, teachers are constantly making decisions both on the intimate student/educational/psychological level and on their own classroom educational agenda (value) level. For a new teacher and a NNS teaching English, the process of using CLT can be quite threatening. Furthermore, it behooves teacher trainers to be more aware of the insecurities that the Korean (NNS) teacher has, and where possible for the workshops to build in a "bridge" part of the program to get into the classrooms to provide support and constructive analysis. The goal of effective classroom language teaching is to maximize opportunities for language use and the goal of effective teaching is to provide encouragement, support and build self-confidence in the non-native speaker teacher. It is crucial that NNS teachers become confident in the SL pedagogy of where students enter the class lesson exchanges as equals. For example, what is not known can be a joint exercise in finding the answer.

Four points of improvement are possible from the above study:

1. By teacher-trainers being more aware of the efforts that a non-native teacher must make to teach English, better training programs can be created that address these efforts.
2. By the non-native speaker having greater *teacher awareness* and *process skills*, they can become more comfortable in the teaching of English.
3. With teacher-trainers understanding and insight into the Korean classroom, a dynamic clearer pedagogy can be taught.
4. Providing simplified and practical methodology can improve communicative competence in a more fun and relaxed way than the traditional rote style, and build a viable sense of the teacher's own teaching awareness.

The ultimate importance of this study is for teacher trainers to see the NNS teacher in their experiences in their classroom, not simply through the lens of a native speaker in a training workshop. Freeman (1998:182) succinctly states, "If we are outsiders to the classroom, we will not see the same things, in the same ways, as the teacher and students who learn there." And perhaps the teachers can benefit, again in Freeman's words (1998:187), "The principle function of teachers is to do, not to tell." Hence the process in communicative task-based learning is in the doing, not the telling, in the process.

## THE AUTHOR

[Editor's Note: This is the biography submitted by the author some months before his passing.] Professor Gongwer has taught at Chung Ang University, Ansung Campus since 1996 in both undergraduate and graduate courses. He received an MA in Educational/Psychology from the University of California (Santa Barbara), counseling credentials from the University of California (Berkeley), a certificate for EFL/ESL and is currently in a TESOL/Applied Linguistics doctoral program at Bristol University, Bristol, England. He has worked in K-12 education since 1970, including research on teacher standards, effectiveness and curriculum development. He has also directed numerous teacher-training programs both in America and Korea.

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## **Course Design**

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# Student Attrition and Foreign Language Anxiety: An Action Research Project

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## ABSTRACT

Student attrition is a phenomenon that occurs in a variety of EFL settings yet the causes are still not clearly understood. Rates of up to 50% within 3 weeks of course commencement is a common occurrence in company and institute conversation classes. We believe that there is a relationship between anxiety, cultural factors, and attendance patterns. This article is a current summary of an action research project (which is still ongoing) that was initiated to explore the interaction between these factors in a corporate setting. We will present our findings using Horwitz et al.'s (1986) Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale. Following their recommendation, we also surveyed students' reasons for EFL study. Item discrimination patterns from the results of the surveys and examination of attendance records will be discussed, and implications for program design and administration, as well as later stages of the action research project, will be suggested. The results suggest that conventional wisdom regarding student attrition can be misleading but can yield interesting paths on which to further investigate this issue.

## INTRODUCTION

In almost every English conversation classroom in Korea, there seem to be a problem with attendance rates. That is, attendance is high at the beginning of the course but often tends to drop until there are only about half (or less) of the original students attending. Why is this so? Various ideas have been put forth primarily from teachers and administrators resulting in well-meaning but superficial changes. The problem remains and both teachers and administrators are befuddled. In most cases another important group of stakeholders are rarely consulted, the students. Attendance rates in of themselves offer a small clue as to underlying causes that may be occurring. We hypothesized from previous research that anxiety might be influencing attendance.

Horwitz et al (1986) found that anxiety was debilitating to L2 performance. It challenges an individual's self-concept of communicative competence. It can be thought of as a drive to appear as competent L2 user, which may not be met when

one makes mistakes. This in turn produces reticence, fear, self-conscious behavior, panic etc.

Matsuda and Gobel (2001) also investigated anxiety by differentiating it into 2 components: Performance & Self-confidence. They suggest that anxiety is a multi-faceted concept based on target language and learning settings, and that, therefore, it doesn't make sense to see anxiety as a general state. Their work, however, did not examine the effect of anxiety on attendance, or on relative levels of student anxiety associated with particular stimuli.

Tsui (1996) looked at anxiety from the perspective of the L2 teacher's perception. Teachers view anxiety caused by many factors, including low L2 proficiency and a lack of rapport with others. This element gives support to the notion of Horwitz's undermined self-concept. Tsui tends on anecdotal evidence, however, to reach conclusions, and thus is a little short on quantitative support.

Thorkelson (2001) also conducted research on anxiety levels of his students. He found no relationship between achievement and anxiety level, but the study suffers from several significant limitations. First, the construct of anxiety was not clearly operationalized to make certain what kind of anxiety was actually being measured. Second, achievement was measured by a single dimension, and that a discrete language element (the pronunciation of a suprasegmental). Triangulation would have helped to make connections much more concrete. Finally, a longer period in which to observe student performance would have been helpful.

From the literature, this paper seems to represent one of the first attempts to link statistically attendance rates with various student demographics in order to see whether significant interactions exist.

## RESEARCH CONTEXT CHARACTERISTICS

Students are between 28-45 years old and have various English proficiency levels according to ACTFL standards. Student TOEIC scores would range from about 250 up to 850. The typical classroom was composed of 90% males. Most students have degrees in either the hard sciences or in business-related fields. Some have completed graduate school and a few are at the doctoral level. Their work schedule is between 9-6 from Mondays to Fridays. Coming in earlier and staying later was not uncommon and in some cases, they would have to come in on Saturdays or even Sundays to complete a special company project. Their speaking opportunities with foreigners are limited, usually found in email, telephoning, and understanding and applying technical manuals or contractual agreements.

In the last seven years, there have been only male teachers in the English program. The typical teacher usually had several years teaching experience in Korea and faced an isolated location and work environment. A business-related background is not necessary for the position and the contract period was for one year. Most instructors did not renew their contract.

The administration is staffed by capable people, but not necessarily in the field of ESL. The training programs that the HRD (Human Resource Team) delivers are geared toward furthering company goals. As well, the scheduling of classes had to take into account the typical work schedule, which took precedence if a conflict arose.

The English conversation course is the only course in which participation is voluntary. Other courses conducted by the HRD team are counted towards fulfilling certain criteria in order to get a promotion and overall company demands. For example, the TOEIC classes fall within this promotional scheme.

Success was based merely on the number of registered students, not on study hours or proficiency gained after taking the course. Testing during the course was discouraged. Otherwise, a teacher had some latitude in program design.

## **METHODOLOGY**

Much effort was made to collect the data necessary in order to form the basis of this project. Emails, faxes, telephone calls, as well as verbal personal reminders to students were carried out. Follow-up messages were done to gather as much data as possible. However, one would be remiss not to briefly comment upon the difficulties encountered in the collection of said data.

Accessing information can sometimes be problematic. To illustrate this, a brief overview of the company is required. Like all big corporations, LG group organizes itself in a manner that it deems to be the most efficient. LG has approximately six different companies (LG Chem, LG Petrochemical, LG Dow, LG Caltex etc) within the Yochon complex. Each company is organized into teams. There are presently over 40 teams within the various companies with a total of over 2000 employees. Hence, one will find students from different teams within an English conversational class.

Fortunately, the TOEIC scores for LG Chem employees were readily available but only certain office personnel have access to that information within the HRD team. Gathering TOEIC scores for employees outside of LG Chem proved to be more difficult. Usually it involved phoning, faxes, emails, and direct personal contact by the instructor or available staff. Some resistance was encountered in that a few employees were reluctant to give out their score, even after the aim of the action research project were explained and privacy assured. As well, no supporting documentation was ever witnessed by the instructor to support any score or when the TOEIC test was taken.

The goal and anxiety surveys (appendix 1 and 2) were supervised directly by the instructor and usually done within the first week of class. Translations of items into Korean were provided on the survey sheet. This was done because we wanted to ensure that responses were truly representing anxiety or goal orientation, rather than language ability (to understand the items in L2). Attempts to this beforehand in conjunction with an evaluation procedure were met with resistance.

Finally, attendance records prior to 2000 appeared to be missing. In fact, an exhaustive search revealed only scattered and incomplete records. These previous records were not necessary for the action research project but they would have helped to demonstrate previous attendance patterns. As such, we have to rely upon the anecdotal evidence of previous instructors.

To expand the database, efforts were made to contact other LG plants that also offer similarly-styled course. Most promising was Naju plant which had students with a similar background and course schedule to Yochon plant. The necessary forms were sent for data collection but so far, no results have been received, despite repeated follow-up.

Where possible, the students were evaluated on their English proficiency level before class commencement. The New Interchange series has a placement test meant to help evaluate students and place them according to the book that best corresponds to their level. TOEIC scores were also gathered. The anxiety and goal surveys were done during the first week of the course with great effort for student to complete the surveys within the first day. Attendance was meticulously recorded and the final results were reported at the end of the six week course.

## FINDINGS

The study is severely limited for purposes of generalization by the number of participants. However, classroom research is concerned with the dynamics of unique classrooms in local settings. With this in mind, what further subjects are needed, if one can acquire all relevant statistics from the population under study, namely the local classroom? Having data about other classrooms and other situations does not illuminate any more clearly what is happening specifically in a unique, local classroom setting; hence, the rationale for classroom research. These statistics may offer at the very least suggestions for further study, perhaps in terms of further acquisition of subjects. As well, data sets with large numbers of subjects may reveal relationships that have statistical significance, but lack educational significance. When significant relationships are found with smaller data sets, the findings, if only suggestive, still remain interesting to the classroom teacher.

Different kinds of comparisons were made with the data set, and each measurement then suggested a further level of comparison. The student scores were re-coded to ensure that responses were all in one direction. We began with a T-Test to compare the "hi-attendance" and "lo-attendance" groups on anxiety level (table 1) and TOEIC score (table 2). Attendance seemed to be affected by anxiety levels ( $t=2.775$ , significant at the .009 level), but not from TOEIC scores ( $t=-.631$ , ns). In other words, students who scored lower TOEIC scores did not miss class more often than those who had a higher score. The lack of a relationship is confirmed by a correlation between the two items, showing an almost zero relationship ( $r = -.060$ , ns).

From this finding, we proceeded to investigate more closely what other kind of anxiety might be operating on attendance. To measure this, the entire matrix of anxiety scores, along with the number of days attending, was put into an analysis. This matrix was subjected to a component analysis. This was done in order to assist us in narrowing down the possible factors under investigation by examining component loadings. A component analysis simply groups together items under investigations. These groups are called components. It does this by examining and weighting the patterns of inter-correlations between these items. A component, then, is composed of the parts of item variability that inter-correlate (the loadings, or L) most strongly. By changing the sequence of comparisons (or rotating), patterns of variability can change. The analysis, then, seeks to find the pattern of variabilities that maximizes the degree of difference between items by rotating it several times (iterations). The analysis does not, however, directly explain the relative levels of significance these loadings possess the way that a correlation matrix can.

TABLE 1. STRONG ANXIETY LOADINGS ON COMPONENT 1

Anx-Item 11:	Sometimes I skip class because studying English is just too hard.
Anx-Item 23:	English class moves so quickly I worry about getting left behind.
Anx-Item 27:	I get nervous when I don't understand every word the English teacher says.

Component 1 (eigenvalue = 9.716) accounted for approximately 32% of the variability in a principal component matrix rotated to produce maximum loadings, converging in 19 iterations. In component 1, attendance (L = -.701) is negatively associated with high scores on items 11 (L = .747), 23 (L = .858), and 27 (L = .847). These items are presented above in table 1.

No other anxiety items showed loadings of similar strength in component 1. Attendance had no other large loadings on any of the other extracted components, and so our focus would be limited to the three anxiety items mentioned above. A quick check of the inter-correlations between these items confirmed the existence of their relationship.

TABLE 2. ANXIETY ITEM INTER-CORRELATIONS

	11	23
Item23	.639**	
Item27	.587**	.801**

A further check was conducted, this time a t-test which compared high attendance versus low attendance response on these items, and significant differences were found with all items again (table 3). In other words, students that attended regularly answered these anxiety items significantly differently than did their low-attending peers.

TABLE 3. ANXIETY ITEMS ON ATTENDANCE GROUPS, FOR T-SCORE

	Att grps	N	Mean	SD
Anx 11	hi	20	1.7	0.98
	lo	14	2.7	0.13
t = -2.57, 32 such that p<0.15				
Anx 23	hi	20	2.0	5.99
	lo	14	2.86	1.17
t = -2.164, 32 such that p <.038				
Anx 27	hi	20	2.35	1.09
	lo	14	3.57	1.16
t = -3.136, 32 such that p<.004				

When factoring in information from the goals survey, we found that, although goals were related to anxiety, that anxiety type was not associated with attendance problems. In this analysis, we reduced the anxiety items into a single total score, and correlated this score with goals and attendance. This data was first subjected to a principal components analysis, and we found that the one component was associated with a higher anxiety score, attendance, and loadings on three goal items, shown below in table 4, with loadings (L):

TABLE 4. STRONG ANXIETY LOADINGS ON COMPONENT 1

Why-Item 7:	Because I like studying languages. (L = .616)
Why-Item 10:	So I can work in a different country. (L = .833)
Why-Item 11:	Because I like studying about different cultures. (L = .572)

Initially, this would seem to suggest that all three constructs were correlated in some way. A correlational analysis between Goals, Anxiety & Attendance showed a different story, however. The three goal items continued to show high inter-correlations, but none of them were related to attendance. They were related to the anxiety score. This suggests that the relationship suggested by component 1 was in fact produced by incidentally: anxiety, when reduced to a global score, is related to many constructs (in this case goals and attendance), but these constructs in turn may have very little in common with each other. A correlation matrix reduced to just these items confirms the complexity of the relationship (Table 5).

TABLE 5. INTERCORRELATIONS: GOALS, ANXIETY SCORE, AND ATTENDANCE

	Why 10	Why 11	Anx Sc	Attend
Why 07	.459**	.516**	-.472**	-.055
Why 10		.565**	-.543**	.339
Why 11			-.421**	.180
Anx. Score				-.451**

Attendance shows significant relationships with only the global anxiety score, while the anxiety cluster shows a variety of other relationships with TOEIC, the placement test, and goals.

What facet of anxiety component 1 is measuring, however, is difficult to interpret, given its complex relationships with the other constructs in question. Qualitative data, from interviewing students on their learning experiences, were conducted to help shed more light on this issue. Thus, the on-site instructor conducted informal interviews with students when the surveys were completed at the end of the course, and student responses lead to some interesting interpretations. The excerpts below are taken from the morning, afternoon and evening classes. It would appear that students feel more confident and less anxious in their use of English depending upon the situation and topic area. The English classroom seems to heighten student anxiety in the morning class:

T: Is that true? Do some of you feel maybe more confident when you're not in the English classroom? When you're away from the English teacher?

S: Yeah!

S: Yeah.

<general laughter>

Afternoon students also said that evaluating themselves on the survey was difficult. Their feelings and perceptions were situational, and thus it was hard to attribute to themselves generalized characteristics.

T: Oh. So it's kind of a little hard to judge your level? Is that what you mean?

S: Right.

T: Okay.

S: Because when I...in some situations I feel better or not anxious but at the same meaning I was at another situation that time I was anxious. So a little ambiguous.

The evening class cited a similar problem.

S: Well, questions #1 to #5 are ambiguous?

T: Really? What do you mean?

S: Well, for me, picking the level was hard [the range 1-5]. It's hard to assess yourself because it depends on the situation.

On the other hand, students who did attend until the end of course cite some interesting benefits of having studied. Interestingly, their comments were tied to real world events, in which they were able to assess some degree of their own success with language. Several examples from different time periods of the afternoon classroom transcript follow:

S: We have a good skill to read English, not speak. So it's easy to visit an English website because we can read it well...

S: I have more confidence now. I didn't before.

Ss: It's good to talk to native speakers...

S: Yes. My supervisor is from Germany. His English is very good. He was born in Australia. I can talk to him now about many things...

S: Before I was hesitant to meet foreigners. My friend had an American teacher stay at his house but no one could talk to her in English. So she stayed at my house. I was a student. Myself, my roommate and the teacher lived in the same house. She stayed with us for 6 months. I taught her how to play go-stop. We played it everyday. That made me confident.

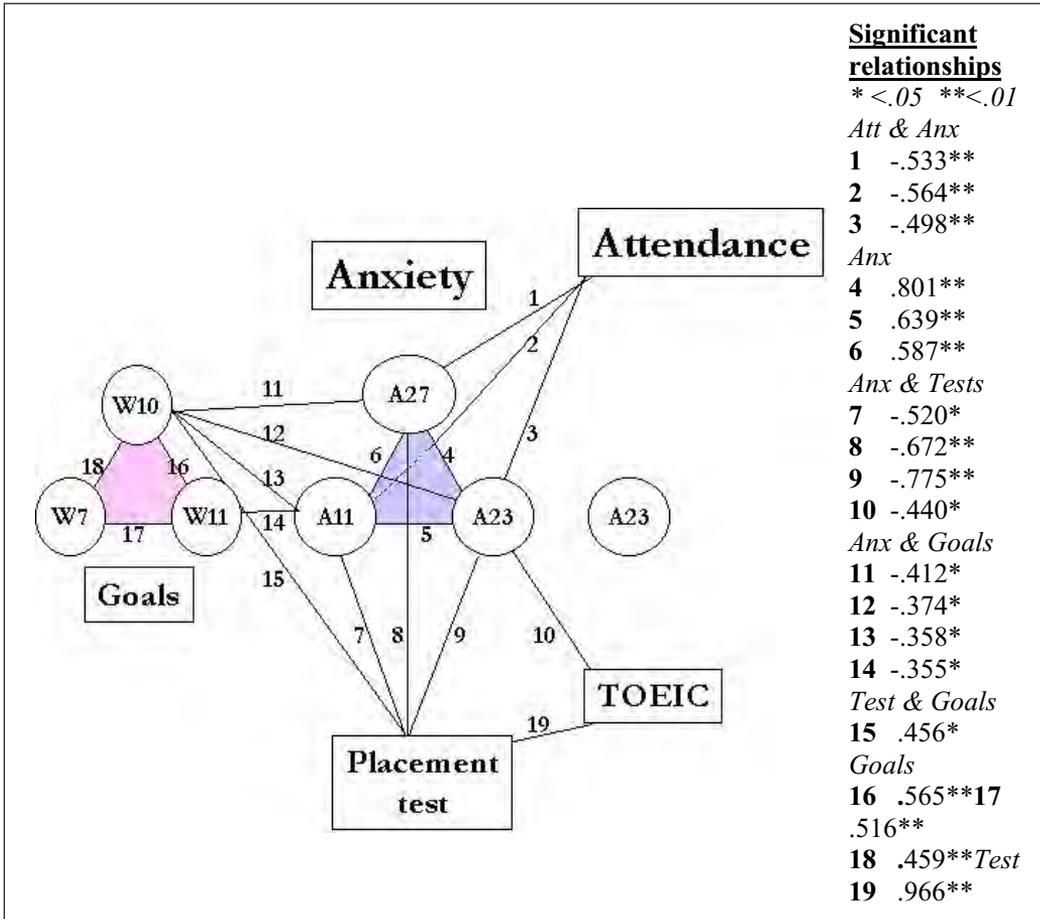
How do these concepts connect? Testing anxiety is ever-present, but did not contribute to attendance patterns found in our classroom. As was mentioned in the background section, paper-and-pencil evaluations were actively discouraged, because students did not want to have the added stress of further testing while studying. On the other hand, students' comments seem to indicate an inability to effectively evaluate their own language performance. The fact that they appreciated English study because it helped in real-world communicative contexts is significant. In those contexts, communicative feedback is present: I can talk to my supervisor, I can read web-sites, I can talk to native speakers. Students seem to be desirous of feedback, without the anxiety-provoking presence of paper-and-pencil tests. If this feedback were available in class, perhaps students would be more motivated to attend. Further, students who cited benefits from the class indicated a closer proximity in their daily lives with contexts demanding L2 use.

Why would the goals survey NOT be connected to patterns of attendance choice? Perhaps due to this previously mentioned inability to adequately assess their own learning orientations. On the surface, they might cite popular reasons for studying, what they think their supervisor or teacher might like to hear. By giving goal survey a second time, and investigating whether goal orientations had changed, this question might get a clearer answer.

## DISCUSSION

Graphically, the inter-relationships would look like the figure below (figure 1). Anxiety can be seen here as a situational construct, with minimal association with TOEIC levels, a stronger relationship for studying goals, and even more strongly for attendance.

FIGURE 1. THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ANXIETY, ATTENDANCE, GOALS, AND TESTING



Significantly, these anxiety items are measuring more than attendance, being also associated with goals and various tests. Attendance in this diagram shows no relationship with any construct except anxiety. Thus, it would appear that a global view of anxiety cannot sufficiently describe students' attendance patterns. Therefore, a more specific, situational view of anxiety is needed to account for attendance patterns. Significantly, goal orientation and tests measuring student language ability were not related to attendance patterns, and so further research on the attrition problem could eliminate these factors in future research.

The research that we have conducted agrees with the consensus on anxiety, that it is a multi-faceted, situationally-determined construct (Horwitz et al, 1986, Matsuda and Gobel, 2001). Treating anxiety from a global viewpoint does not account for the patterns of learning choices as well as a situational view does. The complex inter-correlations present in our data suggest that Masuda and Gobel's model is perhaps too simplistic (only two main components), that anxiety needs to be broken down into yet smaller components. The fact that testing results, proxies

of language ability, do not correlate with attendance choices would seem to disagree with the perceptions that teachers have about their students, as found by Tsui (1996).

If achievement is construed merely as product assessment (the achievement of stated learning objectives), then this paper sheds little further light on Thorkelson's (2001) findings. If achievement is measured in terms of the developing students' self-evaluation strategies, however, then some divergence with Thorkelson might be predicted. If anxiety as perceived by the students view of their own progress, then this process achievement could be enhanced through the use of alternative assessments; this in turn may mitigate the self-perceived developmental anxiety, and increase attendance rates.

In this suggested view of situational anxiety, then, following on from Horwitz's drive theory, students are motivated to evaluate their learning sacrifice in a cost/benefit analysis. Note also that this analysis may or may not be occurring at a conscious level. If they perceive themselves as not progressing, their drive to continue learning lessens, and other avenues of activity become more attractive (socializing after work, etc). If the teacher can help students to develop strategies to effectively assess their own development, and helps to create a learning environment in which this progress can be made explicit, then anxiety can be lessened, and attendance rates can increase.

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**APPENDIX 1. GOALS SURVEY**

Why is it important for you to study English?

영어를 공부하는 이유는?

#	Item	How important?				
		Not Important			Very important	
1	To get a promotion in my company. 회사에서의 승진을 위해	1	2	3	4	5
2	To talk to native English speakers. 원어민과 대화하기 위해	1	2	3	4	5
3	For my own personal development. 내 자신의 개발을 위해	1	2	3	4	5
4	Because my children speak English. 내 아이들과 영어로 말하기 위해	1	2	3	4	5
5	Because my friends speak English. 내 친구들과 영어로 말하기 위해	1	2	3	4	5
6	So I can travel abroad. 외국여행을 하고 싶어서	1	2	3	4	5
7	Because I like studying languages. 언어공부를 좋아하기 때문에	1	2	3	4	5
8	Because it's company policy. 회사의 정책이므로	1	2	3	4	5
9	Because I have a natural ability for languages. 천부적으로 언어습득 능력이 있기 때문에	1	2	3	4	5
10	So I can work in a different country. 다른 나라에서 일해보고 싶어서	1	2	3	4	5
11	Because I like studying about different cultures. 다른 문화에 대해 공부하는 것을 좋아하기 때문에	1	2	3	4	5
12	Because everyone in Korea is learning English. 한국사람 모두가 영어를 배우기 때문에	1	2	3	4	5
13	Because I don't want to be left behind in globalization. 세계화에 뒤떨어지지 않기 위해서	1	2	3	4	5
14	Because the Internet uses English. 인터넷에서 영어를 사용하기 때문에	1	2	3	4	5
15	(Your own reason) 그 밖의 의견이 있으면 적으세요.					

APPENDIX 2. ANXIETY SURVEY

Please circle the number that fits your feelings best.

자신이 생각하는 번호에 동그라미 치시오.

#	Item	Never	Sometimes	Always
1	I never feel quite sure of myself when speaking English. 영어를 말할 때 자신에게 전혀 만족하지 못한다.	1	2 3 4	5
2	I don't worry about making mistakes in English class. 영어수업시간에 실수하는 것에 대해 걱정하지 않는다.	1	2 3 4	5
3	I tremble when I know that I will have to speak in class. 수업시간에 말을 해야만 한다는 것을 알 때 떨린다.	1	2 3 4	5
4	It frightens me when I don't understand what the teacher is saying. 선생님이 말씀하신 것을 이해하지 못할때 두렵다.	1	2 3 4	5
5	It wouldn't bother me at all to take more English classes. 영어수업을 더 많이 수강하는 것에 대해 전혀 부담이 없다.	1	2 3 4	5
6	During English class, I often think about things not related to the course. 영어수업시간동안, 자주 수업과 상관없는 생각을 한다.	1	2 3 4	5
7	I keep thinking that the other students are better at English than I am. 계속해서 다른 학생이 나보다 영어를 더 잘 한다고 생각한다.	1	2 3 4	5
8	I am usually at ease during tests in my English class. 수업시간에 테스트하는 것을 걱정하지 않는다.	1	2 3 4	5
9	I start to panic when I have to speak in English without preparation. 준비없이 영어로 말해야 할 때 두렵기 시작한다.	1	2 3 4	5
10	I worry about the consequences of failing my English class. 영어수업시간의 낙오에 대한 결과에 걱정한다.	1	2 3 4	5
11	Sometimes I skip class because studying English is just too hard. 가끔 영어공부가 너무 어려워 수업에 빠지기도 한다.	1	2 3 4	5
12	In English class, I can get so nervous I forget things I know. 영어수업시간에, 너무 긴장해서 내가 알고 있는 것을 까먹기도 한다.	1	2 3 4	5
13	It embarrasses me to volunteer answers in my English class. 영어수업시간에 자발적으로 대답하는 것이 당황스럽다.	1	2 3 4	5
14	I would not be nervous speaking English with native speakers. 원어민과 대화할 때 긴장하지 않는다.	1	2 3 4	5
15	Even if I am well-prepared for English class, I feel anxious about it.	1	2 3 4	5

	비록 내가 영어수업을 잘 준비했다고 해도, 걱정된다.	
16	I often feel like not going to my English class. 영어수업에 참여하고 싶지 않을 때가 종종 있다.	1 2 3 4 5
17	I feel confident when I speak in class. 수업시간에 말할때 자신감을 느낀다.	1 2 3 4 5
18	I am afraid that my English teacher is ready to correct every mistake I make. 내가 실수하는 것마다 선생님이 고쳐주려고 할 때 두렵다.	1 2 3 4 5
19	I can feel my heart pounding when I have to answer in class. 수업시간에 대답을 해야 할 때 가슴이 두근거린다.	1 2 3 4 5
20	I don't feel pressure to prepare very well for class. 수업을 위해 아주 잘 준비할 압박감은 느끼지 않는다.	1 2 3 4 5
21	I always feel that the other students speak English better than I do. 나는 항상 다른 학생들이 나보다 영어를 더 잘 말한다고 생각한다.	1 2 3 4 5
22	I feel very self-conscious about speaking English in front of other students. 다른 학생들 앞에서 영어를 말하는 것을 아주 꺼린다.	1 2 3 4 5
23	English class moves so quickly I worry about getting left behind. 영어수업이 너무 빨리 진행될 때 뒤처질까 걱정된다.	1 2 3 4 5
24	I feel more tense and nervous in English class than in TOEIC class. 토익반에서 보다 영어회화시간에 더욱 긴장하고 신경쓴다.	1 2 3 4 5
25	I get nervous and confused when I am speaking in class. 수업시간에 말하고 있을 때, 긴장되며 당황스럽다.	1 2 3 4 5
26	When I am on my way to class, I feel very sure and relaxed. 수업하러 갈 때, 아주 자신있고 여유롭다.	1 2 3 4 5
27	I get nervous when I don't understand every word the English teacher says. 선생님이 말씀하신 모든 단어를 이해하지 못할 때 걱정한다.	1 2 3 4 5
28	I feel overwhelmed by the number of rules you have to learn to speak English. 영어를 말하기 위해 배워야 하는 많은 문법들 때문에 골치아프다.	1 2 3 4 5
29	I am afraid that other students will laugh at me when I speak English. 영어를 말할 때 다른 학생들이 나를 비웃을까봐 두렵다.	1 2 3 4 5
30	I feel comfortable around native speakers of English. 영어원어민들과 함께 있을 때 마음이 편하다.	1 2 3 4 5

# Motivation and Anxiety of Japanese Female EFL Students

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## ABSTRACT

Female students' silence in classroom is one of the most common features found in the researches of gender-based differences in performance and behavior in classroom. Some researchers even indicate that female students should be separated from males for their greater academic success. This article concerns a survey of some Japanese female university/college/junior college students around Tokyo concerning motivation and anxiety in language learning in relation to gender factors, including the difference between co-ed and single-ed environments. The results show there are significant differences between single- and co-ed female students in gender-related anxiety and in the awareness of English for their future status. Female students at co-ed schools have significantly higher gender-related anxiety and awareness of English being a tool for their future status. The results may not support idea that single-ed schooling creates better academic success for female students; however, the authors suggest that EFL teachers' awareness of such matters and their efficient management of class are important.

## INTRODUCTION

Girls should not sit together with boys when they get seven years old...  
——— Confucian saying (Takeuchi, 1977, p.451)

In recent decades, the relationship between language and gender has been getting growing attention. Many researchers have published evidence that supports the notion that men and women are different in performance in language learning and second language acquisition. One of the key issues for gender difference is that girls at younger ages tend to perform better than boys (Sunderland, 2000). Some studies provide data showing girls performing better than boys in foreign language exams (Arnot et al., 1996, as cited in Sunderland, 2000; Clark, 1998, as cited in Sunderland, 2000), and showing girls more likely to choose language courses (Sunderland, 2000). In second language acquisition, Ellis (1994) suggests that women "are more open to new linguistic forms in the L2 input and they will

be more likely to rid themselves of interlanguage forms that deviate from target language norms” (p. 202). Female students’ use of higher-level learning strategies as well as their characteristic of using a “global” learning style were indicated by studies such as Green and Oxford (1995) and Oxford (1994). Similarly in language learning motivation, there have been some results indicating that female learners are more highly motivated than males (Bacon & Finnemann, 1992; Chavez, 2000; Muchnick & Wolfe, as cited in Sunderland, 2000).

Are female learners always better in language learning, as the above examples seem to indicate? Some other studies show that females’ more positive attitudes toward learning a second language and their better linguistic performance are not always manifested (Ellis, 1994), and gender differences in overall subject choice are decreasing (Sunderland, 2000). Regarding motivation and anxiety in specific, Norton (2000) states that motivation as well as anxiety are not fixed traits, but situationally change. Despite high motivation, there are particular conditions under which women are uncomfortable and unlikely to speak. Anxiety is also affected by states and situations (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991). Anxiety is socially constructed “within and by the lived experiences of language learners” (Norton, 2000, p. 127).

A picture of contrast with the better performance of female students is their quieter conduct than male students in the classroom (Cortes, 1986; Losey, 1995). In a description of mixed-gender classroom, Swann (1988) writes, “men tend to be the dominant parties in mixed-sex conversations and discussions” (p. 123). Cortes (1986) summarizes some studies in classrooms. Some findings are: boys’ confidence is “apparent in the way they respond to questions: they participate actively, call out answers, make lots of guesses, while girls listen more passively” (p. 156). Cortes also quotes a comment by a female student who was aware of the discrepancies between boys and girls and said that boys are more intelligent than girls (as quoted from Stanworth, 1981, in Cortes, 1986).

Female students’ quietness in the classroom has been explained from various perspectives. One explanation is given as the difference in communicative style, which results in different interactive styles. According to Cortes (1986), men’s tendency to interrupt women allows them to control conversation topics and induces women’s silence. She also states that “the differences between the competitive, assertive male style and the co-operative, supportive female style mean that men will tend to dominate in mixed-sex interaction” (p.117).

Differences in teacher treatment greatly influences performance and behavior of female students. Several researchers have found that in the classroom girls and boys are treated differently and more attention is given to boys (Sunderland, 2000; 1994; Swann, 1988; Cortes, 1986). For example, classroom topics are often chosen with a view to maintaining boys’ interests (Swann, 1988; Cortes, 1986); boys get more blame, approval, disapproval, as well as instructions; girls who call out are reprimanded more; and boys are given more wait time (Sunderland, 1994). Sears and Feldman (1974, in Cortes, 1986, 158) comment about teachers’ re-

sponses affecting girls' self-esteem: "Teachers' responses encourage boys to act independently, but lower girls' self-esteem. By 11 or 12, bright girls are known to have a significantly lower self-image than boys of comparable ability". Losey (1995) also states in her study that "low-self-esteem or negative self-perception also played a role in the silence of women" (p. 65).

Another factor contributing to female students' silence in the classroom might be their own consciousness of the image of femininity, or the traditional role of women in society. According to Glazer (1997), there is a "motive to avoid success" (p. 43) in women. Femininity and competitive achievement are viewed as two desirable but mutually exclusive goals, when faced with the conflict between their feminine image and developing their abilities and interests. Girls' sense of their own identity as female makes them feel that such actions as arguing, challenging and shouting are inappropriate (Cortes, 1986).

In the field of sociology of education, Brutsaert (1999) summarizes educationalists' arguments that girls cannot develop their fullest potential either socially or academically in coeducational schools. Brutsaert also reviews some research that shows the difference in curriculum orientations between single-ed and co-ed, and some research that indicates that girls in single-ed schools have higher career aspirations. Brutsaert analyzes these outcomes from the perspective of gender identity formation in school, stating that gender identity is socially constructed in structural mechanisms such as gender-segregated activities, cross-sex interaction patterns, hierarchy formation, differential treatment by teachers, and therefore, "gender stereotyping of attitudes and behaviors is more pronounced in coeducational schools than in single-sex schools" (p. 2).

In Japan in particular, high school female students tend to be imbued with the traditional social role of women. In her description of Japanese education from the perspectives of gender, Kameda (1995) writes that "gender discrepancies in patterns of participation in higher education reflect certain cultural norms and attitudes regarding the role of women in society and the purpose of higher education for women within this culturally defined role" (pp. 129-130). Some old-fashioned beliefs are still the basis of many Japanese people's attitudes regarding education for women, as Kameda gives as examples: "a man should be better educated than his wife"; "too much education will make a woman too proud and therefore unfit to be a good wife"; "the goal of women's education should be producing good wives and wise mothers" (p. 130). These general attitudes toward women's education might cause young female students to have lower expectations for their future careers and minimal classroom participation, as Inoue (1999)'s study of female students' status aspirations and life-course selection indicates. In the same way, Japanese parents' expectations for daughters are not educationally oriented. They put higher priority to the education of sons, and daughters are expected to be brought up to be good homemakers (Kameda, 1995).

These are some of the factors that seem to be related to female students' silence in classrooms, in other words, their lower motivation to and higher anxiety

about speaking up and being competitive in language classrooms. Although it is impossible to change the whole Japanese view of the gender roles, we wonder what might be an optimal condition for female students to learn language with higher motivation and lower anxiety. If the presence of male students further induces the female students' silence, it might be really reasonable to separate boys and girls in school, and to keep girls away from the reminder of traditional social roles as much as possible. Although the Confucian saying we quote at the beginning of this section was originally meant to stipulate gender roles at home, it is very often quoted for many other occasions, including education. The saying would be quite right if gender segregation in school is reasonable and effective.

In this present paper, we would like to find out whether female students in co-ed schools in Japan have more anxiety and less motivation for language learning because of the presence of boys in classroom and whether students in all-female schools have less anxiety and more motivation for language learning because of the absence of boys. We would also like to know whether Japanese female students are more or less aware of the traditional gender role in society and if that affects their motivation for language learning. To that end the following research questions are posed:

1. Is there any significant difference between co-ed Japanese female students and single-ed students in the self-report scales on motivation and anxiety for language learning?
2. Are there any significant correlations between the co-ed/single-ed difference and motivation, anxiety, gender-awareness and their effects on motivation and anxiety, or awareness of the gender role and its relation to language learning?

## METHODS

### Participants

The total of 297 Japanese female EFL students: 131 co-eds and 166 single-eds from seven universities/colleges/junior colleges in Tokyo were participants in this study. (See Table 1.1.)

TABLE 1. INFORMATION ON COLLEGES/UNIVERSITIES

Schools	N	Single/co-ed	School type	Years
1	75	Single	Private	4
2	43	Single	Private	4
3	48	Single	Private	2
4	26	Co-ed	Private	2
5	50	Co-ed	National	4
6	48	Co-ed	Private	4
7	7	Co-ed	Private	4

## Materials

The questionnaire used in this study has 30 items on a 5-point Likert scale, and there are 6 questions for each five categories. These five categories are: (1) Motivation for language learning; (2) Anxiety for language learning; (3) Motivation for language learning and its relation to gender; (4) Anxiety for language learning and its relation to gender; and (5) Language learning and gender. Participants did not know which question items belong to which categories. Following is the background of making question items and the questions themselves. The actual questionnaire given to students is written in Japanese. (Please see the Appendix for the English translation of the questionnaire.) The reliability of the questionnaire was reasonable:  $\alpha = .7998$ .

### Category 1: Motivation for language learning

The questionnaire items on motivation are based on Gardner's Attitude/Motivation Test Battery (A/MTB) (1985), and its Japanese adaptation created by Robson. (Brown, Robson, & Rosenkjar, 2001). The number of the questions is reduced from Robson's version (from 86 items in 3 sections to 6 items in 1 section), so as not to tax the students' attention and patience. The questions ask for information about: attitudes toward native English-speakers; interest in learning English and attitudes toward learning English; integrative orientation; instrumental orientation; motivational intensity; and parental encouragement. The questions about anxiety are excluded from this part because anxiety is treated separately in this study. The reliability of questions in this category was low:  $\alpha = .3497$ .

#### Questions:

1. Native English speakers are a sociable, warm-hearted and creative people.
2. I wish I could speak English perfectly.
3. Learning English is important because it will allow me to meet and converse with more varied people or because it will enable me to better understand and appreciate art and literature written in English.
4. Studying English can be important for me only because I will need it for my future career.
5. I actively think about, practice, and ask questions about what I have learned in class.
6. My parents encourage me to study English.

### Category 2: Anxiety for language learning

The questionnaire items on anxiety for language learning are based on Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope's Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) (1986) and its Japanese adaptation created by Robson in Brown, Robson, & Rosenkjar (2001). This questionnaire is designed to identify the respondents' "self-perceptions, beliefs, feelings and behaviors related to classroom language learning"

(Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope, 1986, p. 128). The number of the items was reduced from the original version (from 33 to 6 items) in order to forestall the participants' fatigue. The reliability of questions in this category was reasonable:  $\alpha = .6163$ .

**Questions:**

7. I never feel sure of myself when I am speaking in my English class.
8. I do not worry about making mistakes in my English class.
9. I start to panic when I have to speak without preparation in English class.
10. Even if I am prepared for language class, I feel anxious about it.
11. I feel nervous when I know that I am going to be called on in language class.
12. I keep thinking that the other students are better at language than I am.

**Category 3: Motivation for language learning and its relation to gender**

The questionnaire items on gender and motivation are also based on Gardner's Attitude/Motivation Test Battery (A/MTB) (1985) and its Japanese adaptation created by Robson (Brown, Robson, & Rosenkjar, 2001), but gender-related elements are added. The questions ask for information about: instrumental orientation of women, parent expectation for girls; interest in learning English and attitudes toward learning English; teacher treatment; attitudes according to teacher gender; and femininity and motivation. The reliability of questions in this category was low:  $\alpha = .4204$ .

**Questions:**

13. Studying English can be important for Japanese women (including me) for the future career.
14. My parents do not encourage me to study English so much because I am a woman.
15. When I talk to native speakers of English, I would like to be able to speak English perfectly without anybody's help.
16. Teachers treat boys and girls differently.
17. My feeling for learning English is different depending on the teacher's gender.
18. I want to appear feminine, so I feel reserved about speaking up in the English classroom.

**Category 4: Anxiety for language learning and its relation to gender**

The items on anxiety for language learning and gender are also based on FLCAS (Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope, 1986) and its Japanese version (Brown, Robson, & Rosenkjar, 2001), but we added gender related elements. These questions intend to identify the participants' language learning anxiety in situations with boys. The reliability of questions in this category was very high:  $\alpha = .9011$ .

**Questions:**

19. I would speak more in an all-female classroom.
20. I think that boys are better at English than women.
21. I would feel more nervous when I have to speak English in front of boys.
22. I would be afraid of making mistakes in front of boys.
23. I would not want to speak English without preparation in front of boys.
24. I would not want to initiate speech in the presence of boys in the conversation session of the English class.

**Category 5: Language learning and gender**

The questionnaire items on gender and language learning are developed by ourselves in this study. The questions ask information about the female students' awareness of various situations related to gender-related issues in the context of Japan, and their perception of the relation between women and language learning. The information to be collected was: attitudes toward native speaker women; view on Japanese women and language learning; awareness of gender inequality and language learning; women's status and language learning; situational motivation; and the effect of language learning on the view on gender. The reliability of questions in this category was low:  $\alpha = .4352$ .

**Questions:**

25. Native English speaker women are more independent, liberated, socially recognized than Japanese women.
26. Traditionally Japanese women are said to bear a major responsibility for the home and family and girls are brought up to be good housewives. Thinking of this role of Japanese women, I feel that studying English is meaningless for women.
27. Women should have jobs and secure their status in Japanese society. For this purpose, learning English is important.
28. I feel sometimes motivated to learn English and sometimes discouraged because of gender-related factors, for example, when the interlocutor is male.
29. Women should not surpass men in learning English because "one-step-behind" is the norm of the Japanese tradition.
30. My image of Japanese women has changed after I started learning English.

**ANALYSIS**

**Factor Analysis**

Collected data were put into SPSS for Windows for analysis. First, principal components analysis with varimax, oblimin, quartimax, equamax, and promax rotations were done for data reduction, and solutions were reasonably stable across different rotations. Scree plots for each rotation were also used for the factor analysis. Instead of the initially prepared five categories, only three factors were found

from this analysis, and we named them as a) Anxiety/Gender, b) Anxiety, and c) English for Status. For the first factor, six question items which measure gender related anxiety got high loadings on the factor analysis. Question items are shown in Table 2.1.

TABLE 2.1. QUESTIONNAIRE ITEMS FOR FACTOR ONE: ANXIETY /GENDER

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*No.	Questionnaire item
19.	I would speak more in all-female classroom.
20.	I think that boys are better at English than women.
21.	I would feel more nervous when I have to speak English in front of boys.
22.	I would be afraid of making mistakes in front of boys.
23.	I would not want to speak English without preparation in front of boys.
24.	I would not want to initiate speech in the presence of boys in the conversation session of the English class.

\*No.= Questionnaire item number

For the second factor, six items measuring language learning anxiety loaded high on the factor analysis, and items are shown in Table 2.2.

TABLE 2.2. QUESTIONNAIRE ITEMS FOR FACTOR TWO: ANXIETY

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*No.	Questionnaire item
7.	I never feel sure of myself when I am speaking in my English class.
8.	I do not worry about making mistakes in my English class.
9.	I start to panic when I have to speak without preparation in English class.
10.	Even if I am prepared for language class, I feel anxious about it.
11.	I feel nervous when I know that I am going to be called on in language class.
12.	I keep thinking that the other students are better at language than I am.

\*No. = Questionnaire item number

Six items, shown in Table 2.3, loaded high on the factor analysis. By looking at these items, we figured that they were not measuring language learning anxiety or gender-related issues with these seven items, but English for the students' future status. Therefore, this new factor was created even though we did not have it in our original categories.

TABLE 2.3. QUESTIONNAIRE ITEMS FOR FACTOR THREE: ENGLISH FOR STATUS

*No.	Questionnaire item
3.	Learning English is important because it will allow me to meet and converse with more varied people or because it will enable me to better understand and appreciate art and literature written in English.
4.	Studying English can be important for me only because I will need it for my future career.
5.	I actively think about, practice, and ask questions about what I have learned in class.
6.	My parents encourage me to study English.
13.	Studying English can be important for Japanese women (including me) for the future careers.
27.	Women should have jobs and secure their status in Japanese society. For this purpose, learning English is important.
30.	My image of Japanese women has changed after I started learning English.

\*No. = Questionnaire item number

### Multiple analysis of variance (MANOVA)

After the factor analysis, we then conducted multiple analysis of variance (MANOVA) with the factor scores in order to find if there is any difference between two groups: single- and co-ed. We chose a p value of .5 instead of .1 because we believe it is reasonable, considering the exploratory nature of the study. Table 3 shows the MANOVA between-subjects results, and Table 4 and Figure 1 show the estimated marginal means for each factor.

TABLE 3. MANOVA RESULTS OF BETWEEN SUBJECTS

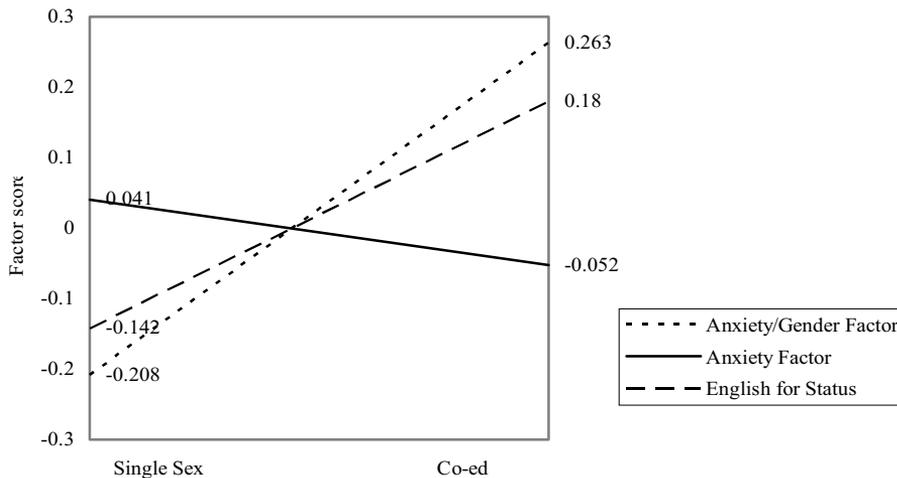
Source	DV	SS	df	MS	F	p	Power
School type	Anxiety/Gender	16.226	1	16.226	17.109	.000	.985
	Anxiety	.628	1	.628	.628	.429	.124
	English for Status	7.580	1	7.580	7.753	.006	.793
Error	Anxiety/Gender	279.774	295	.948			
	Anxiety	295.372	295	1.001			
	English for Status	288.420	295	.978			
Total		296	297				

\*p<.05.

TABLE 4. ESTIMATED MARGINAL MEANS FOR EACH FACTOR

Factor	M		s.d.		N	
	Single	Co	Single	Co	Single	Co
Anxiety/Gender	-.208	.263	.993	.949	166	131
Anxiety	.041	-.052	1.033	.958	166	131
English for Status	-.142	.180	.983	.996	166	131

FIGURE 1. ESTIMATED MARGINAL MEANS FOR EACH FACTOR



As shown in the figure and tables, the MANOVA analysis showed that factor one, gender related anxiety ( $p = .000$ ), and factor three, English for students' future status ( $p = .006$ ) have significant differences between single- and co-ed schools. The result for the first factor shows that female EFL students at the co-ed college/universities score significantly higher on gender-related language learning anxiety. As shown in Figure 1 and Table 4, estimated marginal means for single-ed students were  $-.208$  and for co-ed students were  $.263$ . For the third factor, female students at the co-ed schools possess significantly higher awareness about English being a tool for high status, and estimated marginal means for single-ed students were  $-.142$  and for co-ed  $.180$ .

## DISCUSSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

We found no significant findings on motivation and anxiety on language learning between groups. The initial five categories disappeared after data reduction, and three factors emerged instead. Two of them are the same as the original categories (Anxiety/Gender and Anxiety), and English for Status is the new factor. Gender-related anxiety showed the most significant difference between two groups ( $p = .000$ ), and English for students' future status also showed significant difference between groups ( $p = .006$ ). The second factor, language learning anxiety, did not show significant differences ( $p = .429$ , n.s.).

Table 3 shows an observed power for language learning anxiety of  $.124$ , which means that we did not have a large enough sample size to detect any possible difference between single- and co-ed schools. It is not likely, in our opinion, that there is a difference, and we did not find one, but it is possible that a larger study would show one. However, the power for gender-related anxiety factor is high ( $.985$ ). Also, for English for status factor, it was high enough for an exploratory

study (.793). MANOVA analysis also shows significant differences for these factors; therefore, we can conclude that there were significant differences between female students at single- and co-ed schools.

The results we got may not be great enough to assure that “single-ed schooling produces greater academic success for female students” (Brutsaert, 1999). However, the fact that the female students at co-ed schools have significantly higher gender-related anxiety may suggest that we the EFL teachers’ awareness of this matter and efficient management of class are important.

## **LIMITATIONS**

For this study, we focused on the participants’ school types, single- and co-ed, and we have to admit that other possibly important variables (e.g., school locations, participants’ home environment, socioeconomic status of their family, school characteristics, and age) are ignored. Also, reducing the numbers of questionnaire items from their original versions may reduce the reliability of the questionnaires. However, we hope that using a large N size (N = 297) helped to diminish these problems.

We also think that the participants’ interpretation of some of the question items might be problematic. For example, item 23 is “I would not want to speak English without preparation in front of boys.” A participant may strongly agree to this item because she would not want to speak without preparation, would be embarrassed to speak out in front of boys, or both. Such items should be modified for the future research.

Through this research, the notion of gender as essentialist dichotomy of man and woman was taken for granted. However, in the recent trend in the postmodern theoretic framework, the static and fixed gender characterization is questioned and gender is perceived to be a more fluid identity, changing with time, place, interlocutors and other factors (e.g., Pennycook, 2001; Norton, 2000). Obviously, a female student’s gender identity could not be recognized merely in relation to opposite sex in the essentialist binary system. In the similar vein, as in most gender discussions in linguistics and TESOL, this study is based on the traditional norm of heterosexism, and more diversified gender identity and sexual identity are largely ignored (e.g.; Pennycook, 2001; Nelson, 1999). It could possibly be the case that a female participant in this research might have troubled about being addressed by female or woman. It is important for us to redirect our attention to those various notions of gender.

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5. I actively think about practice, ask questions what I have learned in class.
6. My parents really encourage me to study English.
7. I never feel sure of myself when I am speaking in my English class.
8. I do not worry about making mistakes in my English class.
9. I start to panic when I have to speak without preparation in English class.
10. Even if I am prepared for language class, I feel anxious about it.
11. I feel nervous when I know that I am going to be called on in language class.
12. I keep thinking that the other students are better at language than I am.
13. Studying English can be important for Japanese women (including me) for the future career.
14. My parents do not encourage me to study English so much because I am a woman.
15. When I talk to native speakers of English, I would like to be able to speak English perfectly without anybody's help.
16. Teachers treat boys and girls differently.
17. My feeling for learning English is different depending on the teacher's gender.
18. I want to look feminine, so I feel reserved about speaking up in English classroom.
19. I would speak more in all-female classroom.
20. I think that boys are better at English than women.
21. I would feel more nervous when I have to speak English in front of boys.
22. I would be afraid of making mistakes in front of boys.
23. I would not want to speak English without preparation in front of boys.
24. I would not want to initiate speech in the presence of boys in the conversation session of the English class.
25. Native English speaker women are more independent, liberated, socially recognized than Japanese women.
26. Traditionally Japanese women are said to bear a major responsibility for the home and family and girls are brought up to be good housewives. Thinking of this role of Japanese women, I feel that studying English is meaningless for women.
27. Women should have jobs and secure their status in Japanese society. For this purpose, learning English is important.
28. I feel sometimes motivated to learn English and sometimes discouraged because of gender-related factors; for example, the interlocutor is male.
29. Women should not surpass men in Learning English because "one-step-behind" is the norm of the Japanese tradition.
30. My image of Japanese women has changed after I started learning English.

# Integrating L1 Literacy Acquisition Principles and EFL Classrooms

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## **ABSTRACT**

It is our contention that the application of several principles of whole language teaching and natural learning, formulated recently in English speaking countries to promote L1 literacy from elementary to high school, should be applied in EFL classrooms across Korea, particularly post-secondary classrooms. These principles include: thorough integration of all four language skills; sustained engagement with comprehensible reading material, especially books; and self-selected reading. Warwick Elley and others have conducted research on these principles in ESL and EFL settings. From analysis of this research it is apparent that sustained engagement with intrinsically motivating, comprehensible texts, if properly implemented, is probably the single most important factor for encouraging foreign language fluency. Therefore, in combination with self-selection of reading materials, sustained engagement becomes a tremendous, under-utilized resource for EFL teachers and university curriculums aiming at increasing students oral language fluency (conversational competence), as well as general language proficiency.

## **AIM**

In the Korean EFL environment, current university curriculums have had the primary goal of increasing English students' oral language proficiency. Too often the language modes are segregated into separate classes, and treated as if they are not part of a whole, "language." Such fragmenting of language instruction is not only contrary to whole language principles (Elley & Mangubhai, 1983; Anderson & et al., 1985; Cambourne, 1988; Elley, 1991; Graves, 1988; Nurss & Hough, 1992; Freeman & Freeman, 1998; Ovando & Collier, 1998), but interferes with simultaneous acquisition and transfer effects (Elley & Mangubhai, 1983; Elley, 1991; Freeman & Freeman, 1998; Ovando & Collier, 1998).

This paper will attempt to illustrate how a whole language EFL program makes language learning more efficient, fluent, and broadens the range of language proficiency beyond the limitations of popular language teaching methodology. First we will discuss whole language: for whom it is, and what it is. The purpose of our overview of the relevant research literature will be to present research studies not

readily available in Korea, and from them to identify elements of a well-implemented L2 (second or foreign language) instructional program. Then we will present a model of methodologies and activities that would collectively represent a course of action for teachers. In our opinion, Korean post-secondary and continuing education overlooks and under-implements these whole language methodologies.

## DISCUSSION OF WHOLE LANGUAGE

Whole language terminology and principles have been gleaned from 20 years of research and analysis of the acquisition of L1 (first language). Recent research has focused on the similarities between L1 and L2 acquisition and how the application of whole language principles can increase the efficiency and effectiveness of L2 instruction (Ovando & Collier, 1998).

Whole language has obviously developed from elementary L1 literacy instruction, but its proponents argue for universal application to all L2 learner age groups and ability levels, not just the more advanced learners.

When whole language is seen as a philosophy about teaching and learning, a philosophy grounded in current research, it becomes apparent that whole language should not be restricted based on student age or ability. We believe that whole language is good for all ages: young children, teenagers, college students, and adults. We also believe that whole language is good for all kinds of learners, those who are exceptional learners as well as those considered by the system to be average or below average.

(Freeman & Freeman, 1992, p. 5)

Thus, the literature argues that regardless of the age of the learner or whether the learners are elementary students or college students, whole language principles apply to the educational process of SLA (Second Language Acquisition).

Whole language has become something of a bandwagon term and classrooms, curriculums, and textbooks that claim to espouse and apply whole language principles should be evaluated according to some of the following principles synthesized from ESL/EFL textbooks and articles (Rigg, 1991). Central to whole language is a focus on sustained engagement with authentic (free from skills sequencing and over-emphasis on the structuring of grammar and vocabulary), but comprehensible and meaningful language that arouses interest (Krashen, 1997). Level-appropriate approximations, such as comprehensible but awkward grammatical constructions and nonstandard spelling, are accepted from learners as meaningful forms of communication. Teaching is as learner-centric as classroom culture allows, and instruction integrates the development of multiple language modes, especially allowing for the simultaneous acquisition of oral and written language. Time is set aside for students to engage in meaningful and purposeful acts of writing, reading, speaking, and listening. Reading time is an important factor for incidental learning. There is allowance for student choice in reading and writing, and exposure to comprehensible literature of quality and authentic texts

from a variety of genres. Motivation is intrinsic to tasks. Language learning proceeds from whole to part, and teaching of language parts comes from an authentic whole. The use of isolated drills and worksheets, and teaching isolated or strictly sequential language skills is largely avoided (Freeman & Freeman, 1998; Ovando & Collier, 1998; Cambourne, 1988; Elley, 1991).

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

The following review is somewhat unorthodox in its length, but it is our contention that the research needs to be brought to the forefront of any further discussion of the future of L2 education in Korea.

By far the most conclusive and thorough investigations of the effects of reading on second language proficiency have been conducted by and associated with Warwick B. Elley. In study after study he has shown that there is a strong relationship between high levels of comprehensive language proficiency and book-based programs. He has been associated with the development of government supported L2 education programs in Fiji, Singapore, and Sri Lanka. His studies have involved multiples of schools in rural and urban areas, and thousands of students. His studies, for the most part, have been comparison studies of shared-reading and other book-based approaches versus the common and popular audio-lingual method upon which most conventional "conversation" textbooks are based.

In 1983, Warwick Elley and Francis Mangubhai published a landmark study of L2 acquisition, "The impact of reading on second language learning." This study has been the benchmark for all further studies in the field. Three hundred eighty students in eight schools were selected for experimental groups and were given shared-reading or sustained-silent reading time during their English language instructional period. They were provided with classroom libraries of 250 high-interest illustrated storybooks in English, from which the teachers and students, or just the students read. A control group of 234 students were taught according to the government-mandated Tate Oral English Syllabus, which is based on the audio-lingual method.

After eight months of instruction the students were given a reading comprehension test, an English structures test, and an English composition test. An interview was also conducted, and half of the students were given a word recognition and pronunciation test, and the other half was given an oral sentence test. The shared-reading group showed significantly higher (double or triple differences) residual gain scores over the control group, and the Self-Selected Reading (SSR) group was usually double that of the control group.

In the 12-month follow-up study, the initial gains of the storybook groups were only compounded and more dramatic, especially for reading comprehension and English structures. In the time between the post-test and the follow-up study there was also a statistically significant advancement of the SSR group beyond that of the shared book group, contrary to the initial hypothesis of the authors.

There was a significant transfer effect that gives credence to the view that “marked improvement in one aspect of L2 development has substantial effect on related skills” (p. 65). Furthermore, the greatest variable in student achievement seemed to be the teachers’ attitude toward and treatment of the books. If the teachers encouraged students to interact with the books, and modeled good reading behavior there were higher levels of language proficiency observable in the students.

In 1985, the Ministry of Education in Singapore became interested in studying the effects of a similar book approach. They called their project “REAP,” and their intent was to design and implement “an integrated whole language approach,” using Shared Reading, Modified Language Experience approach, and a Book Flood” (Elley et al., 1996, pp. 7-8). In this study, no SSR methodology was employed. Comparable groups of 256 students, one control and one experimental, were chosen according to a standardized pre-test (the sample size was gradually increased, and at one time included 5,000 students). As in Fiji, the control group was taught using the traditional audio-lingual method, “which emphasized regular structured drills, extensive use of phonics and workbook exercises” (p. 8). The REAP students scored significantly higher on 53 of 65 language test comparisons, and the differences between the REAP students and the control increased over time.

It is worth noting here, given the possible similarities between the educational environment in Singapore and South Korea, that there were complaints about the adequacy of the REAP program as a preparation for the national exams in Singapore, but “it was estimated that any pupil who had taken REAP would increase his or her chances of passing the P3 Examination by 10%; a failing child would increase those chances by at least 40%” (Elley, 1991, p. 397). Also, an IEA (International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Assessment) survey of reading literacy in 32 countries reported that, “Despite the fact that nearly 80% of the [Singaporean] pupils had English as their second language, they achieved results in English reading that put them in the highest achieving group of 10 countries and well ahead of any other country which was tested in a second language” (Elley et al., 1996, p. 8).

Elley was also able to reproduce the effects of his prior research in Sri Lanka in 1995-1996 in a study of 30 rural and urban schools (20 experimental and 10 as a control) and 1,600 students. The language growth rate of the students who received the book flood, and benefited from the shared-book experience (15-20 minutes of book time a day) was, on average, three times as great as the control. The level of achievement was phenomenal given that the normal eight-month school year was disrupted for at least a full two months by the Sri Lankan civil war, which was an effective reduction of the instruction time to a full five months, and given that on average there was a 20% absentee rate. Teacher instruction quality was more closely monitored, and once again it was found that “the distribution of books, without teacher training in their optimum use, is unlikely to be beneficial” (Elley et al., 1996, p. 12); thus “books alone are not the answer” (p. 17). Another interesting feature discovered in the course of this study was that

... no school performed well in writing which did not also perform well in reading. A follow-up analysis showed, further, that virtually no student achieved a score higher than 5 points (out of 20) in writing, who did not achieve highly in reading. Apparently, reading ability is a prerequisite for writing ability in a second language.

(p. 13)

A foundational study in L1 acquisition by Nagy, Herman and Anderson (1985) determined the effects of reading natural texts on vocabulary learning. In this study, 57 students of average and above average reading ability identified by the Gates-MacGinitie reading test “read either an expository or narrative text about 1000 words in length” (p. 233). Posttests included two vocabulary assessment tasks on 15 target words from each text to control for the text not read, and an individual interview and a multiple-choice test both of which were designed to tap partial knowledge of word meanings. The findings of the study were that students learned word meanings from context even when contexts were not very informative about the target words and 23 words of the 30 target words were repeated only once; and the amount of learning from each text was the same.

Also, Nagy et al. (1985) compared the rates of incidental vocabulary learning from context and from direct instruction. They found that on average, students learned words incidentally from context at the rate of 0.2 words per minute, but under direct vocabulary instruction, students learned words at the rate of 0.25 words per minute of instruction. This means that vocabulary learning from direct vocabulary instruction highly depends on time-efficient methods, but “the number of words to be learned is too enormous to rely on word-by-word instruction” (p. 252). Hence, considering all the other benefits of reading such as “pleasure, gains in general knowledge, and practice in various reading sub-skills” (p. 251), Nagy et al. (1985) extrapolated from their findings: “a most effective way to produce large-scale vocabulary growth is through ... reading” (p. 252). Therefore, we could not but hypothesize that sustained reading is important for vocabulary acquisition as well as other modes of language skills.

Another study of L1 vocabulary learning was conducted by Elley (1989). In this study, Elley performed two experiments to find the effect of listening to stories read aloud on vocabulary acquisition. Pretests and posttests were administered to measure the extent of the new vocabulary acquisition from reading. High-illustrated storybooks were read aloud to students in both experiments. This first experiment had several limitations such as no control group, use of only one book, and no assessment of the permanence of the acquisition of the new words, so the second experiment was designed to overcome some of these limitations by using two books with different characteristics, one was “*Rapscallion Jones*, a frivolous animal story book by James Marshall” (p. 181) and the other one “*The White Crane*, a translated Japanese folk tale adapted by Helen Smith” (p. 181).

In the second experiment, 127 students in six classes from six schools participated. After reading *Rapscallion Jones*, the three highest prior vocabulary knowledge student groups in the classes who received no teacher explanation showed

gains of 15% on average and the low prior vocabulary knowledge group 22.9%. The control group who had not heard the story had a gain of less than 2%. This result was similar to the findings of the first experiment. The three classes who received direct vocabulary explanation produced gains of more than 39.9%. However, the results with *The White Crane* were not as consistently high as the vocabulary gains with *Rapscallion Jones*. The group who heard *The White Crane* with no vocabulary explanation showed a gain of only 4.4%, and the group who heard *The White Crane* with direct vocabulary explanation produced a gain of only 17.1%.

Even though the rates of vocabulary acquisition varied, the pattern of results indicates that reading stories aloud to students can significantly affect vocabulary acquisition, even more so if teachers explain new vocabulary. The variation in the results may imply that “characteristics of stories are critical in contribution to children’s learning” (p. 186) and for the maximum gain in vocabulary acquisition, teachers should consider variables such as “novelty, humor, conflict, suspense, incongruity, vividness, and the like” (p. 185) when choosing a book to read to the students. Finally, both experiments indicate that low reading ability groups have a greater potential gain from being read aloud to. This finding should be taken seriously when dealing with L2 beginners.

Janopoulos (1986) studied the relationship between pleasure reading and second language writing proficiency. Seventy-nine foreign students admitted to Ohio State University for the fall term participated in the study. Students had to provide a written response to one of three open-ended composition topics in an hour and answer a questionnaire which asked them to estimate the amount of time they spent each week reading for pleasure in their native language and in English. This study had no control group. In the study, “those subjects who reported being heavy pleasure readers in English tended to be more proficient writers in English, while subjects who reported being heavy pleasure readers in their native language showed no such tendency” (p. 767). Thus pleasure reading in L1 had no significant correlation with L2 writing ability, and neither was there a correlation with L1 writing ability. Yet the correlation between L2 reading and L2 writing is further described as “pronounced” and “striking” (p. 767).

The above literature review has been a representation of several of the most convincing studies that support various aspects of L2 whole language instruction. The research has indicated that students need access to high-interest, comprehensible texts, especially books and stories, and successful elements of the experimental programs were shared-reading, SSR, modified language experience approach, sustained listening activities (read aloud, and tapes), and text-based vocabulary instruction.

## METHODOLOGIES

The following methodologies are representative of whole language, but whole language is broader reaching and encompasses more than just these methodolo-

gies. Furthermore, they are not reading instruction methodologies; they are text-centered language acquisition methodologies.

Our focus in this outline will be on the extension of their use to university and adult. A brief discussion of various assessments and follow-up activities proceeds after the discussion of SSR, reading aloud, and shared-reading.

The modified language experience approach (mentioned in the REAP study) is only for the lowest level of students, especially those who cannot make English sound-sign correspondence. Therefore, since it is likely that very few students of this nature enroll in higher and continuing education we think this approach is irrelevant. Total Physical Response (TPR) is useful for students who have no knowledge of English, and is advocated by most whole language texts, but as it was not indicated by the above research, it is also not considered.

### Self-Selected Reading (SSR)

Of the methodologies mentioned in this section, SSR is probably the most important. All language students can benefit from access to a range of comprehensible, intrinsically motivating text, and time to spend with it. Krashen (1993) stated:

[SSR] is also ... the way to achieve advanced second language proficiency. Although the research in second language reading is not as extensive as in first language reading, it strongly suggests that free reading in a second or foreign language is one of the best things an acquirer can do to bridge the gap from the beginning level to truly advanced levels of second language proficiency.

(p. x)

Thus, SSR is the most effective use of time for individual language instruction (Krashen, 1993, 1997; Nagy et al., 1985).

SSR does not mean choosing a common text for the entire class. In literature classes, it is common to assign a text or a series of texts that must be completed on a specific date, but this is not SSR. Assigned reading for level-adjusted groups of students within a class that “share” a text is not SSR, either.

True SSR is uninterrupted reading time with a selected text (self-selected or teacher-guided selection) that the student must “stick” with throughout the allotted reading time, and student access to a variety of texts, including texts from multiple genres. The teacher should be a model of good reading during this time, and the students should not be allowed to do homework or reading for other classes during this time (Cambourne, 1988).

*Selection of materials:* It is reasonable to expect that all students will need instruction on how to select text. Some students will probably be too ambitious, and will need to be directed towards less concept-dense or more level-appropriate selections. Herein lies the struggle for adult learners: there must be a balance between motivation and frustration. With text that has too many unfamiliar vocabulary words and concepts, students will become frustrated, while the material

that will be more appropriate for the students' level of English acquisition may not be as motivating initially. The job of teachers then becomes interest makers and motivators, and shared-reading time (below) can make for good interest building time.

Day and Bamford (1998) and O'Donnell and Wood (1999) provide two general guides that rely on vocabulary as a guide for determining whether text is too difficult. The guides do not take into account grammar or concept density, but are simple and efficient. Day and Bamford (1998) suggest choosing a text that has less than three unfamiliar words per chapter, while, O'Donnell and Wood (1999) suggest about five words a page. We currently lean more towards Day and Bamford's guide, and it is probably equally as important that the student feels comfortable with the level of difficulty.

*Application:* Constant reference to a dictionary is an interruption of reading time, and it is a sacrosanct rule that there are no interruptions. But attention to vocabulary is necessary for vocabulary learning because if the students are taught to skip the words they do not understand, then the simple fact is that they will not learn them (Birch, 2002). Thus, they must consciously notice them, and there needs to be a specified time to use the dictionary. Also, students need to re-read, as well as to try out different types of reading, such as skimming and scanning (Day & Bamford, 1998).

We have developed the following method to integrate the benefits of SSR with vocabulary instruction and dictionary use at specific times. Since the central focus of reading time is time to read, if elements of the method are too distracting initially, they can be introduced gradually. Modeling of the elements can be provided by shared-reading.

There are five elements to our reading program: *Review*, *Preview*, *Reading*, *Vocabulary Scan*, and *Re-reading*. Before *Reading*, the students should first *Review* what was read during the last reading session, and then *Preview* what will be read during the present class, while making predictions and possibly inventing questions for 10-15 minutes. The students should then *Read* the text for 25-30 minutes, noting the words that are unfamiliar, and pausing to think about the meaning for a second or two—consciously noticing the word. The students should then take a short time *Scanning* the text for the sentences in which the words that were unknown occurred, and look up the meanings in a dictionary, and then *Re-read*, thoroughly, and mentally pause to check for accurate selection and fit of dictionary meanings.

During the process of reading, the students should be naturally pausing to think about meaning, and not just vocabulary, and the students should also feel free to ask the teacher about unfamiliar grammar or concepts after reading time.

*Extension:* Students not only need time to read, but time to share and spend talking about what they are reading. At regular intervals, students should have book conversations, sharing what they are reading, and what they have thought about their reading (Cambourne, 1988). The teacher can guide the discussion by

asking questions that elicit comment and encouraging other students' interest in the process, if the students are not ready for independent sharing.

If the class is long enough, then the teacher can conduct individual or group conferences to facilitate comprehension, encourage students in their reading, as well as to address individual issues. Reading logs, in which students keep track of time, text, and pages read, are also useful as the students can also see how much they have read, and how they are progressing for themselves. Though, since we are both slow readers, we are reluctant to suggest that grading be tied to amount of material read, unless the student is largely off task during reading time. For other means of assessment, see below.

### **Selection of Material for Shared-reading and Reading Aloud**

As with SSR, students should be able to understand somewhere between five words a page or three words a chapter. A variety of material from various genres should be taken into consideration. Texts can be books, but they do not have to be. The primary consideration is that the text(s) chosen for class be meaningful and comprehensible. Comprehensible means that the text should be at or below the level of the majority of students, and in this definition we deviate slightly from Krashen's (1982) definition and follow Day & Bamford's (1998) modification.

The instructor should not select material to meet the perceived needs of the top of the class. For the top of the class this level of input will be what has been termed  $i - 1$  (Day & Bamford, 1998), yet there is still a large benefit for them. There are many language structures to be internalized, even in easily comprehensible material. For example, the non-native English speaking teachers in Elley and Mangubhai's Fijian study (1983) reported greater confidence and facility with stories and with English after teaching the shared-reading experimental classes.

There is a different challenge for every level of language of proficiency, and instruction based on interaction with a single text can be provided for multiple levels of language proficiency (Clay, 1991). While initially the higher-level students might think that the material is too easy, there is always a level of meaning that can be accessed only through higher levels of proficiency. Furthermore, input at  $i - 1$  can be just as intrinsically motivating as other material, and evidence can be found in the simple fact that *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire* had the largest first edition in U.S. history, and this would simply not be possible unless large numbers of adults were not also enjoying the series.

### **Shared-Reading**

*Purpose:* Initial development of the method is credited to Holdaway (1979), and the primary purpose is to provide modeling and demonstration of good reading strategies, especially strategies that the students are to apply during SSR time and during their own reading, and to increase students' familiarity and comfort with L2 materials and language. Shared-reading is easily applicable to fiction and

non-fiction, including content oriented material, or genre studies to help facilitate comprehension and familiarity with the language of that content area.

Grammar and vocabulary can be front-loaded or pre-taught, or taught as deemed necessary. Instruction and modeling are driven by the students' needs, as is text selection. Shared-reading is also a good method for getting students "hooked" on books that they might never have considered enjoyable on their own.

Shared-reading also further develops sight vocabulary, the internalization of frequent words and grammar patterns of general English or of the specific style or genre demonstrated, and as the teacher reads aloud or with the students, appropriate pronunciation is also modeled, all of which increases the students' confidence and makes for better and more successful SSR time (Holdaway, 1979; O'Donnell & Wood, 1999).

*Application:* The length of a lesson should be appropriate for the students, and allow time for re-reading and necessary instruction. Reading and interaction with and about the text should be the primary focus of the class. The text should be highly visible to the entire class, and it should be kept in mind that it might be harder to follow the instructor if the learner is looking at his/her own book.

The first shared-reading of a text might proceed in the following manner. The teacher thoroughly previews, predicts, and discusses the material before the reading. If the text is illustrated, the instructor might elicit descriptions of the pictures, and if the text is not, then the instructor might discuss the topic sentences of key paragraphs. The latter would be appropriate for introducing an article by talking about the topic sentences, title, or first paragraph, and then discussing expectations. In this way, the learner is already reminded of relevant vocabulary. The text is then read through without stopping. After finishing, the instructor then re-reads the text, inviting the students to read along with him/her, pausing before key words to allow the students to read ahead and anticipate the word, modeling reading strategies, and stopping for relatively brief discussion of ideas and concepts, grammar, vocabulary, or even comprehension checks.

*Extension:* The text can then be re-read by the students during SSR time or by the teacher at a later date. Masking activities can be adapted for this time, with portions of sentences or words masked. The students can then utilize their grammar knowledge, or analyze the context for appropriate completion of the sentence. Whether the students come up with the "perfect" answer may not be as important as analysis of whether the answer makes sense (O'Donnell & Wood, 1999). Activities that help L2 students meet their grammar and vocabulary needs are best, and it should be noted that re-reading the text, itself, would assist in the acquisition of these, as well as direct vocabulary instruction (Elley, 1989).

## **Reading Aloud**

*Purpose:* Reading aloud is important for all levels and ages of language students (Krashen, 1993). Introducing new material by simply reading aloud the textbook introduction has been associated with higher levels of reading comprehen-

sion (Allington, 2001). It has been estimated that an additional five minutes of silent reading time or time being read to would represent an “additional month’s growth on a standardized reading achievement test” (p. 31). Reading aloud time has been closely correlated with listening comprehension, which, in turn, has been identified as a crucial factor in writing ability (Birch, 2002), in addition to the transfer effects to general language proficiency noted in Elley & Mangubhai (1983) and Elley (1991).

Reading aloud suits itself very easily to narrative material. For the study of genre and content, shared-reading is perhaps a better method. The register of narrative texts usually has a closer relation to speech than other genres.

*Application:* Reading aloud is a rather open method in comparison with the structure of shared-reading. It can easily be adapted for any number of contexts and classes, and is rather self-explanatory: the teacher simply reads text aloud.

The instructor should read at a relaxed, but natural speed. The staggering of reading with comment and immediate repetition of challenging sentences, phrases, or paragraphs can help keep the class involved.

Interesting material should be re-read. Re-reading has the effect, as has been noticed with shared-reading, of assisting in the acquisition and internal control over new grammar structures that are comprehensible, but have not been successfully reproduced by the students. If text is provided for the students, the students can follow along, but if suspenseful text is used in class, the teacher might want to collect all copies of the text, or provide no more text than can be read at the time (Day & Bamford, 1998).

### **Other Assessments and Follow-Up Activities for All Methodologies**

With narrative text, instructors can involve the students in keeping a running summary that might also help absent students keep up with the story (Day & Bamford, 1998). Character lists and descriptions can be made and updated, and scene descriptions that make reference to the story and use story language are also good assessments of comprehension. Story imitations and oral story re-tellings can assess the internalization of story language, and integrate multiple language modes. Students can write skits based on character interaction in the text, or epilogues concerning what might happen next.

For other content areas and genres there are different extension activities that require application of the text in projects and reports, but they can also be imitated and responded to. Written summaries can assess understanding and ability to identify important points.

For any genre leading questions make for good discussion, and promote comprehension by helping students make meaningful connections while acknowledging students’ prior range of experience (Allington, 2001). Such questions should focus on meaning and be meaningful, and students can be invited to write their own (Day & Bamford, 1998).

Also, selected vocabulary words can be expanded into vocabulary research projects, in which the following information could be required: the sentence from the text in which the word was originally found, the L1 translated definition, the English definition from an unabridged dictionary, a list of synonyms, a semantic word web (also called word diagrams, or word maps), and a sizeable paragraph (or more) relating an experience that the student can associate with the word.

## CONCLUSION

While research clearly illustrates that language learning does take place in an effective audio-lingual classroom, and that vocabulary learning takes place in vocabulary drills, there are critical and profound differences between the language competency that develops through the audio-lingual method, and the language competency that develops through whole language education. The incidental language learning that takes place in whole language classrooms is both expensive and time-consuming to measure, primarily because it is taking place on so many levels and in all of the language modes simultaneously (Nagy et al., 1985; Krashen 1993). "The evidence of the positive effects of such [strategies] on ... second language acquisition must now be taken seriously" (Elley & Mangubhai, 1983, p. 409).

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# Student Choice in a Content-Based English Language Class: Content-Based Course Design for ELT in Asia

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## **ABSTRACT**

Many university English language courses are now often forced to address the challenge of both teaching English as well as equipping students with the knowledge necessary to communicate in an international context. In an effort to confront this challenge, we have used the principles of autonomous learning to develop a content-based English language course with a focus on international communication. Our course attempts to deliver general content in the classroom as a foundation for students to choose specific content and modes of displaying knowledge (essays, debates, presentations, etc.) for their own out-of-class assignments. This presentation will attempt to offer practical advice for language teachers interested in designing a similar course.

## **INTRODUCTION**

Kanda University of International Studies (KUIS) opened the Department of International Communication (IC) to students in April 2001. The department's instructional goal is three-fold: to raise students' knowledge levels regarding international issues, to improve students' computer literacy skills and to increase students' English language communicative competence. Fundamentally, the goals of the English language program is not to produce perfect English speakers, but effective communicators who may choose to use English in addition to their own language.

The first cohort of students began their second year in the IC department in April 2002. At this point they entered the department's flagship English class, Sophomore English. Sophomore English is the flagship class in the sense that it is the class that, it is hoped, will define the IC department's English curriculum in both students' and other concerned parties' minds. The Sophomore English class is the cornerstone of the department's efforts to build on the university's skills-based first-year courses while preparing students for the English sheltered content-based style courses they are required to take in third year.

The IC Sophomore English class is designed around a content-based curriculum focusing on topics that are in line with the department's wider goals. We will come to an examination of the content chosen for the class and the methods used to deliver it after a brief explanation of content-based language teaching and a defense of the rationale for choosing this instruction method.

## **CONTENT-BASED LANGUAGE TEACHING**

Content-based language teaching is the combination of language learning and content learning. It is a shift away from language instruction that focuses on teaching the target language explicitly toward implicit teaching through the promotion of contact with the target language via content-based instruction (Stryker & Leaver, 1997).

This method of language instruction has always existed in non-academic settings: traders and soldiers in foreign lands acquiring local languages, children acquiring a second language from a foreign governess, the powerful instrumental motivation that helps some immigrants' language acquisition (Brinton et al., 1989), have all indicated that language learning that focuses on meaning rather than on form is a potentially powerful means for education. As far back as 389 A.D. it was said, "we cannot hope to learn words we do not know unless we have grasped their meaning. This is not achieved by listening to the words, but by getting to know the things signified" (St. Augustine, cited in Kelly, 1969: 36).

The formalization of this general awareness into a language teaching methodology was popularized in the British Language Across the Curriculum movement and in Canadian bilingual education programs, both of which sought to remove language instruction from traditional restrictions, especially with regard to using a new language solely as a method to understand literature, to concentrate instead on language as a means of interacting with texts on a wide range of subjects (Bullock Committee Report, 1975; Lambert & Tucker, 1972).

Content-based instruction is used in both second language instruction - teaching French to Canadian Anglophones, for example (Lambert & Tucker, 1972) - as well as in foreign language instructional settings, such as teaching Arabic to English native speakers in the United States (Ryding & Stowasser, 1997). Successes have been reported at novice, intermediate and advanced proficiency levels (Stryker & Leaver, 1997) and at a range of institutional settings with learners of a variety of different ages (Brinton et al., 1989). (For a survey reading on various successful content-based courses at the university level see Krueger and Ryan (1993).)

The specific type of content-based instruction prevalent in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) contexts is sheltered content instruction. Typically, students in sheltered content courses are separated from native-speaking students so that they approach the content from roughly the same linguistic starting point. The instructor, however, is usually a native speaker or highly proficient user of the target language teaching exclusively in the target language (Brinton et al., 1989).

In addition, this type of syllabus should take learners' end goals into account, offer pertinent information to meet those goals, build on students' previous learning experiences and provide examples of the target language through contextualized use rather than decontextualized language fragments (Brinton et al., 1989).

The advantages of using this style of curriculum are numerous. There are the obvious advantages of having students interact with a native speaker or highly proficient user of the target language. Modifications and simplifications made by the instructor to her or his own speech benefit students in the sense that Krashen has explained (1985). As students receive authentic comprehensible input at a level they can just about understand they are continually forced to use their existing knowledge plus their deductive powers or other forms of input, the teacher's gestures, visible images, etc., to bridge the gap between the teacher's output and their own level of competence (Krashen, 1985). Related to this is the necessity for students to produce comprehensible output in order to effectively communicate with the instructor, which is a likely step in the process of moving from producing merely semantic utterances to syntactically correct ones (Swain, 1985).

The other components of a successful content-based course listed above (Brinton et al., 1989) are likely to be effective in increasing student motivation to continue studying the target language and thus encourage independent learning. Choosing content that students see as relevant to serving their needs and goals is thought to increase motivation, as is using classroom material that is both linguistically and culturally authentic (Stevick, 1971). While there is some doubt about the accuracy of measuring motivation (Au, 1988) it is largely believed that higher levels of motivation lead to higher levels of achievement (Gardner, 1972).

Numerous studies have shown that students in content-based learning courses benefit in two ways. In Canada's University of Ottawa students in a French language sheltered content-based psychology course showed no loss of academic achievement despite studying the content in a second language. They also showed the same linguistic gains as students in a skills-based French class even though they received no formal language study. The sheltered students also showed greater confidence and greater willingness to use their second language (Edwards et al., 1984; Hauptman et al., 1988).

The successes are not limited to students in second language acquisition contexts, as is the case for Anglophones learning French in Canada. Besides the successful language and content acquisition (Lafayette and Buscaglia, 1985; Peck, 1987; Snow & Brinton, 1988), students learning foreign languages have also shown to benefit from higher self-confidence and satisfaction with courses (Snow & Brinton, 1988) and the development of positive attitudes towards speakers of the target language (Lafayette and Buscaglia, 1985).

The IC department's focus on the theme of International Communication lent itself well to choosing a content-based approach to language teaching for the Sophomore English program. At the very least, students' self-selection to enter the department can be construed as evidence that they demonstrate interest in

learning about content related to international communication. (Later informal in-house surveys also support this conclusion, although further research needs to be done in this area.)

The department's goals as stated in the introduction to this paper also lend themselves well to focusing on English as a means for accumulating knowledge on other content and being able to communicate meaning and messages on the content using English. The need to meet the goal of providing knowledge about international communication is not solely the responsibility of content providers in the students' native language. In addition, promoting the acquisition of knowledge in both the students' native language and in English should make it easier for them to see the practical benefits English language instruction they receive. This type of additive bilingualism (Lambert, 1981), where the second language complements and enhances the user's mother tongue linguistic abilities, is recognized as an asset to cognitive development in performing creative and classification tasks and heightening metalinguistic awareness (Diaz, 1985; Lambert, 1981).

Content-based language instruction also complements the students' computer learning, especially concerning Internet use. The need to research content-based topics on the Internet, a largely English medium, for Sophomore English provides students with an obvious application for the computer skills they receive in other areas of the departmental curriculum. As students' linguistic skills increase they have increased access to the infinite resources found on the Internet and, with increased access, their linguistic skills should increase as a result of contact with the target language. This iterative process, where gains in one area lead to gains in another, allowing further gains in the first area, should reinforce the importance of both skills. It is also hoped that this will promote learner autonomy as students learn that they can build on their own skills to acquire new knowledge without the help of the instructor (Scharle & Szabó, 2000).

Furthermore, our students have chosen to study in the IC not solely for its English language program. Therefore we needed to design a course that could be flexible enough to meet the needs and motivate students who do not hold dear the dream of being fluent English speakers. We needed to design a course that seemed to take the focus off the process of language acquisition, broadening the scope of the course to encompass content acquisition that includes subjects that would hopefully interest the majority of students in the classroom.

## **IC SOPHOMORE ENGLISH: CURRICULUM DESIGN**

Keeping in mind the tenets of successful content-based course design and the departmental focus on international communication, the over-arching theme the Sophomore English curriculum is globalization, especially globalization as it is defined in Thomas Friedman's seminal work on the topic, *The Lexus and The Olive Tree* (2000). Friedman's argument, that globalization has replaced the cold war as the defining organizational structure for international relations, is a theme

that restricts the course to clearly defined contextual boundaries yet still allows great freedom for both instructors and students to choose to focus on a wide variety of topics.

The curriculum is divided into two semesters. The first semester is a bridge from the Freshman year into the more content-driven second semester. While retaining the basic structure of the university's Freshman lessons, the Sophomore lessons in the first semester focus more on content instead of skill building. The underlying theme of the first semester is cultural stereotypes - looking past our existing knowledge and understanding of the world we know and debunking a few myths and preconceived notions that usually blurs our vision of the world. Content of the lesson is investigated and developed to obtain a deeper understanding of the issues and information surrounding the topic.

This main theme was further subdivided into sub-topics. A variety of questions were considered when each of these sub-topics was chosen: Did the topic seem relevant to the Department of International Communication? Did the topic connect to the main theme of globalization? Did the topic complement other topics students study in the department? Did the topic complement other topics in the Sophomore English course?

For example, the topic of religion was considered and accepted as being suitable for the course. This topic complements other courses students take in the department in that many courses focus on discovering more about other cultures with the final goal being understanding such cultures enough to communicate from a sense of shared community. Using religion as a topic allows students to see how globalization is affecting aspects of societies other than business, the most common focus of most texts on globalization.

Methods of content delivery were also chosen with several factors in mind. Skills development in a content-based course is not explicit, but it is still important for instructors to be mindful that language needs have to be met before content is present, used and understood. Students were given materials to read, watch and listen to, both in hardcopy form and via links to appropriate text, audio and video files on the Internet. Often similar material was presented in two different forms to allow students to recycle the vocabulary and ideas they were studying.

The approach taken to design lessons for the course is based on a three-pronged model commonly referred to by materials designers in the IC department as Spoke theory. If we think of a lesson as a wheel then the language focus of the lesson, the relevance of lesson to students' needs and the actual content as the lure to encourage students to want to know more are the three spokes that support the wheel.

A typical lesson begins with students negotiating text, either through reading or by listening to audio. Then they are encouraged to discuss and reflect on the text with their classmates and the instructor. The main message of the content is reinforced through the completion of tasks. Students are given a certain level of autonomy to complete the tasks at their own speed and at their own level of ability. Students are also expected to do further research on topics that are of interest to them for a final project at the end of the semester.

## **SOPHOMORE ENGLISH: EVALUATION**

The choice of what to evaluate in a course is an important one, as this will have an influence on what students see as important learning objectives (Brinton et al., 1989). Evaluating a content-based course presents the additional challenge of deciding what weight to give to the evaluation of content and what weight to give to the evaluation of language skills, if any.

Students were allowed to display their knowledge in a wide variety of ways. With the goal of making them effective communicators in mind it was decided that it would increase their motivation to give them more choice for their final projects (Griffiths and Keohane, 2000). Students were allowed to choose from a list of assignment products: teaching a lesson, doing an interview and organizing a fund-raiser, among others. This was in addition to the usual essay and oral presentation options that are common in university courses. How-to guides for these various types of assignments were provided and models were done in class either by the teacher or as part of the students' task-based activities in their lessons.

As one of the main goals of the course is to develop effective communication skills using English, students were not evaluated solely on language form. The freedom in product choice allowed students to choose the best method they thought for delivering the content of their researched material. The rationale supporting this approach is to demonstrate that English is used as a tool to communicate in more ways than merely writing essays or giving lengthy presentations.

A sample of the assignments that appeared reflects the essence of the Sophomore program's search for motivation through personalization of content. One student did a survey comparing Japanese and non-Japanese attitudes and presented the results on a multi-media website. A student with an interest in world religions interviewed a local Roman Catholic priest and reported back to the class. A group collected information about education funding problems in a developing country and then raised funds for donation. A student with an interest in World Englishes taught his classmates a lesson on Creoles complete with audio samples. A film buff attended a short film festival where he met a director of a short film being exhibited at the festival. He showed the class some short films on-line, explaining the director's meaning and purpose.

## **SOPHOMORE ENGLISH: RESULTS**

Still in its formative stage, and in the absence of any definitive empirical research, it would be premature to draw any conclusions claiming success linguistically or pedagogically. However, from close observations and continued discussions with and feedback from students, overall the curriculum appears to go some way to meeting its initial goals - to develop students' use of English as an effective communication tool. The course has also opened the minds of our students to how English and the use of English is more than another subject or lesson from a textbook.

It is a tool for communication - an alternative and effective tool. The course has demonstrated that there are more ways to communicate and express thoughts and opinions in English apart from writing academic essays or giving presentations. Above all, the course has given a valuable and eye-opening demonstration on how effective communication can be achieved using any level of English language skills.

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# A Profile of Learners' Cultural Milieu and Cross-Cultural Experiences

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## ABSTRACT

This paper is a study of the cultural milieu and cross-cultural experiences of learners for an Australian Culture and Society course in the English Department at Miyagi Gakuin Women's College (MGWC). The course is content based and taught in an EFL context by myself, a native English speaker from Australia. The study will provide an overview of culture research and coverage of specific studies in the Japanese context. This will be followed by an introduction to the institutional culture of the college and a course outline. For the study, I developed a ten question multiple-choice survey to collect data about the cultural milieu and cross-cultural experiences of learners in Japan and overseas. The study will summarise this data and refer to relevant research to interpret results within the prevailing cultural context.

## BACKGROUND TO CULTURE MILIEU RESEARCH

Within the framework of teaching English as a Foreign Language, Brooks (1976) outlined how any student who examines a foreign culture eventually realises that he or she also lives in a culture. Subsequently, this can directly influence the way our own culture is perceived. He advocated the concept of a cultural component in the second language curriculum. I concur that learning about another culture is an insight to one's own culture. I am constantly reminded of this in my endeavours as an expatriate EFL educator in Japan, teaching a course about Australian culture. I have new insights about my own culture at regular intervals in the course of my teaching duties and daily interaction in Japanese society. I hope students in the Australian Culture and Society (ACS) course will experience similar reflections on Japanese culture while learning about Australia.

Stern (1983) traced the origins of the inclusion of culture within language teaching to German teaching practices after World War 1, followed by recognition about the role of anthropology and sociology for teaching about culture and society. Damen (1987) described culture learning as the fifth dimension in the language classroom and provided models for incorporating culture in the language teaching matrix. Kramsch (1993) suggested that a foreign culture needs to be positioned in relation to a learner's culture to promote understanding. She stated that learners should have chances to construct their own meanings via interac-

tions with native speakers and teaching resources. This approach is defined as creating a 'sphere of interculturality' and is preferable to one where teachers simply convey information about culture to students.

Of particular interest to the Korean EFL audience is a study of a Korean EFL teacher by Moran (2001). He described how the teacher, Kang Min Hee estimated that Korean English learners tend to idolize the images of the target culture, especially the United States. Kang contended that in the typical classroom environment, target cultures are heavily projected at the expense of the learner's home culture. She argued that in order to avoid a feeling of inferiority and even cultural abandonment, it is necessary for language teachers to investigate the home culture on a regular basis. Furthermore, Kang touched upon the dangers of teaching about foreign cultures by displaying facts or outdated customs as this may reinforce stereotypes and eventuate in a 'tourist-multiculturalism' approach. Rather, it is desirable to teach multiculturalism in a monocultural classroom through valuing the uniqueness of each culture and affirming a sense of equality. This guidance is equally relevant and valuable for the context of teaching about Australian culture in Japan

## CULTURE STUDIES IN THE JAPANESE CONTEXT

Sato & Cullen (2002) observed that there is considerable literature about how to teach culture, but limited knowledge about how students actually develop cross-cultural awareness in the classroom environment. Cullen introduced the concept of cultural texture as a productive foundation for the teaching of culture. This concept involves an attempt to examine a culture in a multitude of approaches and to personalize the content to increase understanding. Cullen outlined a specific case study at a Japanese university based on stereotypes about Australian English. Students participated in group projects and in the process, became cultural informants in the language classroom. Learners also understood cultural differences and similarities between Australia and Japan.

A major study of Japanese students' motivation was conducted by Kimura, Nakata & Okumura (2001). The results highlighted the desire to learn about the culture of English speaking countries, to make friends or correspond with foreigners, to make American or British friends and a longing for American or British culture. However, the study is perhaps guilty of some ethnocentrism as it concentrated on the United States and the United Kingdom at the expense of other English speaking cultures, which were not specifically included in the study at all. Accordingly, it is impossible to measure the level of interest in Australia for comparative purposes with the current study nor to determine any opinions about other English speaking countries.

Matsuura, Chiba & Hilderbrandt (2001) completed research based on the context of communicative English courses for university EFL students. The study examined beliefs about important instructional areas, goals and objectives, in-

structional styles and methods, teaching materials and cultural matters. 47% of the students were majoring in English, in contrast to the universal English major profile of MGWC respondents. Results indicated that 90% of students were in agreement with the belief that learning about cultural differences is important for communication. From a cross-cultural perspective, it was interesting to note how 81% of the cohort thought it was necessary for foreign teachers to know about Japanese culture when interacting with Japanese students. Clearly, it is beneficial in any cross-cultural educational environment for both language learners and teachers to have an understanding of the respective cultures beforehand and to increase the level of appreciation during a course of study.

The results of a study focused on teaching a Japanese culture class to foreign students at a junior college in Japan were reported by Kamada (2002). She introduces the concepts of ethnocentrism, stereotyping and over-simplification to the course in an attempt to make students aware of the importance of how they construct personal identity when evaluating another culture. Kamada indicates that students are able to achieve a greater understanding of Japan by comparing cultures and through reflection. She stressed the need for learners to be cognizant of how they picture themselves when they attempt to evaluate another culture.

## **INTRODUCTION TO MGWC**

In the context of this study, it is enlightening to provide some information about the institutional culture of Miyagi Gakuin Women's College. The college dates to 1886 and was established by missionaries from the Reformed Church in America. The institution began as the School for Girls in Sendai, with an enrolment of just six pupils and two female teachers. A letter dated 1886 (Poorbaugh 2002) described how it was the role of teachers to convert and elevate the females of Japan to the higher position of Christian womanhood. From 1900, a college was opened and courses were taught in Bible Studies, Home Economics, English, Music and Japanese. Correspondence from 1946 (Poorbaugh 2002) reported that high school and college graduates represented the high scholastic standards and fine characters of the student body.

The college subsequently expanded to become a two-year junior college and eventually became a four-year tertiary institution, with nine departments and a graduate school. MGWC still has a good reputation in Sendai and throughout the Tohoku region of northern Japan as an educational institution for young women. The English Department opened in 1949 and it has maintained a particularly good status as a place of higher learning within MGWC. The department now has an enrolment of approximately 450 students, with nine full-time teachers, including three native English speakers from Scotland, the United States and Australia. All of the Japanese faculty members have considerable overseas research and intercultural experience. Religious education is compulsory for all first year stu-

dents and Christianity permeates college life through a weekly Christian service and annual spiritual events, especially Christmas celebrations.

### AUSTRALIAN CULTURE AND SOCIETY COURSE OUTLINE

MGWC students major in culture, linguistics or literature during third and fourth year. All of the students in the Australian Culture and Society course are majoring in culture. The course is part of compulsory English study requirements for the English Department but students elected to take this course in preference to cultural courses focusing on other Western countries, including the United Kingdom and the United States of America. The students were enrolled in a full year course for the 2002~2003 academic year. The completion of a 2500 word research project in English on selected Australian cultural and social themes is a compulsory component of the course. I was the class teacher for the whole year and classes were held once a week for 90 minutes.

The Australian Culture and Society Course is a 'strong' content-based program in terms of the classification provided by Brown (1994). He differentiated between content-based and theme-based teaching on the grounds that the primary purpose of the former is to instruct students in a subject area and language instruction is subordinate. Certainly, an intermediate level of language proficiency is assumed for the ACS course and I do not engage in any specific language tasks in the classroom. The course incorporates a wide range of content areas related to Australia. The major themes of the course are Aborigines, education, multiculturalism, women, family life, lifestyle, language, history, travel and tourism, Australia – Japan relations, language, sport and work. I utilise a variety of teaching resources for the course, including a textbook, original materials, the Internet, songs, videos, movies, government publications and newspapers.

The fact that Japanese normally have rather stereotypical images of Australia was pointed out by Helgesen (2002). He mentioned how the usual way of thinking is often limited to exotic wildlife like kangaroos and koalas or icons such as the Sydney Opera House. He elaborates that multiculturalism, for example, is not something which many people associate with Australia. In fact, multiculturalism is now a core feature of the Australian identity. Multiculturalism is official government policy and cultural diversity is obvious through many aspects of daily life, such as language, religion, sport and food. As a long-term EFL educator and resident in Japan, I can confirm that Japanese learners and the population as a whole have a low level of cultural awareness about Australia beyond tourist attractions. Indeed, my students have a strong desire to learn about travel and animals but are not interested in themes such as the economy or political system.

However, at the tertiary level of education, I believe it would be very superficial to concentrate on themes that do not investigate the culture and society in a manner appropriate to an academic audience. I do not mean that popular topics such as tourist destinations or wildlife should be excluded from the curriculum,

but these areas of student interest must only play a peripheral role to the more serious endeavour of cultural understanding and knowledge. This is consistent with avoiding the 'tourist-multiculturalism' approach to culture teaching, as espoused by the Korean teacher, Kang, in the previously mentioned research by Moran (2001).

Nelson (1999) analysed how culture can be introduced to the classroom. He remarked that culture studies are a fascinating and powerful resource for EFL classrooms, but the materials must be designed to maintain student interest. The traditional approach is to examine culture as societal institutions, with a focus on political or educational systems. However, it is thought that such a strategy will bore the learners as they have minimal interest in such information about the target culture or even their own culture. A more recent teaching methodology aimed at increasing student interest is to view culture as an output, by emphasising social beliefs and values. Currently, a popular approach is one that examines culture as behaviour. I believe the most suitable teaching methodology actually involves a combination of the above three alternatives. Ultimately, Nelson is correct in asserting that teachers have the responsibility to select appropriate materials to enrich the lives of learners.

## **SURVEY RESULTS AND INTERPRETATION**

### **Introduction**

The survey was completed by 30 students in my third year Australian Culture and Society course. I asked students to complete the survey during regular class time so there was no extra burden placed on the subjects. The survey consisted of 10 multiple-choice items related to cultural and educational background, overseas experiences, MGWC Overseas Study Program experiences and cross-cultural experiences in Japan.

### **Cultural and Educational Background**

The initial item in the survey revealed that 19 out of 30 students, or 63% of the cohort were born in Miyagi Prefecture, within close proximity to MGWC. The remaining 11 students were born in other prefectures from the Tohoku district, within about a 200 kilometer zone from MGWC. It is appropriate to explain that the Tohoku district has a quite distinct regional identity within Japan. This northern part of Honshu is regarded as a more traditional and rural domain with particular cultural traits. The survey data indicates that the group is highly homogeneous in terms of cultural identity at the national and regional scales, with some variation in background within the regional level. Question 2 showed an even greater degree of homogeneity in relation to the senior high school educational profile of learners. 24 out of 30 respondents (80%) completed high school in Miyagi Prefecture. The other six students (20%) went to senior high school in the Tohoku

region. Question 3 identified that 18 out of 30 learners (60%) currently lived in Sendai City, a further 11 learners (37%) lived in Miyagi Prefecture and just one individual lived in another prefecture. The results for these three items produce a highly homogenous group identity in relation to place of birth, location of senior high school education and current place of abode. Undoubtedly, the learners have had very similar cultural experiences during the formative period of life.

Okano & Tsuchiya (1999) investigated gender-specific differences in education in Japan. They found that the meaning and values of schooling differ for men and women, due to limited labor market opportunities for women and expectations related to family roles. Such differences became striking at the tertiary level, with only 18.7% of female high school graduates entering four-year universities in 1995, in comparison to 26.5% of males. Accordingly, MGWC students belong to a select group of young Japanese women able to further their studies beyond secondary education. In fact, female enrolment at four-year universities in Japan is stated to be lower than in any Western industrialized nation. The study also reported that employment opportunities for four-year university female graduates were actually even more restricted than for counterparts at junior colleges. In comparison with men, women's educational qualifications possess a symbolic value related to higher social status and degree of cultural sophistication.

Nozaki (1989) observed that Japanese university students have a lifelong exposure to Western culture. On campus, students reflect North American counterparts in terms of clothing and style. Yet, she suggested this is a deceptive Western veneer and that core values of Japanese tertiary students were still traditionally Japanese. Examples of cultural contrasts between Japanese and Western students included in the study were differences in the concept of a good student, attitudes to learning, classroom behavior and perceptions of teachers. I contend these observations are equally true of the current student population in Japan. Students have a very pronounced cultural profile that they bring to the learning environment

As surveyed earlier, Miyagi Gakuin Women's College has a strong and rich history as a Christian institution of higher learning for Japanese women throughout the Tohoku region. Accordingly, learners are exposed to an institutional culture that has specific religious and gender orientations in combination with the underlying regional and national culture. Learners arrive in my culture course as young Japanese women, raised and educated in close geographical proximity until the completion of secondary school, followed by immersion in a clearly delineated spiritual and single sex environment throughout their tertiary education sojourn.

## **Overseas Experiences**

This group of items was designed to build a profile of the learners' overseas experiences. I think it is important to collate such information on opportunities to live, study or travel overseas. The data will help me as a teacher to identify and

interpret the amount of opportunities for students to directly encounter cross-cultural experiences, prior to embarking on their journey across the landscape of Australian cultural and social studies. It is natural to assume that any previous chances to live, study or travel overseas would have a positive influence on a learner's degree of cross-cultural understanding and be a favorable factor for a student enrolled in the Australian Culture and Society course. Although, this is not to discount that an individual may have encountered some unpleasant or difficult experiences while abroad, it would generally be advantageous for everybody in the classroom environment to have students with some exposure to the world beyond Japanese shores.

For the purposes of this study, respondents had to differentiate between three types of overseas experiences. Any given experience was to be classified as one of the three types and was not recorded in multiple categories. First, 'lived' overseas in Question 4 was defined as a stay of more than one month and not for study or travel. This item revealed that just 2 out of 30 students (7%) had lived overseas, while the overwhelming majority (93%) had never lived outside Japan. Second, Question 5 was defined as a trip primarily for educational purposes. This item identified a perfectly even balance in the group between students who had or had not studied overseas. 50% of respondents nominated 'yes' and the other half responded in the negative. It is likely that such overseas study experience was in a high school program or independent program involving both homestay and English language study in a Western country for up to a month. Third, Question 6 was for departures abroad with the main purpose of travel. The data for Question 6 illustrates that 20 out of 30 students (67%) had traveled overseas, whereas 33% or one third of the cohort had no such experience. Typically, overseas travel for Japanese is of a limited duration due to work schedules and limited holiday leave so it is reasonable to conclude that most trips were for short periods of around a week or less.

### **MGWC Overseas Study Program Experiences**

The English Department at Miyagi Gakuin Women's College offers several Overseas Study Programs (OSP) to students. In fact, the English Department was a pioneer in developing study abroad programs among tertiary institutions in the Tohoku region. The availability of these optional programs is attractive to prospective students. Gilmour (2001) reported that a majority of graduates from the English Department would embark on some experience of living and studying in an English speaking culture through an MGWC program. Approximately 60 second and third year students participate in the summer program each year. She described how studying English in the Japanese context restricts the opportunities for cultural contact. These programs last one month, and send students to a variety of destinations in the United States, United Kingdom and Canada. Students in the ACS course had the opportunity to visit Scotland or Arizona as second year students and will be able to study in Victoria as third year students.

*The Japan Times* (1997) reported Japanese Ministry of Justice statistics to the effect that over 180,000 Japanese students went overseas for study or research purposes in 1996. English language programs organized by universities, colleges and high schools would represent a considerable proportion of the Japanese student population involved in such visits. Overseas study programs are an important part of the educational culture in the Japanese environment, particularly in the context of English language study. Bodycott and Crew (2000) investigated the value of short-term overseas English language immersion programs to Australia and other destinations for undergraduate ESL students in Hong Kong. One of the primary objectives of the program is cross-cultural insight to life in an English-speaking culture. While abroad, students participate in sociocultural experiences through planned activities designed to increase student knowledge and understanding of the host culture. The Overseas Study Programs at MGWC to Canada, Scotland and the United States are similarly focused on increasing cross-cultural awareness by means of a participation in a homestay and extracurricular activities at the host institution.

The results for Question 7 showed that only 6 out of 20 (20%) of learners joined one of the 2001 Overseas Study Programs. All of these students ventured to Edinburgh, Scotland for three weeks of English study and a homestay, followed by a one week tour based in London. Nobody went to Arizona in the preceding year and 24 out of 30 students (80%) did not participate at all. For Question 8, four students (13%) intended to join the 2002 Scotland OSP and a further eight students (27%) planned to participate in the Victoria OSP, which includes a four week language course and a homestay. Although the majority of learners in the group (60%) had no plans to visit either Scotland or Canada in 2002, the overall participation rate in an OSP for the group increased from 20% as second year students to 40% as third year students. This is definitely a very positive development for increasing cross-cultural awareness. One likely explanation for the greater participation rate is the decision by learners to major in culture within the English Department from third year and a corresponding higher level of interest in Western cultures. However, it may also be attributable to more pragmatic considerations such as family or personal finances and the study cycle of learners at college.

### **Cross-Cultural Experiences in Japan**

Whereas Questions 4 to 8 examined the overseas encounters of the cohort, the final two items were aimed at discovering some information about cultural experiences on the home front. For Question 9, only 4 out of 30 students (13%) indicated that an overseas student or guest had ever stayed at the family home, while the vast majority of respondents (87%) had no encounter of this kind. This was a surprisingly low percentage for me as I imagined there would be a higher degree of international exchange at the family unit level. Question 10 indicated that a solitary student had ever belonged to an international group in Japan, while 29 out of 30 students nominated no such association. This line of questioning probably

needs to be further developed to incorporate other items about international and cross-cultural experiences in the Japanese context as it may in fact involve a multitude of activities. Contact with native English speaking teachers at high school, private study at language schools, e-mail or pen pal exchanges and participation in international events are some additional examples of this type of exposure that require investigation to improve the current study.

Japan implemented internationalization at the local level as a national government policy over a decade ago. The exact definition of this policy remains unclear and the degree to which it encourages the opening of Japanese society to outside cultural influences is debatable. However, it is my impression that the flow of cultural exchange is realized through a considerable number of Japanese going overseas to travel, study or live with a comparatively smaller number of foreigners coming to Japan to travel, study or live. Indeed, Japan is a monocultural nation by most normal measures of cultural diversity, particularly in terms of ethnic composition, with 99% of the population born in Japan. Based on this cultural profile at the national level, it is rather difficult for most Japanese to be exposed to long-term and meaningful intercultural experiences within the archipelago.

## CONCLUSION

This study has provided an overview of cultural milieu research, with specific reference to teaching EFL in the Japanese context. Studies indicate that learners need to be cognizant of their own cultural milieu when investigating another culture. Such awareness will allow the second culture to be interpreted in an appropriate manner and assist learners to reflect upon their own culture. For the Australian Culture and Society course, there are likely to be special challenges due to limited prior knowledge about the subject matter. The institutional culture of MGWC has been outlined and illustrates the particular spiritual and gender environment. The survey results reveal the existence of a very homogeneous cultural and educational background for learners. While the students have minimal exposure to long-term overseas experiences, half have studied abroad for less than a month and one-third reported previous short-term travel outside Japan. For the Miyagi Gakuin OSP, 20% of the cohort had already participated and an impressive 40% would study in Canada during the summer break, while enrolled in the ACS course. Finally, the learners had limited cross-cultural experiences in Japan. As an educator, the research results are a valuable insight to the cultural milieu and intercultural background of the learners before we jointly traverse the Australian cultural and social panorama.

## THE AUTHOR

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APPENDIX 1. AUSTRALIAN CULTURE AND SOCIETY SURVEY RESULTS

**Cultural and Educational Background**

- |  |    |
|--|----|
| 1. I was born in ...                   |    |
| a. Miyagi Prefecture                   | 19 |
| b. Another prefecture                  | 11 |
| c. _____ (country)                     | 0  |
| 2. I went to senior high school in ... |    |
| a. Miyagi Prefecture                   | 24 |
| b. Another prefecture                  | 6  |
| c. _____ (country)                     | 0  |
| 3. Now, I live in ...                  |    |
| a. Sendai City                         | 18 |
| b. Miyagi Prefecture                   | 11 |
| c. Another prefecture                  | 1  |

**Overseas Experiences**

- |                                      |    |       |    |
|--------------------------------------|----|-------|----|
| 4. Have you ever lived overseas?     |    |       |    |
| a. Yes                               | 2  | b. No | 28 |
| 5. Have you ever studied overseas?   |    |       |    |
| a. Yes                               | 15 | b. No | 15 |
| 6. Have you ever travelled overseas? |    |       |    |
| a. Yes                               | 10 | b. No | 20 |

**MGWC Overseas Study Program Experiences**

- |  |    |
|--|----|
| 7. Did you participate in the 2001 MGWC Overseas Study Program?  |    |
| a. Yes, I went to Scotland                                       | 6  |
| b. Yes, I went to Arizona  | 0  |
| c. No  | 24 |
| 8. Will you participate in the 2002 MGWC Overseas Study Program? |    |
| a. Yes, I will go to Scotland                                    | 4  |
| b. Yes, I will go to Victoria                                    | 8  |
| c. No  | 18 |

### **Cross-cultural Experiences in Japan**

9. Has anybody from overseas ever stayed with your family as a host student or guest?

a. Yes	4	b. No	26
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10. Have you ever belonged to any international groups in Japan?

a. Yes	1	b. No	29
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# A British Festival in Japan: Fostering Cross-Cultural Understanding Outside the Classroom

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**STEPHEN J. DAVIES**

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## ABSTRACT

This paper describes how Japanese learners of English actively participated in a unique extra-curricular activity. To help them gain a better understanding of British culture, some students planned and staged a British festival that was open to members of the public. The festival included activities such as horse-riding, egg and spoon races, one-legged races, darts, tennis and cricket. The writer wishes to encourage all teachers to explore alternative approaches to learning about language and culture.

## INTRODUCTION

Recently, the declining birthrate in Japan has led to a decrease in the number of students applying to study at universities. Because of this, universities have begun to accept a larger number of students with limited English proficiency (LEP). In consequence, both the approach to teaching and the content of courses has begun to change in response to the needs of these new students. One significant development has been the proliferation of theme-based content classes that aim to improve students' language ability by teaching them *about* something, rather than focusing on 'pure' language instruction. This paper describes one such course at Miyazaki International College that focused on Japan/Britain relations. The students had three classes each week; each class lasted for two hours and the semester was 15 weeks long.

## THEME-BASED CONTENT CLASSES

Theme-based content classes are for students with TOEIC scores usually in the range 350 to 500. These scores are lower than the TOEIC 550 score which is often the minimum requirement for students who want to study at universities in English L1 contexts. Teachers in Japan (Yamane & Ryan, 2000) have identified three important principles to keep in mind when designing a course for LEP students:

- a. search for/create appropriate materials
- b. focus on student strengths
- c. begin with familiar ideas

Students with limited vocabulary need to be given materials that have either been abridged or written with their needs in mind. The Flesch/Kincaid test measures the readability of texts. It analyzes the number of words per sentence and the number of syllables per word to give an idea of the complexity of the text. The score ranges from 1 to 12, with 12 being the most difficult. First year students at Miyazaki International College can generally read texts in the Flesch/Kincaid range 5-6. If about 5-10% of the vocabulary is new, then the text can be assumed to give sufficient input while remaining comprehensible (Krashen, 1988). Comprehensible input allows students to both improve their vocabulary and understand the key concepts in the text.

## **BRITISH CULTURE IN JAPAN**

The Japanese call Britain “Igirisu,” which is a rendering of “England” in the katakana phonetic syllabary. No problem, I suppose, for the 46 million English, but less pleasing perhaps for the 10 million Irish, Scots and Welsh who also make up the nation. Nevertheless “Igirisu” is the term used in Japan to mean Britain. In addition to this geographical confusion, there are a number of cultural stereotypes about Britain that can be best illustrated by imagining the fictional Mr. Charles Peabody taking a walk. Mr. Peabody is carrying his umbrella, for rain is never far away, and he is wearing his bowler hat. Right now he’s shuffling along Turnpike Street in search of some afternoon tea. He’s having trouble seeing much though, because of the dense fog. Soon he reaches Lady Jane’s Olde English Tea Shoppe and pops in for a cuppa. Suitably refreshed, he’s soon back out in the fog. Next, he passes a bookshop which has two bestsellers on display in the window. One is a story about a young wizard’s early education and, on the cover of the other book, is a photo of a young man in a soccer shirt with blonde hair. “Good heavens! “ says Mr. Peabody in his impeccable Queen’s English. “Harry Potter and Becks again! Now where can I get some fish ‘n chips?”

Although the stereotypical images in this narrative clearly do not give a well-rounded representation of life in modern Britain, as with most stereotypes, they do contain some truth. The fact that many Japanese students do have some awareness of British culture, gives them a good base for developing their ideas further and a chance to move on from these simple stereotypes to examine more complex social practices and realities.

## **THE BIRTH OF THE BRITISH FESTIVAL**

The idea for the British festival came as a logical conclusion to a series of questions that, we the teachers, had been asking ourselves. Was there any activity or event that would somehow synthesize our ideas into a coherent whole? Could

this be both practical and informative? Could it be made to further cross-cultural understanding?

Our lesson planning soon moved on from the usual daily routine into a new dimension as we began to envisage how the event could be staged. Initially, we thought of just involving our own class. Soon, however, we began to realize the possibilities of an inter-class event that could involve the entire student body and even be made open to the public. We decided that the festival would feature a cricket match between students from our class and those from another class called "British Thought and Culture." A budget was negotiated and cricket equipment was purchased over the internet. We also decided to have an egg and spoon race, a three-legged race and a sack race. A dartboard was obtained and the students practiced throwing darts. We also decided to contact a local stables to see if a horse could be rented for the day. In fact, both a horse and mule were made available to us. At a late stage in our planning, the student government asked whether they could combine the farewell barbecue party for the second year students with the British festival. (The second year students would soon be embarking on a semester of studying overseas.) We readily agreed, as it seemed that a barbecue in the evening would be a good way to round off the event. It also conveniently solved the problem of whether to supply refreshments ourselves at the event. We felt that there would be no need for us to do so with a barbecue planned.

## **PREPARATION**

The students were given class time to prepare for the festival. To begin with, they made posters to advertise the various events. Some of these were surprisingly creative and all of them were visually striking. They were then given an oral introduction to the rules of cricket. This was followed by some cricket practice on the sports field. Although cricket is a generally a game for men, we found that our female students were quite willing to participate in playing. Then, the students returned to the classroom and wrote a short passage describing the rules of the game so that we could check that they had understood them. So, in a nutshell, we were trying to achieve a balance between more 'formal' modes of instruction and freer 'learning by doing' activities. But we were not simply following procedures; the students had the benefit of knowing that there was a real goal ahead of them, an event whose success or failure would depend on their efforts.

Next, the students were asked to form small groups and to take responsibility for the various different events. They were responsible for obtaining any necessary items. For example, the egg and spoon race team bought eggs, hard-boiled them and obtained spoons. We also decided to run a few trial races to find out just how difficult they were to complete and the optimum distance for the course.

## STAGING THE FETE

The British festival was held on a Saturday in July and it was better attended than we had anticipated. A large number of faculty came along and brought their children with them. The children, faculty and students enjoyed taking part in the races and playing darts. The horses were particularly popular and many students had fun riding them. Some students even decided to take riding lessons at the stables. Overall, we felt satisfied that we had organised a large-scale event that brought students, faculty and the public together. Significantly, the festival was also reported in a local newspaper which gave us valuable publicity.

## CONCLUSION

The British festival grew out of a need to find an activity that would take learning beyond the classroom and offer an alternative way of teaching about culture. We invited the students to involve themselves in something bigger than themselves and to free themselves, albeit temporarily, from conventional classroom-based learning routines. They responded well to the challenge. In the future we hope to explore other ways of structuring learning that will give us similar opportunities and challenges. I believe, as the 21st century advances, there will be continuing need to rethink our teaching goals and learning outcomes.

## THE AUTHOR

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## **Assessment**

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# Conceptual and Practical Problems in Oral Testing

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## ABSTRACT

The typical native speaker teaching conversation at Korean universities often teaches large classes, meets students only a few hours per week, and may have little experience in oral test design. Under these conditions, it is important to orally assess students using methods that are appropriate, useful, fair, provide feedback, and are relatively easy to administer.

To address this situation for his own students, the author used marking categories from a pre-revised version of the Cambridge First Certificate of English (FCE) to examine their oral capabilities. After assigning numerical grades, he then undertook bivariate analysis to examine underlying patterns. He found correlations to be excessively multi-collinear, ranging from 0.84 to 0.96. Given these unexpected values, he opined that inadvertent psychological factors were primarily responsible for inducing clustering characteristics within the grade set, while secondary factors may have included student admission policies and marking guidelines at his university.

## INTRODUCTION

Both the classroom environment and evaluation skills are important factors to consider when teachers assess the oral performance of their students. In Korean tertiary education, considerable latitude is generally given to native speakers of English in the ways they conduct their conversation classes. Although some universities have departments with guided curricula and pre-selected textbooks, most do not intervene in course structure and content provided academic standards are met. Moreover, this relative freedom extends to evaluation methods, resulting in a plethora of testing techniques within departments and among universities. In a typical conversation classroom, for instance, students may be assessed using in-office interviews, by observed participation in class, by prepared performances such as role-play and skits, by oral exams, or by any combination of these.

The point is not to question the variety of methods used but the ability of the native speaker to judge students appropriately, accurately and fairly. One complicating feature can be the classroom itself. Many conversation teachers are blessed

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\* This is an amended version of a presentation by the author to a speech sciences conference in Seoul, May 2002.

with groups of 15-30 students, but classes comprising 40, 50, 60 or even 90 students are common. Faced with these numbers, the possibility of even a well-trained teacher giving a comprehensive oral examination is low. Furthermore, meeting students only two to four hours a week limits how well a teacher knows his students' oral capabilities, especially for large classes.

A second consideration is teaching experience and skills. Korean universities have steadily improved their hiring standards but gaps remain in the recruitment process. Although nationwide data are unavailable, there is indirect evidence the typical native speaker has little formal ESL or EFL training and is relatively new to teaching. While most have an M.A. or the occasional Ph.D., these are distributed throughout a wide range of subjects and are not concentrated in linguistics, education or TEFL, perhaps the most useful fields for conversation classes here. For example, a 1999 survey of tertiary instructors who belong to KOTESOL (Korea Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages), the largest teaching-centered EFL organization in the country, showed that 40% had some ESL/EFL training, but only 15% had been teaching in Korea more than five years (Nelson and Gongwer, 2001).

Given their diverse backgrounds, few native speakers are sufficiently knowledgeable of advanced techniques in oral testing, and even fewer are likely to apply them in their classes. To their credit, they often rely on the methods and judgments of more knowledgeable associates, or seek professional training. But many opt for passive oral examinations that are easily given and marked. While cloze exercises, short answers to questions, multiple choice and related exercises are valuable and definitely have a role in the testing quiver, they do not fully examine the range of student capabilities in listening, oral production and communicative interaction. Worse, they may be beneficial to the university administration only in the sense that numerical grades are provided, not that students have been fairly or even well evaluated. From the students' perspective, most tests currently given do not provide helpful or sufficient feedback that will enable them to master the language.

## **A PRACTICAL APPROACH TO ORAL TESTING**

The testing difficulties faced by conversation teachers in Korean universities does not mean that passive exams should dominate, as an interactive approach is also necessary and should be used where possible. Given the constraints of time and skills, however, it is unrealistic to expect instructors to design a sophisticated oral exam, or give one that takes much time to administer or evaluate. Appropriate tests need content, construct and face validity, and must be reliable as well as provide a mechanism for students to protest perceived incorrect scoring or marks considered too low. They should also be complementary and hopefully exhaustive, enabling the student to be tested for a wide range of features in speech pro-

duction. Clearly, these are difficult objectives to attain, even under the best of conditions.

For these reasons the writer was drawn to the expertise of Cambridge University's Local Examinations Syndicate, UCLES. While obtaining TEFL training in the UK and later Korea under the (then) Cambridge/RSA Certificate and Diploma programs, he was shown a pre-revised version of the First Certificate of English (FCE) examination, which is at Level 3 of the Cambridge five level system and is widely recognized in commerce and industry, and by many university faculties and other institutions.<sup>1</sup> Examining features of the oral examination section, he realized its analytical approach and assessment categories met his own criteria for examining his students' speech production, especially for short interviews in the privacy of his office. Moreover, although he was in no way associated with UCLES or even a trained evaluator, he realized the test was sufficiently informative and user-friendly to enable him to choose and adapt categories of interest, using the outdated test as a starting point for his own work. What follows below is a description of his own experience using the modified, dated FCE in a limited context, and his reasons for recommending this type of testing method to other native speakers of English.

Indicators of the former FCE are: Fluency, Grammar, Prosody, Pronunciation, Vocabulary, and Interactive Communication. The six categories considered together cover important aspects of speech production, yet are comprehensible, well described for evaluation purposes, and essentially non-technical. Within each category, individual scales are subjective in that each is partly dependent upon the listener's personal interpretation of speech, not upon pre-determined criteria that help the instructor 'check off' particular utterances by students. The FCE is therefore well suited for conversation, as the evaluator has sufficient latitude to apply the guidelines of the scales to wide-ranging dialogue. While the test requires developed listening skills and ability to place students accurately within its 0-5 marking range, the definitions for each category are sufficiently broad for a committed instructor to develop evaluative baselines for each item. Moreover, the individual test items provide useful feedback to students and good profile information to university departments.

## **STATISTICAL EXAMINATION**

The review below is a description of the writer's experience with his amended version of the FCE, used to test 81 students during two semesters in 2001, in the Department of English Education at Chung Ang University in Seoul, South Korea. He used the test for diagnostic purposes only, and provided students with an independently-derived speaking grade. With this information, he then wanted to examine what, if any, statistical relationships exist within amended FCE categories, and between each category and the final mark.

After reviewing the language categories, the writer reasoned that **Fluency, Grammar, Prosody, Pronunciation** and **Vocabulary** could be used directly to evaluate his students' oral performance. **Interactive Communication**, however, considered not only the context of the conversation but also the importance of turn-taking and responding appropriately, test features that might not apply fairly to shy or nervous students. He therefore focused solely on the quality of the answer in relation to questions asked, and made judgments in terms of a student understanding the question and responding.

The test was administered to each student privately, for approximately 15 minutes. During this period the instructor engaged each student on a topic chosen at random from a dictionary; if the student considered it too difficult, it was changed. Students were evaluated while speaking, after which each was shown their individual scores as well as a summary grade on a 0-100 scale, not the 1-5 scale used by the FCE.<sup>2</sup> Students were told their summary grade was NOT the average of (modified) FCE items, but was based solely on the instructor's evaluation of them in relation to other students. In this regard the instructor was confident in his evaluative abilities: his classes were small (about 20 students per class); he had ample time conversing with students in class; he had six years' prior experience in teaching conversation, and he had some appropriate training in his Cambridge/RSA Certificate and Diploma programs.

After testing all students, he examined the (modified) FCE scores and summary grades to ensure they met statistical criteria for normally distributed variables, checking in particular for outliers, kurtosis and skew. This procedure was done twice—once during the midterm exam, and once during the final exam. These two scores were then added and averaged to obtain a semester speaking score, used herein.

Given the distribution characteristics of the data, the first analysis examined how categories in the modified FCE related to the final speaking score. A working hypothesis was that a positive correspondence would exist between each FCE variable and the final grade. It was based partly on personal observation that 'good' speakers (allocated grade) tended to perform well in many of the FCE attributes. It was also based on previous work done by the writer in this area (Nelson, 1999), and on observations of experts in speech production and listening.<sup>3</sup> Given serious research constraints, however, the writer did not base his work on findings in the testing literature.<sup>4</sup>

A second analysis was to determine whether components of the modified FCE related to each other in a discernible pattern. The working hypothesis was that a positive relationship existed, based on the same reasoning as was applied to the first hypothesis. Although the hypothesis was not based on findings in the testing literature, the writer had contacted the UCLES group and had received information regarding their own statistical examination of FCE items (L. Taylor, personal communication, March 27, 2002).

Table 1 presents data distribution for the 81 students for each of the amended FCE variables and the final grade. Since all data were in interval form and met the criteria for normally distributed variables, it was possible to perform Pearson product moment correlations on them. Calculations were done using SPSS, with results shown in Table 2.

TABLE 1. DESCRIPTIVE FREQUENCIES ON ALL VARIABLES (ALL VALUES ROUNDED)

	Fluency	Grammar	Prosody	Pronunciation	Vocabulary	Quality	Grade
Valid	81	81	81	81	81	81	81
Missing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mean	86.1	86.9	86.8	86.0	86.4	86.8	86.6
Std. Error of Mean	.53	.42	.44	.43	.47	.54	.45
Median	85	85	85	85	85	85	85
Mode	84	85	85	85	85	85	84
Std. Dev.	4.76	3.78	3.99	3.86	4.20	4.80	4.03
Variance	22.71	14.24	15.90	14.94	17.62	23.09	16.22
Skew	0.4	1.07	1.01	1.16	.68	.45	.95
Std. Error of Skew	.27	.27	.27	.27	.27	.27	.27
Kurtosis	.09	.29	.02	1.12	.74	-.07	.14
Std. Error of Kurt.	.52	.53	.53	.53	.53	.53	.53
Range	23	18	17	20	23	23	19
Minimum	75	80	81	78	75	75	79
Maximum	98	98	98	98	98	98	98
Sum	6976	7041	7033	6969	6998	7027	7011

TABLE 2. PEARSON PRODUCT-MOMENT CORRELATIONS OF REVISED FCE INDICATORS

	Fluency	Grammar	Prosody	Pronunciation	Vocabulary	Quality	Grade
Fluency	---	.858	.883	.843	.916	.934	.951
Grammar		---	.897	.834 (lowest)	.869	.850	.925
Prosody			---	.855	.885	.871	.937
Pronunciation				---	.860	.843	.911
Vocabulary					---	.951	.961 (highest)
Quality						---	.961 (highest)
Grade							---

All correlations are significant at .001

Examination of Table 2 shows high co-linearity within the matrix, so much so that all correlations have a .001 significance level. The highest correlation with **Grade** is 0.961 for both **Vocabulary** and **Quality**, which purportedly accounts for 92% of the variance. The lowest correlation is between **Grade** and **Pronunciation** (.911), accounting for 82% of the variance. While positive correlations were anticipated, these consistent and exceptionally high values triggered an alarm rather than a sense of satisfaction that the writer had assessed his students well.

A similar situation exists among the modified FCE variables. The highest correlation is .951 between **Vocabulary** and **Quality** (90% of variance), while the lowest is .834 between **Grammar** and **Pronunciation** (69% of variance). This high co-linearity also raised more concern than satisfaction, and caused the researcher to try to find an explanation independent of the statistics.<sup>5</sup>

Several ancillary procedures were performed as an additional check. These included box plots of all the variables to check visually for range and distribution characteristics; stepwise multiple regression using **Grade** as a dependent variable and modified FCE categories as independent variables, and Principal Components Analysis to determine factor loadings of the FCE categories. Last, a reliability analysis of the variables produced a Cronbach Alpha of .97. Considered together, these tests confirmed the uniqueness of the variables but did not explain the high correlations observed.<sup>6</sup>

## INTERPRETATION

The exceptionally high values obtained raised warning flags regarding the scoring system used. Several interpretations were possible:

1. The modified FCE categories are essentially the same variable—possible, but highly unlikely given their definitions and the indicators used to differentiate among speakers;
2. Students tend to have their verbal ability scores cluster in highs, medium and lows—possible, but unlikely to explain the high co-linearity among all variables in the matrix;
3. Unstated factors were causing the evaluator to cluster scores unintentionally.

The researcher took explanation # 3 as a starting point for further analysis. He first reviewed the box plots from Table 4 and noted the similarity in range and dispersion characteristics for each. This led to new analysis, since it seemed inherently unlikely that scores from a student population would be aligned in this manner. He therefore considered an explanation based on factors independent of the test scores themselves. These include the student selection process, the grading system used, and psychological considerations.

## Student Selection

Admission to Korean universities is based primarily on KCAT examinations that are given nationwide the senior year of high school. If applicants fall within a designated range they can be admitted to some universities but not others. Furthermore, each range is relatively narrow, so in practical terms and in relation to test takers nationwide, students entering a particular university do so essentially as a cohort.

Confidential data supplied by the university administration for this paper can be used to illustrate similarities among students on entrance exams. The incoming class to his department had KCAT scores with a range of approximately five percent and a S.D. of approximately one percent. For English proficiency itself (based on passive listening and reading tests) the range was wider at approximately 11 percent, with a S.D. of approximately three percent (CAU, 2002). Examining the data, the researcher concluded that the relatively narrow spread for both scores may account for some but certainly not all of the high correlations within the matrix. Surprisingly, the correlation between KCAT and English proficiency scores was essentially zero, suggesting the potential for noticeable variations in interviews.

Given the privacy issues involved, the researcher could not correlate individual KCAT and English proficiency scores with the modified FCE scales and oral grades.

## Grading System

A second component of unintentional clustering may be related to the grading system used at the instructor's university. Although conversation professors are given great freedom in marking, there is a general understanding that most students are to receive A's and B's, with C's, D's and F's respectively reserved for unusual or extreme situations. For classes above 30 students there are guidelines published by the university administration, with the upper range for A's and B's comprising 65% of total grades. Although professors are not questioned about their grading, most adhere to the guidelines or at least keep them in mind at the end of the semester. The practical result of this evaluation system, then, is that grades cluster in the 80-100 range, with many centering around an 85, or B+.<sup>7</sup>

## Psychological Factors

Perhaps the most important aspect of the grading process may occur in the mind of the evaluator, in that knowing the marking guidelines may predispose one to meet them. This prior knowledge may create a situation whereby the instructor, already familiar with the students' oral performance in class, subconsciously or otherwise marks the student in the A, B or C category in a global sense (the final oral grade). In essence the student has received a 'mental mark' before the oral test is taken, and this grade changes only if the student's performance during the

interview differs noticeably from what was expected. This process is understandable but may introduce significant bias into the grading system.

A similar process may occur with the modified FCE indicators, even though they do not form part of the final grade. In particular, the order in which the categories are scored might affect the outcome. In his interviews with students, the evaluator first listened for fluency, followed by grammar, prosody, pronunciation, vocabulary and quality of interaction/response. In this order, 'fluency' is a global assessment, one that is reasonably easy to determine within an A, B, C grading system, and one that relates closely to the final grade. Correct assessment of the remaining FCE categories is more subjective, however, and arguably more difficult to do well. Knowing this, it is possible the evaluator used the score for fluency as a 'marker' or 'proxy' for the others, subconsciously assigning follow-on scores in mirror-like fashion unless they differed noticeably from fluency. Uncertain whether this was a tenable explanation, the writer consulted a testing psychologist, who considered it plausible.<sup>8</sup>

## CONCLUSION

This paper began with an assessment of the classroom environment in Korean universities. It ended with the writer's efforts to introduce a good oral examination based on a modified, pre-revised Cambridge FCE, and his interpretation of results from those tests. Overall, he believes his technique to examine students was only partly successful. For example, modified FCE scores and exam grades met statistical criteria for normally distributed variables and fit well within university guidelines for marking. His application of the FCE categories also provided useful information to himself and to students. Finally, in-office interviews enabled students to engage in conversation in a relaxed, private setting, and provided an assessment that complemented examinations given in the classroom.

Alternatively, the findings raise warning flags that require further analysis. For this paper, the writer rejected the possibility that observed high co-linearity within the amended FCE matrix identified solely one variable. He also questioned the high co-linearity between FCE categories and final grades. While some experts have observed a natural tendency for oral characteristics to cluster together, he found no basis for accepting unconditionally all correlations at .85 and higher.

The researcher instead opines that there exist a number of essentially unstated and external factors, individually or in concert, which help to cluster marks. These include the way in which students are admitted to his university (based on KCAT scores), recommended grades (predominately A's and B's), and psychological considerations such as prior knowledge of student performance influencing an in-office interview. These factors are speculative only, however, as testable hypotheses and the necessary data are missing at this time.

Despite the uncertain outcome from a statistical standpoint, the researcher argues that, from a practical standpoint, oral tests of this type are helpful to both

student and teacher. However, he recognizes that to test oral skills well, interactive exams must be within the teacher's abilities to administer and assess, and also must address real world limitations like large classes, limited time or unintentional yet biased evaluation. In this regard the modified, pre-revised FCE categories are useful as testing categories, although his own experience suggests how comprehensive evaluation systems designed for a specific context and to be given by experts can be compromised by inadequate application or by possible interference from external factors.<sup>9</sup>

Recognizing this limitation, yet still wanting to utilize its features, a prudent approach might be to test first for "micro" FCE categories like pronunciation and grammar, but end with fluency, rather than use the reverse procedure. A variation might include using fewer FCE categories, perhaps randomly assigned. Third, the exam might be used solely for diagnosis and guidance, not for grade allocation. It may also be used to rank or group students, or to compare their interview performance with complementary exams given in the classroom. If instructors work together, they may consider listening to tapes of each other's interviews and giving an opinion, or even a second mark, although this would require sophisticated coordination and agreement regarding grading standards as well as introduce facets of inter-marker reliability. Given limited time and teacher skills, however, team evaluation may be difficult and may yield inaccurate, misleading results.

Last, the research has enabled a number of hypotheses to be raised that might be supported, amended or nullified. At this time it is not possible to do so, especially given the lack of information regarding the oral testing environment at Korean universities. Future research should be undertaken in several areas:

- Studies and surveys of native speakers of English, including their degree areas and EFL training;
- Analysis of the types of oral exams used, including their purpose, advantages and disadvantages;
- Analysis of classes, including class size, meeting hours per week, and grading requirements;
- Analysis of relationships between English proficiency scores and classroom grades;
- Analysis of factors that might hinder, or assist, oral testing of students and interpretation of scores.
- Analysis of steps taken by teachers to maximize objectivity while giving oral (and other) exams.

## ENDNOTES

1. It is important to note that the FCE underwent substantial revision in the early 1990s, and the revised version was introduced in December 1996. This paper employs the earlier, pre-December 1996 version. Its marking scales and assessment criteria are no longer in use, and therefore cannot be compared to the marking scales and assessment criteria contemporary FCE examinations. The FCE description is from The British Council Korea website.

2. Earlier research by the author (Nelson, 1998) regarding intra-marker reliability suggested that marking on a 0 -100 scale was possible and provided better discrimination than a 0 - 5 scale. In addition, students could easily relate to the revised scale, as it is used by the department for final grades.
3. Conversations with Dr. Hee-san Koo, a speech measurement specialist, and Dr. Kyung-whan Cha, a listening specialist, on 27 March 2002. Both professors are in the Department of English Education at Chung Ang University. Both felt there are positive relationships among the speech components, but neither had undertaken correlation-based research in this particular area.
4. A preliminary search in testing literature did not provide references that matched the author's objectives, so he wrote directly to the Local Examinations Syndicate at Cambridge University regarding their own research in this area.
5. The author received a written communication from Dr. Lynda Taylor of UCLES on 27 March, in which she indicated that her group had done some internal work on inter-correlations between assessment subscales. FCE inter-correlations ranged from 0.68 to 0.86, which were generally lower than the writer's findings. This information is useful primarily as a research guideline, as there is no direct basis for comparison between pre-revised and contemporary FCE examinations. Equally important is that the writer did not use equivalent testing materials and evaluation methods.
6. These calculations and tables are available from the author.
7. This situation may not exist in all departments or universities. Some use a required ABC grading scale, which tends to increase the dispersion of marks. Others have conversation classes comprised of students from many academic disciplines, and instructors from these classes have commented that their students vary widely in conversational abilities. The writer's conversation classes, however, have few students outside the Department of English Education, where the proficiency range in English is relatively narrow.
8. Conversation with Dr. Yong-shik Im, Chung Ang University, 20 March 2002.
9. Acknowledging that biased evaluation may occur is not an argument against using oral interviews. The teacher, however, should be aware of the problem and seek to maximize objectivity, a process that may require research, consultation with experts and perhaps experimentation.

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# The Effect of Noticing on Paralinguistic Features of EFL Acquisition

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## ABSTRACT

This paper is a discussion of an attempt to apply noticing theory to a paralinguistic context. It details a study in which noticing was used in an effort to foster the acquisition of paralinguistic features related to public speaking at a South Korean university. It concludes that though such a procedure seems sensible, in this study no significant improvement was witnessed with regard to the target features. It further discusses some possible explanations for this outcome and makes suggestions related to using noticing-based activities in the classroom.

## INTRODUCTION

This paper reports on a study that focused on whether **noticing** would promote the acquisition of certain paralinguistic ways of conveying meaning among Korean university students taking a public speaking course. The course instructor after observing a weakness among his students with regard to public speaking-related body language (gesturing, full-body movement, posture, etc.) devised an action research project which sought to help the learners develop their use of these paralinguistic skills. The results of the study indicate that the noticing treatment had no *apparent* effect on the acquisition of the above-mentioned paralinguistic skills. It is suggested that the reasons for this may be related to the following:

- There may have been improvement in paralinguistic ability that was either not observed or not displayed.
- There was no improvement for one of the following reasons: the treatment process was insufficient to effect change, or the noticing hypothesis can't be generalized to paralinguistic learning.

## NOTICING

A number of authors have indicated the importance of focusing learners' attention on the language code in language learning. The noticing hypothesis (Schmidt 1994: 17) claims that "noticing is the necessary and sufficient condition for the conversion of input into intake for learning." Consciousness-raising is another

term associated with drawing learners' attention to particular language items. Introduced by Sharwood Smith (1981), and later recast as 'input enhancement' (Sharwood Smith 1991, 1993), it holds that if the teacher can raise a learner's awareness of specific target forms it will increase the probability of acquisition. In a similar vein, Long (1991) has suggested that a focus on form, a procedure in which attention is focused on aspects of language during meaning-based activities, will lead to better language learning. Izumi and Bigelow (2000: 243) after a review of the literature related to the effects of drawing learners' attention to target forms write the following:

Collectively, the results of these studies suggest that drawing learners' attention to form facilitates their L2 learning. Learners whose attention is deliberately drawn to the targeted elements via external input or task manipulation tend to demonstrate more accurate use of the language forms than learners who are exposed to nonmanipulated input

While the positive effect of noticing on the learning of the language code has been demonstrated (at least to the satisfaction of some), there is little information on the use of noticing to help learners learn non-code or paralinguistic ways of expressing meaning. Paralinguistic features include behavior like head movement for expressing agreement and disagreement, gestures with particular meanings as in the 'thumbs up' sign, and gestures which add emphasis as when a speaker stresses the importance of a point by making a chopping motion with his/her arm. While some linguists would include certain vocal characteristics under the heading of paralinguistics (Richards et al. 1996, Pennycook 1985), this paper is interested in only non-vocal acts of communication of the type sometimes labeled kinesics.

This study hypothesized that the positive effects of noticing on code-based language could also be realized in the area of paralinguistics. Thus, a noticing treatment was designed with the purpose of drawing learners' attention to certain paralinguistic features pertinent to speech-making: posture, head and hand gestures, and total-body movement.

## THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. Would the learners exposed to the noticing treatment show an improvement in their use of the paralinguistic skills focused on in the treatment?
2. If an improvement were observed in both the treatment group and the non-treatment group, would it be greater for the treatment group than the non-treatment group?
3. Would the treatment group evaluate their final-exam use of the treatment items more favorably than the non-treatment group?

## **THE TREATMENT**

A total of 47 Korean university students taking a junior year public speaking course participated in the study. During the early part of the course the instructor noticed behavior on the part of the students that was not conducive to good speech-making:

- poor posture (e.g., slumped forward, one leg bent)
- poor hand position or movement (e.g., twisting hands in pockets, frenetic movement, playing with hair, pens, note cards and such)
- facing away from the audience for long periods of time to read from visual aids (e.g., poster, OHP or PowerPoint projection)
- poor eye contact with the audience (e.g., looking at the floor or note cards almost exclusively)

In order to encourage the learners to move away from undesirable behavior toward behavior that was judged to be more beneficial to giving a good speech, the learners' midterm speeches were videotaped, and afterwards they were given the option of coming to the instructor's office to review their performance. Of the 47 learners, 26 learners came to instructor's office and 21 did not. Those who came to the office were given a checklist of items (Appendix 1) to watch for as the video of their speech was watched. To further focus the learner's attention on the physical aspects of the speech the sound was turned off. During the playing of the videotape or immediately afterward, before any discussion with the instructor, the learners completed the checklist. After finishing the checklist, the instructor and student discussed any problems that were evident and measures to improve on them. No formal remedial activities were assigned.

The rationale for this design was that by having their attention focused on their paralinguistic weak areas, the learners would benefit from the positive effects associated with noticing. That is, their weaknesses would be made conscious, and the after-observation discussion would reinforce more acceptable forms of paralinguistic behavior (which had already been covered during the course).

To measure the effect of the noticing procedure, two procedures were used. The first was a comparison of the instructor's scores of the learners' midterm and final speeches with respect to the relevant features, and the second was a checklist (Appendix 2) that, after the final speech, asked the learners to compare their midterm and final speeches with regard to the features in question.

## **THE RESULTS**

Group 1 represents the learners who participated in the noticing activity and Group 2 those that did not. A statistical analysis of the results revealed that no significant change was found in the learners' use of the treatment items (posture, eye contact, body movement [hand, head, facial, whole-body]) when the midterm and final instructor scores were compared (Table 1). A matched t-test revealed the

following: (1) Group 1:  $t = .42$ ,  $df = 25$ ,  $p = n.s.$  (non-significant difference) at the .05 level, and (2) Group 2:  $t = 1.42$ ,  $df = 20$ ,  $p = n.s.$  at the .05 level.

TABLE 1. A COMPARISON OF MIDTERM AND FINAL EXAM SCORES FOR PARALINGUISTIC ITEMS

	Midterm Exam			Final Exam		
	E. C.	B. M.	A. S.	E. C.	B. M.	A. S.
Group 1 (n = 26)	9.23	9.46	9.35	9.15	9.38	9.27
Group 2 (n = 21)	9.09	9.1	9.1	8.38	8.86	8.62

E. C. = Eye Contact, B. M. = Body Movement, A. S. = Average Score

The results also showed no significant difference between the self-evaluation scores of the learners of Group 1 and Group 2 (Table 2). A regular t-test produced the following result:  $t = -.299$ ,  $df = 40$ ,  $p = n.s.$  at the .05 level.

TABLE 2. A COMPARISON OF LEARNER SELF-ASSESSMENTS OF PARALINGUISTIC CHANGE FOR THE MIDTERM AND FINAL EXAMS

Paralinguistic Change (1 = worse, 2 = the same, 3 = better)			
	E. C.	B. M.	A. S.
Group 1 (n = 26)	2.26	1.73	2.0
Group 2 (n = 16)	2.0	1.76	1.88

E. C. = Eye Contact, B. M. = Body Movement, A. S. = Average Score

(The scores for this table were calculated on a per category basis as the body movement (B. M.) category consisted of the six sub-categories described under the headings of Posture and Movement (see Appendix 2).

## DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

With regard to the first and second research questions, a comparison of the results of the treatment and non-treatment groups' midterm exam versus final exam scores for paralinguistic items revealed no significant change in the one over the other. That is, the treatment group did not perform better in the

paralinguistic area than the non-treatment group. As for the third research question, neither the treatment nor the non-treatment group evaluated themselves as having improved in their ability to use paralinguistic features. Both groups judged themselves to have been at approximately the same level on the final exam as on the midterm.

The explanation for this seeming utter lack of improvement might include one or more of the following:

### **Improvement occurred but it wasn't observed**

While the results show that no paralinguistic improvement occurred it is possible there was a change for the better that was not observed because of problems with the assessment. The assessment was done by one rater, the instructor, as the speeches were given with the rater focusing on a host of verbal, organizational, meaning-related and paralinguistic criteria. It is certainly possible that this assessment load led to a less than adequate focus on the study items. Other factors which may also have contributed to poor assessment were that the instructor-rater sometimes had to contend with technology-related problems (camcorder, OHP, PowerPoint program, etc.), and also, because of the large number of test takers and the time required to complete each test, the rater sometimes found his attention weakened by fatigue.

### **Improvement occurred but it wasn't displayed**

It is also possible that improvement might have occurred as a result of the noticing treatment but that the learners either chose not to display it, or were unable to do so under test conditions. They may have made a tactical decision not to display paralinguistic behavior in order to concentrate on their verbal display in the belief that this would benefit them more than attempting both. As the course focused heavily on organizational and verbal components of speech-making and delivering, learners may have judged it advisable to give their limited attention to these features. In support of this explanation is the understanding that while learners were aware that the exam evaluation criteria included paralinguistic features, they represented a small percentage of the overall score. It should also be noted that the overt focus on paralinguistic features was concentrated in the early part of the course (before the midterm exam), and though the instructor drew attention to these features throughout the course the main focus was on non-paralinguistic elements.

With regard to being unable to activate their paralinguistic skills, it may be that though the learners had intended to deploy these features during their speeches, they found themselves unable to do so because of test pressure.

### **Improvement occurred but it didn't last**

Another interpretation of the results takes the view that learning may have occurred but that it did not last. If this was the case, it may be that the noticing

treatment was insufficiently rigorous to effect long-term learning. This could be because the one thirty-minute noticing activity was too short to realize the goal of long-term learning without follow-up procedures.

### **Improvement didn't occur because the treatment was poorly designed**

Yet another attempt to explain the results is that the treatment was ineffectively designed. One design flaw may simply be that the single thirty-minute treatment was too short to have had the intended effect. This may have occurred because the instructor overemphasized the importance of the personal contact with the instructor for the learner, or that the learner and the instructor conceptualized the purpose of the meeting differently.

For the instructor, the noticing procedure represented a considerable expenditure of time and effort and thus was viewed as being important. For the learner this may not have been the case. It may just have been seen as the completion of one more in a long line of course activities. By overestimating the importance of the procedure to the learner the instructor would also likely have overestimated the learning effect. Thus, possibly leading to an insufficiently rigorous procedure.

It is also conceivable that while the instructor clearly viewed the purpose of the encounter to be related to the noticing activity, the learners may have viewed it differently; for example, as a chance to practice their English conversation skills. By focusing on another purpose the learner would naturally pay less attention to the noticing procedure.

Another potential design problem is that in a typical noticing activity learners have their attention drawn to properly constructed features of the target language that they are having trouble with. By comparing the correct target language form and their incorrect interlanguage form they are expected to develop in the direction of the correct form. In this study, though, the learners were expected to rely on their abstract knowledge of the correct paralinguistic features (which was taught in the course), and to compare their incorrect use or non-use of these features during their recorded speech with the abstract forms. As a result, it may be that not having concrete examples of the correct forms (perhaps a video of a speaker using the relevant paralinguistic features) reduced the usefulness of the noticing procedure.

While there may be some truth to this explanation, it is important to note that the focus on the nature and importance of paralinguistic features occurred in class not long before the noticing activity, and that the checklist the learners completed was designed to stimulate recall of this information before they watched the recording of their speech. This pre-viewing procedure included a brief review of the paralinguistic features in the checklist. Thus, while it is difficult to know exactly what occurred in the learners' minds during this treatment sequence, it is highly likely that they would have had an awareness of the appropriate forms in mind as they viewed the recording. If this were the case, they would have been able to compare the appropriate use of the target forms with their inappropriate use or non-use of said forms.

In addition to this comparison activity which was done by the learners alone, the instructor and each learner discussed any relevant paralinguistic weaknesses evident in the videotape recording after viewing it. This included the instructor indicating the inappropriate use of forms not initially noticed by the learner, and instances where paralinguistic forms might have been usefully deployed but weren't. This activity was intended to add a reinforcement or "rehearsal" stage to the treatment. Robinson (1995) claims that noticing requires "detection plus rehearsal in short-term memory." (Izumi & Bigelow 2000: 240)

Therefore, it seems plausible that the learner would have left the session with a strong awareness of the incorrect and correct paralinguistic forms that were shown to be troublesome in their recorded speeches. (Post-study reflection and feedback from interested sources have convinced me that the study would have benefited from receiving more direct input from the learners regarding the reasons for the observed results. A follow-up questionnaire or interview aimed at eliciting this information might have lessened the need for speculation and produced helpful guidance about ways to improve the procedure used in the treatment.)

### **Improvement didn't occur because the noticing hypothesis can't be generalized to paralinguistic items**

A final possible explanation that must be considered is that though noticing has been shown to affect code-based language learning, it cannot do the same for paralinguistic features of communication. On the face of it, there seems to be no reason why this should be the case. Paralinguistic features of communication are as old as communication itself, and there is every reason to believe the L1 learning of these features occurred through observation and imitation. To claim that this noticing-like process cannot occur in an L2 context would certainly require more evidence.

### **IMPLICATIONS FOR TEACHING**

Given the speculative nature of the above explanations I am hesitant to make suggestions about teaching. However, I would like to stress that the learners who did participate in the noticing activity seemed to enjoy the contact with the instructor. This may have had the unanticipated (and non-study related) effect of creating a better relationship between those learners and the instructor, thus producing an affective benefit.

In terms of the noticing activity, it may be that teachers should consider designing a procedure that is implemented over a longer period of time; perhaps, a series of interventions. If it is true that the hoped for learning either failed to occur or faded before the final exam, it may be that more reinforcement over time of the target forms would lead to better learning. In the syllabus used in the study classes

the primary focus on paralinguistic features occurred early in the semester, and it's possible that the learners simply concentrated on the content taught in the latter part of the course to the detriment of the paralinguistic features. The effectiveness of a design of this sort would of course have to be verified.

It is also important to remember that exam evaluation criteria and the relative weighting of the criteria are likely to have a washback effect on grade-conscious learners. If instructors want learners to focus on particular features of language, learners need to be aware of the criteria and be motivated to learn and display them.

Finally, with regard to rater problems, it would be wonderful to have the service of a team of raters to lessen possible discrepancies due to the inattention of the single rater-instructor. However, for many instructors the reality is that they and their colleagues are usually pressed for time, and that finding and organizing additional raters is impractical. It is, of course, possible to videotape all the learners' performances and later review them should time for this be available. In cases where it is not, and assessment must be done while the learners are completing their test tasks, it is important to clearly specify what you are rating and have an easy-to-use method of doing so (I have found checklists of relevant features to be very helpful.)

## CONCLUSION

This paper has described an attempt to use noticing to improve paralinguistic behavior among a group of Korean university students. The results suggest that either the noticing activity was not successful in achieving its purpose, or that the improvements in learning were either not observed or not displayed. Various explanations have been put forward to account for the results, but more work is required before a convincing answer can be given.

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# Re-shaping of Consciousness for EFL Performances

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## **ABSTRACT**

Korean university students' performances in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) appear to be very poor in general, which may be largely attributed to their consciousness shaped to be appropriate for studying English as a subject, not as a communication tool (Kim, 2001). In an attempt to help students re-shape consciousness appropriate for EFL performances, an exploratory research study was designed within the framework of Chafe's theory of language, thought and consciousness (Chafe, 1994, 2001).

## **INTRODUCTION**

It is assumed that accumulation of experiences of using EFL will help students consciously think in EFL, which will consequently result in changes in the ways they use EFL, because speakers of different languages think differently and because language and thought influence each other. To this end, an innovative program named "Project RESCUE (Re-shaping of Consciousness for University English)" was organized for this research study. The theoretical background for Project RESCUE comes from Wallace Chafe's "Theory of Language and Consciousness" (1994, 1996, 1997, 1998, 2000). The program was comprised of four major sub-programs: Argument Writing, Conscious Utterance Exchange, Look-And-Tell, and Partial Expressions, which were administered to a freshman English class of 17 students during the first semester of 2002. Three types of evaluation tools were used: (1) Short conversation listening, (2) reading for correction, and (3) Argument writing.

The results were as follows: (1) In listening and reading for correction, correct responses of 45.5% and 28% in pre-test changed into 55% and 55% respectively in post-test, which demonstrates statistically significant increases of 21% and 96% respectively, (2) in writing for post-test, evident qualitative changes, besides obvious quantitative changes, were identified in concepts (e.g., uses of words), orientations (e.g., inflectional affixes and particles) and constructions (e.g., sentential and textual grammar). Also, TOEFL-ITP pre-/post-tests showed statistically significant differences.

## AN ANECDOTE OF CONSCIOUSNESS

What does *consciousness* have to do with learning a language? Helen Keller describes that very moment of the miracle of becoming conscious of the word “water” in her letter to William James:

Suddenly I felt a misty consciousness as of something forgotten—a thrill of returning thought; and somehow the mystery of language was revealed to me. I knew then that W A T E R meant the wonderful cool something that was flowing over my hand.... I left the well-house eager to learn. Everything had a name, and each name gave birth to a new thought. (quoted from Lash, 1980)

## PRELIMINARY RESEARCH

The ability to think in English gradually develops in three stages. First, the number of the produced words expands. Second, the focus of consciousness is no longer limited to the sentential level, but is deployed across sentences. Third, creative thinking is realized into words. Years before Project RESCUE was conceived, some preliminary research was conducted that would serve as its background.

## Developmental Aspects of Mi Kim’s Successful EFL Learning

Following are listed some utterances described in a case study of the English language acquisition of Mi Kim, a young Korean. We can see the above stages reflected in her responses to the same picture of a piglet and its mother over a period of 36 months:

### Thinking in English: Low-Level (13 months/35 words)

1. Here is a pig.
2. A baby pig sat with Mother.
3. A mother died.
4. And baby pig left.
5. And pig cried.

### Thinking in English: Higher-Level (36 months/121 words)

1. There’s a pig and a piglet.
2. The piglet was sitting looking at her mother’s milk.
3. The pig were lying down.
4. It was all sandy.
5. It was at a farm.
6. And the piglet’s brothers and sisters were playing.
7. But the piglet was too small to play.
8. So he stayed by his mother.
9. So he would be safe from any danger.

10. The mother was happy to have company.
11. But she knew that he must grow up.
12. Then she let him come back, if he were hurt.

### Development of Thinking in English

Months	Words
8	15
13	35
30	63
36	121

As Mi Kim deployed her consciousness, the number of words she used increased greatly, from 15 at 8 months to 121 at 36 months. In addition, she was able to deploy her consciousness so that she could use referents and use the new-given distinction accurately across sentences. Finally, she was able to add creative elements that went beyond the content of the image she was presented with.

### Transcription and Error Identification in a University Classroom

In March 1996, three EFL Freshman classes listened to a recorded conversation (Nunan, 1995) twice. They then heard each line of the conversation with the goal of writing it down verbatim. Next, three volunteers from each class wrote their transcription on the board. After that, the whole class was invited to find errors in each transcription and come up to the board to correct them freely.

Surprisingly, no one in any of the classes completely corrected the errors in lines of the text (1), (2), (3), (4), and (5), as below, with eleven problem items in them.

- 1st voice (Anita): Would you like a cup of coffee?  
 2nd voice (Josie): (1) Yes, I love one.  
 (Cf. Yes, I'd love one.)
- 1st voice (Anita): Okay. Here's the kitchen....
- 1st voice (Anita): Oh, hi, Marcella.  
 Marcella: Hi, Anita.  
 Anita: (2) Marcella, I like to meet Josie.  
 (Cf. Marcella, I'd like you to meet Josie.)  
 (3) Today's his birthday\*.  
 (Cf. Today's her first day.)
- Marcella: (4) Please meet Josie.  
 (Cf. Pleased to meet you, Josie.)
- Josie: (5) Please meet Marcella.  
 (Cf. Pleased to meet you, Marcella.)

\* Some students wrote "birthday" others "first day"

## PROJECT RESCUE (RE-SHAPING OF CONSCIOUSNESS FOR UNIVERSITY ENGLISH)

The following principles were followed for the development of the Project RESCUE. Methods were to be employed that would strategically encourage students to produce English, help them to consciously experience realizing thoughts in English, and lead them to work on spoken and written English.

Initial and final evaluation for the program was based on two items. First, students were tested on their ability to detect the eleven problem items found in reading and listening to the text entitled “Josie’s First Day,” as seen above. They were also evaluated on their ability to determine the “new-given distinction” in the same text. Second, students were asked to produce “argument writings,” stating their position for or against a certain proposition. Their writings were evaluated on the number of words produced, the distinction between new and given information, and creative thinking ability.

The following table shows the results of the Project RESCUE pre- and post-tests:

Listening: Correct Responses (N=17)

	<b>Pre</b>	<b>Post</b>
Total	508	606
Average	46%	55%
Difference:	120%	

Reading: Percentage of Correct Responses (N=17)

	<b>Pre</b>	<b>Post</b>
Total	324	613
Average	30%	56%
Difference:	186%	

The RESCUE program was divided into four sub-programs: Argument Writing, Conscious Utterance Exchange, Look-And-Tell, Partial Expressions. Each of these sub-programs will be now examined in further detail.

### Argument Writing

The goal of the Argument Writing portion of the RESCUE program was for students to accumulate experience in realizing guided thinking in English. To achieve this goal, students read a text for a better understanding of a proposition, about which they developed an argument, either positive or negative. The content included simple propositions and stories about some subjects with which the students were familiar. They were given the instruction to carry out in their arguments the two duties of “justification” and “rebuttal.” Each student’s argument was openly discussed for further improvement. One writing task was given every three weeks.

The following chart shows the number of produced words in the students' writings at the beginning and end of the program:

	<b>Pre</b>	<b>Post</b>
Total:	1444	3433
Averages:	85	202

It can be interpreted that, in terms of the three developmental aspects of Thinking In English revealed in the College Students' data compared with that of Mi Kim's data, the number of produced words, new-given distinction in deployment of consciousness, and creative thinking can all be compared.

### **Conscious Utterance Exchange**

The goal of the Conscious Utterance Exchange part of the program was for students to accumulate experience in the proper deployment of focus of consciousness in conversations. The method followed was for students to practice talking with each other using prepared texts, with their partners constantly changing. The content of the texts was ordinary conversations. The frequency of the Conscious Utterance Exchange was once in each class, for four weeks at the beginning of the semester. It was hoped that students would understand the intentions of speakers in the conversations for realistic practice.

### **Look and Tell**

The goal of the "Look and Tell" portion of the program was for students to activate their consciousness in English by accumulating experience in giving long talks on familiar topics. The method followed was to have students first practice with written and recorded model talks made by native speakers. They then met with native speakers and gave their talks using a series of pictures. The content of the talks consisted of descriptions of places on and off campus, e.g. the library, the cafeteria, the movie theater, etc., and was conducted once a week over a period of four weeks.

Below are examples of a model talk and a transcript of an average student's production used in the Look and Tell portion:

#### **Look and Tell: Model Talk**

As a student, you will spend a lot of time at the library. The POSTECH library is located in the center of the campus. You can find it easily. When you enter the library, you must pass through the checkpoint. You must show your identification card to the guard. After entering, you can find a map on the wall. This map will show you where the different sections of the library are located. Remember that the library has several floors. You might need to go up or down the stairs.

One great place in the library is the Learning Resources Center, called the LRC. It's the room with lots of computers. Here, you can use interactive computer programs such as

English Discoveries. The library also provides lots of tables for study. It's an ideal quiet place to get your schoolwork done.

### Look and Tell: Tape Transcript

Postech library is... uh... center of the campus... in main... in main campus... in the... in the student union and... auditorium... and Postech library. If you want to... if you want into the... if you want go to the Postech library, you must have a identify... ID card. And... the... the front of the gate... and check the your ID card and pass the gate. In the wall... in the wall you can see the map... map of the Postech library. Postech library has a four... four floor... four floor. Um. And then you... you choose the floor and you can use elevator or... or... walking up? or... or... floor... floor down. And the... main floor you can use... you can use many computers in the IR... C? LRC? LRC. In the LRC. Many computer and many media programs you can using to learn English or different language, but maybe use to learn English. Um... And... and three and four you can read a book; choose the book and borrow the book. Or in the fifth floor you can study. It's very silence, but in the midterm or... uh... final term many people in the library so... more noisy than the dormitory. Yeah. But... but... maybe... maybe you can study more... more well in dormitory... Yeah.

The “Look and Tell” method can be compared with a similar activity from an ESL textbook, which might include a setting in an English-speaking country that would be quite unfamiliar to a Korean student. The comparison is made in terms of the *conscious components of thought*, as described by Wallace Chafe (2000).

The activation of *inner language*, i.e. verbal thoughts, is weak in both a typical ESL textbook activity and in the “Look and Tell” method for the precise reason that in both cases the learner must express his or her ideas in a second language. “Look and Tell” comes out much stronger, however, in having learners access *imagery* (perceptual experiences), *emotions* (evaluation, attitudes, and opinions), and *awareness of one's actions* (behavior) precisely because the environments used are familiar to the students. That is to say, unlike a similar activity in an ESL textbook, “Look and Tell” allows students to fully access their non-verbal components of thought, so that they can focus exclusively on producing verbal thoughts in their second language. With the frames of imagery, emotions, and self-awareness already activated by using familiar places and experiences, learners can more readily develop their ability to create verbal thoughts in their second language. In other words EFL students can begin Thinking in English (TIE).

The “Look and Tell” method can also be compared with a similar activity from an ESL textbook in terms of activation of the various parts of *inner language*, or verbal thoughts, also described by Chafe (*ibid.*). In this area, “Look and Tell” has some advantages in the development of *ideas*, or events, states, and referents, because the settings are familiar to the students. In the areas of *categories* (lexical items and collocation), *orientations* (affixes and particles), and *constructions* (syntax), “Look and Tell” seems to have no advantages over a similar activity in an ESL textbook. This is due to the fact that while learners have the ideas activated from the use of familiar settings, specific instruction is still needed in the mechanics of the second language. That is to say, this activity is excellent for promoting fluency, but specific activities aimed at promoting accuracy are still needed.

The Look and Tell method has various applications. One would be to design student-centered activities: having students develop maps of their school, neighborhood, home, etc., and using them in communicative activities. Another method would involve a combined fluency-accuracy approach, linking the “Look and Tell” activity with the use of prepositions, vocabulary, structures, etc. Communicative activities, using questioning and answering, pair/group work, etc., can also be employed.

### **Partial Expressions**

The goal of the Partial Expression portion of the RESCUE program was for students to have the total context of English expressions in their heads. Students would be able to contextualize expressions, rather than produce them verbatim. The students were required to recognize and produce contextually accurate statements. To achieve this goal, students were given eight articles, taken from a standard reading comprehension textbook used in all freshmen English classes. From these articles certain target phrases had been selected and focused upon. The students were also given other materials in which the statements had been remodeled in order to use them in a different context. The students studied these materials continuously over a 16-week term with the aid of the professor, who helped them to understand the meaning and form of the target phrases, using only English to explain them. The students were encouraged to read the texts repeatedly. The students were then tested in two ways. The first portions of the test focused on their ability to recognize if the target phrase was being used correctly, and to correct the target phrase, if it was incorrect. Students were expected to recognize and correct the form “of ... -ing” in the following example:

This kind of buy one get one free sale is a useful method of increase business and makes the owner more money.

The section portion of the test asked students to produce contextually accurate expressions from key words. Students were expected to supply the key words “believe,” “experts,” or “psychology” to produce sentences like “Experts in psychology believe (that)...” or “Psychology experts believe (that)...” in the following example:

\_\_\_\_\_ alcoholism, the addiction to drinking, is a mental illness related to depression.

The results of the test indicated that students were able to recognize the correctly used expressions with a high degree of accuracy, but were unable to correct the incorrect expressions or create contextually accurate expressions with a high degree of accuracy.

### Correct Questions

Target Phrase	Number correct	Percentage
a good reason for your choice	17	89.47
can also reflect a person's..	13	68.42
give us hope we'll be...	17	89.47
___ because it's unavoidable	19	100
put in over 60 hours a week	19	100
most people accept it as normal	18	94.74
to relax and do nothing	16	84.21

### Incorrect Questions

Target Phrase	Number correct	Percentage
spend a lot of money on	5	26.31
was losing/lost	10	52.63
might feel ashamed that	9	47.37
make him feel guilty	4	21.05
of increasing business	13	68.42
are dissatisfied with	9	47.37
makes us worry that	6	31.58
is addicted to	13	68.42
about one third of	10	52.63
there are some people who actually	4	21.05
they do anything else	5	26.32
keeps them busy	12	63.16
to retire from work	17	89.47
seems to be a safe, even advantageous, one	3	15.78
AVERAGE	8.57	45

### Production Questions

Target Phrase	Number correct	Percentage
experts in psychology believe that	12	63.16
consider _____ a symbol of...	2	10.52
psychologists often use a method called	5	26.32
on the first day of	1	5.26
spend eight or nine hours on	3	15.78
prefer not to quit	10	52.68
produced a challenging piece of work	3	15.78
Psychologists claim that work gives	2	10.52
a sense of self and individualism	0	0
AVERAGE	4.2	21

As the students were required to produce more, the average number of correct answers decreased drastically.

Part 1a	Recognizing correct expressions	89% correct
Part 1b	Correcting incorrect expressions	45% correct
Part 2	Creating correct expressions	21% correct

As production is related to consciousness, future activities should focus more on production in an effort to alter the students' consciousness and allow them a higher degree of accuracy. As the students begin to think more in English, it is believed that they will be able to produce better, more accurate, expressions.

## CONCLUSIONS

The above data show that the RESCUE Program was effective. The program was constructed for the re-shaping of consciousness appropriate for EFL performances. Therefore, we are allowed to tentatively conclude that consciousness appears to be the problem that causes Korean students' failure to use English appropriately.

We may need further educational and comparative studies for a stronger generalization in this field based on the data collected in this explorative study.

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# Impact of China's National College English Test (CET-4) on ESL Instruction

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## **ABSTRACT**

Standardized testing results have been used as an indicator of quality of instruction. While advocates claim that the tests help to establish and maintain high standards and motivate students and teachers, there has not been sufficient empirical studies showing either a positive or negative relationship between standardized testing and improved teaching and learning. The present study investigates the impact of China's national standardized College English Test (CET-4) on ESL instruction at Guizhou University, Guiyang, Guizhou Province. The correlation between the students' English achievement scores and their CET-Band 4 scores and how the CET-4 affects teachers' curricular and pedagogical decisions and students' perceptions, motivation, and anxiety are examined. The results of the study have strong implications for what can be done to improve the students' proficiency in English.

## **BACKGROUND**

High-stakes standardized tests have been viewed as a primary mechanism to control and reform educational practice in the United States since 1979's. Many states have begun to use them for the purposes of establishing school accountability, determining student promotion, and driving standard-based curriculum reform (Luna & Turner, September 2001). Among other advocates of standardized testing, Ravitch (1995) asserted that the tests were the best way to establish and maintain high standard, motivate students and teachers, and ultimately achieve educational equality. At the other end of the pendulum, resistance to high-stakes standardized tests has also been evident. For instance, Lunar and Turner (September 2001) conducted focus group interviews with 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade teachers in their study on the impact of the new Massachusetts Comprehension Assessment System (MCAS) on what and how English teachers were teaching and how their students were learning. The results revealed that the teachers strongly opposed to the test and called it a test of "excellence" rather than "competence" and said the state was headed toward "education just for the elite." They felt they were forced to make curricular and pedagogical changes in the school's attempt to improve

students' scores, that is, they were forced to teach to the test on the expense of what their students should be learning. Similar negative effects of standardized tests were also noted in other studies (Thomas, 2001, Walker, 2002, & Zitlow, 2001).

Assessing large numbers of undergraduate students using standardized, forced-choice testing instruments remains relatively rare in American higher education, but there has been a significant increase in the number of states seriously considering - or actively piloting - standardized testing as a deliberate element of higher education policy for the purposes of certifying student readiness or achievement, inducing institutions to improve their quality, or demonstrating accountability, according to Ewell (2001). In China the College English Test (CET) has been in existence since 1987. It was a national standardized test sponsored by the Higher Education Department of the Ministry of Education. According to National College English Testing Committee (2002), "In accordance with the requirements of the College English Teaching Syllabus, the CET objectively, impartial accurately measures the English proficiency of college students in China. It meets the needs of China's reform and open-door policy and reflects the real ability of college students to communicate in English ... (p.1). The CET comprises the CET-Band 4 (CET-4), CET-Band 6 (CET-6), and the Spoken English Test (CET-SET). Many universities have made "passing" the CET-4, a score of 60%, part of graduation requirements (Personal Conversation with Dean of College English Department, Guizhou University, May 2001). Many companies have made it one of the qualifications for employment application (Wang, 2000).

During a 2-month (April-May) English teaching assignment at Guizhou University in 2001, a strong tension was felt among the second year non-English students in preparation for their first CET-4 to be taken in June. Meanwhile, mixed attitudes towards the test among the College English teachers were apparent. The job of fulfilling the College English course objectives and helping their students to succeed in the CET-4 was not an easy one. It was the purpose of this study to investigate the students' College English achievement in relation to their CET-4 performance and the impact of the CET-4 on (1) the students, who were responsible for their own success in their College English class as well as in the CET-4, and (2) on their teachers, who were held accountable for their College English teaching and improving the CET passing rate at the same time. The findings should shed an insight into what needed to be done to make ESL instruction at Guizhou University best respond to both parties' needs.

## **GUIZHOU UNIVERSITY'S COLLEGE ENGLISH PROGRAM**

Guizhou University is a typical, medium-sized university with about 10,000 students enrolled in various degree programs in humanities, social sciences, sciences and technology. All non-English major students are required to take 4 courses of English during their first two years of their undergraduate studies to develop

their reading, listening, speaking, writing, and translating ability so that they can communicate with others in English (Higher Education Board, 1999). Students were taught through the structural and translation approaches until the 1999 when the College English Department decided to use the New College English Book series by Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press with 598 students, almost half of the 1999 intake, on a trial basis. The series was said to be correspondent with the university's College English goals, widely used by famous Chinese universities and communicative-based in which the four language skills were integratedly taught. By the end of the 2001 academic year, the students finished English 1-4 using the New College English Books 1-3 (from the series of 4 books).

## **PURPOSES OF THE STUDY AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

The present study aimed to investigate the students' College English achievement in relation to their CET-4 performance and the impact the CET-4 on the students and their College English teachers. The following research questions were asked:

1. How well did the students perform in both College English and the CET-4 and was there any relationship between the two scores?
2. What impact did the CET-4 have on the students?
3. What impact did the CET-4 have on their College English teachers?

## **METHODS OF STUDY**

### **Subjects**

The present study was conducted at Guizhou University, Guiyang, Guizhou Province, in September 2001. To investigate the students' English language performance, 443 second year students were chosen from a total of 589 who used the New College English Books 1-3 (Zhejiang University, 1999) as their main course-books for College English 1-4 studies. Only 214 from the 443 mentioned voluntarily participated in the questionnaire and the interview to examine how the CET-4 affected them. 15 teachers who taught College English 1-4 using the New College Books 1-3 agreed to answer the questionnaire and be interviewed on how the CET-4 affected them.

### **Instruments**

A 35-item, 5-point scale questionnaire was developed to study the effects of the CET-4 on the students. The subjects were asked to respond whether they strongly agreed, agreed, neither agreed nor disagreed, disagreed, or strongly disagreed with the given statements. The questionnaire consisted of 4 parts: Purposes for taking the CET-4 ; Prior experience in learning English; College English learning experience; Motivation; and Anxiety. It was written in English and read by

two Thai professors at the School of English, Suranaree University of Technology, Thailand. It was then translated into Chinese by the co-research of this study from the College English Department, Guizhou University, and read by two other English teachers from the Department of Foreign Languages, Guizhou University. A set of 25 questions was prepared for a semi-structured student interview for more information on their background, causal attribution, context in learning College English, motivation, and anxiety. The interview questions were developed in the same way as the questionnaire. The candidates with 10 highest CET-4 scores and those with 20 lowest CET-4 scores were interviewed in Chinese.

A 35-item teacher's questionnaire written in English was developed to examine how the CET-4 affected the College English teachers at Guizhou University. It aimed to examine their perception on the test; its impact on curriculum, pedagogy, job security, motivation, and anxiety. In addition, a set of 12 interview questions was written in English to ask for more details or clarification of their responses on the questionnaire. The instruments were read by the same Thai and Chinese professors, but they were not translated into Chinese.

## RESULTS

### Students' Language Performance

According to the data from the Registrar's Office, the students' College English 4 scores were quite satisfactory, given that the passing score was 60%. As shown in Table 1, from a total of 443 students, 39 (8.8%) scored above 80, 151 (34.1) scored between 70-80, and 174 (39.3%) between 60-70. The mean score was 69.48 (SD = 8.43). 71 students (16%) scored between 50-60.

TABLE 1. DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF COLLEGE ENGLISH 4 SCORES

Interval of scores	No.	%	Statistics
< 50.00	8	1.8	Mean = 69.48
50.00 – 60.00	71	16.0	Median = 70.00
60.00 – 70.00	174	39.3	Mode = 60.00
70.0 – 80.00	151	34.1	SD = 8.43
> 80.00	39	8.8	
Total	443	100.0	

However, the students' CET-4 scores from their first attempt in June were rather low as shown in Table 2. Given that the 60% was the passing score, 31 students (7%) scored above 60, 86 (19.4%) scored between 50-60, 156 (35.2%) between 40-50, and 126 (28.4%) between 30-40. With the mean score of 43.79 (SD = 10.49), it was clear that the students' performance was far from satisfaction.

TABLE 2. DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF CET-4 SCORES

Interval of scores	No. of students	Percentage	Statistics
< 30.00	44	9.9	Mean = 43.79
30.00 – 40.00	126	28.4	Median = 43.50
40.00 – 50.00	156	35.2	Mode = 40.00 ,
50.00 – 60.00	86	19.4	45.00
60.00 – 70.00	29	6.5	SD = 10.49
> 70.00	2	0.5	
Total	443	100.0	

To investigate the relationship between the students' College English 4 scores and their CET-4 scores, a correlation coefficient was calculated. The correlation coefficient of 0.496 (p-value <0.01) means that the correlation was significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). It could be said that if a student made a high score in College English 4, he would also get a high score in the CET-4.

As mentioned earlier, not all 443 students participated in the present study; only 214 from 9 different departments did on a voluntary basis as detailed in Table 3. Briefly, 22 students (88% of the whole class) were from the Economics Department, 27 (79.4%) from Philosophy, 50 (67.6%) Law, 52 (65%) Computer Science, 20 (64.5%) Chemistry, 19 (30.2%) Chinese, 8 (22.2%) Physics, 14 (17.15%) Electronics Science, and 2 (10%) Tourism.

TABLE 3. NUMBER OF STUDENTS BY DEPARTMENT AND PARTICIPATION

Department	Participated				Total	
	Yes		No		No.	%
	No.	%	No.	%		
<b>Chemistry</b>	20	64.5	11	35.5	31	7.0
<b>Chinese</b>	19	30.2	44	69.8	63	14.2
<b>Computer Science</b>	52	65.0	28	35.0	80	18.1
<b>Economics</b>	22	88.0	3	12.0	25	5.6
<b>Law Science</b>	50	67.6	24	32.4	74	16.7
<b>Mathematics</b>	8	22.2	28	77.8	36	8.1
<b>Philosophy</b>	27	79.4	7	20.6	34	7.7
<b>Physics and Electronic Science</b>	14	17.5	66	82.5	80	18.1
<b>Tourism</b>	2	10.0	18	90.0	20	4.5
<b>Total</b>	214		229		443	100.0

A closer look at how the students performed in their College English 4 and CET-4 offers an interesting profile as shown in Table 4.

TABLE 4. MEAN AND STANDARD DEVIATION OF COLLEGE ENGLISH 4 AND CET-4 SCORES  
BY DEPARTMENT AND PARTICIPATION

Department	Mean (SD) of Coll Eng 4			Mean (SD) of CET-4		
	Participated Yes	Participated No	Total	Participated Yes	Participated No	Total
<b>Chemistry</b>	70.65 (6.60)	70.55 (5.13)	70.61 (6.03)	51.13 (12.30)	43.55 (11.25)	47.79 (12.11)
<b>Chinese</b>	75.47 (9.20)	70.41 (7.85)	71.94 (8.53)	44.97 (9.52)	43.44 (11.77)	43.90 (11.09)
<b>Computer Science</b>	69.11 (9.46)	66.79 (9.48)	68.29 (9.48)	44.67 (10.28)	43.75 (11.87)	45.65 (10.87)
<b>Economics</b>	68.27 (10.15)	69.00 (7.55)	68.36 (9.75)	45.48 (13.13)	45.50 (9.96)	45.48 (12.61)
<b>Law</b>	69.66 (7.90)	65.50 (11.69)	68.31 (9.42)	42.65 (10.70)	37.56 (8.77)	41.00 (10.34)
<b>Mathematics</b>	71.25 (6.71)	68.68 (6.02)	69.25 (6.18)	46.56 (10.66)	41.52 (8.94)	42.64 (9.43)
<b>Philosophy</b>	71.59 (7.82)	70.86 (4.74)	71.44 (7.23)	46.30 (9.18)	36.50 (6.53)	44.28 (9.51)
<b>Physics and Electronic Science</b>	67.93 (7.94)	69.36 (8.09)	69.11 (8.03)	45.18 (10.10)	42.61 (8.91)	43.06 (9.11)
<b>Tourism</b>	79.00 (12.73)	68.00 (5.83)	69.10 (7.10)	47.75 (2.47)	41.42 (8.85)	42.05 (8.61)

Briefly, the students from the Chinese Department had the highest College English 4 score, 71.94 (SD = 8.53), while those from the Computer Science Department had the lowest, 68.29 (SD = 9.48). On average, the participating groups scored higher than the non-participating ones, with an exception of those from the Economics Department. As for the CET-4 scores, the chemistry students scored the highest, 47.79 (SD = 12.11), whereas the law students scored the lowest, 41 (SD = 10.34). On average, the participating groups scored higher than the non-participating ones, with an exception of the Economics Department.

### Impact of the CET-4 on Students

A simple statistical analysis (percentage) of the student's questionnaire answers from 214 students revealed that they perceived the CET-4 to be very meaningful. 83.9% believed that the test score meant a high ability to use English, 62.3% thought that a good score would enable them to find a good job, and over 52% thought it would help in seeking admission to a graduate school or promotion at work. As for their prior English experience, 68.6% said their CET-4 scores resulted from their high school background. 66.5% never had an opportunity to communicate in English with non-Chinese speakers, and 85.4% never had help from private tutors or their family at all

Asked about their perception on College English experience in relation to their CET-4 performance, almost 50% did not think what they had learned in class for two years prepared them well for the CET-4. However, 57.7% said it helped

them most with the reading section, followed by cloze (45.6%), writing (45.4%), listening (45%), and vocabulary (36.1%). 38.6% said their teachers' teaching methods helped them learn English, while 40.3% were not sure. 38.1% found the New College English books helpful, while another 38.1% were reluctant to admit so. 34.2% found that the learning facilities provided (the language lab, computers, English Weekly Newspaper, Campus English radio, etc.) helped their CET-4 performance, while 35.9% were not sure. 42% did not think extra-curricular activities (English Corner, English Club, etc.) helped their CET-4 performance, while 39.8% were not sure if they did. 55.7% said they did not receive help from their College English teachers outside class when needed.

The responses on their motivation in learning English revealed that 46.5% attended classes regularly. 60.6% claimed they completed all English homework assignments regularly and 55% actively participated in in-class activities. 42.8% tried to find every opportunity to participate in English activities outside class on their own initiative and when possible would not hesitate to use English (58%). More interestingly, 75% said they tried to spare time to learn English every day.

On investigating the students' anxiety in coping with the CET-4, it was found that 58.5% were worried about graduation, while 49% worried about employment if they scored poorly. However, they appeared to be highly matured by asserting that their worries and anxiety did not affect their concentration on the studies of other subjects. Though disappointed with the low CET-4 score and wished they could have done better, 69% said it did not make them feel like under-achievers. Instead, 73.8% said their score made them study harder to improve their English. 85.2% said they would take as many CET-4 exams as they were allowed to get a higher score before graduation.

A semi-structured interview was conducted in Chinese with the candidates with 10 highest CET-4 scores (high achievers) and those with 20 lowest (low achievers). The number of the low achiever interviewees was doubled (from original 10) due to a much larger number of unsuccessful candidates than those who passed. The main purpose of the session was to find out in details if the two groups perceived the CET-4 in relation to College English studies differently and what contributed to their success or failure in the test. The results confirmed the findings from the questionnaire.

Both groups agreed that the CET-4 certificate was essential for their future career and that English was a very important tool for success in the age of globalization; therefore, they were strongly determined to pass the test. However, some interesting dissimilarities were revealed. The high achievers perceived English as a tool, not merely as a subject. To them the CET-4 certificate only showed an acceptable proficiency level for non-English major students, not the real ability to communicate in English. They wished they had had more practice in the listening and speaking in class and less practice in test-taking skills. To them, the latter was useful, but not essential since they had taken many tests throughout their school years. They realized that mastering English took time and perseverance. They

spent more time on English than the low achievers. Like the low achievers, they liked the New College books for their various up-to-date and meaningful topics as well as the integration of the four language skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Another notable difference was that they aimed high – for CET-6, SET, or TOEFL. The low passing score motivated them to work harder and look forward to taking more advanced English courses.

Most low achievers tended to have negative attitudes towards English mainly due to their unsuccessful test performances in the past. To quote some, “I don’t like English. I always got low marks no matter how hard I tried,” “My English is poor and was always poor from middle school and secondary school,” “English is too difficult for me, and I don’t know how to learn it. I forget new words within a few days, so my vocabulary is very limited,” or simply, “I am not interested in English; I learned it because I had to.” They never volunteered to participate in class activities unless they were called upon. They wanted their teacher to be stricter, force them to learn, and assign more homework. To them, test-taking practice was as important as language learning. They never joined extra-curricular activities. “I don’t have enough courage to take part in one owing to my poor oral English,” “To open his mouth and speak English for a person whose English is poor is very difficult. I am afraid to speak it, so I never want to take part in such activities,” “I think it is useless and therefore a waste of time,” or “I have a lot of work to do in other subjects.” More interesting was, “those activities have nothing to do with the CET-4, so I don’t bother.” In short, most low achievers were not interested in any “English” things that had nothing to do with the test. Although all of them were disappointed with their low CET-4 scores, the disappointment motivated them to study harder. It was also worth noting here that many of the low achievers took the CET-4 just to see how far they were from the passing score, anticipating they would not do well in this first attempt.

### **Impact of the CET-4 on Teachers**

Fifteen teachers from the College English Department participated in the present study. All of them taught the 1999 intake (the subjects of the study) using the New College English books. Two had a master’s degree and were holding the instructor positions, while the rest, 7 assistant instructors (1-5 years teaching experience), 4 instructors (6-15 years of teaching experience), and 2 associate professors (16-over 21 years of teaching experience), had a bachelor’s degree. Their responses to a 35-item questionnaire reflected their perception on the CET-4 and how the test affected their job security, motivation, anxiety, what they taught, and how they taught.

As for their perception on the CET-4, to most of them, it was one of the best test in China, helped to keep College English standard high, ranked Guizhou University against other Chinese universities, and that the Department’s reputation depended upon the CET-4 passing rate. However, many did not think the students’ CET-4 scores reflected the quality of teaching. On job security, most of

them did not think their job security depended on the passing rate, nor did they feel threatened by it. There was a split opinion on whether the CET-4 motivated them to look for opportunities to attend conferences, seminars, or workshops for professional development. The responses on anxiety revealed that even though they felt accountable for the students' CET-4 passing rate, most disagreed that they should be blamed for poor scores. They were satisfied as long as the College English objectives were met and their students passed the College English exams even though they did not pass the CET-4. Half of them did not feel pressured by the students' poor CET-4 performance because they always did their best in teaching, three did, while the rest were not sure. The findings corresponded with the interview results. As one teacher put it, "Our job is to be responsible for College English, not the CET. As long as the College English objectives are met, we should be happy even though the CET passing rate is low." "We should not be blamed for low CET. The students' placement exam scores were low; therefore, we should not expect a miracle," to quote another.

The CET-4 undoubtedly caused College English curricular change at Guizhou University, the change on the learning goals, which dictated what to teach, textbook choices, among others. There was a split in opinion on whether the curriculum was guided by the CET-4 and on whether the main goals of College English were related to the test. Most of them strongly agreed that the College English goals were not to prepare students for the CET-4 and that College English teaching should not be geared towards helping students to perform well in the test. Despite such beliefs, they made some adjustments to meet the students' demand. To quote one teacher, "We have to struggle between the requirement of our curriculum and those of the CET-4. Of course, the goals of College English should correspond with that of the CET-4 because companies will only hire those students who have the CET-4 certificate." The College English Department held meetings to discuss how to improve students' CET-4 passing rate. The trial of the New College English series with half of the 1999 class was one of the reactions taken in addition to running a tutoring class every term in which model CET-4 exams were taught.

The most apparent impact of the CET-4 was the pedagogical changes. Although many teachers asserted that they taught to the College English objectives as mentioned earlier, they admitted making changes in how they taught the courses. Many (10) modified their lessons and made room for the CET-4. Most (13) taught and covered questions frequently asked in the test and either made or bought test-preparation booklets or extra exercises, upon being urged by the department or their students' requests, or their own free will. Some teachers made their College English exam questions similar to those of the CET-4 and taught both language and test-taking techniques simultaneously. They often had to hurry through the College English lessons before the CET-4 exam and could not help getting aggravated for not having enough time to help their students. The findings from the questionnaire corresponded well with the interview results.

## DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATION

Under the current examination-based educational system, English teaching was by no means easy. Teachers did not know how to make a balance between improving students' ability of using English and enabling them to get high scores on the CET-4. Along with adopting the New College English books, they were seeking appropriate teaching methods to teach communicatively and providing both in and outside class activities guided by the curriculum. The tasks became more difficult when their students perceived passing the CET-4 as the ultimate goal of learning English, attendance was low, and participation in language activities was sparse or involuntary. In spite of this, College English teachers were so heavily burdened with worries about the CET-4 passing rate that they had to do every possible thing in their desperate attempt to help the students, including making curricular and pedagogical changes and teaching to the test. In short, the quality of their teaching seemed to be judged by the CET-4 whose goals were, to them, different from the goals of College English. With the present movement for Guizhou University to become a national university of the region, the CET-4 passing rate is very likely to be one of the criteria.

While rather helpless in their attempt to convince the public that they were teaching to the College English curriculum, not to the CET-4, teachers must look into the curriculum goals more closely and see if they correspond with the national College English goals or if alignment is needed. Make sure that everyone in the department understands the goals and teaches accordingly. Also, follow up on current developments or modifications of the CET-4 and investigate its validity and reliability. That is, see if it accurately measures the English proficiency of college students as it has claimed. Publicize the findings among the academic community so as to stimulate more discussion on the matter for more effective teaching.

Of course, reforms of any kind take time, but students should not be victims of the system. College English teachers must respond to their needs and feedback. For example, see how to boost class attendance, foster more positive attitudes towards language learning by making classroom activities more lively, attractive, and worthwhile and encouraging students to benefit from making full use of available resources. Teachers must acknowledge the students' maturity in handling their own disappointment in their first trial of the CET-4 (as they said it motivated them to study harder) and tell them the importance of being an independent learner who has control over his own learning and become less dependent on classroom instruction. Let them know that learning English is different from learning maths or science or other content subjects; it needs repeated practice in real communication; one needs not be a genius to learn English and all he needs is a will and determination. Keep in mind the heterogeneous nature of the class and adapt one's teaching to the English proficiency level of the majority, while keeping high achievers from boredom.

High-stakes standardized testing, after all, could be made beneficial for College English teaching if the teachers used it as a tool to help take students closer to their ultimate goal, to narrow the gap between their present proficiency level and the passing mark.

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## **Teacher Education**

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# The Deployment of English Native-Speakers in State Schools: Comparative Perspectives

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## ABSTRACT

Within the region, a number of countries have viewed the importation of native speakers of English as a means of enhancing English language teaching in schools and promoting internationalization or cultural exchange. In this paper, I make some comparative observations about four such schemes, EPIK (English program in Korea), JET (Japan exchange and teaching program) and from Hong Kong, NET (Native-speaking English teacher) and PSED (Primary school English development). I discuss the characteristics of the schemes, outline some of their strengths and weaknesses, and illustrate some ongoing challenges facing them.

Adherents of such programmes anticipate benefits in exposing learners to authentic input, the use of English for genuine communication and opportunities for mutual professional development or fruitful cross-fertilisation of ideas. Critics, on the other hand, point to a perceived lack of value for money, the difficulties of foreigners integrating into local systems, and potential tensions between local and expatriate personnel.

I propose some ways in which native-speakers might best be utilized in supporting enhanced standards of English in schools. Some implications for the successful management of educational change are also outlined, in particular the need for continuity of personnel and policies.

## INTRODUCTION

In our globalised world, the development of English language skills is often seen as a crucial component of educational, economic, social or political progress. As part of this drive for English language development, the importation of native speakers (NS) of English is often viewed as a useful means of supporting English language learning. Such schemes are often controversial however, and it is not clear the extent to which they meet their objectives or provide good value for money. Within the region, four NS schemes have attracted particular attention: EPIK (English program in Korea), JET (Japan exchange and teaching program) and in Hong Kong NET (Native-speaking English teacher) and PSED (Primary school English development).

The purposes of this paper, which reports on work in progress, are essentially threefold. Firstly, I outline some of the main contributions NS and NNS (non-native speakers) can potentially make to English language education. (I use the

terms NS and NNS in the paper but acknowledge that there is debate over the desirability of this terminology and its socio-political overtones, see for example, Rampton (1990) or Braine (1999). Secondly, I discuss the characteristics of the four schemes, outline some of their strengths and weaknesses, and illustrate some ongoing challenges facing them. Thirdly, I outline some implications for the successful management of educational change and review some ways in which NS might best be used to support English language education.

## **PROS AND CONS OF NS/NNS**

Many writers have discussed the strengths and weaknesses of NS and NNS language teachers. Basically, most writers conclude that neither is better than the other, but that each have their own particular merits. Here, drawing on relevant literature and incorporating my own insights where appropriate, I look in turn at the pros and cons of NS and NNS teachers.

### **Pros of NS**

Native speaker teachers:

- Carry an in-depth knowledge of the target language, including wide vocabulary, use of appropriate idiom, knowledge of usage
- Provide a need and an opportunity for pupils to engage in authentic English use (Barratt & Kontra, 2000, Tang, 1997)
- Can provide cultural knowledge (Barratt & Kontra, 2000).

### **Cons of NS**

Native speaker teachers:

- May be perceived as being less familiar with the local context and the learners, including understanding of the students' common learning difficulties (Barratt & Kontra, 2000)
- Monolingual NS do not have first hand awareness of learning a foreign language
- May be less able to make constructive use of the mother tongue
- May find it less easy to control or discipline the class due to lack of awareness of cultural norms or inability to comprehend the pupil mother tongue.

A number of these potential disadvantages are likely to be reduced after a period of time spent living and working in a target culture. So, for example, a NS working in Korea for an extended period may develop an awareness of common difficulties amongst Korean students and some ability in Korean language.

## **Pros of NNS**

Non native professionals:

- Understand and empathise with the learner, having gone through similar processes of learning the language themselves. This can help them to anticipate language difficulties more easily (Medgyes, 1992) or teach learning strategies more effectively (Medgyes, 1992). They can also function as a role model for the learner (Medgyes, 1994).
- Are better placed to make profitable use of the mother tongue (Medgyes, 1994).
- Are likely to have better familiarity with local syllabuses and examination systems (Tang, 1997)
- May have a deeper knowledge of the grammar and how to explain the grammar of the target language through studying it as a second language learner themselves.

## **Cons of NNS**

Non native professionals:

- May have linguistic limitations, for example, in pronunciation or breadth of vocabulary
- May sometimes suffer from a lack of confidence in themselves or an inferiority complex (Medgyes, 1994)
- May find that learners prefer to converse with the teacher through the shared mother tongue, as there is potentially less need/motivation to use the foreign language.

Current thinking emphasises that NNS teachers should have a positive image and not see themselves as failed NS (Medgyes, 1994; Cook, 1999). In the final analysis, the respective strengths and weaknesses of the NS and NNS teachers balance each other out, so the question who is worth more is unhelpful (Medgyes, 1994). Notwithstanding this, 'ideal' teachers might be, for example, a qualified and experienced NS with a good understanding of the language and culture of the target learners or a NNS with a very high level of English language and a strong empathy with the target learners.

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

This study used the following research methods. Relevant academic literature was reviewed, supplemented by information from less formal sources e.g. newspapers, newsletters. Internet searches were carried out to collect relevant information from websites, e-mail discussion groups and other online sources. These initial methods were supplemented by data collected directly from participants in the three schemes under discussion. E-mail interviews were the most common

source of data collection within this category; they were also supplemented by telephone interviews and face-to-face discussions, whenever these were feasible. On-site research visits have been carried out in Korea and in Hong Kong, but not yet in Japan. I have also started collecting a small corpus of classroom videos for analysis.

The approach carries a number of limitations which should be acknowledged before proceeding. Firstly, it is very difficult to obtain a comprehensive overall impression of such schemes. McConnell (2000) in his admirable analysis of the JET scheme refers to the constant refrain, "no two JET experiences are alike" (p.166) and this appears to be a feature of all three programmes. This issue is exacerbated by the fact that I am looking at three schemes rather than one, so my resources are spread more thinly. In terms of the Korean and Japanese schemes, I am limited by my residence in Hong Kong as well as limitations in knowledge and understanding of features of the Korean and Japanese educational contexts. In terms of e-mail informants, I am mainly reliant on individuals who approach me e.g. in 'advertisements' placed on e-mail messenger services or teachers introduced to me through academic contacts. It may be that this form of opportunistic sampling brings with it individuals who have certain characteristics which are not shared by the wider target population.

My approach has been necessarily selective, focusing particularly on issues which seem to carry wider implications or carry resonance across two or more of the schemes under investigation. It is hoped that the comparative perspectives generated go some way to mitigating some of the limitations outlined above. This paper places more emphasis on EPIK due to the Korean context for this publication.

## **EPIK**

The EPIK (English Program in Korea) scheme was started in 1995 under the original name of KORETTA (Korea English Teacher Training) and was expanded and renamed EPIK in 1996 (Ahn, Park & Ono, 1998). Basically, it seeks to enhance the teaching and learning of English through the participation of native speakers of English from 6 countries USA, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Britain and Ireland. According to EPIK (2002), "In 1995, EPIK was implemented with 150 members to improve the English speaking abilities of Korean students and teachers, to develop cultural exchanges, and to reform teaching methodologies in English. In 2002, the EPIK commission is recruiting approximately 120 members to join the 1,530 past participants of the EPIK program".

The main expectation of EPIK (similar to the JET scheme below) is that NS will co-teach with NNS. One of the differences between JET and EPIK is that in Korea the NS teachers are also permitted to teach the class on their own. A further difference is that EPIK teachers are often used in teacher training, specifically to enhance the confidence and language level of Korean teachers of English. These

courses are often held during the Korean teachers' summer or winter vacations and support the government policy of the expansion of English teaching into the elementary school sector, which requires the upgrading of teachers' English language proficiency.

In this part of the paper, I discuss the four main themes which arose from my synthesis of the available literature and the responses from my informants.

### **Qualifications and Experience of EPIK Teachers**

In EPIK (as in JET), there is no requirement for teachers to have training and / or experience but the EPIK pay scale (unlike JET) rewards those who are better trained and / or more experienced. This lack of training and experience of some of the participants in the scheme is a limitation but one that is a reasonably pragmatic response to the issues of supply and demand. It is however, debatable the extent to which unqualified NS can make a significant contribution to the development of ELT.

A number of informants commented on this aspect:

“Because a lot of EPIK teachers have minimal experience, I worry a bit that their classes are under-served. We have a lot of freedom but almost no direction. The program has great potential but needs to attract the right people and presently it's not doing a very good job of it”.

Another observed as follows:

“The type of teachers to recruit is also interesting to me. Although they do make allowances for qualified and experienced teachers, there are salary limits that either by design or by coincidence, limit the experience and qualifications of EPIK teachers. Those with more tend to find better jobs elsewhere, teachers rarely stay longer than three years”.

As this informant indicates, EPIK is often used as a stepping stone for teachers to enter into the university system in Korea. This recruitment of language teachers who are acculturated to the Korean way of life, and familiar with the strengths and weaknesses of Korean students is a potential benefit to English language education in Korea. This supports a well-recognised point that innovations often bring unintended or indirect benefits.

### **Impact on Students**

A questionnaire survey by Choi (2001) suggests that “getting rid of anxiety about speaking English is one of the important benefits resulting from English teaching by native speakers”. Students reported wanting to have more opportunity to speak to NS, with over 90% of students responding that they wanted to continue having lessons with NS.

My qualitative data also provided plenty of evidence that EPIK teachers perceived their biggest achievement was their ability to encourage and motivate stu-

dents. As a North American informant notes “something I’m doing is working, the crippling shyness is falling away”. Another commented, “I’m really enjoying what I’m doing and the Korean team teachers have told me that they and their students love doing our classes, so that’s my measure of performance outcome”.

An interesting aspect of EPIK, less prevalent in the Japanese or Hong Kong schemes, is the use of overseas Koreans as NS teachers. They may be more empathetic to the culture, may have particular motivation and may have or be able to develop relevant Korean language skills, but because of this more demands and pressure may be put on them. A Korean American informant comments on aspects of pupil response and the wider classroom culture:

“The biggest benefit I feel EPIK brings to Korea is a sense of confidence to the people learning English. The EPIK teachers are urged to make people feel comfortable and have fun in the classroom. I think when students realize that English can be fun and is a real way to communicate, and not just something for a test, they may be more comfortable with it and may actually be more motivated to seek out the use of English in the future”.

### **Team Teaching and Co-operation**

There seems to be an expectation in EPIK that a local teacher and a NS will co-operate in class together through some form of team teaching. There appears however, to be quite a lot of variety and flexibility in how this is carried out e.g. whether or not the local teacher will actually join the EPIK teacher in the classroom or if so, how they divide the teaching responsibilities. The EPIK and local teacher co-operation (or lack of it) can give rise to a number of tensions:

- Cultural conflicts between NS teachers and Korean teachers (Ahn, Park & Ono, 1998)
- Difficulties for NS teachers to handle the discipline and the low language levels of pupils when teaching school children alone
- Difficulties in co-operation for team teaching e.g. not easy to find time to plan together; some teachers not eager to team teach with a NS
- Lack of understanding of the rationale and practice of team-teaching.

A number of informants raised issues related to team teaching. For example, a Canadian informant who was very positive about EPIK and his experiences in Korea commented, “Team-teaching is held up as the ideal in EPIK but I don’t find that it works”. He identified two main problems, a lack of appropriate teaching materials for a “conversational” English class and a lack of time for planning between the two teachers. A common reported scenario was that the EPIK teacher planned the lesson independently and taught most of it, whilst the Korean teacher was present to help out with discipline, classroom management or communication problems.

A team teaching experience from Gangwon province seemed to represent good practice in collaboration between an EPIK teacher and a Korean counterpart, based

on mutual trust and respect. In this case, the two teachers met once per week to plan the next week's lesson, taking it in turns to bring suitable materials and trying to integrate the materials with the students' regular English lessons. In class, they tried to share the teacher's role equally. The Korean co-teacher stated that she might sometimes repeat the EPIK teacher's instructions in English but would not use Korean during the team-taught lessons. She saw three main advantages of team-teaching:

- Korean teachers know their students' standard so can support the EPIK teacher in preparing suitable materials
- The Korean teacher can develop her own teaching skills and improve her English communication abilities
- The presence of the Korean teacher can help to maintain discipline and encourage the students to take the EPIK lesson seriously.

On the basis of her 6 years experience as an EPIK co-teacher, she also emphasised the need for continuity in that she was able to learn from her earlier less successful experiences with team teaching and develop an enhanced understanding of how to co-operate productively with her EPIK counterpart.

### **Organisational Structures**

Choi (2001) cites a number of problems associated with the central management and organisation of the scheme, indicating that many NS teachers found the EPIK office at Korea National University of Education and the Board of Education somewhat insensitive to their concerns. He also identified doubts about whether the 2 week induction programme prepares them well enough (Choi, 2001). Data from my informants provided supporting evidence for these findings. For example, the induction programme was criticised for spending too much time on background political matters, such as North-South relationships; a classroom video of team teaching was from a non-Korean context so perceived to be of only peripheral relevance. A Canadian teacher who had taught on both JET and EPIK was much more complimentary about the organisation of the Japanese scheme, summarising his views as follows, "EPIK needs more organisers and organisation, rather than a mere framework flowered with good intentions". Another commented that in view of the lack of continuity of both EPIK teachers and local administrators, there was a tendency for problems to repeat themselves. To counter this problem he suggested a form of "mentoring program both for teachers and for the administrators that handle the teachers, so when the same issues come up, there is someone with experience to share".

During a field research visit to the EPIK office in July 2002, I had useful and constructive discussions with the EPIK office co-ordinator. It was clear that he was sincerely trying his best with limited personnel and a lack of a clear central management structure for the EPIK scheme. He indicated that one of the particular strengths of EPIK was in further developing the communicative abilities of

Korean teachers of English. He identified as an area for further development the issue of recruitment both in terms of quantity and quality, and in order to attract more candidates it may be necessary to intensify the advertising for the programme and possibly increase the salary if there is sufficient budget.

### **Summary of EPIK Themes**

The themes discussed in this section indicate that EPIK seems to be having some positive impact on the English language standards of Korean teachers of English and some positive impact on the motivation and confidence of students. Team teaching seems to have a mixed story of pockets of success, intermingled with some conflicts and problems. Recruitment and organisation for EPIK seem to be ongoing challenges.

### **JET**

The Japan Exchange and Teaching program started in 1987 and is a large-scale operation which in essence involves the posting to Japanese secondary schools of young (normal maximum age 35) overseas university graduates. Participants were originally exclusively from English speaking countries, USA, UK, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand, but have gradually been expanded to involve other countries and other foreign languages. These ALTs (Assistant Language Teachers) or AETs (Assistant English Teachers ) support local Japanese teachers of English through a somewhat vaguely defined concept of ‘team teaching’. In the period 1987-2001 around 60,000 individuals participated in JET and another 6,000 arrived in the summer of 2002.

The aims of the JET scheme are principally twofold, to enrich foreign (mainly English) language education and to promote ‘internationalisation’ both in terms of exposing Japanese nationals to foreign cultures and to increase the number of overseas people who understand Japan (JET review committee, 2001). Some English language specialists have expressed concerns that the “internationalist goals have been pursued at the expense of the language related functions of the program” (Wada & Cominos, 1994, p.5).

The strong points of JET can be summarised as follows:

- JET is a major and high profile initiative; McConnell (1995) describes it as “the largest initiative since World War II in the field of human and cultural exchange” (p. 76). Zitowitz (2000) reaffirms that the JET program continues to be a shining star in the Japanese public education system. The fact that virtually every public secondary school in Japan has an opportunity to see, hear and talk to a foreigner is an accomplishment not to be underestimated (McConnell, 2000). There is wide and sustained impact, because so many schools have been exposed to NS.
- The longevity of the programme is testament to a firm and sustained commitment on behalf of the Japanese government.

- There seems to be demand at the prefectural level for NS teachers. Although this may represent, to some extent, the following of a trend, it provides some idea of the popularity of the programme
- McConnell (2000) describes the overwhelmingly positive reaction of students to AETs with the benefits of a team taught class far outweighing its limitations. These positive responses seem to be largely threefold: the opportunity to hear real live conversational English which may have future practical uses; team teaching providing a break from traditional teacher-centred instruction; and the ability of a number of JETs to form meaningful relationships with students.
- The introduction of team teaching has led to change in English education in Japan through the development of conversational English and other activities which would not normally be done (McConnell, 2000). (McConnell notes however, that there is little carry over from these activities to other English lessons). On the basis of a large scale questionnaire survey about various aspects of ELT in Japan, Browne & Wada (1998) report that the overall response to team teaching was highly favourable; they conclude that “the programme has clearly had an impact on the JTEs themselves as well as their confidence level in working together with native speaker ALTs” (p.107). Gorsuch (2002) also argues that the JET scheme provides a professional development opportunity for JTEs, by helping to diversify their instructional practices and stretching their abilities to communicate in English.
- The benefits of the programme in terms of cultivating international goodwill and cross-cultural ties among individuals may far exceed the narrower goals of the programme which relate to the enhancement of English language education (McConnell, 1995).

Some of the weaknesses of the JET scheme are as follows:

- The scheme is only partially about improving English language teaching which reduces its impact at that level.
- The fact that AETs are largely untrained fresh graduates also reduces the impact of the programme in terms of foreign language education.
- The regulations prohibiting non-Japanese nationals from taking sole responsibility for teaching a class, reduces the role of the AETs and the ensuing impact and effectiveness of the scheme. (A recent recommendation suggests that if AETs have teaching qualifications in their home countries and extensive experience, they may be permitted to give lessons independently (JET review committee, 2001).
- High turnover is encouraged through regulations which make it difficult for AETs to remain in post for more than 3 years. (This policy seems to have an increasing flexibility and 4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> year JET's can be used as ‘prefectural advisers’ (JET review committee, 2001)

- Many AETs are underutilised or deployed in ineffective ways. A ‘one-shot system’ whereby an AET visits a number of schools and/or a number of different classes is generally unpopular (Scholefield, 1996). A limited role for some AETs can create the feeling that they are just a ‘human tape recorder’.
- A lot of money is spent on the scheme, one wonders if these resources could achieve more by being allocated differently.

Overall, one of the impressive features about JET is that there appears to be a genuine desire to tackle problems and improve things as far as is possible within the adopted framework. As McConnell (2000) notes:

“What impressed me most is that Japanese officials ... did not give up. One by one, they took on virtually every difficulty raised by the JET participants and wrestled with it: sometimes holding their ground, sometimes capitulating entirely, but more often than not reaching some kind of compromise”

(p.114).

From this, one may infer a general principle of educational reform that change takes time, so it is advisable to continue developing an innovation over a longer period rather than changing rapidly from one reform to another.

## NET

Native speakers of English have taught in Hong Kong schools since the 19<sup>th</sup> century, but the first formal large scale scheme was introduced from September 1987. This Expatriate English Language Teachers Pilot Scheme (EELTPS) was managed by the British Council and involved 91 (mainly British) teachers, with a broad aim of raising the standard of English of secondary school students (British Council, 1989).

Unlike JET and EPIK, the Hong Kong NS teachers are fully qualified and experienced. They invariably teach classes alone and take up duties roughly comparable to local English teachers in terms of teaching, marking and exam preparation. The main difference between them and local English teachers is that they are somewhat less likely to carry out administrative duties, such as being a class teacher where Cantonese would be useful. There is no age limit for NETs, nor stipulation as to the country of origin. Lai (1999) also mentions that a small number of ethnic Chinese NS of English are used in the scheme.

EELTPS was systematically evaluated through a variety of means, including measuring attitudes of various stakeholders and specially designed tests administered to classes taught by NS compared with control groups taught by local Chinese staff. The main external evaluator was Alan Davies of Edinburgh University. The main conclusion of this report (co-authored by Davies and British Council staff involved in the management of the scheme) was that “the EELTPS has improved English proficiency and helped change attitudes to English. It has therefore been a success” (British Council, 1989, p. 55). The report however was more

guarded on the question of cost-effectiveness of the scheme. There were perceptions (e.g. Boyle, 1997) that the scheme was not particularly successful given the amount of money which was spent on it. Boyle suggests that it would have been better if such financial resources had been utilised to provide more support and better conditions for local teachers of English. In another mainly critical article, Johnson & Tang (1993) outline a number of difficulties in the scheme: discipline problems, especially in those schools with less academically-oriented and/or less motivated students; negative reactions of local teachers to the NS in view of the threat to their self-esteem; and cross-cultural tensions when NS teachers appeared hasty in criticising the local way of doing things.

Many of the EELTPS left Hong Kong or took up alternative employment at the conclusion of their two year contracts, but a modified scheme was continued on a smaller and more low profile scale. Systematic recruitment of NS was subsequently reintroduced in 1998 after a government review of language improvement measures. A renamed Native Speaking English Teacher (NET) scheme sought, according to Storey et al., (2001) to enable NETs to enhance the teaching of English by:

1. acting as English language resource persons
2. assisting in school-based teacher development
3. helping to foster an enabling environment for students to speak English and practise their oral skills.

A research study carried out by Storey et al., (2001) revealed positive evidence for objectives 1 and 3, but less progress for objective 2. With respect to objective 1, NETs were helpful in creating an authentic English speaking environment, enhancing extra-curricular activities and raising both the image of the school and colleagues' language proficiency. Sometimes NETs were used in innovative ways e.g. in leading an English language proficiency evening course for both teachers and support staff (Education Department, 2000).

For objective 2, school cultures tended to encourage teaching in isolation and the 'foreignness' of the NET sometimes increased her isolation. There was little evidence of team-teaching between NETs and local teachers – Storey et al. also report what they describe as non-optimal use of the NET e.g. the local teacher does simultaneous translation into Cantonese with a low ability class. (This scenario also occurs in the JET scheme, McConnell, 2000).

For objective 3, the response from students was generally positive, for example, appreciation of enjoyable, less formal, more communicative lessons (Storey et al., 2001). Counter evidence included the perception from students that NNS teachers were better at preparing exam classes. Walker (2001) also reiterates this point and sees no logic in having NETs operating as exam trainers; she suggests NETs should make different contributions whilst remaining integrated with the rest of the school panel rather than operating outside of it. NETs themselves often reported difficulties when faced with very low ability students who lacked

motivation to learn through English. In such cases, an inability to use the student mother tongue was particularly disadvantageous. A self-initiated support network to try to tackle these kind of challenges was set-up (Education Department, 2000).

The Storey et al., (2001) report makes a number of useful recommendations and observations, including:

- The rationales underlying differential duty allocations of local and NET teachers should be widely discussed to achieve a consensus acceptable to both parties
- NETs contributions could be enhanced by cultural synergy through developing a genuine interest in and understanding of the host country's cultural assets, including her language and socio-cultural traditions
- In secondary schools, the effects of NETs are unlikely to be significant without a culture shift involving an orientation towards more open collaboration between teachers and less emphasis on textbooks and exam preparation
- While the NETs may be better sources of English for personal and social interaction, students should look more to local teachers for more academic and structure-based knowledge
- Evidence suggests that primary schools offer an excellent context for the successful use of NETs since in the primary school, public exam pressure is largely absent and English content involves more here-and-now and is more oriented towards social interaction.

## **PSED**

This last point relates to an interesting recent development in Hong Kong, the systematic use of NS in primary schools. One of the ways that this has been done was through an innovative two year programme named Primary School English Development (PSED) pilot project, carried out between September 2000 and August 2002. The nomenclature is itself constructive, it is denoted as a language development scheme rather than a NS scheme, thus not seeming to place NS on a pedestal. This project involved 40 primary schools in Hong Kong with a project team of 20 NETs and 20 seconded local English teachers (LETs), with both parties collaborating with school English teachers (SETs) by team teaching with them in classrooms and working with them in school-based professional development activities. The project's aims were threefold (Higginbottom, 2002):

- To develop innovative models of good practice in the teaching and learning of English
- To develop students' interest and confidence in learning English
- To promote the professional development of all participants.

Although this pilot project has only recently been completed and detailed evaluation data is not yet available, early evidence seems encouraging. Positive features appeared to be:

- Healthy collaboration through genuine team teaching between NETs and LETs
- Development of greater motivation, confidence and risk-taking amongst primary pupils
- Professional development amongst all participants, NETs, LETs and SETs.

The main limitation is that it is a pilot which is labour intensive, with two or three teachers sometimes operating simultaneously in a single classroom so it is probably not replicable on a wider scale.

An interview with the project manager for PSED, Trevor Higginbottom revealed a number of interesting themes for the management of change in such schemes. Firstly, he identified a need for a balance between pressure and support. Pressure in terms of guidelines on how the NETs and LETs should be utilised, “we were able to negotiate ground rules with the schools ... for successful use of the NET you have to have some ground rules”. Example ground rules for the PSED scheme included not teaching less than 4 periods per week with one class so that some continuity could be developed; not teaching a full teaching load so as to allow sufficient time for good planning, collaboration and reflection; and genuine partnership between NS and NNS with each learning from each other. Support was developed through workshops, professional development, advisory personnel and external consultant visits. In contrast, Higginbottom believed that the secondary NET scheme appeared to lack clear guidelines for use of the NET or systematic processes for support. A repercussion of this was that some schools were unsure how to use the NETs or used them in non-optimal ways.

Secondly, Higginbottom espoused a strong belief in team teaching, “I was absolutely convinced that the best way to use NETs is in a team-teaching system ... I picked this up in my work with the secondary NET scheme seeing NETs working in isolation and also seeing them team teaching”.

Less positively he also refers to a lack of continuity when he comments:

“I felt that what we should have done was to establish some sense of excellence in PSED to take forward into the new scheme. The continuation between the pilot and the new scheme. For example, we never had a properly extended discussion with the architects of the new scheme in this project. We should have sat down for a day and discussed what we had learnt”.

This reflects a recurring theme in the management of change in Hong Kong, a failure to learn from past experiences of educational reform. Reforms are often treated in a piecemeal fashion and frequent changes in supervisory personnel exacerbate discontinuities. With respect to secondary school native speaker schemes, there is little sense of progress since the late 1980s, and problems tend to reoccur without any evidence of a concerted attempt to tackle them. The initial move into primary schools seems positive, but as larger numbers of primary NETs (PNET)

are being introduced into schools in September 2002, it is unclear the extent to which any positive features of PSED are being incorporated into the new PNET scheme

## CONCLUSION

This paper has tried to provide a flavour of how four NS schemes in three countries have contributed to English language development and / or internationalisation. Experiences across the three schemes are varied and mixed. JET is high profile and seems to have done a good job of building on prior experiences. EPIK has a lower profile and still seems to be experiencing the kinds of teething problems which were experienced in the first decade of JET. For both these schemes, there are limitations in the impact that unqualified NS teachers can have on teachers and schools. For NETs, a high degree of training and experience is a requirement, but it seems that the scheme has difficulty in attracting and retaining sufficient quantity of teachers (Education convergence, 1999). For all three schemes, it is difficult to envisage or observe any career development for participants, except by leaving the scheme and taking a position in higher education. NS in JET and EPIK tended not stay for more than two or three years which carries negative implications for continuity and improvement. In Hong Kong, for experienced and capable NETs, one can easily envisage frustration setting in when faced by a lack of opportunity to take on the kind of leadership role for which they might be well-qualified. If a native speaker scheme is to have powerful long term impact, teachers should be encouraged and rewarded for commitment and experience and ideally, there should be opportunities for career development and progression.

In conclusion, I would like to speculate that the future of NS schemes in the school sector in Korea, Japan and Hong Kong may be in the primary sector. In each of the three countries, the development of ELT at primary level has become a point of emphasis in recent years. There is evidence from PSED and other sources that the primary school context may be a more productive environment for NS. Reasons for this include the following: the here and now context of primary school language learning; the relative absence of high stakes examinations; the receptivity of young learners towards games, role-play, drama and other activities which are perceived to be handled well by NS; young learners are also usually somewhat less reticent than adolescents in communicating in a foreign language; primary school teachers are sometimes at a lower level of English language proficiency than their secondary school counterparts so may have more to gain from interaction with NS; and primary school teachers may sometimes be less confident in their ELT professionalism so may be more receptive to external input. A focus on primary ELT may be the most productive way of utilising the available human resources.

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# What Really Happens in the English Classroom?

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## **ABSTRACT**

This paper examines the teaching of four experienced teachers of English as a Foreign language (EFL) in the secondary and undergraduate levels. They were postgraduate student teachers doing a Diploma and/or MA TEFL in a Thai university. The courses required them to teach in their own schools using Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in their teaching projects. The investigation focused on how the experienced teacher students put CLT into practice in their teaching projects, and the changes in their teaching behaviours concerning traditional teaching and communicative pedagogy. In order to enrich their understanding of language learning and teaching and to see what really happens in the classrooms, classroom observations and video recording were conducted on eight lessons, two per informants. The national syllabus of Thailand claims that CLT is being practised in Thai schools. However, it is evident in this study that the practice was different from the claim. On the basis of the data obtained, despite the fact that the student teachers had the chance to construct, reconstruct, and revise their own teaching under the training course, they found it difficult to change their teaching behaviours.

## **INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY**

### **EFL in Thai Contexts**

Many experts and researchers clearly note that the methodology employed in class as in Thailand is still traditional pedagogy (Gebhard, 1982; Maurice, 1985; Mountford, 1986; Promsiri et al., 1996; Waine, 1998; Puntakerngamorn, 1999). It emphasises traditional techniques such as translation, memorisation, repetition, and drilling. Most English lessons are mainly focused on language items, vocabulary, grammar, and reading comprehension. Teaching and learning are traditional and teacher-centred. Significantly, the educational system is influenced by examination-oriented instruction. Textbooks are, thus, the teacher's tools in preparing the learners for the examinations.

Because it is largely a monolingual country, Thailand's medium of education in all subjects and educational levels is the Thai language. Similarly, English appears to be taught through the mother tongue. In most English classes in schools, 90% of a lesson is conducted in Thai (Mountford, 1986; Williams, 1992).

Since Thai teachers are mainly responsible for foreign language teaching in schools throughout the country, the situation of sharing the same culture and mother tongue encourages schoolteachers to teach English in the mother tongue. More often than not, the lessons are limited to grammatical points and comprehension reading which require heavy explanation. The teachers feel more comfortable to do such explanation in Thai language. Some teachers strongly believe that, by doing so, the students would become clear about the target language, while some claim that the use of the mother tongue is what students require and expect (Gebhard 1982; Supervisory Unit, 1997). Because of the national university entrance exams which are seen as keys to students' future success, the students feel more secure to practise on the examination paper exercises. In addition to this, classes in Thailand are large, with 45 students at minimum. Certain classroom activities are therefore impractical and ignored by the teachers.

### **The Communicative Approach: The Reality**

The Communicative Approach to in-service secondary schoolteachers of English in Thailand was introduced in the early 1980s (Supervisory Unit, 1997), with the training of a select group of such teachers. In the meantime, various institutes in the field would provide EFL courses based on the most current Communicative Approach, introducing several new teaching methods on how to teach more efficiently.

Despite all of the attention that CLT has received from teachers, however, its effects on ELT have so far been marginal at best. In reality, it seems that their practices do not meet the demand of the national curriculum. In fact, much has been said and written about CLT not being actively practised in Thai classrooms. The traditional approach or the grammar translation method continues to dominate ELT. It seems that, during training, teachers of English are highly motivated to learn about CLT innovations; yet, they retain traditional aspects of language teaching. The situation seems to be that many practising teachers only pay some lip service to the more innovative techniques that are being developed. They are seen to embrace new buzzword techniques like information-gap, jigsaw reading, pair work and group work activities, as they come along, but few understand and use them in the classroom. CLT implementation in the classroom is, indeed, rare (Maurice, 1985), despite the fact that the learner-centred approach is preferred by the 1996 and 2001 National Core Curriculum. In practice, many classes are still following the lock-step approach (Wongsothorn et al., 1996). The role of the teachers in Thailand is found significantly as the *'transmitter of knowledge'*. It has been reported that some teacher trainers and trainees in Thailand found it hard to shift from a teacher-centred approach to a recognizably more learner-centred one (Stroupe et al., 1998).

In the area of teacher training and teacher education, teachers' behaviour is another important aspect of study. Some experts, namely, Altman (1984 cited in Thomas, 1987), Shapiro-Skrobe (1982, cited in Ghebbard et al., 1990:18), Long

(1983), and others, have discovered in their research that teachers, even with training, do not change the way they teach, but continue to follow their old pattern of teaching. Some of them simply go back to the same old traditional ways of teaching or teach the way they themselves were taught. Richards (1999) also points out that much of what occurs in campus programs is soon forgotten or discarded when teachers enter or return to schools. Freeman and Richards (1996) conclude that teachers' previous learning, knowledge, and beliefs about teaching serve as a powerful determinant of teachers' perceptions and practices, and are often resistant to change.

In this sense, I am interested in investigating how the teacher students of a postgraduate programme, who have been given the opportunity to practise CLT in their own class, apply the pedagogy into practice.

### **Purposes of The study**

It is important to realize that the focus of this study was not to evaluate the student teachers' practice according to a set of predefined criteria, not to assess the knowledge they have about teaching and learning English as a foreign language, and not about the content or structure of a particular teacher programme of any kind. Rather, it grew out of a concern to investigate teaching behaviours in the actual classroom setting with reference to the approach they were committed to. Rather the focus was on the lessons taught by four post-graduate student teachers while working on their CLT teaching projects. The study sought to explain the student teachers' teaching behaviours, and the actual practices in terms of traditional ways of teaching and communicative language teaching. The purposes of this study are as follow.

- How do the experienced student teachers in postgraduate TEFL programmes interpret and put the pedagogical methodology into practice, with regard to the communicative language teaching?
- What are the student teachers' patterns of teaching behaviours?
- Are changes in such behaviours a result of the implementation of the CLT?

### **Informants**

The informants were four female postgraduate student teachers in a TEFL programme in a state run university in Bangkok, volunteering for the study. All of them were in-service Thai teachers of English with teaching experience ranging from 7-23 years prior to attaching to the course. Their ages ranged from 29 to 44 years old. Three informants were teaching in secondary schools, and one was teaching in a college. According to the programme and their teaching projects, they were required to teach in their own schools and conduct their lessons in English.

## Data Resources

Data were collected through classroom observation and transcriptions of video recording, including interview, observation schedules, checklists, and supplementary data.

## Data Analysis: Qualitative and Quantitative Analysis

- Checklist adapted from Gebhard (1990)
- The interaction analysis categories adapted from Nunan (1990)

## 1. THE CLT IMPLEMENTATION

### Findings and Discussions

An observation of the first four structural lessons as analysed and partly shown in Figure 1, below (as well as in Appendices A, B, and C) reveals the following findings.

Among the four student teachers, there was evidence that only one teacher, T1, has made attempts to implement CLT into her lessons. In her structural lesson, it was found that the three elements of *form*, *meaning*, and *use* were covered. T1 provided the model sentences in meaningful context of spoken language with a series of visual aids projected from the computer (see Appendix A: Extract 1) and presented the target form in a mini-dialogue in the later stage. She made a gradual progression of linguistic repetition focused on *form*, moving to *meaningful-focused* activity. The students were found practising the target structure orally as cued by the pictures, both chorally and individually. The teacher's explanation was equipped with examples and situations. As found in Fig.1: T1-ST below, *display questions* (to which the teacher knows the answers) and *referential questions* (to which the teacher does not know the answer) constituted 6.19% and 7.32% of classroom talk, respectively (see category 1 and 2). The instruction given was broken down into short simple sentences, and made clear by demonstrating on OHP. Checking for understanding was performed on the three areas of structural concept check, the meaning check, and checking students' understanding. The teacher also made a small talk related to the target form and made jokes and teased the students in a relaxed informal chat. T1 made 10.88% of her speech modification, and 10.32% of her attempts in negotiating meaning with her students (category 6 and 11). The analysis reveals her attempt in maximising the student contact and use of the language through varied activities. Through a bingo game, students had their opportunity to *use the form meaningfully* with their friends by moving around the class and had an equal contribution in interaction individually. In the later stage, they used the target language on their own, reporting their work in front of the class. The students, in short, demonstrated their responsibility over their own learning.

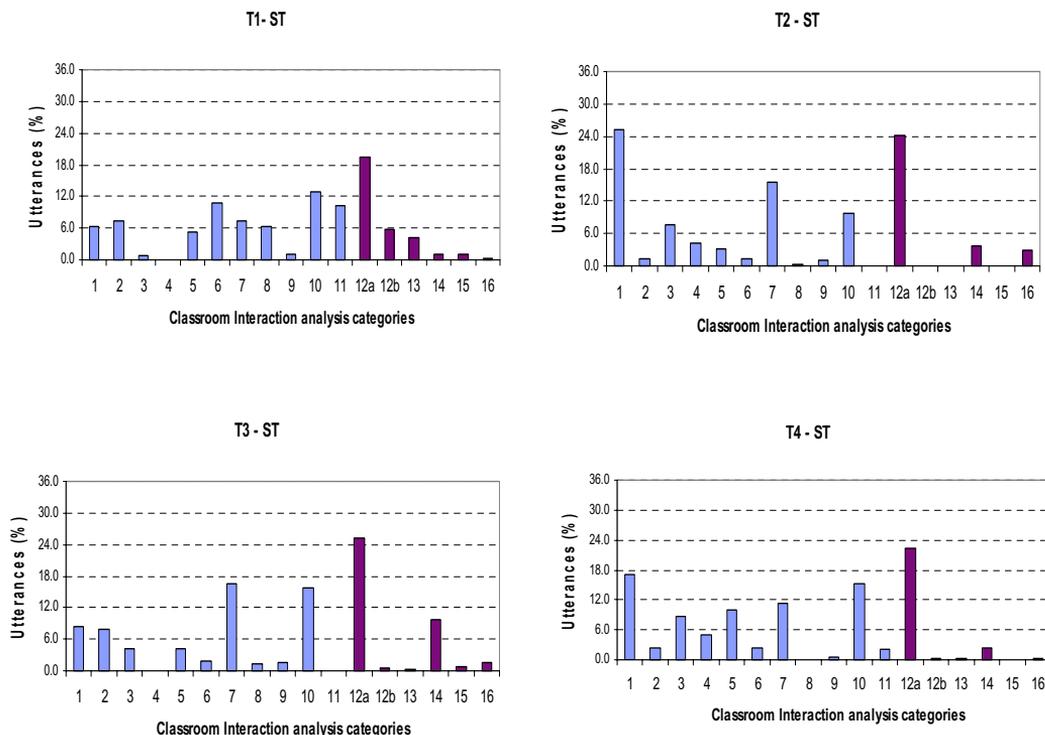
On the other hand, while the other three informants meant to practise CLT as well, observations show some problematic application of the teaching methodology. In T2's structural lesson, the great concern was placed on lexis, phonological practice, and form focus. There was no demonstration of how to construct the passive form, and when to use them to convey meaning (see Appendix A: Extract 2). The transferring of the target structure into communicative contexts was not found. The teaching techniques employed by T2 were *giving instruction* at 15.42% (Fig.1: T2-ST- category7); aided by a great number of *display questions* at 25.23% of classroom talk, and *explanation* as in categories 4, 5 and 6 at the total of 14.96%. The use of *referential questions* and *teacher's modification* was found to be low at 1.4% each. The teacher's attempt at *negotiating meaning* with the students was not found. In practising the new structure, the students were assigned to work on the exercise, aided by the teacher's explanation. The students had no opportunity to use the target language on their own. They simply supplied minimal responses to the teacher's questions (category 12a). Students' *extended response* in a complete sentence or idea and their *initiation* were not found. Casual chat and rapport made by the teacher were also not practised.

T3 presented the target structure orally, aided by simple drawings. However, it was found that the *form* and *meaning* of the model sentences presented were not consistent with the contexts (see Appendix A: Extract 3). The practice of the target structure, as well as the transition of the new structure from the controlled practice to production, was not found. The students were assigned to do group work while, in fact, it turned out to be an individual seatwork. With some limitation of the task and activity design, the students were not practising the target language, nor use the language to communicate in any sense. They simply took turns reading out the reproduction of the model sentences to the class. The numerical analysis reveals that T3 employed *display questions* and *referential questions* at 8.48% and 7.88%, respectively (Fig.1: T3-ST- category1 and 2). T3 gave instruction as high as 16.67%, while *explanation* on three different areas as shown in category 3, 4, and 5 was at 8.48%. Her speech *modification* was made at 1.82%. T3's attempt in *negotiating meaning* with her students was not found. On the other hand, her students made many short responses at 25.10% (category 12a). The *extended responses* or complete ideas as well as their *turn initiation* were not found among them.

T4, on the other hand, despite teaching in the undergraduate student level, was found to have explained every rule of the comparative adjectives and pointed them out (see Appendix A: Extract 4). Her lesson was based on lecture mode and forced elicitation. *Display questions* were high as 17.09%, while *referential questions* were at 2.26% (Fig.1: T4-ST- category1 and 2). On the other hand, her students made a remarkably high frequency of *minimal responses* at 22.36% of the classroom talk time (category 12a). An *extended response* in a complete sentence occurred at 0.25%. The teacher's *modification* and attempt *negotiating meaning* with her students were found at 2.26% and 2.01%, respectively. Contrary to her

well-written lesson plan, the students did not practise the target language verbally as stated. They were involved in some exercises as imposed by the coursebook, and an assignment of making similar sentences as homework.

FIGURE 1. TEACHER - STUDENT INTERACTION IN STRUCTURAL CLASSES



### Patterns of Classroom Communication: IRF Formats

Classroom communication in these lesson, except for T1 where it was much less frequently used, was mostly teacher-fronted eliciting of the Initiation-Response-Feedback/Evaluation (IRF/E) typical format, where the teacher did all the initiating, the students responded, and the teacher followed up or gave feedback. There were predominant instances of classroom transaction, were mostly captured in the classrooms of the three informants, T2, T3, and T4. While it is evident that T1 also made use of classroom transaction characterised by the IRF/E format, other patterns of classroom communication were, also, found. At certain stages of teaching, where the students' initiation and involvement in interaction with the teacher and other learners occurred, patterns of communication characterized as teacher-student, student-teacher and student-student interaction were observed.

## The Limited Opportunity for the Students to Use the Language

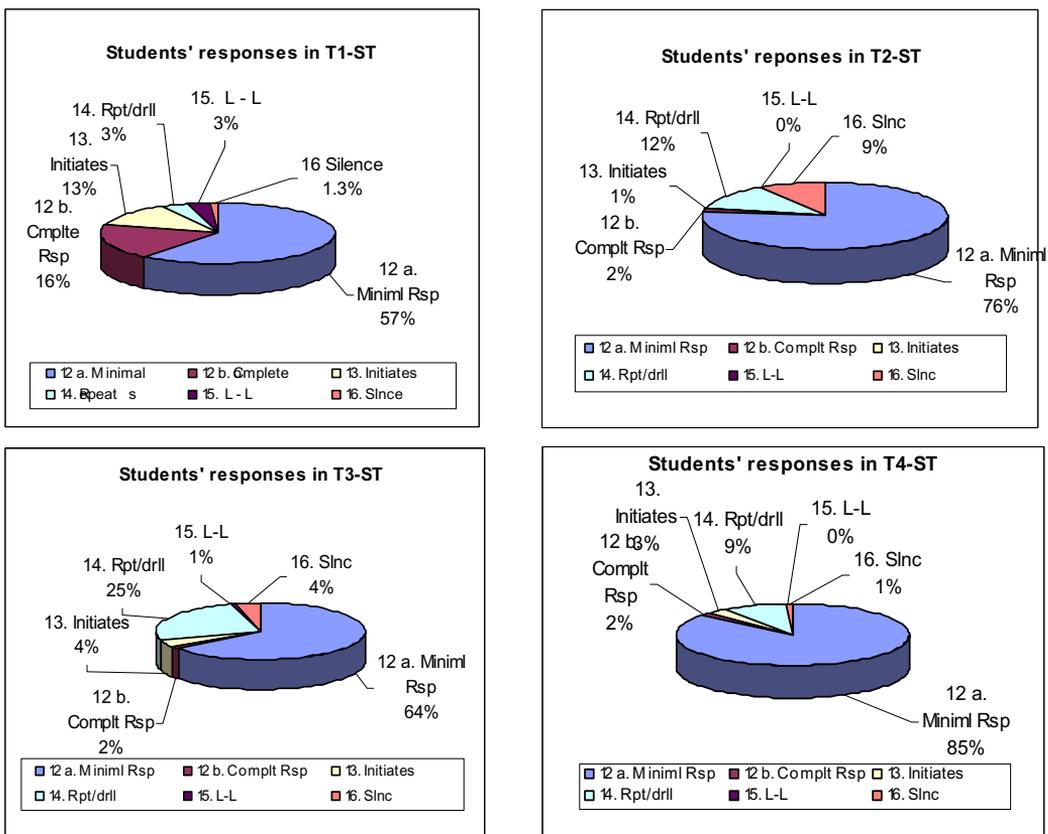
Figure 2 below shows student talk time. The results reveal that a great amount of *minimal responses* was taken up in most of the classes, ranging from 57% of the student talk time in T1's classroom to 88% in T4's classroom. Only T1's students were found contributing indicated observed. It is worth noting that the students' *negotiation of meaning* and *turn taking* took place only in T1's class (category 13), while none occurred in the other three informants' classes. Also, they engaged in much more classroom interaction than the other three classes, despite the fact that the crucial part of individual student-student interaction at certain stages (i.e. the whole class activity using the target form through the language game). In addition to giving minimal responses to the teacher, their turn taking also took various kinds, e.g., making extended responses, negotiating meaning with the teacher, self-selecting, and volunteering in reporting their work in front of the class. On the other hand, the students in the other three classes did not carry out any other activities nor contribute any turns other than making minimal responses. The opportunity for the students to talk and use the language in communication was not found. They did not reformulate utterances related to the new language items presented, nor did they produce their own language to communicate with the teachers and classmates. To some extent, thus, only students in T1's class could communicate through the use of the language, and, therefore, had opportunity to communicate.

At this point, it may be argued that the different situations and results as found in classrooms of T2, T3, T4, and T1 may be due to various reasons; 1) the teachers' questions, 2) turn allocation, 3) classroom activities, and 4) the culture of teaching and learning resulting from socio-cultural background. First of all, the type of questions that the teacher asked affected the kind of responses that the students produced (Tsui, 1995). As shown in the four extracts in Appendix A, *display questions*, mostly yes-no questions, were mainly employed in T2, T3, and T4. Although some *referential questions* were found in T3's lesson, again, they were mostly the same type of yes-no questions. Such questions offered limited choices for the students to respond. Classroom interaction was, therefore, tightly controlled. However, referential questions, which have been suggested as being able to enhance language acquisition in that they are integral to classroom interaction and students' negotiation of meaning (see Brock, 1986; Nunan, 1989; Tsui, 1995) were found in T1. To some extent, these questions encouraged her students to negotiate meaning with the teacher.

Secondly, the ways the teachers cast the questions and allocate turns in the classroom can also encourage or discourage the students' classroom interaction. It was evident that the three informants, T2, T3, and T4 mostly threw them open to the whole class. T2's 106 turns of display questions were group elicitation, and 6 turns were cast to only one student in the front. T3's 24 display questions were delivered to the whole class, and four turns to two students, while all referential questions were thrown open. T4 did not allocate any turn to individuals, when she

made all 68 turns of display questions and 9 referential questions. The observation and analysis reveal that little attention was paid by the three informants. Only a few students were clearly in contact with the lesson, while the majority remained quiet. On the contrary, despite teaching a large class, T1's attention was spread to many students. It was found that within 39 referential questions, 28 were cast to the whole, and 11 were nominated to eleven students. Also, 26 of display questions were for the entire class and 7 were cast to individuals. This action increased the students' involvement and also offered the opportunity to her students to use the language. More importantly, it made them realize that they had contributed to the lesson.

FIGURE 2. STUDENTS' RESPONSES IN STRUCTURAL LESSONS IN FOUR CLASSROOMS



Thirdly, the classroom activities imposed on the students' practice could also enhance the classroom interaction and the students' involvement. In FL learning, the means for providing learners with opportunity to use the language classroom is through various kinds of communicative activity (Littlewood, 1981). In getting

the students to practise the target language, it is the teacher who creates a situation and sets an activity in motion, while the learners themselves are responsible for conducting the interaction to its conclusion. As seen above, only T1 employed different kinds of activities in her class, which involved her students to interact with the teachers and peers verbally at different stages. On the contrary, the other three informants seemed not to provide any kind of different activities other than exercises as in T2 and T4's classrooms. T3 assigned a group work, making sentences, but it turned out to be individual seatwork. Therefore, their students had no opportunity to construct verbal interaction of any kind.

Lastly, while it is not this paper's purpose to engage with this aspect as it requires discussion beyond space here can provide, we must also note that the culture of teaching and learning in Thai school contexts, their linguistic environments, and the socio-cultural background are also crucial variables to classroom interaction.

## 2. THE PATTERNS OF TEACHING BEHAVIOURS AND THE EVIDENCE OF CHANGES

In this section, I investigate the patterns of the student teachers' teaching behaviours and the changes as they emerged during classroom observations. To discover the changes in the student teachers' teaching behaviour, an analysis is conducted on all eight lessons observed through the checklist adapted from Gebhard's (1990:122). The four areas of investigation of the teaching behaviours are shown in column A, which are 1) setting up and carrying out lesson, 2) use of classroom space, 3) selection of content, and 4) treatment of students' language errors (see Appendix C). Modification to Gebhard's findings include the new entries on the student teachers' teaching behaviours as they emerged during practicum as shown, which seen as pieces of evidence on whether the student teachers changed their teaching behaviour or not.

From the interview, all the teachers noted that they had practised grammar translation or traditional methodology before attending the TEFL course, which is represented by '*Behaviour before the practicum*' or the previous teaching behaviours before attending the course. Therefore, all the four student teachers were on the same ground of teaching behaviours. The teaching behaviours that emerged were thus marked by the category of '*Behaviour during teaching practice*'. These marked behaviours were the evidence of changes found at practice. The classroom actions in the four areas as they emerged could reflect how the student teachers applied and put CLT into practice and revealed the evidence or lack of evidence of moving themselves away from their previous teaching behaviours towards CLT.

### Findings and Discussions: Teaching Behaviours and Evidence of Changes

There is strong evidence that only T1 changed aspects of her teaching behaviour dramatically. In setting up and carrying out a lesson, it is evident that she applied some communicative activities, a bingo game in her structural lesson and

a jigsaw reading activity in her reading lesson, where the students did the individual and collaborative work. The teacher-centred lecture was found at certain stages of the presentation of the new structure, giving instruction, and demonstrating the work on task in both of her lessons. Teacher dominance became less at the later stages, and faded away in her reading lesson. Regarding giving instruction, T1 demonstrated how to work on each format of the tasks, and checked the students' understanding. In the second area of the use of classroom space, the front and the back space was taken up when the students were to move around practising the structure, and to seek for different information in a jigsaw-reading activity. The students were seated face-to-face at their pair work, sharing information. The space in front of the class was taken up at the last stage in reporting their work. Obviously, the students were moved away from their seats, while the teacher also moved around, monitoring. In the area of selection of content, it was found that the study of language continued in both of her lessons, which were linked to real life content (e.g. asking about places they visited verbally, planning and writing an itinerary, writing a passage about the place they visited). The error treatment was treated explicitly at the controlled practice, and implicitly when they were in the flow of negotiating meaning.

The other three appeared not to change much of their teaching behaviours towards CLT pedagogy. The practice of pair- and group-work was not found, despite the fact that it was specified in T2 and T3's lesson plan. The use of classroom space was not found fully practised. All students were firmly glued to their seats, while the teachers were always in the front of the class. In the area of the selection of content, the focus was placed on vocabulary, form, and content, as well as pattern reciting. Meaning-oriented activities were not found. Regarding the error treatment of the students' use of the language, it is due to the fact that T2 and T4's students had no opportunity to produce the language on their own; as a result, the students' errors and the teachers' treatment of their errors were, therefore, not found. T3 practised her treatments as in column 2, which were unchanged.

In sum, it is obvious that only one student teacher marked a clear move towards CLT and changed her teaching behaviours in positive manners, especially for her attempt in minimizing the teacher talk in her reading lesson and maximizing the students' talk time. Her practice reflects her acknowledgement of the significant accounts of CLT of what teaching and learning should be like. On the other hand, the other three student teachers seem not to change. They put their knowledge into practice as a result partly of their personal perception and their own experiences and beliefs in ELT, which reveal the CLT pedagogical misconception.

## DISCUSSION

In this paper, the findings of the study reveal that only one informant among four managed to change her teaching behaviours, while most of them did not. In fact, these experienced student teachers had opportunities to change their teach-

ing behaviours during the practicum. Before the teaching project, they were provided with teaching seminars, classroom observation, micro-teaching, the teaching practice (TP) at a pilot school, and supervisory discussion, coupled with a reflexive process where the student teachers reflected their teaching of self and group in verbal and written form (diary). These seemed to afford them the chance for some change. T1, who had fewer difficulties in shifting herself from a teacher-centred approach to a recognizably more learner-centred one, had made a clear change and administered her lessons more effectively, whereas the others were less likely to do so.

The possibilities for her changes could be explained that, first of all, T1 herself considered her previous aspects of teaching as needing changes. It was evident from the self-reflection after the observation and the self-evaluation or lesson report that she wanted to minimize her talk and experiment on different ways of teaching reading. Instead of getting her students to read texts and answer accompanying questions, she employed a jigsaw-reading activity and kept her talk and control at the minimum. This indicates her awareness of her teaching problems and the realisation of the needs for change. The self-realisation on the need to be change is the starting point for a teacher to develop one's strategies and teaching skills. It was also found that T1 had some kind of analytical thinking as she could identify the problems which occurred in her lessons and the remedies for the next lesson. This illustrates her understanding about the different components and dimensions of teaching.

On the other hand, through their self-reflection and self-evaluation reports, the other three informants did not seem to realise the issues and the points for change. The possible explanation for this could be that they were less reflective at seminars and during the course, and also shared little of their teaching problems and experience with peers and supervisors. The second possibility is that the established practice within the TEFL program was not sufficient to offer changes to some participants. Lastly, it could also be that the informants may have had tacit beliefs about teaching and learning language, which emerged from a complex of social and individual influences. These include their experience as a pupil, their development of craft knowledge through teaching experience, personality preferences, public educational theories acquired from training or from reading (Lockhart, 1994), the new perception of pedagogy may be threatening for practice. In this sense, the success of an innovation also depends on the personality and qualities of individual teachers.

As noted by Richards and Lockhart (1996), the teachers themselves are in the best position to examine their own teaching. I am suggesting that the teachers make self-enquiry of their own teaching. If the difficulty for them stems from unfamiliarity with the new paradigm, rather than anything we describe as resistance to innovation, then it would help if the course instructors provide them with some kinds of investigative project or action research or alike.

To this issue, the investigative project to reprocess a teacher's own teaching behaviours and discussion with the supervisor who observes the lessons could be beneficial. As pointed out by Gebhard (1990), multiple activities and interactions afford teachers chances for teaching development. The more activities are made available for them, the more steps they make towards an understanding of their teaching behaviours and of themselves as teachers. In exploring their teaching behaviours, they could observe their own teaching from audio or video recording, study similar or different issues in their implementation, discuss the teaching experience with peers, and analyze alternative ways to teach. However, it could be true that some student teachers are blocked from getting much out of the observation and having no different perspectives. The element of sharing or collaboration with peers or colleagues could offer the possibility of extending one's insights about oneself as teacher. The process could allow them to develop awareness of the differing perspectives that individuals may have on the same teaching events and see teaching differently on how a lesson can be taught. Consequently, they would gain an understanding of themselves and their teaching and realize that there are unlimited ways to teach.

Another proposal to be made here is to develop analytical skills among the student teachers. The case can also be made for including a research component in the teacher program to refine certain skills that underlie continuing professional growth beyond the practicum. Research experience helps to build a foundation for analytical skills (Pennington, 1990). An extension to the practicum, a research course on teaching and learning provided could offer them an opportunity to conduct detailed observations of teaching and learning behaviours, both of others and of self, analyzing the data gathered, and put the analysis into practice. The skills for analyzing teaching performance from their actual practice could allow the experienced student teachers to process their teaching, and subsequently make alteration of their teaching behaviours. Also, it benefits in a direct way from learning how to conduct research on the behaviour of students and teachers in classroom (Long and Crooks, 1986; Pennington, 1990, Gebhard et al., 1990).

Due to the limitation of space, I have placed my focus only on aspects of pedagogical practice and the teachers' teaching behaviours, and not on the social and educational process that accompanies CLT as well. The feasibility of proposals for change in teacher performance should also take the real constraints of the teaching context into account. The recurrent problems that the teachers or the student teachers face, while teaching in the real settings, have to deal with unmanageable problems, e.g., large class, inadequate coursebook and teaching materials, pressure of formal examinations, unwell-planned syllabus etc., some of which are beyond their own control. A discussion of these constraints will be the subject of another separate paper.

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**APPENDIX A. EXTRACTS OF PRESENTING THE STRUCTURAL  
LESSONS BY THE FOUR INFORMANTS**

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**Turn**

- 1 T: I would like to use the pictures on the computer to show everyone because I ... ah... I would show you about my travelling. Do you like travelling?
- 2 Ss: Yes.
- 3 T: I ... do. So I'll show you places which I went last year. Could you ... somebody helps me to turn off the light, please?... [*presents the first picture of the sunflower plantation on the screen*]... OK... Look at this. Do you know this place?
- 4 Ss: Yes.
- 5 T: What do you call this place?
- 6 Ss: Sunflowers.
- 7 T: I mean the place. What do you call this place?
- 8 Ss: Sunflowers
- 9 T: The place... the place... Garden? Somebody says 'garden' ... [*looks at the student in the front row to the left*]... I have been there twice. I have been there twice. It's called 'ทุ่งทานตะวัน' /thũnthaantawan/ ...*the sunflower plantation*] Do you know that?
- 10 Ss: Yes.
- 11 T: Where is it?
- 12 Ss: Lopburi
- 13 T: Lopburi Have you ever been there?
- 14 Ss: ... [*mixed answers*] ... Yes...No...
- 15 T: Somebody says 'yes', somebody says 'no'. OK, I have been there twice. I went there last month. It's very beautiful... [*presents the second picture of the tribal people on the screen.*]... What's that?
- 16 Ss: Mae Hong son... [*a province to the North*] ...
- 17 T: Look at the people who sit on the row. What do you call that?
- 18 Ss: /kàriɛŋ/ ... [*Karens*]...
- 19 T: /kàriɛŋ/ ... [*Karens*]... Only /kàriɛŋ/? Look at their necks.
- 20 Ss: [*in Thai*]... karieng khoryaaw ... [*The Long necked Karens*]...
- 21 T: [*repeats in Thai*] ... karieng khoryaaw... karieng khoryaaw... The Long necked /kàriɛŋ/ OK, I have seen them at Mae Hong Son Have you ever seen them?
- 22 Ss: Yes/No... [*mixing*] ...
- 23 T: Somebody says yes, somebody says no. OK... good... [*clicks 3rd picture*]... What's that?
- 24 Ss: táláat náam ... [*Floating market*]...
- 25 T: Floating market, floating market. In Thai you say ...
- 26 Ss: táláat náam
- 27 T: táláat náam ... floating market. I have been there many times. Have you ever been there?
- 28 Ss: No.

- 29 T: No? You stay in Bangkok near ... ah ... floating market, but you have never been there... Here next! ... *[presents the fourth picture]* ... What's that?
- 30 Ss: Doysuthep ... *[a temple in Chiang Mai]* ...
- 31 T: Doysuthep! Where is it?
- 32 Ss: Chaingmai ... *[a province to the north of Thailand]* ...
- 33 T: In ...? ... *[waits for the answer]* ...
- 34 Ss: Chaingmai
- 35 T: In Chaingmai, in Chaingmai . Have you ever been there?
- 36 Ss: Yes/ no...
- 37 T: Yes... somebody says 'yes', somebody says 'no'. Natha... *[looks around for the student called Natha.]* ... Where are you Natha? Have you ever been there?
- 38 N: No.
- 39 T: No? Would you like to go there?
- 40 N: Yes, I ... um ..I would like... I would like to go there.
- 41 T: Ah... Orn ... Oracha ... *[reads out the name from the name list. Oracha puts her hand up to answer her calling]* ... Have you ever been there?
- 42 Or: Yes.
- 43 T: How many times have you ever been there?
- 44 Or: One.
- 45 T: Just one. Do you like it?
- 46 Or: Yes.
- 47 T: ... *[presents the 5<sup>th</sup> picture on the screen.]* ... Yes, OK... and next... what's that?
- 48 Ss: Waterfall

### Extract 2 (T2-ST): Structural Presentation: Passive Voice

After giving a lengthy lead-in and elicitation as well as full explanation of the map on the worksheet T2 presents the target structure of passive voice.

#### Turn

- 93 T: It's ... *[writes]* ... Southeast! ... *[looks at the W/S for a while]* Look at the sheet! Number1... number1 *[writes 'The grapes are cultivated in the farm.'* on the B/B] ... Everybody! Please answer me. What is the subject? What is the subject?
- 94 MS2: ... *[inaudible]* ...
- 95 T: Hah?
- 96 MS2: ... *[inaudible]* ...
- 97 T: Louder, please. You... please come here. Please... come here and you underline the subject.
- 98 MS2: ... *[comes to the front]* ...
- 99 T: Underline the subject. Underline the subject.

- 100 T: ... *[MS2 turns round and asks the T in Thai. T explains to him softly and points at the subject of the sentence]* ... OK...OK...
- 101 MS2: ... *[underlines the subject and the object]*...
- 102 T: Subject... subject only... only subject! Only subject! Only subject!
- 103 BS2: ... *[erases the lines under some other words]*...
- 104 T: Thank you! ... Anuwat... Anuwat... Are you sure? Are you sure?
- 105 BS2: Yes.
- 106 T: Very good! Please clap your hands for him.
- 107 Ss: ... *[hands clapping]*...
- 108 T: It's ... please... uh... before ... grapes ... the grapes ... *[points back to the sentence on the B/B]*... Do you know the grapes? ... *[back to her desk, searching for a picture and shows it to the class]*... The grapes... Do you know? What does it mean the grapes? You know? What... grapes? What is it?
- 109 Ss: ๑๒๓ .../ʔaŋùn/ ... ๑๒๓ /ʔaŋùn/ ... ๑๒๓ .../ʔaŋùn/
- 110 T: The grapes... What is it?
- 111 Ss: ๑๒๓ ... /ʔaŋùn/
- 112 T: ... *[nods]*... That's good! That's good! ... *[reads her note for a short while, then point to the blackboard]*... You know? ... *[reads her note again, then points]*... This...this is the subject... the subject, you know? ... Ah... this is passive form... ahh... This is passive for ... *[in Thai]* *[May I speak in Thai?]*... The grape is the subject... *[inThai]*... *[The subject is the doer, isn't it? Isn't it?]*
- 113 S1: /châi / *[yes]*
- 114 T: Very good! In passive form... in passive form... we don't need to know... we don't need to know the subject... the subject... do that... the subject do the action. Do you understand? This is... *[points]*... the subject of passive voice. This subject... not... not do this. ... *[points at the verb]*... Do you understand?
- 115 Ss: Yes
- 116 T: ... *[underlines verb phrase]*... You look at your sheet. Number1... number1 ... uh... You look at your... order of the form... *[reads out]*... Make sentences in passive forms with the first... *[inaudible]*... Can you... can you read it? Can you read it? G-R-A-P-E-S ... Hah?
- 117 Ss: Grapes
- 118 T: Grapes! ... verb... verb... cul... cultivate! Grapes cultivate... uh... you... *[looks at her W/S for a while]*... You look... you make the sentence. You make the sentence. Why... uh... you this... with this... uh... with this the region... with the region on the map... *[moves her hand around the map]*... You understand? You... understand? For example... number1... *[points to the blackboard]*... the...
- 119 Ss: The grapes
- 120 T: The grapes ... *[points]*... the grapes is plural... plural... The grapes are plural ... *[points at 'are']*...
- 121 Ss: Are
- 122 T: ... *[nods and points at 'cultivated']*... are...

- 123 Ss: Cultivate  
 124 T/Ss: {Cultivate in the ...  
 125 Ss: Farm.  
 126 T: ...[nods]... You can choose. You can choose. You can choose in your sheet... [points at the W/S]... grapes... You... you... you... look at the symbol of grape. You look at the symbol of grape... [draws a symbol of grapes on the map.]... Do you understand? You understand? Next! Number2... number2... sheep... you know sheep?  
 127 Ss: Yes...yes...

**Extract 3 (T 3 –ST) Presenting Structure: The Present Perfect**

**Turn**

- 1 T: Look at this and listen! I've... New Year's Day, during New Year's Day, I've been to Pukradueng. I've been to Pukradueng several times. I've climbed the mountain. I've climbed the mountain. I've met a lot of people there. It has a cold weather on that date. So I put sweater on to make warm. And I never had shower when I was there, OK? Have you ever been there?  
 2 Ss: Yes.  
 3 T: Have you ever been there?  
 4 Ss: No.  
 5 T: Who... who... have been there? Who have never been Pukradueng? Yes? And who has never been there?... Oh! Never mind, never mind ... OK, listen continue... ah... yes, look at this picture... [shows a stick figure of a boy hitting a ball] ... I've played volleyball several times. I've played volleyball several times. Have you ever played volleyball?  
 6 Ss: Yes.  
 7 T: Yes... Yes, I have. Who... who has never played volleyball?  
 8 Ss: No, nobody.  
 9 T: Good! ... [looks at her note on the podium] ... and ... uh... Have you ever worn... [won/researcher] ... a competition?  
 10 MS1: Yes  
 11 T: ... [shows the same picture of a boy hitting a ball in her hands] ... Competition?  
 12 Ss: Yes.  
 13 T: Yes ... [points at the same picture] ... competition! Have you ever worn? ... [won]..  
 14 Ss: Yes

- 15 T: Yes, very good. OK, next... and this ... *[shows word on a piece of A4 paper read as 'papaya salad']*... Uhh... I like Papaya Salad ... *[glances at the note]*... I have had it three dishes a day. And ... have you ever had papaya salad?
- 16 Ss: Yes
- 17 T: Yes, I... Yes, I have.
- 18 Ss: ...*[laugh]*..
- 19 T: Good!... OK... *[shows the same piece of paper with papaya salad written on]*... OK, please ans... answer me again... Have you ever had papaya salad?
- 20 MS1: Yes, I have.
- 21 T: Yes, I have! OK. ... *[writes the question 'Have you ever had papaya salad?' on the W/B and repeats the words all through]* ... Have-you-ever- had-papaya-salad? Answer... answer me again. Yes or no
- 22 Ss: Yes, I have.
- 23 T: Yes, I have... *[writes the answer under the question]*... or I have had papaya salad, ... right?... *[adds the full form of answering on the W/B]* ... I have had papaya salad.... *[A new student comes in]*... And, answer me again ... *[shows the picture of a boy hitting a ball]*... Have you ever played volleyball?
- 24 Ss: Yes, I have.
- 25 T: Yes, I have ... *[writes as well as and repeats it along]* 'Have you ever played volleyball?' ... OK, answer again. Yes?
- 26 Ss: Yes, I have.

\_\_\_\_\_ **The teacher repeats the same cycle.** \_\_\_\_\_

- 75 T: There are two parts, verb to have and past participle verb, right? OK ... we call present perfect tense... *[writes 'Present perfect tense' on top of those sentences]*... And we use it to talk about experience in the ... in the ...
- 76 MS: New Year
- 77 T: ...*[raises her eyebrows and waits]*...
- 78 FS1: Past
- 79 T: ...*[nods]*... past
- 80 MS1: Oh, really?
- 81 T: In the past... We talk about experience or thing that you've done already in the past... right? Yes?
- 82 Ss: Yes

**Extract 4: (T4-ST): The Comparative Adjective**

T4 arranges the post-listening task as the presentation of structure stated in the lesson goal. She draws a table of comparison between the 'first computer' and 'computer today', with four different columns of speed, size, price, and weight on the board, and elicits one adjective at a time from her students and put it in to the slot.

**Turns**

- 126 T: Look at your sheet. OK, the first computer – what about the 'speed', fast or slow?
- 127 Ss: Slow
- 128 T: ... [*writes 'slow' in the slot.*] ... and for the first computer ...
- 129 Ss: fast
- 130 T: ... [*adds 'fast' into the slot*]... and then the 'size', the first computer...
- 131 Ss: big
- 132 T: OK, very very ...
- 133 Ss: big
- 134 T: And for 'computers today'
- 135 Ss: Small
- 136 T: Yes, small... [*writes 'small'*] ... or not big, some small or some not very big, understand? ... [*pauses for a short while*] ... And price, how much? The first computer said 'It cost \$5000,000.' That means ...
- 137 Ss: Expensive
- 138 T: ... [*adds 'expensive' in the price column*] ... or very expensive, OK. And computer today ... very very expensive?
- 139 Ss: No
- 140 T: Some cheap and that means not expensive. ... [*writes 'cheap' in the slot*] ... and weight... Those computers are smaller than a house. That means very...
- 141 Ss: Heavy
- 142 T: Heavy!... very heavy.... [*writes 'very heavy' in the column*]... And computer today, heavy or not?
- 143 Ss: Not
- 144 T: Not ...
- 145 Ss: Not heavy
- 146 T: Not... not very heavy... [*writes in the column*] ... or for maybe, you know notebook... computer notebook... That's not heavy. You can say light ... [*adds 'light' into the list*] ... Light opposite to the word 'heavy' ... [*makes face of carrying heavy stuffs*] ... - light! Maybe you can lift it. ... This is the difference from the first computer and computers today. I would like to make a sentence to describe about these. OK, look at ... [*inaudible*] ... I would like to write the sentences for tell about speed. I would like to make a sentence about the first computer, comparing with computers today. That means I will tell you about the first computer... [*writes 'the first computer on the W/B*]... The first computer ... [*inaudible*] ... look at the speed, slow or fast?
- 147 Ss: Slow

- 148 T Slow! ... computer today is ...
- 149 Ss/T {Fast
- 150 T Fast!...That means first computer...was...slower...than...computers today  
*...[writes the first sentence while talking with the students]...The first computer was slower than computers today...[writes the second sentence and reads it along.]... And look at the size. I can write the sentences.*
- 151 T/Ss {The first computer was ...*[points to the comparison on the W/B and writes while repeating it through]*
- 152 Ss bigger than
- 153 T Very big but computers ...today...
- 154 Ss *...[about to say something]....*
- 155 T small ...OK! You can write ... *[points at the first part of the sentence on the W/B and continues saying ] ...was bigger than computer today...[completes the second sentence on the W/B and reads out]... The first computer was bigger than computers today. ... [writes the first half of the third sentence] ...And for the price... I can write or I can say ... The first computer was ... *[looks back at the students] ...**
- 156 T/Ss {more expensive.....
- 157 T *...[nods and speaks out ] ... expensive and computers today not expensive. That means the first computer was more expensive than the computer today. ...And for... 'weight', I can say... *[writes along] ... The first computer... [To the class] ...heavy or not?**
- 158 Ss heavy
- 159 T Heavy, very heavy. But computer today not very heavy. We can lift it, OK...  
*[back to the unfinished sentence and completes the second half] ...That means ...The first computer was...*
- 160 Ss heavier

\_\_\_\_\_ [The same cycles are repeated up to turn 193] \_\_\_\_\_

- 194 T ... And today, we will learn the form for comparative adjective. You can make comparative adjective by this clue ... by this clue.... *[points to the sentences on the W/B]... Look at the first one! If for normal adjective, when you would like to make comparative adjective, you can put ...*
- 195 Ss -E-R
- 196 T -er , or add '-er' at the end of that adjective like this .. 'slow' and 'slower'. But for some adjectives that end with 'e', for example, 'save', no need to put 'r' again. You can put ... Oh! Sorry, no need to put '-er', you can put only 'r' at the end of adjective. It will be ...
- 197 Ss saver
- 198 T 'saver'. That the first clue... *[points to samples on the W/B...]* And look at the sentences, that the same? NO!
- 199 Ss ...no

- 200 T: For some adjectives that you pronounce only one - that means 'big' 'fat' something like this, pronounce only one time, one *syllabus* [*syllable-researcher*], you have to add the last letter or double the last letter, and then put '-er'. That 'big'... [*circles around 'bigger'*]..., you have to put 'g' and add '-er'. And look at this one ... [*points to 'expensive'*]... *EXPENSIVER?* NO! For ...
- 201 Ss: Three syllables
- 202 T: Yes. You have to put 'more' in front of that adjective, right? You make comparative adjective. Can you give me some of the examples for the three *syllabus*? ... 'expensive' - can you think some words like this?
- 203 Ss: beautiful ... beautiful ...

## APPENDIX B. THE PRACTICE OF THE FOUR INFORMANTS IN STRUCTURAL LESSONS

### Presenting Structure

	Classroom activities in structural classes	T1	T2	T3	T4
1	Pre-teaches vocabulary		✓		✓
2	Gets SS to repeats words (pronunciation focus)		✓		
3	Gets SS to give examples, as well as to do different tasks relating to the topic and target structure, which were all designed by the commercial coursebook				✓
4	Presents models in the context of spoken language with a series of visuals.	✓			
5	Present models orally with simple drawing on A 4size paper			✓	
6	Writes the model sentences on BB aided by explanation.		✓	✓	✓
7	Presents the language items directly in written language and points it out to the students.		✓		✓
8	Presents the target form on OHP in mini dialogue	✓			
9	Gives models and asks the class to read out	✓	✓	✓	?
10	Conveys meaning through the visuals combining with the context	✓		✓	
11	Illustrates the explanation with several examples	✓			
12	Gets SS to exchange with the teacher	✓			
13	Gets SS to summarize the form with the help of the teacher	✓			
14	Gives models and asks the class to read out	✓	✓	✓	?
15	Checks meaning & concept of the structure	✓			
16	Elicits how the structure was formed.	✓			
17	Highlight the form	✓	✓	✓	✓
18	Gives instruction and check their understanding clearly	✓	?	?	
19	Explains the rules and how the structure is formed	✓	✓	✓	✓
20	Employs many display questions and lectures		✓		✓
21	Relating casual chat to the target form	✓			
22	Rapport & small talk	✓			✓

### Controlled - Practice

23	Gets SS to practise using the target structure orally after the presentation, cued by the pictures from the computer	✓			
24	Gets the students to practise in chorus	✓			
25	Nominates a student from each group to read out the target structure			✓	
26	Gets SS to use the language through a game	✓			
27	Gets the students to practise in different skills	✓			
28	Gets SS to move around, asking and answering among themselves in a whole-class activity	✓			
29	Gets SS to do pair- work / group work			*	
30	Gets SS to do whole-class activity (S-S interaction in a game of bingo)	✓		*	
31	Gets SS to work on an exercise/ exercises		*		
32	Gets SS to read out of the exercise/ task			✓	
33	Monitors the students by moving around checking their performance while doing pair/ group work or whole class activity	✓			

### Free - Controlled Practice

34	Moves from controlled practice to practise freely through an activity	✓			
35	Gets the students to produce their own language by reporting their work in front of the class.	✓			
36	Establishes rapport by chatting / teasing.	✓			✓

### Giving Instruction

37	Gives clear and brief instruction	✓			
38	Checks SS' understanding after giving each instruction	✓	*	*	
39	Demonstrates how to get the task done before getting SS do it.	✓		*	

## Classroom Interaction

40	T – SS interaction	✓			
41	T – SS transaction	✓	✓	✓	✓
42	SS – SS interaction	✓			
43	Students' nomination	✓			
44	Voluntary behaviour	✓			
45	T asks questions – SS give minimal response	✓	✓	✓	✓
46	Opportunities for student talk in the target language	✓			

**Note:** \* Specified in the lesson plan but did not practise in class  
? Some evidence of practising but not clear enough

**APPENDIX C. THE EVIDENCE THAT THE STUDENT TEACHERS  
CHANGE THEIR TEACHING BEHAVIOUR**

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<b>A. Teaching area</b>	<b>B. Behaviour before the practicum</b>	<b>C. Behaviour during teaching practice</b>	<b>T 1</b>	<b>T 2</b>	<b>T 3</b>	<b>T 4</b>
1. Setting up and carrying out lesson	Primarily teacher-centred lecture or teacher questioning (T solicits, student response, teacher reacts)	• teacher-centred lecture or teacher questioning		✓	✓	✓
		• teacher- centred lecture less (more student solicits and reactions)	✓			
		• whole-class activity (asking for information without T, interviewing)	✓			
		• pair-work activity (practising structure, sharing information)	✓	N /P		
		• Group work			N / P	
		• Individual seat work ( working on exercise or worksheet)		✓	✓	✓
		• students copy the sentences on BB				✓
		• Demonstration of the tasks	✓		N / C	
		• Comprehension check after giving instruction	✓		N / C	
2. Use of class-room space	Students sit in rows; teacher stands in front; some arrangement of chairs into groups	• Students sit in rows teacher stands in front		✓	✓	✓
		• Reorganization of chairs (face-to-face)	✓	N /P		
		• SS walk around the room asking & answering among themselves	✓			
		• students stand at blackboard, reporting the result of their work	✓			
		• teacher moves around the room (monitoring)	✓			
		• use of space of the classroom (in the front, at the back)	✓			

3. Selection of content	Primarily a focus on the study of language itself (e.g., vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation; some focus on functions (agreeing, introductions, asking for information, etc)	• focus on the study of the language item and vocabulary (or function in T3).		✓	✓	✓
		• work on exercise (homework)		✓		✓
		• The study of language is linked to ‘real-life’ content (e.g. asking and answering about the places they have visited orally)	✓		N / C	
		• Extended activities (e.g. writing a story about the place visited)	✓			
4. Treatment of students’ language error	No treatment, or treatment limited to two basic strategies: 1) repair sentence with correction using emphatic stress at point of correction. 2) write correction on board and lecture.	• using emphatic stress at point of error	✓		✓	
		• correcting error and getting other students to help correct			✓	
		• some adaptation to original error treatment strategies	✓			
		• treat error differently at different stages of teaching (.e.g. explicitly and implicitly)	✓			
		• additional strategies used	✓			
		• stopping student at point of error and getting them to repeat after T		✓		

**Note:** \* Specified in the lesson plan but not enough evidence in practice  
 N/P Specified in the lesson plan but did not practised  
 N/C Not clear nor enough evidence



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**Issues in ELT**

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# Cross-Cultural Learning Styles Research: How Far Have We Come?

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## **ABSTRACT**

Research on learning styles in the ESL classroom has evolved into a broad domain of inquiry with a considerable body of empirical research behind it. One aspect of this research has focused on cross-cultural differences in perceptual learning styles, and this line of research has continued for the past fifteen years. Despite progress, various conceptual and methodological flaws have undermined the capacity of this field to make strong claims regarding the pedagogical implications of research findings. This paper examines these methodological flaws, with a view to delineating a more fruitful research direction for the future.

## **INTRODUCTION**

Research on learning styles in the ESL/EFL classroom has emerged as a significant domain of inquiry within the field. Research has expanded into various sub-avenues such as cross-cultural differences in learning styles (Reid, 1987; Hyland, 1993; Nelson, 1995; Stebbins, 1995), the relative effectiveness of learning styles (Trayer, 1991; Hansen & Stansfield, 1982), the reliability and validity of instruments used to measure learning styles (Bowman, 1996; Corbett & Smith, 1984; Eliason, 1995), the role of gender in learning styles (Oxford, 1995) and the pedagogical implications of learning styles (Violand-Sánchez, 1995; Kinsella, 1995). All these sub-avenues have an ultimate concern with pedagogy, and with providing a body of empirical findings that can be used to enhance classroom productivity. The trend for an increasingly learner-centered education in modern classrooms makes the body of research on learning styles pertinent.

The relevance of learning styles to ESL pedagogy does not only extend to learner-centered education but also to culture-sensitive education. In other words, where there are differences in learning style which are consistent across certain cultural groups, sensitivity to such factors might enhance educational productivity. If such differences do exist, they are clearly politically as well as pedagogically significant. If some groups are faced with instruction insensitive to their learning-style proclivities, it is possible that they will suffer performance deficits. Given that the area of ESL/EFL is inherently cross-cultural such concerns are of particular concern to the field. In this context, a distinct line of research on perceptual

learning styles has emerged over the past fifteen years that attempts to answer to these issues, starting with a seminal paper by Reid (1987). Reid's paper has been replicated fully, or in part, by Hyland (1993), Stebbins (1995) and Rossi-Le (1995). Further related research employing Reid's (1984) Personal Learning-Styles Preference Questionnaire (PLSP) includes Melton (1990), Jones (1997) and Peacock (2001). This line of research has principally aimed to build a corpus of data that profiles the learning-style preferences of different cultural groups.

It is significant, however, that there has yet to emerge a consensus on what the pedagogical implications of this line of research are. While academic research has a natural tendency to hedge implications in tentative discourse, it would seem that the situation in this line of research remains especially tentative in its pedagogical claims, and not without good reason. This paper examines some of the methodological pitfalls that prevent secure claims being made on the basis of perceptual learning-styles research. The paper begins with a review of perceptual learning-styles research that emerged from the development of the PLSP (Reid, 1984) and its employment in a seminal paper by Reid (1987).

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### The broad context of learning styles research

Keefe (1979:5) defines a learning style as "characteristic cognitive, affective and physiological behaviors that serve as relatively stable indicators of how learners perceive, interact with and respond to the learning environment." This definition is widely quoted in learning-styles literature, and is very similar to definitions found in many areas of psychological trait theory. A key word in this definition is "stable", emphasizing the necessity for the style to be enduring to some reasonable degree. This correlates with the core assumption of psychological trait theory that there are relatively enduring aspects to human behavior that can be identified, and that due to their stability can be used as reliable predictors of behavior. It is important to note that psychological researchers generally do not perceive these "traits" or "types" to have absolute psychological reality. Different researchers employ different constructs and different taxonomies of constructs as conceptual tools that assist in making sense of a complex behavioral and psychological reality.

Most constructs employed within the broader domain of learning-styles research have been formulated in bi-polar fashion and have included *field independence/field dependence*, *global/analytic feeling/thinking*, *impulsivity/reflection*, *extroversion/introversion*, and *group/individual*. More recently, however, a line of research has emerged with fresh constructs based in perceptual modalities. These would include the visual, auditory, kinesthetic and tactile modalities. As such these constructs could be described as more physiological than cognitive or emotive. They are ostensibly less abstract and less buried in the inner world of the

individual. As such they are regarded as more accessible since they purportedly relate to the observable actions of learning. In the early 1970s, work by Dunn and Dunn (1972) and Dunn, Dunn and Price (1975) in the general area of education, rather than in ESL education, led to the development of the Dunn and Dunn *Learning Style Inventory*. This self-report inventory used a classic 3-point or 5-point Likert scale that involved four main factors and eighteen sub-factors. Physiological or perceptual factors featured strongly in this inventory. The Dunn and Dunn Inventory precipitated an extensive accumulation of research into the learning styles of mostly American students. Up to 1987, very little work had been done on the perceptual learning styles of non-native speakers of English. Reid's (1987) research represented a departure from this deficit, and initiated a line of research that examined, and continues to examine, perceptual learning styles in relation to cultural background. It is this line of research that is the focus of this paper.

### Reid's study

Reid's (1987) research employed her PLSP (Reid, 1984) self-report inventory that probed the preferred learning-styles of students in terms of four perceptual areas, namely, the visual, auditory, kinesthetic and tactile areas. In addition, the inventory also probed student preference for individual and group learning. The inventory was validated using the split-half technique with both native and non-native speakers. It comprises 30 randomly arranged statements, of which five statements are allocated to each modality. Students respond on a 5-point Likert scale. Reid (1987) allocated three response-level categories to the analysis of data derived from the questionnaire. On each scale, a major learning-style preference was determined by a mean of 13.5 and above, a minor-learning style preference by a mean of between 11.5 and 13.49, and a negative-learning style preference by a mean of less than 11.49.

It was administered to a wide range of foreign students studying in the United States, as well as local students. Foreign students included significant groups of Arabic, Spanish, Japanese, Malay, Chinese, Korean, Thai and Indonesian speakers. Other variables examined included such factors as age and gender, TOEFL score, length of time spent in the U.S., major field and whether students were graduates or undergraduates. This instrument, and its administration to different cultural groups, established a format for subsequent replications, for which the scientific rationale seemed to be two-fold; to confirm or reject Reid's (1987) findings and to add to a corpus of data on the perceptual learning-style preferences of different cultural groups.

An interesting feature of Reid's (1987) study, that will be the subject of discussion below, was the finding that certain cultural groups indicated multiple major learning styles (Arabic, Chinese & Korean students) while others indicated no major learning styles (Japanese). In other words, certain cultural groups produced means of above 13.5 on all, or almost all scales, while others produced means of below 11.49 on all, or almost all scales.

## **Replications of Reid's Study, and Related Studies**

Hyland (1993) replicated Reid's study using the same questionnaire but exclusively with Japanese students. Variables examined by Hyland included gender, level of study, years of overseas study, years of English study and years of study with a native speaker of English. Results from his study were compared with the results for the Japanese part of Reid's sample. Hyland also found that Japanese students did not indicate any major learning styles, according to the ranges stipulated by Reid (1987), and reported above.

Following Hyland (1993), Ross-Le (1995) replicated Reid's work, also using Reid's PLSP, with a sample of 147 adult immigrants to the United States in two community colleges. According to Rossi-Le, her results indicated a major learning-style preference for the auditory modality, which she claims supports the findings of Reid's (1987) study. In addition, she claimed that Chinese and Vietnamese students demonstrated a strong learning style-preference for visual learning. However, there are serious methodological flaws with this study and its related claims which will be covered below.

Also published in 1995, was another replication of Reid's (1987) study conducted by Stebbins (1995). Stebbins administered the questionnaire to 660 ESL students in eight university-affiliated English programs in the United States. Students came from 63 different countries and 43 different language backgrounds. The study reports results that are often consistent with the findings of previous studies. For example, it was found that once again Arabic and Korean students indicated multiple major learning styles, and Japanese students did not identify any major learning-style preferences. However, as with the Ross-Le (1995) study, there are serious methodological flaws with the analysis of the data that will be discussed below.

Additional research employing the PLSP has included work from unpublished doctoral dissertations, for example, Call (1995) and Su (1995).

## **CRITIQUE**

It is the contention of this paper that the line of research precipitated by Reid's (1987) study has been unsuccessful in producing confident pedagogical claims for ESL in the cross-cultural context. It is further argued that this lack of success is based on failure in the areas of quality of science, forms of explanation and instrument validity.

### **Quality of Science in the Descriptive Project**

When Reid (1987) conducted her initial work using the PLSP, she felt the need to impose semantically meaningful categories on the performance data derived from the questionnaire. To this end, she allocated three response-level categories to the means derived for each learning-style category which are reported above. It is not clear how Reid arrived at the parameters for these categories, but

one assumes that they were arrived at during the testing of the instrument while under development.

The importance of these categories lies in their use as a basis for comparison of group performance on the different learning-style categories in a number of studies including Reid (1987), Rossi-Le (1995) and Stebbins (1995). Reid (1987) does use statistical tests to determine differences. However, in cases where the statistical/confidence tests reveal no differences she drifts into an analysis based on whether the mean for the groups she is comparing fall into one or other of her stipulated categories. For example, in her analysis of how students of different majors responded to the test she states the following:

Statistical analysis did not provide as many significant differences as anticipated, but the results seemed logically consistent. In general, responses for all major fields indicated that kinesthetic learning was a major learning style preference and that group learning was considered a negative learning style by students in all major fields except computer science. Visual learning was selected as a major learning style only by students in the hard sciences; surprisingly, humanities majors were the least oriented toward visual learning.

(Reid, 1987)

This type of analysis seems to reflect an attempt to claim differences between groups on questionable methodological grounds. A group with a mean that sits on the lower threshold of the major learning-style range may not be statistically different from another group whose mean sits on the upper threshold of the minor learning-style range. There may in fact be a negligible difference between them, but due to their falling onto either side of a category threshold, they end up being interpreted as different.

This flawed analysis of data may not be a major problem for Reid (1987), as she has presented information on those groups that are significantly different in terms of recognized statistical tests. The alert reader can then make his/her judgment on what is really statistically different in Reid's findings and therefore interpretable. However, Rossi-Le (1995) and Stebbins (1995) present papers with no attempt whatsoever at statistical analysis. These two papers analyze cross-cultural data collected with the PLSP and uncritically adopt Reid's (1987) ranges for major, minor and negative learning styles. They furthermore use these categories to claim differences in the response means for different cultural groups. This kind of analysis and interpretation of data without the use of recognized statistical methods involving confidence levels is simply inadequate, and means that these studies cannot be integrated into the research record.

Given that the Rossi-Le (1995) and Stebbins (1995) studies are core contributors to the descriptive project of profiling the perceptual learning styles of different cultures, their inadequacy leaves this line of research in a fairly weak position. The only other major study to have replicated Reid's (1987) work, to have been published at the journal level, and to have used recognized statistical procedures is the Hyland (1993) study.

Another methodological flaw resulting from the use of the categories of major, minor, and negative learning styles as stipulated by Reid (1987) is their uncritical use in making comparisons across cultures. Earlier in this paper it was reported that Reid (1987) obtained results indicating multiple learning styles in some cultural groups (i.e. means of above 13.5 on many, or all, scales) and the absence of preferred learning styles in others (i.e. means of below 11.49 on many, or all, scales). Hyland (1993), using Reid's (1987) thresholds, also reported the absence of preferred learning styles in his Japanese sample. The first avenue of explanation for this phenomenon is that high preference means across the board are a genuine indication of multiple learning styles, and low preference means across the board are a genuine indication of the absence of learning styles. In other words some cultures have remarkable learning-style flexibility and others have remarkable learning-style inflexibility. A second line of explanation, however, concerns the manner in which different cultures answer questionnaires. It is arguable that the answering of questionnaires is as culturally relative as the preference for certain learning styles. The absence of learning styles across the board could be an indicator of a greater conservativeness in answering questionnaires, while multiple learning styles could be an indicator of greater exuberance in answering questionnaires. Failure to recognize that the manner in which individuals respond to psychometric instruments is as much culturally defined as the constructs the instrument seeks to measure, leads to erroneous interpretations of data. If the ranges used to indicate major, minor and negative learning styles are recalibrated to accommodate the posture that a particular culture adopts in answering questionnaires, learning-style preferences might emerge, where previously there were none.

The overall issue in this regard, therefore, is that this line of cross-cultural research has to institute some conceptual and theoretical clarity on coping with the exposure of the research instrument to extraneous variables that erode accurate measurement of the real phenomenon of interest. In particular, the general disposition of different cultural groups to answer questionnaires in a more positive or negative manner is one such extraneous variable that has to be managed. Finding a solution to this dilemma is not simple, but is critical.

## Forms of Explanation

This paper argues that two basic research projects present themselves in the area of perceptual learning styles – the first being descriptive and the second being analytic. Reid's work and subsequent replications fall into the descriptive project. They attempt to accurately profile the learning-style preferences of different cultural groups. The analytic project concerns empirical work conducted under controlled conditions and informed by theory that attempts to better explain what these learning styles mean for the real teaching environment. This author found almost no studies falling into the analytic project after an extensive survey of the literature. The only area in which one can find explanatory work of any kind is in the *post hoc* speculations on why certain cultural groups seem to have certain

perceptual learning-style preferences that others don't. These attempts at explaining the differences in learning-style preferences are usually found in the discussion section of these descriptive studies. Many attempts constitute only a vague stab at an explanation, and are based on platitudes that weaken the credibility of this line of research in general. Some of the explanations are simply odd, and display an ignorance of the cultures in question that is difficult to excuse in published work.

For example, Stebbins (1995) states the following in the discussion section of her study:

Korean students strongly preferred visual learning in both surveys (given a decade apart) possibly they are selecting the mode most suited for learning their native language. Lee (1976) stated that Asian cultures, including Korean, emphasized the visual mode for learning their largely iconographic language systems.

(Stebbins 1995)

This author had difficulty locating the original Lee (1976) reference which was from an occasional paper published by CATESOL, and therefore it was difficult to evaluate whether the mistake had originally been made by Lee (1976) or whether Stebbins (1995) had made an error in her citation of Lee (1976). Whatever the case, the Korean writing system is not iconographic. On the contrary, it is one of the most phonetic writing systems in the world. While there are residual uses of Chinese icons/characters in certain contexts, these are now very limited.

A very similar mistake to that of Stebbins (1995) is made by Rossi-Le (1995) in accounting for her cross-cultural data. She states:

Chinese and Vietnamese students, on the other hand, demonstrated a very strong learning-style preference for visual learning, possibly due to the pictorial nature of their written language (Lee, 1976).

Rossi-Le (1995)

Once again Lee's (1976) paper is cited, and once again ignorance of the language in question is evident. The Vietnamese writing system called *quoc ngu* was developed in the first part of the 17<sup>th</sup> Century by Catholic Missionaries, and has largely been the only system in use for the past 100 years. It is based on the Roman alphabet with some augmentation using diacritical marks to represent tone. Chinese ideographs have what can only be described as a residual presence in Vietnam. One can only assume that these two authors are operating under some vague notion that all Asian languages use Chinese characters, and are ideographic in nature.

If this line of research is to establish itself with any depth, research has to proceed beyond the descriptive project. The situation at the moment is that this line of research is chronically under-theorized. If the lack of theory is to be remedied, then contributions have to be grounded on solid observations rather than platitudes and received (often false) wisdoms.

## Survey Instrument Validity

A major factor affecting the confidence with which we can make pedagogical claims in the area of perceptual learning-styles is the nature of the instruments we use to gather data in the descriptive project. To a large extent, the instrument of choice in this area has been the PLSP. The instrument was developed by Reid (1984) in order to survey the learning- style preferences of different cultures studying in the US (see review above). In a subsequent paper (Reid, 1990), Reid covered her development of the PLSP and the process of its validation. Her principle concern was that existing instruments had been normed on native speakers, and she therefore needed an instrument normed for non-native speakers. She is open and informative in her description of the difficulties in norming an instrument for a diverse population of ESL students.

According to Reid, the process went through a number of phases. In the initial phase she started with 60 items – ten for each of the six learning-style constructs – with the intention of running a split-half reliability test and removing half of the items that least contributed to the construct correlation coefficient. Results for this phase were obtained from more than 50 ESL students and more than 50 native speakers of English. For both groups the construct correlation coefficients were below the .70 threshold for acceptability on all constructs. However, the construct correlation coefficients for the native-speaker group were sufficiently high to arrive at an acceptable instrument if weaker items were discarded. For the ESL-student group however, coefficients were too low to take this approach. Only the group and individual constructs could be adopted if weaker items were discarded.

In the second phase, items for the visual, auditory, kinesthetic and tactile constructs were redesigned. New items were administered to 50 ESL students. Results produced low construct coefficients, but through removing weaker items she arrived at sets of five items for the auditory, kinesthetic and tactile constructs that met the threshold for a reliable instrument. Reid is not clear on what she adopted as the final threshold, but leads one to believe that .60 was what she finally settled on. The visual construct seemed to produce problematic results depending on whether students understood the item to involve text or non-text visualization. Reid removed non-text visual items and the construct correlation coefficient fell above the threshold. She was advised by her statistics supervisor to further investigate the visual construct, and then run a large pretest once again. However, time constraints precluded this.

Reid (1987) went on to use this instrument in a major survey of the learning styles of ESL students from different languages and cultures studying in the United States. As covered in the literature review above, the study precipitated a distinct line of research, much of which specifically employed Reid's (1984) original instrument. This line of research continued for fourteen years in the absence of any further validity studies of the instrument. Wintergerst, DeCapua and Itzen (2001) remedied this deficit with an extensive examination of the validity of the instrument. The results of the study seriously question the effectiveness of the PLSP as

a reliable psychometric instrument. The study used a sample of 100 ESL students from four different language backgrounds. The authors initially examined the internal consistency of the PLSP learning-style constructs using the Cronbach Alpha reliability estimate. Three of Reid's (1984) scales yielded good reliability, namely the Kinesthetic, Group and Individual scales, with results of .69, .87 and .75, respectively. The Visual, Auditory and Tactile constructs, however, produced poor reliability estimates with results of .53, .48 and .59, respectively.

Following an examination of the reliability estimates for the original scales hypothesized by Reid, Wintergerst *et al.* went on to examine the validity of Reid's factor structure using exploratory factor analysis with results for both varimax and oblimin rotations being reported. Using principal axis factoring, Wintergerst *et al.* (2001) found that factors did not clearly load on the six learning styles hypothesized by Reid (1984). The 30 items that make up the PLSP loaded on a ten-factor model. Finally, the study explored an alternative three factor analysis of the instrument suggested by a Scree Test. The three factors redistributed items into scales, labeled by Wintergerst *et al.* (2001) as the Group Activity Orientation, Individual Activity Orientation and Project Orientation categories. Wintergerst *et al.* (2001) explain their rationale for the distribution of items into these three constructs, and the Cronbach Alpha reliability estimate returned results that were all good. Results for the Group Activity Orientation, Individual Activity Orientation and Project Orientation scales were .85, .77 and .65, respectively. The Wintergerst *et al.* (2001) study provides data and analysis that leads one to question the validity of the constructs in Reid's (1984) PLSP. The three factors that they arrive at, and that produce better reliability estimates than Reid's (1984) originally-hypothesized scales, are conspicuous for having little to do with perceptual learning styles. They appear, in fact, to be more related to the sociality of learning. This seriously undermines the research body premised on this instrument, and furthermore undermines the potential for this instrument as a pedagogical tool in the classroom.

While the Wintergerst *et al.* (2001) study covered most aspects of the validity of the PLSP, there remains a need for criterion related validity studies of the instrument. There is evidence to suggest that students' actual behavior does not accurately reflect the results of self-report inventories like the PLSP. In one study (Bowman, 1996), students' learning behavior was observed over an eight-week period, and their learning-style preferences were measured on an instrument based on the PLSP. Bowman reports differences in what students report about themselves and what they actually do under observation. If this disparity is to be properly understood, and if its implications for classroom assessments and research based on the PLSP is to be adequately assessed, then further criterion-related validity studies are required. The constructs that the PLSP purports to measure need to be properly operationalized and measured externally under controlled conditions for comparison with results obtained from the instrument itself. Only through these kinds of studies can educators be assured that the instrument they are using has some valid and reliable predictive capacity for student behavior in their classes.

## CONCLUSION

The field of perceptual learning styles is wanting in a number of respects, and it is not surprising that pedagogical claims emanating from the research are highly tentative. There is a justifiable lack of confidence in the implications of the research body to date. In terms of the descriptive project, findings are questionable on the grounds of poor instrument validity and weak science. This means that teachers have no reliable body of evidence on the likely learning-style preferences of students in their class from different cultural backgrounds. Teachers are also unable to trust the instrument of choice (the PLSP) should they wish to do their own profiling in class as this instrument has serious validity problems. In terms of the analytic project there is simply an absence of research. This impedes serious attempts to theorize the impact of style choice in cross-cultural situations of diverse learning styles. The recommendations of this paper for the future are the following. The issue of constructing a valid survey instrument should be revisited. Reid's (1984) instrument is not up to the task. In this regard, the possibility of using translated instruments should also be examined as it may be the case that the project of creating a valid English-language instrument for L2 speakers of English is ill-conceived. The dumbing-down of the items in an English language-instrument required to make it comprehensible to even intermediate speakers may leave an instrument too blunt to be useful. Finally, the glaring absence of experimental-type work has to be corrected.

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# Burning Questions, But No Burning Answers: Collocation and Idiomaticity

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## ABSTRACT

The attention of linguists has increasingly shifted from grammar to lexis. Collocation has emerged as a key feature of lexis. Research using large language corpora has not only helped to identify the significant collocates of individual words but also to confirm the importance of collocation in the language system. John Sinclair has suggested that language operates on two principles: open choice and idiom. If so, then collocation would appear to be the minimal level of idiomaticity. One problem with collocation is that words that habitually co-occur form less distinct, often discontinuous, idiomatic units, whereas grammar generally works with more precisely delineated and contiguous structural units. This paper uses examples from corpus evidence to look at various aspects of collocation.

## INTRODUCTION

Traditionally, linguists have described language as a hierarchical system: language has information at different levels, e.g. discourse, sentence, clause, group, word, and morpheme. Hierarchical systems tend to assume that each level in the hierarchy is more important than the level below. This “top-down” view caused linguists in the past to treat grammar as the most important aspect of language, and the sentence as the most important unit for grammar. Words became merely constituents of the sentence, and important only in the contribution they made to the grammaticality of the sentence. The meaning of the sentence, and the contribution of words to the meaning, was deemed a matter for philosophy.

It is difficult to change traditional opinions, but as Halliday (1966) said: “At a time when few linguists, other than lexicographers themselves, devoted much attention to the study of lexis, and outlines of linguistics often contained little reference to dictionaries or other methods in lexicology, J.R. Firth repeatedly stressed the importance of lexical studies in descriptive linguistics. He did not accept the equation of “lexical” with “semantic”, and he showed that it was both possible and useful to make formal statements about lexical items and their relations.” Halliday (1961: 267) described lexis as “most delicate grammar”, and Sinclair (1966) said: “The two interpenetrating ways of looking at language form are grammar and lexis... running parallel to grammar is lexis.”

Firth was not only a pioneer in stressing the importance of lexis, he was also the first linguist to incorporate collocation into linguistic theory. The importance of collocation is now well-established. Longo (2002) quotes Skehan (1998): “learners rely on lexical chunks and memorized collocations and phrases”. So why is collocation neglected by linguists and teachers? Clear (1993) suggests: “The study of collocation as a linguistic phenomenon has not found a central place in theoretical linguistics, perhaps because its proper province is the rather ill-defined area of linguistic patterning that is neither clearly syntactic nor clearly semantic.”

## WHAT IS COLLOCATION?

Firth (1957/1968) said: “You shall know a word by the company it keeps.” In the same vein, (Firth, 1957) “Meaning by collocation is an abstraction at the syntagmatic level and is not directly concerned with the conceptual or idea approach to the meaning of words. One of the meanings of *night* is its collocability with *dark*.”

The example of *dark* and *night* might seem self-evident, but remember that not all nights are dark. We also talk about “*starry, moonlit, bright*” nights. And even when we do want to talk about the darkness of the night, there are other adjectives we can choose (apart from *dark*), e.g. “*black, moonless, starless, gloomy, murky, overcast, dull, dreary, bleak*” and so on. So it is neither a grammatical nor a conceptual (i.e. semantic) requirement that makes us choose *dark* to describe *night*.

Halliday (1966) defined collocation as: “linear co-occurrence together with some measure of significant proximity” and (1976) as: “the co-occurrence of lexical items that are in some way or other typically associated with one another, because they tend to occur in similar environments”, giving the examples: “He put forward a *strong* argument. He put forward a *powerful* argument. He drives a *powerful* car. \*He drives a *strong* car. This tea is too *strong*. \*This tea is too *powerful*”, i.e. *strong* and *powerful* are both collocates of *argument*, but only *powerful* is a collocate of *car*, and only *strong* is a collocate of *tea*.

Sinclair (1970) said “Collocations of very frequent words are positionally restricted... Collocation which is positionally free ... will commonly be an indication of lexical patterning”. The “very frequent words” are grammatical words. Firth had a separate term “colligation” for collocations involving grammar words, but this term is rarely used; only the “positionally free” co-occurrences, i.e. the co-occurrences of lexical words, are now usually called collocations.

## WHAT IS IDIOMATICITY?

Sinclair (1987) described the “open choice principle” and the “idiom principle”, two key procedures which we use to organize language. They are not mutually exclusive, but are available simultaneously to the speaker.

By the “open choice principle” (similar to the “slot-and-filler” model), each choice is restricted only by grammaticality. It is important to realize at this point that collocation is not the only reason for the co-occurrence of words. Even when using the “open choice” procedure, some words will co-occur in our speech or writing: we often mention together physical objects or people that occur together in the real world (e.g. *socks* and *shoes*, *mother* and *father*); or mention together abstract ideas which belong together in human experience (e.g. *crime* and *punishment*, *profit* and *loss*).

By the “idiom principle”, we all know a large number of semi-preconstructed phrases, and when we choose to use one of these phrases, we make a single choice. These phrases exist because we experience the same situations and feelings many times, we don’t want to think of a new way to describe them each time, our listeners want to know our reactions immediately, and are not concerned whether we use the same phrase or a different one.

Sinclair (1987) says: “Collocation illustrates the idiom principle. On some occasions, words appear to be chosen in pairs or groups, and these are not necessarily adjacent.” It is important to note that collocation can involve words separated by other words, and can occur across clause or sentence boundaries, and so cannot be accounted for by the traditional sentence-grammar approach.

## COLLOCATION AND INTUITION

It has been suggested that even native-speakers are not very good at producing collocations on demand (though they can obviously produce them easily in a genuine discourse context), e.g. Stubbs (1995): “It is also well known that attested data are required in collocational studies, since native speaker intuitions are not a reliable source of evidence.”

To test this informally, I asked my audience (native and non-native speakers) to give collocates for the word *burning*, and they suggested: *desire*, *ambition*, *issue*, *passion*. As these were clearly influenced by the title of my talk, I asked for collocates of the word *burning* in general, and the audience suggested: *fire*, *bridges*, *down*, *out*, *sensation*, *building*, *house*. Note that *fire*, *building* and *house* relate to the literal meaning of *burning*; *bridges* may be literal, or more likely part of the fixed idiom *to burn your bridges*; *down* and *out* refer to the phrasal verbs *burn down* and *burn out*; and *sensation* relates to a metaphorically extended meaning of *burning*.

We shall see in the next section that the audience’s suggestions clearly vindicate the views of Stubbs.

## COLLOCATION AND CORPUS EVIDENCE

Radich (2002) said: “I found the most inconsistent language use in lexical patterns. The textbook collocations were often not those commonly found in the corpus. ... The use of common collocates was consistently lacking in all the textbooks.”

A corpus is a large collection of language text held in a computer. Linguists had no way of measuring collocation accurately until we had large corpora. The corpus evidence used in this paper is from the 450-million-word Bank of English at Birmingham.

The frequency of collocates is usually highest in positions -1 (one word before) and +1 (one word after), gets lower further away, and roughly 4 words away collocation becomes hard to detect. The Bank of English software is preset to look at collocates within 4 words of the word we are analysing, count the collocates, and tell us which occur most frequently (statistics are also available).

The most frequent collocates of *burning* in the corpus include: *wood, oil, fire, coal, and fires*. To indicate typical occurrence rates, there are 11,753 examples of *burning*, of which 343 examples (i.e. 3%, or every 34th example) have the collocate *wood*, 312 have *oil*, 301 have *fire*, 239 have *coal*, and 236 (2%; every 50th example) have *fires*.

For comparison, here are the figures for *dark* and *night*, which we discussed earlier. There are 40,309 examples of *dark* and 203,524 examples of *night*; 292 of *dark night*, 73 of *black night*, 31 of *moonless night*, 7 of *dull night*, 6 of *bleak night* and *gloomy night*, 4 of *murky night* and *overcast night*, 3 of *starless night*, and 2 of *dreary night*. There are 59 of *starry night*, 45 of *moonlit night*, and 7 of *moonlight night* and *bright night*. So the attraction between *dark* and *night* (292 examples) is stronger than all the other collocates put together (248 examples). And neither grammar nor semantics can fully explain this phenomenon.

## COLLOCATION AND THE POSITION OF COLLOCATES

We said earlier that the closer the collocate is to the word, the more important it usually is. Many of the closest collocates of any word are “grammatical words” (see Section 2).

To focus on the “lexical” collocates, let us look only at nouns. The only noun collocate in positions -3 and +3 is *fuels*, which also occurs in the +2 position. So we can concentrate on noun collocates in positions -2 to +2 (see Table 2).

TABLE 1. THE MAIN COLLOCATES OF *BURNING*, ACCORDING TO POSITION

the	the	the	BURNING	of	the	the
and	of	a	BURNING	the	and	and
of	a	of	BURNING	and	in	in
a	and	and	BURNING	in	of	a
to	from	s	BURNING	desire	to	of
in	to	by	BURNING	down	a	to
that	in	<b>wood</b>	BURNING	a	<p>	<p>
s	with	was	BURNING	up	is	it
with	london	is	BURNING	with	for	is
is	is	from	BURNING	ambition	that	s
it	smell	were	BURNING	<p>	on	was
was	s	still	BURNING	stove	i	at
<p>	<p>	are	BURNING	it	but	his
by	that	for	BURNING	<b>oil</b>	it	that
he	have	slow	BURNING	question	<u>fuels</u>	he
from	was	<b>fires</b>	BURNING	issue	or	i
his	by	<b>coal</b>	BURNING	sensation	at	on
i	it	been	BURNING	out	he	<u>fuels</u>
on	on	with	BURNING	or	his	be
you	his	<b>fire</b>	BURNING	on	was	as

TABLE 2. THE MOST PROXIMATE NOUN COLLOCATES OF *BURNING*

-2	-1		+1	+2
London	wood	burning	desire	fuels
smell	fires		ambition	hole
home	coal		stove	fuel
looting	fire		oil	wells
fire	flag		question	midnight
fires	cross		issue	looting
week	book		sensation	candle
smoke	fuel		fossil	
Paris	eyes		building	
sun	oil		issues	
fossil	light		rubber	

Looking at its collocates suggests the range of meanings of a word. Many of the collocates of *burning* indicate a literal meaning: (-2) *London, smell, home, looting, fire, fires, smoke, Paris*; (-1) *wood, fires, coal, fire, flag, cross, book, fuel, oil*; (+1) *stove, oil, building, rubber*; (+2) *fuels, fuel, looting, candle*. But some of these are not straightforward. Are *London* and *Paris* (-2) connected with events of World War Two, or does *London* refer to the Great Fire of London in 1666? *Home* (-2), rather than *house* (cf. *building*), seems unusual. *Looting* (-2, +2) is associated with *burning* in riots and other civil disturbances. *Flag, cross, and book* (-1) are also associated with acts of social or political protest.

*Eyes + burning* is a metaphorically extended meaning: our eyes feel hot, and hurt, as if they had been touched by a burning object. *Sun + burning* is another

extended meaning – when the sun is very hot, we talk about the sun “burning down” or being “burning hot”. There are several abstract nouns, which must involve metaphorical meanings: *desire, ambition, question, issue(s), sensation*. Note that they all occur in the +1 position.

This leaves us with a few unusual collocates: *fossil* (-2, +1), *week* (-2), *light* (-1), *hole, wells* and *midnight* (+2), for which we need more contextual information.

### COLLOCATION AND PHRASEOLOGY

I now wish to draw attention to Sinclair’s “semi-preconstructed phrases”, and to his point that these “pairs or groups ... are not necessarily adjacent” (see Section 3). In the tables below, the first column gives the frequency of the collocate in the stated position, and the last column gives the frequency for the particular phraseology. For example, there are 177 occurrences of *London* in position -2, of which 167 occur in the phrase *London’s Burning*.

TABLE 3. COLLOCATES OF *BURNING* IN -2 POSITION, AND THEIR PHRASEOLOGY

freq	collocate in -2	phraseology	freq
177	London	London’s Burning	167
124	smell	smell of burning (flesh/rubber)	115 31
65	looting	looting and burning	50
56	home	Keep the Home Fires Burning	56
52	fire	(a/the) fire (was/is) burning	26 36
49	fires	fires (were/are) burning	33
39	week	the week’s burning issues	30
37	smoke	(the) smoke (from/of) burning (oil/chemicals/tyres/etc)	16 30
31	Paris	Paris is Burning	31
29	sun	(the) sun (without) burning	28 12
27	fossil	(by/from/of) fossil-fuel burning	16

Several of these phraseologies involve culture-specific references: *London’s Burning* is a popular British TV programme about firefighters; *Keep the Home Fires Burning* is a popular World War Two song; *Week* is part of the title of a Saturday column in *The Sun* on *The week’s burning issues*; *Paris is Burning* is a recent US film, and a 1930s German play. The literal phrases involve *smell, fire(s)* or *smoke* (mainly prepositional phrases, *smoke from/of burning oil/etc*). The phraseology of *sun*: “(stay in) the sun without burning”, indicates our concerns about sunburn. *Fossil* co-occurs with *fuel* in prepositional phrases.

TABLE 4. COLLOCATES OF *BURNING* IN -1 POSITION, AND THEIR PHRASEOLOGY

freq	collocate in -1	phraseology	freq
267	wood	wood-burning stove(s)	141
112	fires	keep the home fires burning	47
105	coal	coal-burning power plants/stations	25
97	fire	(there is/was; keep) a fire burning	25
87	flag	flag-burning (n, also adj)	87
47	cross	cross-burning (n, also adj)	47
46	book	book-burning (n, also adj)	46
46	fuel	fossil-fuel burning (n, also adj)	46
44	eyes	his eyes burning } (with hate/salt/ her eyes burning } zeal/fatigue)	16 6
32	oil	oil-burning (lamps, engine, stove, etc)	32
29	light	(= electric lights)	29

Phrases with literal meanings tend to be hyphenated. Some are adjectival compounds: *wood-burning stove*, *coal-burning power plants/stations*, *coal-burning plants*, *oil-burning lamps/engine/stove*. Four collocates form noun compounds (sometimes used adjectivally): *flag-burning*, *cross-burning*, *book-burning*, (*fossil-)/fuel burning*. *Fire* occurs in simple phrases with common patterns: *there is/was a fire burning* and *keep a fire burning*.

*Eyes* is preceded by a possessive pronoun; *his* is more frequent than *her*; and the causes are negative emotions: *hate*, *zeal*, *fatigue*.

TABLE 5. COLLOCATES OF *BURNING* IN +1 POSITION, AND THEIR PHRASEOLOGY

freq	collocate in +1	phraseology	freq
211	desire(s)	(have/has/had) a burning desire to (do sth)	53 147
189	issue(s)	(be/become) a burning issue of (the day/time/moment)	37 28
166	stove(s)	(log/coal/) wood-burning stove	141
158	question(s)	SEE SEPARATE TABLE	
149	ambition(s)	a burning ambition to (do sth)	56
128	building(s)	(a/the/in/from/of) burning building(s)	109
123	sensation(s)	(with/cause) a burning sensation in (the/his/her) (stomach/neck/ear/etc)	56 22
119	oil	burning oil well(s) (/fields/facilities)	45
87	fossil	burning fossil fuels (fuel)	80
68	rubber	(smell/stench) of burning rubber (= car tyres)	35

Of the abstract nouns, *desire(s)* and *ambition(s)* have similar phrases: followed by a to-infinitive, or in a prepositional phrase after *with*; but *have* is more frequent with *desire*, and possessive pronouns with *ambition*. *Issue(s)* forms more impersonal phrases, as *issues* rarely belong to one person. *Sensation(s)* has different patterns: prepositional phrases introduced by *with* or following the verb *cause*; followed by *in* and a part of the body.

Literal phrases involve *stove(s)*; *building(s)* in noun groups or prepositional phrases; *oil* in *burning oil fields/facilities* as well as *burning oil well(s)*; *fossil* in *burning fossil fuels/fuel*.

*Rubber* does not occur with a literal meaning, but in phrases referring to a car accelerating rapidly (more in British English than American English): e.g. *a screech of tyres and a smell of burning rubber... you can almost smell the burning rubber when cornering at speed*. The verb phrase *to burn rubber* means “to drive (away) very fast”.

TABLE 6. COLLOCATES OF *BURNING* IN +2 POSITION, AND THEIR PHRASEOLOGY

freq	collocate in +2	phraseology	freq
89	fuels	(the danger/bad effects) (by/from/of) burning fossil fuels	50
80	fossil	(from/to/by) the burning of fossil fuels	30 56
70	hole	(money is/was) burning a hole in (someone's) pocket	17 67
45	fuel	(of/by/from) burning (fossil/jet/aviation/alcohol/rocket/diesel/solid/uranium) fuel	17 25
43	wells	burning oil wells	41
41	midnight	burning the midnight oil	41
39	looting	burning and looting	37
35	candle	burning the candle at both ends	33

Literal meanings mainly involve prepositional phrases; *fuels* and *fossil* in phrases of negative evaluation; *fuel* in phrases indicating the substance used to provide power; *wells* in references to *burning oil wells* in Kuwait during the Gulf War. *Looting* occurs in both -2 and +2 positions with similar frequency, so is evidently part of a reversible binomial (cf fixed binomials, e.g. *bread and butter* has 776 examples in the corpus, but *butter and bread* has only 2).

Three collocates (*hole*, *midnight*, *candle*) are part of fixed idioms: *money is/was burning a hole* in someone's *pocket* (i.e. they are eager to spend the money); *burning the midnight oil* (i.e. staying up late at night to study or work); *burning the candle at both ends* (i.e. trying to do too many things, by staying up late and getting up early).

Looking at collocations is a powerful method for discovering the prefabricated chunks that Sinclair referred to. Many collocations are positionally fixed. Adjacent pairs form lexical phrases, e.g. *burning desire*, *burning ambition*, or compounds, e.g. *wood/oil/coal-burning stoves*, or prepositional phrases, e.g. *by/from/of burning fossil fuels*. Longer positionally fixed collocate groups form fixed idioms, e.g. *burning the midnight oil*, *burning the candle at both ends*, or culture-specific references, e.g. *London's Burning*, *Keep the Home Fires Burning*.

**THE COLLOCATION *BURNING QUESTION(S)***

*Burning question/questions* is a collocation (Table 5: 158 examples). The Bank of English software shows us in which texts a word or collocation occurs. *Burning question(s)* is mainly used in British written texts, popular magazines (31 examples), newspapers (17 in tabloids and 35 in broadsheet), and books (11), and in Australian newspapers (30). It occurs more rarely in American and Canadian English, in Spoken English (including Radio), in Ephemera (junk mail, advertising leaflets, etc), and in (WWW = Global) Business English.

Some collocates are shared by *question(s)* and *burning question(s)*: *the, is, how, this, whether*, and *answer*. Some collocates are more closely associated with *question(s)*: *of, that, it, 's, was, there, you, no, what, how*, and *about*.

Some collocates are more closely associated with *burning question(s)*: *but, remains, one, can, all, any, still, course, before, does, why, where, your*. The commonest phrases are: *the burning question is how/whether/why*, *(but) the burning question is/remains*, *the burning question of*, and *the burning question for* (some-one).

TABLE 7. *BURNING QUESTION(S)*: PATTERNS OF USE IN THE CORPUS

freq	-2	-1			+1	+2
115			burning	question		
77		the	burning	question		
19		the	burning	question	is	wh-word
9	but	the	burning	question	(is/remains)	
8		the	burning	question	of	
7		the	burning	question	remains	
6		the	burning	question	for	person(s)
43			burning	questions		
18		the	burning	questions		

The Bank of English software can show us these examples in a way that makes the patterns clearly visible:

TABLE 8. *BURNING QUESTION(S)*: CORPUS CONCORDANCES

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so funny -they make me laugh!" The burning question is does she want a big in British jails. So the burning question is, has some startling of my other six rides." <p> But the burning question is, how will Galileo late imperial situation in which the burning question is independence. The has promptly named it `Paddy". The burning question is: where is Major goi for those who keep coming back, the burning question is whether defeat or time to slip on a new pair. But the burning question is which frames will season on November 4. <p> And the burning question is who will win the so rich in its own history. But the burning question is: whose history exact," says one insider. `To me, the burning question is why when everything

Why is this paper titled “Burning questions, **but no burning answers**”? The relationship between *question(s)* and *answer(s)* may seem strong psychologically, as “abstract ideas which belong together in human experience” (see Section 3). It may even be that *question(s)* and *answer(s)* collocate with each other. But remembering Halliday’s example (Section 2) of *strong* and *powerful*, so *question(s)* collocates with both *burning* and *answer(s)*, but *burning* does not collocate with *answer(s)*. Out of 11,753 examples of *burning* and 68,461 examples of *answer/answers* in the corpus, there is not a single example of *burning answer(s)*!

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# Erring in English: Korean L1 and Cultural Interference

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## ABSTRACT

Analysis of errors produced by Korean learners of English is one area in which much work remains to be done. This paper attempts to delineate two particular types of errors: L1 syntax-influenced errors, those caused by L1 surface structure interference in L2 production, and L1 culturo-syntactically related errors, those caused by L1 surface structure interference which, in turn, has been influenced by cultural or other extralinguistic aspects of the L1 speech community. This culturo-syntactic influence of Korean is shown to occur at the morphological, lexical, phrasal, and sentential levels, all causing errors in English production. Two additional general principles are proposed to account for much of this influence. It is suggested that teacher awareness of these types of errors and imparting to the student information on the reasons causing them will be conducive to their expedient elimination.

## INTRODUCTION

Both unavoidable and potentially beneficial to the language-learning process is learner error production. However, error analysis is too often ignored in the English classroom in Korea. It is believed that if the mechanisms at work in causing error production are better understood and the ESOL instructor is better equipped with knowledge concerning types of errors and the reasons for making them, they will be better able to make students aware of the reasons for their error-making, which will in turn lead to more effective elimination of errors in their oral and written production.

The focus here is on L2 errors produced due to the primal differences in English (L2) and Korean (L1) sentential surface structures as well as the relationship of Korean thought and culture and Korean syntax upon English error production. These include SVO versus SOV word order, the Macro-to-Micro Principle influencing multiple-subject constructions and double-accusative constructions, the proposed Most-to-Least Principle influencing fronting of the more important element, and the proposed Principle of Least Opposition.

There are numerous kinds of errors that are made by the language learner: learning strategy-based errors, communication strategy-based errors, target language-influenced (intralingual) errors, and mother tongue-influenced (interlingual)

errors, to name only some. It is the last of these that will be the topic of concern here: the errors that Korean learners of English make due to influence from their mother tongue, Korean, and related thought processes, i.e., the relationship of the Korean language and the influence of the culture of native speakers of Korean to their production of errors in English.

## LANGUAGE UNIVERSALS

Joseph Greenberg (1963), in his seminal work on language universals, shows that there are primal differences in language topography. He shows that languages fall into a small number of basic categories according to the way in which their basic sentential parts (subject = S, object = O, verb = V) are ordered. Greenberg's first language universal is as follows:

**Universal 1:** In declarative sentences with nominal subject and object, the dominant order is almost always one in which the subject precedes the object.

(p. 77)

From this it follows that languages can be one of only three possible types based on their basic sentential part order: SVO, SOV, or VSO. Indeed, it is these three basic order types that actually do exist in the real world. Some examples of each are:

**SVO:** English, Spanish, Portuguese, French, Dutch, Greek, Russian, Chinese, Vietnamese

**SOV:** Korean, Japanese, Latin, Turkish, Hungarian, Hindi, Bengali, Punjabi, Urdu

**VSO:** Arabic, Tagalog, Samoan, Maori, Hawaiian, Welsh, Scots Gaelic, Irish Gaelic

Differences of this type between L1 and L2 can lead to interlingual errors at the sentential level. Since English and Korean belong to two different basic order categories, SVO and SOV, respectively, this basic order difference causes interlingual basic order errors to be produced in English by speakers whose L1 is Korean. These errors are caused by learners incorrectly associating L2 basic sentential order with that of L1. For example:

1a. English (SVO): Gene hit Joan.

[S] [V] [O]

1b. Korean (SOV): Gene-i Joan-eul ttaeryeossda.

[S] [O] [V]

1c. English Errors: Cigarette give me. [Korean: dambae-leul juseyo.]

[DO] [V] [O] [V]

(You) pizza like? [Korean: pija-leul johahapnikka?]

[O] [V] [O] [V]

Because the verb precedes the object in English (1a) but follows it in Korean (1b), errors involving incorrect verb-object order arise in the production of the English learner, e.g., \**Cigarette give me* and \*(*You*) *pizza like?* (1c.).

Many SVO languages are prepositional, while many SOV languages are postpositional; i.e., in prepositional languages, prepositions come before the governing noun and their counterparts, while in postpositional languages, postpositional words or particles follow the governing noun. Greenberg (1963) expressed this as Universal 4:

**Universal 4:** With overwhelmingly greater than chance frequency, languages with normal SOV order are postpositional.

(p. 79)

Accordingly, Korean is both SOV and postpositional (2a), while English is both SVO and prepositional (2b). Phrasal-level errors arise in English learners from associating L1 word order in postpositional phrases with that for L2 prepositional phrases. These errors are typically manifest as the omission of the English preposition because there is no equivalent structural element preceding the noun in Korean (2c):

- 2a. Korean (SOV): Gene-i ***hakgyo-e*** gass-da.
- 2b. English (SVO): Gene went ***to school***.
- 2c. English Error: Gene went ***school***.

Errors related to the Korean postpositional particle *-eui* (3a) involve the English learner associating it with English “*of*” (3b) while keeping the preceding and following nouns in the Korean order (3a) in producing English structures such as in 3c:

- 3a. Korean (SOV): ***jimseung-eui*** wang
- 3b. English (SVO): king ***of beasts***
- 3c. English Error: ***beast of king***

A third Greenberg (1963) language universal has to do with the position of the genitive in prepositional and postpositional languages:

**Universal 2:** In languages with prepositions, the genitive almost always follows the governing noun, while in languages with postpositions it almost always precedes.

(p.78)

Although Korean and English exhibit comparable word order in this case (as we will see below, this is due to Korean also being a primarily agglutinating language), there is a type of error commonly associated with genitive production in English:

- 4a. Korean (SOV): ***Cheolsu-eui*** jip
- 4b. English (SVO): ***Cheolsu's*** house
- 4c. English Error: ***house of Cheolsu***

The error, \**house of Cheolsu*, is produced because the Korean genitive *-eui* in 4a is associated with the English word *of*, resulting in structures of the form N + *of* + N (4c) instead of the English genitive form - 's as in 4a. The error in 4c is that, in English, when the governing noun is animate (e.g., *Cheolsu*), structures of the form N + *of* + N are unacceptable.

## AGGLUTINATIVE LANGUAGE

In addition to being an SOV and postpositional language, Korean is also an **agglutinative** language; i.e., chains of particles are commonly attached to the ends of nominals and verb stems rather than expressing the semantic content of these particles as separate words, as is commonly done in SVO languages such as English. An excellent example of this agglutination is *gasyeoss-gess-seupnida*, which consists of five particles attached to the right of the verb stem *ga-* (*go*) [5a-c]:

5a. Korean: *ga-syeoss-gess-seupni-da*

5b. English: (A respected person) may have gone.

5c. Particles:

<i>ga</i>	– verb stem
<i>si</i>	– subject honorific particle
<i>eoss</i>	– past tense particle (contracted with <i>si</i> to form <i>syeoss</i> )
<i>gess</i>	– presumptive modal particle
<i>seupni</i>	– addressee honorific particle
<i>da</i>	– declarative particle

Because English does not exhibit a comparable agglutinative characteristic, English learners often attempt to associate L2 with L1 syntax and omit L2 words necessary to carry the semantic information carried in the agglutinated Korean particles, as there are no L2 rules for attaching them to the right of the verb (6a-c):

6a. Korean: *geubun-i gasyeoss-gess-seupnida*.

6b. English: He may have gone.

6c. English Error: (Maybe) he *go/gone*.

At this point I would like to consider whether structural characteristics of languages in general, and Korean in particular, such as the ones discussed above causing errors in English production, are always entirely linguistic in nature and spontaneously produced or whether they may be induced by extralinguistic factors, i.e., influenced by the thought patterns and culture of L1 speakers. Let us consider the agglutinating phenomenon of Korean as an example. In agglutination, many particles are grouped together with a verb stem or noun in Korean while the semantic equivalent occurs as individual words in English. Is it a pure coincidence that the society of Korean speakers is collective and that of English

speakers individualistic, while their languages are agglutinative and non-agglutinative, respectively, or is there a relationship between the type of society of a speech community and whether their language is agglutinative or not?

The agglutinative behavior of Korean is a common feature of the Ural-Altaic language family to which Korean belongs, and too little is known about proto-Ural-Altaic and the culture of Ural-Altaic speakers to speculate as to whether a collectivist social structure has had an influence on Ural-Altaic languages becoming agglutinative. However, supportive evidence is given below to suggest that the culture of a speech community, specifically that of Korean, may very well manifest itself in the surface structure of a language, and that by being manifest in the L1 surface structure, these cultural features cause L2 error production by Korean learners of English.

## LANGUACULTURE

Important to the language-learning process is not only language itself but also the culture, including the thought processes, of its speakers. Accordingly, Michael Agar (1994) makes use of the term “*languaculture*,” arguing that language and culture are so intertwined that the term “*languaculture*” should be used rather than the two terms, “*language*” and “*culture*,” separately (p. 60).

Language and thought, the extralinguistic feature of a speech community’s culture which was considered to have the most important relationship to language before the whole of culture was more seriously considered, have long been believed to have a dependency relationship between them. Over time, there have been three hypotheses as to the nature of this language-thought dependence:

**Hypothesis 1:** Language is dependent on thought.

**Hypothesis 2:** Thought is dependent on language.

**Hypothesis 3:** Language and thought are interdependent.

Hypothesis 1 has been the traditional view of the relationship of language to thought. It is simply the belief that people have thoughts and put these thoughts into words. The view that developed in opposition to Hypothesis 1 is Hypothesis 2. Proponents of this hypothesis believe that the way people use language dictates the lines along which they can think. This view has had support among linguists in the field of language acquisition who believe that a child’s earliest encounters with language are the main influence on the way concepts are learned. In other words, language determines the way we think. This view is well known as the Principle of Linguistic Determination in the Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis:

“...The fact of the matter is that the ‘real world’ is to a large extent unconsciously built up on the language habits of the group.

(Sapir, 1929; as cited in Mandelbaum, 1958, p. 162.)

A third and much more commonly accepted hypothesis today is that language and thought are mutually dependent, Hypothesis 3. In this hypothesis, it is understood that language is a regular part of the thought process, but at the same time, we have to think in order to understand language. It is a much-weakened version of the Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis above, often stated as:

Language may not *determine* the way we think, but it does *influence* the way we perceive and remember, as well as the ease with which we perform tasks.

(Crystal, 1987, p. 15)

Similarly, Steven Pinker (1994) more recently suggests that we all use a language of thought that is in some ways richer than spoken languages and in other ways less elaborate. Linda Harklau (1999) states, "Language is inexplicably bound up with culture. Cultural values are both reflected in and carried through language" (p. 109). This all lends support to Agar's (1994) coinage of the term "languaculture." From this it follows that if the occurrence of L2 errors may be due to the influence of L1, their occurrence may also be due to the influence of culture-specific features of the speakers of L1.

## LANGUACULTURAL INFLUENCES ON ERROR PRODUCTION

### Macro-to-Micro Principle

It has been shown that the Korean language of L1 speakers may influence the production of L2 errors, and it is much more obvious today that cultural aspects of a speech community, such as that of Korean speakers, may be manifest in their language, and thereby influence L2 error production through association of acceptable Korean structures with the production of English. One of the ways that this manifests itself at the phrasal and sentential level is in the Macro-to-Micro Principle, which can be stated as:

Korean, like Japanese, is a "macro-to-micro" language in that the universe is represented in the order of a set (macro) first and then its members (micro).

(Sohn, 1999, p. 16)

This is a linguistic principle that has its origins in extralinguistic thought, i.e., the thought that bigger is better and therefore should receive priority in appearance. Korean names, addresses, and dates are all clear examples of the application of the Macro-to-Micro Principle at the phrasal level. In individuals' names, the surname precedes the given name; in addresses, city, district, and ward, in that order, precede house number; and in dates, the year precedes the month, which precedes the day of the month.

Consider the following examples. In 7a, *Kim*, the name of the clan, is the set that precedes *Cheolsu*, a member of that set. In 7b, the set named *Gwangju* precedes the district *Dong-gu*, which is a member of that set. Likewise, *Dong-gu* is the name of a set which contains wards as its members, one of which is *Hak-dong*



- 9a. Korean (SOV): nae-ga ko-ga keu-da  
 (I-nm nose-nm big-dc)  
 9b. English (SVO): I have a big nose.  
 9c. English Error: I nose big.

The Macro-to-Micro Principle applies to Korean double-accusative constructions in very much the same way as it applies to multiple-subject constructions. In double-accusative constructions, two noun phrases occurring in the same clause contain nouns, with the accusative (object) marker *-eul/-reul* (*-eul* following a noun ending in a consonant, *-reul* following a noun ending in a vowel) instead of the normal single noun phrase containing an accusative marker. The order of these two accusatives follows the Marco-to-Micro Principle in that the larger of the two appears first. Accordingly, in sentences such as 10a, the accusative noun, *gae* (dog) appears prior to *kkori* (tail) because *kkori* is only a part of *gae*, i.e., “tail” is a member of the set of things comprising “dog.” The common error arising in Korean learners of English is that of placing the two nouns together in linear order (*dog tail* or *dog’s tail*) in the English sentence (10c), associating English sentence structure with that of Korean.

- 10a. Korean (SOV): Gene-i gae-reul kkori-reul jabass-da  
 Gene-nm dog-ac tail-ac catch-pst-dc  
 10b. English (SVO): Gene caught the dog by its/the tail.  
 10c. English Errors: Gene caught the dog’s tail.  
 Gene caught the dog tail.

In both constructions, there are two structures of the same category, and in both constructions, it is the second of these like structures that is a (micro) member of the (macro) set, i.e., the first in linear order of these like structures.

### Most-to-Least Principle

A second principle, one proposed by this author, also represents how extralinguistic Korean thought has come to be syntactically manifest in the Korean language, and by extension, in Korean speakers’ English errors through association of L1 surface structure with L2 production. This principle can be expressed in what we shall call the “Most-to-Least Principle”:

Korean contains a most-to-least principle in that the universe, in some cases, may, and in other cases, must be represented in linear order with the most important item appearing first followed by the lesser in importance.

This principle manifests itself at both the phrasal and lexical levels. It commonly appears in phrases containing more than one number. As is true of English, when two numbers of equal status appear in the same phrase, the linear order is that of counting order, i.e., lower number first, higher number second. This is an obligatory rule in English, but only optional in Korean. When the larger number is

considered more important in Korean, the Most-to-Least Principle may be applied and the larger number appear first, as in common in describing the discount range for sales (11a). The upper end of the range (80%) is expressed first and the lower end (50%) second. As this range order is not acceptable in English, English learners make the mistake of using the higher-to-lower range order in their English constructions (11c).

- 11a. Korean:            seil **80 - 50%** halin  
 11b. English:           Sale: 50-80% off  
 11c. English Error:    It is an 80 to 50% discount sale.

Similarly, Korean regularly expresses length of trips in terms of number of days and nights in the order: nights first, days second (12a). English uses the reverse order, and indeed only expresses the number of nights at all if they are deemed to have any relevance to the topic (12b). Korean, on the other hand, mentions nights first due to the traditional thought, no longer very pertinent, that the night was the most important part of any trip because one had to find a place to put up for the night, and arriving at that place on foot or donkey before darkness fell too heavily was of paramount concern. Accordingly, in this case the Most-to-least Principle is obligatorily applied. This often causes the Korean English learner to mistakenly produce number of nights first followed by number of days (12c):

- 12a. Korean:            **3 bak 4 il**    (3 nights 4 days)  
 12b. English:            4 days (and 3 nights)  
 12c. English Error:    Our trip was 3 nights and 4 days.

The Most-to-Least Principle also applies to the traditionally held Korean concept of male dominance, as manifest in the salutations of speeches (13a), while English speakers express the concept of “ladies first” (13b). The L2 error that Korean learners of English may make is a reversal of this common word order to 13c, which corresponds to that of Korean.

- 13a. Korean:            **sinsa suknyeo** yeoreobun ...  
                               (Gentlemen, ladies, everyone, ...)  
 13b. English:            Ladies and gentlemen, ..  
 13c. English Error:    Gentlemen and ladies,..

It can also be shown that the Most-to Least Principle has been at work at the lexical level in word formation in relation to the concept of male dominance. Many Korean nouns are formed from two Chinese characters, each with its own meaning, combining as word-internal bound morphemes. Korean has such lexical items as the equivalent of the English expressions “girls and boys” and “children.” The Korean word for the former is composed of the morpheme *nam* (boy(s)) preceding and bound to the morpheme *nyeo* (girl(s)) [14a]. Similarly, the Korean word for “children” (*ja-nyeo*) is composed of the morpheme *ja* (son(s)) preceding

and bound to the morpheme *nyeo* (girl(s)) [15a]. In each case, the male-related morpheme precedes the female related one.

- 14a. Korean: *nam-nyeo* (boys-girls)
- 14b. English: girls and boys / boys and girls
- 15a. Korean: *ja-nyeo* (sons-daughters)
- 15b. English: children

Koreans have traditionally venerated those of greater age. (Even the second to be delivered of twin brothers is required to call his twin brother *hyeongnim* [older brother].) Therefore, it is not surprising that the Most-to-Least Principle operates on the formation of lexical items with word-internal bound morphemes ordering them for the morpheme expressing greater age to precede the other. The morpheme for “older brother,” *hyeong*, precedes the morpheme for “younger brother,” *jae*, to form *hyeongjae* (brothers) in 16a. Similarly. In *jamae* (sisters) the morpheme for “older sister” precedes that for “younger sister” (17a).

- 16a. Korean: *hyeong-jae* (older brother-younger brother)
- 16b. English: brothers
- 17a. Korean: *ja-mae* (older sister-younger sister)
- 17b. English: sisters

In Korean society there has long been a tradition of respect for teachers, so the Most-to-Least Principle predictably also applies to the formation of the lexical item, with internal bound morphemes, meaning “teacher(s) and student(s).” Since the teacher has been thought of as the object of respect and as being in a position of more importance than that of the student, the morpheme *sa* (teacher) precedes the morpheme *jae* (student) in the lexical item *sajae* (18a).

- 18a. Korean: *sa-jae* (teacher-student)
- 18b. English: students and teachers

Though the Most-to-Least Principle has been shown to operate at both the lexical and phrasal level in Korean, its influence on L2 error production is primarily limited to those involving Korean phrase constructions. Dual-morpheme lexical items such as *namnyeo* in (14a) may influence the learner’s production of L2 *boys and girls*, but that is the more common English order of the two nouns, anyway, when they are connected by *and*.

### Principle of Least Opposition

A third principle, one that I also propose, which governs the way Korean is spoken and can also be the source of L2 errors in Korean learners of English is what we shall call the Principle of Least Opposition:

Korean contains a principle of least opposition in that utterances may be presented in such a way as to have the least negative impact upon the hearer.

This principle is most apparent in the manner in which responses can be made to the Korean equivalent of tag questions:

- 19a. jilmun issjiyo? → ye, (issjiyo).  
       question have-dc → yes, (have-dc).  
 19b. jilmun eopsjiyo? → ye, (eopsjiyo).  
       question not-have-dc → yes, (not-have-dc).

In both 19a and 19b, the main verb in the question is (optionally) repeated in the response, and the affirmative response adverb (*ye*) is employed in response to both the affirmative question (19a) and the negative question (19b).

The English equivalents of 19a and 19b are 20a and 20b, respectively:

- 20a. You have some questions, don't you? → Yes, I do.  
 20b. You don't have any questions, do you? → No, I don't.

In English, the adverb of response (*yes/no*) must agree with the auxiliary verb of the sentence, whether uttered or not, in polarity. That is, both must be either affirmative (*yes, do*) as in 20a, or both must be negative (*no, don't*) as in 20b. English obligatorily exhibits agreement in polarity while Korean does not. Instead, the Principle of Least Opposition allows Korean to use an affirmative response adverb for both affirmative and negative questions. The apparent reason for this is that in Korean society it is considered indecorous to disagree with another, especially someone senior to you. Therefore, the affirmative *ye* is used in both 19a and 19b to show agreement with the speaker, which is considered decorous, rather than show polarity agreement with a negative verb phrase by using a negative adverb of response (*aniyo*), which could easily be construed as less decorous.

Errors that this difference often causes in L2 learners involve the breaking of the negative agreement rule exhibited in (20b), forming unacceptable responses to negative questions such as:

- 20c. You don't have any questions, do you? → \*Yes, (I don't.)

Let us take a somewhat different set of example sentences to further demonstrate the effects of the Principle of Least Opposition. Sentences 19a and 19b demonstrate how an affirmative reply is possible in Korean for both an affirmative and a negative question. The Principle of Least Opposition also makes it possible to answer a question with the affirmative response adverb (*ye*) in opposing real world situations. Consider the following:

- 21a. hong gildong-ssi taek anipnikka? → ye, majseupnida.  
       Hong Gildong-Mr. house not-be-q → yes, correct-dc  
 21b. hong gildong-ssi taek anipnikka? → ye, anipnida.  
       Hong Gildong-Mr. house not-be-q → yes, not-be-dc

The English equivalents of 21a and 21b are 22a and 22b, respectively:

22a. Isn't this Hong Gildong's house? → Yes, it is.

22b. Isn't this Hong Gildong's house? → No, it isn't.

For 21a and 22a, the real world situation is that the house in question is indeed Hong Gildong's house, and in both instances, the response to the question is made with an affirmative response adverb and a subsequent affirmative clause. Conversely, the real world situation in both 21b and 22b is that the house in question is *not* that of Hong Gildong. When the real world situation is not that suggested by a speaker in their question, the acceptable response in English is with a negative response adverb (*no*) and an optional negative clause, as in 22b. However, because of the Principle of Least Opposition, Korean syntactic rules are such that the negative clause in the response is accompanied by an affirmative adverb of response, presenting the hearer with less negative material than in the case of English, and ostensibly leaving a more decorous impact upon them.

The type of L2 error made in this case is also in the response to the question:

22c. Isn't this Hong Gildong's house? → \*Yes, it isn't.

By associating the English response being produced with the Korean response in 21b, an affirmative adverb of response is incorrectly used with a negative clause in constructing the English response.

## CONCLUSION

We have seen that the syntactic structure of Korean has an influence in L1 Korean speakers in causing error production at the phrasal and sentential level in learning English and that these are ultimately due to the differences in the basic order of sentential parts of the two languages (English being SVO, Korean SOV). We have also seen that there has been extralingual influence on Korean, both present-day and historical, that has impacted the syntactic rules and syntactic structure of Korean and that these have, in turn, had an influence on English L2 error production in Korean L1 speakers. Error production is linguacultural, and some of the cultural-related influences on Korean have been shown to be due to the Marco-to-Micro Principle, and the Most-to-Least Principle and the Principle of Least Opposition proposed here. Their influence upon Korean syntax has been shown to cause L2 error production at both the phrasal and sentential levels in English.

It is the author's belief that ESOL teachers must be aware of the different types of errors that their students are producing and of the reasons why they are producing these errors. Presented here are some of the interlingual errors that Korean L1 speakers make in their English learning process. If the ESOL teacher is

aware of the syntactic structures of Korean causing English error production and is also aware of the cultural principles behind some of those syntactic structures, then the teacher will be able to not only correct the English learner's errors but also explain the Korean languacultural reasons for the error production. If the language learner is made aware of the types of errors they are making and the languacultural reasons for making them, it is believed that the production period for making these individual errors will be shortened and that English accuracy will be facilitated.

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*\* The romanization system for Korean used in this paper is the Republic of Korea Revised Romanization (2000).*

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# Accidental Research: The End-Driven Quest

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## ABSTRACT

The word “research” is conceptually different in the minds of: (a) practitioners who believe that they are researchers; (b) professionals who consider that they are users of research; and (c) students whose sole objective is learning. Research can be targeted from the “demand” aspect or from the “supply” aspect; however, there is also “chance” or accidental research, which has no target but merits a post-conscious aim. The substance of the value of this third category of research cannot be determined until: (a) the pertinent practical procedure has been completed; and (b) it has been discovered or surmised that action has led to findings that may prove to be useful. Areas in which accidental research may prove to be fruitful include the stimulation of further research, the improvement of current teaching skills, the reassessment of research priorities, and the generation of interest on the part of people who were hitherto not involved in research.

## 0. NON-SERIOUS OVERVIEW

### 0.1. Pedantry and Pleasantry

As in the case of all other professions, teachers can exercise extreme strictness or flexibility in their approach to their work. However, the question of what is “their work” can be answered in a variety of ways; one way involves very restricted thinking and is concerned solely with what the teacher says in the classroom, while another route of consideration of this matter takes in far wider aspects such as real and actual communication with students and the purposeful development of that communication into enormously beneficial improvement in the knowledge and capabilities of the students. In fifties/sixties Britain, the former way was summarized by the well-worn slang expression “gassing”, while the latter methodology had scarcely reached the ears or minds of even a slender minority of experienced teachers.

What has this got to do with research, and why is it to be regarded as “non-serious” according to my section title? Well [initial-word-of-sentence clichés are regarded in many quarters as wholly acceptable, but some researchers will disagree with this!], in one sense there can be no advancement of knowledge or skill without research, for the very simple reason that research is “work that involves studying something and trying to discover facts about it” (Sinclair, 2001). If

nobody studies anything, and more particularly if nobody discovers any relevant facts, how can knowledge advance? Is that the whole story, however? I have answered a question with a question - a favorite activity of researchers!

As to the “non-serious” point above, I did not actually state that the definition of teachers’ work was non-serious, but only that the present overview was so.

Let’s focus our minds on the question of how knowledge can progress. I am referring to human knowledge, so there has to be a human recipient and holder of the knowledge. Does there have to be a deliberate researcher who studies and tries to discover, as per *supra*? I think not, although in a proportion of cases there is.

Perhaps researchers have no fun, because they are always studying and trying to discover; this statement is certainly non-serious, because I take an entirely different view. Systematic research is enormously satisfying and rewarding, and far be it from me to say otherwise. However, the part played by “accidentality” [not in my dictionary] is by no means insignificant. We will examine this later.

## **0.2. Resolution and Ridicule**

Problems need to be resolved, whatever walk of life we are talking about. If there is anyone here who thinks that the teaching profession is without problems, please come and talk to me afterwards - I am sure we will have an interesting conversation. A problem left unresolved may lead to a ridiculous situation, but resolution may come by accident. Accidents of this type are advantageous and beneficial - we gain knowledge without making any effort; we get something for nothing, and not just something of no value. On the contrary, the worth of extra knowledge is immense.

# **1. THE PHILOSOPHY OF ACCIDENTAL RESEARCH**

## **1.1. Causation**

What causes accidental research? Is there a cause, or does “accidental” mean that there is no operative causative agent? In reply to the first question, various factors can be operative, e.g., self-awareness giving rise to the appreciation of a broadly-based brain function, or the active realization that teaching is inevitably a research activity based on investigation of the presence or absence of specified items of information or capabilities in the minds of students. Many years ago, an officer of the United States Patent Office made a remark that has since become “immortal”: “The function of the Examiner is to embark, with the applicant, on a voyage of discovery.” There is a direct operative parallel between this position and the teaching profession, for we need “elicitation” followed by “actual” teaching. Elicitation is perhaps the equivalent of embarkation, including the process of finding out where we are starting from, as it is rather difficult to embark upon a ship if we do not know where the ship is! Has anyone noticed that I have actually answered *sub silentio* the second question above? Putting that into print, there is indeed in at least some cases a cause.

Are we glad that there is a cause? Beneficial accidents are a good thing, whilst causatively triggered accidents can be even better! “Causatively triggered” and “caused” are very different in teaching philosophy. In any event, would you be happy to be doing something causeless? The causeless pursuit of knowledge is perhaps excellent, but the pursuit of accidental research is practically excellent - to avoid ambiguity, let us say “excellent in practice.” Any philosophers present will recognize the start of a definition chain here, but exploring that is not the goal or within the purview of the present paper.

## **1.2. What**

What is accidental research, then? It is something likely to be caused by the positive realization that we have an active learning mechanism which does not require periods of being “off duty.” In other words: “We have brains, so let’s use them!” If there is no apparent target at the material time, never mind - we can still learn something and then find out later what it is that we have learned. Accidental research can be likened to reassembling an onion; we acquire “bits” of information from various efforts and sources not accessed by effort, and then we have in front of us an array of “layers” which need to be assembled into a whole.

Do we face dire consequences if we ignore accidental research and pay no heed to its existence? Dire - probably not, if we associate “dire” with a life-threatening scenario; consequences - certainly yes, for we will be throwing away opportunities for learning, and boosting our storehouse of knowledge and experience. So - let’s go for it, and “be open to accident,” as I would put it.

The word “accident” has enlarged its scope progressively over the years and centuries; by way of example, I noticed recently that Collins Cobuild accepts that any collision involving a vehicle can be described as an accident, regardless of whether the cause thereof is chance, negligence or intent. The word has also appeared in various fun expressions, such as “There has been an accident in the accident.” Please be sure to interpret the expression “be open to accident” in the sense delineated as relevant for our purposes in the present paper.

## **1.3. Who**

Researchers research and teachers teach - how is that for a logical analysis? Sound but inadequate, I would say. For our purposes, practitioners are those who practice a profession, so researchers are certainly included.

If I want to do research, do I need to be a practitioner bearing the label of the profession of researcher? I think not, and I further consider that all effective teachers need to be plugged in to finding many things out at any time or at all times. If we take the visual sense as an example, we need to march into the classroom with our eyes open; the initiation of our ocularly active state is no accident, but we have thereby laid the foundations for many accidental discoveries. Is anyone left out of this? There is no need to be, but you choose! This is not simply a case of climb-

ing on a bandwagon; if you want to be a frontline accidental researcher, then get aboard and drive the wagon yourself.

The same applies to ears as to eyes - use them, don't just allow them to be switched off by indolence or prevailing circumstances. Everyone has the capacity to be a thoroughly efficient accidental researcher. By the way, it is all free of charge - you do not need a license to enter the ranks of entitlement.

Teachers can and should be practitioners who believe that they are researchers; if we do not so believe, then we are not really alive as regards driving ourselves forward into new experience. Accidental research is a superb way of disabling any unintended approach to the so-called drone/drudge condition.

Let us consider another category: professionals who consider that they are users of research. Who are these paragons of virtue, thirsting to enter the new reality of tomorrow? For what purpose do they use research? Everyone can answer these questions in his or her own way, but there is another, rather important matter to consider: When I asked the "Who are ..." question just now, did you spot or feel any self-identification? This is highly significant stuff, so we all need to think about it carefully. What about students? Do they do accidental research? At one level of argument, there is only a single possible answer to this: We as teachers are all students, and the best teachers are ipso facto the most efficient students.

#### **1.4. When and Where**

Accidental research gives us complete freedom of sphere of operation and timing, so let's take full advantage of these facilities. We need no staff, no equipment, no setting-up time, just patience and opportunistic common sense. Too much to ask? I do not think so. Try it some time - you will see how easy it is to execute. Processing the results is another story, as during the course of the data collection there is not necessarily any appreciation that research is actually being carried out (unless, of course, you are a real, full-time accidental researcher, or ARer, in which case your "data reception antennas" will be fully operative without interruption.

So, what are the common times and places for AR? Classrooms, staffrooms and teacher offices are obvious answers, but there are also other possibilities, including any place where students meet with teachers. Any time is a good time. These answers are very brief, but no more needs to be said on this right now, because the real answer is: Any time, any place.

#### **1.5. Why and How**

After what has been said above, the "why" should be fairly self-evident. We want to be alive and well, and to drive ahead into the unknown - after all, research is all about finding out new things. If we stay within the confines of familiar territory permanently, we will lose all freshness in teaching, and both we and our students will suffer accordingly. Let's break out, and do some AR!

Another important question is “How?” Use perception through the natural senses, and you will automatically develop your “buffer storage filter.” Data items that have prospective relevance to teaching activities will be channeled into mental short-term memory through an on-going process that is self-developing in teachers’ minds. Mysterious? May be, but it works. Along with teaching experience, we develop the knack of remembering important data that we can analyze later at some convenient time. When is the best time for this analysis to take place? The minimum delay principle is excellent here.

You may perhaps be wondering whether this is reality or fantasy. If it is fantasy, why should the human brain be subject to such grave limitations? After all, it is “quite a good bit of kit,” to use a rather slangy modern expression.

Please permit me to quote from a late-nineties British TV comedy show called “Roger Roger” (a story of a taxi firm that got into all kinds of scrapes): “All the theories in the world won’t get your brake pads changed - it’s the practical that counts.” Beyond a shadow of a doubt, this enunciation is indisputably correct within a very limited interpretative framework, but is that all there is to it? A one-word answer: No.

We need to take a correspondingly broad view of research, and to realize that any spatiotemporal constraints placed thereon are likely to be the artificial product of unduly narrow perception.

## **2. SUPPLY AND DEMAND**

### **2.1. Supply**

Is there a supply-and-demand law in the field of research? I think there generally is, but it is certainly not always followed. Those doing pure academic research are, in theory, not concerned with an outlet for their research results; their object in doing the research may be, for example, purely and simply to get a higher degree. However, with the advent of the science park philosophy and university/industry collaboration on a large scale, not to mention results-based grant awards and a commercial attitude towards research department development, academic researchers may be far less “disinterested” than in earlier decades. To put it another way, they may wish to have a saleable product. Accordingly, some traditional ideas have gone out the window. “Do research and sell it” is quite a rational position these days. However, this applies far more in the science sectors than in language-based areas.

### **2.2. Demand**

At the opposite end of the spectrum, there is definitely some “demand” targeting of research. An example might be of the form: “We want to develop a plastics material that has this, that and the other properties, and we need to commission research to pull that off.” This is just a commercial matter, but it generates a significant demand for research as a “product.”

### 2.3. Absence

What is the position if there is no supply and also no demand in our research scenario? Do the possible parties just withdraw and terminate or refrain from any action? In scientific circles, the answer to that is in many cases in the affirmative.

Do we as teachers have an advantage here, at the gateway to the world of AR? Indeed, is the way barred to all except us? Yes, no, in that order. However, in this case bare facts do not tell the actual story. Anyone can do AR at any time, but do they? They do not, in some cases because they are not aware of what it is and they have no fix on how to get involved and perform in the sector, in other cases because, although they have in fact done it, they do not realize this, and in yet other cases for the reason that, having done and realizing as above, they misfire on application of the results. Research requires data analysis, and AR is no exception.

There are many fences to fall at, which brings even more joy to experienced ARers. However, let us not give too much rope to any sense of *schadenfreude*!

The present subsection (heading: Absence) of this paper, you might think, suggests a void, and you would be right in so thinking. However, some voids are unfillable, others are fillable with difficulty, and yet others are waiting to be filled. The last category is the most interesting, so let us consider that.

No supply, no demand ... no research - is that logical? Wearing my "merchant of knowledge" hat, I have to say, "Yes, it is," for reasons briefly outlined above. Nevertheless, on donning my "teacher" hat, I see things rather differently. I have, *inter alia*, two eyes and two ears; do I need anyone's permission to use them in circumstances other than ones narrowly specified by the law of supply and demand? Certainly not. So, I like to be an ARer, and to find something out and then wonder what I have found out and who would be interested in knowing it. That is not all! Such an outfinding [a coinage based on Scottish word forms] may improve my (and other people's) teaching skills and may stimulate further research, among other things. There will be more in this connection in section 3. of this paper.

Some of you may be thinking that it is time for examples - a great idea! What have I found, in my experience, through AR? I will tell you about some explanatory cases.

I have never set out to research student consternation or circumstance-induced aphonia. However, AR has provided me with data on this. If I were asked to list the ten most difficult classes I have ever taught in Korea, there would be many contenders for second and lower places, but first place would indisputably go to a class of young people in Incheon, where I worked for two years. This was a two-hour class that took place five days a week. As regards getting answers to questions, it was rather like getting the proverbial blood out of a stone. Dead silence prevailed for long periods, and I made use of a range of tactics forming a teacher's armory. The class was held each time in a windowless room (fairly small)

with poor air conditioning for two hours, with a ten-minute break half way through. Incapacitation of the students was almost total, but while I was teaching them I ignored the conditions and kept doing my job. I found the room stuffy, but I was not prevented from thinking and speaking. I made no effort to do any research at the time, and this all happened long before I started accidental research. I realized, at the time, that use of the prescribed textbook was impractical in the circumstances; on one occasion, I asked the class to explain to me the basic principles of baseball - not an immensely arduous task, by all accounts! I decided to let them have all the time they needed to accomplish this task; I allowed for the fact that their level was fairly low, but I was enormously surprised to find that one hour was only just about sufficient to complete this oral assignment. This was the first hour of the session; the second hour was taken up with pronunciation practice and some reading work - tasks that I thought would not be too demanding. This worked fairly well, despite the apparent exhaustion of the students. One student, when asked his name, froze in a state of petrification and was unable to make any further utterance.

To this day, I do not fully know the causes of this rather remarkable experience. Clearly, inadequate ventilation was a contributory cause; however, that in conjunction with any claustrophobic tendency does not comprehensively explain the phenomenon. I would certainly like to know a lot more about this form of capacitive degeneration. No other room was available at the time; otherwise, I would have moved the class to a more amenable location. Looking back now, I would like to know the spectral range of the fluorescent lighting and other details. In that class I learned a lot about teacher resilience in general and my own resourcefulness in particular.

Another example of an accidental finding of mine is that some students “need to be late.” Again, I have never set out to research this matter, and I must admit to being more than a little surprised at this definite result. Some individual students, when they arrive early or on time, lack the ability to concentrate hard, and they spend time looking bewildered or staring out of the window, despite much encouragement from me and from other students. However, when they are late for class they give their full attention all lesson long and learn a lot. Astonishing, but true! I guess that a sense of obligation plays a part in this. Being armed with this knowledge, I do not tell them to be on time; results are more important than slavery to the clock.

Attentiveness and aptitude can be demonstrated in many ways, particularly in young learners. In a children’s class, a girl aged nine told me that I had written the letter “t” wrongly, because that letter should be written with the horizontal bar extending to both sides of the vertical stroke (obviously, she did not use that particular language, but that is the meaning of what she said). I thus discovered by accident her remarkable sense of attention to detail, which has since come to light in other ways too.

Students who have studied other languages - French, German, Chinese etc. - often have a heightened appreciation of English grammar points; I was very well aware of this in my own case, but now I know that it is of general application.

Some misconceptions emerge without any research forethought, e.g. "correlation" between word order and ease of learning a particular language.

In pair work, in many cases each pair needs to be told who should be "A" and who "B", since otherwise they will spend the entire class time taking this momentous decision! This principle does not apply to Business English students, who in general have a far more highly developed sense of decision making.

Murphy's Law of Pairs can loosely be described as falling within the ambit of accidental research, as can its derivation/extension from the better-known Murphy's Laws.

Where are we now? We have considered "Absence" in the present subsection, and this holds the key to understanding AR. That is, nevertheless, a rather negative defining concept - lack of supply/demand. What about the positive side? AR is an exciting notional concept which can actually become a hobby.

Are you convinced that it exists? Are you developing it? Is it fun? If not, make it so. Do you think that post-conscious research is a viable activity? These are four questions for your individual consideration. I will not say any more on these just now.

### **3. BENEFITS**

#### **3.1. Stimulation of Further Research**

If I do not know something and I know that I do not know it, then I want to know it - I think this is a typical way for an active mind to work. Second-degree accidentality can come in at this point; instead of directly investigating what it is that you really want to know, why not arrange things so that there is a fair chance that you will find what you want as well as other information that may or may not be related to what you want? If it is so related, then that is a bonus, and very far from peripheral.

Further research that would not exist without AR falls into two categories:

- AR-stimulated targeted research;
- AR-stimulated further AR.

In some cases or on some projects, (a) and (b) may be concurrently initiated or stimulated - two for the price of one, so to speak.

The realization may dawn that AR is a really useful technique; what starts accidentally may flourish into a highly organized activity that will never lose its *ex natura* accidentality.

I have given some illustrations of cases where I desire to have further knowledge, based on AR findings. Self-perpetuating thirst for knowledge is without doubt a desideratum in a teacher, for only by being a good learner can a teacher

continue to be a good teacher. I do not believe in temporal separation of learning and teaching; in other words, in my view if, by way of example, there are sixteen students and one teacher in a classroom at one time for a class, there must be seventeen learners present if things are to go well. If the teacher is an established ARer, then the possibilities are limitless. In the case where we reverse-analogize learning and fluid flow, faucets need to be open constantly.

In addition to direct stimulation, where a fundamental realization obtained through AR leads to targeted further research or to second-degree-accidentality further AR, there is also a situation where pre-existing awareness is triggered by AR into a rich ground for research activity. Alone or in combination or association, AR gets things going, and this is good for all. Chaos turns into order, and “clear as mud” becomes “like crystal,” to use well-worn phrases.

### **3.2. Improvement of Current Teaching Skills**

One of the reasons why we joined KOTESOL is that we desire to become better English teachers, whether in a general context or in a specialized field, but will AR move us in that direction? Let us briefly consider that question. Targeted research, especially if any commercial factors are involved, unearths portions of information that are frequently very narrow in range and useful only for tightly defined purposes. “Is that a good thing?” we may ask. Is it better to know a lot about a little or a little about a lot? Why not remove ourselves from the group having to answer this question? Good idea? I think so. We can raise our sights without having our feet firmly in the clouds!

The real benefits of AR can be quantified in many different ways, and I will cover this aspect in a further paper (not at this conference) which will refer to the practical outcomes of initiated AR procedures. Accidentality in our sense here does not vitiate executory systems/mechanisms, as is evident from the above.

There are indeed many ways of becoming a better teacher, and AR is one of them; as is well known, no way is per se total or exclusive. This conference is unquestionably a good event for achieving this aim.

### **3.3. Reassessment of Research Priorities**

Not only do we want to know something if we know that we do not know it (cf. *supra*); some evaluation of the direction in which we need to move will also be appreciated, but that evaluation does not need to reveal all the desired information, if we are going to give AR a chance. “Go broad, not narrow” is a good motto here. If we are to maximize the effectiveness of research effort, we should think about what extra information or communication intelligence we can acquire with the same level of effort. In like manner, more information for more effort can be analyzed on a comparative quota basis and then affirmed or negated as a matter of practical decision, rather than being made the subject of automatized rejection in favor of certainty.

Any reassessment of priorities is, necessarily, a beneficial activity, since it significantly increases the level or depth of consideration given to the subject question. Once again, AR is self-evidently no exception to principles of universal application.

What are your research priorities? Have you thought about them? Do you have any, in actual fact? Are they related to the ways in which you want to become a better teacher? Are they purely academic, without practical relevance? If so, this is not necessarily something that needs to be changed - let's make no mistake about this. AR can be organized with a post-conscious aim, which is generally far better than what we might perhaps term "chaotic AR."

It is, in any event, a good idea to be flexible in setting our priorities on a specified project; in this way, we can always be looking forward to a closer approximation to full awareness of our research-oriented situation.

### **3.4. Generation of Interest in Research**

It is clear that research is not some kind of "automatic" activity in practice although, in reality, our sensory perception is operative throughout our waking hours. Why do we not make more effective use of our discerning powers? The answer appears to be connected with the idea that some people are interested in research, while others are not. When I first came to Korea as a teacher, I did not particularly associate teaching with research; to put this another way, I regarded teaching as an "activity in its own right" which was so well established that experts knew everything that could be known or discerned about it. Now I see life very differently with regard to the teaching world, which is, in fact, a pulsating vehicle of excitement with many new discoveries to be made every day. This is no exaggeration - there is a wealth of research waiting to be done. However, some of it will in all probability never come to fruition if every attempt is made on an "I want to know ..." basis, which is, paradoxically, a route to lost opportunities.

Every person needs a research philosophy, which will in most cases be related to, or interlocked with, some form of practical goal. Targeted research will not necessarily generate interest on the part of those who think of research as a deadly serious, extremely intense activity to be pursued only by dedicated researchers.

Are we stuck with this situation, or is there an escape route leading to more fertile ground? For the reasons outlined in the present paper, and for others which time does not permit to be set forth here, accidental research provides opportunities for intellectual creativity of a dynamic kind. There is no reason for anyone to suppose that this field has nothing to offer; indeed, possibilities, probabilities and opportunities abound.

## **THE AUTHOR**

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## **Techniques and Materials**

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# Free Interactive Websites and Online Quizzes: No Programming Required

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## WORKSHOP ABSTRACT

Participants will make their own website and create online quizzes during the workshop. Contrary to what many assume, this can be done at no cost, and requires no programming skills whatsoever.

Much online learning has not been successful because it fails to take advantage of the interactivity of the Internet. Static websites are little different from textbooks that happen to be online. However, any teacher with basic computer literacy can create interactive websites that allow their students, not only themselves, to actively participate, upload and revise content on the site. Thanks to new user-friendly services and software, there is no longer any need for a single webmaster to control all content.

Those who have never created their own websites before, or who think that they couldn't possibly create online quizzes are especially welcome. Those who create their own javascript quizzes may not find this presentation as useful.

## INTRODUCTION

Although well-intentioned, enthusiasts of online learning and web-based materials have perhaps made out the process to be more difficult than it really is. The creation of basic homepages has become a great deal easier than it was even a few years ago thanks to some innovative services. Creating fully interactive professional websites and online courses remains a time-consuming and complex task. However, for the average classroom teacher who wishes to add online support to class activities, the task is possible without any advanced computer skills. The workshop was an attempt to dispel the idea that it takes special skills to make homepages, and to show participants that quizzes and homepages can be created at no cost by those with minimal computer skills. The objectives of the workshop were therefore quite limited.

## OBJECTIVES

1. To create a very basic homepage using Microsoft Groups.
2. To create a simple quiz using Hot Potatoes quiz generation software.
3. To complete these tasks without any knowledge of programming languages used for webpages such as HTML or JAVA.
4. Furthermore, to demonstrate that this can be done at no cost.

## FORMAT

The workshop was done in a computer room with 33 working computers. Attendance was about 40 with some latecomers. I would like to thank the conference organizers for making the extra effort to acquire the facilities needed. The workshop was designed to be as hands on as possible. From the author's experience workshops that merely show or describe the possible uses of the technology are not as convincing as those that allow learners to do the task for themselves. The presenter took the first ten minutes to introduce the content of the lesson and the objectives. The participants then accessed a webpage created with Microsoft Groups containing the instructions for the tasks. The remaining 45 minutes were spent doing the tasks. During that time the presenter circulated and answered questions and troubleshooted any problems.

Detailed directions for completing the tasks can be found at <http://groups.msn.com/HanyangEnglish/> click on CONFERENCE. The page is an example of the type of site promoted in this workshop.

In order to minimize technological problems, two different tasks were devised. One required an internet connection and the other working from downloaded software on a harddrive. Participants were instructed to switch between tasks if they had internet connection problems. In order to get a sense of the level of knowledge of the participants, they were asked to rate themselves on their familiarity with computers from a scale of one to five. I then asked the participants to direct questions to those who identified themselves as comfortable using the computers as well as to myself. Participants were also asked to work in pairs to help each other solve the tasks. I believe this contributed to the effectiveness of the workshop.

A handout was also provided in case the internet connection was inadequate. The presenter had also prepared a paper-based version of the presentation in case of total equipment failure. Thankfully the facilities and internet connection was adequate except for minor problems with the MSN Groups site.

### Task 1. Homepage Creation

MSN Groups pages allow users not only to participation in bulletin board discussions, but also to generate instant webpages. The options also allow any user to upload content among a number of lists and formats that can be custom-

ized. The KOTESOL Writing and Editing Special Interest Group has a page that allows participants to note which Journals are available at Korean Universities, for example. <http://groups.msn.com/kotesolwesig/journals.msnw>

The possibilities for collaborative tasks have not even begun to be explored with this function. Here is how some other teachers are using this free service. <http://groups.msn.com/Browse?CatId=281>

## Task 2. Quiz Creation

*Hot Potatoes* is the name of a suite of tools that automatically generates online quizzes of the type that can be found at <http://a4esl.org/> The software is free for educators and can be downloaded at the following address: <http://web.uvic.ca/hrd/hotpot/#downloads> Participants can also take a tutorial at <http://web.uvic.ca/hrd/halfbaked/tutorials.htm> that contains much more information than the simple task suggested in the workshop. You can view how others are using the software at the following site: <http://web.uvic.ca/hrd/halfbaked/sites.htm>

## RESULTS

The workshop could have been described as productive chaos. Participants were free to work at their own pace and ask questions at any time. Most were able to complete the tasks. Some seemed genuinely surprised at how easy it can be. A few experienced a problem with an error message generated by MSN groups. This caused confusion as to whether their webpage had actually been loaded. A number of individuals raced ahead and started more ambitious quiz pages. A few participants got a bit too ambitious and went beyond the scope of the simple tasks I had devised. Consequently, they didn't finish in time. Overall the presenter was pleased with the results. The self-paced nature of the workshop allowed the learners to concentrate on what they found most valuable. I believe this may have been more effective than going through the whole process step-by-step as a group. The facilitator went around constantly and answered questions for the entire 45 minutes. Participants also helped each other solve problems, which was a great help.

The presentation went a bit more smoothly because the presenter was able to download and install software during the lunch break saving a few valuable minutes. Conference organizers and KOTESOL chapter groups might consider scheduling presentations requiring software or audio-visual equipment just after breaks or plenaries to enable presenters to check the equipment beforehand.

## LESSONS LEARNED

Informal comments after the presentation revealed that participants liked the idea of jumping right into the task and figuring it out for themselves.

Webpages are generally superior to PowerPoint presentations or handouts. Handouts are popular, but presentations put up on webpages can be quickly forwarded and distributed. In addition, workshop content can continue to be reviewed. Conference proceedings are too short to allow for the detailed instructions that may be required for technology-based presentations. Imagine if all keynote and plenary speakers had their text on webpages that could be reviewed or referred to anytime rather than as PowerPoint presentations. Powerpoint presentations can also be launched from webpages.

However, the presenter could have used the beam projector more effectively to answer questions by demonstrating the steps involved. There was a conflict inherent in the structure of the workshop between stopping and demonstrating problems with the beam projector and letting participants just go ahead with the tasks.

### **Why MSN Groups?**

Some KOTESOL members are familiar with groups pages. KOTESOL Special Interest groups are already using them such as [http://groups.yahoo.com/group/KoTESOL\\_TED\\_SIG/SIG](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/KoTESOL_TED_SIG/SIG)

Two of the most well known are Yahoo groups and Microsoft Groups (formerly known as communities.) MSN Groups allows the manager of the site to create homepages automatically; however, Yahoo Groups does not. Yahoo also has more intrusive advertising. MSN Groups also has more functions for lists and other types of content.

### **What Makes It Different From Other Websites?**

On a Groups site anyone who has joined the group can upload content. It does not rest on a single webmaster. The manager of the page can designate any member an assistant manager so they can create pages too. There is no single "Webmaster" anymore, only a community of users.

### **Why *Hot Potatoes*?**

It's free. There are other competing services that provide more services but they are not free to educators. An example of a popular pay service that enables teachers to create interactive questions is <http://www.quia.com/>. However, it is fee-based.

### **LIMITATIONS OF THE WORKSHOP**

Quiz questions created with *Hot Potatoes* cannot be placed directly on MSN Groups pages. This requires using another homepage service such as Tripod <http://www.tripod.lycos.com/> or Yahoo <http://geocities.yahoo.com/home/>. Tripod is the best service I have found. However, the *Hot Potatoes* files can be uploaded as

documents, emailed to students, or loaded onto disks for use without any additional software. The software can save files as HTML format files which can be viewed with any internet browser.

Half-baked Software, the creators of the *Hot Potatoes* suite, have now created a web-hosting service where participants are able to upload their quizzes and get results from students taking quizzes. There is a fee for this service, however.

A few individuals wanted to do a bit more than the simple tasks intended for the class.

The presenter was not able to fully help every participant who had questions; however, the amount of individual contact time with participants and time spent answering questions was a great deal more than traditional workshop formats.

## **THE AUTHOR**

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## **OTHER LINKS OF NOTE:**

### **Interesting examples of future possibilities for quiz creation**

<http://web.uvic.ca/hrd/eurocall2001/FutureExercise/>

### **Another innovative type of instructional software for use by teachers.**

<http://www.halfbakedsoftware.com/index.htm?qandary/>

### **Mindmapping software**

Not only can this produce mindmaps, but they can be saved as HTML pages and uploaded on a website (not free). <http://www.mindjet.com/>

### **For further information on mindmaps**

<http://www.jcu.edu.au/studying/services/studyskills/mindmap/index.html>



# Sailing Techniques on *Titanic*: Teaching with Video

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**DAVID BERRY**

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## **ABSTRACT**

This paper shows how a teacher can easily exploit a video to help students learn English. For the purpose of this paper, the video is the movie *Titanic*. Video has been a standard resource in the English-language classroom for many years. But teachers may not be clear on how to use videos in the classroom effectively. First, this paper discusses background issues related to how video can help the student learn English. The two issues mentioned include how video helps students and choosing a suitable video. Out of the many videos available for the teacher, she needs to choose the one most useful for her teaching purposes. Next, the paper provides a bird's eye view of the different kinds of activities available. Finally, the paper runs through a sample lesson that has been used or "tested" in a number of classes.

## **INTRODUCTION**

Many teachers use (or want to use) video in the classroom. After speaking with many teachers, it became clear that many teachers needed a clearer understanding of how to use video. They sometimes decided to use videos at the last minute without much thought about how to integrate them into their lesson. Videos were confined to a few minutes at the end or beginning to make the students "feel excited". In other cases, the whole class time was taken up with watching a whole movie without any student interaction or input at all. Both these extremes have some merits if they relax or help the students. But clearly they are not effective ways to fully exploit a video to help students learn English. There are many effective ways to use video to help students learn English. Throughout this paper, examples from the movie *Titanic* are used to illustrate approaches or techniques mentioned. Before considering these effective ways, let's first consider how video helps students.

## **BACKGROUND ISSUES**

### **How Video Helps Students**

Most importantly, video motivates students to learn English. It stimulates class communication and discussion. Students want to discuss what they saw. Video does this by giving students the chance to experience English-language

situations more directly and personally. Students get more directly involved in peoples' lives. Students feel greater empathy with the characters they see. Video provides the students with a visual context. With other media like audio tapes or pictures, it is more difficult for students to get involved in other peoples' lives because there's little context (static without visual cues). An example of a contextual video clip where students can get involved in other peoples' lives is when a man meets a woman for the first time. In *Titanic*, this is when the hero Jack tries to stop the heroine Rose from jumping off *Titanic* to her death. Students see all the body language (like when Jack throws his cigarette in the sea) and hears (maybe!) some of the spoken words (Jack explaining how cold the water is). This context is especially useful for elementary students who desperately need context to help them understand the scene.

Another way that video helps students is by using authentic material in the classroom. Instead of using stilted textbook dialogues, the students see how native speakers actually speak and interact in real-life situations. When native speakers use English, many unexpected things happen. For example, they might repeat words or stop suddenly only to restart a second later. A video clip captures this natural speaking style.

Video brings the real world into the classroom. Students see how things happen in the real world through the eyes of the video. This better prepares students to communicate successfully in an English-speaking situation. Also, a good video may include different varieties of English. In *Titanic*, the crew uses cockney British English while many of the passengers use American English. Another character, Molly Brown, uses a lot of southern US slang.

Students are helped with video by communicating cultural values, attitudes, and behaviour. These more subtle aspects of language may only be clearly seen and understood through video. For example, in *Titanic*, students see the relationship and expectations between a daughter and mother.

### **Which Video to Choose?**

Teachers have a multitude of reasons for choosing a video. Two main reasons are the most salient. First, a teacher loves the video and wants to use it to teach English. This is the reason the author choose *Titanic*. Second, a teacher wants to teach a specific structure (a grammar point, for instance) and finds a perfect scene that illustrates this structure (such as Jack convincing Rose why she should not jump).

For whatever reason, a teacher needs to consider the following factors when selecting a video.

First, the video needs to be recent, exciting, and engaging. Recent because students can better relate to a recent, living actor (like Leonardo DiCapiro) than an older actor (like Vivian Leigh). Many students view a video as not as legitamite a teaching tool as, say, a textbook. Students often think a video is entertainment for a tired Friday afternoon. If this becomes a greater issue, then the teacher may

need to justify using the video to teach English. The teacher can explain how a video provides real context, real communicating (such as the many useful idioms), and real culture, etc.

Second, a flexible video needs to be chosen. A flexible video is one that can be used with many different language activities. The video needs to have various speaking speeds but all of these must be clear. A variety of characters would be helpful. Different speech types such as slang, casual, and polite would help design different activities. The situations should be easily recognizable and everyday. These are situations that students could recognize such as Rose and her fiancée Cal quarreling while eating breakfast. A video with unfamiliar situations (such as in the *Natural Born Killers*) would confuse students.

Interestingly enough, many students are concerned about the language level of a video. They think they need a low-level video such as a children's movie. But this is the furthest from the truth. The language level of a movie is not that important. What is more important is the activities that the teacher uses to use with the movie. If teachers choose carefully graded activities, the video becomes useful for them.

## MAKING VIDEO LESSONS

There is no shortage of video activities to keep any class of students busy. At last count, 144 activities are listed in the two video resource books listed in Resources. But what the following section attempts to do is to provide the teacher with a bird's eye view of the different types of activities. This helps the teacher to become familiar with the different activities and when to use each one.

To make this section as user-friendly as possible, the various groups of activities are listed with a brief description.

1. Preview (printed picture / freeze frame) – brainstorm background info
  - Predicting story / conversation from picture  
(Example questions: Who are they? What are they doing? What are they saying?)
  
2. Active viewing — while watching – early stage to engage students
  - sequencing events or conversations
    - \_\_\_ Jack approaches Rose
    - \_\_\_ Rose climbs over the railing
    - \_\_\_
    - ...
  - Word Scramble: write important vocabulary on sheet of paper – give to students. They read sheet and write speaker or said sentence.
  - What did you see? – Students list what they saw

3. Vocabulary *or* grammar (review or development)
  - synonym match, in the mood, what are they like?, matching, prepared lists (mark present words, put list in order, predict video from words), word scramble (memorize words, find speaker or sentence)
4. Pronunciation – Hot spots: biggest obstacle for understanding
  - Marking pronunciation on script: intonation, linking, reduction, stress
5. Listening / speaking
  - a. Viewing comprehension –
    - Watchers & hearers: sit back-to-back silently watching & narrating
    - Story-telling: narrating story (using new vocab, telling story from character’s point of view — but new vocab often limits)
    - Working with script: Dialogue cards, role play (look up & say), cloze dialogue matching
  - b. Discussion: opinion, ranking values (why go to university? – episode 6)
6. Reading & writing
  - a. Comprehension of related reading material (real history, ads, news)
  - b. Note-taking & writing composition
7. Cross-cultural concerns – awareness, comparison
8. Testing – “I use it to test listening, pronunciation marking, vocabulary use”

## NOTE

All the lessons mentioned in this paper and many more are accessible at the following website: <http://www.geocities.com/titanicenglish>

## THE AUTHOR

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# Magic in EFL: Creating Communicative Contexts for Learning

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Making the shift from grammar - translation to communicative learning can be a struggle for both the learners and the facilitator. At this crucial time of change, innovative tools must be added to the facilitator's "tool belt". Magic is one of these tools. When creating a communicative classroom in the target language, we often find ourselves looking for creative ways to turn a foreign environment into one that is more conducive to the learning of the target language. Magic can help create the illusion of this different environment. With simple objects found in the home or classroom, it is very simple to create unique "teachable moments" in the communicative classroom. "Let the Magic Begin!!"

## **WHY MAGIC?**

First of all, people love magic. Young children especially love magic as do the young at heart. Secondly, people stop, listen and pay particular attention to magic. Magic is captivating, and being able to captivate the foreign language learner is an important skill for the EFL teacher to develop. Thirdly, when delivering a magic routine in a target language, the learners actively listen in the target language. Fourthly, magic can easily become a reward for appropriate behavior and good work in class. In a final note, experience has shown that it is often shy, inwardly-focused learners that rise and shine with the help of magic; and it is surprising to see how the magic can bring them out of their shells and into the limelight. I have seen incredible magical transformations of individuals...

## **HOW CAN MAGIC BE APPLIED TO THE EFL CLASSROOM?**

### **Magic for Illustrating English Structures**

Many English structures can be illustrated using magic. One example is prepositions of place that can be explained using coin magic. The simple slight of hand coin magic can be used to explain difficult concepts such as "through" and "in" by passing a coin through one's hand and pulling a coin out from the inside of a learner's ear.

## **Magic for Communicative Interaction and Following Directions**

When an learner volunteer is included in the magic routine they become a participant in an interactive communicative activity. In order to participate they must follow directions from the magician and understand what is being asked of them.

## **Magic for Public Speaking**

One of the benefits of using magic in the EFL classroom is its use in public speaking. With magic there is a transformation that occurs through the magic routine. Unlike a traditional oral speech presentation, where a text is memorized and repeated, a magic routine has interactive elements with audience volunteers. There is also a natural emotional transformation that occurs during a magic routine which may include elements of surprise, disappointment and joy.

## **USING MAGIC IN THE EFL CLASSROOM**

Now that the theories behind magic in EFL have been explained it is time to look at some concrete examples. Before beginning it is important to examine the magician's code.

### **The Fundamentals of Performing Magic or “Magician’s Code”**

The learners doing magic should clearly understand and follow this code. It is important that the teacher, when performing magic, also follows the code, so as to instill in the learners.

1. Never reveal the trick to the audience..
2. Never repeat the trick in the same performance.
3. Never make someone look bad. Always make the audience the star and make certain that no one is made fun of or feels that they have been tricked in a negative way.

As well it is important for the magic newcomer not to be overwhelmed by the experience of performing magic in front of a group. The following is some advice for the teacher magician:

- Practice! Practice! Practice! At first you should practice your magic routine at home, alone and preferably in front of a mirror.
- Confidence is the key to magic success. You should feel confident in your ability to perform, whatever the level of your performance.
- Always remember that first and foremost, you are demonstrating magic as a way of facilitating language learning. Even if you mess up, the law of averages suggests that this will happen at least a few times anyway, so go with it. Have fun, and use the experience to help the learners acquire more language. In this manner, you will always come out on the winning end.

## **MAGIC ROUTINES DEVELOPED FOR THE EFL CLASSROOM**

The following routine is great for illustrating prepositions of place.

### **Slight of Hand Coin Magic: Palming a Coin**

1. Choose a large coin such as a 500 won coin, Canadian Toonie, or US half dollar.
2. Place the coin directly in the center of the palm of your hand.
3. Bring the lower joint of your thumb slightly inward, while keeping your thumb as straight as possible.
4. Turn your hand over so that you are looking at the top of your hand.
5. Try to keep all of your fingers straight and as open as possible, so as to conceal the fact that you have a coin resting in your palm.
6. This may take some practice before you get the right feeling. It may take some time to exercise this lower thumb muscle, so that you are able to easily hold the coin in your palm without dropping it.
7. Take a similar coin and place that on the top of your hand, while your coin is still concealed in your palm.
8. Now you are ready to explain the preposition “through”
9. Yes you guessed it. You place your other hand over the coin on top of your hand. Pushing your hand down on the coin on top of your hand, you make a forceful turning motion.
10. While making the turning motion, you move your thumb slightly outwards and “Voila!” the coin has passed “through” your hand magically.
11. Now, what to do with the other coin? There are many possibilities depending on how much time you want to spend learning sleight of hand techniques. In the beginning, the easiest move is to simply keep the hand on top, but keep the pushing and turning hand in place when the coin is released.
12. Turn both hands over while keeping them together, so that the hand that was on top is now on the bottom with the palm of both hands facing you.
13. Pull the two hands away from each other and make a fist with each hand.
14. As you are pulling the hands away, drag the coin into the fist of palm of the lower hand.
15. Now you are ready to demonstrate the preposition “in”.
16. You may use your imagination here to explain why there is another coin “in” you hand.
17. As your slight of hand improves and you are able to better conceal the disappearance of this coin, you may even try pulling it “out” of someone’s ear or show that it is “inside” their pocket.

### **Card Magic and the Key Card Principle**

The following routine is great for communicative interaction. It is simple for the teacher/magician to learn and easy to teach to EFL learners. Simply stated,

you memorize a key card in the deck, without the audience catching you, and you use this card as a marker to help you locate the unknown card. That is the card that a volunteer choose from the deck.

### **Language and Key Card Magic**

The best magic routines are the ones that are simple. Yes, in magic, as in life, “simple is best.” Once you learn the simple magic routine, you can then enhance the routine with language that is specific to your learning objective and the specific level of your learners. Here it is, without further ado, the one, the only, the amazingly simple ... “Key Card Magic Routine”:

1. You secretly look at the card on the bottom of the deck.
2. You ask a volunteer to choose a card from the deck.
3. You ask the volunteer to memorize the card and show it to the audience.
4. You ask a volunteer to then cut the deck into two equal piles.
5. You point to the pile that DOES NOT HAVE your card on the bottom and ask the volunteer to place the card there.
6. You place the other pile on top of his pile.
7. Now your key card, the card that was on the bottom, the card that you memorized, at the beginning is on top of his card.
8. Now turn over the deck of cards and hold them in your left hand.
9. Ask the volunteer to think of the card really hard.
10. Begin to deal the cards face up, so that you can see the pictures and numbers, in a pile.
11. Stop after a few cards and say it is not working. Say that maybe you need more help. Ask the audience to help by thinking really hard of the card.
12. Begin to deal the cards face up, so that you can see the pictures and numbers, in a pile. When you come to the key card, the volunteer’s card will be the next in sequence.
13. Hold up that card and ask: “Is this the card?”
14. Thank the audience and the volunteer, especially, for their help and state that they were really thinking hard and made the magic work.

Yes, it is that simple.

### **Adapting the Routine for Multi-leveled Language Learners**

#### **Beginners**

1. “Coaching” is the key word here. It is very important to do the action of the command when directing the volunteer through the routine. You don’t need to translate, merely show the action that the volunteer is required to perform. The actions follow a logical sequence and should be easy to follow. You may want to ask your most logically-minded student to be your first volunteer. The others will catch on as they watch.
2. Keep the language simple, such as “Choose a card”. “Place the card on top” (motion to the top), “Think of the card” (Pointing to your head).

3. Use clear affirmations, “yes”, “right”, “great” or nod your head, to make certain that they understand when they have done what you expect them to do.

### **Intermediate**

1. Simple is still the best as far as language goes, but you should be able to ease off on the “coaching”, pushing them to figure out what you expect, solely from the language you use.

### **Advanced**

1. Building on the intermediate model, with no coaching, make the language in your requests more complex such as “Pick a card, any card.” As much as possible use language that parallels native speaking in this context such as: “Yes that’s right. Do we ever have a great magic show for you today. First of all, we need a volunteer. Don’t be shy. Step right up. What is your name, sir?”

**Note:** Remember that it is important to use the language to challenge your students. The actions that you request of them should remain simple, while the language you speak is challenging. Oh, and remember to enjoy yourself and HAVE FUN!!!!!!

## **MAGIC FOR PUBLIC SPEAKING**

It’s often difficult to find oral production activities in the communicative EFL classroom that challenge the learner without appearing too threatening. Ladies and gentleman...Welcome to...

### **“The EFL Magic Show”**

Where even the most shy learners shine as magicians. In true communicative learning fashion English becomes the medium, their necessary “tool “ for performing the show. Herein lies the true magic. The learners are having so much fun preparing and presenting their magic show that they do not worry about their English oral production!!!! Shyness disappears as the EFL magician takes the stage, confident in their knowledge of the magical illusion they will perform.

### **The Benefits of Magic for Oral Production**

1. Magic performance allows the learners an opportunity to practice English in a real context that is both inter-active and fun.
2. The language used in the interactions can be controlled, thus reducing the fear-factor for the learner.
3. The language of the magic performance can be adapted to suit beginners to advanced students.
4. Magic performance in a foreign language can be a real self-confidence builder. The combined success of overcoming the challenge of performing magic suc-

cessfully, along with doing it in one's other language often carries the learner further down the "road of risk taking" in future language learning situations.

5. In the case of advanced learners the "unknown element of magic" may be exploited. This is when the trick does not go according to plan and the learner is forced to think on their feet.
6. It's a whole lot of fun!!!!

While the focus is on oral production, written production also plays a role in the total learning outcome of this project. Firstly, learners will be using written English to construct their "magic routines". Secondly, learners will use English to create the magic posters that will promote their "Magic Show".

### **Suggestions for the Evaluation of the Oral Production**

Formative: Explain to the learners that you will be evaluating their use of English during all of the preparation time allotted for "The Magic Show". When they use English appropriately, acknowledge this.

Summative: Evaluate the learners on the final outcome of their oral presentation, "The Magic Show".

### **Suggestions for the Evaluation of the Written Production**

Formative: Explain to the learners that you will be evaluating their use of written English while they are preparing their text for "The Magic Show". Evaluate their use of English resources to learn new magic-related words for their written production. Resources may include the internet and magic books. Before they memorize their text, collect it, correct any errors and assign a grade.

Summative: Evaluate the final outcome of each learner's magic poster.

### **Preparations**

#### **Preparing the "Magic Routine":**

1. As in any writing activity, it is always a good idea to start with some "brainstorming", using the board to write down any vocabulary that the students already know on the subject of "magic". This should form the basis of the writing texts. You will need to add some words of your own and it is also a good idea to send the students to find more vocabulary in magic books or on the internet. Inform the students how the vocabulary will be used. They are to invent a magic name for themselves, create a title for their magic show, and use common magic performance language in their magic routine.
2. Once the vocabulary is gathered, return to the board to help the students put their vocabulary into the proper context of their routine.
3. Have the student choose their "Magic Name" and the name of their "Magic Show".

4. Begin the text writing by offering samples of “intro’s”. They should not copy these “intro’s” word by word, but adapt them to make them unique to their “Magic Routine”. Here are some samples of “intro’s” that may be adapted to any magic routine. They are placed in order according to learning level to show how it is possible to adapt the language according to the English proficiency of your specific learners.

**Beginner level intro**

Magician: Good morning (or variation of greeting depending on the time of day)...Welcome to the...(specific name of magic show)

Audience: Applause

Magician: Thank you. My name is...(magician’s specific magic name)

Audience: Applause

Magician: Thank you. Today I will perform the...(name of the specific magic trick)...

**Intermediate level intro**

Magician: Good morning (or variation of greeting depending on the time of day)...And welcome to the...(specific name of magic show) ladies and gentlemen.

Audience: Applause

Magician: Thank you very much. As you can see, I am a magician and my name is...(magician’s specific magic name)

Audience: Applause

Magician: Thank you very much. You are very kind. Today I will perform the...(name of the specific magic trick)...

**Advanced level intro**

Magician: Good morning everyone (or variation of greeting depending on the time of day)...Thank you all for coming out today and welcome to the...(specific name of magic show) ladies and gentlemen.

Audience: Applause

Magician: Thank you very much. As you can see from my appearance, I am a magician and I am known as...(magician’s specific magic name)

Audience: Applause

Magician: Thank you very much. You are too, too kind. You are in store for an incredible show today, folks. Today I will be performing the...(name of the specific magic trick)...

5. The use of audience volunteers is extremely important for the success of the “Magic Routine”. Firstly, they provide a speaker for English interaction. Secondly, the audience will feel much more a part of the success of the show when they are actively participating. The specific language of requesting a volunteer is the next component of the “Magic Routine”. The following is a beginner-level sample for requesting an audience volunteer.

Magician: A volunteer, please. (an audience member comes forward)

Magician: Thank you. What is your name?

Volunteer: (states their name)

Magician: Thank you... (states their name, claps and motions to audience to clap)

6. The next part of the “Magic Routine” is specific to each performer’s magic trick. Depending on their language level the learner will require a certain amount of assistance from the facilitator in formulating their specific presentation.
7. “Extro’s” or endings to the routine will also depend on the language level of the learner. Each “extro” should include the following:

Magician: That is all. Thank you very much..(name of volunteer)

Magician: Thank you very much (to the audience)

Magician: Good-bye (or another form of salutation)

### **Making Posters**

When creating a poster advertising “The Magic Show”, each learner should begin by examining the following “Wh” questions: Who, What, When, and Where. Each of these questions needs to be answered in the poster. The learner should be given the freedom to design the poster to reflect their individual “Magic Routine”.

### **The Audience**

If you feel confident that the students are going to be well prepared, encourage them to invite family and friends to see the show. Otherwise an audience of other students from your school will provide an ample selection of volunteers. An added bonus is that if they are really excited about the event, you may have enough interest to do a magic activity with them in the future.

### **Staging the “Magic Show”**

1. It is best to choose a performance time that falls at the end of a long teaching period in your regular teaching schedule, if at all possible. This will allow you the all important last-minute preparation time. Otherwise, choose a time that is most convenient for the students and spectators.
2. Costumes may be created using articles of clothing that the learners already possess. Black clothing is always good. Also it is simple to make cone-shaped wizard hats with construction paper.
3. Decorating the magic presentation area of the classroom will help to create a magical mood for the performers and audience members.
4. Magical music or any type of music in English will help to create a magical mood and work as a cue to the performer as to when it is their turn on stage. You can simply play the music between routines and stop the music when it is time for the next performer to go on stage.

## Videotaping

Videotaping the show can be quite beneficial. It is a good record to help you prepare for future magic shows. You can show it to future groups. As well, it can be a valuable teaching tool. You can replay the tape to the students and have them play “spot the speaking errors” game. If your school has a website and you use a digital camera, you can even place photos on your site.

## Some Specific Hints

1. Choosing a “Magic Name” for each performer: Such adjectives as amazing, incredible, fantastic, the world’s best, magnificent, superb, outstanding and marvelous may be suggested.
2. Choosing a name for the “Magic Show”: The adjectives suggested above are useful here, too.
3. Making a magic poster: This should be done at least a week before the “Magic Show” and should include the learner’s “Magic Name” and the name of the “Magic Show”.

## STEP-BY-STEP INSTRUCTIONS FOR PREPARING “THE MAGIC SHOW” IN THE EFL CLASSROOM:

1. Introduce the idea of “magic” by performing it for your learners regularly.
2. Once the learners are excited about “magic” ask them if they would like to learn some “magic” tricks that they can easily perform at home for their family and friends.
3. (Later) Ask the learners how they did performing the “magic” at home. Was it fun?
4. If the experience was positive continue on to the next step. If the experience was negative examine the reason why. You may need to practice the simple magic tricks again, offering specific pointers to help them with their performance before sending them out to practice on new family and friends. It is important that the learners develop a personal desire to perform “magic”. Once the desire is there, it is safe to continue to “Step 5”.
5. The success in “Step 4” will determine the level of difficulty in the magic tricks that you teach to the group next. You may teach each learner, individually, having them write down the language that you dictate, or simply hand out written explanations on how to do the magic tricks, allowing them to adapt the language for their specific performance.
6. Encourage the learners to practice their new magic tricks and to create a “Magic Name” for themselves.
7. “Brainstorm” magic words. Some common ones are “Abracadabra”, “Shazam” and “Hocus Pocus”. Encourage the learners to search the internet or look in magic books to find other language specific to performing magic.

8. Explain the language that is common for each “Magic Show”
9. Have the learners write out the language specific to their “Magic Show” along with the common language from “Step 8”.
10. Learners should practice their “Magic Routines” individually.
11. Learners should divide into groups of three or four and practice their “Magic Routines” with one another.
12. Learners should memorize their “Magic Routines” as homework and continue to practice at home.
13. Learners should make their posters and have their rough copies checked by the facilitator before doing a final copy.
14. Learners should return to practicing in small groups of three or four. This time with different groups than previously.
15. Learners should be encouraged to make costumes for the “Magic Show”. At this time you may also choose to decorate the classroom in magical way.
16. For the final practice, or dress rehearsal, the learners should do a complete run through “in costume” and following the running order of the “Magic Show”. If music is going to be used in the “Magic Show”, it should be tried out at this time.
17. Appropriate emotional responses in context: For the intermediate and advanced learners it is important that they take a step away from memorizing a text and enter the world of natural speech. Magic provides a great opportunity for this departure. Learners must be encouraged to react with surprise when the magic happens, disappointed when something appears to be going wrong and full of joy when it finally works. They should be encouraged to have fun with their routine, even “ham it up a bit” making it funny and fun for themselves and the audience.
18. Preparing for the unexpected: In a magic show the most learning occurs when the routine does not go as planned and the learner is forced to improvise. This is difficult to plan for. One suggestion is to take the learner through scenarios where the routine does not go as planned so that they have experience improvising through these pitfalls.
19. You are now ready to bring in the audience and stage your “Magic Show”.

“Break a leg” and have fun!!!

## THE AUTHOR

*Stephen Fergusson began teaching EFL and learning FFL (French as a Foreign Language) in 1986. In 1990, he received his TESL Certificate from Concordia University, where he studied the communicative approach. Ten years later, while teaching FFL in the Yukon, he encountered similar shifts from grammar-translation to communicative second language learning. Here he discovered magic and its applications to second language learning. Stephen has given workshops to FFL teachers in the Yukon on using magic in the classroom. Before relocating to Korea, he developed educational programs for a magic and clown college in Vancouver, BC.*

# Unlocking the Mystery of English Idioms

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## **ABSTRACT**

An area that many English language instructors find difficult to address is the topic of English idioms in current English conversation. There are several reasons for this but the most notable reason has been the difficulty in teaching word groupings, in an effective way. This explains why sometimes idioms are under-valued but this does not have to be the case. During the past three years I have worked extensively to illustrate a pattern of relationships between word groupings, in particular idioms, that would allow for a more comprehensive method of instruction. This paper reviews this work and discussed a multi-layered grouping of idioms in relation to the significance given to the key components of the word grouping.

## **INTRODUCTION**

There are reasonably clear rules of grammar for the structure of formal written English. Rules may remain unchanged but their application in the changing environment of practical language usage does not. In this organic environment language structures as firmly established as sentences and paragraphs fall down. Even the long established order of single word vocabulary falls subject to context and relationships to other words. Understanding becomes more contextual in nature where much of the information is implied through a common knowledge and understanding. In this environment the phenomena of word groupings often dominates the language.

How should we approach the problem of instructing word groupings? Traditionally we have stressed the long established rules of grammar learning the majority of our vocabulary by studying single word meanings in the context of the sentence structure. Students believe they are learning proper English but in truth by focusing away from word groupings students lack a key skill and understanding in the practical application of English. Translating word for word between languages often strips away the meaning intended in the communication. In authentic English communication much of the meaning is conveyed through word groupings. Not only do word groups give their own unique meaning, but they often reinforce key themes and accommodate implied knowledge common to the speaker and receiver.

## IDIOMS

Probably the most difficult word groupings to understand are those that are idiomatic. Because of this the main focus of my research has been on idiomatic groupings.

Idioms are confusing to the learner because the meaning of the individual words will often be familiar to them but the meaning of these words in combination is not as transparent as they may believe, for example the idiom *turn on*. The individual words *turn* and *on* are probably well understood but in combination their meaning is very different than what one might expect depending on the context of its application. One meaning may be to allow the flow of electricity, fluid, or gas, as in “Can you *turn on* the light?” The same combination can also refer to initiating sexual excitement as in “Your new boyfriend is a real *turn on*?” They are two completely different meanings where neither one could be logically understood with only a knowledge of the individual words *turn* and *on*.

There are an extensive number of idioms in the English language and it would be impractical for a non-native speaker to seriously consider learning them all. This is particularly true for the idioms attributed to regions and special groups within native English speaking society. It is wise to only attempt to learn these specialized idioms when it becomes necessary for your day-to-day communications.

It is impractical to attempt to learn the full range of idioms or other word groupings but it is essential to have some understanding of the more basic and common ones. To make this process less formidable, I recommend the learner **not** consider the following:

- word groupings that can be reasonably understood through direct word for word translation
- most one word idioms that can be found in a competent translation dictionary
- regional based idioms <sup>(1)</sup>
- most idioms associated only with specific groups in society
- idioms that are dated and not in current common use
- proverbial idioms <sup>(2)</sup>
- obscure, silly or awkward idioms.

This limits the number of idioms to a more workable and realistic number. It is obvious that the choice of which idioms are included and excluded in the reference guide that I developed was at the author’s discretion and I certainly would not suggest that the list is any better or worse than another, but I do suggest that it is a reasonably comprehensive selection.

### Why Are There Idioms?

Idioms add a sense of individual and community personality that is usually absent from more formal English and this allows individual expression and bonding between people through an implied understanding of a common history and

culture. Idioms give a feeling of comfort and belonging. This is why conversation often feels more friendly and personal when idioms are used. The expressions ‘Drop by my place’ or ‘Come over later’ seems friendlier than ‘Come to my home for a visit’. Finally new idioms are often developed simply because new items are developed or situations occur where the meaning cannot be adequately described by one of the existing words in the language. Fortunately such new word groupings are usually logical even when they are not immediately transparent.

### **The Implied and Reinforcing Power of Idioms**

Consider the phrase *come in*. In isolation it conveys an invitation to enter a private or restricted place for some kind of visit where the duration and nature of the visit are not specified. The implied information may refer to a previous conversation or simply be implied by what is considered a common understanding for that specific situation.

Now consider the phrase *come in and visit*. There is no added information, note that the duration and nature of the meeting are still only implied. Taken literally the meaning is an invitation to enter and visit. This would sound overly repetitive but when the same meaning is conveyed with the use of an idiom it allows for a reinforcement of the message without this problem.

### **Phrasal Verbs**

The word grouping *come in* belongs to a special classification of idioms called prepositional (or phrasal) verbs. A phrasal verb contains a verb and one or more prepositional or adverbial particles. Verbal phrases are the most common and universal form of idioms used and there are an extensive number of possible combinations. Fortunately many combinations are not used and many of those that are commonly used can be understood relatively easily.

## **UNLOCKING THE MYSTERY OF ENGLISH IDIOMS – THE UMI PROGRAM**

I believe that a lot of the problem associated with the learning of idioms and word groupings generally, lies in inadequate programs of study and the associated support materials. This is why I have developed a program (the UMI Program) that I believe can help fill this gap in the training of word groupings.

What is unique about my proposed program? First the focus of study is a relatively small number of idioms and collocation phrases that are most common and current (approximately 3500). Half the training focuses exclusively on phrasal verbs. Phrasal verbs are studied from three different views (by particle and meaning, by verb and meaning, and by general meaning). The second half of the training considers other idioms and collocational phrases where the idioms are viewed by key features and meaning, reference and meaning, and general meaning. Other collocational phrases are grouped by formality and situational use.

The program was developed for more senior, university, ESL students. The material assumes a limited exposure to current English idioms by the student. As time progresses and this is less the case the course time can be reduced and the material may be introduced at a lower level. The workbooks can also be used for self-study with CD support but this is only a secondary audience.

## **Program Support Material**

The supporting textbooks consist of a reference manual and two workbooks, one on phrasal verbs and the second on other common word groupings. The reference manual consists of approx. 3000 to 3500 of the most common English word groupings in current use. Each word grouping has a brief description of its commonly understood meaning and an example of its use. Entries are given in both English and the local language.

**Book 1 – Phrasal Verbs**, examines phrasal verbs from three broad headings by particle root, verb root, and general meaning. Within each broad head are sub-sections where related phrasal verbs are grouped by common meaning. Other word groupings are also introduced in the section for general meaning.

**Book 2 – Other Common Word Groupings**, examines idioms and collocation phrases according to grammatical structure or central themes. Once again each section clusters closely related word groupings by meaning and discusses the common elements they share. The final section examines common collocation phrases that were not previously discussed.

Proposed additional support materials include an instructor's guide, a UMI program for children, video and CD support, and an on-line web site support.

## **How the Program Works**

The greatest challenge in the instruction of idioms is showing the relationship of word groupings to others with similar meaning. There must be a sense of relevance and orientation or the word grouping simply won't be remembered. The strength of this program is in the highlighting of the relationships in meaning and structure between word groupings, rather than examining each idiom in isolation.

Learning a word grouping's relationship to other word groupings and in English communication generally can be similar in approach to how one might understand a person's relationship within their family and society. A person can be considered in relation to their mother's family, then father's family and finally the whole family in relation to local society generally. Considering a person in such a way creates an understanding of individual relevance. This is also true of word groupings when they are considered in relation by meaning and key feature to the immediate related word groupings and English meaning generally.

Consider the phrasal verb *back off*, which can mean to withdraw or delay. The student is first introduced to the idiom in relation to the particle "off". In this broad grouping under the meaning of withdraw or delay we find that the phrasal

verb is grouped in close proximity to *hold off* and *put off*, which refer to delaying a process and *take off* which refers to withdrawing or leaving quickly. Later the phrasal verb is examined through the verb root “back”, which often symbolizes support or the withdrawal of support. In this group *back off* is proximal to *back up* which means to give support or *back down* which means to withdraw or no longer oppose. The phrasal verb is also proximal to *hold back* which has a slightly different grammatical structure but still conveys the meaning of withdraw or delay support. Finally the phrasal verb is compared to others of common meaning. In this grouping the phrasal verb is proximal to the other phrasal verbs already mentioned but now it is also grouped with the idioms *step down* and *stand down* which are similar to *back down* and convey the broad meaning of withdrawal.

Other word groupings are less clear and often more regional and social group specific. Such groups are also more likely to change or be temporal in nature. Fortunately some broad relationships can be made to help with the understanding and acquiring of this vocabulary.

Consider the idiom to *hold one's ground*. In book two the idiom is first introduced under the key component “hold”. In this grouping under the meaning to maintain a position, the idiom is proximal to *hold one's own*, *hold the line*, *hold one's end*, and *hold steady*, all with similar meaning. The verb “stand” can also mean to maintain a position and under this general meaning you will see a few of the idioms with “hold” as a key component repeated with the key component “stand”, *stand one's ground* and *stand on one's own*. Another idiom under this meaning is to *stand on one's own two feet*. The key word “feet” can also represent maintaining a position. Because of this the idioms *stand on one's own two feet* and *have one's feet on the ground* first introduced under the key component “stand” or “feet”, are repeated under the meaning of to maintain a firm position and proximal to the idioms previously mentioned.

## CONCLUSION

The students is more likely to find relevance and some logic to idioms and their use through repeating, varying, and re-enforcing connections between similar word groupings. This is not an exact science in that the language is always changing and not all connections are clearly understandable but there is a broad logic and pattern to the way we express ourselves through our language. I think the approach that I suggest captures the essence of how we can do this with word groupings. Most important, I hope that this paper and the associated presentation inspires instructors of ESL to consider alternative ways of presenting the sometimes awkward task of instructing word groupings.

## **ADDITIONAL COMMENT**

Did my research really unlock the mystery of English Idioms? No. I would be misleading the reader if I implied through my argument and examples that there is a clearly defined relationship between word groupings, there is not. The examples I have given in the article regarding withdrawal or delay are more convenient patterns, but in some other groupings the relationship is less clear. There is a broader patterning of relationships that allow for a certain degree of systematic learning and practical language acquisition regarding word groupings, but it is far from perfect. Others and myself still must do a good deal more research regarding relationships between word groupings and how best to assist in the acquiring of this knowledge by non-native English speakers.

## **THE AUTHOR**

James Life has a Masters in Education from the University of Victoria, Canada and currently holds a position as a full-time professor in the Department of Foreign Languages at Youngdong University, Korea. His area of specialty is the development of English conversational skills with a particular interest in the use of common word groupings. Email: [jlifevic@yahoo.com](mailto:jlifevic@yahoo.com)

## **ENDNOTES**

1. More and more English language is being influenced by other languages and cultures as English becomes more an international language. Although this influence must ultimately be considered in word grouping research, it is a complication I have not considered in my initial work.
2. It is important to note that proverbial idioms generally are an insignificant part of English communication and should be a low priority in language acquisition for the non-native speaker.

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**Errata: *KOTESOL Proceedings 2001***

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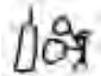
### APPENDIX A. EXAMPLE OF A KONGLISH WORD LIST FOR KOREAN EFL STUDENTS

What are the English terms for these Konglish terms?

- |                 |                         |
|-----------------|-------------------------|
| 1. One Shot     | 11. Eye Shopping        |
| 2. Backu, Backu | 12. C.F.                |
| 3. Dutch Pay    | 13. VTR                 |
| 4. MT           | 14. Talent              |
| 5. Hotchkiss    | 15. Lover               |
| 6. Free Size    | 16. Remo-Con            |
| 7. Magic Pen    | 17. Audio               |
| 8. Ball Pen     | 18. Handle/Power Handle |
| 9. O-Bite       | 19. Service             |
| 10. Potato      | 20. After Service       |

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**APPENDIX B. EXAMPLE OF A PICTURE WORD LIST  
FOR KOREAN EFL STUDENTS**

Mansion		
Punk		
Cassette		
Sofa		
Stand		
Sand Bag		
Manicure		
Steam		

**APPENDIX C. SELECT KONGLISH LEXICAL SET WORD LISTS  
FOR KOREAN EFL STUDENTS**

**Lexical Sets Using Noun Modifiers**

Konglish Term: 스킨쉽 (skinship) Close physical contact  
Related English Terms: Friendship, Partnership, Relationship.

**Lexical Set Word List Using Konglish Contractions or Shortenings**

아지트 (Agit)	<u>Agitating Point</u>	클린 (Clean)	Clean <u>Cut</u>
클리프 (Clip)	<u>Paperclip</u>	콤플렉스 (Complex)	<u>Inferiority</u> Complex
코디 (Cordi)	<u>Coordinate</u>	후레쉬 (Flash)	<u>Flashlight</u>
미션 오일 (Mission Oil)	<u>Transmission Oil</u>	멘트 (Ment)	<u>Comment</u>
스프링 노트 (Spring Note)	Spiral <u>Bound</u> Note <u>Book</u>	나이트 (Night)	Night <u>Club</u>
와이 셔츠 (Y-shirt)	<u>White</u> Shirt (dress shirt)	리모콘 (Remo-Con)	<u>Remote</u> <u>Control</u>

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PROCEEDINGS OF THE 9TH KOREA TESOL INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE, SEOUL, OCTOBER 13-14, 2001

**Lexical Set Word Lists Where Konglish Terms Require -ed Endings**

캔 커피 (Cn Coffee)	<u>Canned</u> Coffee	카레라이스 (Curry Rice)	<u>Curried</u> Rice
콘덴스 밀크 (Condense Milk)	<u>Condensed</u> Milk	후레아 [스커트] (Flare Skirt)	<u>Flared</u> Skirt
후라이 치킨 (Fry Chicken)	<u>Fried</u> Chicken	스모크 햄 (Smoke Ham)	<u>Smoked</u> Ham
원사이드 게임 (One-Side Game)	One-Sided <u>Game</u>		

**Lexical Set Word Lists Where Konglish Terms Require -ing Endings**

후라이팬 (Fry Pan)	<u>Frying</u> Pan	세트로션 (Set Lotion)	<u>Setting</u> lotion
스케이팅 링 (Skate Ring)	<u>Skating</u> Rink	스펠 (Spell)	<u>Spelling</u>
스피드 스케이팅 (Speed Skate)	Speed <u>Skating</u>	오픈게임 (Open Game)	<u>Opening</u> Game

**Lexical Set Word Lists Where Konglish Terms require Plural -s Endings**

하이힐 (High Heel)	<u>High Heels</u>	골프링 (Golf Link)	<u>Golf Links</u>
팬티 (Panty)	<u>Panties</u>	슬리퍼 (Slipper)	<u>Slippers</u>
스타킹 (Stocking)	<u>Stockings</u>	선글라스 (Sunglass)	<u>Sunglasses</u>

**Lexical Set Word List for Konglish Terms Missing Word Endings**

어나운스 (Announce)	Announce <u>ment</u>	아파트 (Apart)	<u>Apartment</u>
오토 (Auto)	Automatic [gearshift]	호모 (Homo)	<u>Homosexual</u>
이러스트 (Illust)	Illustrat <u>ion</u>	인플레이 (Inflay)	<u>Inflation</u>
로케 (Locay)	Locat <u>ion</u>	마이크 (Mike)	<u>Microphone</u>
미스 (Miss)	Mistak <u>e</u>	노트 (Note)	<u>Notebook</u>
스냅 (Snap)	Snaph <u>ot</u>	스텝 (Stain)	<u>Stainless</u>
텔레비 (Televi)	Television <u>ing</u>	테러 (Terror)	<u>Terrorism</u>
트랜스 (Trans)	Transform <u>er</u>		

**Lexical Set Word List for Konglish Terms Missing Word Beginnings**

뽀이 (Boy)	<u>Bell</u> boy	트로트 (Trot)	<u>Foxtrot</u>
스피커 (Speaker)	<u>Loud</u> speaker	벤츠 (Benz)	<u>Mercedes</u> Benz
그라운드 (Ground)	<u>Play</u> ground	미싱 (Mishing)	<u>Sewing</u> machine

**Lexical Set Word List for the Topics of Food or Eating Out**

방울토마토 (Bangul-Tomato)	Cherry Tomato	뷔페 (Buffet)	Buffet
버거 (Burger)	Hamburger	콜라 (Cola)	Coca-Cola (Coke)
돈까스 (Don Kass)	Pork Cutlet	포테이토 (Potato)	French Fries
샐러드 (Salad)	Salad		
에그 후라이 (Egg Fry)	Poached Eggs, or Eggs Sunny Side-Up		

**Lexical Set Word List for the Topics of Cars or Travelling**

백미러 (Back Mirror)	Side Mirrors	봉고 (Bongo)	Mini-Van
본네트 (Bonnet)	Hood or Bonnet	핸들 (Handle)	Steering Wheel
클락슨 (Klaxon)	Horn	오픈카 (Open Car)	Convertible
리어카 (Rear Car)	Trailer		
룸미러 (Room Mirror)	Rear View Mirror or Rear Vision Mirror		
사이드 브레이크 (Side Brake)	Parking Brake or Hand Brake		

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## **Conference Overview**

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## Presentations of the

# 10th Annual KOTESOL International Conference *Crossroads: Generational Change in ELT in Asia*

Seoul, Korea  
Oct. 5th - 6th, 2002

The Conference Committee gratefully recognizes the following people for presenting papers, conducting workshops, and leading discussions at the 10th Annual KOTESOL International Conference. Listing is in alphabetical order by surname, followed by the title of the session; co-presenters are listed separately. Commercial sessions are listed in a separate section.

## Academic Presentations

Catherine Adler	Who Can Teach Grammar and Pronunciation?
Daniel Armstrong	Exploring Anxiety: An Action Research Project
William M. Balsamo	Asiahelp: Helping the Children of Asia
William M. Balsamo	International Email Exchanges for the ESL Classroom
William M. Balsamo	Simple Computer-Based Activities for College Students
Kip Cates	Bring the World into Your Classroom Through Video
Kip Cates	Language Awareness and International Understanding Through English
Mitchell Clark	Teaching and Learning Methodologies for a Culture Course
Andy Curtis	Professional Development: Against All Odds
Erich Cutler	Error Correction
Steven Davies	A British Fete: Fostering Cross-cultural Understanding Outside
Stephanie Downey	Error Correction
David Dugas	Criteria of Success: Did We Succeed?
Corony Edwards	Teacher Development From Inside Out
Terri-Jo Everest	Teaching English Stress Without the Stress
Stephen Fergusson	Magic in EFL - Part 1: Creating Communicative Contexts for Learning
Stephen Fergusson	Magic in EFL - Part 2: Staging a Magic Show
Andrew Finch	All the Students Talking All the Time
Andrew Finch	A Model for Peer-Assessment of Conversation Skills
Andrew Finch	An Interactive Learning Journal
Mark Fraser	Student Choice in a Content-Based English Language Class
Roger Fusselman	Cognitive Teaching Techniques
Chris Gallagher	Modeling Academic Genres of Writing
Jim Gongwer	What Happens After a Teacher Training Program in a Korean School
Alistair Graham-Marr	Teaching Listening: Illuminate the Language
Kay Hammond	Creating Stories for Young EFL Learners
Takahiko Hattori	Four-Language-Skills Integrated Textbooks for ESL Classes
Cheryl Hedlund	The Art of Telling Stories

## KOTESOL PROCEEDINGS 2002

Craig Howard	A Comparative Approach to Class and Individual Feedback
Ian Isemonger	Cross-Cultural Learning Styles Research: How Far Have We Gone?
Judith A. Johnson	Creating an Integrated Curriculum for a Global World
Marcela Jonas	Who Can Teach Grammar and Pronunciation?
Gretchen Jude	Stimulating Discussion With Video: Modern Issues for Intermediate Students
Myung-Jai Kang	Teaching and Learning English Grammar Through Cooperative Learning
Ivan Katz	Teaching Students to Avoid Plagiarism
Byong-won Kim	Re-shaping of Consciousness for EFL Performances
Carol Chi-Hyun Kim	Integrating L1 Literacy Acquisition Principles and EFL Classrooms
David Kim	Using the Survey as a Tool: Methods in Harmony
Hyun Hee Kim	Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in a Korean Secondary Classroom
Hyun Jung Kim	A Case Study of EFL Curriculum and Material Evaluation
Jake Kimball	Structure: How Much is Too Much?
Jake Kimball	The Art of Telling Stories
Maria Kim-Oh	Korean Learners' Reactions to Communicative Language Teaching
Gerry Lassche	Exploring Anxiety: An Action Research Project
Mila Laurel	Alternative Learning Resources and Strategies for Under-resourced Classrooms
Mijae Lee	Cross-culturalism in the Korean ESL Classroom & Workplace
James H. Life	Unlocking the Mystery of English Idioms
Jeongwan Lim	Communicator Goals and Discourse in Americans, Korean-Americans, and Koreans
Damian Lucantonio	Modeling Academic Genres of Writing
Damian Lucantonio	Speaking for a Purpose
Nooreiny Maarof	Reading Strategy Instruction and Its Effect on ESL Comprehension
Don Makarchuk	Classroom Research: Using the Results to Improve Language Teaching
Fahimeh Marefat	Our Students' Preferences, Let's Care More About Them
Douglas P. Margolis	Inspirational Teaching: Motivating Students
Eric J. McClellan	Better Testing, Fewer Headaches: MSPAT and Other Innovations
Paul Mead	Cross-culturalism in the Korean ESL Classroom & Workplace
Mary J. Miller	Increasing Classroom Interaction Without Games or Gimmicks
Rachel Miller	Are These Kids Brats or Is It Just Me?
Chieko Mimura	Motivation and Anxiety of Japanese Female EFL Students
Liam Morgan	Action Research and Teacher Change
Reiko Mori	Respect for Students: A Metaphor to Teach By
Peter Nelson	Conceptual and Practical Problems in Oral Testing
Steven Pavelich	Re-shaping of Consciousness for EFL Performances
James Ranalli	Micro-teaching Listening
Todd Rucynski	Travel English: The Lonely Planet Approach
Kevin Sampson	An Interactive Learning Journal
Kevin Sampson	A Model for Peer-Assessment of Conversation Skills
Chuck Sandy	Asking The Right Questions in Language Classes
Chuck Sandy	Developing A Content-Rich Curriculum
Tony Schiera	Facilitating Conversational Listening Skills Through Video
David E. Shaffer	Erring in English: Korean L1 and Culture Interference
Ayako Shibuya	Motivation and Anxiety of Japanese Female EFL Students
Gyonggu Shin	Internet-Assisted Cooperative English Classes
Joan Kang Shin	Increasing Classroom Interaction Without Games or Gimmicks
John Small	Global Stories: Voices From the Invisible World
John Small	Shadowing and Summarizing Exercises

Johsua Snyder	Re-shaping of Consciousness for EFL Performances
Eugene Spindler	Integrating L1 Literacy Acquisition Principles and EFL Classrooms
Kong-ju Suh	Do We Need Intercultural Understanding?
Rania Samir Sultan	12 + 1 Techniques for Teaching Novels
Rania Samir Sultan	Is There a Future for E-Learning?
Sean Sutherland	Student Choice in a Content-Based English Language Class
Adam Turner	Free Interactive Websites and Online Quizzes: No Programming Required
Siriluck Usaha	Impact of China's National College English Test on ESL Instruction
Monica van Heerden	Lifelong Learning: No New Patch on an Old Garment
Alistair Van Moere	Measuring Progress in Communicative Proficiency
Jun Wang	Impact of China's National College English Test on ESL Instruction
Aurapan Weerawong	What Really Happened in the English Classroom?
Kim Willcocks	A Comparative Approach to Class and Individual Feedback
Christopher Wolfe	Accidental Research: The End-Driven Quest
Sang-do Woo	Cross-culturalism in the Korean ESL Classroom & Workplace
Melior Yunus	Reading Strategy Instruction and Its Effect on ESL Comprehension

## Commercial Presentations

Sean Bermingham	Read to Succeed With ACTIVE Skills for Reading
Karen Cooke	Literacy Place: A Reading program for Elementary School
Elaine Cross	American Headway: See What It Can Do for You
Elaine Cross	Let's Get Together for Early Secondary English!
Brendan Delahunty	LDOCE With CD ROM
Brendan Delahunty	Tapping Potential and Making It Do the Work for You!
Brendan Delahunty	Teaching Triangles (Cutting Edge)
Corony Edwards	The University of Birmingham Distance MA in TEFL/TESL
Clyde Fowle	Keys to Reading Competency
Clyde Fowle	Making Sense of Spoken English
Gynneith Fox	Using Your New Macmillan English Dictionary
Chris Gallagher	Aston University's Diploma/MSc in TESOL/TEFL
Steve Gershon	Addressing Relevance and Motivation "On the Go"
Steven Gershon	Give Your Students an Upgrade!
Thomas Healy	Bridging the Gap with Interactions/Mosaic
Thomas Healy	Fun, Games, and Content-Based Learning With Best Friends
Thomas Healy	MegaFlash, Making Grammar Come Alive
Marc Helgeson	Designing "Out of the Box" Listening Activities
Patrick Hwang	Phonics Land, an Internet-Based Phonics Program for Young Learners
Nancy Jordan	Dynamic Learning with Parachutes
Kathleen Kampa	Music and Movement in the EFL Classroom
Minhee Kang	SIT's Master of Arts in Teaching Program
Carter Keltner	Authentic American Language Arts Text
Casey Kim	Phonics Land, an Internet-Based Phonics Program for Young Learners
Aleda Krause	Motivating Young Learners with SuperTots & SuperKids
Ramesh Krishnamurthy	COBUILD Dictionary Definitions: A Powerful but Underused Resource
Kelly Lee	Amazing is Fun!
Kelly Lee	Developing Literacy
Robin Longshaw	Reaching Out to the EFL Learner and Teacher
Robin Longshaw	Strategies for Creating Dynamic Classroom Interaction
John Lowe	Key Elements for Successful Communication with Expressions
Nick Lutz	More Ways to Reach, More Ways to Teach

**KOTESOL PROCEEDINGS 2002**

Steve Maginn	Building Cross-cultural Awareness and Understanding
Casey Malarcher	Successful Reading Through Reading Success
Ian Martin	Achieve Outstanding English Results with Stand Out
Ian Martin	The Importance of Listening In, Before Speaking Out
Scott Miles	Finding the Balance: Fun Activities and Language Learning
Scott Miles	Meeting the Needs of Asian Students: Asian-Biased Textbooks
Karl Nordvall	Early Phonics Using My First Talk - The Alphabet Party
David Paul	Communication Strategies: A New Approach for Korean Intermediate Students
Isobel Rainey	An Up Close Look at Effective and Competent Communication
Janice Reis-Lodge	Sing, Spell, Read and Write
Kirsten Reitan	Going For It All With Young Adult Learners
Kirsten Reitan	Task-Based and Learner-Centered Activities Using ATLAS
Bruce Rogers	A New Guide to TOEIC Preparation
Marc Sheffner	DramaWorks: Techniques for English Communication
Theo Steckler	DramaWorks: Techniques for English Communication
Thomas Sweeney	Bridging the Gap Between the Real World and the Classroom
Thomas Sweeney	Classic Developmental Skills Text
Setsuko Toyama	Activities to Encourage Children to Become Independent
Tyler Warfield	DramaWorks: Techniques for English Communication
Robert Williams	Financial Planning for the Teaching Profession

