TESL REPORTER

BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY — HAWAII
Volume 23, Number 2 • Laie, Hawaii • April 1990

TESL Reporter

BYUH Box 1830
Laie, Hawaii 96762-1294
USA

ISSN 0886-0661

A quarterly publication of the Language, Literature, and Communications Division of Brigham Young University—Hawaii

Subscriptions are available on a complimentary basis to individuals and institutions involved in the teaching of English as a second/foreign language. Requests for new subscriptions and change of address notification for continuing subscriptions should be sent to the circulation manager.

Manuscripts relevant to teaching English as a second/foreign language, bilingual education, intercultural education and communication, and teacher-preparation in these areas are welcomed and should be submitted (in duplicate) to the editor. Manuscripts dealing with classroom aspects of teaching are especially encouraged.

Manuscripts should be typed and double spaced throughout, generally not exceeding ten pages. Each manuscript should be accompanied by a cover sheet with the title; author's name, position, and address; and a short (less than 50 words) bio-data statement. Identifying information should not appear elsewhere in the manuscript in order to insure an impartial review.

It is expected that manuscripts submitted to the *TESL Reporter* are neither previously published nor being considered for publication elsewhere.

Reviews of recent textbooks, resource materials, tests, and non-print materials (films, tapes, or computer software) are also invited. Potential reviewers who indicate a particular area of interest to the review editor will be contacted concerning recent titles in that area.

Advertising information is available from the business manager.

Abstracts of articles published in the *TESL Reporter* appear in *Language and Language Behavior Abstracts*.

The opinions and statements expressed by contributors are their own and do not necessarily reflect the views of the editors or of Brigham Young University—Hawaii.

From the Roller Coaster to the Round Table: Smoothing Rough Relationships Between Foreign Students & Faculty Members

Shirley Stapleton, Azusa Pacific University

When I first began to consider intercultural relationships as I have known them, I decided I needed a symbol to represent the ideas tumbling into my mind; a focus for my quest for understanding of how best to approach this opportunity. The rainbow, I decided. But as I pondered further on the nature of intercultural relations, the rainbow was replaced by an intercontinental roller coaster filled with passengers; some with eyes wide open in order not to miss one moment of life's intercultural experiences, others with eyes tightly closed, hoping it would all just go away.

With my symbol in place, I struggled with how I could begin to express the frustration, sorrow, anger, and misery I had heard expressed by both foreign students and American faculty. I decided to dust off and use my collection of statements which I had entitled "Can This Relationship Be Saved?"--statements gleaned from interviews, conversations, discussions, and discreet eavesdropping over a two-year period. The participants in this imaginary relationship are Professor X (American), Student Y (International) and the intercultural counselor.

Professor X (American)

"I want to be effective in teaching the international students, but I can't understand what they're saying and they can't understand me. I'm talking simple, ordinary statements and questions; never mind concepts; that's another story. These students take an inordinate amount of my time and that of the departmental secretary to whom they often won't listen because she is female. In fact, they don't listen to the women faculty half the time. They want a degree but they have no study skills. They're pushy and treat me as if I were their servant. I know they can't get away with this in their own country; why do they try it here? They want me to do all of the adjusting. They've ruined our American market because the American students don't want to be around someone they can't understand. After all, who wants to sit through hours of unintelligible oral presentations? If I don't give them the grade they want, they will often go clear to the president about it. They are poorly prepared, especially for graduate work. They should learn English before they come here. I don't want to teach them either English or study skills. I want to teach my subject matter. I want to like these people, but they make it darned near impossible. I wish they would all just go home. I've had it."

Student Y (International)

"I want to be a good student so that my family will be proud of me, but university work is so different in the United States. I want to meet Americans, talk with them and become friends with them, but this is difficult because I don't live on campus as

a graduate student. Anyway, Americans are so impatient and so busy. They are also very independent and don't realize that we do not become independent of our family as early as they do.

"The professors want us to participate actively in class discussions which is something we're not used to. In my country, the professor lectured; we listened and took notes. The final examination was everything. We didn't have to do any critical thinking; we just had to remember what the professor said and write that on the examination paper. We never had multiple choice or true/false tests. I thought a multiple choice test meant I should give more than one answer so I did, and failed the test.

"In my country there is a social and physical distance between teacher and student. I wish the American professors would realize that we need more attention and advice than American students, at least in the beginning. We are used to a lot of direction from our professors; they tell us what to do and we do it. I had never done a research paper and I was so frustrated in the beginning. I didn't know how to use the library facilities, nor did I know enough to ask for help. In my country we used the library for studying, not for research.

"When I passed the examination to enter the university, I had to choose a major—I had about a hundred choices. I got my seventh choice. American professors don't understand that a student coming to the U.S. for an MBA might have had literature as an undergraduate major because that was the major assigned. We value education and study hard in the U.S., but we often don't work in a way to become academically successful. I wish the professors here would be more definite about what they want.

"I wish also that we could live on campus at least for the first semester, especially if we arrive during the summer. We are told we must live off campus because we are graduate students and should be able to take care of ourselves. Take care of ourselves? When I came here I didn't know enough English; I didn't know how to drive; I didn't know anything! Any American freshman could take better care of himself than I could when I first arrived in the U.S. I didn't have sufficient opportunity to practice speaking English before I arrived on campus. I was so disappointed when I realized how poorly I spoke English. I want to do good work and to please my professors, but I do wish that I could be accepted as I am and not be expected to act as if I were an American."

The Intercultural Counselor's Perspective

Professor X wants to be a competent, caring teacher of international students. Student Y wants to do good work the family will be proud of. However, neither of these two people, from completely different cultural backgrounds and educational systems, has been adequately prepared to deal with what they regard as strange, if not undesirable, behavior in each other. Both are so caught up in the stress of dealing with an unfamiliar culture that they tend to forget each other's rights and needs and the need to work together and not at cross-purposes.

I counselled with the two over a considerable period of time with

encouraging results. We concentrated on discussing the rights and needs of both parties in an intercultural relationship. In the final session, attended by both parties, a number of points of agreement were reached, the most important of which was that both parties in an intercultural relationship must understand that though there are real differences between them, neither's value system is better or worse, but simply unique, and that acceptance of another value system does not imply agreement with, or approval of, that system. It simply recognizes its right to exist as it is.

Both Professor X and Student Y agreed that appreciation of and understanding of another culture requires setting aside for a time the lenses through which we have viewed life and putting on other lenses through which we will gain another perspective. Both agreed to put aside their own time-worn lenses and to try on some new ones, thus enriching their lives and the lives of others who will follow after them.

Conclusion

Traditionally, at the end of the rainbow, there is a pot of gold. At the end of our roller coaster ride, however, we find a roundtable—a table which will accommodate all of the riders from all points of the compass—

> A place where we will be not "apart," but "a part" of a gathering...for at a roundtable there are no sides, and all are invited to wholeness and to food.
>
> Roundtabling means no preferred seating, no first and last,... no corners for 'the least of these,'
>
> Roundtabling means being with, a part of, together, and one.
>
> It means room for the Spirit and gifts and disturbing profound peace for all...
>
> And it is we in the present who are mixing and kneading the dough for the future. We can no longer prepare for the past. (Lathrop 1977)

References

Kohls, L. Robert. (1984.) *Survival kit for overseas living* (2nd ed.). Yarmouth, ME: Intercultural Press.

Lathrop, Chuck. (1977.) "In search of a roundtable," in *A gentle presence.* Washington, D.C.: ADOC.

About the Author

Shirley Stapleton teaches in the MATESOL program at Azusa Pacific University. She has over twenty years experience teaching ESL/EFL at all levels, has conducted teacher-training workshops in Taiwan, and is a consultant in ESL for the Pomona, California School District. Her research interests center on teacher behavior in the classroom.

Developing Student Confidence in Speaking English

Xu Lihua, Huiyang Teachers College

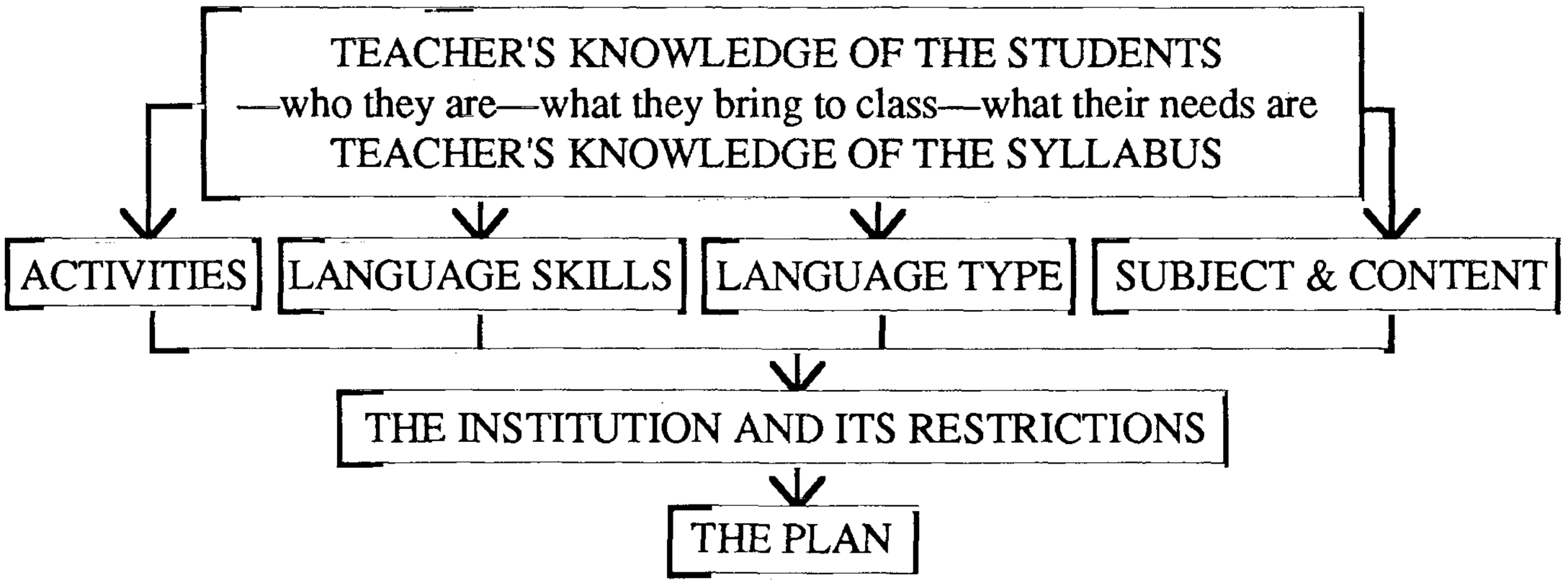
Speaking is a productive or active skill which is absolutely vital in the encouragement of communicative efficiency. But Chinese students are comparatively quiet and shy, which works to their disadvantage in speaking. They are afraid of making mistakes. The cultural concept of "losing face" if they make mistakes is the biggest obstacle to language learning. These associated psychological problems make speaking, the productive/active skill, the more difficult for Chinese students.

To improve their speaking skills, the teacher must enable the students to overcome their psychological problems and must help them develop their self-confidence. These require careful planning, skillful motivation, varied techniques, patient instruction, relaxed atmosphere, visual stimuli, and good humor.

Careful Planning

The most important consideration a teacher undertakes is his careful preparation of a lesson. A speaking class should not be improvised. The teacher has much to think about while conducting the lesson without having to rack his brains for the next activity. Good lesson planning is the art of mixing techniques, activities, and materials, to create an ideal balance for the class. The two principles of good lesson planning are variety and flexibility. Variety means involving students in different activities. Flexibility means the ability to use different techniques and not be a slave to one methodology. Harmer (1984) summarizes the teacher's knowledge about the plan in the diagram below.

Also the teacher should have a detailed plan about teaching techniques, speaking activities and materials, all of which should meet the students' needs. The goal the teacher sets for oral lessons must be high enough to aim at and low enough to reach.



Skillful Motivation

Motivation is an important factor in learning English. It is the internal drive that encourages students to pursue the learning goals. If we have a goal and if the goal is really attractive, we will be strongly motivated to achieve it no matter how difficult it may be. A teacher will find a strongly motivated student with a goal easier to teach than a student without a goal. The poorly motivated student studies English simply because it is a part of his curriculum.

A student's attitude is also strongly influenced by factors around him—the teacher's treatment of him and what happens in the classroom. If the atmosphere in class is deadly dull and if the teacher does not treat him with kindness and patience, the student will never stand up to speak. The teacher must motivate the students' enthusiasm for speaking by telling them that teachers respect and help students who try--no matter how many errors they make and that they have no respect for students who do not try for fear of making errors. But of course, teachers should help them form good habits of speaking standard English, not Chinglish (Chinese English).

Different Techniques

Teaching Spoken English in Chinese schools calls for a variety of techniques. The teacher must know how to give many lessons with different techniques. He should carefully plan and execute the lessons so that the new language material is soundly integrated with the old, the difficult with the easy. The new and difficult should be taught thoroughly, while the old and easy can be covered quickly. "Like a stream, a good lesson flows more rapidly over the shallower sections and more slowly over the deeper." (Broughton, et al., 1980)

The teacher should know to adjust priorities at different stages. (Speaking is the basic course for the first and second years.) At the elementary stage, he should put emphasis on phonetics; at the intermediate stage, the teacher should lay emphasis on a wide range of English usages which ordinarily confuse students; and at the advanced stage, the emphasis should be on fluency and accuracy in speaking English.

The teacher should constantly change the activities in speaking practice. "No topic or device should be overworked, however good an idea it is or however much preparation it has entailed. It is always better to stop whilst everyone is enjoying it and wants more, rather than pursue it to the bitter end. Then a repetition on another day provokes eager anticipation rather than groans." This is Broughton and his cohorts' (1980) idea about effective topics and devices.

The same is true of useful textbooks. Good textbooks offer lively and interesting material, but if the teacher depends too much on the textbook by following lesson sequence repeatedly, the class may become boring, and the students may find the routine less and less motivating. Consequently, the textbook is an aid, not a Bible. The teacher should use it skillfully but never let the textbook use him. I have heard students complain about a good teacher who was highly praised in the beginning lessons. I asked them why and they told me, "He follows the same steps without any changes: first, listening

to the tape with the books closed, then asking questions, then opening the books, explaining the language points, reading aloud, and finally, doing exercises." These steps are exactly what the author of the textbook recommends. Boredom can be avoided only if the teacher can introduce a fresh approach to learning by changing the material, activity, and teaching method.

I have designed some training methods for the teaching of speaking: stories, picture-talks, free talks, speech training, discussion-summary, role-playing, debate and language games which stimulate students' interests. I usually use three training items in the program for a speaking class. For example, I first have a role-play, then a discussion in small groups, and a game or a story at the end. I change the program every week. If students are particularly interested in the activity, I will lengthen it; if they lose interest, I will omit it. Stories by L.A. Hill (1978) are very interesting and humorous. Students enjoy them very much but get tired of only teacher's telling and students' listening. So I change the routine: telling the story from the beginning, stopping at the climax, and then asking the students to continue. The story "A Traveler's Tale" begins, "I was walking on a narrow path to my camping place after hunting all day. On my right was a dark forest. On my left was a big river. Suddenly I saw two green eyes among the trees. A man-eating tiger was ready to jump at me. When I looked into the river, an immense crocodile was opening its big mouth to welcome me. I was so frightened that I shut my eyes..." I stop at this point. Now the students are so active that they all try to continue the story. Thus I change the students' role from passive listening into active producing, which sparks the students' imagination and their willingness to speak.

Tang Lixing (1983) compares teachers with conductors in his work *TEFL in China:* "Good teachers should be like conductors of orchestras, who lead their orchestras to work on the same piece of music, and at the same time attend to the individuality of players of different instruments. In other words, they should attune the learning interests of their students to general teaching aims and lead them step by step towards the final goal."

Patient Instruction

Patience is another virtue greatly needed for a teacher. Students are growing as they produce and correct mistakes. Correcting mistakes calls for great patience.

At the elementary stage, some students cannot understand English, nor can they speak it. Their pronunciation is poor. So they think they cannot learn English. Sympathetic understanding for their frustration is essential. The teacher must gently but firmly discourage them from withdrawing and encourage them to listen more and to imitate. Mistakes in pronunciation are not easily corrected since habits of poor pronunciation have been formed. Their listening ears are not keen at first. The teacher's efforts often seem to produce nothing, and the students' progress is often slow. These mistakes should be corrected repeatedly and patiently until new habits are formed.

A new problem will appear at the beginning of the intermediate stage while they not only find it hard to express themselves, but also make mistakes once they open their mouths. Beginning

students often naively believe that they will be able to put English to immediate use. When they realize that this is not so, they become disappointed. A student told me impatiently, "I know what to say, but I cannot speak out." Learning to ride a bicycle is just the same. People cannot ride a bicycle without practice. Speaking is a skill, not unlike riding a bicycle, in that practice is the only way to improve it. A teacher's patient and sympathetic instruction prevents withdrawal.

Problems occur at the advanced stage when the students want to make a public speech. The inexperienced speakers suffer discomfort just at the thought of standing before an audience. When they actually do face their listeners, discomfort becomes fear. The knees quake, the voice quivers, the throat goes awry and the mind goes blank. The teacher should help them overcome their fear and increase self-confidence by being friendly and helpful, yet not criticizing their efforts. But some teachers act counter to this. "It is not uncommon to see teachers who stop a student numerous times to correct errors in his speech. They do not realize that they are running the risk of silencing the student forever and, what is worse, of scaring the rest of the class" (Tang, 1983). It would be much better to make a note of all errors (including phonetic, grammatical and lexical errors), but do not interrupt speakers until there is a convenient pause. Then tell them how well they performed (the teacher should "flatter" students when they do well in order to instill enthusiasm), cite any problems and explain how they can be corrected. Immediate feedback is extremely valuable to students, and it is much more effective when followed by extra practice.

Actually, errors and mistakes are an unavoidable and even valuable part in foreign language learning. If students are making mistakes, they are learning and practicing. If they do not make mistakes and correct mistakes, they will never become perfect (Tang, 1983). Therefore correction should be gentle without making a big fuss. Gentle correction involves statements such as "Well, that's not quite right...", "Usually people don't say...but they do say..." and other thoughtful expressions. Thus the teacher corrects the mistake without discouraging the student. Sometimes silly but interesting mistakes make the class burst into laughter, and the student becomes embarrassed. I would soothe him, "Don't mind it. Your classmates are just friendly. You can get a deeper impression from it and never repeat this error again." No matter how many mistakes and errors they make, the teacher should never forfeit hope for his students. Remember, bake the pie in a slow oven.

Relaxed Atmosphere

Speaking class can be a total failure, with the class silent and embarrassed and the teacher racking his brains for some means of keeping the lesson alive. As mentioned, Chinese students are quiet and shy. They feel uncomfortable in their first attempts at speech in English and they are afraid of failure, laughter, and ridicule. Sometimes they maintain silence only in order to avoid being the ice-breaker. When I ask a question and I am sure they can answer, the students lower their heads as though to hide. This situation perplexes the teacher, especially the foreign teacher, and it is a waste of time. But I know that, although their desire to speak is real, the psychological and social obstacles to

speak are just as real. They do not talk because of the serious atmosphere.

Psychologically, people become more talkative in a relaxed atmosphere. Via (1976) once said, "If the atmosphere is one of tenseness and tightness, our bodies become tight and tense, and we are not able to concentrate properly on what we want to do. But when the atmosphere in the classroom is one of relaxation, happiness, and fun, our whole bodies relax and we are able to receive, we are able to learn." Our department has two speaking classes each week during the third and fourth periods before lunch. Since students are weary, a boring class would put them to sleep. To overcome their speaking barriers, the teacher must first cultivate a relaxed atmosphere, in which students feel free to develop oral confidence and the ability to project themselves and enjoy themselves in the foreign language. Geoffery Broughton and his collaborators stated in *Teaching English as a Foreign Language* (1980), "Even with more serious materials and teaching, there should always be room for games, songs, and puzzles."

Visual Stimuli

The visual element is another source of oral English practice. This includes pictures, maps, cartoons, slides, tapes and other items. With attractive visual stimuli, the students' interest and attention are aroused, a relaxed atmosphere is created in which students are eager to talk, and most importantly, a live language situation is brought into the classroom, which is indispensable to any meaningful learning. For example, a picture can be used as a discussion starter, a situation for a dialogue or a talk. The teacher should try to gather available visual stimuli or make his own, both of which add to the active classroom atmosphere.

Good Humor

Humor is an indispensable quality for a teacher. Moskowitz (1978) has shown that good teachers provide for and utilize humor as a part of the classroom atmosphere. Traditionally, some Chinese teachers like to maintain their dignity as an authority figure, which is another obstacle to the students' speaking from the teacher's side. Humor can bridge the gap between the teacher and students, and relax students for talk. So it is wise for the teacher to insert a little humor occasionally into the activity to cause laughter, which clears away the boredom in the classroom and keeps the learning process fresh.

When students are aroused to talk, the teacher must withdraw and make the classroom student-centered. Experience shows that 70-80% of the speaking class time should be given to students for practice. In other words, the teacher must talk concisely and encourage the students to talk, talk, talk. With the teacher's concentrated efforts, students will certainly progress towards the goals. Learning English is just like taking Chinese medicine—the effect will come slowly, but surely.

References

Broughton, G., C. Brumfit, R. Flavell, P. Hill & A. Pincas. (1980). *Teaching English as a Foreign Language*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Harmer, J.. (1984). *The Practice of English Language Teaching*. London: Longman.

Hill, L. A. (1978). *Elementary, Intermediate and Advanced Stories for Reproductions*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Moskowitz, G. (1978). *Caring and sharing in the foreign language class.* Rowley, Mass.: Newbury House.

Tang, L. (1983). *TEFL in China: Methods and Techniques*. Shanghai: Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press.

Via, R. A. (1976). *English in three acts.* Honolulu: University Press of Hawaii.

Additional Recommended Reading

Black, C. (1978). *A Handbook of Free Conversation*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Dobson, J. M. (1978). *Conversation in English*. New York: American Book Company.

Snyder, B. and C. DeSelms. (1983). "Personal Growth Through Student-Centered Activities," in A. Garfinkel, *The Foreign Language Classroom: New Techniques*. New York: National Textbook Company.

Widdowson, H. G. (1983). *Teaching Language as Communication*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Woronov, N., and Y. Qu. (1981). *Modern American English*. Shanghai: Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press.

About the Author

Xu Lihua is an assistant professor of English at Huiyang Teachers College in Guangdong, China.

Business Interactions

Review by Lindy Wai Ling Ko Tham, BYU-Hawaii

BUSINESS INTERACTIONS. Candace Matthews. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall Inc., 1987. pp. 208+xvi. Paper $11.25 (Instructor's Manual available); Cassettes $18.00.

Business Interactions is a book designed to build up the oral communication skills of ESL/EFL students in business-related fields at an intermediate to advanced level. It consists of ten individual units, four appendices to provide guidelines, and useful exercises for effective interaction in small group discussions. Each unit is composed of several sections: Phrases, Listening Practice, Controlled Practice, Communication Concepts, Discussion Techniques, Role Playing, and Useful Vocabulary. In addition to the textbook, there are a set of audio-cassette tapes and a teacher's manual.

A wide variety of useful and practical phrases to express ideas on different topics

or functions are covered. The Listening Practice section is one of the means by which the students learn and hear how phrases are used by speakers of English.

The Controlled Practice section has exercises for students to practice and use phrases. The exercises may not all be used, but teachers are advised to include enough for the students to remember and use the phrases. Becoming familiar with the phrases is significant because they add variety to speaking activities.

Each Communication Concepts section gives some suggestions for group interaction. What a good meeting or discussion should consist of is shown and listed in this section of the unit. In addition to the Communication Concepts, Discussion Techniques is another part of the unit in which students can learn some different communication skills (which are as important as their pronunciation skills and knowledge of English grammar) in small group discussions.

In the Role Playing section, four different, realistic situations are offered. Teachers can work with the students and help them choose the most relevant and interesting one(s). They can start with an analysis of the situations given, and follow it with a discussion. After that, the class can be divided into groups and assigned different roles. This part is the most interactive of each unit. The discussion section provides opportunities for the students to interact and practice speaking to each other. After the role play, students can make use of the evaluation scales provided to judge their own performance or that of their classmates. In the back of every unit, new vocabulary items that appear in the unit are listed. Teachers may teach the new words briefly before any group activities begin so that the students may be able to practice the use of those words.

Pictures or sketches of different everyday activities in a business career are added in the Controlled Practice section to increase the interest of the students in the topics. They also depict a clear image of the situations to the students. Examples of suggested steps for group discussion are shown in the first two units to help students organize their thoughts in an efficient way. The sequence of the units is logically arranged. The students will learn the communication skills and useful phrases from simple to complex through a notional-functional approach.

One more strength of the text is that it provides an overview section for the teacher or the students to look up the functions, discussion techniques, and communication concepts available in each unit. The teacher may also use it to decide when to teach and where to look for materials for a particular lesson.

In summary, *Business Interactions* seems like an effective guide for speaking practice and discussion techniques in business contexts. The register used is very business-like, thus preparing students to get along in the business world and present themselves with both courtesy and politeness.

Lindy Tham is a recent graduate of BYU-Hawaii's teacher-preparation program in TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages).

Preparing Indonesians for Graduate Study in Canada

Harry Krasnick, Canada-Indonesia Predeparture Program, World University Service of Canada, Universitas Gadjah Mada

Preparing Indonesians for graduate study in Canada starts with English language instruction, of course, but it is coming to be appreciated that language instruction by itself is not sufficient preparation (see Benesch, 1988). Because of differences among educational systems, overseas students also must be prepared for the approach to knowledge and the conduct of inquiry which characterizes the Western university. I would like to discuss a few issues which arise in this regard.

Teaching About Canada

The first need is to prepare students for Canada itself. A typical predeparture ESL or EAP program incorporates a communication component, often including cross-cultural communication. Usually, there is some treatment of the target culture itself as well. A number of textbooks designed for ESL-speakers with this goal in mind are available. As sources of information about the culture, some of them can certainly be recommended. Most, however, deal only with the culture of the host society, rather than with the contemporary society itself.

To fill this gap, the Canada-Indonesia Predeparture Program[1] uses a university-level Canadian sociology textbook (Richardson & Tepperman, 1987) in its Canadian Academic Program, a language-content course offered to students who are nearing the TOEFL 550 level. This serves two purposes simultaneously: it provides a systematic, conceptually-based treatment of Canadian society; and it offers students the chance to use real, native-speaker materials. Since this is a native-speaker text, it avoids depicting Canada primarily in terms of its differences from other countries, and approaches Canadian society in the way that native members would be prepared to see it. This undoubtedly involves certain losses, from the standpoint of its use overseas, but the gains in authenticity and native-member point of view more than make up for the losses.

Distinguishing Canada from the United States

Although Canada is playing an important role in language training in Indonesia, its population is only one-tenth that of the United States', and the mass media in Indonesia present little information about Canada. Since Canada's culture and social structure are basically similar to American culture and society, it is important to help students distinguish between the two countries. Students might be satisfied with the explanation that 'Canada is basically just like the United States,' since that assurance would allow them some sense of security, but that would be merely a way to escape the responsibility of teaching them about

Canada and preparing them for life there. In the case of cross-cultural communication textbooks, of course, there is no real alternative, since there are no Canadian substitutes. But when it comes to teaching about the contemporary society itself, there are choices. It seems, then, that to prepare students specifically for Canadian society, sociology offers an answer.

Realism versus Idealization

The treatment of American culture and American society in the many cross-cultural communication and ESL textbooks currently available varies along the dimension of realism-idealization. My view is that it is inappropriate to present learners with an inaccurate picture of life in the country in which they plan to spend two or more years of their lives, yet there are those who seem to feel that students should not be given anything which approaches a "negative" picture. In sociology, this is not really an issue at all, since the science of sociology studies—must study—what is. (For example, a sociologist would not teach criminology by summarizing the criminal law, but rather would describe and try to explain what it is that people actually do.)

Students need to know, and are entitled to know, what their new environment will be like, including the contemporary issues which are of importance to people who live in the target society. Students who are adults will also be adults in Canada, and it would be a grave disservice to send them to Canada with a child's view of life. In seeking to enter a foreign speech community, students have already given up some of the security which they have earned by virtue of having become educated adults in their own society. There is no need for them to give up their social competence along with their linguistic competence.

Orientation to Knowledge

In addition to preparing students for life in Canada in general, the Canada-Indonesia Predeparture Program tries to prepare them to be graduate students. One of the most important areas here is that of the orientation to knowledge. Though this is a topic which is rarely, if ever, dealt with in either ESL textbooks or cross-cultural communication textbooks designed for ESL-speakers, it is something with which students must be familiar. From my own experiences with students in Indonesia, I have concluded that we need to emphasize the "open" character of knowledge in the West. Students at first seem slightly uncomfortable with the existence of competing theories. Which one is correct? In the Canadian society course, students are repeatedly exposed to the application of theories or theoretical paradigms in various situations, and gradually come to appreciate that often there is no official correct answer to problems of significance. (I explain to them that if such an answer did exist, it would certainly not be part of their graduate course, but would be entered into the encyclopedia or statistical yearbook.) Students must come to terms with indeterminacy and the continuing process of creating new theories and hypotheses. Though this may be unsettling in the beginning, they will not be prepared for graduate study in Canada without understanding this aspect of the Western orientation to knowledge.

One part of the orientation to knowledge is that of being ready to look for

opportunities to apply academic theories to actual situations and, conversely, to identify theories already in use in real life. In the case of sociology, this is easy, for the mass media are full of useful examples. Students, then, must come to appreciate the connections between theory-building and practical application, and between the classroom and the real world. In the present case—preparation for living and studying in Canada—exercises of this sort help give students the ability to live in the world as adults.

Answering Essay Questions

Essay questions on examinations pose many of the same challenges encountered in ESL writing classes—making notes first, making a rough outline, managing time, and so on. In addition to teaching these aspects of answering essay questions, in the Canada-Indonesia Predeparture Program we devote some time to the expectations inherent (but usually not explicated) in the typical essay question. Students' tendency is to approach the question in terms of what they think is the "right" or most appropriate answer. In some cases, this will lead to disaster: "answer not responsive to the question." How disappointing it must be to find that phrase scrawled across your examination paper. In this case, I like to use "shock treatment." For example, I caution the student beforehand that I might well ask him to explain why he himself should not be sent to Canada for graduate study. The look of shock and horror is just what you would imagine it to be. Yet when I offer an admittedly extreme example such as that, along with some possible answers or reasons, the student can begin to appreciate the existence of the underlying dimension involved. Your job, I reiterate, is to do your best with whatever question your instructor has given you. It is not necessarily the answer you eventually choose to give that counts the most, I continue, but rather your ability to apply some type of procedure or perform some type of analysis within the terms of reference given. Shocking? Definitely. Useful? I think so.

The "What" and the "How" of Teaching

What we teach in the Canada-Indonesia Predeparture Program is the sociology of Canadian life, but how we teach is also part of what we teach. It is a fundamental principle in the Canadian Academic Program that learning how to learn—a tired phrase, of course—is essential. One general strategy I use is that of pausing from time to time to draw attention to the learning process itself, for example, focusing on issues rather than facts, or comparing competing theories rather than simply voting for the theory of choice. If we were teaching Canadians, we might not have the responsibility of doing this. Here in Indonesia, we do have that responsibility. Ideally, we would teach the students everything they will have to know and will have to be able to do as graduate students in Canada. It would be rather naive to presume that we can attain a goal as lofty as that, of course, but having the correct goal in mind is at least half the battle in this particular case.

The Concept of Cross-Cultural Academic Communication

From our experiences with the Canadian Academic Program, and those of other Western teachers working in Indonesia (see, for example, Fisher, 1988), we have

come to see that the business of *being a student* in Canada is itself an instance of cross-cultural communication, and it needs to be approached in a systematic way. Certainly, if predeparture programs can pay attention to everyday culture such as shaking hands, maintaining eye contact, and making appointments, they should deal with being a graduate student. That, after all, is what predeparture programs are all about. The course on Canadian society both gives students an authentic viewpoint on Canada and provides the opportunity to learn in the way that Canadians learn.

Note

1. This program is managed by World University Service of Canada (WUSC) and sponsored by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA). It accepts students sponsored by government ministries from all parts of Indonesia.

About the Author

Harry Krasnick is academic advisor and coordinator of cross-cultural studies in the Canada-Indonesia Predeparture Program, Universitas Gadjah Mada, Yogyakarta, Indonesia. He received his master's degree in sociology from UCLA and his law degree and doctorate in TESL from the University of British Columbia. His primary interests are academic inter-cultural communication and language through content.

Content-Area Language Instruction: Approaches and Strategies

Review by Teresa Dalle, Memphis State University

CONTENT-AREA LANGUAGE INSTRUCTION: APPROACHES AND STRATEGIES. Gina Cantoni-Harvey. Reading, Massachusetts: Addison-Wesley, 1987. pp. 210 + xiv. $21.25.

Content-Area Language Instruction: Approaches and Strategies attempts to explore "the relationship between second language acquisition and the development of academic knowledge and skills at the elementary and secondary grade levels." It provides its readers with basic information on the characteristics and needs of limited English proficient (LEP) students, or minority students as the author refers to them, and the means of accommodating such students in the classroom.

Cantoni-Harvey divides her book into three parts. Part I gives some general background to the subject. First of all, it supplies information on the educational implications of providing for increasing numbers of ethnic minority students in U.S. elementary and secondary schools. Second, it summarizes what is known about second language acquisition, ESL (English as a Second Language) methodologies, and current approaches to

teaching ESL. Finally, it suggests some basic principles to be applied in the classroom to encourage educational excellence among all learners, specifically to "enhance the learners' linguistic and experiential knowledge." In fact, the theme of the book seems to be that all students benefit from teaching which encourages the development of language skills and of an increasingly complex schemata, (those mental representations with which everyone organizes the world and his/her experiences therein). Using this theme, then, of "enhancing linguistic and experiential knowledge," the author, in Parts II and III, discusses content courses, language, and the relationship between teaching both.

Part II gives suggestions for teaching language arts—literacy, reading, and writing—to LEP students.

Part III outlines specific strategies for teaching such students the content of social sciences, mathematics, science and "other" (music, arts and crafts, and physical education) in ways which take into consideration the limited language skills of the student while encouraging the development of those skills.

The lengthy reference list at the back of the book attests to the extensive research Cantoni-Harvey conducted before presenting her ideas. Also provided is a list of organizations which might provide useful information to those involved in teaching minority students, as well as a list of periodicals which give the reader sources of information on general education, English education, cross-cultural teaching, reading, mathematics, and educational research.

The book is extremely valuable to any teacher who has or may someday have a LEP student in his/her class. Since it is projected that 80% of those teaching today will at some time have a LEP student in the class, this book seems to have a large audience.

The author knows her audience well and speaks to them as professional colleagues. She aims at those who have an appreciation of quality education and who may not have had any experience in linguistics or ESL and bilingual methodology. The style and presentation is direct, helpful, and very readable.

Cantoni-Harvey is specific in her recommendations, and she presents theoretical materials in an enlightening and succinct way, always directing the readers' attention to the implications which research and theory have on actual classroom practice. For example, she emphasizes the need for every teacher to promote cognitive development as well as English proficiency in the LEP student by explaining the important distinction between "basic interpersonal communicative skills" and "cognitive-academic language proficiency" (from Cummins 1981).

Her basic premise, which she states carefully in Chapter One and supports throughout the book, is that "EFL methodology, which focuses predominantly on language, is less effective than an ESL approach, which combines language with content." After making her point, she provides an excellent overview of the current ESL methodologies which stress the "importance of meaning over grammar and the pragmatic and creative use of English."

Through her very thorough approach to the problem of teaching LEP students in content areas, Cantoni-Harvey gives teachers encouragement in working with minority students, a conviction that such students need not be ignored, and the key to organizing and presenting material in a way that makes learning possible. This book is highly recommended for all teachers who face the prospect of working with LEP, or minority students—in short, for nearly all teachers.

Reference

Cummins, J. 1981. *The role of primary language development in promoting educational success for language minority students*. Sacramento, CA: California State Department of Education, Office of Bilingual Bicultural Education.

Teresa Dalle is assistant professor in ESL and coordinator of graduate studies in English at Memphis State University in Tennessee.

Word Dominoes

(Continued from page 40)

normally precede nouns but adverbs do not." Color coding also shows the relationship among words classes. I code nouns red, subject pronouns scarlet, and object pronouns pink to illustrate that just as scarlet and pink are shades of red, "he" and "him" may refer to the same noun, but their usage is determined by word order. Thus, scarlet precedes blue (the verb) but pink follows it to produce "He sees the cat," and "The cat sees him."

Procedure

"Word Dominoes" is best played with three to six players. The teacher deals seven cards to each player. The remaining cards are placed face down next to the free pile which consists of articles, verb endings, and punctuation marks to be used as needed.

The player to the teacher's right puts down a card to begin a sentence; each player in turn puts down an appropriate card to continue the sentence. Whenever necessary, a player may use a card from the free pile in conjunction with the card being played. This builds awareness of the need for articles, plurals, and tense.

When the players agree that a sentence is complete, they finish it with the appropriate punctuation mark, then put the used colored cards at the far end of the table and return the free cards for reuse. The next player begins a new sentence. If a player does not have an appropriate card to play, he/she will draw up to three times from the unused cards which were placed face down after dealing. The winner is the first player to place all his/her cards in sentences or the player with the least number of cards after a specified time.

New words can be added to keep the game challenging. Modals, negations,

irregular past tenses, and conjunctions will also increase the level of difficulty.

About the Author

Vivian Karr has taught K-12 ESL for the Littleton (Colorado) Public Schools since 1979. Prior to that, she taught English in Italy on a Fulbright award. For the past two years she has also worked on two U.S. Department of Education grants for the development and implementation of foreign language curricula in elementary schools (FLES) using TPR and the Natural Approach.

FREE PILE
(WHITE)
a
an
the
-ed
-s
-es
-ing
.
?
!

VERBS
(BLUE)
am
is
are
was
were
have
has
do
does
want
like
see, etc.

QUESTION WORDS
(YELLOW)
where
what
who
when
why

NOUNS
(RED)
nouns familiar
to students

SUBJECT PRONOUNS
(SCARLET)
I
you
he
she
it
we
they

OBJECT PRONOUNS
(PINK)
me
you
him
her
it
us
them

ADJECTIVES
(ORANGE)
big
small
pretty, etc.

ADVERBS
(GREEN)
slowly
quickly
fast, etc.

PREPOSITIONS
(PURPLE)
to
from
with, etc.

Word Dominoes

Vivian Karr, Littleton Public Schools

Children learn vocabulary and pronunciation in a second language with relative ease, but they do not acquire syntax as readily. Children who have "picked up" English will write what they hear: "You like apples?" and "She going to the store." This is because auxiliary verbs are among the many forms reduced when speaking. Left uncorrected, these errors fossilize. Clearly then, elementary ESL students should be given opportunities to practice syntax without having to study formal grammar.

To make teaching and practicing syntax more meaningful and fun in my elementary ESL class, I have developed the game "Word Dominoes." It is easy to make and effectively teaches "why this word can't go there, and this word must go here."

Producing the Cards

First, the teacher writes familiar words on flash cards. Pronouns, auxiliaries, and prepositions are also included for a total of at least fifty cards.

Teacher and students then categorize the cards: words that name people or things (nouns); words that do things (verbs); words that tell how things are done (adverbs).

Students then color the cards according to category. Color coding has two purposes: to make the game visually appealing and to facilitate sequencing. It makes more sense to a nine-year-old to hear that "blue cards can follow red cards but green cards cannot," than "adjectives

(Continued on page 38)

TESL Reporter
Brigham Young University—Hawaii
Box 1830
Laie, Hawaii 96762-1294

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
LAIE, HAWAII
Permit Number One

Address Correction Requested