TESL REPORTER

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Adjustment Problems of Foreign Students in U.S. Colleges and Universities

by Christine F. Meloni

According to the International Institute of Education, 336,985 foreign students came to study in colleges and universities in the United States for the 1983 academic year. This large number of such admissions testifies to the importance these schools attach to having such students on campus. Having admitted these students, these institutions can play a key role in facilitating the students' adjustment to life in a new culture.

What Are Foreign Students' Most Common Problems?

Many studies have been carried out to determine the major problems faced by foreign students. Even keeping in mind that individual characteristics can determine some of the problems students encounter, most studies agree that homesickness seems to rank as the most serious personal problem. Ranking next after homesickness are problems related to finances, housing, and food. Major academic problems include English language proficiency, understanding lectures, participating in class discussions, and preparing written and oral reports. Social problems usually mentioned are American social customs, making friends, relationships with the opposite sex, and being accepted by social groups.

What Variables Affect Student Adjustment?

Nationality. Studies have found that the national origin of the student does influence what a student's major problems will be. Of course, the characteristics of the institution will also make some difference (urban-rural, large-small, large city-small town). Nonetheless, there seem to be some trends.

Homesickness attacks everyone at some time. Beyond that, students from the Far East and Southeast Asia frequently list lack of sufficient English language proficiency as their overriding concern along with vocational planning and difficulty in making friends. They also sometimes perceive the community as being unfriendly, and a sense of social isolation can set in.

Africans and Latin Americans report major concern regarding grades. Like the Asian students, they also find it difficult to make friends and, in some cases, they perceive unfriendliness in the community.

Students from India and Pakistan list money as a major problem in addition to making friends and dating.

Academic issues are the overriding concern of students from the Middle East, Iran, and Afghanistan. Some problems are directly related to language proficiency, e.g., completing written examinations in the same time as American students, communicating thoughts in English, presenting oral reports, and taking notes.

Other problems may be due more to culture than to language. One of the most serious difficulties for many Arab students is written assignments. There is a strong emphasis in Arab culture on the verbal aspect of language, and, therefore, it is quite possible that Arab students, undergraduates and graduates alike, have never had a written assignment before coming to the United States.

Another academic problem that Arab students face is the course elective system. In the Arab educational system, each program of study is very structured with no choice of courses. Therefore, Arab students are not used to planning their own programs as American students are, and they become frustrated when their advisors leave the

decision up to them as to what their course of study should be.

Arab students also have trouble with plagiarism, a totally new concept for them. They are accustomed to learning by making the knowledge of others their own without critical analysis. Consequently, they encounter difficulties in written assignments in which American professors expect them to distinguish between original ideas and information gained from other sources.

Undergraduate vs Graduate Students. Undergraduates have significantly more academic and personal problems (especially coursework, finances, and food) than graduate students.

Sex Differences. Levels of alienation seem to be equally high among male and female students, although among Afghans and Iranians, some female students experienced significantly more problems than male students. This finding may not be too surprising given the cultures from which these students come.

Marital Status. Married students seem to have fewer problems in all areas—academic, personal, and social. It has been hypothesized that students who are married and live with their families will be less socially alienated than unmarried students.

Major Field of Study. One study found that students who were majoring in the humanities or social sciences had significantly more academic problems than those majoring in the sciences and engineering. There were, however, no significant differences in their personal and social problems.

How Can Institutions Facilitate the Adjustment of Foreign Students?

Language Instruction. English language proficiency seems to be one of the major concerns of international students. As noted earlier, Asian students rate it very high, and students from the Middle East experience academic difficulties that are tied heavily to language proficiency. Most foreign students study English in their own countries and virtually all institutions of higher edu-

cation in the U.S. require them to achieve a minimum score on a standardized test (such as the ALIGU, MTELP, or TOEFL) as a prerequisite for admission. It has been found, however, that English courses abroad frequently do not prepare students adequately for college-level work in the United States. Therefore, special courses in English as a second or foreign language should be offered by institutions that admit foreign students.

Orientation Programs. There is a great need for predeparture orientation programs for students coming to the United States. The following topics would be of primary importance: American culture, the American system of higher education, living and educational expenses in the United States, and immigration regulations. There is, of course, also the need for a series of orientation

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sessions on these or similar topics when students arrive on campus as well as for well-organized general orientation programs very much like those provided for all entering freshmen.

Counseling. It has been demonstrated that foreign students are under a great deal of stress as they try to adapt to U.S. culture; certainly, the difficulty in making friends is a contributing factor. They are unlikely, however, to consult psychologists or counselors for help in coping. Walter (1978) reports Sundberg's finding that "foreign students are more likely to seek other foreign students to help them solve personal problems than professionals, but other foreign students may impede the adaptation to the host culture and the individual's sense of independence." The problem, then, is what kinds of services

can be provided to ease the stress before it becomes overwhelming. Certainly the foreign student advisor has a critical role in spotting the stress as it begins to build and in directing students toward outlets to help ease it.

Host Family. As is evident from the studies conducted to determine the problems of foreign students, social isolation is a major one. A host family plan in which an American family "adopts" a foreign student can give the student a sense of belonging to the community. The student may live with the family or may be invited to be part of family events or to simply visit the family regularly. Various organizations (e.g., Experiment in International Living, Youth for Understanding, and the Council on International Educational Exchange) have a successful track record in finding and preparing host families.

"Study-Buddy" Program. A "study-buddy" program initiated on the Duluth campus of the University of Minnesota seems to be quite successful. In this case, foreign students who need assistance with English or study skills are given an American student partner. It has been recommended that every foreign student be offered a mature student counterpart to provide encouragement in everyday situations.

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Outsiders: American Short Stories for Students of ESL

Book Review by Linda H. Hess

OUTSIDERS: AMERICAN SHORT STO-RIES FOR STUDENTS OF ESL. Jean S. Mullen. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall Inc., 1984, pp. 233. $8.95

Outsiders: American Short Stories for Students of ESL by Jean S. Mullen is a collection of short stories and two poems written by noted American writers. The text is designed to teach reading techniques that are necessary to the study of literature and also to develop and polish the writing skills that are appropriate for the college-level student. The text can be employed in an ESL reading course of one semester's duration with the class meeting for three fifty-minute periods per week.

Outsiders itself is neatly divided into twelve units. With the exception of the first unit, each contains a series of study questions, a review of a particular grammar point or a vocabulary study, a study of a particular literary term or writing strategy, class discussion questions, and, at the conclusion of each unit, a controlled writing exercise. Many of the exercises are couched in realistically contextualized language.

The first unit of the text is the introduction and guide to the readings found in the book. In addition, the introduction includes a list of literary terms and their definitions to familiarize the students with conventional labels to be used in class discussion and written assignments. The selections in *Outsiders*, all of which are set in the United States, were chosen because they deal with actual "outsiders" who are trying to cope with their new life in America or because the characters are native Americans who feel alienated in their own society.

The author introduces ESL students to the study of literature through observation, inference, and imagination. Students are encouraged to think about what they see and to make reasonable inferences about what they observe. The course aims to make the connection between the students' deductions and what they already know. It encourages students to use their imaginations as a means to bridge the gap between their own experience and the experience of others.

Another feature of this text is the glossary of words and expressions that are important for the understanding of the stories: proper names of people, places and institutions, longer phrases containing several difficult or unfamiliar words, and certain nonstandard forms or dialect differences.

Outsiders is a straightforward look at contemporary literature designed with the ESL student in mind. Its clear-cut presentation, as well as its varied and diverse exercises should appeal to even the most hesitant readers in your class.

Linda Hess, a student in BYU–HC's TESL program, previously taught English in New Jersey and Pennsylvania.

Rapid Reading Drills for the ESL Classroom
by Neil J. Anderson

Rapid reading is an essential skill for all ESL students, and for the many advanced ESL learners who desire to attend an American university, it is an especially important skill to master (Eskey 1973, Oller 1972). Yet for many of these students, reading is a suffocatingly slow process in which they struggle laboriously along on a word-by-word basis. According to Coady (1979:9), "Alarming numbers of students have a great deal of proficiency in English and yet read very slowly and with poor comprehension. What we have is a reading problem and not a language problem." Harris says, "It has been our experience that even advanced learners of English as a second language tend to be slow readers and that their slow reading speed constitutes a serious handicap when they commence their studies at our universities" (1966:v). Perkins and Pharis (1980) found that average ESL readers are well below average college freshman in reading speed as well as general reading ability.

Rapid, fluent reading is a process which cannot creep from one word to the next (Eskey 1973, Clarke 1979). It must proceed quickly and smoothly. Nevertheless, the building of such skill is commonly neglected by teachers.

Recently, much work has been done in the area of speed reading. The earliest studies conducted with native speakers of English concluded that speed reading was only a skimming strategy used to cover the reading material (Brown et al. 1981). Yet more recent studies indicate that speed readers achieve not only rapid reading skills but also better comprehension when specifically taught rapid reading techniques (Cranney 1982). Very little has been done in teaching techniques for rapid reading to ESL students. Many texts emphasize that reading rate is an essential aspect of ESL reading but students are only given instructions such as,

"Read the following passage as quickly as possible." A component to increase reading rate with actual drills and activities would give students some concrete help in reaching that objective. I am not proposing that we teach ESL students to read thousands of words per minute, but I am proposing that we teach them to read at a faster rate than that at which many of them currently read.

One essential aspect of the reading drills described in this article is that most of them use reading material that the student has selected. In other words, it is not mandatory that everyone use the same text. Thus, each student can read material s/he is interested in.

Record keeping is an important part of rapid reading. Each student should keep graphs charting words-per-minute as well as comprehension scores. These are useful as each student goes about setting his/her individual goals. In addition a reading log should be kept. Students should practice rapid-reading techniques for thirty minutes every day outside of class time. They should record the type of material read, the time involved, as well as the words-per-minute. These reading logs should be checked each week by the instructor.

Reading Drills

Here are four basic types of speed drills which, when used in sequence, can be used in the ESL reading class to help increase reading rate as well as comprehension.

Add-A-Page
The first of these drills is an add-a-page drill. The drill is conducted in the following manner: Students are given sixty seconds to read as much material as they comfortably can in the book of their choice. They

then begin reading again from the same point and are given another sixty seconds. They are to read more material in the second sixty seconds than in the first. The drill is continued a third and a fourth time. The purpose of this drill is to reread old material quickly, gliding into the new. Students are encouraged to read one more page during each sixty second drill, thus the name of the drill, "add-a-page."

Paced Reading

In the second rate-building drill a class goal is set for reaching a certain level of words-per-minute. Then the average number of words per page of the material being read is calculated. It is then determined how many pages need to be read in one minute in order to meet the class goal. For example, let's suppose that the class goal is to read 250 wpm. Let's further suppose that the reading material being used for this particular day has an average of 125 words per page. The

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class would then be expected to read one page every thirty seconds. As each thirty seconds elapses the teacher indicates to the students to move to the next page. Students are expected to do whatever is necessary to finish the page in thirty seconds and thus keep their rate up to 250 wpm. Of course, those who read faster than 250 wpm are not expected to slow their reading rate down. As long as they are ahead of the designated page they are fine.

Self-Paced Reading

The third drill is a self-paced speed drill. Students read for three minutes and then calculate their average words-per-minute. Setting goals for wpm is expected of each student. The drill is repeated three or four times during a class period. Each student

is competing with him/herself to improve reading rate.

Rate and Comprehension

The fourth drill in the sequence works on both reading rate and comprehension skills. Students are given a variety of reading passages and multiple choice comprehension questions. They set individual goals for wpm and percentage of comprehension. Students are encouraged to maintain at least a seventy percent comprehension rate.

Conclusion

These drills have been used to achieve significant increases in student reading rates in an ESL reading program (Anderson 1983). Students from upper-intermediate and advanced ESL reading classes at Brigham Young University were involved in the study. The experimental group, which received instruction using the four drills described above showed a tremendous increase in reading rate when compared with the control group (F=37.871, p .0001, CV= 16.2, 1 and 22 df).

ESL reading teachers should prepare themselves to assist their students to move into the area of rapid, fluent reading. Then they can help students overcome the barriers caused by slow reading rate that prevent them from enjoying more reading in English.

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The Teacher

Let the teacher, first of all, assume the attitude of the father toward his pupils. He stands in the place of the parents who have entrusted their children to him. He must have no personal voices, and must not tolerate them in others. He must be austere, but not gloomy; genial, but not dissipated. Otherwise he runs the risk of incurring hatred or contempt. His speech must be constantly concerned with what is honorable and good. He must warn frequently, that he may seldom have to chastise. He must not lose his temper, but neither must he disregard the necessity for correcting faults. He must be simple in his teaching, able to endure labor, steadfast, never unreasonable. He must have a ready answer, for those who ask questions, and must draw out those who fail to ask them. In praising the recitations of his pupils he must not be too sparing or too diffuse; for in the one case the pupils will grow tired of their work, and in the other they will become self-satisfied. In correcting mistakes he must never be harsh or abusive. Many pupils who have the best of intentions are led to abandon their plans for further study, because certain teachers act as though they hated their students. The teacher ought to be a good speaker himself, and in his daily speech he should present an example to the pupils.

Marcus Fabius Quintilianus (A.D. 35?-95?), in *Quintilian on Education, Selections from the Institutes of Oratory,* Herman Harrell Horne (ed.), Catherine Ruth Smith (trans.), (New York: New York Univ., 1936), pp. 145-8.

# A Movable Man or Woman for the Overhead Projector

by Mark W. Seng

In the many years that overhead projectors have helped teachers, many ingenious transparency devices have been invented by teachers to put some life into their explanations and learning activities. When this agile young man is placed on the overhead projector stage, your class will see his silhouette dramatically jump from one activity to another. The effect is really quite startling and will provide you and your students with many happy hours of language learning activities. Best of all, this movable man (or woman) can be made easily at little cost.

Some Uses

Language is communication. Language means people, and people *do* things. Of course, that means verbs. This man can *run*; he can *jump* over fences or hills— even tall buildings (if you have a sense of humor). He can run *between* two cars or run *up to* a door. Place a coin or other disc near his foot and your students will see a ball, which he can kick or (if you're teaching the passive construction) which *is kicked* by him. He can bend over, climb a ladder made from paper or cardboard, or even demonstrate the backstroke swimming in water. (Draw some water waves on a sheet of clear plastic upon which you place the man.) He can also walk on the water, dive below the surface, or sit on a cardboard boat with a fishing pole in hand. A transparent or cardboard fish may even swim up to the hook and take it inside its mouth.

If you construct more than one person, many more language teaching points can be demonstrated and practiced. For example, "She is taller than he." "He is walking but
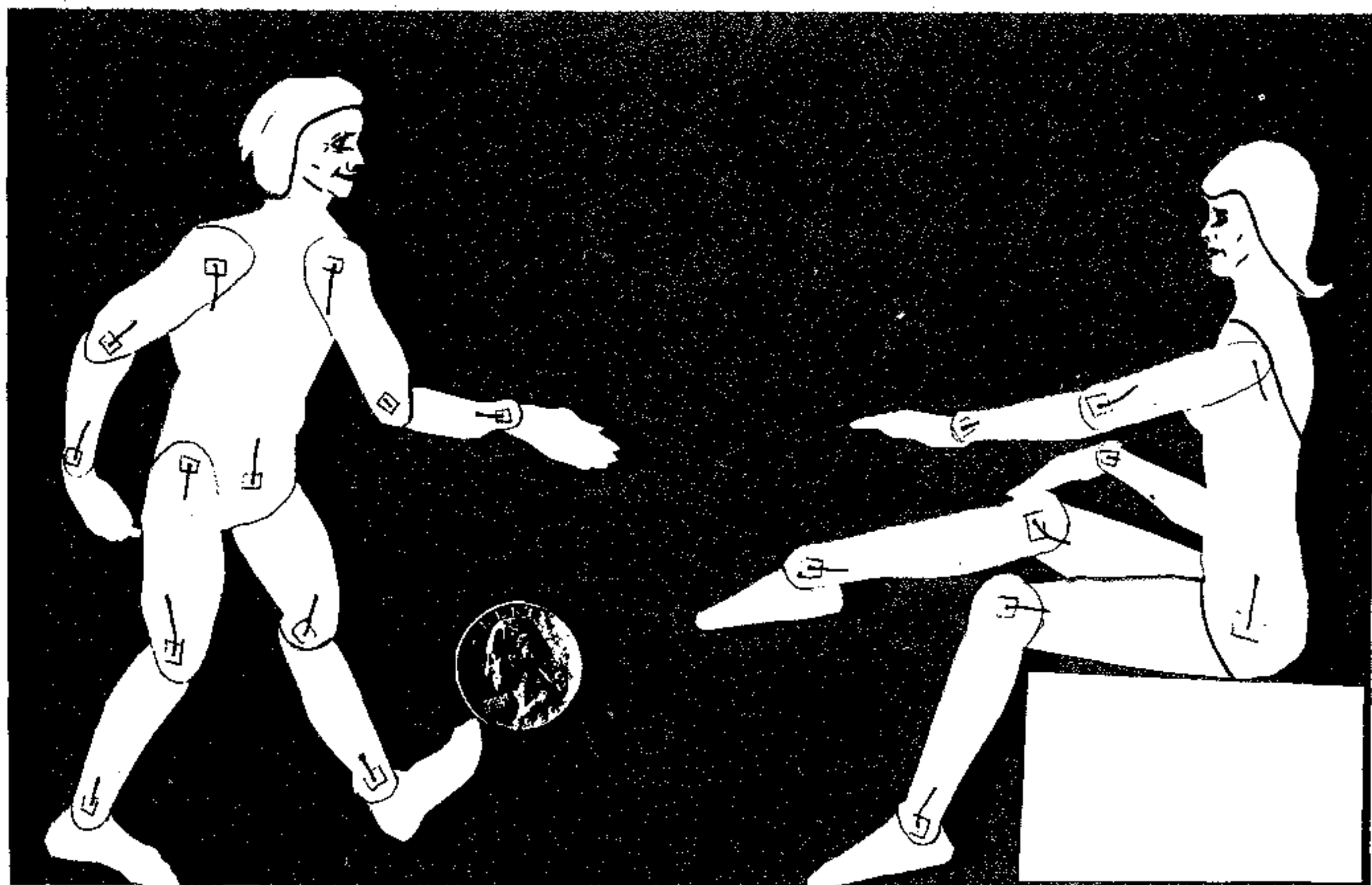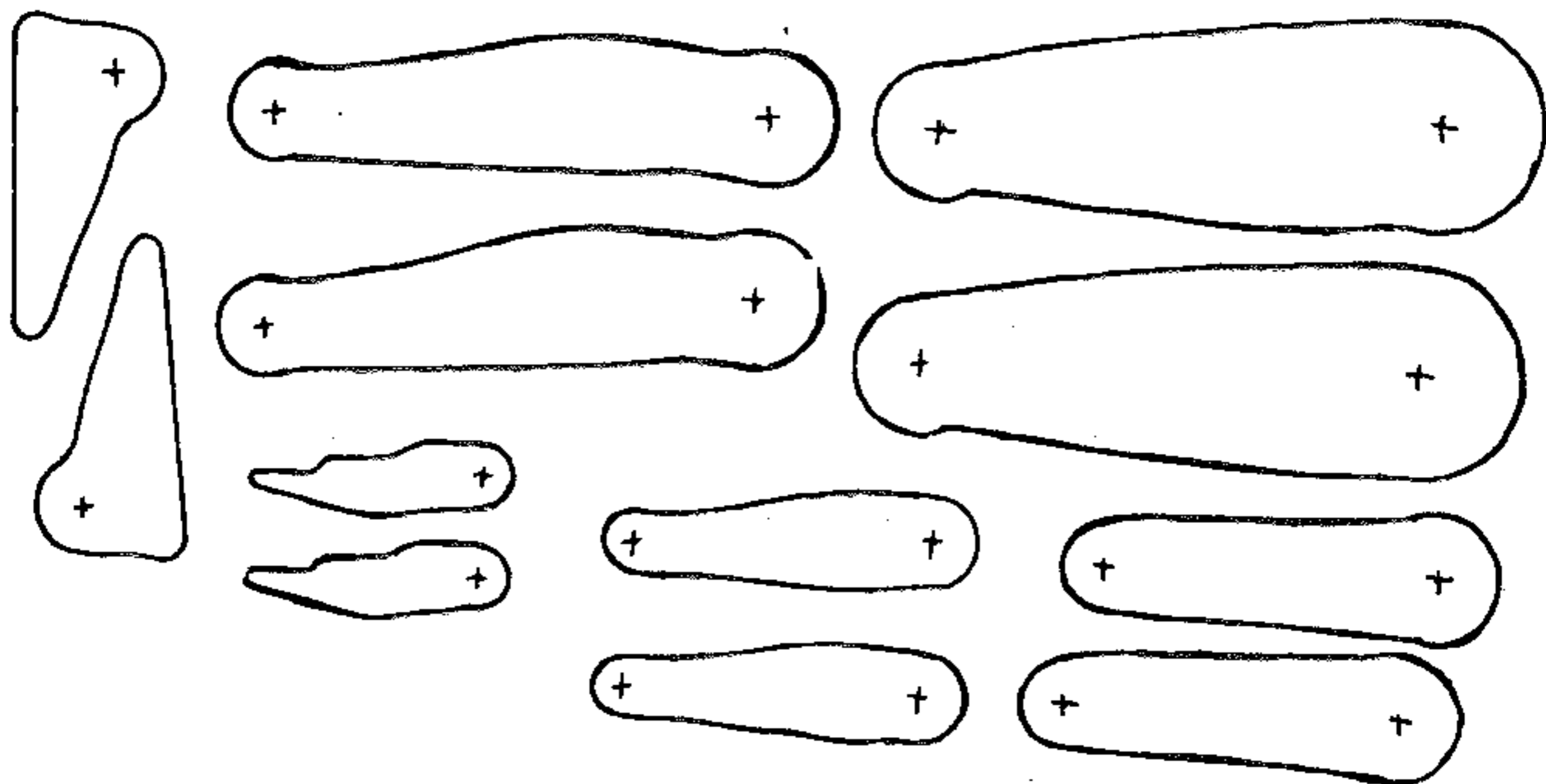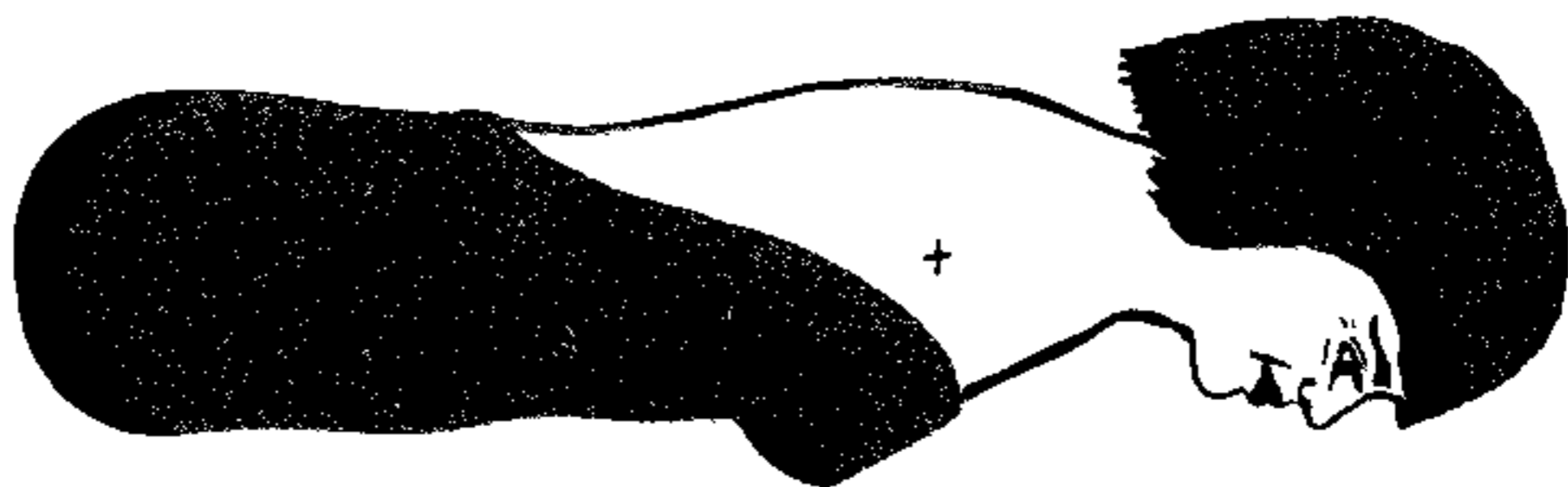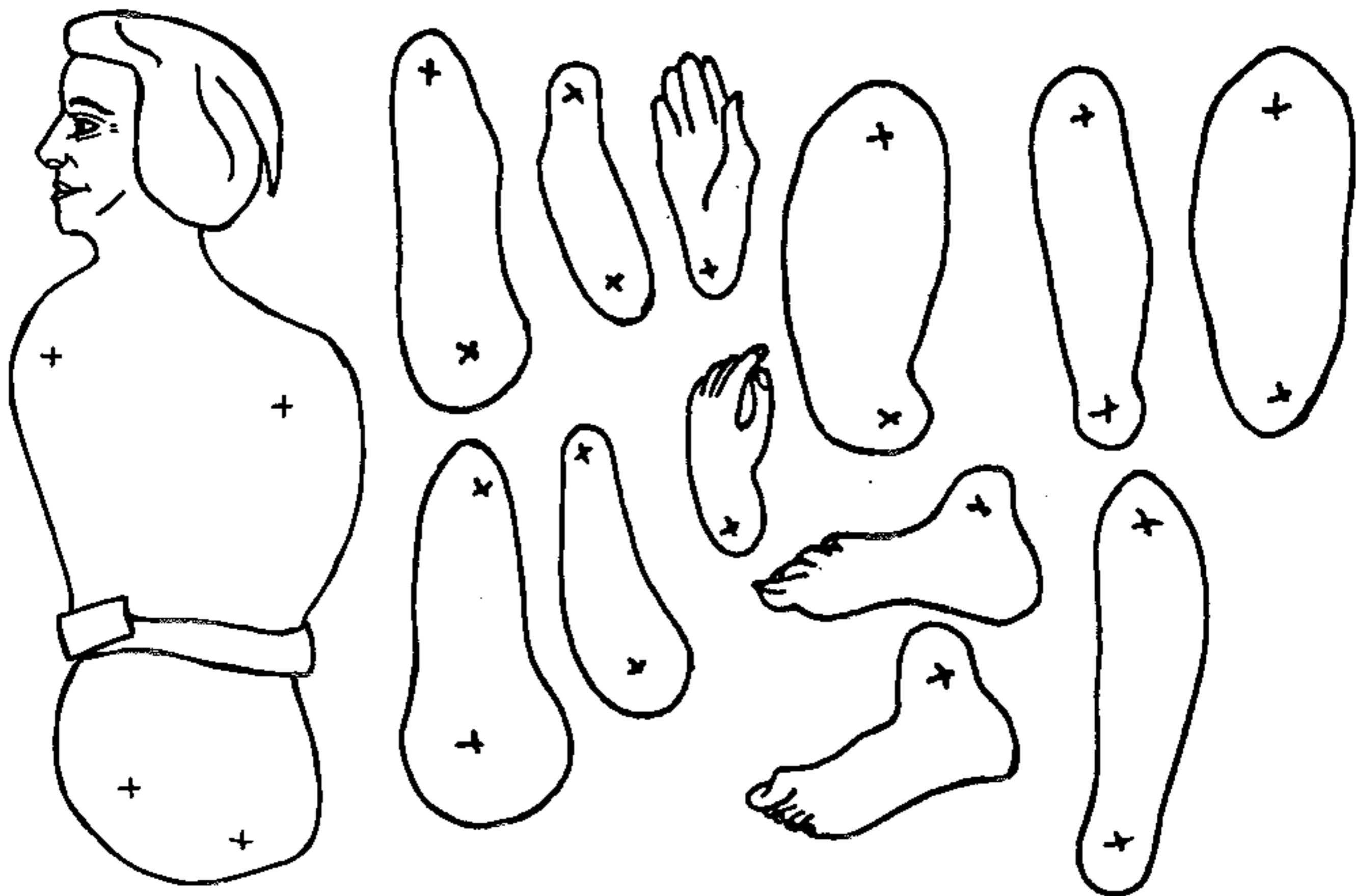
she is running" (or sitting, or stretching, or bending over). "He picks up the hammer, but she picks up the saw." "They are both sitting," or "They are dancing."

A question mark on the projector stage can cue one student to ask the question, "What is he doing?" That student may then choose another student to answer the question. Then that student can ask another question to still another student.

A modified Total Physical Response activity can involve two students—one at the projector and another giving commands, such as, "Put the ball inside the box which is on the table," or, "after putting down the ball, place the box on the table." The other students in the class will be most interested in seeing if their classmate at the projector can rise to the challenge (especially if someone might call on them to perform next.)

One may also project pictures (which may be transparent or opaque silhouettes) of all the things that people use. Some examples might be a hat, a shirt, socks, pants, a briefcase, golf clubs, a tennis racket, a football, a table, a chair, a handbag, or books.

Construction

The idea of this movable man was conceived some years ago by an ingenious University of Texas student, David Hatcher. Over time, many changes have been made from his original transparency. For instance, the model may be constructed from transparency materials or from cardboard (a manila folder works quite well). Transparency materials offer the advantage that facial features are visible, and clothing cut from paper may be overlaid. But the use of cardboard eliminates the need for a transparency making machine.

A completed figure about five to six inches long will prove convenient for projection and movement. Some teachers may want to make the figure even larger. (If an overhead projector is not available, this idea may still be used without projection by increasing the model's size to the point where all students in the class can easily see

it and then fastening it to a bulletin board or chalkboard. A felt board approach would also work quite well.) The easiest way to enlarge the drawing on cardboard is to use one of many brands of enlarging photo copy machines. Most machines which do enlarge will also enlarge on card stock. One can also enlarge the illustration by inserting it into an opaque projector or by placing a transparency of it on the overhead projector, projecting the image upon a piece of cardboard, and then tracing the drawing. Although the color of the cardboard will not show when projected,

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you can select a bright color to make the device more attractive if placed on a bulletin board.

Next, carefully cut out the drawing. Depending upon the size you choose, use either sharp scissors, a single edge razor blade, or a craft knife. Careful work at this step will ensure that the projected image proves realistic and attractive. (You might also request help from your class to construct more than one model since it is also possible for one or two students to work with this device at their desks.)

Through the years, many teachers have made transparencies with parts that moved. Trying to solve the problem of joining two pieces of material so they can pivot has proved challenging. One of the first techniques for achieving this articulation of materials was a common thumbtack pushed up through both pieces. To cover the sharp point, a pencil eraser was used. Brass paper fasteners can also be used to join moving parts.

While the thumbtack or paper fastener approaches are still adequate for simple

designs, the complexity of this project requires a more delicate solution. A single strand of polyester thread is used in order to allow free movement and to facilitate manipulation of the arms and legs on the overhead projector stage. Select a heavy weight polyester thread. Close inspection will reveal that this thread is composed of several strands, twisted together. Use a single strand of this very strong material and draw it through the two pieces of cardboard. Secure both the top and the bottom of the thread with a small square of transparent tape. Cut off the free ends of the thread neatly.

Another way of fastening the man together (taught to me by a creative woman in Japan) is to tie a double knot in the thread above and below the joint. This method eliminates the need for the tape but requires considerable skill and care. To insure that the completed joint articulates smoothly and precisely, the thread must be drawn taut before tying the final knot and trimming it.

Finally, tape both sides of an ordinary manila folder closed to create an envelope in which both figures and accessories can be stored and protected until the next time you use them in class. The complete package will be a teaching tool you can use for many years in a variety of ways limited only by your imagination.

Insights and Ideas

Book Review by Johnny K. W. Mok

INSIGHTS AND IDEAS. Patricia Ackert. New York: CBS College Publishing, 1982, pp. 219

Insights and Ideas, by Patricia Ackert, is a reader for low-intermediate students of English as a Second Language. The text is composed of twenty-five interesting readings aimed at increasing the students' vocabulary by 1000 words. It is designed to improve vocabulary and comprehension through exercises on prefixes and suffixes, using contextual clues, finding the main idea, drawing conclusions, and making inferences.

The text is designed for a daily one-hour ESL reading class over a fourteen week semester. The text assumes that the student has a 1,000 word vocabulary to begin with. Reading and exercises then increase this by another 1,000 words.

The twenty-five chapters include such high-interest topics as fast-food restaurants, country music, language and languages, deserts, Amnesty International, the United Nations, gold, and computers. The instructor's manual contains answers to all exercises, a quiz for each lesson, a mid-term and a final exam, and a list of new words and irregular verbs in each lesson. It is recommended that the lessons be covered in sequence because the vocabulary is introduced gradually and then used repeatedly in later lessons.

The most obvious merit of the text is the structured teaching of vocabulary to ESL students. Most lessons in the text have ten to fifteen new words that are used several times in subsequent readings. The students are encouraged to use their dictionaries only as a last resort.

Because of the high-interest topics and emphasis on vocabulary, *Insights and Ideas* should succeed in helping low-intermediate students gain a positive attitude toward their developing ability to read fluently in English.

Johnny Mok, a student majoring in TESL at BYU–HC, formerly taught ESL in Hong Kong.

Will Publishing ESL Students' Writing Keep Them from Perishing?

by Norman W. Evans and Priscilla F. Whittaker

Anyone who has ever taken pen in hand is frustratingly aware of what Isaac Singer meant when he said that there ". . . are no miracles in writing. The only thing that produces good writing is hard work." As most of us involved with language teaching are aware, when the writing has to be done in a second language the "hard work" is generally multiplied many times over. Writing in a second language is not an easy task, yet it is one of the most valuable skills a language learner will ever develop.

Valuable as it may be, the skill of writing still requires a great deal of time and patience to develop. At Brigham Young University—Hawaii Campus it takes English Language Institute students more time to reach exit criteria in writing classes than in the three other skill tracks (reading, speaking, and listening). This is due, in part, to the fact that our ELI students are not mainstreamed into the university. They must pass a qualification exam (a portfolio of essays) in order to enter freshman English. In most semesters, enrollment in ELI writing classes is thirty percent larger than that in any of the other skills classes. Consequently, students often become discouraged, or altogether disinterested in writing before they ever attain a level of proficiency adequate to function on the college level. These students are not unique; such a problem seems to be the rule rather than the exception in many ESL programs. A royal road to good writing simply does not exist.

Nevertheless, certain factors can facilitate the development of writing skills, for example: good texts, well trained teachers, motivation, lots of writing practice, and a wide variety of related activities. One such activity that has proved to be very successful in our program is publishing the best of student writing.

Admittedly, the idea is not new. Most of us have at one time or another been in a writing class where the teacher has reproduced, usually anonymously, some outstanding student writing with the purpose of showing the rest of the class what kind of work is possible as well as expected. Such a practice typically results in student remarks like "Well if someone else can, I certainly should be able to." or "I am sure I can do that well." Thus the students are motivated or try harder, and the students whose work is being displayed can relish the sense of accomplishment. It was just such attitudes we hoped to generate with our best-of-student writing publication—*The ELI Expositor.*

Rationale

We have, in the year-and-a-half history of the *Expositor*, discovered many good reasons for publishing student work: it teaches care in writing, develops students' sense of accomplishment, motivates struggling students, helps bring students and teachers closer together, and reinforces the importance of audience in the writing process.

Unfortunately, students (as well as teachers) sometimes lose sight of the real purpose of a writing class. This is especially true when grammar and writing are taught together as one subject. Too often, students learn how to get good grades and overlook the real objective—becoming effective communicators. A high mark on a proficiency test or an "A" on a verb tense exam are often misperceived as measures of success in a writing class. In reality of course, true success should be measured by how well an idea is communicated to a reader. One of the best ways to learn how to communicate an idea is by writing something to be read by others—many others. *The ELI Expositor*

has been instrumental in teaching our students that successful writers must be effective communicators and not necessarily "A" students.

In addition, our students have learned that anyone who is ultimately successful as a writer must learn that good writing involves more than "writing it Sunday night and handing it in Monday morning." Good writing requires revisions (note the plural). Hemingway said it best when he was asked by a reporter how much rewriting he did. Hemingway's response was that he reworte the last page of *A Farewell to Arms* thirty-nine times before he was satisfied, "before getting the words right." (Plimpton 1965: 222). Since writing submitted to *The ELI Expositor* is expected to be as grammatically correct as possible, students learn the necessity of revising. One student reportedly spent nearly three hours "getting right" her two-paragraph submission on clothing trends in Kiribati.

Perhaps the most obvious reason for publishing students' writing lies in the fact that it clarifies to students that the real purpose in writing is to communicate. Most writers will agree that they write better when they have something they want to say and someone to say it to. The *Expositor* gives students a much wider and more definite audience than they normally have in the classroom. As a result, students' work becomes more meaningful and less like busy work when they are writing for *The ELI Expositor.*

A publication of student work also creates a fountain of ideas and non-intimidating examples for other writing students. Such a publication is a good source for students struggling with the age-old question "What can I write about?" Not only are the ideas usually of some interest, but the examples are not beyond the students' capabilities. In contrast, the writing in textbooks is frequently so far beyond ESL students' abilities that it serves only to make the writing process more frustrating. Unlike textbook samples, the writing of their peers is not normally intimidating to students.

The list of benefits that result from the publication of ESL students' writing goes on. Students become highly motivated when something they have written is published. (Some students may never get this kind of positive reinforcement anywhere else.) Another benefit is the close working relationship that develops between students and teachers. Often students who wouldn't normally go near a teacher's office will seek their instructor's assistance in revising an essay when it is to be published in *The ELI Expositor.* A student publication also creates a forum for students to vent their grievances—whether they concern dormitory conditions or inequities in the grading system. In short, the reasons to publish student work far outweigh the reasons not to. There are, however, some challenges to publishing student writing.

Procedures and Problems

At the outset we planned to have a publication that would help our students by (1) giving them a definite but wider audience, (2) showing them what kind of writing their peers as well as they, themselves, were capable of writing, and (3) providing a means of exchanging ideas. Nevertheless, all of this had to be accomplished with a minimal amount of time and money; neither were in great abundance.

We wanted to have a publication that would be helpful to our students, but we did not want to commit ourselves to something that would require an inordinate amount of time, since (like all teachers) we had other responsibilities that could not be neglected.

We first looked at other programs that published their students' work. This investigation quickly revealed that there are nearly as many ways to publish student writing as there are ways to teach writing: publishing a once-a-year literary collection, reproducing exemplary work on a particular class assignment, submitting students' work to the school newspaper, or creating an ELI newspaper (students become editors, reporters, typists, etc.). Even though each of these approaches had definite strengths, their weaknesses made them impractical for our

purposes. Publishing only once a year (or semester) does not provide ongoing motivation. Reproducing work on a class basis limits the range of topics as well as the number of submissions. In the school newspaper, the competition from more advanced writers is so keen that very few, if any, ESL learners even attempt a submission. And having an ELI newsletter would be simply too time consuming to be practical in our program. Our students do not have time for a lot of extra work; nor do we.

The most feasible approach was to create a publication that would include our students' best writing from their regular class assignments. However, rather than publish student work on an individual classroom basis we decided to publish writing from all levels of the ELI program together. This

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Norman Evans coordinates the writing program, and Fawn Whittaker is the listening coordinator in the English Language Institute of Brigham Young University—Hawaii Campus.

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way our students could compare their writing with that of students at all levels, they would not be burdened with an extra task, and we would have the work of nearly one hundred and fifty students from which to make our selections.

Collecting and Selecting

Collecting and selecting student writing proved to be the most difficult part of the process. In the first place, as editors, we made sure that our own students submitted writing, but getting work from other writing teachers' classes was quite another matter. Initially, other teachers were not nearly as enthusiastic about the project. Consequently, their students were not submitting work to the *Expositor.*

The solution to this problem actually turned out to be a benefit. We asked other teachers to be in charge of some small *Expositor*-related task, such as keeping a file of all the submissions, or helping evaluate the essays. Delegating responsi-

bility not only lightened our load but also involved other teachers in the process. Soon the number of submissions from other classes increased, as did teacher enthusiasm.

Another problem in the collecting process was that there wasn't always a lot of "publishable" work available. Often at the beginning of a semester, class assignments were fundamental writing exercises—not very interesting reading. Even when more interesting work did start coming in, it usually took several weeks to be revised. This did not prove to be a serious problem, however, since the *Expositor* was printed on a flexible schedule—if and when there was a sufficient number of submissions and an adequate amount of time.

Once enough submissions had been handed in, the selection process began. Only very general guidelines were given to the evaluators. They were to select the best papers according to (1) correct use of English, (2) appeal to the readers, and (3) creativity. They were not always in total agreement on which writing was best, of course, but there were usually eight or ten essays that were selected by a majority of the evaluators.

An additional problem we encountered (and still have not solved to our satisfaction) is how to evaluate work fairly when not all students are on the same level. Students in our program score from the low sixties to mid eighties on the Michigan Test of English Language Proficiency. Naturally, the 101 student is less likely than the 104 student to have work accepted for publication. The solution to this problem has been to divide the papers by levels and select the best from each.

A more serious problem was that of "making the rich richer." In other words, the writing that was chosen for publication was frequently that of students who would most likely succeed in writing class anyway, without the extra benefits of having their work published. The only apparent solution to this problem is to encourage students—especially struggling students—to make the effort and write for *The ELI Expositor.* Concerned teachers have assisted a great deal

by making special attempts to help floundering students get something published. Some teachers have even made submissions to the *Expositor* a mandatory class assignment.

Once the essays had been selected, they were returned to their student authors to make any corrections that the evaluator, their teachers, and they themselves deemed necessary. (Care must be exercised so that reader's suggestions do not dominate or overpower the student's original work. We have found it best to limit suggested revisions to grammatical problems. This is primarily done to insure that the student's writing is exactly that—the student's!)

When students returned the reivsed work we asked for their signatures (in non-Roman alphabets when applicable) to place at the end of their writing. This addition helped to make a normally dull page of print quite attractive.

The revised writing was then typed into columns and proofread one last time. A critical point that needs to be remembered is that students look to the work published in the *Expositor* as exemplary; care should be taken to make it such, including using the best quality of duplication the budget will allow. The finished product should reflect the time and effort that have been spent on it.

Ed. Note: In the next issue of the TESL Reporter, *Evans and Whittaker will report on student and teacher reactions to* The ELI Expositor.

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Plimpton, George, ed. 1965. *Writers at work: the "Paris Review" interviews* (second series). New York: Viking.

Singer, Isaac Bashevis. 1968. Interview in the *Paris Review* (spring).

A Special "Thank You"

In producing the *TESL Reporter,* one of the most important behind-the-scenes jobs is the evaluation of manuscripts which have been submitted to the editor to be considered for publication. Although for many years this process was handled "in house," manuscripts submitted to the *TESL Reporter* are now evaluated not only by the *TESL Reporter's* editorial staff but also by other TESL professionals with expertise appropriate to the topic of the manuscript. In addition to evaluating submissions, these "referees" frequently offer useful suggestions on how manuscripts can be improved. For their service, these individuals receive no reward other than professional recognition and sincere thanks from the editor, the staff, and the readers of the *TESL Reporter.* Thus, we extend a special "thank you" to the following people who have evaluated manuscripts for the *TESL Reporter* this past year:

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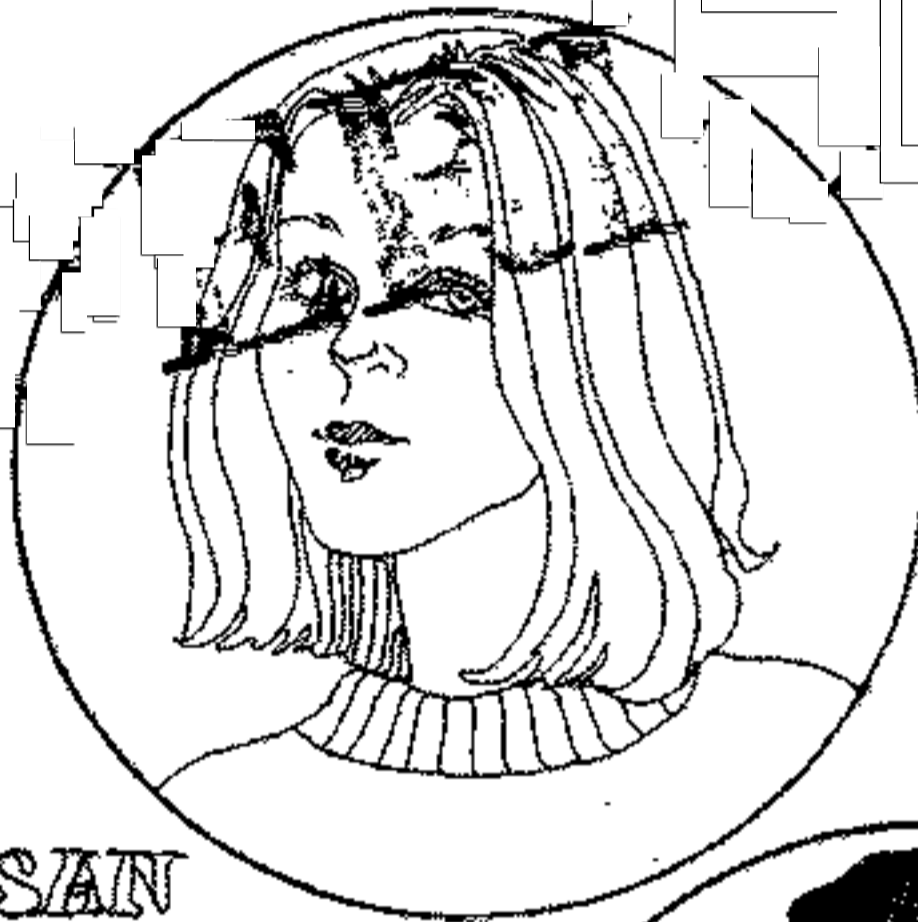
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Conference Announcements

The nineteenth annual convention of TESOL (Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages) will be held April 9-14 in New York City. Proposals for presentations are due September 10, 1984. For further information, contact the TESOL Central Office, 202 D.C. Transit Building, Georgetown University, Washington, D.C. 20057.

The fifth annual WATESOL convention will be held October 12-13, 1984 at Northern Virginia Community College. Contact Washington Area TESOL, P.O. Box 25502, Washington, D.C. 20007.

"Language and Literacy: Liberating the LEP Learner" is the theme of the fourth WPC Bilingual/ESL conference, to be held at Wayne, New Jersey October 26-27, 1984. Contact the Office of Continuing Education, William Paterson College, Wayne, NJ 07470. Telephone (210) 595-2461.

The sixth annual TEXTESOL conference will be held at San Antonio College November 2-3, 1984. Contact Carolyn Kessler, Bicultural-Bilingual Studies, University of Texas at San Antonio, San Antonio, TX 78285. Telephone (512) 691-4426.

The National Adult Education conference will be held November 7-11, 1984 at Louisville, Kentucky. Contact the American Association for Adult and Continuing Education, 1201 Sixteenth Street, N.W., Suite 230, Washington, D.C. 20036. Telephone (202) 822-7866.

The fourteenth annual convention of the Hawaii Council of Teachers of English will be held in Honolulu on Saturday, November 3, 1984. Deadline for presentation proposals is August 31, 1984. Contact Lynn Henrichsen, BYU–HC Box 1830, Laie, HI 96762.

The thirty-fifth annual conference of the International Communication Association will be held in Honolulu, Hawaii May 23-27, 1985. Asian and Pacific scholars interested in participating should contact Clay Vollan, Institute of Culture and Communication, East-West Center, 1777 East-West Road, Honolulu, HI 96848. African, Latin American, European, and Canadian scholars interested in participating should contact Majid Tehranian, Dept. of Communication, University of Hawaii, Honolulu, HI 96822. Proposals (full papers or extended abstracts) dealing with intercultural/development communication should be sent to Felipe Korzenny, Dept. of Communication, Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI 48824 or Josep Rota, School of Telecommunications, Ohio University, Athens, OH 45701. For additional information contact ICA Headquarters, P.O. Box 9589, Austin, TX 78766.