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WHAT GRADE IS DR. CHAN IN?

by Donna Ilyin

First presented at Northern University of Illinois, "What Grade is Dr. Chan In?" was written to present to adult educators and consultants in Local and State Departments of Education and Federal Regions.

Too often attempts are made to place highly educated non-English speakers into children's school grades. This system is humiliating and degrading. It seems rather foolish to say that Dr. Chan is in the first

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grade because he can't read or speak English, yet reading grade levels are important to the Federal and State Government when evaluating Adult Basic Education programs. They are important to employers when selecting minority workers for employment and they are important to Dr. Chan and to his teachers when selecting reading materials after he has reached the intermediate and advanced courses in adult schools.

When Dr. Chan can read well enough in English, he can take adult tests which place him into those reading grade levels. When he has the proficiency of an adult intermediate level student, he can also take tests designed for foreign college students who are entering beginning courses (often called ELI or ALI) giving him intensive English

Dr. Robert Kaplan (USC) has informed me that some ALI or ELI programs have students with nil proficiency in English. If those beginning courses are in his area and scheduled when he can attend and if they are not too expensive, he is indeed fortunate. Usually, however, Dr. Chan has to attend a free adult program ESL class.

for college work. However he cannot take any of these tests if he has no English proficiency at all. In adult program ESL classes the beginning level classes as well as the lower intermediate level class are often called SURVIVAL ENGLISH. When Dr. acquired survival English Chan has proficiency, he can now take native-speaker tests that will give him a grade level He can now take college equivalency. foreign-born tests qualifying him for beginning English classes.

How long does it take for Dr. Chan to show the Local, State, and Federal Government that he can get a grade equivalency and then show gains in grade levels as he continues to study? How long will it take Dr. Chan to qualify as a beginner in a college intensive English class for foreign

Donna Ilyin, presently a counselor and teacher at Alemany Community College Center, has taught ESL to adults for the last 15 years. She has also written tests and been a guest lecturer and consultant in teacher training and testing. She has an MA in TEFL from San Francisco State University. Previously she was a vocational and resettlement counselor for the National Lutheran Council.

students? It really depends on many factors. (Language Proficiency Study p. 25 and 26) Adult beginning students on the average, take anywhere from 500 to 1500 hours of instruction to reach this proficiency.

How should the Federal programs evaluate Dr. Chan's progress when he is in those Survival English classes? How do teachers select materials and reading for Dr. Chan when he is in those levels? Are most courses the same throughout the country? Is survival English just hit and miss with no plan, course outlines, curriculum or special materials, methods, tests, etc? Is it impossible for Dr. Chan's progress to be reported?

Many adult school programs throughout the country have similar plans, curriculum outlines, behavioral objectives, recommended texts and materials for those beginning Survival English classes. (For two plans and outlines see: ESL Structure Outline, Los Angeles and Master Plan II, S.F.)

Many of us believe it would be helpful for the Federal, State, and Local programs to refer to Dr. Chan's classes as SE-1 (Survival English-1) or 100, SE-2, or 200, SE-3 or 300. It really is much kinder and more realistic to say that Dr. Chan is in level 100 or SE-1 or SE-100 than to ask for a grade equivalent that doesn't exist because Dr. Chan can't read well enough to take a test in English to demonstrate his English reading grade.

It is especially more honest and rewarding for Dr. Chan and for us to report that after 350-500 ² hours of instruction Dr. Chan has progressed to a proficiency level equal to ESL 200, SE-2, or SE-200...whatever you want to call it. Dr. Chan still can't read well enough to take the test in English to show his grade or to become a college foreign student beginner, but he usually can read well enough to take an ESL test to show his ESL level or SE level.

Dr. Chan's oral proficiency should also be evaluated since oral communication is important for surviving and finding a job in the United States. Dr. Chan may have to work part-time while he is learning English. Oral comprehension also aids reading comprehension. We want Dr. Chan to understand what he can decode--not just read a lot of words he can't understand in context. Neither Dr. Chan nor any other ESL non-English speaker should be forced to take a native speaker test or a test for foreign college students until he can read and understand English well enough to attempt the test. He shouldn't take a special ESL

This figure is an estimation based on testing research that I have done in adult program ESL classes. Students in junior high, senior high and true beginning classes in ALI and BLI would undoubtedly take less time. Hopefully some researcher will study the problem in open enrollment adult ESL classes using true beginners with nil English.

screening test either until after he has acquired some English proficiency.

How can one tell if Dr. Chan is ready to take an adult program ESL screening test? Before giving him the screening tests ask a number of information questions (who, what, when, where, etc.) sprinkled with a few Yes/No questions (are, do, did, etc) about the student, his English ability, the number of classes, or kinds of classes he wants, etc. If the student can ask and answer and read a few simple conversation sentences, give him screening tests for placement. If he can't, place him in the adult beginning survival English class.

After Dr. Chan has been in a beginning Survival English class, how can one tell how much he has achieved? The screening tests can also be used as achievement or post tests if given after 350 hours of instruction. They are useful when time is limited, when teachers have not yet made reliable and valid evaluation tools to measure their objectives and when teachers want another

evaluation to check their own evaluation.

What is really tacking at the present time are reliable and valid screening and achievement tests that measure reading ability in the Survival English classes 100-300. However until new reading tests are developed and normed on adult ESL students in those Survival English classes, the tests listed below can show gain. Teachers'own records of before and after achievements can also be used.

The following is a list of tests with scores showing placement into ESL levels. Grade equivalents are given when appropriate and when gain can be shown. Most of the information given here comes from research in validating my own tests, but other tests are listed. For further information about how those tests place into ESL levels, contact the authors. (See Ramirez pp. 37-41 & pp. 50-58.) Hopefully Federal, State, and Local Governments will begin to use the SE levels rather than grades. Then our Dr. Chan's progress will be realistically reported-our progress better evaluated.

SCREENING TESTS

LEVEL	SCORE	PLACEMENT
ESL 100 of Beginning 1		SE-1 or SE-100
EPT A and B (Ilyin)	0- 19	
ILYIN ORAL INTERVIEW	0-24	
STEL (Best)	0- 19	
(Grinsell, Nixon, Lado, Terrell, Madsen, Martz, others)		•
ESL 200 or Beginning 2		SE-2 or SE-200
EPT A and B	20-29	
ILYIN ORAL INTERVIEW	25-39	
STEL TESTS		
Beginning I & 2	20-27	
(Lado, Terrell, Madsen, others)	•	

(continued on page 9)

DIALOGUES FOR ELEMENTARY SCHOOL SECOND LANGUAGE LEARNERS

by Emilio G Cortez

One of the oldest and most widely used language-teaching aids is the dialogue. Many language teachers consider the dialogue a highly effective teaching vehicle. Nelson Brooks contends:

All that is learned is meaningful, and what is learned in one part of the dialogue often makes meaning clear in another.¹

Faye Bumpass speaks favorably of the dialogue and its use on the elementary level.

Learning language patterns in a dialogue form is a very rewarding experience for children on the elementary levels of foreign language learning. It involves a natural and exclusive use of aural-oral skills, and all the elements of the sound system appear repeatedly.²

Preparing meaningful and appropriate dialogues is a difficult task and of growing concern to textbook writers and language teachers alike.

Julia Dobson and William R. Slager enumerate several considerations which can serve as a guide for writing and/or evaluating pedagogic dialogues.

- 1. Dialogues should not be excessively lengthy. Ideally, a dialogue consists of two or three exchanges.
- 2. The dialogue should have an appropriate final line that signals a realistic stopping point in the conversation.
- 3. The language should be natural and accurately reflect the speech habits of native English speakers.
- 4. The dialogue should be appropriate for a particular proficiency level (elementary, intermediate, or advanced). Ex-

- cessively difficult sounds or structures should be avoided.
- 5. Ideally, a dialogue has enough content, in terms of either grammar or subject matter, to permit it to tie in closely with the other material in the lesson.
- 6. The content of the dialogue should reflect the level of sophistication of the student and his knowledge of the world.
- 7. The tone of the dialogue should be realistic; e.g. adults should speak as adults and children should speak as children.
- 8. If characters are used, they should be readily identifiable, and their characteristics should be easy to remember. An example of such a character might be a "contrary" child, Pablo, who doesn't do this or doesn't do that; he would be the character for any negative construction.

In keeping with these suggestions, nine dialogues are here presented. Various English words may be substituted into these dialogues without hampering either unity or coherence.

DIALOGUES

Vocabulary Words

A. Be sure you finish eating	Beans
your dinner.	Soup
B. I can't ; I'm full.	Spinach
A. I guess you're too full for	Peas
dessert.	Carrots
B. I just got hungry again.	-

A. Whe	ere are you going?	Eggs
B. To	the store; I have to	Butter

buy some bread. A. Can I come?	Milk
B. Sure, let's go.	Sugar
A. That's a nice dog! Whose	Basketball
is it? B. It's Pablo's.	Football Cat
A. Where'd he get it?	Wagon
B. I don't know. Let's ask	Bicycle
him.	•
A. Did you see Papo?	Book
B. No, I didn't. Why?	Nickel
A. He has my lunch.	Pen
B. Oh! Here he comes	Dime
now.	Quarter
A. What happened, Paul?	Knee
You're hurt.	Leg
B. I fell and hurt my arm.	Back
B. I'm going home.	Neck
A. I'll go with you.	Nose
	Ankle
	Head
A. Hi! How are you?	Circus
B. Fine, thanks-and you?	Movies
A. Just fine. Where are you	Store
going?	Park
B. To the <i>library</i> .	Drugstore
A. OK. I'll see you later. B. So long.	
D. 30 long.	
A. Excuse me. I found this	Ruler
pencil on the floor.	Paper
Is it yours?	Eraser
B. Yes, it is. Thank you.	Notebook
A. Who's that?	Cousin
B. That's my friend.	Brother
A. He looks like you.	Father
B. That's what everybody says.	Uncle
A. Wasn't the circus great!	Tigers
B. It sure was.	Elephants
A. What did you like best?	Seals
B. I liked the clowns best.	Monkeys
•	Bears
	Horses
	Lione

Lions

Creating appropriate dialogues is an interesting and challenging endeavor-well worth the time and effort. An appropriate dialogue, when meaningfully implemented, constitutes an effective and highly versatile pedagogic aid.

FOOTNOTES

Nelson Brooks, Language and Language Learning (New York, New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc., 1960), p. 145.

²Faye Bumpass, Teaching Young Students English as a Foreign Language (New York City: American Book Company, 1963), p. 68.

³Adapted from two sources: Julia Dobson, "Dialogues: Why, When, and How to Teach Them," English Teaching Forum, X (May-June, 1972), No. 3, pp. 22-23 and William R. Slager, "Creating Contexts for Language Practice," TESOL Quarterly, VII (March, 1973), No. 1, pp. 38-40.

TESL REPORTER

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TALK AND LISTEN

by Richard Via

ESL teachers have an opportunity to make use of an effective technique that professional actors use to enhance a conversation class. Actors use the technique to develop a conversational tone and to learn their lines. In the theatre the technique has no name, but I have dubbed it, "Talk and Listen," for that is what the method calls for.

There are many values in using the "Talk and Listen" system with ESL learners. It can train students to listen; it can help them learn dialogues; it can help them develop a conversational tone (talking rather than reciting); and not last (for there are still others) nor least—"talk and listen" is fun.

To discuss this a little further let me make a few observations. A good actor, like a good conversationalist, must be a good listener. By listening an actor can judge how he/she needs to respond. The way something is said to a performer, or anyone, affects the way the other performer responds. For a language learner the same holds true. Listening provides the language learner with added opportunity to pick up a needed word or phrase to use in his /her reply.

By talking to an actor, rather than reading, the actor or conversationalist becomes more interesting—the difference between reading and talking is tremendous. Yet in most classroom situations dialogues are read aloud rather than spoken as conversation.

All too often students are asked to memorize a dialogue and recite it in class. This seems to work well in the classroom and the student receives an A. But in the real world these rote recitations cause the student to fail. The words come tumbling out, with no thought behind them, because that is the way it was memorized.

- A sad but frequent consequence of this

is that the speaker is not understood by the listener, and thus there is no communication, no exchange of information. This isn't a problem in a classroom where dialogues are memorized because it isn't necessary to listen, nor is it necessary to communicate. The cue for the listener to begin speaking is the silence, not the message of the first speaker. In other cases the dialogue comes to a dead end because the listener, who had never learned the dialogue replies with a sentence which is logical and appropriate, but original. This new sentence leaves the memorizer in a bewildered state unable to reply. A in the class, F outside. With "talk and listen" students are trained to talk and listen and talk.

Perhaps the best way to start students on the "talk and listen" system is to use Talk and Listen Cards. Choose or write a simple dialogue of six to eight lines. Put the lines that A speaks on one card and those of B on another.

A: Why do you always do that?

A:----

B: ---

B: Do what?

A: You know. What you're doing now.

A:----

B: ----

B: Why? Does it bother you?

A: Oh no, not at all.

A:----

B: ----

B: Then why did you ask?

Since A speaks first, A reads his/her first line to himself/herself. B does not look at his/her card yet, but waits for A to speak to him/her. A then makes eye contact with B and says the line to B. When A has finished speaking, B then reads the first line on his/her card to himself/herself, then says it to A. The entire dialogue is done this way. Students

may refer to their cards as often as necessary, but whenever someone is speaking there must be eye contact. Students should not be reading their lines planning how to say the line, they should be listening to the speaker. A proper response can be given only by listening. When using a dialogue from a textbook or play, students should be careful not to read the line that is being spoken to them. In most cases students who read the line spoken to them hear their own "inner voice" with its interpretation louder than the real voice of the speaker.

If you should note that students are making eye contact, but not listening, put two sets of dialogues on the cards. This will require listening to elicit a sensible dialogue.

A. It was good to see you yesterday.

or

Did you know I was going to Detroit? B. No, I didn't.

or

It was good to see you too.

A. Yeah, I'm going to Detroit.

or

It was a good party, wasn't it.

B. Oh, it was okay.

or

For how long?

A. Permanently. I'm moving there.

or

Are you going to the picnic Saturday?

B. Oh, not on a vacation?

or

I'm not sure.

A. It should be fun.

or

No. I'll miss this place.

B. We'll miss you too.

Ot

Well, I'll try to go.

Once the students have learned to use the cards, there are other things you may do that are both fun and effective. Speaking the lines in different natural tones or speeds will show how language can be changed in meaning or feeling. The greatest change and the most fun occurs when the circumstances surrounding the situation are given. By this I mean the who, where, what, when, anything that might control the way the sentences

would be spoken. Every dialogue changes according to these circumstances yet rarely do teachers think to add them.

In the first dialogue how would the lines be spoken if:

- -A and B are a married couple watching T.V. B keeps changing channels.
- -A and B are parent and child. B, the child is biting his/her fingernails.

-A and B are lovers. B is stroking A's hair. The dialogues for Talk and Listen may be written by the teacher, taken from textbook dialogues or selected from suitable plays. The class may be divided into pairs using different cards or the same cards with each pair deciding on the given circumstances. After they have worked on them they could be presented in front of the class for all to enjoy. More than likely after working on them they will know the lines and not need the cards. In case they have not learned them, let them refer to the cards rather than memorize the lines.

BOOK REVIEW

Access to English as a Second Language

Robert G. Breckenridge McGraw-Hill International Book Company. 1974.

The two texts and accompanying work-books that comprise Robert G. Breckenridge's Access to English As a Second Language are, I think, valuable only to the more experienced ESL teacher. There are enough disappointing features encountered in the books that in the end it will have been the strengths of the teacher rather than those of the materials that have made their adaptation a success in class.

Teachers examining the texts for possible use in the classroom will find them time-consuming to figure out. There is no preface or introduction explaining how to use the

books or at what level students they are directed. To read some of the instructions to the student in the first chapter, one would guess they are directed only to fluent English speakers:

Situational practice gives you...the opportunity to use English for actual communication rather than just in mechanical repetition and drill (p.8)

There is some pretty advanced vocabulary in that. And yet the exercises that accompany are very basic:

Is this a book? Yes, it is. Is this a pen? No, it isn't.

There are also modals (should, can) that are apparent early in either the instructions or the commentary, some future ("are going to") expressions, and some if clauses. All of this sophisticated language indicates that the audience Breckenridge must have in mind is an advanced one, but one that needs to go back and review the fundamentals of English.

It is also an audience that needs a teacher, and this may be a strength or weakness of the books, depending on how you look at it. The books lend themselves well to actual classroom work, with the teacher taking sometimes an active, sometimes a passive role, but always an instigating one. He prods the students constantly with questions, he walks around the room and holds things up and asks about them, and he gets the class to do the same things.

But the student on his own will have difficulty with the books, at least until he understands them after several chapters. There are not enough examples in many of the first exercises to give him what he needs to practice outside of class. Also, some of the examples are erroneous:

Give the correct answer, "Yes, it is" or "No, it isn't".

1. Is Centerville a town? Yes, it is.

- 2. Is Centerville in the United States? Yes, it is.
- 3. Is Centerville in Mexico? No, it isn't.
- 4. Is there a school in Centerville?
- 5. Is there a bank in Centerville?
- 6. Do the Bankers live in Centerville?
- 7. Do you live in Centerville?
- 8. Are you going to read about Centreville?

Obviously it's impossible to answer "Yes, it is" or "No, it isn't" to questions 4 through 8. This is cleared up later in the book mostly because one can assume the student has become accustomed to the routine. Nonetheless, the teacher will have to be careful to explain much to his class as they first attempt the exercises.

Perhaps the strongest selling points of the books are their approach and extensiveness of exercise. Listening and speaking are stressed throughout, with particular emphasis on question formulation. Questions are the basic tools for second language acquisition. but many students have problems with them, the appropriate words to use (who, what, how), their syntax. They therefore lack confidence and are embarrassed to ask about things they must learn. Breckenridge gives second language speakers that confidence through rather lengthy catechism and practice formulating their own questions about given situations.

Writing comes later and receives the most attention in the workbooks, which correlate well, by the way, with the texts. There are reading selections in each chapter. They become progressively longer and increasingly difficult, and have more paragraphs. Most of the exercises and questions stem from the reading selection.

Access to English can be a very effective approach to English in the hands of a competent, experienced teacher. Otherwise it may be a bewildering mistake for both teacher and student alike.

Steven Goldsberry

What Grade Is Dr. Chan In?

Adv. 1 & 2

The state of the s		
(continued from page 3)		
ESL 300 or Intermediate l		SE-3 or SE-300
		G~ade 2.9
EPT A and B	30-39	RFU (Thurstone)
ILYIN ORAL INTERVIEW	40-59	
STEL TESTS		
Beginning 1 & 2	30-37	
Intermediate 1 & 2	0- 19	
(Finn, Lado, Mills, Terrell)	4 -2	
ESL 400 or Basic Education where ESL and native		Grade 3.5
speakers of English are in the same class. Vo-		RFU
cational 4/4 programs are often at this level also.	•	
cational 4/4 programs are often at this level also.		
EPT A and B	above 35	
	0- 19	
and G and H (Ilyin, Best & Biagi)	- 	•
ILYIN ORAL INTERVIEW	60-74	
STEL Tests (Int. 1 & 2)	20-29	
TOEFL	350-425	
(Mills, CELT see Harris, and others)		
ESL 500	•	about 5th grade level
(Regio Education English engaling students and		
(Basic Education English speaking students and		RFU (Thurstone)
non-native speaking students with low educations		TABE M
are now in another coursenot usually in ESL		
classes.)		
EPT TESTS G/H	20-29	
ILYIN ORAL INTERVIEW	75-100	
STEL TESTS		
Int. 1 & 2	30-37	
Adv. 1 & 2	0- 19	
TOEFL	Below 500	-
CELT	Delow 500	
Listening	Asserone A6	
Structure	Average 46	
Situcture	Average 41	
MTELP (See Upshur)	Below 54	•
ESL 600		about 7th grade
	•	level
(Non-English-speakers only who usually have above		RFU
5th grade education in their own country.)		TABE M
EPT TESTS G/H	30-40	•
ILYIN ORAL INTERVIEW	75- 100	
STEL TESTS		

20-40

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TOEFL
CELT
Listening Average 64
Structure Average 51
MTELP Average 54
MICHIGAN AURAL ACHIEVEMENT Average 59
(See Pillsbury)
MICHIGAN STRUCTURE Average 54
(See Pillsbury)

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INDONESIA APPOINTMENT

The U.S. Department of State has notified Michael E. Foley, a TESL Reporter staffer and member of the BYU-HC ESL faculty, that he has been selected to lecture in ESL during the coming academic year. Mr. Foley and his family will assume their new responsibilities this summer in Bandung, Indonesia.

Mr. Foley is not new to international programs, having received his MA in TESL while studying at Honolulu's East-West Center. "We're looking forward to this next school year," he added, "and I hope we continue to receive the TESL Reporter in the mail."

PROFESSIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Position:

Teaching position in Oral English and Phonetics in the College Division of Kobe College. Academic rank dependent on qualifications. A 3 year contract commencing September, 1975.

Qualifications:

B.A. minimum; training in TEFL and teaching experience desirable; must be a Christian and eligible for short-term appointment by the United Church Board for World Ministries (United Church of Christ).

Kobe College:

Founded in 1875, Kobe College is the oldest Christian institution of higher education for women in Japan. It is located on a beautiful 30 acre campus in surburban Nishinomiya, convenient to nearby Kobe, Osaka and Kyoto. The College comprises a 6 year combined Junior and Senior High School division, a 4 year College division and a 2 year division of Graduate Studies. Three schools make up the College Division: School of Literature, School of Home Economics and School of Music. The English Department, with approximately

550 students and 18 faculty members, is the largest of the departments. Both the High School and College divisions of Kobe College have a long tradition of excellence in the teaching of English.

Living:

An attractive on-campus furnished apartment is provided rent free.

Salary range:

\$5300-\$6600. In addition are paid round-trip travel, freight, reimbursement of Japanese income tax, employer and employee share of United States Social Security taxes and medical expenses.

Summer language study option:

The appointee is encouraged to take advantage of the option for six to eight weeks of Japanese language study in Japan in the summer of 1975. Tuition, travel, housing and a per diem will be paid.

Address application or request for further information to:

Kobe College Corporation 19 South La Salle Street Chicago, Illinois 60603

TESL REPORTER

Box 157
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Laie, Hawaii 96762

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