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TESL REPORTER

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FROM LANGUAGE TEACHING TO LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

by John F. Haskell

(A speech given at the May 1979 Illinois TESOL Meeting and at the April 1979 conference on Students of Limited English Proficiency sponsored by the Honolulu District Department of Education and the Northwest Regional Laboratory.)

Each decade seems to produce its own terminology, a result, generally, of the need to reflect in concrete terms the growth, the changes in thinking, the, hopefully, advancements made in how we think about and how we act in our profession. The change in emphasis on papers and book titles from language teaching to language acquisition reflects the growing humanism of our ESL materials, texts, methods, syllabuses, programs and teacher training. Certainly, Chomsky's challenge of structural linguistics and behaviorial psychology began or at least reinforced the growing view that language learning/teaching needed to take a healthy look at itself and its clientele. The growing number of teachers who told us we needed to reevaluate the learning task and the learner, as well as the teaching method and the teacher, were certainly pushed to prominence by the reappearance of bilingual education in our public schools and its criticism of ESL as not being affective–i.e. meeting the emotional and cultural needs of the individual student.

As Escobar and Bright have recently pointed out, the research and thrust of the 70's has brought us to the dawn of the 80's with what they see as important and major trends in the areas of methodology, materials, and programs, all of which reflect the growing humanism in education. Emphasis on language acquisition, communicative competence, language appropriateness, the "limited English speaker", functional syllabuses, and English for special purposes are the current fruits or foci of this trend.

Methodology is now acceptably eclectic. The teacher first evaluates the needs, capabilities, and learning strategies of her students before selecting the kinds of materials and techniques for presenting, encouraging, and involving the students in a language experience. Clearly such approaches to language learning as Counseling-Learning, with its emphasis on the positive, non-threatening learning environment and the teacher as facilitator rather than instructor, and the Language Experience Approach, with its recognition of the learner as the source of experience and knowledge from which and through which language and life growth can be nurtured, are present evidence of our focus on the learner. Studies in motivation have convinced us that the willing, conscious participation of the student, his personal commitment, and his own recognition of his needs and wants are essential to his successful learning of a second language.

Our materials, too, reflect this growth toward viewing the learner's need to deal with communication skills rather than just abstract language. We long ago recognized that our adult students, having less time for formal classroom instruction, wanted instant language usage rather than mechanical pattern building. Situational materials provided first the adult learner and increasingly the elementary and secondary school learner with immediate access to functional, useful language. Demand for competence in language and the use of appropriate

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rather than just syntactically correct language has resulted in another look at language as a notional tool, that is, a tool which has, in addition to its syntactic or linguistic elements (sound, word and sentence systems) and its situational usefulness, a set of definable/teachable parts that have to do with how one uses language to meet certain communicative/discourse needs, such as beginning a conversation, changing the subject, expressing disagreement or anger or curiosity, being polite, or understanding when someone else isn't, etc. The Spanish student, for example, who says "OK! OK!" even though he may be translating, is using real enough English. But how does the native English listener view this response? In English, the repetition of such a short response, generally signals a feeling of exasperation on the part of the speaker, rather than the polite assent generally expected. If what I have seen this past year is any indication, granting that texts will continue to be overwhelmingly audio-lingual/structural/linguistic in approach, there will also be an increasing attempt to provide material with a notional-functional (i.e., language as communication) emphasis.

A third trend, long overdue, and into which I may be reading more than is yet happening, is towards English for Special Purposes (ESP) programs. There seems to be an increasing recognition in the United States for the kind of language class that has long been taught overseas, classes that not only teach general English but also take into account the specialized vocabulary and communication needs of the student, whether he be the potential scientist, nurse, mechanic, tourism specialist, engineer, or college student. True, many university programs in the U.S. have long recognized the need to prepare their ESL students to deal with the skills required of American college education such as listening to lectures, taking notes, and writing papers, as well as mastering basic language communication skills, but the trend today is clearly beyond even that to what I see as the recognition that student success may also require certain technical or specialized content area skills as well. What I hope this means is that elementary and secondary school ESL teachers will recognize these same needs for their students. In ESL and bilingual programs, teachers must not only teach English and supply first language education but prepare the student for eventual movement into content area classes taught in English, often by teachers less than sensitive to the individual needs of the limited English speaker. This means that the ESL teacher must supply needed vocabulary while both the ESL teacher and the bilingual teacher, together, supply the knowledge of and experience in dealing with points of view, testing procedures, discussion techniques, panel and individual presentation formats, math and science procedures, etc., so that the limited English speaker can enter his content area classes taught in English with not only adequate language content knowledge but with appropriate and useful skills—ways of thinking and performing—that are expected in those classes.

I think it is hopeful to see the audio-lingual dictum to take the student from mechanical to meaningful language become instead begin and stick with what is meaningful.

ANECDOTES FOR CROSS-CULTURAL INSIGHTS

by Judy E. Winn-Bell Olsen

Item: Janet Hafner of Palomar College tells of an incident in her beginning ESL class for Vietnamese students. One night she wore a favorite piece of jewelry, a large pendant in the shape of an owl. The students, normally warm and relaxed, froze. Finally one of them was able to tell her that, in Asian culture, the owl is the portent of death. An owl perched in a tree outside a house means that someone there will die soon.

Comment: What an interesting insight Janet's "mistake" reveals. Consider the number of educational materials with the "wise old owl" theme, and the commonness of the owl motif in American gifts and decorative accessories. Janet's anecdote could be the beginning of an interesting and relevant discussion for intermediate and advanced classes with Asian students, and help us avoid an upsetting symbol for shell-shocked Indochinese refugees.

Item: Pat Anesi of Alemany CCC and Jerrilou Johnson of Oxford U. Press tell of Arab and Latin students who have hissed for a waiter's attention - and have nearly been thrown out of the restaurant for doing so.

Comment: These students' "mistakes" give us another insight into a bit of American cultural behavior which should be discussed, perhaps practiced, in ESL classes which have students of these backgrounds. How many of us would think to talk with our students about polite ways of getting others' attention in this country--unless we knew about this mistake?

Item: Elena Garate of USC tells of, and has shown on videotape, the Latin American who was insulted by a well-meaning North American who, when asking about the height of one of the Latin's children, used a gesture that is reserved for animals in many parts of Latin America (arm outstretched, palm down).

Comment: Another "mistake" reveals another aspect of culture that we might wish to cover in class. How would we know unless someone had made that mistake? Would someone from that culture think to tell us about gestural differences? Only if they had been made overtly aware of those differences--probably through someone's mistakes.

The anecdotes above may make you think of others--mistakes made because what was appropriate in one culture was not in another. We may discover them inadvertently in class as Janet did, or from a student's anecdote about his own experience here, as Pat did, or from our own experience with someone of another culture, as in Elena's example.

A collection of these anecdotes would make a useful body of knowledge for us teachers to have; 1) for our own interest and heightened sensitivity; and 2) for indications of direct point of inter-cultural conflict--a very practical place to begin in "Teaching culture" in the classroom.

Won't you help with this collection? You have probably shared stories like Janet's, Pat's, and Elena's around the teacher's room coffee table. Perhaps your students have anecdotes to tell. You could make a real contribution to other teachers by sharing these anecdotes. Bob Lindberg in the Adult Education Field Services Section of the California State Dept. of Education has offered to distribute the collection to all contributors.

Please send your anecdotes to me (don't forget to include your name, affiliation, and mailing address). Put them down on paper **now** while the inspiration is fresh, and send to:

Judy E. W.-B. Olsen
c/o Alemany Community College Center
750 Eddy St.
San Francisco CA 94109

Or, if you prefer, send a cassette tape of your anecdote and I'll type it out myself. Maybe it's time to revive an oral tradition!

CONTROLLING THE VELOCITY: A *Sina Qua Non* in Teaching Listening

by T. Edward Harvey

There are several levels of listening expertise which are commonly found in normal native conversants. These levels usually occur simultaneously in the course of normal life situations. In the home, for example, siblings will understand what Fishman (1978) calls the "manifest content"--that which the parent is saying--but also will comprehend the "latent content"--what is really meant by the message. The latent content of the slang expressions uttered at a beach party by a jealous boyfriend is only too clear to the newcomer who is caught flirting with a seemingly unattached young lady. Listeners differ in intelligence, but when they listen in their own language, most are able to predict with a high degree of accuracy the total meaning of what they hear even if the message is coming at them at a rapid rate.

In contrast, neophyte second language (L2) learners may catch about one quarter of the manifest content and, according to the amount of their exposure to the target culture, may understand very little of the latent content of the message. As listeners gain knowledge of the L2 linguistic system and familiarity with the L2 culture, they more easily distinguish between the essential and the redundant and can anticipate the total message content. At least this is the terminal behavior that will be achieved by most students.

Some L2 students are inefficient listeners in their native tongue. When they are confronted with a rapid string of speech sounds they panic. M.D. Steer (1945) found that some people tend to pay too much attention to rate rather than content. They concentrate on how fast things are coming at them and, when they miss a string of words, they become so overly tense and preoccupied with the part missed that they become hopelessly lost and miscomprehend the message. Apparently those who can listen efficiently for meaning are skilled listeners because they are also field independent. Field independency is a theoretical construct based on the ability to keep things apart in a perceptual field, to see patterns, and to respond without stress in novel situations. Field dependent people are unable to disregard the more superficial aspects in order to detect order in the unfamiliar (H.A. Wilkins, et.al., 1962). Applying this same construct to listening, Carver, Johnson and Friedman tested listeners who tended to concentrate more on the rate and less on the content. They used speeded speech in conjunction with measures of field dependency and found that the ability to comprehend highly speeded speech probably involves being field independent. (1971-72). The results of other research by Friedman and Johnson point to rate as a dimension of speech which seems to be at the root of individual variations in listening proficiencies (1968).

Assuming that some of our L2 students are field dependent, if we continue to do nothing about controlling listening, they are doomed to inadequacy and frustration. In attending to learner needs, we can "control the teacher," as was recently suggested by I.S.P. Nation *(TESL Reporter,* Spring 1979). However, unless we control the message velocity, we still miss the mark as we try to provide the learning environment that leads to the greatest proficiency in listening.

We must remember that human speech is characterized by a certain amount of redundancy: processing time is provided for the listener by such means as hesitation and repetition, which reduce the amount of latent content available in a given message. Laudably, Nations's method--items II and III--suggests that the teacher be flexible and provide processing pauses or repeat portions of the message in question. The fact remains, however, that after class the same student who benefited from in-class flexibility will often have to resort to the

inflexible tape recorder for the much-needed additional listening practice.

Speech contrived and recorded for listening practice omits the pauses and the repetitions and moves relentlessly on from start to finish. Thus the student listeners are confronted with both the manifest and the latent content nearly simultaneously. As a consequence, they are forced to accomplish a task that even native speakers of English are not required to do. They must cope with a speech stream made up almost entirely of items totally essential to message comprehension. Rivers (1977) suggests that we obtain recordings of contextualized spontaneous speech to be fair to our students. However, authentic materials of the type she specifies are difficult for the classroom teacher to obtain. How can second language educators compensate for the inadequacies of listening programs already in their possession?

Rate-Altered Speech

The most promising way to enhance student listening performance with recorded materials is to mechanically retard the speed of the tape and electronically correct the accompanying shift in pitch. The device a student or teacher may use to modify the original recording is called a speech compressor/expander. The machine consists of a regular variable-speed cassette player which is equipped with electronic circuitry that, as the tape speed is changed, either deletes small, periodic samples of the taped message and electronically splices them together, or inserts speech into the message stream to slow it down. Several United States companies now market reasonably priced cassette players that contain either "shift register" or "Random Access Memory" (RAM) circuitry. Two representative companies are: Lexicon, Inc., 60 Turner Street, Waltham Massachusetts, 02154, U.S.A., which produces the VARISPEECH-II Compressor/Expander. This machine incorporates RAM circuitry. The Variable Speech Control Company, 185 Berry Street, Suite 3850, San Francisco, California, 94107, U.S.A., produces the model A-7 Speech Controller that incorporates shift register circuitry to slow down the speech.

Expanded speech is produced by periodically repeating a small segment of a recorded message. This produces a message which is perceived as being slower than the usual native-speed at which speech is normally recorded. While the materials the students will use still lack the pauses and repetitions of authentic speech, the electronic alteration provided by the speech expander effectively reinserts the juncture pauses which are essential to comprehension and effectively negates the cognitive overloading that results from the mere velocity of the message (Sticht, 1970).

Application of rate control falls logically into two areas. Expanded speech may be employed to minimize task overload and assure greater success to the beginner and the slower learner. Compressed speech may be used to sustain the challenge for the more advanced students. David Siegrist (1977) has prepared a training program designed to allow ESL students to proceed from use of expanded to normal to compressed speech. Such a procedure constitutes an optimum curriculum design for language laboratory listening experiences. Exercises and materials will convey meaning from the beginning of instruction, even at lower levels. Students are taken from comprehensibly slower presentations through successively faster presentations to native-speed materials and beyond. A similar project is underway at Miami University (Ohio) where expansion and then compression are applied to an L2 reading program. Phillips (1978) describes a procedure where a passage is first recorded, then expanded. Then the selection is re-recorded six times. Each time speech compression is applied to increase the rate of aural presentation. Thus as a student listens to a tape he will hear the same passage at rates from 120 words per minute to 240 words per minute. The objective of the application of rate control is to force the student to associate sound, meaning, and the printed word more rapidly and thus avoid

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the cumbersome but very common practice of conscious translation.

Besides applying expansion and then compression to instructional situations, expansion has been successfully used in L2 research and testing. Action research by Harvey (1978) has shown that high school students studying a second language preferred expanded speech when reviewing tape programs in preparation for listening comprehension examinations. Flaherty (1975) and Littell (1976) have shown that expansion of the L2 speech signal effectively negates cognitive overloading, especially during testing situations, thus significantly enhancing student listening performance.

Rate-controlled recordings have also been used as aural pacers. Mary Neville and A.K. Pugh (1975) had university ESL reading students listen to a recording of a passage while reading it silently. Again the experimental procedure included both expansion and compression. During the pilot study, it was found that speech expanded to 115 and 120 percent of the original recording time allowed more time and facilitated the reading of new and more difficult material. Speech compressed to 80 percent of the original speaking rate gave variation in difficulty without increasing the complexity of the printed text. All subjects in this research effort made statistically significant improvement in reading comprehension.

Summary

We can do much to free our students from the difficulty involved in listening to commercial tape programs in a language laboratory. We can take them out of the lab and have them control the teacher or we can place proper instruments in the lab and have students control the rate of program materials. With portable instruments comercially available at costs within the reach of educational institutions and individual teachers, the utility of the speech compressor/expander is no longer limited to those able to purchase and maintain expensive, bulky equipment and to those working in laboratories. Research has suggested the feasibility of instructing and evaluating listening and reading comprehension in second language education by applying rate control to recorded speech. Thus rate control is offered as one means of helping our students achieve the goal of listening fluency--the ability to comprehend the manifest and the latent content of native speech. It is also offered as a vehicle for facilitating acquisition of other language skills.

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ALPHABETOMANIA: From "A" to "Z"– or is it "Zed"?

by Jason B. Alter

The mere letters of the alphabet can be used creatively in the ESL classroom. There is the standard mind-boggler of asking the students to recite the alphabet backwards, starting with "Z,"/for example. The pronunciation of each letter in itself often requires practice by the class. But here I am suggesting a letter-by-letter exercise, with one or two admittedly far-fetched extrapolations.

The Honolulu newspapers often have a section labeled "E-1," and this label set my TESL mind working. How about a quick run through the alphabet, using this seemingly bare-boned "E-1" prototype? English lends itself to a myriad of language-learning/teaching possibilities, and the TESL practitioner has only to select from the cornucopia to motivate his students to a turn.

A-1 There's the sauce, of course. (Cf. "on/off the sauce.") Also, the notion that "A-1 means "top-notch." And then, isn't that one of Lawrence Welk's trademarks: "A-one, a-two, a-three...."?

B-1 Vitamin B-1. Cf. "I'd rather see one than *Be one.*"

C-1 Tell me if you *see one.* Homonymous proclivities should be encouraged. Cf. "Nan*cy won.*"

D-1 Sandra *Dee won.* It was a win*dy one.* (This is a once-over-lightly treatment; the list of elaborations could go on and on. The aim is to involve the student, not to lecture to him/her.)

E-1 He tried hard, and *'e won.* And*y won.* Cf. E-1 rank in the Army.

F-1 He flew an F-1. She'll get an *"F one* of these days.

G-1 *Gee, one* just left. It's a ding*y one.* (Here, I limit myself to the A-1, B-1, C-1 category; one could of course proceed to A-2, B-2, C-2, etc., with G-2 being an obvious example.)

H-1 Hawaiian example: the name of our freeways. Cf. minimal-pair possibilities of "H": "each," "ouch," "itch."

I-1 *I won*, for a change. Did you *eye one*?

J-1 *Jay won* the whole shooting match. O*J. won* the Heisman Trophy. He's here on a *J-1* visa.

K-1 Give *Kay one* of the apples. They might o*.k. one* of the proposals.

L-1 I'll ride on the *el one* of these days. Cf. "tell one," "sell one," "fell one," etc.

M-1 He fired an *M-1* rifle. She'll wear a diad*em one* day.

N-1 We'll go there *again one* day. *End one*, and begin another.

O-1 *Oh, one* glass is plenty. *Oh, won* again, did you?

P-1 Pap*py won.* She's the hap*py one.*

Q-1 Than*k you, one* and all. Get in *queue one. Cue one* another.

R-1 They *are one.* They*Are won* over easily.

S-1 Fin*esse won.* They enjoyed the school's larg*esse one* time.

Jason B. Alter, on leave from the University of Hawaii, is currently teaching at the Peking Foreign Languages Institute.

T-1 *Tee one* off. *Tea won* out over coffee.

U-1 *You won.* Did they give *you one? "U" won*, rather than "non-U."

V-1 It's a hea*vy one. TV won*, not radio.

W-1 Is the form *W-1* or W-2? I'll *double you one* time.

X-1 *X one* of them out. His *ex won* the case.

Y-1 *Why one* would complain is beyond me. The *"Y" won* the game.

Z-1 It's an ea*sy one.* Fon*zie won.*

There are cultural nuances to expatiate upon in most, if not all, of the examples. Sentence-making, rhyming, and insights into colloquialisms are attendant activities. Go for it!

WORD WHIRL

by Vicki Lee

This game is an adaptation of Abraham B. Hurwitz's and Arthur Goddard's "Word Whirl" and "Word Wheel" games. The changes made are beneficial since they call for more student participation and thus increase the game's effectiveness.

"Word Whirl" is intended initially to build the vocabulary of class members by "training them to group words in logical categories" (Hurwitz & Goddard: 111). Since students are required to speak up when naming the words, "Word Whirl" also provides students with the opportunity to practice their pronounciation.

Materials

2 pieces of poster board of different colours.
A pin or preferably a 1¼" round-head paper fastener.
A 21"x21" piece of cardboard.
3 markers of different colours.
Masking or scotch tape.

Procedure to Construct "Word Whirl."

1. On one piece of poster board, draw a 10"-radius circle. On the other board, draw an 8"-radius circle.
2. Cut out the circles. Then, mark them off as shown in Diagram 1.

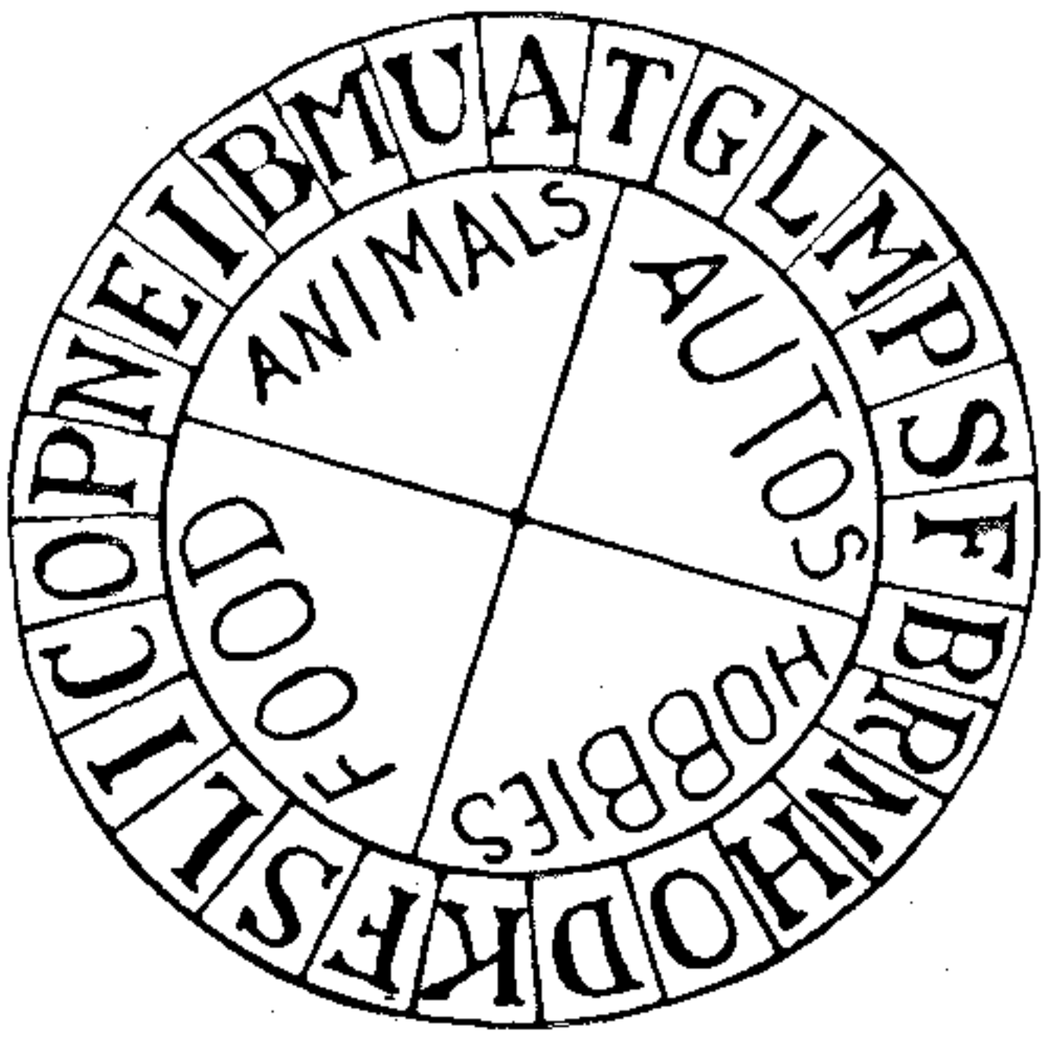

DIAGRAM 1.

3. To make the indicator, cut out two thin strips from one of the boards as shown in Diagram 2. Glue both strips together.

DIAGRAM 2.

4. Then, mount the two circles and indicator on the cardboard. To secure them in place, stick a pin or the round-head paper fastener through the centers of the circles. (Make sure the round disks are able to spin freely with the fastener or pin in place.)
5. You are now ready to play the game.

Rules and Procedure for Playing "Word Whirl"

Before the game, the teacher may wish to appoint a student to write out the words on the board, and to keep score. This then leaves the teacher free to act as time-keeper and arbitrator. The rules for the game are as follows:

1. Divide the class into groups of four or five students each. Each group then selects a group leader.
2. Then, beginning with group 1 have the group leader come forward and spin the indicator to select the category and letters. The first spin determines a category; the second a letter.
3. Within a given time of, say, one minute, all members in group 1 must come together and name, out loud, as many words as possible that belong to the selected category and begin with the designated letter.
4. When group 1's time is up, the other groups each, in turn, add some more words to the list. Words already on the

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Vicki Lee, currently in Singapore, is a graduate of B.Y.U.–Hawaii's BATESL program.

LINGUISTIC ANALYSIS: A Diachronic Perspective

by Lynn E. Henrichsen

The past four decades have been turbulent ones for the fields of linguistics, psychology, and (consequently) language teaching. Theories, and the practices that have accompanied them, have come and gone with almost startling frequency, although not without considerable controversy. It will be the purpose of this paper to present a limited, diachronic description of the different methods of language analysis which have, in turn, dominated the language learning/teaching field since 1945 and the controversies which have accompanied the rise (and demise) of each. This presentation will be necessarily brief and generalized, but it is hoped that it will serve as more than just an introductory overview of the different methods of linguistic analysis which have been and are currently being used in the study of second language teaching/learning/acquisition. As important as the particular theoretical and practical bases of these controversies and trends is the overall impression of instability brought about by overreaction. As the field is considered from such a perspective, one is tempted to ask, "Will the pendulum ever stop swinging?"

A Hypothesis

In 1945, in his classic book, *Teaching and Learning English as a Foreign Language*, Charles Fries explained the hypothesis which was to become the object of considerable discussion in the ensuing years.

> The most efficient materials are those that are based upon a scientific description of the language to be learned, carefully compared with a parallel description of the native language of the learner. (Fries 1945: 9)

This idea was not totally new. Bloomfield and others had advanced it earlier. But Fries' timing was right, and "contrastive analysis" fit in very well with the then popular theories of behaviorist psychology and structural linguistics. Based on these theories, an approach to language teaching which came to be called "the audio-lingual method" soon became dominant. It was built upon the linguistic/psychological thinking of the time which emphasized the differences between languages and which viewed the task of learning a second language as being distinctly different from the acquisition of a mother tongue (Lado 1957: v and Prator 1979). It carefully avoided student errors and used the predictive powers attributed to the "strong" version of the contrastive analysis hypothesis to determine the content of language teaching materials. By 1957, contrastive analysis (CA) had become so popular that it was extended to include culture as well as language.

> The plan of the book rests on the assumption that we can predict and describe the patterns that will cause difficulty in learning, and those that will not cause difficulty, by comparing systematically the language and culture to be learned with the native language and culture of the student. (Lado 1957:vii)

This dominance by CA theory was well into its second decade before it began to be seriously questioned and challenged. Eventually, however, the inadequacies of CA became apparent, and critics began to raise their voices against it. The reasons behind their criticism can be categorized into three major areas:

1. Behaviorist psychology and transfer theory, upon which CA was based, were unable to explain satisfactorily the creativity and open-ended nature of language and learning as demonstrated by Chomsky (1959).
2. The ability of linguistic theory to write comprehensive grammars, a prerequisite to using them to compare and contrast languages, was questioned as well.

Uncertainty is obviously piled upon uncertainty in making contrastive

analyses. Such uncertainties arise from inadequacies in existing linguistic theories. . . . The strong version is quite unrealistic and impracticable. . . . [It] makes demands of linguistic theory, and, therefore, of linguists, that they are in no position to meet. . . . The contrastive analysis hypothesis also raises many difficulties in practice, so many in fact that one may be tempted to ask whether it is really possible to make contrastive analyses. (Wardaugh 1970: 124)

3. As language researchers and foreign language teachers began to give systematic attention to the errors learners unavoidably made, they noticed that
   A. Learners made errors which could not be explained by the structure of their native language.
   B. Learners did not make many of the errors that CA predicted they would.
   C. There were remarkable similarities in the errors made by all second language learners, irrespective of their native tongue. (Taylor 1975: 392)

As the dissent increased, CA was labeled everything from a "pseudo-procedure" (Wardaugh 1970) to "psychologically invalid" (Taylor 1974: 30). One study collected data on nearly 2500 Japanese learners of English and (like many others) reached the following negative conclusion:

> Tests were administered to large numbers of Japanese learners of English, and their performance on the tests was compared to the predictions that were derived from each analysis about the difficulty that Japanese should have in English. None of the analyses demonstrated an adequate capacity to make such predictions, and our conclusions as to the present validity of contrastive analysis are correspondingly negative. (Whitman and Jackson 1972: 30)

While this flood of criticism demolished the strong version of the CA hypothesis, another version of CA, the "weak" or explanatory version, survived the storm. Wardaugh (1970) described it as having "certain possibilities of usefulness," and its applicability to phonology (Dulay and Burt 1972: 239) was acknowledged, although not without reservations.

Modifications to the original CA hypothesis were made, including the development of hierarchies to explain why some native language-target language differences caused considerable problems in second language learning while others resulted in minimal difficulty (Stockwell and Bowen 1965: 9-18 and Stockwell, Bowen, and Martin 1965: 282-291) and the use of generative phonology to explain such things as why a Russian is likely to say *tink* and a Japanese *sink* when attempting to produce English *think* (Ritchie 1968).

A Reversal

During the heyday of contrastive analysis in the United States, a colleague across the Atlantic was advocating another kind of language analysis for language teaching which now, over twenty years later, sounds strangely familiar. In 1957, W. R. Lee recommended that ESL/EFL teachers analyze their students' mistakes instead of avoiding or ignoring them. While not denying the theoretical basis of contrastive analysis, Lee presented the following argument in favor of what he called "mistakes analyses."

> A comprehensive review of the phonetic material is unnecessary and indeed digressive. Attention should be focused on the difficult points, and those which cause little bother may be left, more or less, to look after themselves. And this is where mistakes analyses come in. For if these analyses are based on the speech of enough learners and of a sufficient variety of learners, of the same linguistic background, they enable a teacher to prophesy. . . . To guess at probable types of error from a knowledge of the first language only is, without doubt, to take a somewhat far-off view of teaching problems. Thus if a first language has no final [ŋ], as in *laughing*, it is a good guess that another nasal may be substituted, as in ['la:fin]. But this is not at all the same thing as seeing that it is substituted, and in what positions. . . . Study of the mistakes themselves seems to be a short cut. (Lee 1957: 79-83)

However practical and sensible Lee's mistakes analyses might have been, his idea did not gain acceptance until nearly a decade later when new trends in psychology and linguistics brought with them the idea of language as creative, rule-governed behavior and of language learning as the formation and testing out of hypotheses about the features of the new language. When this happened, emphasis was shifted "away from a preoccupation with *teaching* towards a study of *learning*" (Corder 1967: 163) and errors were no longer seen as evils to be avoided, but rather as the inevitable result of the evolution of the learner's underlying, rule-governed systems and, hence, valuable for several reasons.

> A learner's errors, then, provide evidence of the system of the language that he is using (i.e., has learned) at a particular point in the course (and it must be repeated that he is using some system, although it is not yet the right system). They are significant in three different ways. First, to the teacher in that they tell him, if he undertakes a systematic analysis, how far towards the goal the learner has progressed and, consequently, what remains for him to learn. Second, they provide to the researcher evidence of how language is learned or acquired, what strategies or procedures the learner is employing in his discovery of the language. Thirdly (and in a sense this is their most important aspect), they are indispensable to the learner himself, because we can regard the making of errors as a device the learner uses in order to learn. It is a way the learner has of testing his hypotheses about the nature of the language he is learning. The making of errors then is a strategy employed both by children acquiring their mother tongue and by those learning a second language. (Corder 1967: 167)

Thus, in a reversal of the previously held theory, which had emphasized the differences between first and second language acquisition, the new trend was to discover similarities between the two processes. Error analysis, in contrast with CA, which had viewed the learner's native language as a major source of errors in the target language, emphasized intralingual/developmental sources of error. The universal learning processes of generalization and simplification were viewed as being important, while native language transfer (the basis of CA) was generally disregarded. Dulay and Burt, for example, in a classic but controversial study, examined the acquisition of English grammatical morphemes by Spanish-speaking and Chinese-speaking children and found that "only 4.7% of the errors were due to language transfer" (Dulay and Burt 1974a: 132). They concluded "that universal cognitive mechanisms are the basis for the child's organization of a target language and that it is the L2 system rather that the L1 system that guides the acquisition process" (Dulay and Burt 1974b: 360).

Unfortunately, many of these early studies had serious flaws in their design and/or methods which biased their results and laid them open to later criticism (Cancino 1976 and Rosansky 1976).

A Reaction

While condemning CA and proclaiming the virtues of EA, the advocates of the latter approach did not adequately allow for "the possibility that there are corresponding weaknesses in EA which would make error-based theories and materials as inadequate and one-sided as contrastively-based theories and materials are" (Schachter and Celce-Murcia 1977: 442). In at least a partial defense of the strong, *apriori* version of the original CA hypothesis (as far as it applies to the learning and use of a particular construction in English) and with the purpose of pointing out some of the weaknesses in dependence on error analysis alone, Schachter (1974) examined relative clause formation in compositions written by ESL students from four unrelated language backgrounds. Her initial error analysis led to a conclusion (that Persian and Arab learners have far more difficulty producing relative clauses than do Chinese and Japanese learners and that relative clause formation in English is quite a minor problem for Chinese and Japanese learners of English) which she subsequently demonstrated to be completely false as a further, more extensive examination revealed the learners' real difficulties. Schachter concluded that the initial error

analysis, which had concentrated solely on errors and had not taken into account total learner production, had resulted in a distorted, narrow view of the learners' difficulties by excluding an improtant factor–avoidance of relative clauses by the Japanese and Chinese students.

> It is plausible and I think correct to suppose that they produce fewer relative clauses in English because they are trying to avoid them, and that they only produce them in English when they are relatively sure that they are correct, which would also account for the extremely small number of errors they make. What we encounter is a phenomenon of avoidance due to a difficulty which was predicted by the *apriori* approach, but which the *aposteriori* approach can not handle at all. (Schachter 1974: 210)

Schachter's use of this broader view, called performance analysis (PA), which attempted to analyze the learner's overall performance, not restricting analysis to errors alone, and the conclusions she reached were supported by the work of others, such as Kleinmann (1977) who found that adult speakers of Spanish and Arabic avoided producing a variety of English constructions whose difficulty was predicted by contrastive analysis.

The limitations of error analysis were outlined more extensively in a later article by Schachter and Celce-Murcia (1977) which listed six weaknesses in error analysis research:

1. The analysis of errors in isolation
   Extracting learners' errors from the corpus in which they occur distorts the conclusions of the analysis by excluding the learners' non-errors from consideration.
2. The proper classification of identified errors
   Error analysis requires the making of numerous questionable decisions. Frequently, the source of error is ambiguous (e.g., as in the following sentence: "Americans are easy to get to guns.").
3. Statements of error frequency
   Error frequencies should be stated in *relative* rather than *absolute* terms. Obligatory/optional contexts must be considered, and analysis should include how often a structure is used *both* correctly and incorrectly.
4. The identification of points of difficulty in the target language
   The assumption that frequent errors unerringly indicate points of difficulty is challengeable. Moreover, questionable means are often used to identify errors in the first place (numbers 2 and 3 above).
5. The ascription of causes to systematic errors
   Caution is advised in ascribing the large number of ambiguous errors to either interlingual or developmental sources.
6. The biased nature of sampling procedures
   Sampling procedures in most studies to date have been limited and biased in at least one of the following areas:
   1.) background languages of subjects,
   2.) the subjects themselves,
   3.) data samples.
   There is also a danger of analyzing performance errors as competence errors.

Complete confidence in error analysis declined as its drawbacks became apparent. At the same time, reconciliatory moves back toward the idea of native language transfer were made.

> One should not be too hasty in ruling out the influence of transfer in the L2 acquisition process as some recent studies have urged . . . The definition of language transfer should not be limited before it is fully understood. By restricting our concepts we might be unwittingly dictating certain results and closing the door on much potentially productive research. (Cancino 1976: 44)

A Reconciliation

Today, many research reports are willing to acknowledge the influence of both native language interference and developmental/intralingual sources of error (e.g., Butterworth and Hatch 1973: 238 and Ravem 1978: 153), and some see the convergence of transfer and overgeneralization as an important source of errors (Andersen 1978:1). In such studies, however, the original CA hypothesis is often given a new twist.

Instead of attributing interference to habit formation and transfer theory, it is seen as the result of a learning strategy. Since the language acquisition process is thought to involve active hypothesis testing by the learner, interference errors are taken as evidence that the learner begins with the hypothesis that the target language is just like the native language and that this hypothesis is used until evidence resulting in new hypotheses is gathered through the analysis of input (Corder 1967: 168, Kellerman 1977, and Cancino, Rosansky, and Schumann 1978: 218).

A more unexpected modification to the contrastive analysis hypothesis, with its original emphasis on the differences between languages as sources of difficulty and errors (and the greater the difference, the greater the difficulty), is the idea that interference may be greatest when the first language and second language are similar. For example, based upon his English-learning subjects' use of both content and function words from Norwegian in a "slightly anglicized form" as in the sentences "Kan du come i morgen?" (Can you come tomorrow?) and "Vil du have coffee?" (Will you have coffee?), Ravem (1978: 153) concludes that "the more closely two languages are related, the more there is which can successfully be transferred." Such an idea also explains the relative persistence of such things as *no* plus verb negation by Spanish speakers learning English. Schumann (1978) suggests that the extent of pre-verbal negation (*no* plus verb) by ESL learners depends on the position of the negative in the learner's native language. When the first language has pre-verbal negation, this form is used extensively in English and is very persistent. On the other hand, when the learner's native language has late or post-verbal negation, the pre-verbal negation is only fleeting and the learner moves on to correct English negation (with the full realization of the auxiliary) more quickly. It is difficult to decide whether this modification to the original CA hypothesis, which upholds the idea of native language interference while reversing the similar-easy, different-difficult relationship advanced by Fries and Lado, is a vindication or a reversal of CA. It cannot be denied, however, that current thought tends toward an acceptance of both inter-lingual and intralingual sources of error in second language learning.

> Thus, we conceive the order of acquisition of English grammatical morphemes as resulting from an interplay of at least two factors. One factor, consisting of variables such as frequency and salience, seems to direct the order or acquisition toward a universal order. But a second factor, transfer from the native language, modulates the order so as to produce differences between learners of different language backgrounds. (Hakuta and Cancino 1977: 308-309)

An interesting combination of the two hypotheses is made by Taylor (1975: 394) who found that

> intermediate subjects made a higher proportion of errors attributable to overgeneralization than did the elementary subjects. And conversely, the proportion of elementary errors attributable to transfer . . . exceeded the proportion of intermediate transfer errors. The major conclusions. . . are, then, that reliance on overgeneralization is directly proportional to proficiency in the target language, and reliance on transfer is inversely proportional . . . . As proficiency increases, reliance on transfer decreases and reliance on overgeneralization increases.

This idea has received support from other researchers who have concluded that "interference errors appear primarily in the earliest stages of acquisition" (Hakuta and Cancino 1977: 301).

A New Direction

Recently, a new kind of language analysis has come onto this scene of rather tenuous harmony between contrastive analysis, error analysis, and performance analysis. This newcomer, called discourse analysis, takes a distinctly different approach to the task of analyzing language. Acknowledging the human learner's status as a social being, discourse analysis (DA) analyzes language in the social context. While not rejecting the need for phonological, morphological, and syntactical stud-

ies, proponents of DA proclaim its pre-eminence.

> In focusing only upon the structures at the sentential level, we have perpetrated a misleading simplification of the language acquisition process. We have overlooked the need for the learner to acquire a whole other system of language—namely the structural unity that exists at the discourse level . . . . In addition, it has been suggested that by focusing solely on the linguistic form of the learner's speech product, we have virtually ignored an important data source, namely the language input to which the learner is exposed . . . . Some researchers would go even farther and say that it is the interaction of the input and the linguistic product which is most enlightening (Larsen-Freeman 1978: 173)
>
> It is not enough to look at frequency; the important thing is to look at the corpus as a whole and examine the interactions that take place within conversations to see how that interaction, itself, determines frequency of forms and how it shows language function evolving. (Hatch 1978: 402)

While the potential value of this supra-sentential perspective cannot be ignored, it will be of greatest value as a broadening rather than a usurping influence. It is reassuring to note that, so far at least, DA has made progress in a positive way—not by tearing down its predecessors but by expanding upon them. Perhaps the pendulum has finally stopped swinging, and language analysis, with its implications for language learning/teaching, can advance in an orderly, efficient manner which avoids too much side-to-side movement.

A Conclusion

The future is, of course, impossible to predict, and what actually will happen in language analysis remains to be seen. Nevertheless, researchers and teachers will undoubtedly benefit from keeping the past in sight.

This overall view of the recent history of language analysis results in an appreciation of the complexities of both language and language learning and an understanding of the difficulty of analyzing them. Looking back on what has emerged from the various controversies, one is forced to conclude that "one single view of the language learning process, attractive though it may be, will not account for the diverse phenomena that exist" (Schachter and Celce-Murcia 1977: 449-450). Unfortunately, in the past (and even now), too many have been guilty of underestimating that complexity while taking extreme positions which have hindered rather than encouraged real progress.

One of the most important outcomes of the CA-EA struggle has been the realization that it is indeed possible to take what is right from both methods. The two views are not necessarily mutually exclusive, and fitted together properly they form a more powerful tool for linguistic analysis. It is hoped that advances in performance analysis and discourse analysis will work together with error analysis and contrastive analysis in increasing the present understanding of the complex process of learning a language.

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Word Whirl

(continued from page 34)

list cannot be used a second time.

5. The game ends when all the groups have had opportunities to contribute to the list.
6. The scoring could be done in the following manner:

   1st group –1 point for each word
   2nd group –2 points for each word
   3rd group –3 points for each word
   4th group –4 points for each word

More than one central disk can be made. Other disks with different categories (e.g., clothes, games, names of famous people or places, etc.) may be attached to the present "whirl", to increase the variety and breadth of vocabulary learned through the game.

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Controlling the Velocity

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PRC SEEKS TEACHERS OF ENGLISH

The following announcement is made at the request of the Director of the Employment Department of the Foreign Expert Bureau of the People's Republic of China.

From February, 1980 to February, 1982, the People's Republic will conduct a 3-year program to upgrade the level of teaching college English. During this period there will be six 5-and-1/2 month periods (from mid-February to July and from September to mid-July) of classroom instruction in four skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Classes will be held on 24 campuses throughout the nation. Each of the prospective students has had not only college-level English but also a minimum of two or more years of college level English teaching at the end of a 5-and-1/2 month study. The enrollment in each class will be about 15 students to each instructor.

Instructors with the following qualifications are sought:

1. a minimum of an MA in English linguistics/or in English or American literature, and
2. a minimum of several years of college level English teaching as a NATIVE language in the United States. (Retired teachers are not excluded.)

The salary for the prospective instructor is between 600.00 and 1,000.00 renminbi. ($1.00 U.S. is approximately equivalent to 1.50 renminbi.) Housing, transportation between residence and work, and medicine are all paid by the People's Republic. Meals are not.

If the instructor is accompanied by spouse and/or children, he/she may request 1/3 of his/her pay in U.S. currency. If he/she is not accompanied by spouse or children, he/she may request 1/2 of his/her pay in U.S. currency. If the teaching assignment is for one 5-and-1/2 period only, China will pay for the instructor's return airfare. (The instructor must pay for his/her own airfare going, and the roundtrip fare of both spouse and children.) If the assignment is for two or more 5-and-1/2 month periods, China will pay for the instructor's roundtrip airfare plus that of the spouse and any child under 12 years of age.

Teachers have also been invited from four other countries where English is spoken as a native language (Australia, Canada, England, and New Zealand), and the Foreign Expert Bureau will evaluate the performance of the instructors hired from each country.

Interested persons may write to Dr. John Charles Thomson, Public Affairs Officer, Embassy of the United States of America, 2 Xiushui Dong Jie, Beijing (Peking), People's Republic of China or to the Director of Employment Department, Foreign Expert Bureau, Friendship Hotel, Beijing (Peking), People's Republic of China. Please indicate the period of time available for the assignment. Please do NOT request any specific location of instruction.

The 3-year program announced here is not to be confused with that described in the September, 1979 issue of *the Linguistic Reporter,* which was conducted by the Ministry of Education rather than by the Foreign Expert Bureau.

DEAN LEAVES BYU–HC

Dr. C. Jay Fox, Vice President-Dean of the Brigham Young University –Hawaii Campus, has taught English to advanced level second language students in the English Language Institute at BYU–Hawaii. He was also chairman of the Communication and Language Arts Division (including responsibility for ELI) from 1972 to 1975 and directed the Language Skills Lab Project which developed library materials for Freshman English. The Fiji English Project, the initial Tonga English Testing Project, and the *English for Korean Saints* materials were all developed under his direction. Several of his articles have appeared in the *TESL Reporter.*

Dr. Fox was also the chairman of the Hawaii Department of Education Secondary English Project Review Committee from 1974-1977 which reviewed all plans and materials for the extension of HEP (Hawaii English Program) to grade 12.

Professor Fox has decided to return to teaching English full time at Brigham Young University (Provo).

Dr. C. Jay Fox

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