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ABSTRACT

Causes of language fossilization and ways to overcome it are considered. Fossilization is the relatively permanent incorporation of incorrect linguistic forms into a person's second language competence. The discussion is focused on fossilization of incorrect syntactical rules, based on experiences with learners of English as a second language at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County. Students who have been in the United States for years often demonstrate fossilization. While they can communicate basic needs and some may communicate at complex levels, the students have developed their own personal, idiosyncratic interlanguages, which are simplified versions of English. The causes are lack of formal instruction and insufficient corrective feedback from native speakers and classroom teachers. It is suggested that helping students overcome fossilized items requires positive affective feedback but negative cognitive feedback when fossilized structures are used. A problem for educators is to convince the students that they need remedial assistance without intimidating or antagonizing them. Placement essays and grammar tests can be used to determine whether students need a remedial course or can proceed to an English as a second language composition course. In the remedial class, the span in levels of proficiency causes problems. Tutorial help for less proficient students and extra language lab work, as well as individualized instruction, are possible solutions. The remedial class includes formal grammar instruction, oral exercises with corrective feedback, substitution and sentence manipulation drills, written exercises, short composition assignments, and dictations in class. (SW)

OVERCOMING FOSSILIZED ENGLISH

Presented by: Janet G. Craham,
University of Maryland Baltimore County,
at the Second Annual Washington Area
Teachers of English to Speakers of Other
Languages Convention (Catonsville, Maryland,
October 2-3, 1981).

My name is Janet Graham, and I'm a local -- I'm the language coordinator for the Learning Resources Center here at UMBC. The subject of this session is fossilization -- some of its causes and some ways to overcome it. To be sure we'll all be talking about the same thing, let me start out with the definition I'm using, which is from H. Douglas Brown's Principles of Language Learning and Teaching.

> Fossilization is "the relatively permanent incorporation of incorrect linguistic forms into a person's second language competence."

We see -- or rather hear -- fossilization in the "foreign accents" of many people who speak English fluently but who learned it after adolescence. We also see -- or hear -- fossilization of lexical or syntactical errors in the speech of people who may be fluent and communicative. My observations today will focus on fossilization of incorrect syntactical rules, although I think that most of what I plan to say applies to all varieties of fossilization.

In my job as language coordinator here I work with English language learners at pretty much all levels of ability (except rank beginners) and of various ages. This summer I directed and taught in our English Language Institute's intensive summer program. Our students ranged from 14 to about 55. One of the adults was a woman who nad been here 20 years. I know many of the ESL students on campus during tne regular academic year through classes, workshops, tutoring, committees. I see samples of the writing of virtually every incoming ESL student.

Part of my job, in fact, is to read every placement essay which the essay readers suspect is "ESL" and to place the writer in the appropriate English class. If the student writes with almost native-like proficiency, he or she

is placed in the regular freshman composition class. If he does not write with almost native-like proficiency but produces pretty well constructed sentences and shows pretty good control of the verb system, he is placed in a special composition class for nonnative English speakers which is taught by someone with ESL training and experience. If the sentences are poorly constructed and the control of the verb system is weak, then the student is placed in the so-called "Basic English for ESL Students" course, English 98. The methods used for overcoming fossilization that I am going to talk about are methods used primarily in this course.

Some of the students placed in this lower level course, English 98, are new to the country and naturally it is not surprising that they are not yet ready for the composition course. Most, however, have been in the country for several years. Many have gone to high school here and even junior high and have received good enough marks so that they are admissable under the University of Maryland standards. And yet they write sentences such as these, taken from a composition written about what they hope their lives will be like in ten years:

> But someday I started serious about that job be a accountant is became so facinating things to me. (3 years)
>
> I might have went back to Korea and living some place near my parents. (4 years)
>
> I want to have good mother to a child, then I would have to stay home and take care of baby but it will decide from my husband from his wages. (6 years).

These students who have been here for years are in many cases demonstrating fossilization. They can all communicate basic needs and some can communicate at much more complex levels. They have somehow survived high school, which isn't easy for any adolescent and must be particularly hard for people

so different from their classmates. Through the years, these students have developed their own personal, idiosyncratic "interlanguages" -- their approximations of English -- which have gotten them by. In many instances their "interlanguages" or "idiosyncratic dialects" are forms of pidgeon, a simplified and reduced form of language. As Jack C. Richards points out in an article called "Simplification: A Strategy of Adult Acquisition of a Foreign Language,"

> The immediate objective for a language learner is to construct an optimum grammar, that is, a grammar in which the fewest number of rules do the maximum amount of work.

As he says, when we as second language learners are forming our successive hypotheses about the linguistic rules involved, we tend to simplify the rules, while at the same time -- if we are receiving corrective feedback -- we are being pressed to make the rules more complex, to make the rules of our interlanguage correspond to the rules of the target language. It is not strange that the language learners who turn up in English 98 after years of living in the U.S. have constructed their own, simplified versions of English. What needs to be explained is why these students through the years have not developed interlanguages closer to the English spoken by the native speakers all around them.

How is it that students who have lived in the U.S. for years, who may have even graduated from U.S. high schools, can speak and write with such a lack of proficiency? (I might add here that many of the students who end up in English 98 read and comprehend spoken English poorly, too, much more poorly than they should.)

From what I have learned through interviews with students, and from my knowledge of existing ESOL condition in the Baltimore area school districts, I have come to the following conclusion: That although we do not yet know <u>all</u>

the causes of fossilization of incorrect language forms, two situations seem clearly related in a causal way.

One situation is lack of formal instruction in English. Many of the students I see in English 98 have never received adequate ESL or EFL instruction. They never learned the basics underlying the English grammatical system, and learning simply by contact has led them to devise interlanguages or ideosyncratic languages with rules often wildly different from those of standard English. Even with feedback from teachers and classmates, these students are liable to remain confused and settle for minimal communicative competence.

My hypothesis is supported by my observation that students who first studied English overseas are very often better off than students who first study it here. Isn't that a sad comment on our educational system?

Even though students who answer "yes" when I ask them if they studied English overseas almost invariably say -- disparagingly -- "Yes, but we only learned grammar, we didn't learn how to talk," they are often better off because even though they may have arrived here not able to speak a word, they have a rudimentary understanding of the English grammatical system -- a basic framework -- that students learning it here through contact only may never acquire.

Why aren't students in our junior high and high schools getting formal instruction in ESOL? Primarily because the necessary teachers, programs, and commitment on the part of legislators are lacking. I have some figures from a proposal written by Ron Schwartz of UMBC for our new Bilingual master's program:

OVERHEAD -- Table 1

In addition, I just learned some horrifying statistics: that this year no local funds are being spent for ESL instructors in the Baltimore City Schools,

and they have -- in the entire system -- two part-time ESL teachers -- and there are about 600 limited-English-speakers in the schools. It isn't too surprising that many students don't get adequate ESOL instruction!

A second major cause of the fossilization I see among our students at UMBC who end up in English 98 is -- I believe -- that during the English language forming years they have received insufficient corrective feedback from native speakers, even their classroom teachers. Their mistakes go uncorrected, and unclear or poorly formed messages are rewarded with a sympathetic passing grade. Good grades given out of sympathy and social promotions tell these students that their English is OK as is.

Vigil and Oller in an article in Language Learning called "Rule Fossilization: A Tentative Model" have presented a model which I find convincing, and I'd like to share it with you here. They claim that there are two kinds of information transmitted between learners and audiences (native speaking audiences): information about the affective relationship between learner and audience and cognitive information. The feedback can be positive, neutral, or negative.

OVERHEAD -- Table 2

The learner can receive various combinations of feedback with various results: for example, if a learner receives negative affective feedback, and neutral or positive cognitive feedback, he may very well stop trying to communicate. (It's essential that teachers give positive cognitive feedback, naturally.) If the learner receives positive affective feedback and positive cognitive feedback on a message, the linguistic forms he used will be reinforced. And with enough reinforcement, the rules will be internalized. Now this is of course excellent if the linguistic forms he has used are correct. If, however, the learner is receiving both positive affective feedback and positive

cognitive feedback to incorrectly formed messages, the result will be learning incorrect forms -- that is, fossilization.

If a learner receives positive affective feedback ("I affirm you and value what you are trying to communicate") but neutral or negative cognitive feedback, he knows that his message is unclear or malformed. He will try again, forming a different hypothesis about the rule.

Simply put, reinforcing incorrect forms leads to fossilization. So, the teacher who allows most mistakes to go uncorrected, who through well meaning but misguided sympathy allows incomprehensibly written papers filled with errors to "do" is unwittingly doing a disservice to the student. The learner needs corrective feedback if he is to improve.

This feedback does not necessarily have to come from an outside source. Vigil and Oller's model allows for feedback not only from an audience but from the learner's own monitor, that inner ear, that part of the self which sits back and objectively observes and corrects one's own language production. A monitor has to be well-developed and active to provide the necessary feedback, however. And as Brown points out in Principles of Language Learning and Teaching (p. 183), a learner will tend not to monitor his own speech when he is receiving both positive affective and positive cognitive feedback from his audience.

So, in order for students to overcome fossilized items, we need to provide the proper kinds of feedback: positive affective feedback but negative cognitive feedback when fossilized structures are used. As Vigil and Oller put it, this combination creates a "desirable instability in incorrect or not well-formed utterances and prods the learner to make appropriate modifications." (p. 288) We also need to develop and strengthen our students' own monitors, which will continue to provide feedback when class is over and we

are not around.

Our long-time-in-the-U.S. students in English 98 present us with another problem caused by lack of corrective feedback, a serious one, and that is lack of motivation to improve their English. Because they were passed through the high school system -- or have served in the U.S. armed forces (as in the case of one student whose writing we'll look at later) or through several years of college work, they are sometimes deeply insulted that they are placed in a "remedial" class (although we never use that word). Some of them think their English is just fine as it is. Others know that it isn't very good but believe that knowing English well simply isn't very important to success in the important courses like calculus, biology, or economics. The problem for us, then, is how to convince the students they need the course without 1) intimidating them or 2) as happens more often, without antagonizing them. This course, English 98, is required, by the way, and it carries no credit towards graduation. You can imagine the hostility which emanates from some of the students during the first few sessions.

So -- the first thing that I have to do -- before the instruction begins -- is to convince the students that they do in fact need the course.

There are several ways I try to do this. First, on the first day of class, they are given another chance "to prove" they don't need the course. They write another placement essay. I tell them if this essay is good enough in its demonstration of control of basic English structures and writing conventions, I will give them permission to drop the course and proceed directly to the ESL composition course. So far, there have always been at least one or two second essays that were so good I could give their writers that permission. This tends to convince the rest of the class that perhaps their own compositions weren't so good after all; and at least they know they had a second chance.

Another thing I do very early on is to give a grammar test that a native speaker of standard English would have no trouble whatsoever with -- like this one --

OVERHEAD -- Table 3

but which requires good English competence of nonnative speakers. I tell them that this is a pretest -- that it doesn't count -- but that it will give me and them an idea of where they are. (I give the same test as a posttest later in the semester, and share the gain in the scores with them.) With this pretest, I have them exchange papers and correct them on the spot, using an answer key on an overhead transparency. And I make sure they know that native standard English speakers almost always make 100%. Incidentally, I use pretests of other kinds throughout the semester.

Still another thing I do very early on is demonstrate how the stress patterns of English may have led them into mishearing what native speakers were saying. I demonstrate how lightly articles and other function words are stressed, for example, so that when a native speaker is saying "In the United States" the learner may not hear the "the". I demonstrate how the very, very light stress of auxiliary verbs, and their customary reductions, may have led them to think they're hearing what in fact native speakers aren't saying. For example, "Where're you going?" = Where you going? "She's been here for a year" = She been here for a year. "Whatcha got?" = What you got. I tell them when they hear a phrase like this they should know that if the speaker were to write it out, and is even reasonably educated, he would write, "What have you got?"

I also point out that in fact many native speakers are speaking nonstandard varieties of English -- but that as college students, they should learn the standard one. We talk about registers -- informal and formal usage -- but I

point out that many of the forms they are using are never used by native American speakers, in any dialect or situation.

The above demonstrations and discussions seem to motivate the students in several ways. One, they realize that some of the linguistic forms they think they've been hearing they haven't been; two, they realize this fuddy-duddy old grammar class may actually help them to understand better what's being said to them in their everyday lives; and three, they realize I'm attuned to the real world -- that I realize there are varieties of English and registers, that I'm not going to teach them some abstract, unreal "proper" English that no one ever speaks or writes but rather a living English as spoken and written by fairly well-educated native American English speakers.

As we start working through our text, another motivational problem arises, that is, the better students in the class already know the easier material. All I can do is stress that while the course starts at a fairly basic level, it will get more difficult -- fast. Incidentally, I tell them that I know they all speak English and that what we are doing is reviewing the grammatical system, although in fact many of them have never had much formal instruction, so that they will speak and write it better.

The span in levels of proficiency in the class is very large, by the way, and as might be expected, causes problems. I aim the instruction somewhere in the middle, I guess, and urge the less proficient students to get tutorial help, which is available through the Learning Resources Center writing center. I also may assign them optional extra language lab work. I individualize the instruction through the written work -- both exercises and compositions, which I'll discuss later. Throughout the course, I attempt to get each student to focus on areas he or she needs to pay particular attention to.

Well, what do we actually do in class? Actually what we do is designed to remedy two the situations which have brought many of these students to this class, namely 1) lack of formal instruction in the ways English works and 2) lack of adequate corrective feedback of their utterances and written productions.

To remedy the first, I of course give them that formal grammar instruction. In doing so, though, I try to make the explanations as simple -- and brief -- as possible. Actually, I am now using a text with such excellent explanations that I put a lot of the responsibility for covering them on the students themselves. Therefore, discussions about grammar don't take up a large part of class time. (The text is Understanding and Using English Grammar, by Betty Azar, published by Prentice-Hall.)

Nevertheless, these grammatical explanations are an important part of the effort to overcome the fossilizations in the students' language. For one thing, the rules they learn become part of the arsenal of their monitors, and, I believe, help them to develop stronger, more active ones. In addition, most students can modify the rules of their own interlanguages so much more efficiently if they are given clear presentations of the rules of the target languages.

To remedy what I believe is the second major cause of the students' error-laden, malformed English -- lack of corrective feedback -- I of course provide it for them! Lots and lots of it! Even though the class is called "Basic Writing," we do lots of oral work in class -- almost all individual, rarely choral -- because you can get in so much more practice and -- equally important -- so much more feedback than through written exercises alone.

Incidentally, we do substitution drills, sentence manipulation drills, and the like, but also lots of "meaningful" exercises. Like Karl Diller and

Earl Stevick and many, many others, I'm convinced that we really learn a language by actually communicating in it. Many times I'll start a class by asking questions -- to be answered truthfully -- and grammatically -- practicing forms we've been studying, for example, "What is Meong doing right now?" "Luis, what do you usually do on Saturdays?" to review the uses of the present progressive and the simple present.

I assign written exercises as class work and homework. The corrections, of course, provide more feedback. And if a student clearly has not understood a rule, I can point him to the pages he needs to study, or speak to him personally, or tell him to go over it with his tutor.

Another thing I do, and something I feel is very important, is to assign frequent short composition assignments which are designed to elicit the grammatical structures under study, giving the students a chance to use them in an actual act of communication. Sample: "Tell me about a typical day in the life of someone you know well (not yourself). You will use mostly the simple present tense." Whenever I can think of an assignment which combines practice in particular forms with a topic that will really engage the students, I give it. I believe with Earl Stevick that the deeper the source of the message, the more likely the person is to remember the forms used to express it.

In correcting and commenting on these short compositions, I try to give positive affective feedback (a la Vigil and Oller) with brief comments such as "Interesting!" even if the cognitive feedback is of necessity negative. Students are required to correct -- and to show me that they have done so -- all errors on their compositions. In grading, I make it clear I do not count off for mistakes in areas we haven't already studied. I also tell them, before they write their papers, what grammatical patterns I'm going to look at most care-

fully and count most heavily in order to focus their attention on those patterns.

I also use dictations in this class, for several reasons: to provide variety; to improve aural comprehension, which in turn leads to more acquisition of syntax (as Krashen puts it); for practice in recognizing the structures we are studying as they appear in normal speech; and as error analysis exercises, when the students correct their own sentences -- down to every final 's', with the correct written versions of the sentences I have dictated. This last step -- correcting their own sentences -- again sharpens their monitors, I believe, the monitors which provide necessary feedback even when no external audience is doing so.

Throughout the semester, motivating the students -- getting them to believe that they need to improve and that they are improving -- continues to be necessary. One device I have used I have already mentioned -- a verb pretest. Another is to share with them the results of a comparison between the results of a T-unit analysis of their first in-class compositions and of a T-unit analysis of essays written about two-thirds of the way through the course. I explain briefly that my T-unit analysis looks at the ratio of error-free T-units (something like sentences) in their compositions to the non-error-free ones. The mean ratio of the class's second composition is convincingly higher than the mean ratio of the first ones. I like the error-free T-unit measure because of the accent on the positive.

OVERHEAD - Table 4

This seems to impress the students because numbers seem so much more credible to them that what they consider my subjective evaluations.

I use many other motivating devices: stressing the importance of attendance on their grade; giving quizzes and tests; requiring C or better on the

grammar final, as well as a C or better on the final in-class essay before permission is granted to go on to the regular freshman composition course for ESL students. Some students have integretive motives for improving their English. Many others, though, need to be motivated by appeal to instrumental motives - through grades!

I won't pretend the "treatment" we use works on everybody, but on the whole we see good results. One of my most satisfying students was a man in his middle twenties who had been in the U. S. for six years or so. He had served in the U. S. Army and then came to UMBC before we had any writing requirement for graduation or did any screening of students. He made it through junior year here and then -- for what reason I don't remember -- decided to improve his English by taking 98.

During all those years in the U. S. he had developed his own simplified version of English -- a sort of pigeon -- in which he communicated well enough. His speaking was much like this writing sample:

OVERHEAD

I don't know how much he truly wanted to improve his English, but he was a compulsive grade-hound, and worked very, very hard. In ten weeks after just 3 hours of class a week he was writing in well-formed complex sentences and using and forming the tenses well.

OVERHEAD

By the end of the year, he could write like this.

OVERHEAD

Let me review, then, what we do here at UMBC to get students to overcome fossilized English. First of all, we require a certain level of proficiency before they are allowed to take the English course which in turn is required for graduation. In other words, we have relatively high expectations. I like this statement by Vigil and Oller although I can't say I am wholly as optimistic about the power of expectations: "The level of correctness that can be achieved

is probably limited only by the expectation of the teacher." If their proficiency is not good enough, they are required to take English 98. Once in English 98 we have to overcome resistance and hostility -- motivating is an enormously important part of what needs to be done. Then, we provide formal, orderly instruction in English grammar -- sometimes the first that they have received. At all times, students are given practice in using the rules in their spoken and written production, much of it truly communicative. Lastly, we provide feedback -- lots and lots of feedback -- always positive affective feedback but negative, neutral, or positive cognitive feedback depending on the correctness of their messages, both oral and written. We endeavor in various ways to get them to listen to themselves -- or to look at their own writing objectively -- to develop a monitor, if you will, that will continue to provide corrective feedback even when no one else is doing so.

How do these methods differ from those one would use in teaching language learners without fossilizations?

They differ, first of all, in the amount of motivating that is required and in the techniques used to motivate.

Secondly, while I'm not positive that explication of grammatical rules is necessary in <u>all</u> second language teaching, I'm convinced it's very helpful in helping people <u>unlearn</u> their own ideosyncratic English and to construct an English closer to that spoken by native speakers.

Thirdly, while I'm not sure trying to encourage monitor development in language learners is always the best thing to do, I think it <u>is</u> important in helping students who need to overcome fossilizations.

And finally, the stress is more on <u>correctness</u> - on <u>well-formed messages</u> -- than it would be if most of the students in the class were new learners (when

the emphasis might be more on communicativeness). Once learners have gained basic communicative competence, then I agree with Vigil and Oller when they say that as long as the affective messages conveyed from the teacher to the students are positive, "Frequent instances of negative cognitive feedback ... are probably essential to a high level of attainment on the part of the learners."

TABLE I

NUMBER OF STUDENTS, TEACHERS,
AIDES IN ESOL AND BILINGUAL PROGRAMS*

ESOL Programs

County	No. of LEP Students	Teachers	Aides
Anne Arundel	130	5	0
Baltimore	522	15	0
Frederick	27	0.5	0
Howard	140	1.5	0
Montgomery	3,000	64	13
Prince Georges	1,100	13	0
Total	4,919	99	15

*Adapted from survey report, Office Bilingual and ESOL Education, MSDE.

TABLE 2

Different types of feedback

		<u>Affective Feedback</u>
+	Positive:	"I like it" (more of the same)
±	Neutral:	"Waiting..." (reaction undecided)
-	Negative:	"I don't like it" (try something else)
		<u>Cognitive Feedback</u>
+	Positive:	"I understand" (message and direction are clear)
±	Neutral:	"Still processing..." (undecided)
-	Negative:	"I don't understand" (message and/or direction are not clear)

TABLE 3

Fill in the blanks with one of the below:

is	has	does
are	have	do
was	had	did
were		Ø (meaning nothing)

1. What_____they think causes the problem?
2. By that time he_____already earned his master's degree.
3. She must_____been happy when she won the prize.
4. They_____painting the house all last week.
5. The decision_____made early yesterday afternoon.
6. Ask her if she_____eaten dinner yet.
7. He_____come here many times.
8. They might not_____arrive in time.
9. We_____not like those rules.
10. _____he know who called?
11. Who_____making all that noise?
12. As of right now she_____read six of the books.
13. Can you_____do all the work?
14. What_____she taking at the present time?
15. I hear a funny noise; what_____they doing?
16. It_____not mean the same thing one hundred years ago.
17. They_____already cleaned up the kitchen when he offered to help.
18. We will_____learned how to do that by the end of the semester.
19. Who_____sang the loudest at the party?
20. _____he finished the assignment yet?
21. _____he dance a lot last night, too?
22. The students_____told that they had done well
23. They_____not seem very cheerful today.
24. The cookies_____all eaten by noon.
25. He_____had many opportunities before this one, which came up last week.

TABLE 4

Ratio of error-free T-units to total number of T-units in first writing samples $\bar{x} = 25\%$

Ratio of error-free T-units to total number of T- units in second writing samples $\bar{x} = 48\%$

This is a significant rise ($p. < .000$, one-tailed).

* * *

There was a correlation of .55($p. < .002$) between the average lengths of error-free T-units and grades I had given on the first writing sample.

There was a correlation of .51 ($p. < 004$) betweem tje average lengths of error-free T-units and grades I had given on the second sample.

There was a correlation of .44 ($p. < .012$) between the ration of error-free T-units to total units and grades with the first writing sample.

There was a correlation of .41 ($p. < .019$) between the ratio of error-free T-units to total units and grades with the second.

My Life 10 Years Form today

I will live in Korea which I born after 10 years later.
I will work in church which located country of my native.
Two children, wife and I will live in small house with pretty dog.
We will go to church on every sabath day and sing, pray for my family.
We will get up four o'clock in the morning and run 2 miles every morning.
We will wordship 1 hour after runing, then go to work in the field.
I will talk with my naborhood every night about God's love.
I will build big cabin which can live all people of my naborhood.
We will plant all kind of flowers.
I'll spend my leasure time for painting.
I'll decorate the walls of the big cabin with my paintings.
I want make pretty and big country which have all trees of fruits.
I'll live in the mountains.
The mountains have many streams.
The mountains which have many pretty animals.
We will swim in the streams on sumer.
We will play with dog, birds and any pretty animals.
We will ski when become winter season.
All of the things, happing around me will be happy.

9/2/80

I want to talk about my friend's father. He is fifty three years old now, and he was born in Korea. He came to the U.S.A. last year with all his family. He hadn't gone to school before he came to the U.S.A.

He is only five feet tall, but his weight is over one hundred and fifty pound. His hair is dark brown and his skin is yellow. He has big brown eyes but his nose is so flat. He is short, fat and looks very ugly but he always smile. He has strong arms and his hands are very small. He also has strong and short legs, but his feets are so big. He always has a trouble to buy his shoes, so he has special ordered for his shoes.

He was working for a construction company. He worked thirteen hours everyday by labor. He had an accident while he was carrying a big piece of lumber. He was in the hospital for two weeks, and after he was released from the hospital he found a better job. He has been learning welding since he started working in the welding company. He has become a very skilled man. I admire How he learned, because he has no education.

He is always calm and nice. Whenever I visited his house , he was very kind and smiled. He alway talks slowly and loudly but I feel comfortable at his house. He is also very gentle to everybody. He has helped his poor neighborhood since he was young.

He wants to become a electric technician because he can earn more money if he is a electric technician. He started study English two weeks ago, but he has learned English grammer very quickly. He is going to learn it two more months, then he will go to electric technical school to become a technician. He plan to graduate that school next year, so he is studying hard now. 11/13/80

I have been studying at UMBC for three years. I feel this school is a very good place to study for foreign students. There are many good professional programs and basic English programs for foreign students. In my case, I learned a lot of my major field and comprehension, speeking and writing English at UMBC. I believe there are many reason why UMBC is expecially good school for for students.

The ratio of students and faculty is very low than other schools. According to the data, there are only sixteen students per a faculty. Therefore, students always participate with a faculty. In physics department, the number of students is less than the number of faculties, so students always free to ask about his major field and teachers more concetrate to the students.

Teachers always well understand students and they are trying to help students. last year,I had been sick for two weeks during the semester, so I was not able to recover my study. When I talk to the teacher my situation, he gladly taught me individually what I did not learn. He taught me every day for two hours and he gave me the test individually. I had another chance to recover my study and finally I got an A in the course.

If I want to say one weakness at UMBC, I would say about courses offering in every semester. Certan courses are offered per year, and I had very difficulty to make my schedule every semester. I have been noticed that some graduate students were waiting for one year to take one course, and Some times the

courses are not offered because few students register. Last fall semester, two physics courses were canceled because only few students registered, therefore those students are taking this semester. According to them, it is really hard to adjust the schedule in every semester.

Generally, UMBC is a good place for students because the ratio of students to faculty is low, therefore students always participate with a faculty. And teachers can more concentrate to the students and they are always gladly helping students. If the courses offering is well considered, then I would say perfect school for students.

5/21/81

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