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ABSTRACT

A study was conducted to describe, discuss, and evaluate a workplace curriculum process in which teachers were actively involved in both constructing and teaching curricula. This process was developed by the Consortium for Worker Education (CWE), a group of 22 New York City labor unions through which 15,000 workers attend more than 300 classes at 40 sites annually. Data collection methods were as follows: a review of related literature; interviews with CWE administrators, teachers, and students; classroom observations; and examination of curriculum materials. The study explored the teacher's process in creating a workplace-based literacy curriculum, considering whether or not this is a feasible and effective method, and comparing it to other worker literacy development approaches. The major finding of the study is that, because of the remarkable teachers CWE selects and the exemplary staff supervision and development, these classroom instructors were able both to develop and teach inventive and outstanding curricula. Shaped by the CWE philosophy, which is committed to the union concept and its social action agenda, teachers are steeped in a student-centered ideology that values teacher collaboration, student participation, and flexibility in content and presentation. (The report includes a list of 37 references and appendixes and the following program materials: interview and consent forms; examples of curriculum materials from three CWE classroom sites; and examples of a "Workplace Handbook" developed by CWE.) (Author/KC)

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Curriculum Development in Selected Workplace Literacy Programs of the Consortium for Worker Education

Evaluation Study

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to describe, discuss, and evaluate a workplace curriculum process, in which teachers were actively involved in both constructing and teaching curricula. This process was developed by the Consortium for Worker Education (CWE), a group of 22 New York City labor unions. The study was conducted through a review of related literature; interviews with CWE administrators, teachers and students; on-site classroom observations; and examination of curriculum materials. The study explored the teacher's process in creating a workplace-based literacy curriculum, considering whether or not this is a feasible and effective method, and comparing it to other worker literacy development approaches. The major finding of the study is that, because of the remarkable teachers CWE selects and the exemplary staff supervision and development, these classroom instructors were able to both develop and teach inventive and outstanding curricula. Shaped by the CWE philosophy, which is committed to the union concept and its social action agenda, teachers are steeped in a student-centered ideology that values teacher collaboration, student participation, and flexibility in content and presentation.

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Introduction

Background and Purpose

The purpose of this study is to describe, discuss, and evaluate a workplace curriculum process developed by the Consortium for Worker Education (CWE). The unique feature of this process is that teachers were actively involved in both constructing and teaching curricula. This study was conducted through a review of related literature; interviews with CWE administrators, teachers, and students; on-site classroom observations; and examination of curriculum materials.

The particular curriculum development process described in this report is embedded to a considerable degree in the history of the CWE, the original impetus and underlying philosophy of which is to "strengthen the labor movement by providing educational opportunities to all workers" (CWE, p. 6) and to "enabl[e] members to understand the roles that both they and their unions play in the struggle for social justice in their society." (CWE, p. 8)

CWE has evolved into a large, multi-faceted worker education program. Conceived and developed in 1985 by a group of New York City labor unions, CWE was initially funded by the New York City Board of Education and the New York State Education Department. Currently, it is funded by a special New York State Legislative Initiative administered by the New York State Education Department. Presently 26 labor unions participate in the Consortium, and 15,000 workers attend over 300 classes at 40 sites annually.

Dr. Francine Boren-Gilkenson, Director of Education Programs for CWE, Dr. Deborah D'Amico, Deputy Director, and other CWE personnel are responsible for translating a union/worker perspective into educational policies and programs. Thus, the entire structure of CWE -- administration, courses offered, selection of instructors, nature and form of staff development, models of pedagogy, and selection of curriculum materials -- reflects a continuous expansion of CWE's initial concept into a "system of life-long learning, organized in the context of the members' basic work-related institution: their unions" (CWE, p. 4). As part of its commitment to union and worker objectives, CWE offers a broad range of literacy courses in response to both union and union/management requests. A substantial number of their course offerings prepare workers for high school equivalency tests, worker certification examinations, and college degree programs. Because of the increase in the immigrant worker population in New York City, courses in English-as-a-second language are increasingly requested by workers and union/management.

In accordance with the nature of its funding and constituency, CWE adapts and broadens its offerings as the needs of workers and workplaces change. As part of its effort to improve its educational programs, CWE experimented with using four teachers as curriculum developers at several workplace literacy programs and asked the Center for Advanced Study in Education (CASE) at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York to assess these efforts. The CASE investigation posed the following principal questions in its evaluation:

1. What is a teacher's process in creating a workplace-based literacy curriculum?

2. Is the teacher-developed curriculum a feasible and effective method, and how does it compare with other workplace or worker literacy curriculum development approaches?

Supplementary questions were also addressed in order to describe and evaluate the curriculum development process of selected workplace literacy programs. These included:

- What was the nature and extent of the support CWE offered to encourage and advance the curriculum development process?
- Was there a relationship between teachers' characteristics and their competence to create and teach curricula?
- How did teachers and students perceive the curriculum?
- How could the curriculum development process be replicated?

Literature Review

There is a wide body of literature concerned with the general theory of curriculum development (see, for example, Unruh & Unruh, 1984). This review, however, will focus on curriculum development in the worker education field, particularly related to literacy programs, and on the expanding role of teachers in the curriculum development process.

Many worker education studies have developed primarily in response to a perceived lack of skills in the workforce, (e.g., The bottom line. . ., 1988; Carnevale, Gainer, & Meltzer; DeStefano, 1992), and a number of models have been proposed to address these deficiencies. At one end of the workplace curriculum spectrum is the functional-context model, a job-specific approach based on the work of Thomas Sticht (1975, 1987, etc.), that uses actual job tasks and

job documents as the basis for identifying needed literacy skills (e..g., Philippi, 1988; Philippi, 1991; Rush, Moe, & Storlie, 1986; Taylor, & Lewe, 1991). This model emphasizes the relationship between the development of workplace education curriculum and the improvement of workplace job competency.

According to Philippi (1991), one of the main proponents of the functional-context approach:

> Developing effective workplace literacy programs requires careful planning. Essential activities include identifying critical job tasks; conducting analyses to determine how competent workers use literacy skill applications in their job performances; developing customized curriculum to match workers' needs; and evaluating cost benefits of program results. (p. 28)

Thus, using the functional-context approach, a curriculum developer, who may be an educator, a writer, or a technical specialist, first performs a task analysis to determine what literacy skills need to be taught. Next, the developer sequences the skills, provides specific teaching methods, and, often using previously published work-related materials, writes a curriculum (e.g., Kalash, 1993; Johnson 1992; Johnson, 1993).

While Philippi acknowledges the necessity for the curriculum developer to be involved in task analyses and to have "personal exposure to job tasks...to obtain the layers of knowledge necessary for developing valid lessons" (p. 33), nowhere does she fuse the functions of curriculum developer and teacher. In fact, Philippi says

> If the instructors delivering your curriculum are unknown to you, provide lesson overviews, goals for instruction, and a relatively detailed trainer script. These materials

will increase the likelihood that your original concept of instructional delivery will be retained as it is filtered through the personalities and communication skills of various other instructors. As a result, your curriculum becomes less dependent on the delivery by specific training personality types and more adaptable to use in a variety of situations. This feature facilitates replication of your program at other sites. (p. 204)

The teacher's role vis-a-vis the functional-context model is to serve as intermediary between the job expert/curriculum writer and the worker/student. Rather than curriculum development, the teacher may have a background in technical skills, or, more than likely, in adult education with a focus on basic skills instruction (in reading, writing, math, etc.). If the former, then the instructional format will likely consist of lectures and tests; if the latter, then the instructional format may be more participatory. In either case, the emphasis is on learning job-related literacy skills according to a set of pre-determined objectives, a sequence of skills, and a mode of instruction, all of which have been decided by the curriculum developer in the process described above; the teacher functions mainly as a guide and transmitter (Paul & Monson, 1992, p. 521). Thus, the curriculum development model influences not only what is taught but, to a large degree, how it is taught as well.

Another proponent of job-specific workplace education, Mikulecky (1993) summarizes the broad outlines of what is necessary for effective learning by adults. Stressing the importance of the conditions of learning, he presents a more student-concerned functional-context approach to literacy curricula and provides a bridge between curriculum, mode of instruction, and learner. For example, he enumerates various criteria that facilitate learning: appropriate, motivating, and

available materials; sufficient reasons for learning; regular time for practice; regular reinforcement, feedback, and resources; and student's perception of improvement in learning.

At the other end of the literacy curriculum spectrum is a distinctly student-centered, worker-oriented approach based on the importance of the social forces existing in the workplace and their implications for workers (Darrah, 1990; Fingeret, 1991; Gowen, 1992; Hull, 1993). An extension of the analysis of critical social theorists (Aronowitz, & Giroux, 1985; Freire, 1985), this approach is concerned with empowering workers through literacy programs. In this view the employee is a significant variable in the larger workplace context rather than a problematic or deficient worker. In this approach, often referred to as "Freirian" or worker-centered (w-c), the emphasis shifts from literacy learning solely to improve technical skills and job performance to literacy education to enhance critical thinking and lifelong learning.

As in the functional-context strategy, worker-centered curriculum development may be based on job-related task analysis and assessment of worker skills; enhancement of job-related skills may be one of its primary purposes; and it may be composed of materials previously published or created by instructors based on students' perceived needs. However, because it stresses students' objectives and needs, w-c curriculum development must be responsive to varied levels of student education, knowledge, and competency. The emphasis shifts from preparing more competent workers to educating workers, a process requiring a stronger relationship between curriculum development and actual teaching. It is possible for teachers in this latter context to become more than "instruments for achieving the intentions of curriculum developers" (Ben-Peretz, 1990). With less prescription, the teacher may feel freer to expand and create additions to the curriculum. According to Pahl & Monson (1992), "as the nature of their

interaction with curriculum moves beyond implementation to innovation," teachers may ultimately "adopt a model, prepare the components, and deliver the lessons" (p. 521).

In the workplace literacy programs examined in this study, CWE has attempted to integrate curriculum development and teaching (Monson & Monson, 1993) without completely abandoning the functional-context model. De-emphasizing the input of outside experts to develop a job-specific curriculum that addresses the tasks and skills necessary for effective job performance, and designating the classroom teacher to act as curriculum developer, CWE has merged the functions of curriculum developer and teacher.

Whether based on a functional-context, Freirian, or an amalgam of approaches, curriculum development in the worker and workplace education field confronts a variety of problems and questions. According to Perin (Adult Learning, 1993, in press), these issues include defining curriculum and determining the appropriate mix between literacy and critical job skills through an understanding of the work context. Thus, understanding the central questions of this study requires an examination of various components in the CWE and the workplace context (Darrah, 1990).

Structure of the Study

Design and Procedure

The purpose and design of the study were explored through initial discussions with Dr. Francine Boren-Gilkenson, Director of Education Programs for the Consortium for Worker Education and Dr. Bert Flugman, Director of the Center for Advanced Study in Education (CASE) at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York. Dr. Deborah D'Amico of

CWE and Dr. Dolores Perin of CASE also participated in subsequent methodological discussions.

Rather than an evaluation of program and course effectiveness based on attendance and completion rates, pre- and post-test gains, certifications and promotions obtained, or meeting of program goals, CWE wanted a description and evaluation of what they considered a unique curriculum development process. Therefore, based on Darrah's (1990) ethnographic approach, this study of CWE's curriculum model is made up of descriptions of various components, including worksites, CWE staff development meetings and seminars, students' and teachers' characteristics, classrooms, and reviews of curricula. To gather information about CWE's curriculum development process, the investigator attended CWE staff development meetings, observed workplace classrooms, interviewed CWE administrative staff, teachers, and students, and reviewed curriculum documents.

Dr. Boren-Gilkenson selected a representative sample of four instructors at four worksites using either the experimental CWE curriculum model or a prepared curriculum closer to the functional-context approach. Three of them developed and taught their own curricula: one used a curriculum prepared by curriculum developers outside of CWE.

To provide the context for the research and to learn about the CWE community, the investigator attended staff/instructor meetings (three meetings made up of 3-5 classroom instructors, CWE Directors, teacher supervisors, curriculum evaluator, etc.), as well as wider CWE speaker meetings (ACTWU speaker, Stanley Aronowitz, and Henry Levin). This provided an opportunity to meet the instructors whose classes were observed and to become acquainted with the administrative structure of CWE, its goals, functioning, and on-going staff development, and its relationship to the curriculum development process.

Preliminary discussions with the four instructors occurred via phone; these discussions were followed by scheduled site and classroom observations. Based on these preliminary interactions, two questionnaires were developed, one for use with teachers, one with students, to provide a structure and framework for interviews. A student consent form was also prepared. These questionnaires and the consent form were reviewed and approved by the Graduate School and University Center of the City University of New York's Committee on Protection of Human Subjects (see Appendix for samples).

Instructors selected some of the students for interviews to ensure a variety of language backgrounds and levels, and other students volunteered. In fact, more students wished to be interviewed than were necessary. Interviews took place on site, but separate from the class to ensure privacy. An English to Spanish translator was used when required. The purpose of the interview was explained to each volunteer, and each was asked to sign the consent form that they read or was read and/or translated to them.

In addition to observations of CWE meetings and worksite classes and interviews with CWE administrative staff, instructors, and students, prepared curriculum materials (Kalash, 1993) and curricula developed by CWE instructors (Ferry, 1993; Ferry & Veeser, 1993) were examined.

Site/Subject Interaction with the Curriculum Development P ocess

This section describes the selected sites, instructors, and subjects, which were integral parts of the curriculum development process. Visits to the four designated worksites to observe workplace education classrooms and to interview teachers and selected students took place from

January, 1993 through June, 1993. After initial observations to become familiar with and known to the workers, subsequent site visits were made to conduct interviews. Interviews with the four teachers occurred before and after classes, during subway rides to or from the worksite, over the telephone, at CWE meetings, and at scheduled interviews. The 16 employee interviews, as well as the interview with the translator, were conducted during class time at the sites. The sites and subjects included:

1. Swingline Staple Factory. Swingline, a mid-sized factory that produces a widely-used stapler, is located in a sparsely-populated industrial area of Queens off Queens Boulevard in a brick building with glazed windows. There CWE offered two English-as-a-second language classes of approximately twelve students each that met initially on a Monday/Wednesday or Tuesday/Thursday, 2:30 - 4:30 p.m. schedule. Classes began November 11, 1992 and met twice a week until February, 1993, and then, at student request, increased to three times each week through June. Supervisors primarily selected students to attend the classes based on the perceived need for English language instruction and the coordination of work schedules, but employees did participate in these decisions.

Swingline classes were conducted in a large room behind the factory assembly floor equipped with a blackboard, tables (arranged in a 'U'-formation), chairs, and video equipment (when needed). Teachers could use the factory management offices for xeroxing, and the Swingline training supervisor, Patty Hickman, was on-site. In fact, CWE staff and teachers worked closely with Ms. Hickman to arrange for this space. Although it was not elegant and

lacked some desirable materials -- e.g. books, magazines, newspapers, tapes, or tape recorders -- the space was close to the factory floor, convenient for the students, and serviceable.

E.F. and C.V. each initially taught one of the two classes. In addition, E.F. functioned as the primary curriculum writer, although the other instructor worked closely with her to augment and refine the curriculum. Both teachers speak fluent Spanish, and they had worked together previously at Centro, an English-as-a-second language institute for Spanish speaking adults in Manhattan initiated and developed by C.V. A graduate student in history at Columbia University, C.V. had discovered and absorbed ESL teaching techniques through observation, reading, trial-and-error, spending considerable time in the Dominican Republic, and ten years of prior workplace teaching. In turn, he trained E.F., a graduate student in anthropology. She had taught previously at another union worksite program, a CUNY writing center, and an ESL program for Brazilian students at Boston University.

Both teachers, sensitive to the students' long work days, usually arrived with packages of cookies and soft drinks for the students; students contributed by bringing fruit. The sharing of food easily became the basis of language learning events.

Because the students found the instruction so effective and had such positive responses to the instructors, they requested an additional class. Based on the teachers' suggestion, Swingline union, management and CWE agreed to an additional E.F.-C.V. team-taught class open to both sets of students for Friday afternoon from 2:30 - 4:30. A total of four Swingline classes were observed, one of E.F.'s, two of C.V.'s, and one team-taught class.

In addition to interviews with the two instructors, ten students and the translator were also interviewed at Swingline. For six of the interviews, a Spanish to English translator was present

who was also a Swingline employee. The translator was paid by the Consortium to work as a paraprofessional with the students whose English proficiency was most limited.

The ten employees interviewed work mainly on assembling, packaging, inspecting, or repairing of staplers. The amount of time they had worked at the facility ranged from one to 25 years, with the average time of service being 9.65 years. This is a significant tenure for factory workers in these economically difficult times when factories are closing, or are moving to off-shore or third world countries where wages are lower and costs of doing business overall are generally much lower.

Of the ten students/employees (excluding the translator) interviewed at Swingline, six were women and four men, with ages ranging from 20 to 55: 3 in the 20-30 group, 4 in the 31-40 range, 2 were 41- 50, and 1 was over 51. Their language backgrounds and countries of origin varied: 1 Haitian/Creole speaker (Haiti), 2 Romanian speakers (Romania), and six Spanish speakers (Colombia, Cuba, Dominican Republic, and Ecuador). Their educational level ranged from never attending any school (according to this employee, his mother had died, his father was an amputee, and the children worked or stayed home to help) to completion of four years of college in Ecuador. Only one attended high school in the United States.

Overall, the Swingline students were an immigrant group, had families of their own or lived with families, and had a language other than English as their first language. They did not speak English at home or at work, unless their supervisor or team workers did not speak their native language. In that case, the lingua franca, of necessity, became English. All expressed a desire to learn more English.

2. Mademoiselle Garment Factory. Mademoiselle, located in a semi-residential, impoverished area of Bushwick, Brooklyn, is a mid-sized garment knitting factory that produces sweaters for companies such as Liz Claiborne. CWE conducted two English-as-a-second language classes at this site, one of which was observed for this study. This class of approximately twelve students was taught by E.F. (who also taught at Swingline) and met Mondays and Wednesdays from 5:00 - 7:00 p.m. over a six-month period.

At the first site visit, the English-as-a-second language class was held in the employee cafeteria. Students sat at two dining tables set aside in a rather large room. Although total privacy was not possible, it was relatively quiet and functional: A blackboard was available, and vocabulary charts created by E.F. and the students as well as work maps were pinned on the walls.

On a subsequent visit, however, the class had been moved to a "training" classroom in the management area near the factory floor. In this smaller room, students sat at tables, a blackboard was available, and other vocabulary charts were displayed on the walls. Although factory owners and management were close by, the training room afforded a great deal more privacy and intimacy than the cafeteria. E.F. always brought packages of cookies that she and the workers shared during class. Once again, there was no library of resources, e.g. books, magazines, brochures, tape recorders, tapes, etc. The instructor did, however, have access to Mademoiselle's xeroxing facilities.

At the first visit, the class was composed of twelve students of Asian and Hispanic background. By the next visit, however, the Asian students had left the class. This resulted from

several factors. First there were constant layoffs at this factory, perhaps a reflection of the economic climate in the garment and retail industry. The Asian workers may have been the last hired and consequently the first to be let go. In addition, management had originally paid for a car service to take several of the Asian workers home after the class, but had recently stopped the service, probably due to cost. Consequently, the workers who lost access to the car service stopped attending class. (Why this service had been provided to Asian but not Hispanic workers was not explained.)

As mentioned above, the teacher, E.F., is fluent in Spanish. She wrote the Mademoiselle curriculum as well as the Swingline curriculum. Informal interviews with the instructor occurred both before and after site visits.

On the second visit, after a class observation, four of the students participated in interviews, with the instructor serving as translator. Although there had been discussion of the possibly inhibiting effects of E.F. functioning as her students' translator, students' responses during the interviews did not appear constrained: they both praised her teaching and offered suggestions for ways to improve the class.

Of the four students interviewed at Mademoiselle, two were sewing machine operators and two were pressers, three male and one female. Their time of service ranged from 2 months to 3 years, an average of 1.64 years (compare to workers' average time at Swingline: 9.65 years), testifying to the greater number of layoffs at this site compared to Swingline. Their ages ranged from 20 to 41 years old with two in the 31-40 year age range. All were Spanish speakers: three of the four were from the Dominican Republic, one from Ecuador. One completed the 6th grade, two completed the 11th grade, and one graduated high school.

Although a smaller group with less language variety than at Swingline, the Mademoiselle students were also an immigrant group that wanted to learn English.

3. Metro-North. The Metro-North education class took place in the Metro-North Training Center on the 7th floor of Grand Central Station at 42nd Street and Lexington Avenue in Manhattan. The facility was a stark contrast to Swingline and Mademoiselle. Metro-North has set up a substantial and comfortable training facility staffed with office help, a Metro-North training director, xeroxing room, several fully-equipped classrooms with built-in blackboards, overhead equipment and small separate rooms off the classroom area for supplies and books. Adequate refreshments -- e.g. sandwiches, danish, soft drinks, etc. -- were provided by the facility at each class session. Employees from all levels at Metro-North attend seminars and training sessions and take certification and promotional exams here.

B.K., the Consortium's Metro-North workplace instructor has an M.A. in adult education and human resources. She came to the adult workplace education field from I.B.M., where she moved up through the ranks from receptionist to personnel to classroom instructor. Presently, she is a part-time consultant for I.B.M. in their Employment Solutions program. Perhaps as a result of her corporate background, B.K. has a keen sense of what is required to succeed in the workplace. She was attentive to the lack of confidence in her students and provided a productive, supportive atmosphere.

The Metro-North class used a curriculum developed for CWE by the Center for Advanced Studies in Education (CASE) to prepare these workers for promotional exams. Most of the students did pass the various exams they took, but wanted more practice writing. So, at the

students' request and with CWE's approval, a more advanced reading and writing course was introduced. Two students from this latter advanced class, both female, between the ages of 31 and 40 (one a car coach cleaner, the other a building service custodian), were interviewed. One travelled from Stamford, Connecticut, to take this advanced class. Although neither was from the U.S. originally, their first language was English. One completed 8th grade in Jamaica, W.I., the other the equivalent of junior college in Guyana.

4. Sheetmetal Workers Union Local 28 Apprentice School. The Sheetmetal Workers Apprentice School is located in Queens in a one-story plus basement building. Union officials operate from this location, training classrooms are available, and actual worksite training equipment is stored here.

CWE was asked by the union to design and provide a pilot career development class as part of the union's pre-apprenticeship program for approximately 35 relatively young apprentice trainees (33 males and 2 females) between the ages of 18 and 30. The instructor, R.G., an experienced adult/workplace education instructor with a graduate degree in American Studies, also developed the curriculum for this course. The class took place in a drafting room on the lower level. It was possible to meet with several union officials, as well as observe a class and interview the teacher at this site.

Because there were problems in this pilot attempt, CWE discontinued the class during the time of this study in order to reconsider and revise the curriculum. On-going observations and interviews with students could therefore not be conducted. The initial observation and subsequent discussions with R.G., however, provided valuable insights into the relationship between

instructional goals and curriculum development. Although initially conceived as a program to address conflicts that might arise at the worksite, e.g. race, gender, new versus experienced workers, it became clear that it would be more appropriate to focus on problem-solving strategies at the pre-apprentice level, and address the more volatile issues of gender and racial conflicts during the regular apprenticeship training.

Descriptions of the worksites and background information about the teachers and employees provide the context for the curriculum development process described in the next section.

Results of Current Study: CWE Approach to Workplace Education

This section will report on administrative and staff meetings, the use of curriculum in the classroom, teacher and student curriculum assessments, and an examination of curriculum materials. The purpose of these observations and interviews is to locate CWE efforts in the context of workplace education, and to ascertain the connection and effects of these components on curriculum development.

Relationship of Staff Development to the Curriculum Development Process

CWE incorporates a variety of approaches into its structure for supervising staff. Meetings and observations with individual teachers occur on a regular basis, and in addition to individual supervision, CWE has established staff development meetings, including both small meetings and a relatively large, well-attended speaker series, which form an important part of the curriculum

development context. These meetings provided a forum for discussion of curriculum and teaching-related issues that in turn influenced the curriculum development process.

At CWE, for example, staff attended a meeting where Henry Levin, Director of the Center for Educational Research at Stanford, considered the relationship between workers' literacy and job skills in a speech titled "Education for Jobs: A Proactive Approach." (CUNY, Office of Academic Affairs, Distinguished Speaker Series in Adult Learning, April 16, 1993, Baruch College, CUNY, New York, N.Y.) Professor Levin questioned basic assumptions such as the need to upgrade workers' skills; the idea that United States competitiveness has been compromised by low levels of worker competency; or that test scores of workers need to be raised in order for the U.S. to compete in the global economy. Rather than blaming workers, he asserted that managerial resistance to the high performance workplace is the culprit in the present economic situation. Since the value of training and education in the workplace, he contends, depends on workplace conditions, Levin argued for a reorganization of the workplace.

These ideas also have implications for curriculum development and teaching. If the worker is perceived as deficient, then assessment of the degree and kind of deficiencies is necessary, followed by appropriate job-related basic skills' instruction, as the functional-context model suggests. If, however, the problem is workplace conditions, then (as the worker-centered model suggests) employees need problem-solving strategies and critical thinking forums, along with basic education skills such as English-as-a-second language and math computation, etc.

At another staff development meeting (March 5, 1993, at the ILGWU, 1710 Broadway, New York, N.Y.), three CWE teachers reported on their trip to Brazil in the Fall of 1992 to observe selected educational programs of the Confederation of Unions of Brazil. Examining

worker education in another culture can serve as a useful comparative model for curriculum development in the United States workplace. One of the observed programs concerned literacy education of unionized bank workers, members of the Workers Party. In the United States, however, basic worker education is generally targeted at working-class, blue-collar groups rather than at white collar employees, such as bank workers.

CWE staff who went on this trip view worker education as a vehicle for collective community change, that is, for purposes of social action, which is, of course, in keeping with a union perspective. Interestingly, however, the Brazilian educators encouraged the CWE staffers to develop worker education programs in the context of American history and culture. After all, while the history of labor unions is one of group solidarity and social action, there is a strong ethos in the United States that historically has and continues to subscribe to education for the sake of individual advancement. The tension between these sometimes conflicting interests is an important consideration of curriculum developers and teachers. For example, an employee may want to improve his English so he can move up and out of the factory and the union. Should CWE support an individual worker when his personal objectives have little to do with the worksite or the union? Consideration of these questions can create a candid and intellectually honest educational environment and encourage curriculum development that is flexible and responsive to local concerns.

At another full CWE staff meeting (February 9, 1993, at the Teamsters, Local 237 on West 14th Street), Stanley Aronowitz of the CUNY Graduate Center introduced a variety of provocative ideas about the relationship between education and work. He contended that worker education programs best serve the worker when they emphasize <u>how</u> to learn, leaving employers

responsible for on-the-job training. According to Aronowitz, knowing how to learn involves knowing how to negotiate one's world through reading, writing, math calculations, and oral communication, i.e., general knowledge rather than specific job content. Again, his comments have implications for curriculum that run counter to the job tasks/literacy skills model.

Like Levin, Aronowitz questioned the notion that U. S. unemployment and other economic problems are a result of workers not having adequate skills. He argued that worker education should not be about fitting people into jobs, because the jobs envisioned for them may not exist now or in the future. He cited the example of the JVC plant in Japan, which at present is almost completely automated: five workers make all the VCRs that JVC sells throughout the world. Thus, employees are being displaced because of technological advances, rather than worker inadequacies. Aronowitz urged worker educators to find a new mission for education beyond preparation for specific jobs. He suggested creating educational contexts that excite people to learn and to prepare for an uncertain future beyond the concept of training, a future in which "education will be the job." People who can work with other people will be in demand; knowledge, not skills, will be required.

In light of the global economic forces he presented, Aronowitz suggested that CWE courses "decontextualize" knowledge, so workers can expand their knowledge base. He seems to advocate generic teaching that is subsequently related to the workplace rather than workplace-related teaching that is subsequently generalized to broader knowledge. Framing the issues in this way encouraged CWE staff to continuously analyze, question, and revise their educational practices.

At another CWE Speaker Series meeting, Charles Kernaghan of ACTWU International, speaking on "The Global Economy and Worker Rights," recounted how the U.S. government has helped to promote the loss of U. S. jobs (what he referred to as "deindustrialization") through aid to offshore industries in the Caribbean Basin. The ironies of the relationship between economics and politics in the structure of the American workplace are often daunting and incomprehensible to both worker and educator. (For example, after leaving countries in South America and the Caribbean Basin to seek better employment opportunities on the U.S. mainland, many workers find that their jobs are being rerouted to the countries they left.) His thoughtful presentation again situated the problems of the American workplace in a global political context rather than as a result of worker literacy deficiencies.

These speakers, Levin, Aronowitz, Kernaghan, and others, encouraged CWE staff -- program directors, curriculum developers, teacher supervisors, teachers -- to question the issues facing the workers they teach, what forces create the conditions of the workplace, and what kinds of skills workers need. Considering the broader issues that drive the workplace compels educators to assess the appropriateness of classroom agenda and curriculum, the value of teaching strategies, and the effects of instruction on students.

These same issues emerged at smaller staff meetings concerning local CWE programs. At one staff meeting (of about twelve participants), which the classroom instructors from the four sites involved in this study attended (November 23, 1992), the agenda included a report on the development and dilemmas of a CWE education program at the Ironworkers' union. The role of management, union, employees, and CWE in these problems was examined. At another meeting (January 14, 1993), a progress report on curriculum development at Swingline and Mademoiselle

factories was presented to familiarize staff from other programs with curriculum issues and to solicit their ideas. At a third staff development meeting, Dr. Boren-Gilkenson and Joanna Herman, a teaching and curriculum specialist and worksite program troubleshooter, led a discussion of the purposes of worker education programs, the relationship between the classroom and the workplace, of whose agenda the teacher serves, and, finally, of the types of changes teachers would like to make in the CWE program. Thus, attention to curriculum was not seen as merely the purview of the curriculum developer. It was an integral part of CWE staff development with ongoing questioning and discussion of the role and functioning of workplace educators.

Another important function of these staff meetings and discussions was to create a community of educators as well as to provide a forum for exchanging information. Educators involved in worksite teaching are often isolated from colleagues and teach in less than glamorous settings. It is all too easy for workplace educators, as they travel long hours on subways and buses to industrial neighborhoods or depressed, often dangerous areas, to begin to experience a sense of hopelessness and alienation similar to that felt by many of their students. These staff development meetings therefore emphasize the purpose and importance of what the teachers and the workers are engaged in; they reconnect the teacher to a community of educators, as necessary to the instructor as the community of union members is to the worker. The meetings make the issues in workplace education a stimulating subject, have a direct effect on the classroom atmosphere, and encourage the connection and interaction of the teacher with the curriculum and teaching process.

In addition to bringing in speakers on a variety of topics and conducting staff meetings to discuss local programmatic issues and problems, CWE teachers and education directors formed a study group to discuss readings that Dr. Boren-Gilkenson and Dr. D'Amico distributed about "issues...essential to understanding both classroom practice and the larger context of workplace education." According to a memo from the education directors (3/17/93), the articles and list of readings are

> intended to stimulate our thinking toward a position paper or set of guidelines which would help us with curriculum, staff development and the politics of union/management/worker/ teacher relations which are emerging in the classes we are providing.

As part of its staff development, CWE also publishes and distributes a newsletter, Literally Speaking, with meeting announcements, articles, book reviews, etc. Through its structure, CWE models the type of interactive dialogic teaching they encourage in the classroom.

Case Studies of Curriculum Development at Selected Worksites

This section integrates descriptions of the curricula and the curriculum development process with the use of curricula in the classroom. Results were gathered through interviews, observations, and examination of curriculum materials.

Metro-North

At Metro-North, the CWE instructor used a curriculum written by Kalash (1993) for a basic skills class. The curriculum has two overall purposes: to provide practice and instruction so that railroad workers who are presently coach cleaners, custodians, laborers, etc. can prepare for promotional exams to become entry level clerical workers and to improve the communication

skills of these workers. Comprised of sixteen instructional units of four hours each (total instruction time = 64 hours), the curriculum presents four general areas of skills: reading, writing, math computation, and oral and interpersonal communication. These skills are presented primarily within the workplace context, using actual workplace tasks and materials. An attempt is also made to incorporate and suggest materials beyond the Metro-North environment, e.g. lists of high-interest fiction, as well as making connections between skills learned and general educational development.

Of the sixteen objectives in the Metro-North curriculum, four deal with reading, four with writing, five with math, two with communication, and one with test-taking. For each unit, the curriculum provides preliminary notes to the instructor, primary and secondary objectives, a list of materials, "Suggested Teacher-Directed Activities," "Suggested Self-Directed Activities," and copies of actual materials. The notes to the teacher give a general overview of the unit, its purpose, how it fits into the larger scheme of the form and conception of the curriculum, its relationship to the workers' present and future work, reminders of what to emphasize, or what to review. Generally, the overview provides a context for the lesson or unit. The priority objectives are based on the task analysis conducted by the curriculum writer and on what literacy skills are necessary to successfully perform clerical jobs. The suggested teacher and student or "self" activities are quite thorough. The former guide the instructor through the four classroom instructional hours, sequencing the activities, delineating what should be taught, and providing suggestions of how to teach. The latter can function as a way to individualize instruction either in or outside class by providing additional activities for students to complete on their own.

In the Introduction, Kalash emphasizes that teachers should feel free to alter the sequence of instruction of the units. Instructors are also encouraged to provide bridges for students between one unit and another, to point out relationships and links.

The Metro-North curriculum, although certainly context specific is, nonetheless, extremely comprehensive. An instructor, novice or experienced, could pick it up cold, read the sequence of suggested activities, study the materials, and teach the class. In other words, the teacher would be a conduit of the objectives, information, and materials. Although encouraged to be creative, the instructor is provided with everything necessary to conduct class. This is a thorough, detailed, comprehensive curriculum guide. (See Appendix for samples of Metro-North curriculum guide Units.)

The instructor at Metro-North, B.K., assessed the curriculum as providing a solid foundation for both her and the students. Compared to the classes at the other sites, B.K. had a greater number of text resources. This may be partly a function of the nature and level of the courses. At Swingline and Mademoiselle, the classes are basic ESL instruction. Therefore, tapes, movies and constant oral practice are appropriate; at Metro-North, the students are English speaking. To move from their present cleaning and maintenance positions to clerical positions, they need to pass tests that require improved writing skills. The curriculum of the Metro-North class is therefore goal-oriented, providing interesting activities and materials, a great deal of practice, and continuous teacher feedback.

Swingline

At Swingline staple factory, E.F. and C.V. collaboratively developed Speaking Swinglish, an English-as-a-second language curriculum (Ferry & Veeser, 1993). The curriculum writers

were also the classroom teachers. Prior to teaching at Swingline, both teachers/curriculum developers worked with Swingline employees on the assembly line to determine the nature of the factory jobs. They performed the same tasks as their students, observing and listening to the languages used, and noting the speech events. From this experience, they became acquainted with the workers, their supervisors, and their job tasks, and gained direct experience of what was required of workers in terms of language skills. Participating in the work culture gave them access to the vocabulary, communication strategies, problem-solving approaches, and literacy levels necessary to negotiate effectively in the workplace.

From this workplace participation base, along with their prior adult English-as-a-second language and workplace teaching experience and guidance from the CWE staff (specifically Dr. Francine Boren-Gilkenson and Dr. Deborah D'Amico), they developed a draft of learning objectives and sequenced them. They then selected exercises from texts and created materials to include workplace vocabulary and concepts identified during the task analysis phase on the factory floor. After trying out each unit with one of the classes, they reviewed and rewrote it for the next class. In addition to the draft outlines and units, the teachers kept a journal after each class noting what occurred, what worked, and what needed to be changed. Finally they rewrote all of the units and produced a curriculum document that can be used by other instructors.

The final curriculum document presents an Introduction, nine Units, References, and an Index. While it follows a sequence of increasingly difficult language structures and skills, it also presents a variety of themes (e.g. "Questions and Answers," "Family," "Feelings and Opinions," etc.), as well as numerous songs and games. Each Unit begins with Objectives, followed by Teacher Notes, and then Suggested Teaching Learning Activities. The latter includes a narrative

of how to effectively use whatever is suggested and samples of materials and worksheets. Using the workplace for theme and vocabulary content, the Swingline curriculum provides for different levels of English language learning reflecting the variety of languages and fluency levels of the students.

Because of their social vision and academic backgrounds (graduate study in anthropology and economics), the content E.F. and C.V. emphasized was of a social and political nature. Their pedagogical approaches emphasized involving students in reviewing goals and creating reading, writing, and speaking activities that revolved around movies, songs, and games. For example, they used a video of West Side Story, the tragic love story of a young couple, a Puerto Rican woman and a white man, as the basis for several classes. This allowed an opportunity to explore issues of solidarity and the restrictiveness of cultural groups, living conditions of working class people, as well as the similarities between the social problems of thirty years ago and of today. The students' tremendous response to the tragic ending led to a discussion of larger issues.

E.F. and C.V. carefully planned and structured the two classes during which they showed the video (they used the combined Friday class) so that students practiced basic vocabulary, heard a good deal of English watching the movie, and used a great deal of English in the discussions before, during, and after the movie. They began the class with a presentation of characters names and vital information. Through this discussion, students were introduced to the plot and actors. The instructors also presented significant vocabulary the students might need. Then they showed the movie. At certain pre-determined points, they stopped the video and discussed with the students what was going on or what had happened. At the end of the video presentation, they again wrote significant vocabulary and sentence structures on the board and distributed handouts.

Since there was a good deal of music in the movie, students practiced the songs after the showing. For example, the teachers used the song "Maria" as a cloze exercise, distributing a copy with selected words blank. Working together in pairs or small groups, students attempted to fill in the blanks. The teachers moved line by line replaying that section of the video as many times as the students requested it. Then, the teachers distributed the full text of the song and the entire class read it together. The exercise challenged their competitive spirit, their curiosity, and their desire to practice English structures and pronunciation.

During other class observations at Swingline, the teachers often began with discussions of what was going on in the workplace, particularly who was laid off, and connected the content to language learning. For example, at the beginning of one session, as E.F. asked questions about what had occurred at work, she wrote the question words (what, who, when, where, how, why) on the board. After the initial discussion about work using these words, the class used them as a "round robin," going around the room with one student asking another a question such as "How do you feel?", and the next student answering and then asking another question. This gave them practice with the structure and encouraged everyone to participate even though the language levels in the class varied. E.F. then divided the class into groups, gave each a picture, and asked them to answer the same questions using the question words even though each group had a different picture. She circulated and helped the groups. Each group then made a presentation.

In one of C.V.'s classes, C.V. tied these same question words to the workplace maps (i.e. drawings of their work stations, the people, machines, and lines of communication involved) students had created. After distributing xeroxed copies of the students' maps, he had students ask the designer of each map questions about it using the question words. Thus, while the instructors

followed the same curriculum objectives and covered the same English structures with the students, they did it in slightly different ways, ways of their own devising that were responsive to what had happened in the workplace and utilizing materials the students worked on about the workplace.

The final curriculum document submitted to CWE (Ferry & Veeser, 1993), the title, Speaking Swinglish, captures the richness and inventiveness of the curriculum developers/teachers. While not offering teachers a script, they do offer a comprehensive series of units. They provide an ample beginning for the next teacher who works with it and on it, and an end as that teacher shapes it to adapt to a new group of students, a different teaching style, and the changing demands of the workplace.

Mademoiselle

The Mademoiselle curriculum was developed and taught by Ferry (1993), referred to in this section as E.F. The union, management, CWE, and employees wanted an English-as-a-second language course to enhance the fluency of the employees. This curriculum was based on a task analysis; that is, at Mademoiselle (as at Swingline), E.F. worked on the assembly line to determine the nature of the employees' work and the literacy skills that would be appropriate and helpful to them in their job functioning. E.F. then incorporated the language events she observed and experienced into a draft outline of objectives and units.

The curriculum, ILGWU/Mademoiselle ESL Curriculum, is composed of an Introduction, General Goals, Specific Themes and Goals, Supplementary Vocabulary and Materials, and an Index. The curriculum guide covers a course that would run for approximately four months, presumably twice a week for two hours.

The Introduction states that the curriculum should be viewed as a guide and that teachers should involve students in defining instructional goals in on-going assessment of their progress and its relationship to the curriculum. The Introduction also addresses the issue of dealing with a wide range of English language levels, suggesting grouping students by fluency levels and modifying activities to fit stages of English language development.

The curriculum-wide General Goals emphasize contextualizing language learning through content, situations, and materials related to the workplace. For example:

> Students will learn vocabulary related to their jobs -- sizes, body parts, sweater parts, machine parts, job titles.
>
> Students will describe their jobs in English, using the vocabulary learned.
>
> Students will review a contract and discuss what they want from a new contract.
>
> Students will discuss the modules and problems resulting from them. They will role play possible solutions to these problems, and they will also have an opportunity to discuss the modular reorganization with a union representative. (p.1)

The next section, "Specific Themes and Goals" delineates the five units of the curriculum, including "Introduction and Identification," "Questions & Answers," "Work and Union," "Health and Safety," and "Evaluation." These Units are comprised of lesson plans, each beginning with a Focus or theme, followed by Goals or a series of objectives, Resources, i.e., books that might provide additional ideas and exercises, and Suggested Teaching/Learning Activities. These activities are actually a cogently sequenced description of what might occur during the class and the worksheets students will actually use.

UNIT C: WORK AND UNION (see Appendix), for example, has as its overall goals the development of English fluency and vocabulary through discussion of work-related issues. Along with the Focus and more specific Goals, E.F. suggests a variety of other resources on these issues, e.g. Unemployment: A New Order or ESL for Action: Problem Posing at Work. The "Suggested Teaching/Learning Activities" for this Unit contain four lessons. The first concerns a workplace map. As in the Kalash curriculum, E.F. outlines a series of steps for the presentation. E.F., however, presents these steps with alternative ways of presentation or of having students work together as part of the narrative. E.F. also provides reasons for the activities. Although these are brief, they provide context and purpose for the teacher. For example,

> At Mademoiselle, the maps can be a useful record as workers are moved around. Furthermore, they allow students with literacy problems to work with pen and paper without having to write too much. (p. 25)

Other interesting aspects of the Mademoiselle curriculum are the Supplementary Vocabulary and Materials and an Index. Supplementary materials include "vocabulary lists, drawings, the contract summary, job titles and description, supervisors' directions, and health and safety information." (p. 73) Setting additional materials in a separate area provides teachers with a resource section right in the curriculum, prevents each lesson from becoming too overwhelming, and allows the teacher some leeway in adding materials and activities through his/her discretion based on the level of the class. An extremely interesting section provides lists of work-related vocabulary presented by category in three different languages: Spanish, English, and Chinese.

While these lists reflect the language backgrounds of the employees at Mademoiselle, they act as a model for teachers who may use the curriculum with students from other language groups.

Finally, the Mademoiselle curriculum provides an Index outlining the activities and language structures included and locating them in the text. For the teacher who does not want to follow the sequence of Units or who wants to mix and match, this is quite a useful addition.

The curriculum also provided an example of how similar concepts and strategies can be used within different contexts. For example, at Mademoiselle, E.F. extended the concept of the workplace map (used in the Swingline curriculum as well) to include a variety of topics related to workplace issues at that site. In preparation for this task, students first created a map of one room where they lived; next they worked collaboratively creating workplace maps with a particular emphasis. For example, one set of maps concerned the health and safety risks of the knitting factory environment, e.g. using machines. Another map represented the organization of the factory; yet another began with each worker at his workstation and expanded outward. These are obviously sophisticated concepts requiring organization and categorizing skills in addition to vocabulary use.

This connection between the workplace and the class was established not only through the workmaps students created (drawings of their work stations, the people, machines, and lines of communication involved), but through the topics the curriculum covered, the materials selected, and the vocabulary emphasized in the classes. Although E.F. had pre-planned the curriculum, the design was sufficiently flexible to allow for changes when something was not working, when students requested something else, or when the teachers wanted to introduce something different.

Another example of how the workplace context affected the subject matter of the curriculum can be seen in the use of dialogues. Although used at both sites as a successful instruction mode, at Mademoiselle E.F. created dialogues around the theme of "Layoffs." A dialogue about layoffs incorporated grammatical structure practice and vocabulary with, unfortunately, an all-too-familiar Mademoiselle workplace circumstance. At Swingline, by contrast, one of the dialogues was concerned with a "Family Tree," a very different subject matter.

In another class at Mademoiselle, E.F. used a section of the union contract as the text. Although the text seemed quite difficult for this lower level English-as-a-second-language group, it had considerable meaning and impact on their lives. Consequently, they were more than willing to grapple with the vocabulary and sentence structure. Students took turns reading aloud. E.F. distributed a series of questions that required students to locate significant information in the text and students worked collaboratively to do so. Her handout of questions included: What does the contract say about discrimination? What is the average wage for a "trim and turn" worker? What is the average wage for a sewing machine operator? Further, in the section of the contract concerning disability benefits, students offered examples of accidents that can occur at their work stations, etc. Another section of the contract regarding immigration status seemed particularly pertinent to this group of 100% Spanish speakers. Whenever students had severe difficulty comprehending, the teacher, who, as mentioned previously, is fluent in Spanish, translated the English into Spanish.

Not all of the exercises were so obviously work-related. A diagram of body parts was useful for learning vocabulary by category with words that are basic and essential both on and off the job.

The Teacher-Developed Curriculum: Discussion

Both E.F. and C.V. developed the Swingline curriculum and both taught it; E.F. developed and taught the Mademoiselle curriculum. Both thoroughly acquainted themselves with the work environment of their students and the culture of the workplace. They both had a definite bias against prepared texts, subscribing to the notion that the students and their interests, concerns, and educational needs should serve as the source of curriculum and teaching. Therefore topics and situations selected for discussion were workplace based, grammar work coming from students' speech and writing. However, both teachers are familiar with ESL texts and adapted and incorporated previously published materials when necessary.

Since they both emphasize an interactive curriculum, their instructional strategies focus on students asking each other questions, working collaboratively in pairs or small groups, and writing on the blackboard. They suggest considerable oral work with students and listening to extended English through tapes and movies. The students particularly seemed to favor and appreciate the dialogues they read aloud, the songs they practiced, and the games and puzzles they completed. In fact, at Swingline the teachers/writers made a tape of the songs and gave one to each student.

In these basic ESL classes, even the exercises with verbs, negatives, and questions appeared playful and challenging. They supplied sufficient practice and also provided a framework for the development of additional exercises based on their contexts.

The instructors found the variety of language levels at Swingline daunting. In one class at Swingline, E.F. had the help of a translator who could work with Spanish-speaking students who were very limited in their English; these students often found the easiest exercises too difficult. At the other end of the spectrum, those students who had been in the United States the longest had developed a quite rigid way of speaking English and found it difficult to change and learn a more standard idiom. However, according to C.V., for this latter group, even if their productive English does not appear to change much, comprehension improves considerably through class participation. Noting this problem in the curriculum and suggesting helpful strategies is a beginning, but certainly does not provide a comprehensive solution to the problem.

The issue of mixing language and achievement levels in one classroom was a situation that all of the instructors had to deal with. The curriculum as a guide rather than a script to be adhered to is more appropriate to the mixed-level situation. Although noting the heterogeneity of the classes as daunting, all of the instructors cited its advantages as well: the mixed group is, for example, more verbal and theatrical, definite pluses in language learning environments.

Considerable curriculum development occurred in response to worksite events (e.g. layoffs, introduction of worker teams, etc.) available resources, and the instructors' inventiveness and creative reactions to opportunities. E.F., for example, serendipitously established the use of a translator as a class assistant. She met A.M., an assembler at Swingline, in the factory cafeteria and got to talking with him. He told her he was taking English as part of an English for Education Careers Program at the ILGWU. Realizing that he would be quite an asset in her multi-level English class, and that it would accommodate his ultimate goal of teaching, she suggested that he become a class assistant. She contacted Dr. Deborah D'Amico at CWE, who in turn

contacted Patty Hickman, the training supervisor at Swingline, who contacted A.M.'s immediate supervisor. The arrangement was made. E.F. emphasized, however, that much of her curriculum was based on communication with the students. After holding the initial goal-setting class with the students to determine their expectations, she engaged in continuous review of the classes. Based on all this information, she decided what to pursue and what to drop. Although she had constructed objectives and a sequence of teaching, she altered this sequence based on events in the workplace and in the classroom. For example, a woman collapsed in class at the Mademoiselle factory, but would not stay home from work because there were no sick days allowed in the union contract, and E.F. wrote a dialogue about this issue. E.F. claimed her original curriculum sequence was often derailed; however, it seems closer to the truth to say that rather than being derailed, it was expanding and responding to workplace events.

Another example of E.F.'s responsiveness to what students wanted evolved from a goal-setting session in which they said they wanted to learn 50 verbs and they wanted straight grammar. She highlighted the verbs using materials she had originally planned on using and created a variety of additional exercises in which students could use these verbs. To accommodate her students' verb-mania, after her class saw the movie Modern Times, she created verb exercises based on the movie. After two months of concentrating on verbs, they had a review session and found they had learned 40 verbs. She gave them another 10 as well as a chart of these 50 verbs and the various tense forms. Therefore, their goals were met and they felt they had had an impact on what occurred in the classroom. The final results of this process appear attractively and sequentially in the final curriculum document.

Adherence to a strict curriculum sequence would not have allowed for this refocusing. When a curriculum is imposed and adhered to no matter what students and teachers want, grumbling and dissatisfaction result. As interviews with students confirmed, there was no dissatisfaction with the curriculum even when there were suggestions for additions.

E.F. clearly discerned differences between the curriculum that was necessary at Swingline and the one at Mademoiselle. One of the main differences concerned the heterogeneity of the classes. Swingline had a more diverse student population and a greater variety of language levels. Thus the curriculum had to utilize the advanced students as models and offer them a challenge without allowing them to take over the class and intimidate the other students. Developing topics and materials for the diverse group at Swingline is quite different from developing a curriculum for the more homogeneous group of relatively recent speakers of English whose first language was Spanish at Mademoiselle.

E.F. found that certain types of exercises and materials were successful at one site but not at the other. The students at Mademoiselle, for example, liked making collages. To learn vocabulary related to clothing, they would cut out pictures from magazines and then make collages of them. The workplace map was also more successful at Mademoiselle than at Swingline, where the reasons for creating workmaps did not seem clear to the students. While students at Swingline liked songs, those at Mademoiselle preferred games. Since the class at Mademoiselle was Spanish-speaking, translation exercises were more useful to them. For example, they worked first with a Spanish version of the union contract, then switched to the English one. When they created questions to pose to a union official who visited the class, each question was first formulated in

Spanish and then translated into English. However, had the Asian students continued to attend the class at Mademoiselle, the translation exercises might have been eliminated.

Because of the different workplace situations and the different mix of students and language levels, the curriculum at Mademoiselle evolved with narrower goals -- i.e. dealing with the union contract and health and safety issues, concentrating on question words, work-related verbs, basic English sentence structure. and oral practice -- than the curriculum at Swingline. The Swingline curriculum provides for more different levels of English language learning and addresses reading and writing skills more explicitly than the Mademoiselle curriculum.

The instructors constantly reflected on what they were doing in the classroom and its relationship to the workplace. For example, one of the instructors was concerned about the relationship between what they were doing in the English class and the teamwork concept introduced in the workplace. (Both Swingline and Mademoiselle are facing competition from multinational companies and to meet the challenge are experimenting with worker teams. Banners throughout the factories promote this approach). Although C.V. used the team/collaborative approach in the classroom, he felt that the concept as it was used in the workplace did not result in a teamwork environment where workers ideas are considered. Instead, he thought it functioned to speed up production and allow the factory to lay off workers. So, while in their interviews students consistently expressed the view of the English class as a positive force, as an "oasis," the instructors worried about how the classes served to ease and improve the communication of the teams and thus could be used in a negative way by management.

Based on these observations of CWE teachers, it can be concluded that, a curriculum, whether written by teachers or outside experts, may not capture all the positive nuances of their

teaching, their flexibility, their ability to turn everything that happens during the class into a teaching opportunity, etc.

In a general overall comparison among the three curricula, it would seem that they are all quite workable. Using workplace content, the Metro-North curriculum presents a comprehensive, sequential approach to reading, writing, and math. It is focused on helping students upgrade their skills to pass tests and improve their positions. The activities are presented in a series, a clear technique, particularly for a new or inexperienced teacher to follow. The Mademoiselle and Swingline curricula concentrate on the development of English-as-a-second language skills using the content and context of the garment industry, i.e. situations and vocabulary of each workplace, as the focus for English language learning and practice. These latter two curricula place considerable emphasis on interactive activities, i.e., songs, games, movies, invited speakers, to facilitate English language learning. Because the Mademoiselle and Swingline curricula were pilot-tested as they were being developed, the final documents contain examples of actual student work, whether it is a workplace map or a series of questions and dialogues. Consequently, these latter two have an element of student involvement that Metro-North, as good as it is, lacks.

R.G. developed the curriculum at the Sheetmetal Workers Pre-Apprentice Training Program. The basic concept he worked from is that workers need to read the world, that is, literacy for them involves understanding the social and political agenda operating in the work environment. Questions of what is education for, how do workers network, and how do they move forward formed the nucleus of the curriculum. Consideration of these and other related issues continued to serve as the bases for the revised problem-solving curriculum.

With the Sheetmetal Workers' curriculum, the relationship between the curriculum content and the teacher was critical. To teach ESL classes, a teacher needs knowledge of English, among other things; to teach a workplace-related class utilizing safety regulations or union contracts requires an understanding of these areas. However, to teach units on minority participation in construction jobs, resolving gender and racial conflicts, etc. requires sensitivity due to the potentially disturbing nature of the subject matter. Under these circumstances, it is surely far better to have the classroom instructor involved in initial development of the curriculum and subsequent instructors encouraged to adapt the curriculum.

Student Perspectives of the Curriculum Process

This section summarizes the responses to a questionnaire administered to selected students, 10 at Swingline, 4 at Mademoiselle, and 2 at Metro-North. The purpose of the interview and questionnaire was to ascertain how students responded to locally developed curricula as well as to "outside" developed curricula. Although individual students at the Sheetmetal Workers Apprentice site were not interviewed, R.G. was observed using a curriculum he had developed.

The questions concern why students took the class, what was taught, how the class was of use to them, what they liked about the class, and how they thought the class could be improved. These responses present significant implications for curriculum development.

1. Why did you decide to take this class? In response to this question, students offered various reasons. Some said they were coming because it was offered at the worksite and therefore convenient for them; one said she was paid for the time she was in class (only partly true). But the emphasis in their responses was on the importance of learning English and

improving their communication skills in relation to their jobs and to their living in the United States and raising a family here. Several mentioned not speaking much English before they began the class; some did not know the alphabet before attending the class. Others said they had taken an English class previously and wanted to continue studying English. Some emphasized the need to speak better, others wanted to concentrate on their writing. Those who worked in teams said knowing English was important to communicating with other team members. Others said they spoke English only at work and wanted to learn English to use in other parts of their lives. For example, one student said he could not read letters from the doctor, from his children's school, or from the courts. Others said they wanted to be able to do other jobs, to "go outside my area." At Metro-North, students saw the class as part of an educational continuum and wanted to go on for a GED and take workplace promotional exams.

2. What kinds of things does the teacher teach and what kinds of materials does the teacher use? Students used this question as an opportunity to praise their teachers, to talk about how hard they worked and tried to help them, the amount of patience they showed, the encouragement they gave. They spoke of the helpfulness of the constant repetition that gave them practice with vocabulary and grammar structures. They spoke about the familiar things they discussed and the vocabulary they learned that helped them write letters. One student said his teacher asked them what they wanted to study, and they said "they wanted English for basic situations." Students mentioned the dialogues, songs, reading, verb forms and tenses, new vocabulary words, writing on the blackboard, homework assignments, questions, sentences, drawings, drama, plays, stories, narrations, and work vocabulary. At Metro-North, the students

mentioned math, writing sentences and paragraphs, and reading articles. Students seemed quite aware of what the teachers were doing, what materials were being used, and how they were being taught. They were well-acquainted with the curriculum units.

3. How is this class helping you? Responses to this question were related to reasons for taking the class and what they were learning. If, for example, a student took the class to improve his or her English, then presumably that was how he or she was helped. Their responses confirmed this. They said they were improving their English, learning verbs -- one said, "irregular verbs are hard to memorize" -- and learning how to use verbs. Some compared the English they were learning to their first languages: one said that nouns in Romanian have gender, but not in English. (Ramifications for English language teaching for adults: whenever possible, first and second languages can be compared in terms of semantic and syntactic features.) Writing on the blackboard seemed particularly useful to many students. It seems that performing, whether writing, speaking, or reading aloud gave them a chance to use English. Those who did not know how to read or write at all prior to this class indicated that they were making progress.

One student said she was not afraid to speak English in class since none of the other students spoke very well. Another said that although her speaking had not improved, she could listen and understand much better than before. Another now uses English outside work much more often than before. Several were more confident about their vocabulary.

One of the students at Metro-North said the course was helping her to be more open, to ask questions, speak out and communicate when she might not have in the past. The main benefit for her, however, was in how the class had helped change her perception of her work. Metro-

North is no longer just a job to her but a possibility for future opportunities. Since the students gave speeches in the Metro-North classes, they mentioned their increased ability to speak to others as well as elevated self-confidence.

4. What do you like about this class? When asked, in effect, to identify the exemplary parts of the classes, students mentioned specific instructional strategies such as dialogues, reading aloud, records, videos, dramatizations, and puzzles. They also spoke of the teachers' procedures and style of trying to understand and include everyone, stopping class to discuss language problems, asking questions, explaining clearly, giving examples, and assigning work based on these examples. Translating into Spanish was important for some.

In responding to these questions, one student said, "C.V. is a good psychologist. C.V. asks, 'What is new at work?' If you're interested in what you're learning, it's better." Another spoke of the teacher making sure everyone was learning in their own way, and another of being able to incorporate words and questions from "outside." Others liked the attention they received from the teacher.

One student spoke of the intangibles that were important for her: "I forget my problems. I am free of problems. I become like I was as a child in school." A Metro-North student said she had learned things that she could "apply to the future to further myself."

Some liked the homework assignments, other said they did not have time to do them because of other responsibilities. Many assessed and commented on the improvement they had made as a result of these classes.

5. How could this class be made better? Students gave a variety of responses to this question. Their responses focused on subject matter, materials, problems they saw with other students, their desire for more (and more advanced) classes, and the structure of the classes. One woman wanted the basic English class to include counting in English and some math. It is possible that several of the students need basic math instruction. Another thought for a while and said he did not want to see another silent movie, but wants only movies with spoken English.

At Mademoiselle, students' recommendations concentrated on including videos, tapes, dictionaries, stories, and English texts/handbooks to facilitate their learning. They were anxious to expand their English language learning in a more traditional way. This may be a function of their limited English proficiency and their desire for a more structured course.

Several commented that the other students should be more diligent about completing their homework. One complained that students should not be tired during class. The more advanced English speakers at Swingline and Mademoiselle asked for a more advanced English course. A suggestion that a paraprofessional could help with lower level students spoke to the recommendation for more levels of English classes. Several students complained either about not being paid to attend the classes or not being given the time off by their supervisors so that they might come to the Friday class. More instructional hours, more classes, and more levels seemed to be what they recommended.

Implications and Recommendations

To consider the significance of the results of this study, it is necessary to return to the questions posed at the beginning: a) Can the classroom instructor both create and teach a

workplace-based curriculum? b) Is this a feasible and effective method and how does it compare with the traditional workplace curriculum development approach? c) Can this approach be replicated and, if so, how? d) What are the exemplary parts and what are the recommendations for improving this approach?

Ancillary questions suggest themselves based on these primary considerations. What is the purpose of the curriculum and whose agenda does it serve? Does it retrain, renew, and expand the worker's horizons? Does it make him or her a more productive worker? If the latter, what are the rewards, if any, to the worker and to the workplace? Is the English they are learning helpful to them in the workplace? Beyond the workplace? Is "beyond the workplace" CWE's responsibility? CWE series speakers such as Stanley Aronowitz would certainly argue that it is.

Usually workplace literacy curricula are concerned with the transfer of what is learned in the classroom to the workplace. Therefore, the logic goes, a generic curriculum should be replaced with a contextualized workplace curriculum. But does learning go in the other direction? That is, if the curriculum is workplace based, do the skills learned transfer to other areas of workers' lives? This is both an important and a problematic issue.

When curriculum writers opt for contextualized workplace curricula based on job tasks, what effect does the learning have on workers' lives? Some of the workers sampled at Swingline have worked on the assembly line for 25 years and still speak little English, yet are obviously effective employees. If the workplace situation changes, that is, if the team approach becomes the norm, or if increased technology is introduced which requires more English comprehension, then the contextualized workplace curriculum can help them on the job. However, this may create a situation where workers continually learn particular skills to fit into job slots. But learning

English, even when it is primarily job-based, would seem to transcend a narrow job description. Is it CWE's responsibility to provide access to a good general education that may not be specifically workplace bound?

CWE grapples with these issues in many ways. Perhaps one of the most important ways is by encouraging workers to think about the meaning of their job situation. The political/union emphasis bridges the gap between purely technical workplace education and a more general, abstract, conceptual education that provides a frame of reference for a variety of contexts. Thus CWE programs are neither totally context dependent nor totally decontextualized.

Within this frame of reference, CWE teachers with a varied and substantial educational background would be more effective than technical job training specialists or uncommitted adult basic educators. The staff development meetings and range of speakers CWE promotes encourage teachers to "think globally" while they must "act locally." They can constantly review what they are doing in the classroom against the multivaried purpose and agenda of the curriculum.

Because of the quite remarkable teachers CWE selects and the on-going staff development provided through meetings and exposure to speakers and articles, the answer to the question of whether classroom instructors can both develop curriculum and then teach it is a resounding yes. Shaped by the CWE philosophy, which is committed to the union concept and its social action agenda, teachers are steeped in a student-centered ideology that values teacher collaboration, student participation, and flexibility in content and presentation.

The answer to the question of whether the teacher as curriculum developer is feasible and effective compared to traditional methods can only be viewed through the limited contrast of two quite remarkable CWE curricula and a teacher handbook written by three exceptional CWE

curriculum developers/teachers (Ferry, Gunn, & Veeser, 1993) compared with several curricula developed by outside experts. The latter are good; the former are outstanding.

The feasibility and effectiveness of the CWE model also depends upon how the teacher is viewed. If the teacher is seen as being in need of a teacher-proof curriculum to convey information and skills, then the traditional approach of an outside curriculum developer is preferable. If, on the other hand, the teacher is viewed as someone who can become knowledgeable about the workplace and incorporate this knowledge effectively into constructing an evolving curriculum, then the experimental approach described in this report is certainly feasible.

The advantages and disadvantages of the CWE model compared to the traditional model depend upon the viewer's perspective. Summarizing interviews with CWE teachers on this subject prove illuminating. On the one hand, they said that the teacher-created curriculum involves the teacher directly and immediately in the teaching and learning process. They are exposed to the worksite, talk with workers, shadow them, and observe the interrelations between union and management and between workers. Because of this experience, they feel freer and at the same time more competent to change, adapt, and take alternative paths when teaching. This involvement can result in a richly textured, relevant curriculum. On the other hand, the CWE model requires a great commitment of time from the teacher. Adult and workplace literacy instructors juggle many different positions in order to make an adequate salary. Writing curriculum is an additional burden. And not everyone can write an effective curriculum.

The traditional model offers the advantage of already having been written. The motivated instructor can then build and improvise on it. There are disadvantages to this approach: the

teacher is removed from the task analysis process and is not familiar with the bases for the curriculum; the classroom instructor can never be completely sure what it is the outside curriculum developer means, even when there is a detailed "script"; and, consequently, when things do not go well in the classroom, it is hard to devise alternatives.

Whether the CWE model can be replicated depends upon the experience of the instructor and the continued level of support by CWE through staff development. If all teachers are seen as curriculum developers, then any teacher using a written curriculum document prepared by someone else must conceive of it as a list of objectives and a tentative sequence of skills and suggested materials to be explored and expanded.

The fourth question posed concerns the exemplary components of these CWE programs. These can be identified as the committed, inventive teachers, the staff development meetings and speaker series, the collaboration between teachers and between staff and teachers, and the flexible yet responsive CWE structure that gives a much-needed support system to the worksite curriculum developer/ classroom instructor.

The last question concerns recommendations for improving the curriculum development process and resulting education programs. When C.V., a Swingline teacher, was asked what he would do if CWE gave him $100,000 to alter the curriculum and workplace education program at Swingline, he made several valuable recommendations: create more English classes, 15 to 20 of them; create three levels of classes: keep a mixed-level group as the middle level, but pull the top and bottom students to make up a beginners class (sounds, alphabet, verb to be, basic literacy) and an advanced class; continue to hire creative teachers; get a textbook like Side by Side, Level 2 for the beginners and a picture dictionary.

$100,000 is probably not necessary to achieve C.V.'s dream list. Distributing dictionaries to class participants is certainly recommendable. Although some instructors have a valid fear that a textbook could conceivably determine what and how a course is taught, given the care with which CWE selects its instructors and the amount of staff development that constantly energizes, challenges, and stimulates them to think creatively about their teaching, the potential benefits of providing books as resources and handbooks far outweigh any potential drawbacks.

Perhaps CWE could begin by having a resource room with effective materials, supplies, etc. at its administrative offices. (Interestingly, CWE has just instituted a Teacher Resource Center at its new administrative facilities.) A smaller version of this model could then be produced at the worksite in any classroom setting. The introduction of at least some of the more conventional classroom trappings, e.g. notebooks, dictionaries, books, a small paperback library, would encourage both independent and collaborative study. Workplace-related materials should be included as well. Budgeting for videos, tapes, and accompanying equipment may also be necessary.

Continuing and expanding collaborative curriculum development and teaching makes the workplace classroom less isolating for teachers and provides greater resources and even more interaction for students. To a large extent the success of the CWE approach described in this study is the result of its concept of curriculum and instruction. According to Lytle, et. al. (1992),

> If a program defines literacy as the acquisition of a set of technical skills, it may seek instructors qualified to follow published programs and materials. If it defines literacy as social practice and critical reflection, however, the curriculum would need to [be]

constructed by teachers and learners together, [and] the content would evolve from individual and collective interests....

Certainly, CWE views curriculum as more than technical skills. Because of the history of CWE and its relationship to the union movement in the United States, its curricula address the social context of the workplace and of workers' lives. Through study and discussion, CWE addresses the economic and political issues facing union workers and the social and economic forces driving workplace decisions. The curriculum development process presented in this study articulates the goals of contextualized workplace education, the aspirations of the students, and the realistic amount that can be accomplished.

According to Ferry, Gunn, & Veeser (1993), in a teacher handbook they developed as a result of their curriculum writing and teaching at CWE,

> No longer is it acceptable for us to attempt to engage students in lessons that do not interact with the world outside the classroom. We have come to appreciate, in a real and immediate way, what the students bring with them to the classroom....We teachers, therefore, must depend heavily on the students' experiences to propel the curriculum....At a time when teachers find themselves bombarded by oppressive pre-packaged curricula, it is heartening to work with enlightened educators who are able to connect education to larger social, political, and economic issues. (p. 20)

While surely all curricula based on the CWE model may not be as good as the ones reviewed in this study, this is an approach that allows talented and committed workplace educators who are capable of writing curriculum to enter into an open-ended process of constantly improving curriculum and teaching.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Interview and Consent Forms

Appendix B: Examples of Curriculum Materials - Metro-North

Appendix C: Examples of Curriculum Materials - Swingline

Appendix D: Examples of Curriculum Materials - Mademoiselle

Appendix E: Examples of Workplace Handbook - CWE

APPENDIX A

Interview and Consent Forms

DRAFT

CWE CURRICULUM/INSTRUCTION EVALUATION QUESTIONNAIRE

Student Interview
Harriet Lurie Johnson, Ed.D.

Read to the student interviewed:

The purpose of this questionnaire is to find out what you think about the class you are taking. To do this, I am going to ask you a series of questions about the classroom, the instructor, the materials used, and what you think about the instruction you are getting.

This information is confidential and will not be given to your employer, supervisor, union representative, classroom instructor, or other agency personnel. When the information is used in an evaluation report, your name will not be used and the information will be presented so that it cannot be attributed to a particular individual. This information is for the exclusive use of the evaluator (CASE/CUNY).

Name of Teacher _____

Date _____

Site _____

QUESTIONS:

1. What kind of work do you do at this plant? Describe

2. No. of years worked at this facility:

3. Sex: Female _____ Male _____

4. Age range (20-30; between 31-40; etc)

5. Language spoken at home when you were growing up?

6. Language you speak at home now?

7. Highest grade completed in school

In what country?

8. Why did you decide to take this class?

9. What kinds of things does the teacher teach in this class? What kinds of materials does the teacher use?

10. How is this class helping you?

11. Do you think most people are learning something? Give examples of things people are learning?

12. What do you like about the class?

13. How could this class be made better?

14. Have you been attending this class regularly? Explain.

DRAFT

CWE CURRICULUM/INSTRUCTION EVALUATION QUESTIONNAIRE

Teacher Interview
Harriet Luria Johnson, Ed.D.

Date of site visit _____

Name of teacher _____

Site Address

_____

Questions:

1. Prior to observation: What is today's objective?

2. Following observation: How do you think today's session went? What worked well, what could have been improved, etc.

3. Who decides what is taught in each class session? How is this decision made?

4. Describe the curriculum you use. Who wrote this curriculum? If you did, how did you develop it?

5. What parts of the curriculum work well, and why?

6. What parts of the curriculum are not working well, and why?

7. What changes should be made?

8. What types of instruction work well?

9. What types of instruction do not work well?

10. Do the students attend regularly? Describe any attendance problems and what, if anything, was done to try to overcome them?

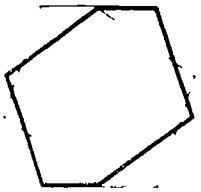
11. How are the students doing so far?

12. How are you assessing students' progress? (Tests, portfolios, your own observations, etc.)

13. Is there a wide range of abilities in your class - if so, how do you hand this?

14. Tell me about your educational and teaching background.

15. Let's go back to the curriculum development process. If you have or are presently developing the curriculum, how do you decide the order of instruction, what to include, how to teach, what materials to use? Do you create your own materials? How do you make changes? (Do you keep a log, rewrite materials, etc.) What do you think of this curriculum development process?



The Graduate School and University Center
of the City University of New York

Center for Advanced Study in Education
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CONSENT FORM

Evaluation of Selected Workplace Learning Programs
of the Consortium for Worker Education

The purpose of this project is to look at what is being taught and the materials that are being used in your classroom. We want to know what you think of this instruction. In order to find out your views of the program, you will be asked a series of questions about your work, your educational background, and what you think of the classroom intruction you are receiving.

This research will help us to understand and evaluate whether or not the classes given at your worksite are effective and how they can be improved. We appreciate your taking the time to talk to us because we need the views of students in the program.

There are no known or expected risks or hazards of this research. This information is confidential and will not be given to your employer, supervisor, union representative, classroom instructor, or other agency personnel. When the information is used in an evaluation report, your name will not be used and the information will be presented so that it cannot be attributed to a particular individual. This information is for the exclusive use of the evaluator (CASE/CuNY).

You can refuse to answer any questions you do not choose to answer. You are free to stop the interview and withdraw at any time. If you have any questions about this study, you may contact Dr. Bert Flugman at the Center for Advanced Study in Education at (212) 642-2942, Dr. Harriet Luria Johnson at the Center for Advanced Study in Education at (212) 642-2942 or the Office of Sponsored Research at (212) 642-2059.

The study described above has been explained and I voluntarily consent to my participation. I have been informed of the details of the study. I understand that I can stop at any time without penalty. I have had the chance to ask questions and have had questions answered.

_____ _____

Interviewee's Name Date

_____ _____

Investigator's Signature Date

Copies to: Interviewee
Investigator's File

APPENDIX B

Examples of Metro-North Curriculum

METRO-NORTH CLERICAL-COMMUNICATION SKILLS CURRICULUM GUIDE

Topics and Learning Objectives

Unit 1: Reading - Orientation to the Workplace

Priority Objectives:

- Overview Metro-North organization and jobs
- Become familiar with scope of duties and description of clerical work duties, bid and bump system, transfer of crafts
- Become familiar with project materials and activities
- Set personal goals and objectives

Other Important Objectives:

- Become familiar with Metro-North orientation folder (e.g. health benefits)
- Write journal entry of personal goals

Unit 2: Reading - Locating Information in a Document

Priority Objectives:

- Use a table of contents to locate information in documents and contracts
- Identify new workplace vocabulary in contracts and documents.
- Use a dictionary to locate word meanings

Other Important Objectives:

- o Keep personal list of new workplace vocabulary and definitions
- o Write journal entry about skills learned

Unit 3: Writing - Using Correct Sentence Form

Priority Objectives:

- o Identify basic sentence form in workplace materials
- o Identify sentence fragments and run-on sentences
- o Write simple memo using correct form and spelling
- o Practice language skills in test format

Other Important Objectives:

- o Improve writing through effective use of descriptive words
- o Improve writing by combining simple sentences
- o Practice writing memo using word processing skills

Unit 4: Math - Adding and Subtracting Whole Numbers and Decimals

Priority Objectives:

- o Perform addition and subtraction operations involving whole numbers and decimals
- o Apply addition and subtraction operations to workplace context and forms (e.g. cash transactions, ticket sales)
- o Check workplace forms for numerical accuracy
- o Use a calculator to add and subtract numbers

Other Important Objectives:

- o Become familiar with the language of mathematics indicating addition and subtraction in the workplace (debit, credit, tally, etc.) and add to new vocabulary
- o Write numbers as figures on forms, in sentences, as large numbers, and addresses
- o Practice addition and subtraction operations in a test format
- o Practice coding in test format
- o Practice word processing skills relating to writing numbers as figures and words

Unit 5: Communication - Effective Communication Skills in Speaking and Writing

Priority Objectives:

- o Communicate messages in an office environment, in oral and written format
- o Discuss polite, effective communication techniques for customer interactions
- o Record time, date, address correctly on telephone message form and memos
- o Learn the correct forms of abbreviations for titles, names, companies and agencies, symbols, months and days

Other Important Objectives:

- o Use the correct forms of abbreviations for titles, names, companies and agencies, symbols, months and days.
- o Become familiar with rules for alphabetical filing by name, title, organization, etc.
- o Become familiar with polite, effective communication techniques for customer interactions.
- o Practice following written directions and coding in test format
- o Practice word processing skills

Unit 6: Writing - Using Correct Subject-Verb Agreement and Pronouns

Priority Objectives:

- Understand the rules for subject-verb agreement in written and oral communication.
- Understand shifts in verb tenses and use of irregular verb forms in written and oral communication
- Use correct forms of pronouns and references in written and oral communication
- Identify and practice use of correct sentence structure in written format

Other Important Objectives:

- Add to vocabulary through reading workplace materials
- Practice sentence structure skills in a test format
- Practice writing correct sentences using word processing skills

Unit 7: Math - Multiplying Whole Numbers and Decimals

Priority Objectives:

- Perform multiplication operations of whole numbers and decimals
- Use shortcut methods in computations when multiplying by 10, 100, 1000
- Understand rounding numbers
- Apply multiplication operations to workplace context: calculating regular pay, overtime, payroll deductions, costs
- Use a calculator for multiplication operations

Other Important Objectives:

- o Become familiar with the language of multiplication operations in the workplace and add to new vocabulary learned
- o Practice multiplication skills in test format
- o Write numbers as figures on workplace forms

Unit 8: Writing - Style, Spelling and Word Usage

Priority Objectives:

- o Use adjectives and adverbs correctly in singular and plural forms, and in comparisons
- o Use correct writing style in informal letter
- o Recognize and correctly use commonly confused words in written and oral communication
- o Use correct grammar in oral communication

Other Important Objectives:

- o Practice using correct grammar in oral communication
- o Identify new technical and general workplace vocabulary through reading workplace materials
- o Practice language skills in test format
- o Practice writing using word processing skills

Unit 9: Math - Dividing Whole Numbers and Decimals

Priority Objectives:

- o Perform division operations of whole numbers and decimals
- o Apply division operations to workplace context: finding yearly and weekly salary, whole and partial amounts
- o Use division to find averages in workplace context

Other Important Objectives:

- o Use a calculator to check accuracy of computations
- o Perform division operations to find partial amounts

Unit 10: Writing - Punctuation, Capitalization and Spelling

Priority Objectives:

- o Understand the rules for the correct use of punctuation, capitalization and spelling in workplace materials
- o Use punctuation marks to clarify sentence meaning (e.g., commas, periods, question marks, dashes, colons, semicolons, apostrophes)
- o Use capital letters in sentences, titles, proper names, places, in writing letters and memos
- o Identify use of correct punctuation, capitalization and spelling in written format

Other Important Objectives:

- o Understand use of italics and underlining
- o Use quotation marks in direct quotations, titles, etc.
- o Practice language skills in test format
- o Practice language skills using word processing

Unit 11 Math - Finding Percents and Fractional Parts

Priority Objectives:

- o Understand and calculate percents and fractional parts
- o Apply finding percents and fractional parts to clerical activities: health insurance, discounts, payroll, interest rates, loans, etc.
- o Use a calculator to find percents

Other Important Objectives:

- o Understand tax forms, financing and finance charges, loans, discounts, etc. in real life situations
- o Calculate percents in test format

Unit 12: Reading - Filing and Coding Information

Priority Objectives:

- o Understand clerical filing systems
- o Build job-related and clerical vocabulary
- o Understand and use codes on documents and accounts

Other Important Objectives:

- o Practice coding skills in test format
- o Practice listing names, subjects, and accounts in alphabetical order using word processing skills

Unit 13: Reading - Using Questioning and Context to Understand Workplace Documents

Priority Objectives:

- o Use H 5 W questioning strategy to understand policies and procedures relating to Metro-North Station Manual and operating guidelines
- o Use context clues to understand technical and job-related terms, common abbreviations, codes, etc. in workplace documents such as station memos and policy guidelines

Other Important Objectives:

- o Read and interpret timetables and train schedules for customer information
- o Practice word processing skills by paraphrasing memo guidelines and policy statements

Unit 14: Communication - Applying Effective Communication and Interpersonal Skills in the Workplace

Priority Objectives:

- o Become familiar with courteous and effective communication techniques for customer interactions
- o Use proper language skills to communicate clearly
- o Apply appropriate workplace behavior to solving "typical" workplace problems

Other Important Objectives:

- o Prepare for an interview
- o Prepare a resume

Unit 15: Math - Measurement of Weight, Linear Units and Time

Priority Objectives:

- o Learn standard measurements of weight, length, and time
- o Perform arithmetic calculations using weight, length, and time
- o Read and interpret a train schedule

Other Important Objectives:

- o Learn metric system and conversions of weight and length
- o Learn military time (twenty-four hour clock)

Unit 16: Test Taking Skills - Applying Reading, Writing and Math Skills to Measures of Performance

Priority Objectives:

- o Apply test-taking strategies for multiple-choice tests
- o Take TCU (Clerical Test) Battery: Language Skills, Following Written Directions, Computation, and Coding
- o Discuss career options with a Metro-North personnel representative

METRO-NORTH CLERICAL-COMMUNICATION SKILLS
CURRICULUM GUIDE

UNIT 8: WRITING - STYLE, SPELLING AND WORD USAGE

Note to the Teacher

To continue developing written communication skills presented earlier in Units 3 and 6, this unit reviews the use of adjectives and adverbs, and emphasizes informal writing using correct style, spelling, and words effectively. The employees read policy regulations in the Station Manual, for example, and note the use of specific words and their meanings. The unit also compares and contrasts commonly confused words which often appear on the Language section of the TCU Clerical Test. A simulated Language Test sheet is provided as additional test practice.

Priority Objectives

- Use adjectives and adverbs correctly in singular and plural forms, and in comparisons
- Use correct writing style in informal letter
- Recognize and correctly use commonly confused words in written and oral communication
- Use correct grammar in oral communication

Other Important Objectives

- o Practice using correct grammar in oral communication
- o Identify new technical and general workplace vocabulary through reading workplace materials
- o Practice language skills in test format
- o Practice writing using wordprocessing skills

Materials

- o Bazerman & Wiener, Writing Skills Handbook
- o Metro-North Station Manual, Company Policy section (pp 47-48)
- o Student assignment: Language Test Practice

Suggested Teacher-Directed Activities

1. Point out that effective written and spoken communication involves understanding and using specific words correctly. For example, in the Metro-North Station Manual, company policy "spells out" certain rules and regulations that apply to certain conditions. Explain that if they were ticket sellers and a customer called to find out if animals are allowed on trains, they would have to read and understand the policy pertaining to "Pets". Ask learners to locate Company policy relating to "Pets" in the Station manual (p.47)

   Q. What kind of animals are permitted on the train?

   Ans. **Small domestic** animals.....

Q. How must they be carried?

Ans. They must be carried in kennels or similar containers, or are securely controlled or leashed.

2. Explain that these descriptive words (**small, domestic**) describe or tell what kind of animals are allowed on the train. These descriptive words are known as **adjectives**. They give more information about **nouns** (animals).

3. Often words are used to give more information about how something is or must be done, i.e. **verbs**.(controlled, leashed). For example, the animal must be **securely** controlled. Words that tell more about verbs are known as **adverbs**. **Securely** tells how the animal must be controlled.

4. Ask learners to find the Company Policy that deals with Sexual Harassment (p. 48). Ask them to read and answer the following questions to elicit recognition of adjectives.

Q. Are only women employees protected by this policy?

A. No, both **male** and **female** employees are protected.

Q. What kind of harassment or intimidation is prohibited?

A. Either **physical** or **verbal** harassment.

Q. What does sexual harassment consist of?

A. Sexual harassment consists of **unwelcome sexual** advances.

5. Teach the effective use of adjectives and adverbs (singular and plural adjectives, adjectives made from verbs, comparisons using adjectives and adverbs) in oral communication. Refer learners to pp 35-38 in Bazerman & Wiener, Writing Skills Handbook. Encourage learners to practice these forms in conversation with each other.

Provide additional examples and explanations as needed.

6. Select elements of effective style and usage in writing such as the use of specific and general words, avoiding repetition and wordiness, shades of meaning, and avoiding prejudiced language, on pages 40-45. Encourage learners to practice these forms in conversation with a partner. Provide additional examples and explanations as needed.

7. Teach commonly confused words (e.g., accept-except, affect- effect, etc.) Refer learners to pages 46-54. Point out that these words commonly appear on the Language test of the Clerical Battery. Ask learners to work in pairs to make up their own sentence examples. For example,

   a) Jim will (accept, except) the job offer. (accept)

      All of us went to work (accept, except) Joan, who was sick.

   b) He was (already, all ready) to start work at eight o'clock. (all ready)

      It was (already, all ready) 9 o'clock and no one was present. (already)

   c) The work was divided equally (between, among) the four workers. (among)

      The train runs express (among, between) New York and Harmon. (between)

Suggested Self-Directed Activities

1. Ask learners to write a letter to their partner or a friend telling them about their job experience. Tell them to write about the job they have now and compare and contrast their present job to their former job. Emphasize that the letter should include descriptive words that tell about their work.

2. Ask learners to write sentences that describe the following:

    a) a piece of fruit (an orange, an apple, a mango, a banana)

    b) an autumn day, a winter day

3. For practice, ask learners to write sentences that compare two or more things:

    a) Work in winter compared to work in summer

    b) The best day they had this week

3. As learners read the Station manual or other Metro-North materials, ask them to note new vocabulary and add to their vocabulary cards. Ask them to use their dictionaries to look up word meanings.

4. Ask learners to work on the Student Handout: Language Test Practice as a five minute test practice. Ask them to work with a partner to correct their tests. Refer them to pp 46-54 in Bazerman & Wiener's Writing Skills Handbook to check their answers.

Unit 8: Language Test Practice

STUDENT HANDOUT

Underline the correct word in each sentence. Check a dictionary to verify your choice if you are not sure.

1. Grand Central Station is the (principal, principle) station at Metro-North.
2. Daily commuters know what track (their, they're) train leaves from.
3. The conductor asked the woman is she would like to (set, sit) in the next car.
4. The customer complained about the (loss, lose) of his ticket.
5. Walter likes his new job better (then, than) his old one.
6. A commuter asked, "Does this train go (to, too) Scarsdale"?
7. The conductor asked, "(Whose, Who's) umbrella is this"?
8. The union members will vote when they are all (there, they're).
9. The inventory clerk (accepted, excepted) the delivery of supplies.
10. Everyone attended the orientation (accept, except) Ken.
11. How do you think the new work schedule will (affect,effect) you?
12. The new worker thanked her supervisor for her (advice, advise).
13. (Its, It's) easy to use a computer once you know how.

14. The report (inferred, implied) that he needed to improve his performance.

15. The Harmon station (lies, lays) north of New York City.

16. The letter was signed ("respectively, respectfully") yours, Mr. Nelson.

17. (Everyone, Every one) was sent a memo.

18. One of the guiding (principals, principles) of Metro-North is good customer service.

19. Everyone in the office has good (moral, morale).

20. First learn the rules; (than, then) try to apply them.

SECTION 8.00

COMPANY POLICY

Unit 8

8.01 NO SMOKING POLICY

No smoking is allowed onboard train equipment. This applies equally to all employees, whether on or off duty, regardless of craft or status.

In New York State smoking is prohibited in waiting rooms and enclosed shelters. In New York State Ticket Offices where more than one employee is on duty, smoking is permitted only when agreed to by all employees.

8.02 PETS

Small domestic animals are permitted on Metro-North trains provided they are carried in kennels or similar container, or are securely controlled on leashes throughout the journey and are not offensive to other customers. Animals on leashes must never occupy seats, and kennels or containers must not occupy seats when overcrowded conditions occur. Dogs accompanying the visually or hearing impaired are permitted on trains at all times without restriction, provided they are properly leashed and harnessed.

8.03 BICYCLES

Bicycles are permitted only when the customer is in possession of a valid Metro-North bicycle permit. Applications for this permit can be obtained from the GCT Stationmaster's Office, GCT Ticket Office, or outlying ticket offices. Permits are issued by GCT Ticket Office during the hours 6:30 am to 11:30 pm, seven days a week. They can also be issued by mail through the Station Services Department 3rd Floor, 347 Madison Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10017.

The cost of the permit is five ($5.00) dollars. The permit will not be replaced if lost, stolen, or destroyed.

Once a permit is issued, there is no charge for transporting the bicycle. Proper fare is required for the customer accompanying the bicycle.

8.04 PRESS RELATIONS POLICY

Ticket agents and sellers must refrain from conversations with members of the press (T.V. radio, etc.) regarding railroad emergencies and media attracted events.

You should refer press personnel to Metro-North's Commuter Relations Department, extension 3410. Then report inquiries to your immediate supervisor.

This policy will safeguard your well-intentioned comments and conversations from being misconstrued or taken out of context

SECTION 8.00

COMPANY POLICY

Unit 8

8.05 EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

Metro-North is committed to a policy of non-discrimination and equal opportunity in its dealings with all persons. All employees must support this policy at all times while on duty. They must not engage in any comments, gestures or physical actions which may be construed to reflect upon the sex, race, color, creed or national origin of any customer or fellow employees.

8.06 SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY

It is the policy of Metro-North to protect employees, both male and female, from any form of sexual harassment or intimidation, either physical or verbal by any other employee. Sexual harassment consists of unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of sexual nature. Violators of such acts will be subject to disciplinary action including termination of employment.

8.07 EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

The Metro-North Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is here to help you deal with personal problems you may be experiencing. Employee Assistance Program Counselors are professionals trained to help you identify the problem and assist in locating the resource or resources that can provide you with appropriate service or care.

EAP counselors can offer you assistance for a wide range of personal difficulties such as substance abuse, gambling, financial, emotional, marriage and family problems and job stress. The company encourages employees to make use of this service. All information that you share with your EAP counselor is kept strictly confidential. If you would like furhter information or an appointment to see a EAP counselor please call (212) 340-2792, Monday to Friday between the hours of 8:30am and 5:30pm.

APPENDIX C

Examples of Swingline Curriculum

SPEAKING SWINGLISH

SWINGLINE—LOCAL 808

ESL CURRICULUM

1992-1993

BY

ELIZABETH FERRY
CYRUS VEESER

CONSORTIUM FOR WORKER EDUCATION

CWE

275 Seventh Avenue
New York, NY 10011

TABLE OF CONTENTS

UNIT IV: *MODERN TIMES*

OBJECTIVES

- Formulate sentences using different tenses of verbs.
- Use verbs to describe actions.

TEACHER NOTES

Modern Times is incredibly effective in ESL classes of all levels. Everyone can understand and enjoy it, and it never ceases to be funny, no matter how many times you watch it. In addition, you can use the movie to address a lot of issues about industrialization, poverty, union, safety, and so on.

The exercises in this unit merely provide examples of what we did with the movie. You may want to choose other scenes or issues to focus on.

SUGGESTED TEACHING/LEARNING ACTIVITIES

Swingline *Modern Times*

After viewing the movie, discuss it with the class, using the questions on the next page as a guide.

SWINGLINE *MODERN TIMES*

1. At the beginning of the movie, where does Charlie Chaplin work?

_____

2. What does the factory look like outside? Inside?

_____

_____

3. What does Charlie do all day?

_____

4. Is he a good worker?

_____

5. How does Charlie get along with his coworkers?

_____

6. Would you like to work with Charlie Chaplin?

_____

The Lunch Machine
(This exercise is good to practice the present continuous.)

After viewing the entire movie once, replay the lunch machine sequence slowly. Stop the videotape often and point to objects in each stopped frame. Ask for the name of the object (for example, *soup, corn, mouth, nuts and bolts, overalls, mustache*). Write these words on the board.

When you have gone through the scene once, return to the beginning and go through it again. This time, pause often and ask "What is Charlie doing?" or "What is happening?" Supply any vocabulary necessary to describe the action, focusing on the verbs. Write the students' responses on the board. Work through the scene like this and at the end you will have a paragraph or so of description that has been almost entirely produced by the students—a Language Experience Story (see sample story). You can then use this paragraph to make a grammar exercise or a strip story. If you desire, divide the class into groups and them work together to answer questions about this scene .

Now do the same thing with the second lunch sequence (when the mechanic gets stuck in the machinery). You may want to focus on vocabulary for this sequence and skip the Language Experience Story, depending on students' interest. Then divide the class into groups and have them work on the questions together. You can also assign the questions for homework and go over them in the next class session. Once the groups have finished working on the questions, have a representative from each group read the answers out loud or write them on the board. Focus on the verbs—have students identify the verbs, change the sentences, put verbs in different tenses, and so on.

Another thing you can do to reinforce verbs is to go over the scene again very after the exercises are done. At each action, stop the videotape and ask "What is he doing?" Have students repeat the verbs such as *drinking* and *spilling*. Go over the whole scene and then return to the beginning. At each action, call ou the verb. Get the students to say the verbs with you. Play the scene through until everyone is calling out the actions as they happen. Then try the same thing with the videotape on fast forward.

SAMPLE LANGUAGE EXPERIENCE STORY

The Lunch Machine from *Modern Times*

This story was created by one class; your class will create a different story.

The boss makes a demonstration with the lunch machine. The machine feeds lunch to Charlie. First Charlie is drinking the soup. The machine cleans his mouth. Charlie is surprised. Then Charlie is eating the corn. The machine is going too fast. Charlie is scared and angry. The man says, " We'll start with the soup again."

The machine spills the soup on Charlie's shirt. Then the machine throws the soup in Charlie's face. Charlie is wet. The man puts the nuts on the bread plate. The machine pushes the nuts in Charlie's mouth. The machine pushes the cake in Charlie's face. The machine hits him in the face. The boss says, "It's no good. It isn't practical."

The Lunch Machine from *Modern Times*

Put the verbs (in parentheses) in the past tense.

The boss (make) _____a demonstration with the lunch machine. The machine (feed) _____ lunch to Charlie. First Charlie (drink) _____ the soup. The machine (clean)_____ his mouth. Charlie (be)_____ surprised. Then Charlie (eat) _____ the corn. The machine (go)_____ too fast. Charlie (be)_____ scared and angry. The man (say) _____, "We'll start with the soup again." The machine (spill)_____the soup on Charlie's shirt. Then the machine (throw) _____ the soup in Charlie's face. Charlie (be) _____ wet. The man (put) _____the nuts on the bread plate. The machine (push) _____ the nuts in Charlie's mouth. The machine (push) _____the cake in Charlie's face. The machine (hit) _____ him in the face. The boss (say)_____, "It's no good. It isn't practical."

QUESTIONS: *MODERN TIMES* #1

1. Write down words you see in the movie.

2. What is the machine doing?

3. What is Charlie doing?

4. How does Charlie feel?

5. Is the machine a good idea?

QUESTIONS: *MODERN TIMES #2*

1. Write down words you see in the movie.

2. What is the mechanic doing?

3. What is Charlie doing?

4. How does the mechanic feel?

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ACTIVITIES

LANGUAGE

SWINGLINE CURRICULUM

APPENDIX D

Examples of Mademoiselle Curriculum

ILGWU / MADEMOISELLE

ESL CURRICULUM

Brooklyn, New York

By
Elizabeth Ferry

CONSORTIUM FOR WORKER EDUCATION

275 Seventh Avenue
New York, NY 10011

TABLE OF CONTENTS

UNIT C: WORK AND UNION

Focus: To allow students to concentrate more closely on issues relating to work, as well as on work vocabulary.

By this time, your class should be more relaxed and willing to approach more complicated issues. Even with very little English, students can still engage in some discussion, especially if the teacher knows their native language. You may encounter some reluctance on the part of students to discuss work for several reasons. Some may feel that for you to teach work vocabulary or issues implies that they do not know their job. Others may feel uncomfortable voicing their problems about work while at the site. Still others may simply be sick of work and would rather talk about almost anything else. You will need to let your students' reactions guide you. If you feel nothing is getting through, you might have to back off at least for a time. If the students react well and get into the material, this unit should last at least a month.

Goals:

- Students will draw a personal map of the workplace and be able to discuss where they speak with other people and in what language.
- Students will learn direction words for use in the workplace maps (*next to, to the left of, in front of, behind*, etc.).
- Students will be able to talk about how to make a sweater in the shop.
- Students will learn work-related verbs: *knit, cut, sew.*
- Students will practice sequencing the steps of making a sweater.
- Students will learn modular vocabulary and will discuss the pros and cons of the modules.
- Students will prepare questions for the union rep about modules and other issues.
- Student will practice verbs in the present in the context of the question for the union rep.

- Students will review the contract summary and answer questions about it.

- Students will discuss what they want from a new contract.

Resources: *Unemployment: A New Order*, Consortium for Worker Education, 1992.

ESL for Action: Problem Posing at Work, Elsa Roberts Auerbach and Nina Wallerstein, Addison-Wesley, 1987.

ILGWU Union Basics ESL Lesson Book, ILGWU Worker-Family Education Program.

ILGWU Piecework Curriculum, ILGWU Worker-Family Education Program.

Workbook for Workplays: You and Your Rights on the Job, Lenore Balliro, Labor Education Center, Southeastern Mass. University, 1988.

For further information on the themes of work and union, you can speak with Marcelo Coronel, the business agent for Mademoiselle, at Local 155 (212–627–4747), or Danyun Feng of the ILGWU International Organizing Department (212–265–7000).

Suggested Teaching/Learning Activities:

Lesson 1. Workplace Map

You might want to prepare students for this exercise by having them draw a map of their apartment or of the classroom. They can present their drawing of their rooms and learn related vocabulary. Each person can work on his or her own map or the class can work in pairs or small groups. Have workers draw a map of their workplace. They can begin by drawing themselves and expand outward to include the people and things around them. When they are finished drawing, students can label what they have drawn. You can model both labeling and drawing up on the board. Ask students questions to get more detail from the maps:

"Where is the worker in the map?"
"Where is the supervisor?"
"Where are the coworkers?:
"Who sits to your left?"
"Who sits to your right?"
"Do you speak to these people?"
"What language do you speak to them in?"

You can also have students draw lines on the map indicating lines of communication, that is, a line between two people that says *Spanish* above it will show that these two people speak Spanish to each other.

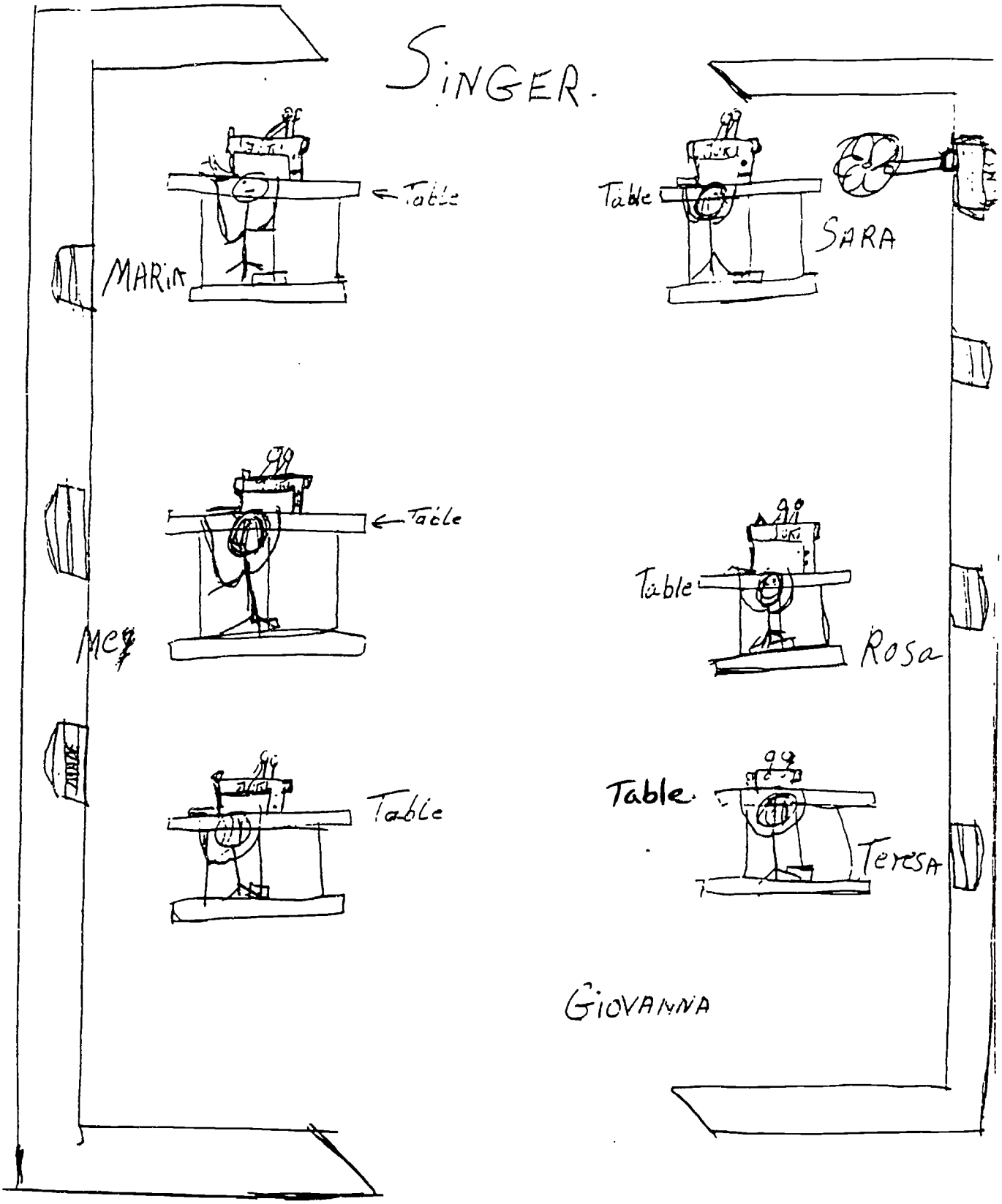
Other questions focus on the language skills needed on the job:

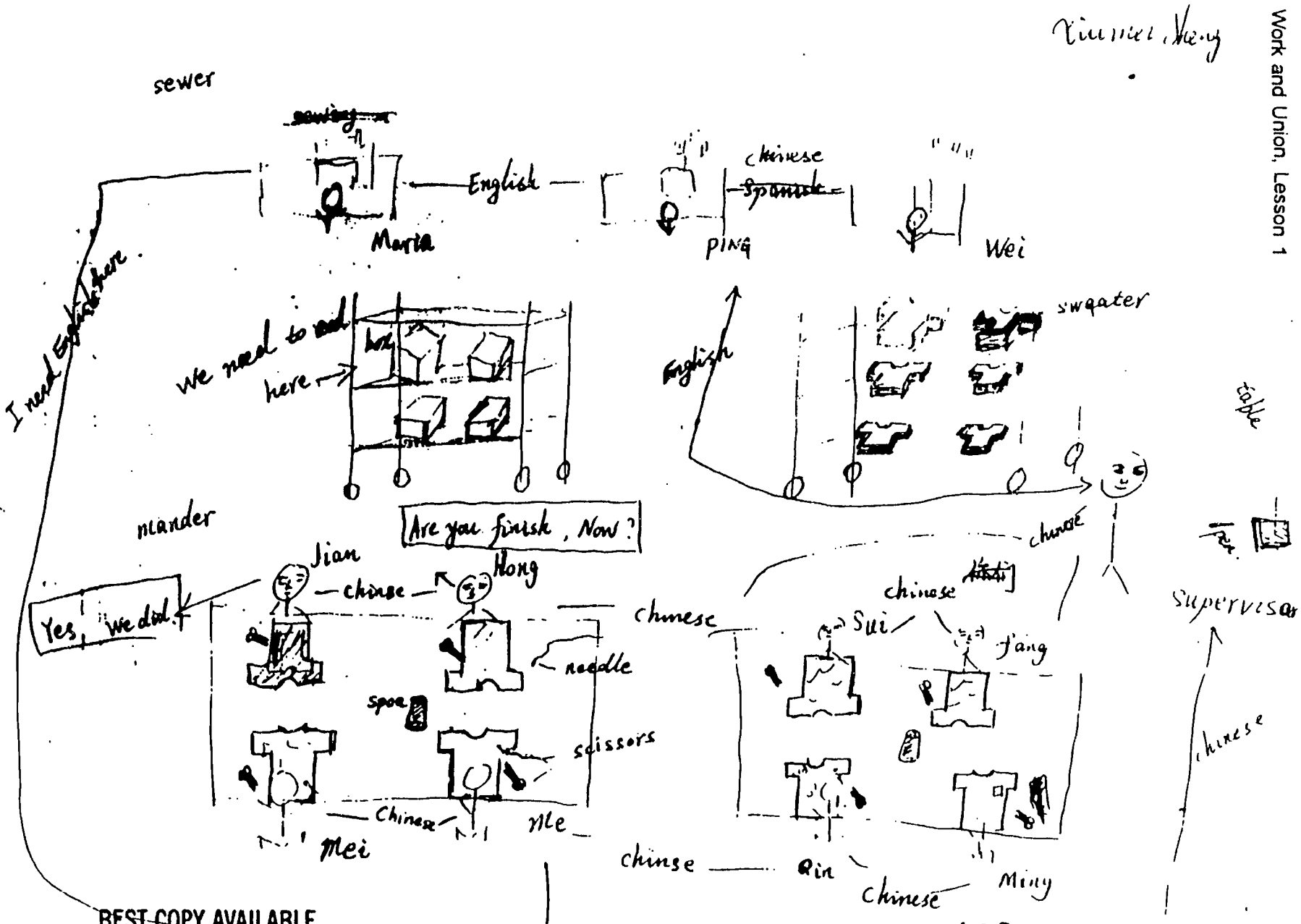
"Where in this map do you have to read?"
"Where do you have to speak English?"
"Where do you have to write?"

Once the maps are finished, you can have each student present his or her own map or have students swap maps and present someone else's. Students can then ask questions of the people presenting the maps. The maps can also serve as the basis for dialogues or role plays—students can sit in the positions indicated on the maps and you can brainstorm problems that might occur and how they would be solved. The role plays can be transcribed and used as readings later on.

At Mademoiselle, the maps can be a useful record as workers are moved around. Furthermore, they allow students with literacy problems to work with pen and paper without having to write too much.

BATHROOM
SEÑORA JUANITA
SUPERVISOR
SPOOL OF THREAD
MACHINE
CHAIR
WORK





Lesson 2. Making a Sweater

This exercise can follow on the heels of the workplace map. It allows people to work together to learn shop-related vocabulary. First, write a list of numbers on the board with spaces for more writing:

1.
2.
3.

Explain that you want to know how the workers make sweaters. What is the first thing that happens. Someone will say something similar to "Knit the cloth." Write that down and say, "Now what happens?" Continue for several more steps, and then ask an advanced student to take over for you. Encourage controversy over the sequence of steps (in English). Once all the steps have been written down, you can identify the verb or do some other grammar work if you wish. This process will probably take half an hour or so. Copy the steps down for the next class.

For the next class, make four copies of the steps cut into strips and mixed up. Divide the class into groups, and have each group try to put the steps in order. This should take about 20 minutes. Afterwards have each group present their sequence, taking turns within the group reading aloud. There will probably be some disagreement about the order, which is good because it encourages discussion. Once you have done all this, ask the class what words they have learned. Have them copy them down and make new sentences out of them. The entire exercise could take 2 hours.

Lesson 3. Modules

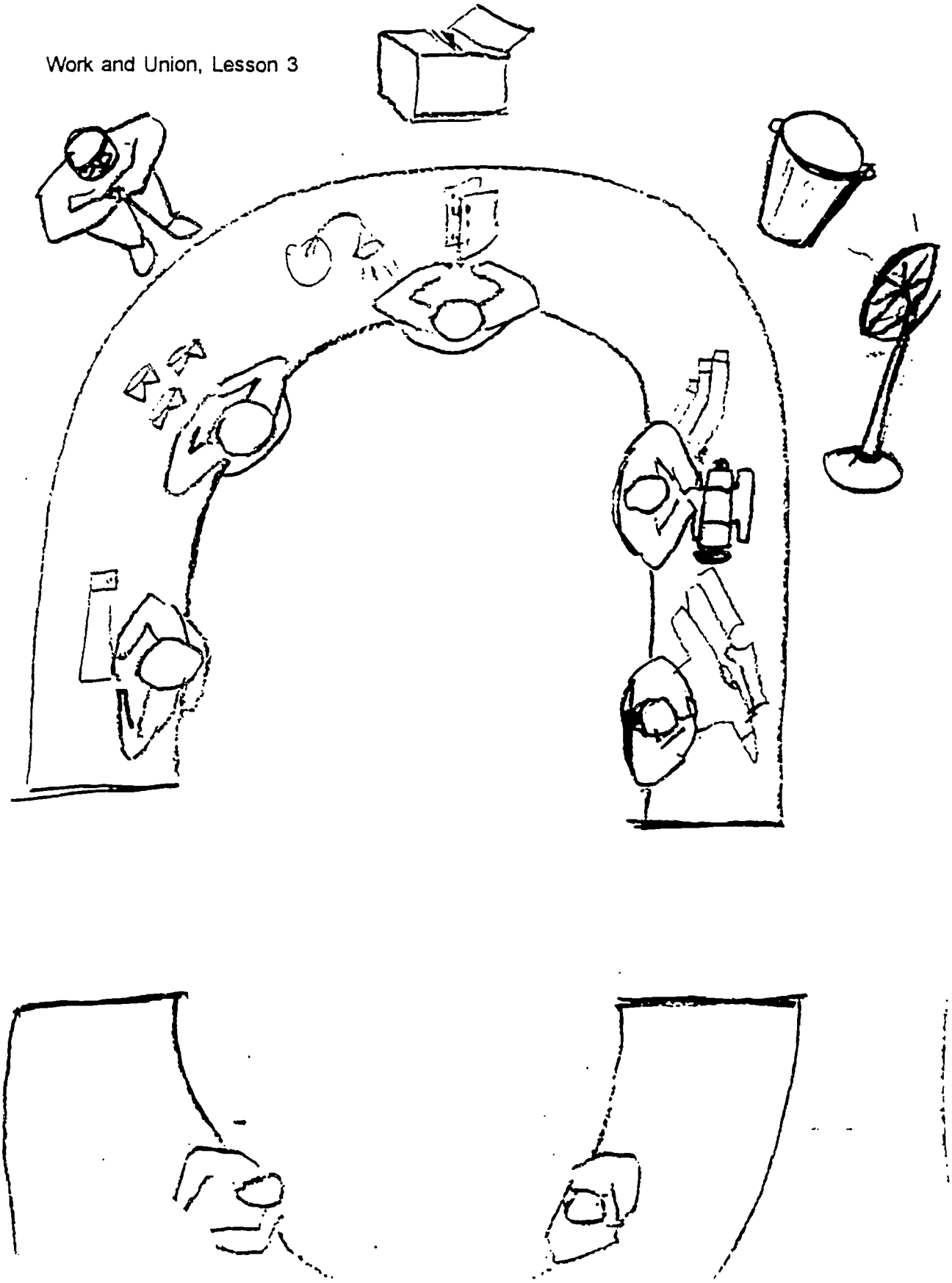
This exercise helps prepare the class for the visit from the union. In this situation it is especially helpful to speak their native language, as people will be able to express themselves much more thoroughly (obviously). Present the discussion in terms of the union visit, and ask your students to talk about the modules. You may to push them a little with questions such as "What is better, modular or before?" or "Do you make more money now?" Another way to approach the issue is to pass around a picture of a module (see example) or use one of the workplace maps as an example. You could make copies for the whole class. Point out that not everybody speaks the same language in the modules. Ask if there are problems because of this. Copy what they say on the board, and translate into English if need be. Ask them if they have questions or problems for the union. Copy these on the board, and take notes for the next class. The process of generating questions should take about 20 minutes.

Once you have generated a list of possible situations or problems that come up in the modules, you can use these as bases for a role play. Seat your students

in a U-shape to represent a module. You can further create the scene by giving people sweaters to "work on" as you present the situation. A playful atmosphere will help students feel less self-conscious. Remind them of the list of module problems that they came up with before. Perhaps spend a few minutes going over the vocabulary and sentences in the text. Then assign a situation to two or three students at a time. For example, one problem might be "If we find a mistake, we don't know who made it." Assign parts to two or three students, and have them act out a short role play. Copy down what people say, and go over the vocabulary. For each problem or situation, focus on the possible solutions. Ask the class, "What do you do?" Write their answers on the board. If they do not say anything, make suggestions: "Ask an operator who made the mistake." "Talk to your union rep." The role play exercise will vary in time depending on how long your list of problems is, but you probably should not spend much more than 45 minutes on it, so as not to overwhelm the students.

These role plays would be good to videotape, if you can get a camera. Then students can watch it and assess their own speaking skills. Once you have worked through possible solutions, you can discuss the weekly modular meetings with them. Every week some members of the modules meet with management to discuss problems; ask the class if they know this. Show them the "Problems in the Modules" form, and ask them if they have seen it before. Have them work in pairs to fill out the forms.

At this point you may want to look at the questions you have generated. You can look at the verbs and practice putting them in different persons, make a dictation from the sentences, or some other grammar exercise. For the next class, you can make a cloze exercise from the sentences. In this way, the students are creating their own classroom materials very directly.



MADEMOISELLE WORKER QUESTIONS AND OPINIONS

1. Our factory laid off some workers last week. We hope the union will find out why they were laid off.

2 The price of some jobs, like "close shoulder" is so low that the efficiency rate is always lower than other jobs. We hope the company will change the price and give all workers in the module the opportunity to make good money.

3. We don't want to change machines so often. We have to adjust to the new place, to the machine, to the other workers, and the sewing process, and it takes time. So when we change machines, we lose money.

4. All sewing operators have to repair the mistakes they make, so they will make quality sweaters.

5. We want a bonus system for repair work, to make good quality sweaters.

6. We want the union label on the sweaters.

Problems in the Modules: Your Opinion

Do you have problems or questions about the modules? Write them below.

If you don't want to put your name on this sheet, you don't need to. The problems will be raised at the next modular committee meeting. The meeting take place in the afternoons on Mondays and Wednesdays. If you want to participate, please speak to Marcelo or Danyun.

I have a problem with:

Type of Problem	Description of Problem
Money, rate of pay	
Machines	
Problem of Speed: Too fast, too slow.	
Organization of the module	
Other Problems	

QUESTIONS FOR UNION REPRESENTATIVE

1. Sometimes when an operator is not sewing, she only makes $3.00 an hour.

2. The checks are short.

3. The contract has no sick days.

4. When we work in modules, we make less money.

5. When we change machines, we lose money.

6. The system is for timework, not for piecework.

7. We want no smoking in the bathrooms.

8. Can we have more meetings with the union?

9. The most difficult jobs are the worst paid.

QUESTIONS FOR UNION REPRESENTATIVE

is	has	make	are	makes	change
is	work	have	want	are	lose

Put the verbs in the box in the spaces.

1. Sometimes when an operator _____ not sewing, she only _____ $3.00 an hour.
2. The checks _____ short.
3. The contract _____ no sick days.
4. When we _____in modules, we _____ less money.
5. When we _____ machines, we _____ money.
6. The system _____ for timework, not for piecework.
7. We _____ no smoking in the bathrooms.
8. Can we _____ more meetings with the union?
9. The most difficult jobs _____the worst paid.

APPENDIX E

Examples of the Workplace Handbook

WORKPLACE HANDBOOK

By
Raymond Gunn
Elizabeth Ferry
Cyrus Veeser

Illustrations
Andy Pollack

CONSORTIUM FOR WORKER EDUCATION

CWE

275 Seventh Avenue
New York, NY 10011

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

This handbook is meant for a teacher who is beginning an on-site class for the Consortium for Worker Education (CWE). We hope that you will use the handbook in any way that is helpful to you. You might want to read it straight through or, instead, refer to particular sections. Either way, we believe this handbook will help you navigate the sometimes stormy seas you are embarking upon.

Since 1992 the CWE, which has delivered education and training to New York City union members for the past 8 years, has begun to work with its member unions to give classes directly at work sites. These workplace classes carry with them unique demands and rewards for teachers and students. Beyond giving classes, the workplace teacher can act at times as an ethnographer, "ambassador," or even labor consultant.

This handbook is meant to describe both the scope and limits of the teacher's role and to give a sense of the complexities and problems you might encounter in an on-site class. The handbook was written by three CWE teachers and curriculum developers who have worked in a range of on-site classes in New York City. We hope that our experiences can help you anticipate problems and prepare for your role as a teacher in an on-site class.

THE ROLE OF THE TEACHER

Your responsibilities will not be limited to teaching, especially when an on-site class is starting up. Initially, you will need to understand the structure and culture of the workplace, for both have an enormous impact on who will attend the class, what the purpose of the class will be, when the class will be offered, and how you, the teacher, will proceed. You may also be a fact-finder and ambassador for the CWE, reporting back about the union, workers, management, and factory. Even after a class is underway, you may find yourself doing things that are not strictly teaching. That comes with the workplace turf.

At one factory, for example, teachers noticed, and workers complained about, health and safety violations. Since the issue was sensitive for both management and the union, the teachers reported what they had seen and heard to CWE, which brought the issue up with the local. Soon a new "safety incentive program" was announced at the shop—not a very good program, but at least it was a response. The incident did ruffle the local's feathers, however, and teachers felt the need to win back the trust of the local's officers.

In other words, while the role of a CWE teacher may not be clearly defined, it *is* limited. Some issues—handling an impasse with management or the union, dealing with serious scheduling or attrition problems, or, after assessing students, having to change the focus of what you were asked to teach because the stated needs are not the students' real needs—should not be on your shoulders. Do not hesitate to refer big problems back to CWE. We have tried to describe situations that you might encounter in your site as well. At the same time, we realize that as the CWE conducts more and more classes and more teachers gather experience in this field, they will add greatly to our observations.

EVALUATION

Since your responsibilities at times go beyond teaching, you may wonder how CWE will evaluate your work. While you are teaching with CWE, you may be observed and evaluated one or more times. At some point, CWE will usually send someone to observe your class and talk to your students. Evaluators from the New York State Education Department and from the union's education department (if it has one) may also visit your class, depending on the source of funds for your particular class.

CWE'S HISTORY IN THE FIELD

CWE workplace education is relatively new, but teachers have already taught a variety of classes at a variety of sites. As of the summer of 1993, CWE workplace courses have included ESL classes at a light manufacturing plant in Queens, a garment shop in Brooklyn, and an airline food services company at LaGuardia and JFK airports, among others. In addition, CWE has provided 6-week communication classes as part of the court-ordered desegregation of apprenticeship programs for two construction unions. Another 6-week class in job-seeking skills was offered to workers laid off by a food processing plant in Queens. In addition, a curriculum for a leadership training class is currently being developed based on an 80-hour ethnographic study a teacher made at a manufacturing plant in the South Bronx.

When unions identify an educational need for their membership, they usually contact either the executive director or the education director of CWE. CWE directors, union heads, chief shop stewards, and management representatives then meet to outline the role CWE might play in developing classes. In some cases, the unions want to provide job training and upgrading for their members. In such cases, the unions themselves choose the instructor and the Consortium provides financial backing for the classes. In other cases, the Consortium provides the unions with teachers for such classes as ESL and GED. In the past, many of these classes

were not offered at the work site. Today, however, there is a growing trend at the Consortium to provide instruction to union members in the context of their workplace. In an effort to develop more relevant curricula, some Consortium teachers are working alongside students in factories, conducting ethnographic research, and participating in labor-management workshops.

In one case, it was management and not the union that contacted CWE to discuss classes that the workers could take in order to upgrade their skills. In other cases, management hardly factors into the equation at all. Two examples are a pair of unions that were mandated by the court to conform to affirmative action policies. It was decided that one way to do this was to restructure the apprenticeship program by having a CWE teacher work with apprentices to develop the communication skills needed to address issues of racism and sexism on the job.

TEAM REORGANIZATION

Often, CWE is called in by a union as part of or in response to a reorganization program in a company or factory. Fully half the CWE workplace classes that started last year were in sites undergoing some kind of team reorganization. So it is quite likely that you will encounter some kind of "team program." Reorganization strongly affects the attitude of union and management towards the classes.

As you may know, many American companies are reorganizing both the production process and labor-management relations within the site. Instead of working on a traditional assembly line, workers work in "teams" on a single line or style. The so-called "team concept" is meant to increase worker responsibility for the product and decrease alienation. It is accompanied by rhetoric of "employee involvement," "participation," "Together Everyone Achieves More," and so on. Of course, it is also supposed to improve quality and increase production.

Usually, both the union and management tend to see the classes as part and parcel of the reorganization effort. Furthermore, those unions with developed education departments and knowledge of CWE pedagogy may welcome participatory, student-centered teaching as a way of promoting "teamwork." However, the union's and company's expectations that the class will promote or solidify the team program can cause problems as the class goes on. We discuss these potential problems more fully in Section IV, "Reorganization and Potential Problems."

II. PRELIMINARY VISIT

After the CWE central office has arranged to conduct on-site classes, they will probably arrange for you to attend a meeting at the site. There you will most likely meet the key players. At this first meeting, CWE should make sure that everything needed for the program is in place, such as scheduling, recruitment, space, equipment, and so on. CWE should also make it clear to both management and the union that the teacher will assess the needs of the workers and will develop a course based on that assessment. If at some point the teacher discovers that the students do not need what the union or management thinks they need, he or she can use CWE's preliminary statement to support suggested changes.

At the first meeting, you may also get a tour of the shop floor and meet some of the workers. If possible, you should arrange to visit the shop a second (or third) time before you begin classes so that you can get a good impression of the place, talk with workers informally, and gather materials. At one site, the teachers worked on the line for a morning inspecting staplers. This was extremely useful because it gave the teachers an idea of the workers' daily routine and of the conditions in the factory.

We have compiled a list of questions to ask yourself or others when you visit the site. Many other relevant questions will come to your mind, but these may begin to focus your thinking. Take notes as you walk around the shop the first few times. These notes will provide a valuable record for you as the class continues.

QUESTIONS

1. What does the shop look like? Is it big? small? dark? light? clean? dirty? quiet? noisy? Do you see any glaring safety or health violations?

2. Who are the workers? Are they men or women? young or old? What is their ethnicity? What languages are they speaking? Is anybody speaking English?

3. Are the workers talking with each other? If so, do they seem to be chatting or only talking about work? Are there reasons why they would not talk to each other (different languages, noise, time pressure)?

4. What do you see on the walls? Are there posters? memos? slogans? production levels? job postings? union notices? rules? What language are these

things written in? Do you see things on the wall that could have been put up by workers (calendars, postcards)? What language are these things written in?

5. Do the workers have to read or write English at work? The reading and writing might be very simple, such as matching a size label with a bundle of sweaters, or very complicated, such as following quality specifications. What language are these written materials in? Can you get a copy of them?

6. Who are the supervisors? Are they men or women? Do certain ethnic groups predominate? What language do they speak? What kinds of interactions between supervisors and workers do you see?

The information and impressions will not give you all the answers. But the more familiar you are with the site, the quicker you will get used to it and the richer your experience will be. You can also use these observations in your curriculum. For example, one teacher plucked a safety memo off the wall and read it with his class. After slogging through two sentences of double talk and obfuscation, he asked the class, "What does it mean?" and received the instant response, **"It means nothing!!"**

RESOURCES

These books and articles may help you familiarize yourself with your site and think about the key players and their agendas:

"Learning in and out of the Classroom," John Garvey, *Literacy Harvest,* Winter 1992.

The Politics of Workplace Literacy, Sheryl Greenwood Gowen, Teachers College Press, 1992.

Excerpts from *Final Performance Report—SEIU Workplace Education Program*, North California Joint Council of Service Employees #2, Peter Simon, 1992.

III. CLASSROOM ISSUES

DIAGNOSTIC ISSUES

The first question is: Can you and should you do what you have been asked to do? You can explore this informally by telling students what you think class is for and asking them for their ideas. (Students may be diffident about this, not willing to discuss their vision of class.)

After informal discussion, you may want to use some sort of written diagnostic instrument. Since some students may not be literate, it is best to keep this simple as possible, but not too open-ended. A simple writing exercise may be enough: "Explain what you do every day at work." In general, taking on the role of omniscient test-giver and decision-maker is not the best way to break the ice, but then neither is jumping right into a question-and-answer session about what students want. As always, you need to maintain a certain authority while breaking down barriers.

LOGISTICAL ISSUES

Who are you teaching? It is important to find out how students are selected for class. You may learn this even before you get to the plant, but if not, ask your students. It will tell you a lot about how the plant works, how involved the union is, and how anxious students are to be there.

Also, patterns of attrition can be meaningful. Do all students from one area of the factory drop out? Is the supervisor keeping them from attending? Are students from lower status/paying jobs discouraged from taking class? Do workers from some areas of the shop have lower literacy rates than others? Are workers batched according to ethnic group? Are some ethnic groups underrepresented in class?

These are the kinds of questions you can explore if you actively try to find out why registered students are not coming. Do not take nonattendance personally—try to find out if some other factor is keeping students away. There is always attrition, but you need to pay attention if "normal" attrition becomes a general exodus. Ask students, honestly, why they are leaving class. There may be problems you don't know about—forced overtime, child care problems. Or you may need to adjust your teaching to fit your students' needs.

Since you are trying to create a workplace curriculum, it is very important to find out what students actually do: How many do the same kinds of work? Who works where and with whom? Who speaks English on the job? Who doesn't? A good way to get at this is by having students draw a workplace map, with lines of communication drawn in. See CWE curriculum materials for examples.

Time and Space

Sometimes the factory housing your class really does not have the space, time, or equipment that you need. Other times, they do have these things but for some reason, intentional or unintentional, they do not make them available to you. In these cases you are faced with a few decisions. Who can help you get these things? How essential are these items and what will you do if you cannot get them? Your response to these questions will affect your relationship with the class and with the factory management.

For example, you probably will not find a traditional classroom space at your site, complete with desks and blackboards, but the company should set aside some place where the class can be held. However, even if you are given a good space at the beginning of the course, you might not be able to hold on to it. In one factory, we began classes in November in a building across the street from the shop. The boiler broke after the first week. We moved to the cafeteria, which was dark, dirty, and full of people during class time. It took almost two months to get a new classroom. During that time, we must have talked to different people in management 30 times, and each time we were told we would get a new room that week.

Another kind of problem arises when management or the union does not give the teacher enough time to teach or does not tell the students when the teacher is coming. Ideally, the Consortium, the union, and management should agree from the beginning on the teaching time. Often, however, the image presented by the union or company of how the program will work does not match the reality the teacher faces when she walks into the shop.

For instance, one teacher scheduled a two hour follow-up class. The union never told him that there was only one hour set aside for him, nor did they tell the students that they would be expected to stay an extra hour. Naturally, when the follow-up began the students were angry and uncooperative. Not only could the teacher not do what he had planned, but the dynamic of the class was thrown off and the students felt that the program was disorganized and the teacher unreasonable. Make sure you have a clear understanding of the circumstances under which your students are attending class. Are they on paid time or unpaid time? Is attending class viewed as overtime? Was there a shift change to accommodate your class? If so, what impact does this have on your students? We find that it sometimes sets a tone of open dialogue if you ask these questions to students directly. From the responses, you can begin to get a feel of how the students regard the class.

Repercussions

Since classes are given at the work site, the company usually has the responsibility and power to provide resources and to make it possible for workers to go to class. When the company does not do these things, students and teachers will probably feel that the company does not respect them or support the program. Furthermore, if the teacher tries and fails to fix the problem, workers may see him/her as impotent or superfluous. If the workers feel this way, trust and respect will develop slowly or not at all.

What Can You Do?

First, try to find an ally in management, preferably someone with power or authority. This person(s) can speak for the program when logistical problems come up or tell you how to avoid those problems.

Second, when you have a problem, especially a serious one, you might want to get the Consortium or the member union to back you up or to speak on your behalf. In an on-site program, the teacher should try to seem as neutral as possible and probably avoid getting into a showdown over classroom space or scheduling.

Unfortunately, not all logistical problems are solved—or solvable. For instance, in one factory an afternoon class started with around 15 enthusiastic students. Two weeks later, management changed the shifts of the majority of these students so that they got off work at 4 P.M. instead of 2 P.M. Although the teacher and the Consortium tried to correct the situation, management did not release or switch these workers. The class was left with three regular students. In response, the teacher set up a resource library in the shop and taught or tutored any students who were able to come. In this way, she adapted the class to a situation that

neither she nor the Consortium was able to fix. In this case, the Consortium and the teacher felt that it was still possible to continue the program and that workers could get something out of it despite the problems.

Sometimes, however, logistical problems will be untenable. In one site, the union only allotted 15 minutes of teaching time. After discussion, CWE withdrew from the site. If you encounter a logistical problem that in your eyes makes the program impossible to run or useless to the students, talk with the CWE central office. The Consortium exists to serve union members, but to continue providing classes in an impossible situation only compromises its reputation and mission.

Overtime

You may have students who skip all or part of class in order to work overtime. The company may compel people to work overtime. Or students may make so little money that they have to work overtime just to get a decent wage. This is true for many workers in New York City, where companies often rely on overtime labor to reduce benefit expenses. If you have this problem, approach it delicately. You do not want to get people in trouble or give the impression that you are interfering with their livelihood or minimizing their difficulties. Encourage students to come as often or as long as they can—perhaps once a week or for one hour every class. Give them the material you have been covering in class.

EDUCATIONAL ISSUES

While the purpose of this handbook is not to advise you about developing curriculum, we recognize that that is one of your main tasks. The CWE has lots of curricular materials on hand and is developing new materials appropriate to on-site classes and workplaces undergoing reorganization. For these, check the Teachers' Resource Room at the CWE central office. We recommend that you save all the new material you create, as well as adaptations of existing material. Tell CWE about lessons, activities, discussions, approaches, and anything else that works well.

Multilevel Classes

You may have students with widely varying knowledge of English. This is a challenge you can deal with in several ways. You may be able to convince key players to create one or more new classes for beginning and advanced students. This is the optimal solution.

If you end up teaching a heterogeneous group, try to turn the problem into an asset. Use advanced students as co-teachers by having them model exercises, explain grammar, and even lead class. You can also pair up advanced and beginning students and have them work together on an exercise. Some teachers have even created special lower- and upper-level worksheets and homework assignments so students at different levels get appropriate material.

Literacy Problems

A more difficult situation involves students who are nonliterate. Some may be nonliterate in their own language and in English, while others just may not know the English alphabet. Since nonliterate students have great difficulty with any written exercise, their presence can create a real problem.

CWE teachers have urged management and unions to set up special classes for nonliterate workers. Even so, teachers have managed to help nonliterate students while teaching ESL. Use literacy materials from the Consortium or even phonics materials meant for children. (Although in general it is much better to use materials aimed at adults, there are not many materials available for nonliterate ESL students.)

You can also help nonliterate students by planning lessons that allow them to participate in the oral aspects of the lesson and by providing special activities for them during the written aspects. For example, while the literate students are engaged in a writing activity, the teacher can gather the nonliterate students in a small group to help them develop a more simplified version of the activity the literate students are doing. Later the whole class—including the nonliterate students—can come together to share what they worked on. Or you can take the things that students say in a class discussion and turn them into a text to be worked on by all students.

Issues of Race, Class, and Gender

As a microcosm of the factory and of New York City, classes sometimes present teachers with issues of race, class, and gender. For example, male students may dominate the class. Students of European background may be condescending toward Caribbean students. Occasionally, students may make overtly racist, sexist, anti-Muslim, or anti-Semitic remarks. In addition, teachers themselves may be forced to confront the sexism of students who flatter or flirt with them.

You cannot expect to change the consciousness of your students in a few weeks or months. On the other hand, you may feel that you cannot ignore "bad dynamics" in your classroom. If you have a good, open rapport with students, you can

bring up issues in an exploratory, nonconfrontational way in your curriculum. For example, there are some excellent materials on sexual harassment and discrimination in *ESL for Action* (see "Resources" below). However, do not feel that you have to push yourself to bring up issues that you do not feel comfortable with.

If you wish to address problem areas in your class, touch upon them gingerly and see how far students are willing to go with them. If you face reluctance, then leave it alone because you could very well be opening a Pandora's box that you and CWE will not be equipped to handle. In one case, a teacher was persistent in getting a new apprentice to talk in class about the racism he had witnessed in the union. The following week when the class met again, the teacher noticed that the student was absent. When he asked about him, the other students looked at each other knowingly and informed the teacher that the student would not be returning because he had been terminated from the apprenticeship. According to the students, some union officials caught wind of his comments from the previous class and suddenly decided to look more closely into his background, upon which they found something unsavory enough to serve as grounds for dismissal. The teacher was left feeling angry and helpless; however, he learned that a teacher wears many hats but that of a crusader is not one of them.

RESOURCES

ESL for Action: Problem Posing at Work, Elsa Roberts Auerbach and Nina Wallerstein, Addison-Wesley, 1987.

Language and Culture in Conflict, Nina Wallerstein, Addison-Wesley, 1983.

Unemployment: A New Order, Consortium for Worker Education, 1992.

A Conversation Book: English in Everyday Life—Books One and Two, Tina Kosloff Carver and Sandra Douglas Fotinos, Prentice Hall, 1985.

Speaking Swinglish: Swingline—Local 808 ESL Curriculum, Elizabeth Ferry and Cyrus Veeser, Consortium for Worker Education, 1993.

ILGWU/Mademoiselle Curriculum, Elizabeth Ferry, Consortium for Worker Education, 1993.

Side by Side, Steven J. Molinsky and Bill Bliss, Prentice Hall Regents, 1989.

Workbook for Workplays: You and Your Rights on the Job, Lenore Balliro, Labor Education Center, Southeastern Massachusetts University, 1988.