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ABSTRACT

This document consists of the three issues of "The Teacher Trainer" published during 1995. This journal of modern language teacher education contains articles by teacher trainees and teacher trainers, including: "The Use of Lesson Transcripts in Teacher Development" (Richard Cullen); "Pair and Group Work--Confessions of Ignorance" (Tessa Woodward); "Getting to the Heart of the Matter--The Marginal Teacher" (Judith Kennedy); "Conflict in Process-Oriented Training" (Simon Borg); "'Is It a Joke?'--The Language Awareness Component of CTEFLA Courses" (Peter Grundy); "A Teacher in Training for Primary School Work"; "Pitfalls of Experienced Teachers" (Magali de Moraes Menti); "Training for Primary School English" (Briony Beaven); "Peering at Your Peers" (Frank Fitzpatrick); "Lesson Planning--Focusing on the Learner" (R. V. Skuja-Steele, M. Gibbs); "Sarah Andrews of 'Nursing First'"; "Using a Counselling Approach in Teacher Supervision" (Dominic Cogan); "Helping Non-Native Speaker Teacher Trainers with Questions for Leading Discussions" (Richard Cullen); "Total Quality Management" (Tessa Woodward interviews Bob Richard); "A Flexible and Practical Practicum" (C. Shields, M. Janopoulos); and "The Name of the Game" (Sylvia Chalker). Book reviews, professional notes, conference reports, and publication announcements are also included. (MSE)

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A PRACTICAL JOURNAL MAINLY FOR MODERN LANGUAGE TEACHER TRAINERS

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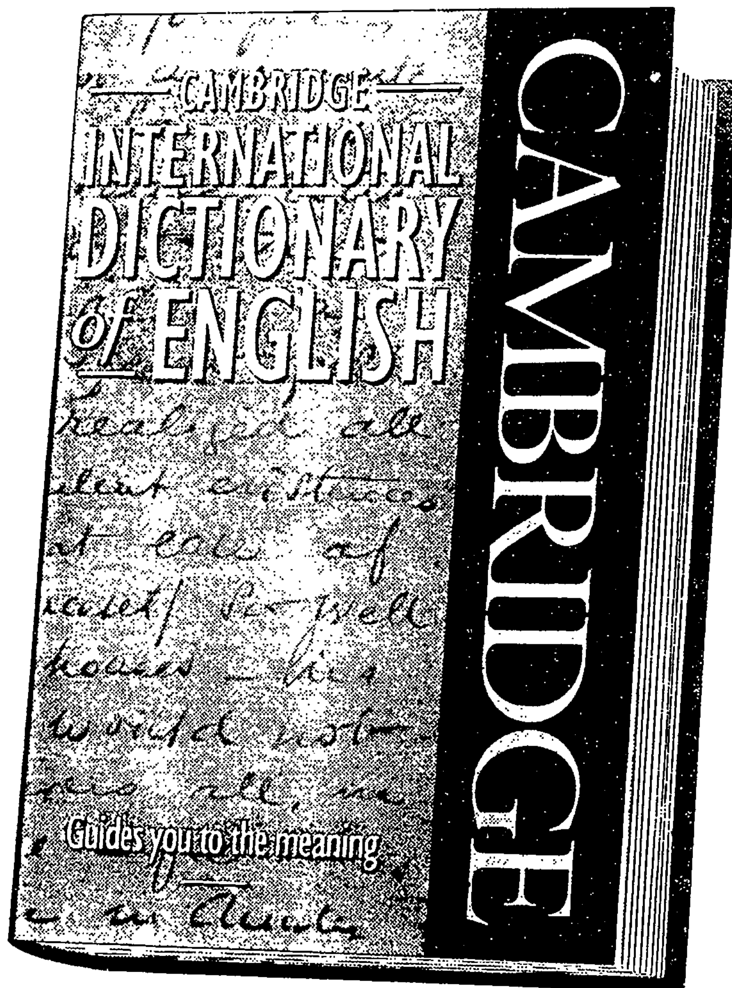

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ABOUT "THE TEACHER TRAINER"

"The Teacher Trainer" is a journal especially for those interested in modern language teacher training. Whether you are a teacher who tends to be asked questions by others in a staffroom, or a Director of Studies with a room of your own, whether you are a course tutor on an exam course, or an inspector going out to schools, this journal is for you. Our aims are to provide a forum for ideas, information and news, to put trainers in touch with each other and to give those involved in teacher training a feeling of how trainers in other fields operate as well as building up a pool of experience within modern language teacher training.

The journal comes out three times a year and makes use of a variety of formats e.g. article, letter, comment, quotation, cartoon, interview, spoof, haiku ideas. If the idea is good, we'll print it whatever voice you choose to express it in.

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Editorial

Dear Reader,

Welcome to Volume Nine! Last year we concentrated on getting The Teacher Trainer looking like a real magazine! Once that was achieved, the advertising policy was changed to enable us to include adverts for courses and exams as well as for publications. This will enable us, hopefully in a few issues, to increase once again the number of pages in the magazine. So please...if you know of a department, or school, exam board or course organiser, encourage them to place their teacher education adverts in our pages!

Another change is that of professional perspective. We plan, as explained in the last issue, to include more trainee voices in our discussions. Simon Borg helps us out in this area (p.15) by explaining the difficulties trainees can have with process-oriented courses. He gives clear suggestions on how they can be overcome. There will be more trainee voices next time too.

Our lead article is by Richard Cullen who gives us concrete ideas (p.3) on how to work with lesson transcripts and in-service teachers. He also explains why transcripts make a more practice-driven course.

Judith Kennedy writes on "marginal teachers", the teachers who are definitely not "naturals" but who can benefit greatly from clear, positive help with simple graduated routines(p.10).

Tim Murphy is back again with, sadly, his last article in the three-part series on neuro-linguistic programming (p.20). This time he suggests ways that teachers and learners can slip into resourceful, productive states.

Group work is given three different treatments in this issue. Many trainers work with groups of teachers rather than one-to-one and currently many trainers actually like learners (of teaching and of language) to work in groups. Is group work actually more productive, more pleasant, more effective than individual work? Martin Parrott whose book 'Tasks for language teachers' is reviewed by Donard Britten in this issue (p.22) might well feel that the answer is "Yes!" although his book can be used for self-study too. Griff Foley, whose article "Going deeper..." is discussed this time (p.18) contends that the received approach to group work has had some progressive effects but needs to be augmented with much deeper analysis. My own article (p.8) confesses to a habitual and rather unthinking endorsement of group work which I am, just now starting to question. I cite some of the books that are helping me with the questions.

We are still very keen to have articles jointly written with or solely written by trainees, as well as articles written by trainers, so if you can help out just send them along.

I hope you enjoy this issue.

All good wishes,

Tessa Woodward.

ERIC

The use of lesson transcripts in teacher development

by Richard Cullen (Dar-es-Salaam Teachers' College, Tanzania).

Introduction

If teacher development, as opposed to initial teacher training, focuses, in the words of Freeman (1982) on "the process of reflection, examination and change, which can lead to doing a better job and to personal and professional growth", facilitators of this process on teacher development courses and workshops presumably need to make available samples of teaching which can be reflected upon and examined. These samples may be taken from a number of sources. Group observations of real classes would be one such source. Video or audio recordings of actual lessons would be another. We might classify these examples as direct or 'live' sources, since the data for reflection and examination are the actual classroom events themselves as seen or heard by the participants on the course. They are thus distinct from indirect sources such as teacher's lesson plans, lesson notes, observer's comments, students' comments and teachers' diaries, which, unlike the former group, are at one remove from the actual classroom experience itself. This article seeks to explore the uses which can be made of one particular direct source of data, that is, transcripts of lessons, or parts of lessons, which have been made either from video or audio recordings, or from an observer's own shorthand transcription of a lesson. I shall be taking examples of transcript material I have been working with at Dar-es-Salaam Teacher's College in Tanzania for use on in-service teacher development courses.

Why use transcripts?

Like video or audio recordings of real classes, transcripts of classroom interaction provide a group of teachers with a sample of raw data about classroom practice which then acts as a stimulus for discussion, analysis and personal reflection. The model of training is thus practice rather than theory-driven, since the data itself provides the entry point to the underlying theory behind the practice - see Ramani 1987 and Cullen 1991 for examples of practice-driven approaches using video recordings of lessons. Transcripts, however, have certain features which video or audio records do not have, and which can often work to advantage on teacher development courses.

1. Anonymity Transcripts have in-built anonymity - the identities of the teacher and the students remain anonymous on a transcript, unlike video, and to a slightly lesser extent, audio. This may be an important consideration in situations where the trainer wishes to use data from local classrooms for reasons of relevance and authenticity, but understandably does not wish to expose the teacher's perceived shortcomings (either as a teacher or as a user of English) to the critical attention of his or her colleagues. The anonymity afforded by transcripts preserves the teacher's own reputation and helps ensure that the ensuing discussion remains objective and uninhibited.

2. Ease of Reference Transcripts are much easier to refer to than video or audio recordings. There is no need to play back a tape in order to check on what happened and who said what: the group simply refers to the written evidence in front of them. This also makes them easier as a medium for the trainer as well.

3. Portability No equipment is required in order to make data from transcripts available: all that is required are copies of the transcript itself. This may be an important consideration in training situations where equipment is in short supply or frequently out of order, or where teachers/Heads of Department wish to make the material available for use on local school-based in-service teacher development meetings.

4. Focus on Classroom Talk The absence of visual or vocal evidence on a transcript can in fact be a benefit rather than a loss, since it narrows the focus of attention - directing it to a particular feature of the lesson, that is the classroom talk, the actual language used by both teacher and students during the lesson. The attention of a group of teachers is thus directed towards the same thing, something which is often hard to achieve when using a rich and potentially distracting medium like video. Admittedly, the lack of facial expressions and voice features, especially the teacher's use of intonation and stress, can give a misleading impression of what is actually happening in the classroom, but this loss can also be exploited advantageously, by asking the participants to 'fill the gaps' and to suggest appropriate intonation patterns or gestures which the teacher might have been using at any given point in the transcript.

Example - Transcripts and Worksheets

The example below shows two transcripts, taken from English lessons in two girls' secondary schools in Dar-es-Salaam. The teachers are both experienced Tanzanian English teachers, and the students are in their second year. English at Secondary level in Tanzania is the medium of instruction, but at Primary level, the medium is Swahili, with English being taught as a foreign language for the last five years. The quality of instruction, however, is highly variable, particularly in rural areas, and levels of English at Forms 1 and 2 at any one Secondary School may range from virtual Beginner to Mid-Intermediate.

continued →

The transcripts were made from video recordings of the two lessons, and have been put together to show two different approaches to conducting the Pre-Reading Stage of a reading lesson. The discussion points and accompanying worksheet were designed for use on one-month in-service teacher development courses which are being conducted in Teachers' Colleges around the country as part of an ELT Support Project, sponsored by the ODA and the British Council, in collaboration with the Tanzanian Ministry of Education. The aim of the Project is to enhance the teaching of English in Tanzanian secondary schools by upgrading the professional competence of the teachers, most of whom have completed a two-year pre-service Diploma course at one of the Teachers' Colleges but have had little in the way of practical training.

The worksheet tasks for these particular transcripts focus on two aspects of teacher talk, namely the questions the teacher asks (in each extract) and the way she responds or gives feedback to the students' answers. Generally speaking, the approach we have adopted is one which requires the teachers first to describe in some form or another the classroom events taking place (using the evidence of the transcript), and to consider the possible rationale behind the teacher's actions. Any evaluation of these events, in terms of their discernible or likely effect on students' learning, would come after this initial analysis. This is important: in the interests of objectivity and fairness, all the participants studying the transcript must first reach agreement on what is actually happening, and what the teacher is trying to do, before attempting to evaluate it or judge it in some way. Thus, in the example given here, the teachers begin by working in groups to identify and describe observable differences between the two teachers' questions and their feedback/follow-up responses. Consideration of rationale would arise during the plenary discussion of the tasks while Discussion Point 3 - 'In whose classroom would you rather be a student?" - moves into the area of reflection and evaluation. Finally, the 'Options' section invites the teachers to use their reflections as a basis for suggesting alternative or additional courses of action which the teacher might have taken (e.g. additional questions the teacher could ask another time).

Tasks 1 and 2 are perhaps more 'directive' than many teacher trainers would prefer, tending as they do to direct the teachers, through the example questions given, towards certain points that the facilitator is aiming to establish. One such point in Task 1, for example, would be the difference between the exclusively testing, 'display' type of questions which Teacher B asks and the mixture of 'display' and 'reference' questions used by Teacher A. Another point (in Task 2) would be the difference between Teacher B's straight repetition of her students' responses and Teacher A's attempts to re-state them in a slightly different form. The reasons for both these differences would then be open to discussion. We have found through use that the suggested questions on the worksheet ensure that the different groups of teachers discuss the same issues: the subsequent plenary discussion thus becomes more focused and interactive. However, the tasks can easily be made less directive by removing the questions and giving the teachers more leeway to note their own points of interest and in effect set their own agenda for discussion.

One inevitable, and perhaps undesirable consequence of using two transcripts in this way is the tendency to compare the two in terms of which one is 'better'. Teachers may well form their own opinions about this, but it is important that the trainer avoids 'pushing' one in favour of the other, as this misses the point of the exercise. The object is not to present one way of teaching as being superior in some way to the other, but to show two different approaches, each of which might be perfectly valid when viewed in the context of the teacher's own aims for the lesson and the group of students she is teaching, and each of which also reflects the teacher's own personal manner and individual style. The object of the exercise is for teachers to try to analyse each transcript objectively with a view to reflecting, as individuals with their own personal styles and perceptions of themselves, on their own teaching and, in particular on the kinds of questions they ask, and way they respond to their students, in the various classroom activities they do.

One final note on using transcripts in a training session. I have found that it is important to read the transcript aloud with the participants - in effect to act it out - before studying it with the aid of the worksheet questions. For example, the facilitator or one of the participants takes the part of the teacher with the others playing the students (S1, S2 etc.). This helps to bring the 'text' alive, and enables both the facilitator and the participants to project themselves into the classroom and the events taking place inside it. We are thus required to role-play what is happening in the transcript as well as to analyse it. I believe that this enhances the quality of the subsequent discussion, because the exercise involves us more directly in the teaching/learning process as recorded in the transcript - we have to 'get into' the lesson as well as to think about it. It also provides an important element of variety of activity and in what might otherwise be a rather silent analytical session.

Other Uses of Transcripts

The example given here illustrates the use of transcripts to focus on an aspect of classroom methodology: in this case, the use of teacher's questions and feedback strategies during the Pre-Reading stage of a 'reading lesson'. Transcripts can of course be used in a similar way to look at many different aspects of teaching methodology: the way teachers give instructions, handle errors, present new vocabulary or cue language practice are obvious examples. Similarly, transcripts can be used to focus on student talk, whether in plenary activities or during group or pairwork. A study of a transcript can throw light on the way in which student contributions and student-student interaction are affected, positively or negatively, either by the teacher's own contributions, or by the tasks s/he sets the class, and the way s/he organises the class.

A possibly more obvious, but perhaps under-exploited application of transcripts is to focus on the teacher's use of the target language itself - the different forms she uses (or fails to use) when asking questions, the different ways she reformulates or paraphrases her own or the students'

questions and answers, the language she uses to give instructions etc. The aim here is not so much to enhance the teacher's understanding of classroom methodology as to improve their own classroom English. There is a wealth of data in a transcript which can be exploited on teachers' courses for this purpose, focusing specifically on the kind of language the teachers need to use - and use with ease and confidence - in the classroom. In this connection, audiotapes of the transcripts would also be useful to direct the focus to aspects of pronunciation, especially the teacher's use of stress and intonation.

Conclusion

Lesson transcripts are an invaluable source of data on in-service teacher development courses, where the emphasis is on describing, analysing and reflecting on current practice. They are particularly useful for focusing on teacher talk and the ways in which teachers' questions and responses can promote - or fail to promote - successful learning outcomes. In this paper, I have attempted to point out some of the benefits which I believe transcripts can have as a training resource (as distinct from other direct sources of data such as video recordings), and to show through an example the kind of use to which we are putting them on in-service courses in Tanzania, and the training principles and processes which underlie this use.

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Pre-Reading: Using an Accompanying Picture

Trancript I

Context: *A Form 2 English class in a Girls' Secondary School in Dar-es-Salaam - a 'Class Reader' lesson. It is near the beginning of the lesson. The class are about to begin reading a new class reader, 'Skyjack Over Africa'. The teacher has handed out copies of the Class Reader around the class, and the students are looking at the cover of the book. The teacher is asking questions about the picture on the cover.*

T Where was the picture taken?
S1 In an aeroplane.
T In an aeroplane. Good, yes. In an aeroplane. What do we call this man in the white shirt? Yes, please. 5
S2 The name
T Just one word is enough.
S2 Pilot.
T Pilot. Good. The pilot. Not what is the other man holding? Yes, please?.
S3 A pistol.
T A pistol. Right. Now what kind of a man is he? What do we call such men who have pistols and point them at pilots? Yes, please? *(Indicating S4)* 10
S4 We call a robber.
T A robber? Yes..Could be. But this man's in a plane. Pause. *No further suggestions.* Anyhow, let us move on. Maybe we will know the name of the man later. Can you tell me - what is he telling the pilot? Suppose you are there listening. What is he telling the pilot? Yes? 15
S5 He is telling him 'Hands up!"
T Hands up. Anything else? Yes?
S6 He is telling him now to be under his control.
T Yes. 'You are under my command. You have to do whatever I want you to do'. Anything else? Any other comments? One more. One more sentence. What do you think he is telling the pilot? *Pause.* Fly to...Zambia immediately. We are going to change course. Instead of flying to Dar-es-Salaam, we are going now to- 20 25
SS Zambia.
T Right. Something like that. Now if he shot the pilot, what do you think would happen to the plane, and all the passengers that are inside the plane? Now, some people here - it's very quiet here. Yes please? 30
S7 The plane would fall down.
T The plane would fall down. It would crash, and all the passengers unfortunately would die. Maybe some would survive, but most likely they would die. Now suppose you were in the plane, and this was happening, what would you do? Imagine yourself now, you are in the plane. *Pause.* Now I'll give you two minutes to discuss it with your friend. Two minutes. *SS discuss in pairs at their desks.* OK, yes please? 35
S8 I shall pray my God because I know it is my final time. *Laughter.*
T She says she's going to kneel down and say 'Please God, forgive my sins. *Laughter.* Yes, please?
S9 I won't do anything, I'm going to die.
T She won't do anything, She'll just close her eyes...*Laughter*...and say: 'Take me if you want - if you don't want, leave me'. Yes? 40
S10 I will shout.
T You shall shout, Aaagh! *Laughter.* I don't know if Heaven will hear you. *Laughter.* Yes, please. 45
S11 I will be very frightened and collapse...
T You'll collapse? So you will die before the plane crashes. *Laughter.* Now will you open the story now. 'Skyjack Over Africa'.

Transcript 2

Context: *A Form 2 English class in a Girls' secondary school in Dar-es-Salaam. The teacher is about to introduce a reading text to the class ('Why the Black Fly Buzzes' from English in Use Book II) and, as a 'Warm Up' activity, is asking the class questions about the picture accompanying the text.*

T What do you see in that picture, Catherine?
S1 I see a man and a girl and an elephant.
T Catherine can see a man, a girl and an elephant. Fatma, what can you see in that picture? 5
S2 I see a hen and a tree.
T Good. A hen and a tree. What is the man doing? Yes Agnes?
S3 The man is climb a tree.
T Again
S3 The man is climb the tree. 10
T The man is climbing the tree. Say that again.
S3 A man is climbing a tree.
T The man is climbing a tree. Good. What is the woman doing? What is the woman doing? 15
S4 The woman is running.
T The woman is running. OK. Now in your groups and pairs - some of you are in pairs - I want you to write down something about the picture. I want you to list all the things you can see in the picture. Just list them down. Then write down two activities taking place in the picture.

SS begin working in their groups. T writes instructions on BB. Then circulates round the room while SS are writing.
10 minutes later... T has elicited the lists of things the SS wrote down in their groups.

T Now your sentences, sentences. Tell us any activities taking place in the picture. Who's ready with a sentence? Rehema? Just your sentence.
S5 A rat is climbing a tree. 20
T A rat-?
S5 A rat is climbing a tree.
T Say 'A rat is climbing a tree'. 25
S5 A rat is climbing a tree.
T Good. A rat is climbing a tree. Another sentence? Yes?
S6 An elephant...*(not clear)*
T Loudly.
S6 An elephant is...*(still not clear)*
T I can't hear you. Say it again loudly. It is correct, but I want you to say it again loudly.
S6 *(loudly)* An elephant is running. 30
T Good. An elephant is running. Another sentence. Yes?
S7 A monkey is laughing.
T Again.
S7 A monkey is laughing.
T A monkey is laughing. Another sentence. At the back. 35
S8 A bird is sitting on the tree.
T Again?
S8 A bird is sitting on the tree.
T A bird is sitting in the tree. Very good. Now the picture is about a story in the book. Now we're going to read the story. 40

Worksheet
Tasks and Discussion Points

1. Make a list of the various questions Teacher A asks the class and then make a list of the questions Teacher B asks. Look at your lists and compare the two sets of questions. What differences do you notice between the kinds of questions each teacher asks? Note down your observations in the table.
   - For example, for each teacher, consider points such as
   - How varied are the questions in terms of topic/length/use of language? Are the questions easy/difficult for the students to understand/answer?
   - Does Teacher A ask any questions to which she does not know the answer? Does teacher B?
   - To what extent do the questions require the students to think or use their imaginations?
   - Do you think the questions interest and engage the attention of the students?

2. Now compare the ways each teacher reacts and responds to the student's answers.For example, consider these questions:
   - What does each teacher 'do' with the answer after the student has given it?
   - Does she appear to show interest in what the students are saying? If so, how?
   - How does she react to mistakes the students make in their English? Does she try to encourage other students to contribute?

   Make a note of your observations in the same way as for Question 1

3. In whose classroom, Teacher A's or Teacher B's, would you rather be a student?

	Teacher A	Teacher B
Worksheet Task 1		
Worksheet Task 2		

Other classroom options

1. Using the same picture which Teacher A was using, consider other questions you might ask/tasks you might set the students as part of the Pre-Reading stage of this lesson.

2. Look at the questions Teacher B asked her class and the responses she elicited. For each response which the students give in this transcript, *consider what follow up questions you could ask so that:*
   a) the students are required to produce more language;
   b) the students are required to do more thinking.

ERIC

Trainer Background

Pair and groupwork - confessions of ignorance

by Tessa Woodward

Using pair and group work when I'm the leader

Whether I am working as a language teacher or a teacher trainer I tend to use pair and groupwork as well as whole class, plenary work. Why?

- I like it when people are talking to each other as well as to me. I like it in the rest of life too.
- It takes the spotlight off me. This gives me a sense of ease and relaxation and frees me to do other things such as check what I've covered so far, plan the next part of the lesson, listen to people, watch them and feel part of the group.
- I feel strongly that talking helps people to re-organise ideas cognitively, become conscious of what they know, practise communication as well as actually communicate and learn from and enjoy others.
- Pair and groupwork increases the time group members have to listen to different voices and to use their own. In a language class especially, this is a "Good Thing".
- It is a progressive, modern, fashionable way of working so I feel politically correct when I work this way.
- If it works well, pair and groupwork can be empowering to the individual participant.

What do I know about pair and groupwork?

- I know how to attract attention, how to group people and re-group them in varied and interesting ways.
- I know how important it is for a teacher or trainer to have easy control of informal English if pair and groupwork is to be effective and effected in English.
- I know the importance of participants being able to start and stop, ask for clarification, negotiate, turn-take etc. in the target language. I know how to teach and review this language.
- I know a little about how to make and set tasks and organise feedback.
- I also know how, sometimes, my colleagues and I hate pair and groupwork!

The Drawbacks of pair and groupwork

A colleague in Japan used to say to me at in-service training meetings "Oh please don't put us into pairs! I hate working with the person next to me, no matter who they are!" A colleague at a conference recently said, "I hate doing groupwork and then having to listen to what all the other groups did. The group feedback thing is just so boring!"

Teachers I've worked with have raised dozens of problems with pair and groupwork such as ... What to do when people don't like their partner, finish early, finish late, talk in their mother tongue, don't like the task, discuss anything but the task, do the task without talking, lean back lazily while their partner does the task, dominate everybody in the group, get into an argument, work as individuals though physically arranged in a "group", get over-competitive, refuse to compete, are obviously at completely different levels ...

It strikes me now that really I know very little about pair and groupwork although I'm always asking people in "my" classes to do it, and frequently proselytise on its behalf. With this on my conscience, I've started noticing things.

Things I've noticed recently

Teachers, both pre- and in-service having set up a task and having watched students endeavouring to get themselves interested in it, will often check their lesson plans and their watches and then suddenly clap their hands and say "OK now...It doesn't matter if you haven't finished!". "Doesn't matter to whom?", we might ask.

I find that I know only one single EFL teacher who regularly creates or uses mixed ability, open-ended or differing tasks for different individuals or sub-groups within a larger group. I know hardly anyone in EFL who deliberately uses different reward structures for different groups or who can discuss co-operative versus competitive ways of working and their positive and negative effects. On the other hand, I've met and taught quite a lot of primary, secondary, modern language and non-UK trained teachers who are conversant and practised in these areas.

...So I've started reading - past the fairly simple ideas about groups "forming, storming, norming and performing" and into areas of research I have never heard of before. Research such as that dating back to the 1880's that shows that individuals exert markedly less effort when working in a group than when working alone on physical and cognitive tasks.

This "social loafing" can happen when a) someone decides to take a free ride and leave others to work and b) an able group member decides to reduce effort after noticing free riders. Social loafing can be reduced by making tasks challenging, appealing or involving and keeping group size down to four or fewer members.

I've started now to learn about task-structures. In Hertz-Lazarowitz et al mention is made of disjunctive, conjunctive, additive and discretionary tasks. To outline briefly just one of these:- a disjunctive task is one where there is perl ps one correct answer or one group project. Although all the group members have the same information available to them one or two of them may be capable of solving all the problems and are the most influential. The less capable group members therefore see themselves as dispensable and don't help much. The "rich get richer" since the most able members talk most and get more practice whilst the less able are often assigned unequal roles in the group such as writing down the answers. Learning about task structures is helping me to see where some of the problems of groups come from.

I'm also learning that contrary to popular belief an individual working alone generates more ideas than when "brainstorming" in a group! This is called "production blocking" in the literature.

And then there are "presence effects". These are the positive and negative effects of the presence of others on measures of individual performance. This is a very important area for me to think about since I watch teachers at work quite often.

Some of this new (to me) information is "common sense", some of it is common sense in new language. A lot of it is absolutely fascinating. Once I've read about it and tried it out I hope to include it in training courses since it seems strange to have a teaching approach and methodology fundamentally built on the idea of pair and groupwork without discussing these fundamentals in detail. If this area interests you too, here are th· books I've started with If you know othe s, please share their details with other readers by sending in recommended reading to "The Teacher Trainer".

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Other areas of ignorance

I could write articles with a similar slant, i.e. revealing innocence or ignorance in many other areas. Ones which spring to mind immediately are "Voice and breathing-effects on me and the classes I teach". "Explaining-what do other people and I sound like when we explain? How can we improve?" Are you beginning to find an area of ignorance in yourself? And have you found some fruitful reading that others could share? If so, let us know by writing a short article plus reading references.

Thank you!

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Current Research

Getting to the heart of the matter - the Marginal Teacher

by Judith Kennedy CELTE,
University of Warwick, U.K.

Introduction

In this article I would like to describe some of the work that I and my colleagues working as teachers trainers at the Centre for English Language Teacher Education, University of Warwick, have been involved with. The DES (Department of Education and Science) in its 1985 publication Better Schools emphasises that "the major single determinant of the quality of education is the teaching force". It further makes the point that if appraisal is to be linked to teacher quality, it is necessary to be clear what quality means. One focus has thus been on identifying the characteristics of good (i.e. quality) teaching. For reasons which I briefly describe below, we have taken a different line which is to look at those teachers who I term "marginal". Marginal teachers are not hopeless teachers; teachers who should be dismissed; nor are they incompetent teachers. Rather they are teachers who operate consistently at the margins of effectiveness. They are less than ideal all of the time and in an ideal world they would probably be selected out. Although my main concern is with teachers in the developing world and particularly the initial training of teachers, I think some of the problems are shared with developed countries

The quantity/quality equation

In many parts of the world there is a demand for increased numbers of teachers owing to school enrolment growths, explosive populations and the growth of tertiary education 'poaching' teachers from the upper secondary systems. This rapidly increasing demand means that in many cases intake into the profession has to be broadened. It is thus difficult to maintain quality in the usual way by restricting the numbers entering the profession. Ideally we would like far more candidates to apply for admission to preservice teacher education programmes than can be admitted - then we can select those with most talent and promise. But in many parts of the world the calibre of entrants into teaching is also declining. This is related to the drop in the status and prestige of teachers. They are no longer as well paid as alternative professions and also their terms of service have declined. Thus this combination of changed status and salary, and demand for a rapid supply of teachers, means that trainees are entering teacher education either academically or professionally less committed than we would like. In addition, in some countries, prospective teachers who realise they are perhaps unsuited to teaching, are nonetheless not keen to leave the profession having already chosen it as an "alternative" to some other career they could not gain entry to. For many, teaching remains a relatively secure career. Governments too - anxious to avoid wastage and keen to increase the number of teachers - demand that teacher training is successful. Teacher training institutions would not be too popular with governments if they maintained quality by failing large numbers of trainees.

Which teachers to help

A concern with marginal teachers is important because whilst in-service training and development is to be commended, evidence suggests that such courses, however "developmentally" or "reflectively" structured tend to have most impact on those teachers who are already relatively good practitioners (Avalos 1985, Dunkin 1985, Fullan 1991, Hopkins 1986). Inadequate and ineffective teachers benefit most from help during their initial training and during the first two years of their school career (Cooke & Pang 1991, McDonald 1982). Thereafter it becomes progressively harder to improve the situation. For this reason we have been trying to identify very early in the training process those teacher trainees who are likely to become marginal teachers and to think of strategies that can be used to help them. Our focus has been on those trainees about to finish training and enter their first year of teaching. Trainees who are identified as marginal will not, of course, necessarily become marginal teachers but in our experience trainees who by the end of their course are weak in implementation of classroom skills remain so unless given a great deal of help in their first year. In most cases the help is rarely available and in fact such novice teachers are often put into teaching positions that further demoralise and demotivate. The areas we are currently investigating are:

1. The identification of marginal teacher trainees (referred to in future as marginals) - based on what constitutes "satisfactory" teaching.
2. The personal characteristics of marginals
3. The classroom behaviour of marginals - the skills and strategies they use and how they plan their lessons and make teaching decisions.
4. How an awareness of the key problems that marginals experience can inform initial teacher training courses - in terms of what we do and how we do it.

For reasons of lack of space, I will only discuss 3. and 4. above.

Getting data on the Classroom Behaviour of Marginals

We were able, as trainers, to identify those trainees we felt were likely to enter the profession as marginal teachers - and as such unlikely to ever become the expert teacher identified by Schon's reflective "knowledge in action" person, the effortless fluid performer. (Schon.

1993). We then collected data on these marginals in many different ways, but one of the most relevant sources of information on classroom behaviour was what I term "Supervisors' secret diaries". When teacher trainers evaluate trainees or when we discuss a trainee's performance there is a kind of accepted public face. Evaluation sheets give little indication of what really happened because quite rightly they seek to be positive and skill building. Thus "Tidy up your boardwork!" whilst unlikely to cause offence is opaque. The student and the supervisor involved may know well what the situation was but for anybody reading the report, little information can be gleaned. Was the board just a little messy or was it a total wreck? We have tried a rather different approach. Each year for the past three years we have had final-year trainees on a long teaching practice overseas as part of their initial teacher training course. Different supervisors have made frequent visits to the same trainees, and this enabled us to build up detailed entries in a 'diary' on each trainee. This diary I call the 'Supervisor's Secret Diary' because no one sees it except the supervisors involved and it cannot under any circumstances be used for assessment. Supervisors gave a report on the lesson as soon as it had finished and whilst they could be as affective and outspoken as they liked they had also to give very specific information about things that went awry in the lesson. It did not matter how many incidents were chosen because the aim was to build up a collective picture of the performance of all the marginals not just one. Each supervisor supervised a group of trainees for one month of a three month teaching practice and during that period kept a diary. At the end of the teaching practice the diaries were then collected. Although at this stage the entries referred to the marginal trainee by name, we then entered the data on computer disc removing the trainee names and then destroyed the original diary entries. We have done this for three years and I have collected over 160 diary entries for marginals - the aim was then not only to categorise marginal teachers' behaviour in very broad terms but also to concretise it. From the very specific descriptions I have started to build up a series of "Critical Decision points or Incidents". These words emphasise that the incidents are important to the effectiveness of the teaching and also require on the part of the teacher some kind of decision. The examples given at the end of this article have been extracted from one type of lesson that marginals were given - notetaking lessons. This is for the sake of clarity only, so that eventual linkage between the original classroom incident and the training materials described later can be seen.

Organising the data

Each diary entry usually yields more than one critical decision point (CDP) and CDP's can be in almost any area. From the original diary entries, over 320 CDP's have been isolated. In order to effectively deal with them there was a need to categorise them in some way. Firstly there were three stages in which CDP's could occur - before, during and after the lesson. I have termed these stages pre-, intra- and post- teach. Within each of these stages different competencies are involved. Loosely based on a model of Donald Medley's (1988), these competencies can be described as:

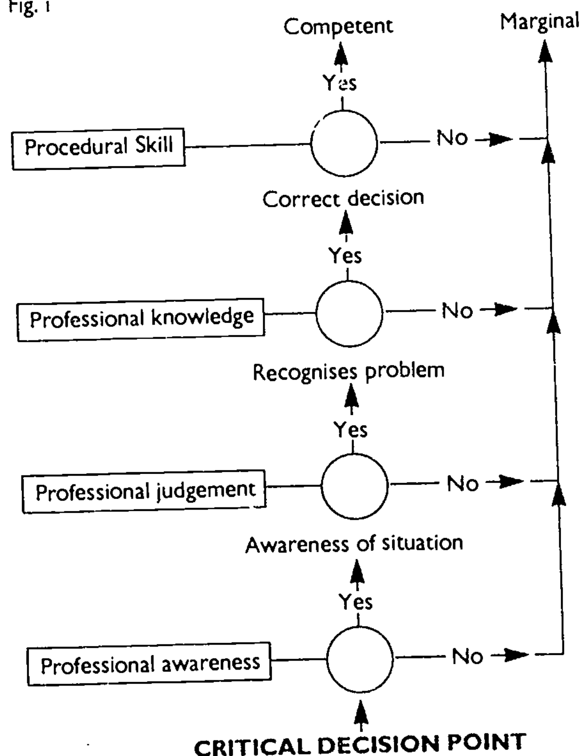
a. Professional Awareness: in order to solve a problem you have to be aware of its existence. By problem in this instance I mean a point at which a decision is called for. If you do not possess such awareness then obviously you take no decisions. What we discovered was that marginal trainees often lacked this awareness or "with-it-ness". One diary entry reads "he seems totally unaware that half the children were asleep - this was confirmed later when he seemed pleased with how things had gone and the fact that he had managed to keep order."

b. Professional Judgement: Of course, trainees may be aware of what is happening but not unduly concerned about it. one trainee had some children in his class, who, after finishing their work ahead of time, were quietly carrying on with their maths homework. In discussion later the trainee seemed pleased that they had quietly got on with other work. He didn't see their behaviour as a problem for him. So awareness doesn't always mean that the implication of the event is recognised - this requires professional judgement. Exercising that professional judgement (knowing whether a situation calls for a decision to act or not) is a crucial area.

c. Professional knowledge: Such decisions are made on the basis of professional knowledge possessed by the teacher (knowing that"). This includes knowledge of teaching skills (e.g. knowing what an information gap task is, how to organise it, how to round it up) but also most importantly subject content knowledge (e.g. lexical and grammatical knowledge, an understanding of text discourse or, say, the differences between spoken and written text). Professional knowledge enables the right kinds of decisions to be made about alternative courses of action.

d. Procedural skills: Using professional knowledge appropriately is often the visible part of teaching - procedural skill (knowing how"). So with notetaking for example, the teacher may 'know that' a spoken text has certain characteristics, that for a notetaking task it should be of an appropriate length, style, etc. but 'knowing how' at the pre-teach stage means the teacher can then select texts appropriately. In the intra-teach stage the procedural skills and expertise demonstrate themselves in all the teaching behaviours associated with good teaching, such as presenting materially appropriately and clearly; involving the pupils in a way that realises the task intentions effectively; dealing with student discipline. The flow chart (Fig. i) below summarises how a problem at any one of the stages has a cumulative effect on the teacher's overall performance. For example, a trainee might demonstrate his professional awareness appropriately and exercise professional judgement in realising that some kind of decision is required. But if he lacks the professional knowledge regarding appropriate action, then his performance is likely to be marginal. A concrete example from the data was one trainee who was aware that many children in the class could not understand her explanations of a grammar point; she realised that something needed to be done but because she did not herself really understand the grammar point in question, was unable to simplify it appropriately.

continued



We have thus built up a series of critical decision points which can be fitted into a pattern (see Fig (ii) below). For example, many marginal trainees have problems at the pre-teach stage. They may show a lack of professional awareness in not thinking it important to speak to class teachers about the level of the pupils they will be teaching; or they may show lack of professional knowledge in their ability to plan for a range of activities. Using this kind of framework, we can identify more precisely what stage of teaching and which competencies are most problematic for marginal trainees.

Fig. ii

Competency	Pre-teach	Intra-teach	Post-teach
Procedural skills			
Professional knowledge			
Professional judgement			
Professional Awareness			

Implications for trainers

Initial selection procedures and methods of dealing with novice teachers in the first years of teaching are important ways of addressing the issue of marginal teachers. In addition, for trainers concerned with the initial training stage, a better knowledge of what characterises marginal teachers could inform courses; both in trainer-led input sessions and the teaching practice itself. Here I will describe just one way in which we have used the critical decision points in our course materials and one way they have affected the organisation of teaching practice.

Developing training exercises from the diaries

We have developed a series of exercises based on the competencies described above and real classroom events as described in the diaries. These exercises, which can help develop trainees' critical and reflective abilities, have taken a variety of forms. We have designed simple "critiquing" exercises using written, taped or videoed data. These are exercises based entirely on problems arising from real classroom events including the texts and exercises, and demand from the trainee a degree of analysis and judgement to decide on an appropriate solution. "Decisive incident mazes" are another way in which I have tried to marry the building up of knowledge with real practice in decision taking. Each step in the maze is based on a CDP and whilst there is not necessarily a right or wrong answer we hope that reflection will develop professional judgement and performance. An example maze is given at the end of the article.

Developing Teaching Practice

Procedural skills are best developed in performance; that is through teaching practice. Mentoring schemes and peer teaching which help trainees to recognise and understand the underlying basis of their own teaching behaviour, are helpful in this respect. However, for marginal trainees in particular, the use of what I term "graduated teaching routines" has been particularly helpful. In actual teaching situations, handling whole classes, marginal teacher trainees lack expertise in very simple routines. They do not have an easily accessible repertoire of skills to call on. In trying to handle a thousand and one decisions they end up on a downward spiral of wrong decisions, faulty judgements and poor performance and then suffer poor appraisal by supervisors. We need to limit what we ask them to do. A graduated teaching routine is a way of breaking up the teaching process into small steps - starting with very simple ones in some cases. The important thing is that the routes should be ones that the trainee can easily succeed with. Their selection should be a mutual decision between trainee and supervisor. They should be varied and short enabling the trainee to experience different ways of achieving the same aim. This is easier to accomplish with supervisors who are closely involved with the practicum. It is also easier to do with trainees who teach in twos and threes because different trainees can take responsibility for different 'chunks' of

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the lesson. This is interspersed with trainees taking responsibility for whole lessons as appropriate. Let me give an example. One trainee, always began lessons in a very peremptory manner. Once he walked into class with no greeting, looked down at his desk, then suddenly left. In fact he had good reason, realising he had left his materials elsewhere, but both the class and the supervisor sat there for some minutes perplexed. When he returned, he then handed out the material to the students without any kind of explanation. This was not an isolated incident. The graduated routine in this case was to focus on the starts of lessons. Other routines that are particularly important for students are giving instructions for activities, asking questions in different ways and organising students into groups. Contrary to much work on developing reflective practitioners we actually discourage marginal trainees from reflecting too long and hard on what has happened. We prefer to move them on in a positive frame believing that an effective experiential base is laid by building in success from the start and minimising failure.

Conclusions

I have described only part of our work with marginal trainees, focussing particularly on the identification of critical decision points. However, as I said at the start of this article, marginal trainees succeed in many things they do. Whilst I think it is important to seek to understand what "goes wrong" in a marginal trainee's lesson, recognition must be given to what "goes right". Hopefully as we continue research in this latter area, we will have a full understanding of such trainees' behaviour and be better able to offer appropriate support.

Example of entries from Supervisor's diaries

Critical Decision Points

Notetaking

1. X asked all those who live in flats to put up their hands, and then proceeded to enumerate all the disadvantages and dangers of living in a flat as opposed to a house. By the time she'd finished I should think the poor girls would be scared to go home. X is like that - not exactly tactful and a bit brusque, but at least she's the same with everyone regardless of status (by that I mean she talks to me in exactly the same way as she does to her students). Notetaking exercise not that great because she never told them why they should take the notes and what they should do with them.

2. I saw second half of 2 period lesson. Objective - note taking and note expanding. Original text was a tape recording (with Y's voice) on advantages of learning English. Recording poor and tape recorder was Y's own and not efficient. The main problem was that the text was unsuitable for note taking, being discursive rather than informative. It didn't contain anything we didn't know already and hardly seemed worth making notes on. There were no facts as such to record. This made the whole lesson a bit pointless as the second stage was an expansion from notes that Y herself had made - presumably the perfect answer being a recreation of the text they had listened to and read on the handout.

3. Activities - following up previous lesson with group work: discussion on causes of unemployment (I think groups had been primed because despite weak, vague instructions and ambitious subject, they produced some first class causes). The central part of the lesson was to be note taking from a recorded monologue (he'd made his own). He gave them quite good instructions on what to listen for, but unfortunately there was too much external noise - tape was inaudible. X showed adaptability in reading tapescript but then forgot to ask them to do the notetaking. He went on to a rather pointless spelling test, then an activity which required students to look up dictionary definitions and copy them out.

4. My heart sank when X showed me the tape on a kidnapping sh[illegible] intended to use. This was one that Y had used and was very difficult to hear. As introduction she explained the word 'kidnap'. The students had a worksheet similar to Y's i.e. comprehension questions. They were to listen and take notes using questions as a guide. She played a really long tape once; then we read it and then she played it. No attempt to break it up. Students then cf. their notes - pretty hopeless notes. Partly because the guiding questions were guiding them to things they shouldn't have bothered to put in their notes. X then noticed the poor notes - her idea of retrieving the situation was to tell them to make them up. So we got some interesting variations on the kidnapping stories - some of them were much better and more exciting them the original.

Example of Maze derived from above diary entries

Decision Point Maze 4.

ENTRY SITUATION

You have decided to give a lesson in taking notes from spoken text. You have got another teacher to record a text (see attached) on tape for the pupils to listen to and take notes from. The class is ready and the tape is plugged in.

Do you:-

a. Tell the students why you want them to listen to the tape and what you want them to do whilst they are listening. (1)

or

b. Tell the students what the tape is about and ask them to be quiet and listen. (3).

1. One of the pupils asks you what they will do with their notes. You haven't actually got anything planned.

Do you:-

a. Tell them you are going to give them a mark for the accuracy of their notes. (2)

or

b. Say the notes will be used for a later task. (3)

continued

2. You turn the tape on but notice that no one is taking any notes.

Do you:-

a. Stop the tape and explain the task and rewind the tape. (6)

or

b. Stop the tape but then decide that in any case it is best for them to listen first without writing - you will play the tape a second time. (3)

3. You turn the tape on but you notice that the children at the back are not listening.

Do you:-

a. Stop the tape and ask them again to pay attention carefully. (4)

or b. Continue playing the tape but go to the back of the class and see what the problem is. (5)

4. You start the tape again but after 2 minutes you realise that the noise from the back of the class is increasing.

Do you:-

a. Decide to read out the text. (6)

or

b. Ask one of the pupils to read out the text (7)

5. You realise the problem is that they cannot hear the tape from the back of the class.

Do you:-

a. Stop the tape and decide to read it aloud. (6)

or

b. Give the text to the student to read silently and take notes. (11).

6. The pupils start to take notes but it is obvious that some are having difficulties.

Do you:-

a. Decide to stop every so often and construct the notes on the board as a class activity. (10)

or

b. When the text stops, ask the children to get into groups of four and try to construct one version of the notes. (8)

7. Unfortunately no one can hear or understand very easily what the pupil says. He stumbles and pauses as he reads. The student is very conscious of this.

Do you:-

a. Quietly interrupt the student, thank him and continue reading the text aloud yourself. (6)

or

b. Let the student continue, but as he speaks you write headings yourself on the board. (9).

8. What will you do with the notes each group has produced?

9. Would it have been better to have given the students the headings before they listened to the text.

10. What do you think would be an appropriate next step bearing in mind your original objectives?

11. Look back at the original objective of the lesson - making notes from spoken text. How close are you to achieving your objective?

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Conflict in Process-Oriented Training

Simon Borg [1]

Introduction

The learning environment which process-oriented teacher training creates is often a novelty for trainees. Many trainees may find themselves on a process-oriented course after years spent in more traditional (i.e. product-oriented) educational environments. This will have developed in the trainees an entrenched set of learning-related beliefs, attitudes and habits incongruent with those implied by process-oriented work. Applied indiscriminately in such a situation, process-oriented training may not only fail to accomplish its objectives, but may lead to a sense of disorientation, frustration and alienation among trainees. The subsequent conflict experienced by trainees will, by raising their affective filter, interfere with learning. Thus the alienation of this conflict is necessary if the trainees are to derive the maximum benefits from process-oriented work. In this article, examples of the kind of conflict trainees on process-oriented courses may experience are first described. Practical steps trainers can take to minimise conflict and to make process-oriented training a profitable experience for all trainees are then suggested.

Characteristics of Process-Oriented Training

As an understanding of what process-oriented training involves is central to the discussion which follows, a number of characteristics which process-oriented training generally exhibits are listed below:

1 Trainees' attention is focused on both the processes and products of learning.

2 Trainees are encouraged to assume responsibility for their own learning.

3 Trainers act as facilitators of learning.

4 Trainee interaction is promoted.

5 Positive trainer/trainee and trainee-trainee relationships are promoted.

6 A top-down view of learning is avoided.

7 Training is concerned with both the personal and the professional development of trainees.

8 Enquiry-oriented work is encouraged.

9 The experience which trainees bring to the training situation is valued and exploited.

Individual programmes of study will of course differ in the extent to which they exemplify these features, yet all process-oriented training will share the common objectives of developing autonomous, critically reflective and personally and interpersonally aware trainees. As noted above, however, these objectives may not always be reached because of conflict which trainees experience. The nature of this conflict is discussed in more detail below.

Conflict in Process-Oriented Training

Four main categories of conflict are described below. These are related to the trainers' role, to the trainees' role, to training methodology and to training content.

1 Related to the trainers' role
Process-oriented trainers tend to adopt the role of facilitator - by which I understand one who enables learning rather than one who teaches - and the frequently non-directive, problem-posing (rather than problem-solving) attitude of such trainers may be a source of conflict in trainees who

- resent the trainers' apparent unwillingness to provide substantial input and to be overtly directive.
- have problems accepting the notion of trainer as approachable co-learner[2] rather than trainer as inaccessible expert.

2 Related to the trainees' role
Trainees used to working in non-process-oriented contexts may experience conflicts because of the demands made on them to

- develop as autonomous learners (i.e. accept added responsibility for their own learning)
- adopt a collaborative/cooperative approach to learning (i.e. learn to work with others to achieve common goals)
- develop personally and professionally (i.e. learn about themselves, not just about the subject under study)
- develop interpersonally (i.e. become sensitive to the needs of other participants in the same learning situation).

3 Related to methodology
Process-oriented methodology can conflict with trainees' existing beliefs about learning because it is

- trainee-centred
- task-based (with a focus on both how these tasks are performed i.e. the process as well as on the outcomes the tasks lead to)
- reflective (i.e. it encourages trainees to develop personal theories by examining their own experience).

continued

- non-judgemental (i.e. it encourages trainees to evaluate their own work).
- enquiry-oriented (i.e. it encourages trainees to learn through analysis and discovery).

4 Related to Content
Product-oriented trainees often perceive course content in terms of a body of theoretical knowledge which they will be required to internalise. A process-orientation defines content in a broader manner such that

- propositional knowledge (i.e. theory) is not presented prescriptively - trainees are encouraged to engage in "conceptual analysis" (McIntyre 1993:50), that is to question (i.e. not accept blindly) the meaningfulness of educational concepts and assertions and to assess the relavance of empirical research to their own teaching situation.
- trainees are encouraged to develop and explore their own personal theories about teaching and learning.
- the development of the trainees' intellectual processes (e.g. encouraging trainees to develop decision-making skills or habits of reflection) is an important part of the course content.

In this case, the conflict arises because the trainees' notion of knowledge (i.e. learning an externally-imposed corpus of information) is challenged by a view of knowledge as a personally construed phenomenon.

The kinds of conflict just described occur when the trainee is not able to make immediate sense of nor to relate in a concrete manner to the principles of learning that process-oriented training is based on. In such a situation, it seems highly unlikely that a trainee will experience the kind of learning outcomes (i.e. increased autonomy, personal/interpersonal awareness and reflective ability) that process-oriented training anticipates. On the contrary, the conflicts may be so intense that process-oriented training actually frustrates, disorientates and alienates trainees.

The discussion so far has highlighted two main issues which trainers who apply process-oriented training should be aware of:

1 It should not be assumed that process-oriented training is immediately appealing to all trainees. Some trainees may not be at all amenable to a process-orientation.

2 By challenging the trainees' established patterns of learning, process-oriented training may lead to conflict which can hinder the trainees' progress on the course.

These two issues would seem to suggest a third:

3 Trainers need to take practical steps which, by minimising the conflict which trainees experience, will make the anticipated outcomes of process-oriented training accessible to all trainees.

There is a clear need, therefore, for trainers to build into process-oriented work certain measures which will reduce the potential for conflict described above and hence lead to more satisfying learning outcomes for the trainees involved. Some of these measures are described in the next section.

Minimising Conflict in Process-Oriented Training

Here are eight suggestions which can help trainers on process-oriented courses to minimise potential trainee conflict

1 Acknowledge the possibility that trainees may resist a process-orientation. To minimise trainee conflict, trainers need first of all to acknowledge the fact that trainees will not necessarily accept unquestioningly everything the course proposes. This kind of awareness in trainers is fundamental in prompting them to start thinking about how to deal with such resistance, and it is in fact a prerequisite for the implementation of the other recommendations made here.

2 Make the assumptions the course is based upon explicit. The description of the course which the trainees receive should go beyond an account of course content. Trainees should be provided with a clear account of the training methodology they will be exposed to, and of the educational principles it is based on.[3] Information of this kind can help reduce the anxiety uninformed trainees may experience on a course which they feel is based on hidden assumptions.

3 Be aware of potential problems and devise specific desensitising activities. For example, trainees who have never experienced interactive work need time to explore and understand what organising learning in this manner involves (e.g. what contributes to/hinders its effectiveness). Activities which introduce trainees to interactive work (e.g. observing groups working on video and analysing what happens) are needed to prepare the trainees to participate more effectively during the course. Such activities could involve trainees in thinking about group dynamics and also about the role which interpersonal relationships play in making interactive work successful. As I have argued elsewhere (Borg 1993), trainees who are aware of how their relationships with each other affect their interaction will be better equipped to make this interaction successful. On the other hand, thrusting trainees into interactive work without preparation can lead to conflict of the kind already discussed.

4 Provide mechanisms through which trainees can provide regular feedback on the course. Enabling trainees to share what they think/feel about the course with their peers (eg via course meetings) and/or trainers (eg via journals) can have many benefits; for example, trainers can assess the effect of the course on the trainees and become aware of the problems of individual trainees; trainees may also realise that their problems are shared by others and that collaboratively these may be solved.

5 Encourage the trainees to evaluate their own learning experiences. By keeping a personal account of their own learning experiences on a course (eg a diary), trainees may find not only an outlet for their frustration but also a means through which this can be objectively reflected upon and made sense of by the trainees themselves. It may also enable the trainees to

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develop an understanding of the rationale behind the learning experiences the course sets up for them.

6 Provide opportunities for trainees to choose their own modes of working. Even if a course is predominantly based on interactive modes of learning, there should be occasions during the course where trainees are free to decide whether they want to work individually or with other people. Such opportunities give trainees a chance to experience and compare different modes of working. They also provide trainees who are still adjusting to interactive work some respite from the conflict the continual imposition of this mode of learning may create.

7 Adopt modes of assessment which reflect the process-orientation of the course. Trainees who invest both personally and professionally in a process-oriented course may be frustrated when the mode of assessment (assuming that the course is to be assessed) in no way reflects this process-orientation. Thus assignments should not all be of the standard research type which are graded by the trainer. More process-oriented alternatives would include involving the trainees in assessing their own work (eg self-evaluation followed by discussion with trainers and peers) and selecting topics which encourage trainees to draw upon their own knowledge, theories and experience rather than those found in the literature (eg reflective accounts in which the trainees write about their own learning experiences). Trainees can also be allowed to choose to work on topics they feel are relevant.

8 Do not dismiss the conflict trainees experience by saying "It's part of the learning process". Trainers sometimes view the frustration which trainees experience as an inevitable and possibly desirable part of process-oriented learning. Even though conflict may in some way contribute to learning, the trainers' attitude here is of little help to trainees in search of support. Practical help in coping with conflict is what trainees need. Only when the trainees, with the help of the support trainers provide, are able to objectify their conflict, will they be in a position to analyse it (eg through diaries - see 5 above) and possibly to exploit it to enhance their own learning.

Conclusion

When writing about the implications of methodological change for teachers Luxon (1994:6) noted that "change is often painful and there is often resistance to it". This article has considered the changes in trainees' ideas and beliefs about learning which process-oriented training may call for, and in doing so it has attempted to sensitise trainers to the fact that the pain (i.e. conflict) which trainees may experience needs to be acknowledged and that measures aimed at helping the trainees to deal with this conflict need to be taken. Applied without this kind of awareness, process-oriented training, despite its apparent suitability as a means of encouraging the personal and professional development of trainees, may be ultimately self-defeating. On the other hand, the implementation of the kind of measures suggested here (none of which detract in any way from the process-orientation of a course) can make process-oriented training a fulfilling experience for all trainees.

Notes

1 This article developed from a workshop on process-oriented training which I ran at the IATEFL Conference (Brighton 1994) together with my colleagues Uwe Pohl and Margit Szeszytay from Eotvos Lorand University, Budapest, Hungary and Jamilah Mustafa from the College of St. Mark and St. John, Plymouth, UK. These individuals have contributed in no small way to the ideas developed here.

2 The picture of facilitator as "approachable co-participant" is derived from Heron's (1989) work on facilitation where one of his modes of facilitation is the "cooperative" mode. In this mode, the trainer negotiates with the learners, shares his or her views with them, and collaborates with them in all decisions related to the learning process. In this mode, the facilitator is an approachable co-participant.

3 It is true that process-oriented courses may purposefully refrain from making their underlying educational principles explicit with the aim of leading trainees to discover these during the course. However, I believe that completely uniformed trainees are more likely to experience conflict and that at least an outline of the main assumptions the course is based on should be provided. This would not necessarily preclude a deeper analysis of these assumptions as part of the course.

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Have you read......?

"Going Deeper: Teaching and Group work in Adult Education"

by Griff Foley in *Studies in the education of adults*, Vol. 24, No.2, 1992.

Griff Foley works in the School of Adult and Language Education, at the University of Technology, Sydney, Australia. In his paper he describes some encounters between participants and group leaders in his school. The encounters involve participants who are agitated, upset or dissatisfied and trainers who feel they should be able to deal with this in some way.

Foley says, "For around two decades the way adult educators look at teaching and group work has been dominated by a combination of an instrumentalism which assumes that teachers can control students' learning, and a version of humanistic psychology which sees learning groups as fundamentally healthy and potentially self-directing organisms, and group leaders as facilitators of the emergence of natural, positive tendencies in groups"...This paper "contends that, while the received approach to group work has had progressive educational and social effects, it needs to be augmented by analyses which reveal more of the depths, complexities and ambiguities of group life"...

"Groups do behave negatively, irrationally, and destructively. They also behave positively, rationally and creatively. Both tendencies are present in groups. Unlike Roger's theory, psychoanalytic explanations of group behaviour account for this duality" Foley looks at a number of concepts in psychoanalysis and group work to see if they can throw light on the encounters described. First he draws on the work of Wilfred Bion and his followers at the Tavistock Clinic in London from the late 1940's onwards. Bion describes the human being as a group animal. As such s/he can't get on without other human beings but unfortunately can't get on with them very well either! Also a group has its own dynamic quite different from the dynamics of the individual personalities making up the group. Bion also assumes that in each individual exist repressed feelings and thoughts deriving from early experience. These two aspects of mind (the conscious, acknowledged and the unconscious, unacknowledged) are both present in groups. The two aspects are called the "work-group" and the "basic assumption" group. The work group gets on with the job, developing over time, approaching problems in a rational way, talking through thoughts and feelings, and has clear leadership. The "basic assumption" refers to the group's tacit, distorted assumptions about reality which have no real awareness of time or development, are hostile to rationality, manifest sound and noise rather than effective verbal communication and demonstrate a high degree of cohesiveness. Bion identifies these types of basic assumption. One is a "dependency" - where the group behaves as if the group leader knows everything. Dependency often develops in therapy and learning situations where the idea that the individual has to work hard is not necessarily popular! (The other types of basic assumptions are 'pairing' and 'fight or flight'). "The work group and the basic assumption group exist alongside one another. The work group struggles to get on with its task, but is inevitably suffused with basic assumption behaviour". Foley is particularly interested in the "dependency" assumption group since he feels that the mode of teaching and learning emergent in his own institution has encouraged students to avoid responsibility and encouraged staff to be endlessly supportive of students both academically and emotionally. This in turn makes it difficult for staff to challenge and extend students. "It appears that this humanistic and supportive approach to teaching encourages the release of unconscious feelings, which are repressed in more conventional teacher-directed forms of education; such as university lectures or tutorials".

Foley also looks at another couple of concepts: "emotional labour" and "emotional management". Emotional labour is when we induce or suppress feelings in order to sustain an outward appearance that produces a proper state of mind in others. An example would be an airline flight attendant exuding conviviality and calm while the plane is going through air turbulence. Foley feels that the "endlessly supportive" facilitators in his establishment are under constant pressure to adopt a "false self". Staff may thus find it difficult to confront students, academic work is in danger of staying mediocre, students can use staff as emotional dumping grounds and presumably staff head towards stress and 'burn-out'. Thus Foley feels that although democratic student-teacher relationships are most satisfactory in some respects, they can produce outcomes very different from the ones intended. By understanding the concepts mentioned in his paper, Foley feels he is "less likely to be surprised or discomforted when negative behaviour appears in learning groups". Also..."awareness of these concepts helps me discard the false self of endlessly supportive facilitator, and to behave in ways which encourages students to take responsibility for their learning".

If you are interested in group work or have ever had encounter with an individual or a group in a learning situation that distressed you in some way and you want to do more than just dismiss it as a "personality clash", then you might find this article interesting and the reading references rich. I would have liked to re-print the whole article in this journal but unfortunately it is just too long for us.

Tessa Woodward

British Council International Seminars

Materials writing for ELT

12 to 20 September 1995 *Oxford*
Directed by Philip Prowse and Simon Greenall

The aim of the seminar is to bring together people who work with secondary and adult learners around the world and who are interested in writing materials with authors and producers of ELT materials in the United Kingdom. The seminar will focus on key issues in textbook writing and raise awareness of the writing process. In addition to input from the seminar team, the participants will contribute from their own perspectives and experience.

The programme will be of particular interest to people who have little or no experience of materials writing, and to practising writers of ELT materials at adult or secondary level who enjoy the opportunity to exchange ideas with other writers, editors and publishers.

Fee: £1,190 (inclusive)

Communicative language testing revisited

3 to 14 September 1995 *Lancaster*
Directed by Professor J Charles Alderson

The aim of this seminar is to attempt to take stock of what the achievements of communicative language testing are, what issues in test design, delivery and analysis remain outstanding and what problems need to be defined and addressed.

The programme will be of particular interest to senior staff in ministries of education responsible for language assessment in examination units, boards, curriculum development centres; language test developers in school or university systems; language test researchers; applied linguists with an interest in assessment issues; language education researchers who need to use language tests; others involved in devising, using or thinking about language assessment instruments.

Fee: £1,770 (inclusive)

Implementing innovation in ELT materials and methods

3 to 13 September 1995 *Liverpool*
Directed by Geoff Thompson

The seminar will aim to help participants to extend their existing knowledge of the underlying linguistic and methodological principles of ELT, in particular by introducing them to new insights from two main sourced from applied linguistics and from research into how people learn languages.

The programme will be of particular interest to experienced ELT practitioners who are involved - or likely to become involved - in discussions on the materials and methods used in their country, region or institution. It will also be directly relevant to the work of those involved in teacher training, both pre-service and in-service.

Fee: £1,280 (inclusive)

Teaching English to young learners: current perspectives

27 August to 8 September 1995 *Warwick*
Directed by Shelagh Rixon

The seminar aims to provide an opportunity for professional development in the field of teaching English to young learners, to senior personnel from countries where English is taught at primary school age (6 to 12 years range). The programme will offer a state-of-the-art overview of issues or areas of activity related to the teaching of English to young learners. Within each topic area, there will be some specialist input and extensive opportunities for seminar discussion, workshop activity and practical involvement in a range of tasks with materials, curriculum documents, and reading resources.

The programme will be of particular interest to senior teachers, teacher trainers, inspectors, advisers, materials writers or curriculum development specialists, and policy makers. They may work in contexts where English is either a foreign or a second language.

Fee : £1,390 (inclusive)

Managing evaluation and innovation in ELT

10 to 22 September 1995 *University of Warwick*
Directed by Dr Pauline Rea-Dickins and Tricia Hedge

Many ELT practitioners are involved in managing evaluation and innovation in ELT. The seminar will aim to look at the role of evaluation in change and at procedures in the process of evaluation, and it will consider the range of strategies available to managers of change. Participants will be invited to bring with them data, documentation and case studies for discussion.

The programme will be of particular interest to those who need to find out more about evaluation and change because they are assuming roles and responsibilities in this area of operation.

[illegible] 420 (inclusive)

English across the curriculum

3 to 16 September 1995 *Canterbury*
Directed by Adrian Holliday

The seminar will consider the aims of cross-curricular language policy; investigate methods of organising English as a service subject; and consider the skills necessary to analyse needs and design appropriate teaching strategies.

The programme will be of particular interest to school inspectors involved with implementing language policy, headteachers developing service English in their schools, department heads at secondary and tertiary levels developing inter-departmental co-operation, and materials developers.

Fee: £1,490 (inclusive)

Developing materials and resources for self-access

12 to 24 November 1995 *Saffron Walden*
Directed by a team of tutors from Bell Language School

During this seminar participants will look at and experience ways of selecting, producing and adapting materials and resources for self-access. They will also become aware of the related practical management issues - innovation, promotions, systems, and training staff and learners.

The programme will be of particular interest to those who are involved in - or about to become involved in - developing self-access materials and/or setting up self-access resources for secondary and/or adult learners.

Fee: £1,430 (inclusive)

New perspectives on policy and planning for foreign language learning

24 October to 1 November 1995 *Durham*
Directed by Professor Michael Byram

The seminar will consider the internationalisation of foreign language learning and participants will start on developing a strategy for reviewing the policy in their own systems in order that the most effective systems are implemented.

The programme will be of particular interest to people in a position to influence language policies and the education policies that result from ministries of education and culture; directors of education and culture; inspectors; and teaching advisers.

Fee: £1,490 (inclusive)

Helping teachers to help themselves: issues in teacher development

11 to 23 June 1995 *Hastings*
Directed by Adrian Underhill

The seminar will examine teacher development and its facilitation. The two main aims of the seminar are:

1. To deepen course participants' own understanding of the issues and processes involved in the development of teachers' personal and professional capacities, especially in the development of teachers' self-awareness and their ability to be self-evaluating and self-directing.
2. To develop course participants' ability to respond creatively and sensitively to the demands of teacher development in their own working environments and to extend their range of personal and interpersonal facilitation skills that will help them in their work with teachers.

The programme will be of particular interest to in-service and pre-service trainers, advisers, supervisors, administrators, directors of studies, project managers and teachers. It will be relevant to anyone involved in a teacher development initiative.

Fee: £1,350 (inclusive)

For further information contact: Publicity Manager, International Seminars Department, The British Council, 10 Spring Gardens, London SW1A 2BN. Telephone: +44(0)71 389 4264/4162/4226 Fax: +44(0)71 389 4154 Telex: 89252201 BRICON G.

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NLP Series Part Three

States and Strategies

Tim Murphey, Nanzan University

[N.B. This is the third of a series of articles on NLP. The first article was a general overview of NLP and provided a valuable exercise with the presuppositions of NLP. The second dealt with beliefs: how to find out what yours are, where they came from and what you can do with them. This article deals with states and strategies].

If I were to tell you that "O T T F F ..." is the beginning of an infinite series, what would be the next two letters? (I'll give you the length of this article to think about it).

Your "state" refers to your emotional condition at any one point in time, it's like a mind-body snapshot. Getting people into an appropriate state for study and exploration is what doing "warm-up activities" or "ice breakers" is all about. Strategies refers to a particular sequence of internal representations that one goes through to perform a particular task. We have strategies for doing practically everything we do, even going into good and bad states, which I will concentrate on here.

For example, if someone tells you you have a faculty meeting tomorrow and you feel bad about it, you may have performed a strategy similar to this:

Ae →	**Vr** →	**K** →	**Aid**
auditory	visual	kinaesthetic	auditory
external	remembered	negative	internal dialogue

We would read this as "you hear an auditory external message ('faculty meeting') which provokes a remembered picture of being bored at past meetings, and then you feel bad and have an auditory internal dialogue, that might say 'What a waste of time!". If all this happens all at once without really going through the steps, you have a synaesthesia, i.e. simultaneous accessing of different sensorily related information. NLP is concerned with figuring out such programmes or strategies and letting people decide if they are helpful or not and showing them how to have alternatives.

The relationship between state and strategy is an important one. When you are in a good state, you may have easy access to productive strategies. For example, in a resourceful state you might joke about the faculty meeting and think of all the useful ways to use the time. When you are in an unresourceful state, more things seem to go wrong because your state predisposes your brain to access certain negative programming strategies.

Teaching and teacher training

Obviously in teaching, and training teachers, it would be useful to know how to help learners get into good states and to access efficient learning strategies. It could also be that the strategies for planning classes and for decision-making in class depend a lot on the states we are in. Let's look a little closer now at the visual, auditory, and kinaesthetic input that are capable of changing our states and those of our students.

Kinaesthetic

Probably the single most effective way to change someone's state is to change their physiology. Asking students to stand up and stretch at the beginning of class not only changes state but also creates group rapport because you are all doing the same thing, matching and mirroring each other. Playing total physical response type games or massaging each other further gets people to align their states. I regularly use juggling to change states when students are tired. It doesn't matter if students can actually do it or not, the point is that they are handling objects and moving and having fun for a few minutes. Simply breathing deeply changes our state as well. If teachers are nervous before a class, doing some deep breathing will often relax them and permit them to focus more. The principle magic in it is that you are providing more oxygen to the brain.

Auditory

Teachers who use music already know the great impact that it can have on the mood of students. Upbeat music when they come in, background music for social activities or writing and reading, and again something exciting for leaving class. Many NLP trainers plan their music in detail. Other things that enter into the auditory environment are the teacher's voice and those of fellow students. Some voices appeal to us and other don't. There is a whole range of tones and ways of speaking that can induce certain states of excitement, concentration, concern, fun, etc. that teachers can use if they want to. It is not just a question of being natural at it, rather it's a question of becoming aware of the power of your voice and tone. Communication specialists estimate that of the information we take in only 7% is verbal (meaning of words), 38% is vocal (tone, tempo, timbre, volume), and 55% facial (Mehrabian 1968 see Ref. 1).

Visual

I have always loved pre-school classrooms with the colours and interesting visuals everywhere. They are in stark contrast to most later classrooms with their bare walls and bleak colours. However, we can still hang the occasional poster and make drawings on the board that raise eyebrows. Drawing something that is not explained until later in the class can instil a state of curiosity. Of course the dress, gestures, and movement of the teacher can also be used to provoke certain states.

Anchors = reminders

After having used any of the above to provoke a state, they can be used in subsequent classes to arouse the same state even more quickly. The same music, stretching exercises, and certain visuals become reminders of particular past states. When used consistently, they become very powerful. When used inconsistently, they naturally get mixed responses.

Teachers' states

States are often contagious. One of the best ways to get someone to go into a certain state is first to match their state (pacing) and, when rapport has been established to go into the desired state yourself (leading). If you don't go into the desired state yourself, chances are no one else will. If you are in good enough rapport, your audience will usually follow.

Thinking consciously beforehand about what state you want the students to go into will help you to plan your visuals, music, activities, metaphors, and your vocalisations, dress, and actions to contribute towards that state. One reason different classes react differently to the same material is that we often are in different states ourselves when we try to replicate what we did in the first class. The material is just not the same if you are in a different state.

Just before teaching

Going into resourceful states before actually teaching can be done in several ways. You can recall past positive teaching experiences and put yourself into that situation just before you enter the class. Others recall a role model and pretend they are that person. I often take a few minutes of quiet time to mentally run through what I am gong to do (future pacing). I imagine positive outcomes and my students responding well and I usually get really excited about what I'm going to do. Then I can't wait to go to class. It's fun. Even now as I think about it I tend to get excited. That's the amazing thing: how we think inside our heads greatly affects our physiology and can have a great impact on what and how we communicate and subsequently on the responses to our communications. William James said much the same thing at the turn of the last century when he mentioned that possibly the greatest discovery of his generation was that by changing the internal representations of the mind we can change the external world (my remembered paraphrase). NLP explores ways to empower people with the tools and understanding to choose the programs that decide their beliefs, states, and strategies. It's a fascinating adventure in the internal universe.

References

1. Mehrabian, A. 1968 Communication without Words. Psychology Today September, pp.53-55.

States - Questions for teachers Activity Sheet

To fill out individually and then discuss in pairs.

1. What state do you want to be in when you begin a class?
2. What state do you want your students to be in at the beginning of class?
3. How do you get yourself into that state?
4. How do you get your students into that state?
5. During a regular class, do you wish your students to go into different states? If so, which ones and how do you contribute to their going into those states?
6. Imagine you are a student in your class. What do the things you see, hear and feel (both physically and emotional) do to your state?

What is within your power to change and how might you do that?

7. TASK: Name three things that you will experiment with in the next few classes that may have an impact on student states. Do them and then report back to the group (e.g. varying your voice tone and speed, background music, student movement, intriguing drawings on the blackboard, etc.)

Tim Murphy, Ph.D. is a certified NLP trainer and teaches courses in NLP, Alternative Learning Forms, and Applied Linguistics at Nanzan University, Nagoya, Japan. He conducts seminars internationally. He is the author of Teaching One to One (Longman) and Music and Song (OUP) NLP is one of several fields he has pursued in his own continuing teacher development.

P.S. O T T F F... (The next two letters are S S)

Thanks to Herbert Puchta, Judith Baker, and Tessa Woodward for their sensitive insight and suggestions on previous drafts of these articles.

! NEWS!

The second international conference on language in development will be held in Bali, Indonesia, April 10-12 1995. The theme is language and communication in development: stakeholders' perspect[illegible]. Contact Tony Crooks, Bali Language Centre, Jalan Kapten Agung 19, Denpasar 80232, Bali, for more information.

Book Review

Martin Parrott, Tasks for Language Teachers: A resource book for training and development, CUP, 1993

All teacher training or teacher development implies a gap between trainer and trainee - an experience gap, a skills gap, a knowledge or attitude gap, or a resources gap. This is true, it seems to me, whether one espouses a reflective training model or the now stigmatised transmission model (which, sensitively handled, can still be rich in reflective activities). The trainer in some sense always knows more than the participants, or has an agenda that is not fully disclosed to them. As the children's joke puts it: What do you need to know to be able to teach a dog tricks? Answer: More than the dog.

One of the remarkable things about Martin Parrott's Tasks for Language Teachers is the near invisibility of the trainer-participant gap. Indeed the author suggests in his introduction (p.15) that a participant can function as peer-trainer or animateur, or that a group can use the book without anyone in that role at all. (Though this raises questions about who the participants should be, a point I will return to). But the gap is there: if not between trainer and participants, it is a gap between author and trainer. For this, it seems to me, is a book for trainers, and Parrott is the trainer's trainer. As Ramsay (updated for PC) puts it:

No teacher I of kids or smaller fry

No teacher I of teachers - no, not I.

For me the wider aim, the larger reach:

I teach folk how to teach folk how to teach.

The idea of separate trainer/lecturer's material to accompany the trainee/participant's book is not new. Hill & Dobbyn (1979) provide their aptly named lecturer with a lot of material for cognitive input as well as with guidance on procedure, timing and so on. In Doff (1988) the balance in the trainer's material shifts somewhat from content towards method, but Parrott, in the notes on each task (which seem primarily to be addressed to the trainer), subordinates content (outcomes) to method (process) in almost all the activities.

This is important and useful because what we have here is a blueprint for non-directive, non-judgmental teacher training or teacher development based on a reflective approach that places maximum value on the participants' own experience and perceptions. Just working through the tasks, alone in an armchair, has taught me a lot and clarified my ideas both as a language teacher and as a teacher trainer. In the space of a single book this is an achievement. And indeed the way in which the material is packaged raises questions about who is meant to teach what and when, and suggests that the final presentation may have resulted from a compromise between author and publisher.

The book consists of a 35-page introductory section (an introduction and three short chapters addressed to the trainer), 250 pages of tasks, and a 30-page "resources bank" providing data or practice material for some of the tasks. The 40 tasks comprise 28 discussion tasks, with recommended timings of from 40 to 150 minutes, and 12 classroom-based tasks (mini-action research) taking anything from a part-lesson to a series of lessons. Each task is presented in the form of a statement of the task, two to five pages in length, and notes on "suggested procedure" and "general discussion and possible outcomes", from one to eleven pages in length. Permission is given for trainers to photocopy the task pages, if participants don't have individual copies of the book.

If I was using this material myself (as I certainly hope to do), I would not want participants to have copies of the notes pages, at least not until after they had done the task. Nor would I want them to see all of a task straight away, since in many cases the first part of a task requires them to reflect on their own experience or practice, list factors relevant to the topic, etc., while the second part often gives possible answers for purposes of comparison. For instance, in Discussion Task 3 (Motivation and learning), Section B, Item 1 tells participants to "brainstorm ways in which the teacher can possibly affect the motivation of her students". Item 2 then asks them to "compare your list with the following..." Clearly the point of the first part would be lost if participants allowed their eyes to stray over the second part. Likewise with the "general discussion and possible outcomes" in the notes section, the temptation to look ahead to the "answers" (though Parrott repeatedly denies that there are any right answers) would vitiate the task activity.

It is not only here that one feels the presentation may have been skewed by the publisher's concerns. In the introductory section "Who this book is for" (pp 3-4)-the only part of the book that I read with less than total respect - it is claimed that the material is suitable both for experienced teachers and for pre-service trainees, both for school-based teacher development groups and for teachers' courses leading to a qualification - from RSA Certificate to Master's degrees. As a source book for occasional use, Tasks for Language Teachers can no doubt lay claim to this broad-spectrum audience. But it is a disservice to an excellent collection of teacher development activities to pretend that, taken as a whole, it is addressed to users other than experienced teachers.

Not only are participants asked in most tasks to reflect on their language-teaching experience, but they are assumed to be familiar with the basic conceptual framework of contemporary TEFL. If preliminary input was required on this background, the whole character of sessions would change, not to mention the suggested timings. Moreover pre-service trainees are generally not satisfied with the assurance that there are no right answers. They will accept the conventions of discovery learning (even if they sometimes accuse the trainer of playing cat-and-mouse

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with them), but by the end of it they want an outcome that they can have confidence in as at least a right answer. There is a need for "received knowledge" in pre-service training which trainers deny at their peril. But the beauty of Parrott's book is that it really does prescribe nothing in terms of outcomes at the content level. One should not pretend it is something that it is not.

I think that this is a book to use extensively, rather than to dip into in parallel with other materials: the results will certainly get better and better as participants grow more familiar with the procedures involved. Trainers or groups making this book the basis of a series of teacher development sessions would, however, do well to rethink the sequence of the chapters into which tasks are grouped. The order in the book is as follows:-

Ch.4 The learners (9 discussion tasks, 3 classroom-based tasks)

Ch.5 The teacher (4 discussion, 2 classroom-based)

Ch.6 Planning (4 discussion, 3 classroom-based)

Ch.7 Teaching: developing skills (9 discussion, 3 classroom-based)

Ch.8 Teaching: developing linguistic competence (5 discussion, 1 classroom-based).

The author emphasises the users' freedom to order ' la carte, but we all have a tendency to begin at the beginning. I think most teachers are likely to be more motivated by the topics in the last two chapters, and it would probably be better to select from there first, while the approach is being assimilated, before beginning to draw from the earlier, more general chapters.

The author's suggested timings seem to me to be rather optimistic (unless the trainer enforces them with an incongruously firm hand). But most discussion tasks would, I think, fit comfortably into a two-hour session. The assumption appears to be that they would be done at a single sitting (possibly following some initial reading or other individual preparation). But this might be a pity. Awareness-raising is not usually of the road-to-Damascus type, and one may wonder how much enduring growth in understanding would result, for most participants, from a one-off treatment of each of these tasks. When I come to use this material, I will want to negotiate some arrangement for previewing forthcoming topics before tackling them, then for having participants systematically prepare for them individually before they are tackled jointly and then later, for periodically reviewing, and perhaps adding to or modifying, the outcomes of earlier tasks. Without some such time spread, I would be very uncertain of the lasting benefit to participants of even working through all of this material.

Well, so much for quibbles. The choice of topics for the tasks is excellent. There is little of basic classroom procedures (in which this book is very different from the equally excellent International House distance training programme for Dip TEFLA, of which it is sometimes reminiscent). Rather the topics here require participants to synthesise and generalise from their knowledge of classroom practice, and to interpret classroom events at a level of generality higher than is possible in basic teacher training.

Let me end by restating my admiration. Parrott has a clear overview of the language teaching and learning process and a masterful ability to relate the parts to the whole. The book is clear, modest and consistent; abounds in sensible advice to the trainer, and is illuminated with insights into teacher development that give one at times the d'j' vu of a poetic experience. Trainers in whom temperament or working situation has brought out the authoritarian Adam should all find the time, like me, to work through these forty tasks - on their knees.

References

Doff, A 91988) Teach English: A training course for teachers. Trainer's handbooks and teacher's workbook. CUP.

Hill, L.A. & Dobbyn M (1979): A Teacher Training course: Lecturer's and trainee's books. Cassell.

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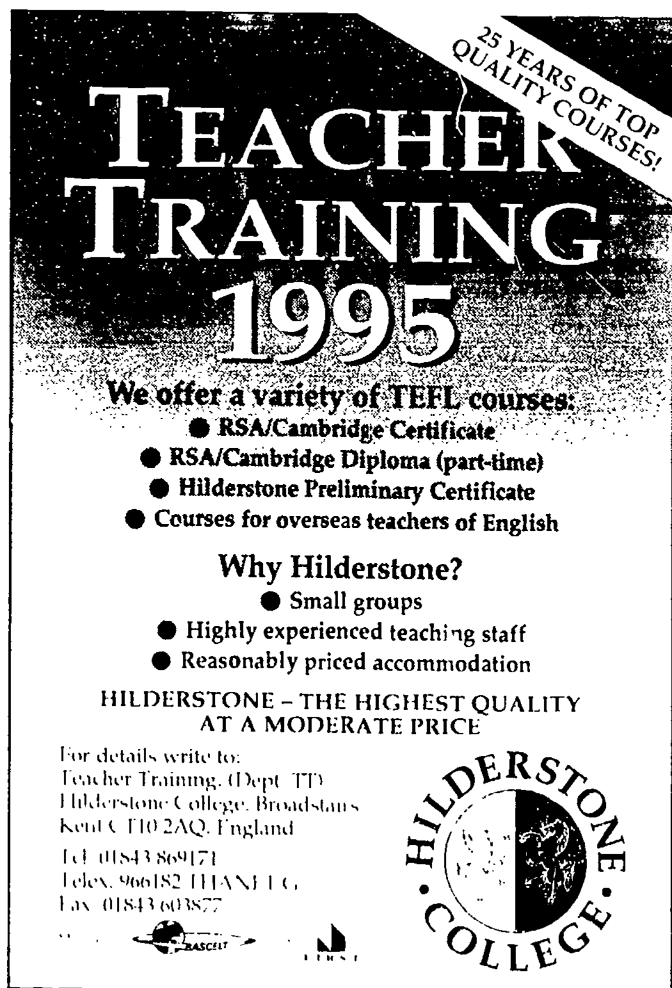

PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED

Of special interest or relevance to teacher trainers are:

Beginners by Peter Grundy (1994) OUP ISBN 0-19-437-200-6. There is an excellent introduction on the many different types of beginner, all requiring different approaches. Over 100 original, ready-to-use activities follow including many that while requiring very limited language are cognitively and affectively challenging and genuinely expressive of learner meanings. Sections on first lessons, roman script, self-study. Highly recommended for its empathy with beginners and interesting methodology.

Interaction in co-operative groups: the theoretical anatomy of group learning eds. R. Hertz-Lazarowitz and N. Miller (1992) CUP ISBN 0-521-40303-0 (hard back). Brings together fairly densely in small print, current related research from education, developmental and social psychology on the social construction of knowledge, social skills and classroom factors influencing peer interactions, task and reward structure and factors influencing positive intergroup relations. If you either love or hate using group work then at least read the final 20 pages summing up the implications of the research for classroom practice.

Penguin English has a new series of slim, pocket-sized, introductory guides to applied linguistics. Introducing discourse analysis by David Nunan. Introducing applied linguistics: An A-Z guide by Ronald Carter, co-editors of the series, were both published in 1993 as was Introducing writing by John Harris. Introducing Listening by Michael Rose followed in 1994. The series aims to introduce the key concepts in each area, using examples from ELT classrooms as well as tasks, self-study questions and further reading leads. What makes these little books especially useful is that: they are genuinely introductory, practical and interactive and they speak to all English language teachers whether TEFL, TESL, TESOL or mother tongue! Pop one in your pocket next time you have a journey to take.

English for the teacher by Mary Spratt (1994) CUP ISBN 0-521-426-76-6 plus cassette. A language improvement course for teachers of EFL whose first language isn't English. It works on English in the classroom, in professional contacts, for talking and reading about work and for furthering studies in EFL. The self-contained units are topic-based and on subjects such as teacher development, course books, a teacher's character, trouble in the classroom. They contain pictures, reading and listening texts, tasks (with answer sheets at the back). Designed mostly for in-service, it's also useable for some pre-service and as a preparation for the CEELT exam.

Common threads of practice eds. K.D. Samway and D. McKeon (1993) TESOL Inc. ISBN 0-939791-47-1. A collection of teacher accounts of teaching English (TESOL) to primary grade children (K-8) worldwide. Accounts from Soweto, Taiwan, Brunei, Philippines, Austria included.

Young learners by Sarah Phillips (1994) OUP ISBN 0-19-437-195-6. This book is for EFL teachers moving into the teaching of young people (and thus into mainstream primary education) and for practising primary teachers moving into TEFL. The age group concerned is roughly 5-12yrs. Five chapters focus on the skills, grammar and vocabulary. Four chapters deal with games, toys, making things and video. The last chapter shows how a unit of work can be put together. Photocopiable notesheets, good further reading and cross-referencing lists.

Distance learning in ELT eds. K. Richards and P. Roe (1994). M.E.P. and the British Council. ISBN 0-333-61058X (HB). Seventeen articles on distance learning for teachers (4 papers), ESP, young learners and others, what distance learning is, designing programmes, using phones, Network and written materials. There is no research yet on the average customer benefit from various language or teaching - learning packages on the market. This volume is thus a preliminary stimulus to thought on the subject. So if you're thinking of setting up or joining a distance programme this is about the only book available for you to read at the moment!

Managing the professional development of teachers by Eds: Les Bell and Chris Day Open University Press (1991) ISBN 0-335-0957-6. This book contains 12 papers on the experience of planning, implementing and evaluating staff development programmes for primary, secondary and further education in the U.K. state system. It looks at ways the concept of professional development of teachers has been interpreted and how it can be supported within schools and colleges.

Making sense of teaching by S. Brown and D. McIntyre (1993). Open University Press ISBN 0-335-15795-5. The book aims to develop an understanding of the professional craft knowledge of teachers through their own and their pupils' eyes. It is an account of a research project involving 16 primary and secondary teachers focusing on the concept of "good teaching".

Language teaching in the mirror eds. A. Peck and D. Westgate (1994) CILT ISBN 1-874016-22-4. Fifteen papers about "reflection", including why to reflect, what to reflect on, how to and the outcomes expected. Contributions are by practising teachers who have actually done it and are brief and readable.

Teaching Business English by M. Ellis and C. Johnson (1994) OUP ISBN 0-19-437167-0. Aimed as a reference text for the teacher, this book gives background on what business English is, who wants to learn it, where it's taught, resources available, analysing needs, managing activities and current trends. But if you or your trainees want to plunge straight into the teaching, try:

Business Language practice by J.M. Milne (1994) LTP ISBN 0-906717-54X. This is an intermediate practice book for students and can be used in conjunction with LTP's 5 other business English books for self or class study.

Inside Teaching by T. Bowen and J. Marks (1994) Heinemann ISBN 0-435-24088-9). This is the first (quite hefty) book we've received in Adrian Underhill's new teacher development series. The book is aimed at helping practising language teachers to become more aware of self, own teaching, language, other people's teaching and any methodological recommendations met. The chapter titles look interesting e.g. Bad habits, Glimpses through keyholes, Archaeology of methodology.

Vague language by Joanna Channell (1994) OUP ISBN 0-19-437-186-7. In the "describing English language" series, it shows how English provides its speakers with a rich variety of ways of being vague. It applies principles of pragmatics to the analysis of vague expressions. Copious authentic examples of loads of thingummys and stuff like that taken from computer held corpora and the author's collections.

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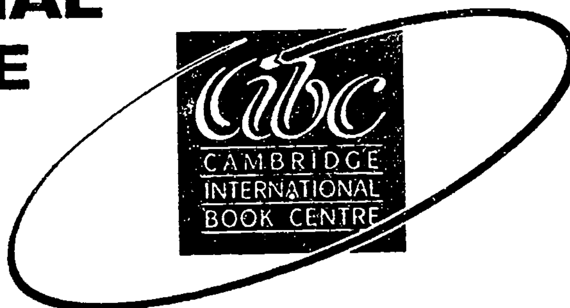

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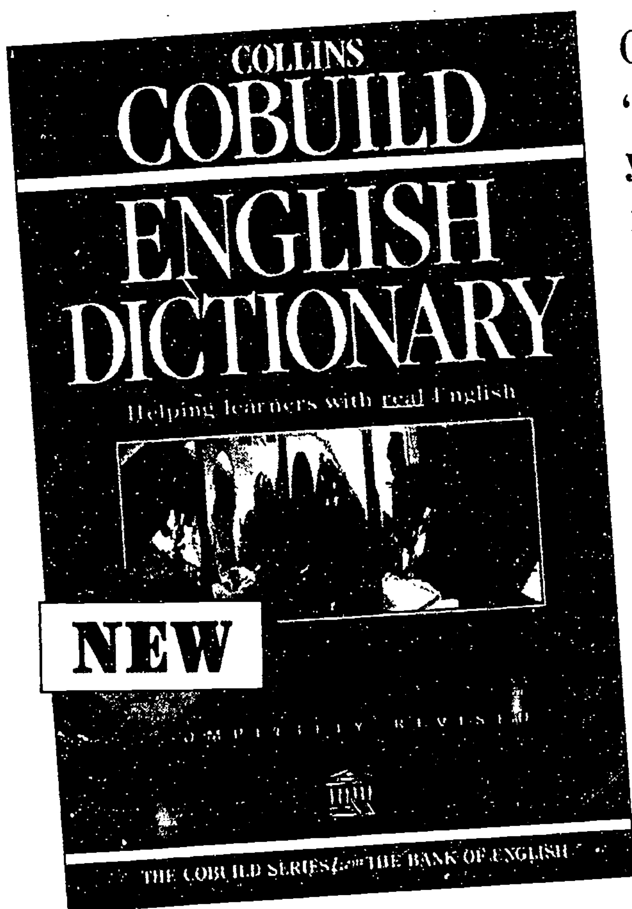

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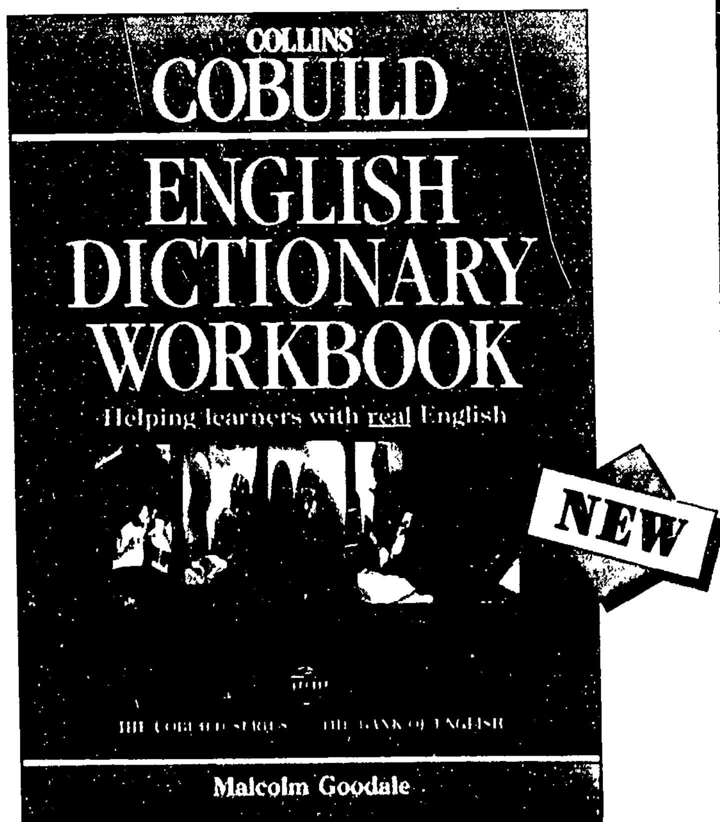

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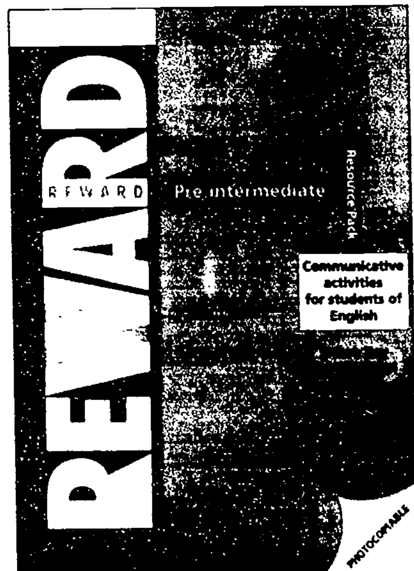

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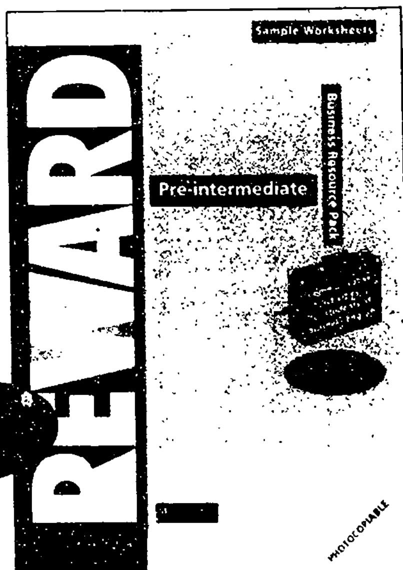

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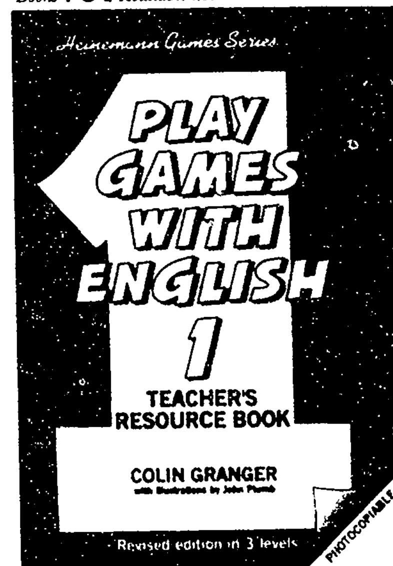

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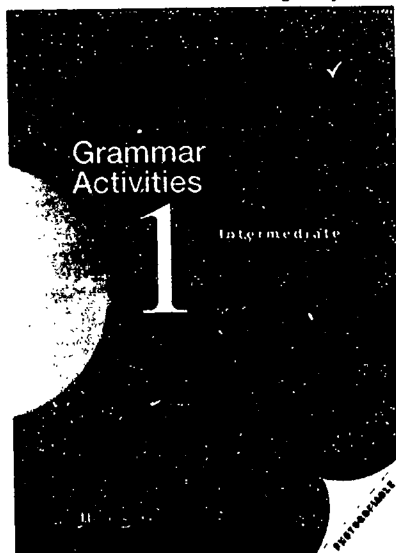

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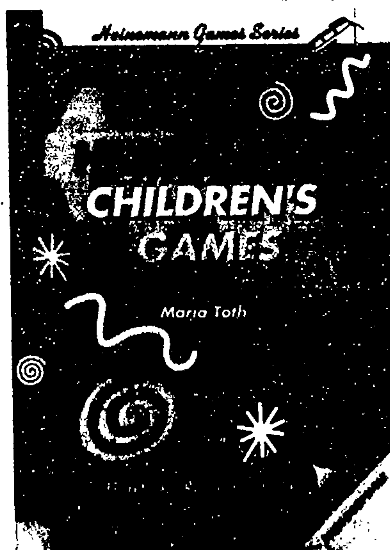

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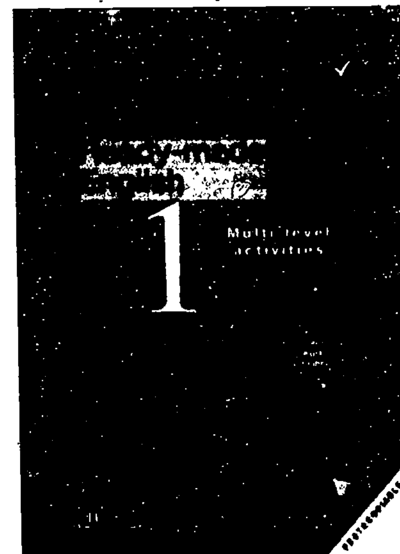

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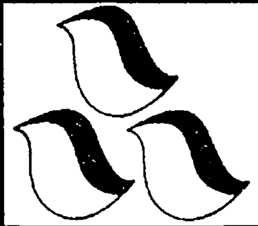

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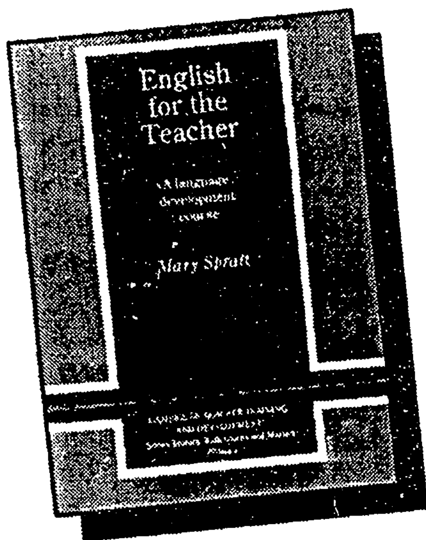

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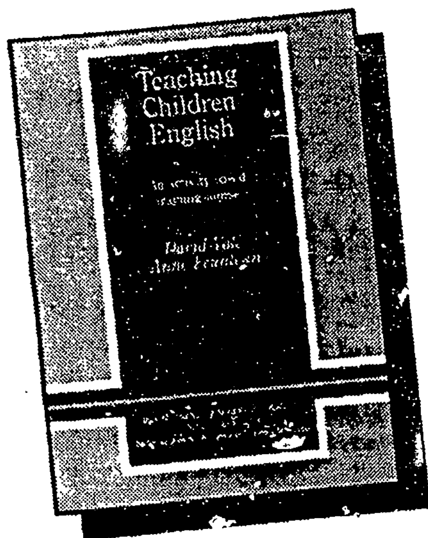

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ABOUT "THE TEACHER TRAINER"

"The Teacher Trainer" is a journal especially for those interested in modern language teacher training. Whether you are a teacher who tends to be asked questions by others in a staffroom, or a Director of Studies with a room of your own, whether you are a course tutor on an exam course, or an inspector going out to schools, this journal is for you. Our aims are to provide a forum for ideas, information and news, to put trainers in touch with each other and to give those involved in teacher training a feeling of how trainers in other fields operate as well as building up a pool of experience within modern language teacher training.

The journal comes out three times a year and makes use of a variety of formats e.g. article, letter, comment, quotation, cartoon, interview, spoof, haiku ideas. If the idea is good, we'll print it whatever voice you choose to express it in.

Editorial

In 1989 Peter Grundy wrote a two part article for The Teacher Trainer about pre-service teacher training. I had to read it several times to get all its many, heretical and provocative points but it was well worth it! The article was way ahead of its time. The debate on pre-service TESOL training only really hotted up in the U.K. a few years after the article was printed. Now, Peter Grundy is back! Again, his article may take a couple of readings as it has an interestingly embedded structure. Again, I feel it is the fore-runner of a debate just about to happen - this time on the place of pragmatics in language awareness training for teacher trainees.

Two issues ago I started to increase the number of trainee voices heard in the journal and this work continues this time with a cri-de-coeur from a practising teacher (and mother) re-training for primary schools. Supervisors please give ear!

Other series continuing are:

- Observation and feedback. Frank Fitzpatrick discusses the use of peer observation as a way of breaking down the isolation and de-motivation of teachers who finished all their training and qualifications some time ago.

- Session plans. An experiment in teaching English in Bavaria to nine and ten year olds lead Briony Beaven, the trainer, to work on some sessions for the teachers. She aimed to build sessions that were consistent in methodology with that used by the teachers in the primary classes. She has written up her session notes and materials for colleagues in similar training situations.

- People who train people. I interviewed Sarah Andrews about her provision of training and professional development courses for nurses working in the British National Health service. As our conversation unfolded I was amazed to find that reflective practice and active learning - very topical in modern language and TESOL teacher education - were also central to curriculum development in nurse training.

A new series starting this time is "Readings for trainees". The idea of this column is to give you, the trainer, some photocopiable texts to hand straight to the teachers or trainees you work with. The readings will differ in level and will be written by trainers all over the world. This time Magali de Moraes Menti provides some advice for inexperienced teachers. Magali is a trainer in Brazil. So why not let her speak directly to any inexperienced teachers you work with?

There does not seem a lot of reading available on the subject of lesson planning help so I'm happy to include Rita Skuja-Steele and Michael Gibbs' article on how to get away from the performance element of practice teaching by focusing on the learner at the lesson planning stage. We wind up this issue with two reports of books. Kate Evans tells us what she thinks of Ruth Wajnryb's 'Classroom observation tasks' and Seth Lindstromberg gives us his thoughts on Steven Pinker's 'The Language Instinct'.

I am very happy we have managed to launch two new series so far this year - Trainee Voices and Readings for Trainees. If you have ideas, reports, work that you would like to share with us on these or any other areas of interest to those involved in training, please send them in. Another new series, on language, will start next issue.

Looking forward to hearing from you!

Tessa Woodward

Editor

P.S. Why not check out the subscriber discount on Page 5?

ERIC

This article is going to follow the fundamental structure of a joke-telling routine. According to the ethnomethodologist, Harvey Sacks[1], a joke

- takes the form of a story
- has preface, telling and response stages
- allows 'failures of understanding' to be concealed
- exhibits 'supposed supposable unknowness to recipients'
- poses an 'understanding test'.

As you read it, please bear in mind that joke-telling, like article writing, is an activity-type with recognisable pragmatic conventions.

'Is it a Joke?' - The language Awareness (LA) Component of CTEFLA courses

Peter Grundy, University of Durham

1 Preface

These are two of the things that happened to me at the conference in Swansea of the International Association for Teachers of EFL (IATEFL):

1 I went to Philip Kerr's session on 'Raising Language Awareness'[2] and learnt that the LA component of CTEFLA courses has been reduced from 16 hours in 1979 to 10 now, that sessions on Word Order (surely the prototypical grammatical property of any language) no longer occur, and that most LA courses focus on verb forms.

2 I was a participant in a session on Neurolinguistic Programming (NLP) run by Judy Baker and Mario Rinvolucri[3]. In the discussion phase, Mario made the point that in Japanese there are highly grammaticalised ways of distinguishing utterances about which the speaker is certain from utterances to which the speaker is less committed. I said that this was true of all languages and that in English gerunds and infinitives tend to have these two functions. Mario asked for an example, and off the top of my head I suggested

(1) I admire your writing books

where the books are taken to be written, and

(2) I want to write a book

where the book is not presupposed as written.

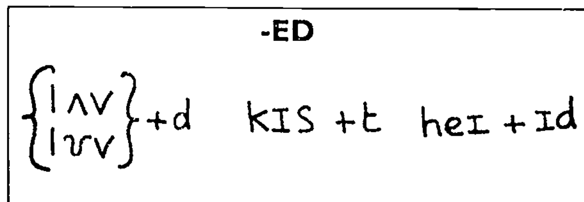
At this stage, Mario asked for a reference and as I was citing Kiparsky and Kiparsky's paper[4], another participant shouted out 'Is it a joke?'

2 Telling

2.1 What should not go into the LA element of CTEFLA courses: the case against teaching morphology and syntax

I wonder how many teacher trainers know sufficient about the formal structure of English to be able to provide a systematic description in the first place. And what use will trainees make of such descriptions anyway? Then there is a further (metatheoretical) difficulty - at what level of description are we to approach grammar

Take the case of the-now-more-favoured-than-ever verb form; take even an area as small as past tense forms in English. A descriptive grammar might go as far as to distinguish "regular" or "weak" verbs such as <love>, <kiss> or <hate> and their allomorphic variation



and "irregular" or "strong" verbs such as <leave>, <catch> or <hit>. One danger of this approach is that trainees treat what they have learnt as a pedagogic grammar for use in the classroom and try to relate information about the surface morphological structure of past forms to their unfortunate students - students who, left to their own devices, would in due course acquire this knowledge, just as we native speakers did, without ever knowing how to describe it.

This point raises precisely the usefulness issue referred to earlier: while learners might conceivably "learn" a language through learning about it in this way (especially if it were a dead one), it's for sure that such descriptive rules are not the psychologically real rules we actually "acquire" or really work with when we produce past forms.

Of course no one knows just what the psychologically real rules are, but in the case of <leave> → <left>, they need to account for

- an internal (high → mid) vowel change
- the devoicing of [v] (? as a result of the shorter preceding vowel)
- the +ED rule (applied after the internal devoicing to be realised as [t])

and in the case of <catch> → <caught>, they need to account for

continued →

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- an internal (front → back) vowel change
- the +ED rule
- the loss of [tS]

In each case, the more marked form (i.e. the past) is realised by a more marked vowel position, either lower or backer, than the less marked present form.

It's important to recognise that the rule suggested in the last sentence is no longer descriptive but "generative", because it tells us how we get a variety of surface realisations from one general underlying rule. But at this stage the "Catch 22" situation arises: no learner could be "taught" such real rules formally, precisely because they are the counterpart to a set of mental processes which we cannot consciously recover. This is why applied linguists argue that the natural "acquisition" of psychologically real rules is more effective than being taught or "learning" pedagogically devised descriptions of surface realisations.

Of course, it's important for CTEFLA trainees to understand this point, but is it worth spending all those hours trying to teach either unreliable descriptive grammar or some doubtful fragment of the generative rules underlying surface realisation in English?

So if the LA component of CTEFLA courses is not to be about what language is, about its form, what then it is to be about?

About its function, how it's used, of course! And about what it's used for - to communicate with. You can hardly call yourself a communicative teacher who helps learners to acquire functional English if your initial training has been entirely formal or structural - can you?

2.2 What might usefully go into the LA element of CTEFLA courses: the case for Pragmatics

(According to Atkinson, Kilby and Roca[5], Pragmatics is the study of 'the distinction between what a speaker's words (literally) mean and what the speaker might mean by his words').

Here is a fragment of conversation I overheard between two freshers queuing up to register at the beginning of the last academic year:

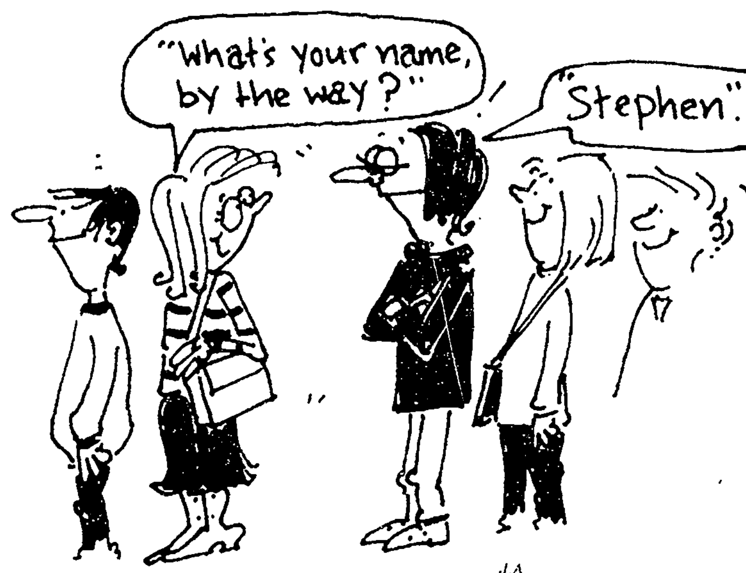
P: What's your name by the way

S: Stephen
P: You haven't asked my name back
S: What's your name
P: It's Pat

I don't know if they are still together, but they each frighten me in their own different ways. Look at some of the Pragmatic effects of their utterances:

P: What's your name by the way

P's 'by the way' is a hedge on the relevance of 'What's your name', a warning to S that what P is saying now isn't quite as relevant to what went before as his knowledge of the rules for talk would normally lead him to expect.



Perhaps it suggests that corridor-talk has gone far enough and a little intimacy may now be risked. 'What's your name' is also an indirect (but fairly conventional) way of saying Tell me your name (indirect because interrogative in form but intended as a request) and therefore a politeness strategy of a sort.

S: Stephen

S's 'Stephen' is so minimal as to flout Grice's Quantity maxim for conversation[6]:

(i) Make your contribution as informative as is required for the current purposes of the exchange

(ii) Do not make your contribution more informative than is required'

Because it's not informative to the expected degree, S's 'Stephen' is on the way to being rude in the sense that it fails to protect P's "face", or wish to be well regarded. It might be said to satisfy the request but not the requester.

P: You haven't asked my name back

P then indicates that she doesn't consider that S has fulfilled his conversational obligations, although strictly speaking he has complied with her request to give his name. 'You haven't asked my name back' is also a genuinely indirect way of telling someone to ask you your name and requires the addressee to draw an inference as to the speaker's intentions. What sort of attitude does her utterance convey - is it a reprimand? Will S draw the right inference and will the effect be as P calculated? How different would the intention and effect have been if she had said 'You haven't asked me my name back'? And, one might reasonably ask, why did she not simply give her name?

S: What's your name

Notice how inappropriate it would have been at this stage in the conversation for S to ask P's name in the same way that she had asked his (What's your name by the way') and what sort of effect it might have had.

P: It's Pat

P's 'It's is anaphoric (i.e. it refers back to 'name'), thus giving her utterance an information structure that proceeds from the known 'it' to the new 'Pat'. In referring to his utterance, she is beginning to co-author the conversation.

I think such simple observations about the pragmatics of this brief, trivial exchange do far more to raise our awareness of how language is used than a whole handful of grammar books. And if learners "acquire" syntax and phonology in a more or less pre-programmed way what is left for us to teach them is an understanding of the pragmatics of the English they may hear and a productive pragmatic competence to enable them to communicate effectively when they use English themselves. To hold, or to choose not to hold, conversations like this one, in fact.

I'm not going to pretend that preparing trainees to become teachers of a second pragmatics is easy, especially when our knowledge of pragmatics is at a very early stage indeed. Some idea of how difficult the task is can be seen by imagining that English was an unwritten language, that no one had attempted to describe its grammar before and that your task was to write the grammar of some small fragment of the language. How would you know how to group data and determine its function - how long would it take you, for example, to come to the conclusion that is and has are both present and that have and en are one, separable form? Or to determine the grammar of you're right, you're writing and your writing?

The situation with Pragmatics today is broadly comparable: although Pragmatics is the grammar of language use, we have only very recently begun to group together items that seem to exhibit similar pragmatic characteristics; and still only the most rudimentary folk terms (such as "interruption" and "topic") are in general use. We certainly don't know enough yet to suggest exactly how anyone would acquire a second pragmatics. And since I am criticising the teaching of syntax as (a) a waste of time and (b) doomed to failure, it would be very inconsistent indeed to claim that one could do any better with pragmatics. The argument is just that trainees' awareness could be raised more profitably in this area than in others. (If the Editor thinks this makes sense, I would be delighted to suggest some awareness raising ideas in a later issue).

- O -

Perhaps we are now ready to return to the exchange between Mario and myself as described in the Preface. With the benefit of subsequent reflection, I realise that we were each thinking of different kinds of pragmatic effect.

Mario was perhaps thinking of the insertion of a particle to warn the addressee that the speaker was adhering weakly to Grice's Quality maxim for conversation, which

continued ⟶

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enjoins the speaker to ensure that their contribution is well-founded:

'Try to make your contribution one that is true, specifically

(i) Do not say what you believe to be false

(ii) Do not say that for which you lack adequate evidence.

A comparable Quality-oriented strategy in English might be to begin an utterance with 'I suppose' or 'I think', neither of which usually adds truth value to the utterance of which they are a part, but instead advises the addressee of the limited degree of speaker commitment to the "quality" of what is being said. (This is what Pat was doing in relation to Grice's Relevance maxim with her 'by the way').

I was perhaps thinking of presupposition, that's to say, those parts of utterances which may be taken as true and which are not part of the assertion that the rest of the utterance conveys. Thus

(1) I admire your writing books

presupposes that the addressee does write/has written books and asserts that the speaker admires this.

In the last two paragraphs, I have described two different kinds of pragmatic effect.

- the use of metapragmatic glosses like 'I suppose' and 'by the way' to advise the addressee about the conversational strategy of the speaker and of the extent to which he or she is using language in ways that are expectable

- the use of strategies to convey two levels of information in a single utterance, the "old", shared information conveyed by 'your writing books', and the "new" information of which the addressee was not previously aware conveyed by 'I admire'.

There obviously isn't space here to develop the pragmatic theories which underlie these observations about language use, but I hope the case is being made for pragmatics as a more appropriate level for the CTEFLA LA component than syntax.

2.3 Pragmatics, language and NLP

The subject of Judy and Mario's presentation was, as stated earlier, NLP. I regret that I don't know as much about this approach to language understanding as I should, but I found one aspect of their thesis fascinating from a pragmatic perspective. Part of the purpose of the session was to raise our awareness of the effect on addressees of the structures and lexis we choose - if you like, of their pragmatics. As a pragmatist I was broadly sympathetic to this thesis.

But I was less sympathetic to their claim that certain items inevitably project in certain ways. The essence of pragmatics is that it isn't the tokens we choose so much as the context in which they are used (or that they evoke - but that's a contentious issue in pragmatics) that determines their effect. For example, the advertisements for Coca Cola and for instant tea both use the token 'It's the taste'. This has precious little truth-conditional meaning but is clearly intended to imply that the taste is good. But when my children come home after school and start their destructive trail through the biscuit tin, and I think how little value I've had out of yet another day's dinner money, I sometimes challenge them with 'Why didn't you eat your school dinner?" And they respond with 'It's the taste', in the process giving the token a quite different meaning from the one it has in the advertisement.

Thus although NLP-ers claim that we should be careful with words like 'all', which causes addressees to think that we are overstating, this is only sometimes true. It is surely unexceptional to say 'We all go to the pub on Wednesdays' even if on occasions some of us do not go. The word 'all' is frequently used in natural language in a pragmatic way and should not be thought of as intentionally equivalent to the universal quantifier of formal language. What I'm arguing is that we should not think of the meaning of a language token such as 'all' in an across-the board way and that the NLP claim that some structures are associated with some mind sets is very challengeable.

Of course there is an axiology according to which certain items tend to be predominantly used in a negative or a positive way, but this is not inevitable. Although an NLP-er might think that things that go 'up' are typically 'good', there are many notable exceptions to this, such as one's temperature, inflation and trains to London.

If language is neutral, and context is all, we should try to raise our trainees' awareness of the importance of recognising that the meaning of (virtually) every utterance is subject to an inference that takes account of the context in which it occurs. Think for a moment of all the different things you can mean when you say 'I'm tired'.

In fact, a very important issue indeed is raised by the NLP approach to language understanding: do language items have intrinsic value (the NLP claim) or not (my counter claim). It seems to me that the essential difference between human and animal language is that only human language has meaningless segments. No one disputes this at the level of the phoneme, a meaningless, valueless segment which acquires a meaning (or, if you prefer the term, a function) only in combination with other meaningless segments.

But this combination of phonemes, this morpheme, is, in its turn, also a form whose function is apparent only when, either standing alone or in combination with other morphemes, it is used as a word. And to jump a level or two, in this article we already seen how a sentence that had interrogative <u>form</u> (i.e. 'What's your name') at the level of the speech act <u>functioned</u> as a request.

The diagram opposite represents language as formally meaningless and functionally meaningful:

Thus a text like this article needs a skilled reader like you to invest it with meaning. The larger the "meaningless segment" (i.e. the lower down the left-hand column), the fewer people will be able to use it effectively. This is because language is a developing endowment at the boundaries of human ability.

	Meaningless segments	Meaningful units or combinations	
F	Phonetic segments or phonemes	Morphemes	F
O		(combinations of phonemes)	U
R	Syntactic categories (nouns, verbs, etc)	Sentences (combinations	N
M		of syntactic constituents	C
	Sentences (declaratives, interrogatives, etc)	Utterances (sentences as used)	T
F	interrogatives, etc)		I
O	Utterances	Sequential properties	O
R		of utterances in discourse	N
M	Discourse/text	Text as situated in society	

2.4 'Is it a joke?'

What about the pragmatics of the interjection 'Is it a joke' in the context in which it arose?

The token certainly doesn't have the same value as it would have had if one comic had said it to another in a stand-up comedy routine or if you said it to someone reading a book who suddenly burst out laughing.

One way of taking it here would be as a rhetorical question. But standardly rhetorical questions parallel with negative declaratives (Who cares = no one cares), which this utterance certainly doesn't do. I think (notice my hedge) that it was used because the speaker didn't feel confident enough to use the declarative to assert 'It is a joke'. It counts as saying 'It sounds like a joke', with the interrogative form implying that the speaker is uncertain about whether it is a joke nor not. This explanation would account for what speech act theorists call the 'locutionary act', the production of a sentence with a determinant meaning. But what of the 'illocutionary act', the intention the speaker wanted to convey - was it an attempt to ridicule perhaps? And the 'perlocutionary effect', how it was taken - and did the speaker foresee that it might be used to illustrate the argument of an article in The Teacher Trainer?

Throughout this article, I've been trying to distinguish my "topic", the language awareness component of CTEFLA courses, and the "form" in which it is presented. In the very next sentence you are going to read, you will need to determine whether the anaphor 'it' refers to topic or form in order to understand the pragmatics of the last four words of the sentence.

Now that you've read the article 'The language awareness component of CTEFLA courses', is it a joke?

3 Response

This is awaited with trepidation

Further reading
The two standard pragmatics textbooks are
Green GM (1989) Pragmatics and Natural Language Understanding
Lawrence Erlbaum Associates
Levison SC (1983) Pragmatics CUP

Just out, and more accessible, is
Mey JL (1993) Pragmatics: an introduction Blackwell Publishers

and coming, if you can wait for it,

Grundy P Learning Pragmatics (provisional title) Edward Arnold

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TRAINEE VOICES

Kate had a career as an administrator before deciding to retrain as a primary school teacher. She has now successfully completed a third of her course including a three week practicum of one hundred hours spent in a local primary school. Kate feels happy about the course so far, the advice given on teaching, the awareness of children's developmental stages and the way that even in theoretical sessions she has been encouraged to see things from the children's perspective. All in all, she has been very satisfied. One problematic area, however, has been the supervision of the practicum and it was on this topic, at my suggestion, that Kate agreed to be interviewed in case her point of view should be helpful to readers who are supervisors.

TW. How was the three week practicum structured?

K. Well, it was left fairly flexible because obviously the teacher has her or his needs and it is their class but the course co-ordinator felt that the best approach is to have one week where you are mostly observing and assisting. By the middle of the second week you'd be taking on some classroom teaching...one-off classes perhaps, and by the third week you're teaching for the best part of the day.

TW. In the first week what sort of things did you do?

K. As the children were working, I would be going round helping individuals with the tasks set by the class teacher.

TW. Did you know the class?

K. Yes, I had been going in for a few days on a weekly basis before, so I knew the school, the teacher and what her long term plans were. Also the week before the teaching practice (TP) we had to compile a teaching file filled with information about the school, lesson plans, and so on and showed this to our supervisors to get permission to go out and do our TP. In fact this is where the frustration started. Some supervisors were easy going and said,"Off you go!" and some were very pernickety and would not let people go until their files had been amended. There was no standardisation and so student teachers were very frustrated.

TW. Did you know your supervisor?

K. No. This was the first time I had met him. He told me he would be coming in at the end of the first week to "assist as well as assess".

TW. So what happened on his first visit?

K. I knew he was going to come in some time on the Thursday or Friday. He phoned at Friday lunch-time to say he'd be in that afternoon.

TW. Did he give you any idea what he would be looking for?

K. He arrived at lunchtime so we had a quick chat before I went into the lesson. He knew what my objectives were because he flicked through my teaching file .

TW. How did that first visit go?

K. With the class or with the supervisor?

TW. Both.

K. The class was pretty hectic! I was teaching a small group in one corner while the teacher carried on her work with the rest in the same room! I knew she felt quite intimidated. It was only her second week of teaching at the school and so she felt she was being observed too.

TW. How did the lesson go?

K. I felt as if I was performing. I didn't feel comfortable because he was sitting at the table with the children. He was just writing and writing, not involved with the children at all. So it was very unnatural.

TW. Would you rather he had sat somewhere else?

K. I'd have preferred it if he had been behind me.

TW.Was there anything else you didn't like about what he did?

K. I didn't like the fact that he was writing about me. I thought that was something he could have done later. But maybe it was important for him to write as he observed so he didn't forget. I just felt that it was a set-up. I think I was acting. My facial expressions and reactions were different, not very natural because I was trying to respond to him and not the children.I just knew I wasn't my real self with him there.

TW. Did you meet after?

K. Our conversation was quite brief because I was going

back in again after. He seemed happy enough. His comments were positive. I was surprised because I felt that things hadn't all gone as planned.

TW. How did it go the second week?

K. Again he said he would be in on the Thursday or Friday. I guessed he'd be in on the Thursday because he knew I would be teaching a new core subject that day. And I was right. He rang again at lunchtime and said he'd be in that afternoon.

TW. Would you rather have known earlier?

K. Only in as far as it would have put my mind at rest. I mean, I had all my lessons planned anyway but if you are expecting someone you keep looking up and you don't relax.I couldn't switch off wondering if he might turn up.

TW. Did you have a chance to talk to him on this second visit?

K. Not before. Just afterwards. I felt very frustrated with that visit! Two of the children had been particularly naughty all through the morning. When they came outside to do the activity with me, they were already in a frame of mind that was not necessarily influenced by me but by the teacher. I found it hard going but because he was there I behaved differently. You see, as a student teacher you don't know exactly what is expected of you. I didn't know if I could stop the class in the middle of the observation and talk severely to these two children. It's not my class. I didn't have them very much and so I felt as if I was not fully in control. In this particular lesson I chose ,as the observer was present ,to ask the naughty ones lots of questions to draw them in. Again, there he was writing copious notes while it was all happening. In the feedback session after,he said, "Now, did you notice the two boys who were not participating?". Of course I had noticed..all morning too! I had been trying to amend that. I felt aggrieved that that comment had been written down on paper. It looked as if I hadn't been aware when I was fully aware. I tried to tell him but...He wasn't aggressive. He just had his points to make and didn't want to hear. He told me things without finding out first if I knew them. I felt undermined more by him than by the children.If he found out I knew these things already, it would undermine his role.

TW. How long was the feedback?

K. Well,it was my lunch break. I'd been working hard all morning. He spent 45 minutes talking about something I already knew. He told me lots of anecdotes. I really wanted him to point out things I had NOT been aware of!

TW. Did he suggest any new strategies in these old (for you) areas?

K. No. He said I asked too many open ended questions. The stress at college actually had been on open ended questions but also I had been frantic to draw these two boys in.

TW. So the first feedback had been positive, this second one rather negative.

K. Yes. This was the experience of a lot of my colleagues too. I think it was a sort of ploy, a policy. Encourage you, pull you apart, build you up again over the three visits.

That second week I came home feeling very down. I cried. My husband hasn't seen me in tears since a soppy film on TV about ten years ago! At the time I couldn't work out why I felt so frustrated with the supervision. I think it's because I had had lots of good lessons. He'd just come in once that week for 45 minutes. It's just a snapshot of a bigger picture. And he didn't want to listen and he didn't tell me anything I didn't know. So I tended to look to the class teacher more. What she said was much more valuable.

TW. Was there anything else he did that annoyed you?

K. Yes! In the lunch hour some children came to talk to me. He started asking them, "Why are you here? It's lunch time!" He took the role of disciplinarian. But it wasn't realistic or appropriate. They had a perfect right to be there at that time! I felt that here was this man trying to show me how to work with children. And I have had so much dealing with children. I have four of my own and I've taught kids under different circumstances for several years. I know children. I can sense how to handle them. He didn't give me any credit for being a mature student or a mother. Doesn't being a mother count for anything?

TW. Do you think part of your frustration was political? I mean that while most of the people who work with young children every day are women , most of the supervisors tend to be men?

K. Partly. Every school I have been involved in has had a man as head and deputy head where every other teacher practically has been a woman.

TW. Do you see a better way of running these supervisions?

K. I don't see why we can't just deal with one or two class teachers. The supervisors could just be pulled in as troubleshooters if there was a problem.

TW. What if you didn't get on with the class teacher?

K. Well that's part of being professional, isn't it? Overiding personal differences with peers in a staffroom so that you can work as a team?

TW. Would it have helped if the supervisor had been someone who taught you normally and that you knew?

K. Possibly but I still think it's the class teacher who sees you day in and day out who can give you good advice and criticism. Maybe it's because the supervisors are there to" assist as well as to assess"that they feel they have to earn their money and tell you things.

TW. And the third visit went OK?

K. He felt it was much better. I thought it was the same!

TW. And the overall report?

continued

K. My report from the classroom teacher was excellent and his report was good too. But he did pick up on a particular thing, his specialism within classroom teaching, which he felt I was weak on. In fact he simply failed to notice my contribution here.The class teacher said that too. So again I felt his comment was not valid.

TW. When you all got back to college again after your teaching practice did you have a chance to discuss your experiences?

K. No. We weren't given time to sit down as a group and do this. So we had to do it in coffee breaks very informally.

TW. Did you find that people had had similar experiences?

K. Some people had much worse experiences than me. Many were very frustrated with their supervisors. At least two people had their supervisors actually stop the class and take over the lesson! To show how it should be done!

TW. Will you be supervised again?

K. Yes. It's unavoidable! It would be nice, if we have to have supervisors, if they were working teachers still in the middle of real life teaching decisions. Rather than people who don't teach anymore. Maybe the supervisor could come in and teach the class for a couple of lessons. That way we could see what their style is and it would remind them what it's like to teach someone else's class. That might help.

TW. Can you tell the college how you feel?

K. I feel slightly reluctant to rock the boat. I mean how do I change it? Anyway most of us have decided to take what the supervisor says with a pinch of salt. I mean if it's valid OK but if not, ignore it. Politely of course!

READINGS FOR TRAINEES

This new column is not aimed so much at you, the trainer but at the teacher-in-training that you may be working with. If you think your course participants/trainees would be interested in the content of the column then please feel free to photocopy it for them. We will be providing you with more photocopiable handouts for trainees in later issues.

PITFALLS OF INEXPERIENCED TEACHERS

Magali de Moraes Menti
Lingua, Brazil

Going into a classroom for the first time is an overwhelming and nerve-racking experience that can leave some teachers in shambles. Teaching is such a hard and complex professional activity that even those that have gone through extensive training programmes are never quite ready for what is ahead of them - a class filled with demanding students with "great expectations" coming from different backgrounds, supporters of different points of view, with different needs and interests.

Over the years, I have spotted some pitfalls for inexperienced teachers - those hidden danger zones in teaching that Training Courses either can not forecast or are unable to fully train teachers to avoid. My intention with this article is to share these pitfalls with experienced and inexperienced readers and suggest some tips on how to avoid them so that their first days of teaching become less nerve-racking.

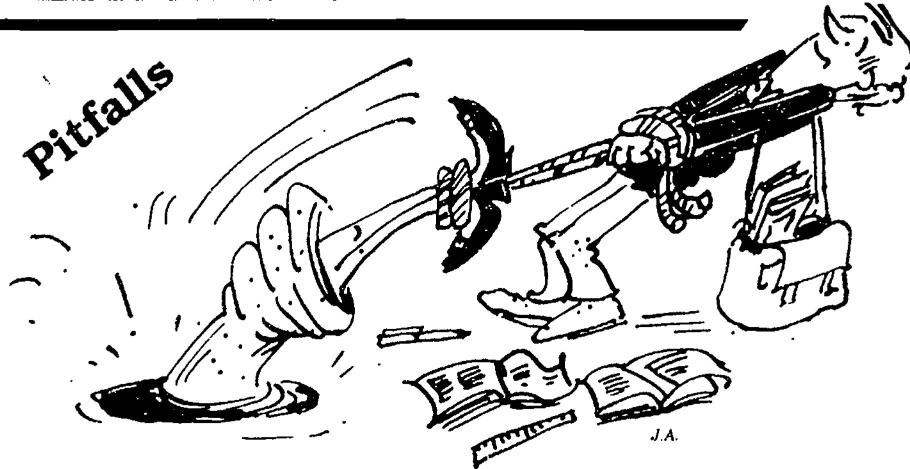
Pitfall # 1

I have to be the "know-it-all" - One of the greatest worries of inexperienced teachers is not being able to answer all of their students' questions.

Tip - A teacher is fundamentally a learner, he/she is constantly searching for development and growth. This means that a teacher should allow herself/himself to learn with students, to learn what is better for them and how to better guide their learning. This also means that a teacher should not aim to be a "walking dictionary". If you do not know a word students ask for, tell them you will look it up and give them feedback as soon as possible. Not being the "know-it-all" also allows teachers to be more flexible to new ideas, to students' suggestions and to changes in his/her lesson plans.

Pitfall # 2

The BOOK is my saviour - Some teachers feel they have to follow the book religiously, and work with all its contents in the same order the book presents them.



Tip - Teachers must keep in mind that their priority is their students and not the book. If your students are not interested in a particular reading or discussion topic the book suggests, skip it. If the book works with a grammar point you feel your students are not ready for, skip it or come back to it later.. If there are not enough communicative tasks, provide them for your students. Your group is the boss, not the book.

Pitfall # 3

I am the TEACHER, you are the students - Teachers may think that as soon as they walk into a class they become the authority.

Tip - As soon as you walk into a class, you are the authority in the sense that you are responsible for the well-being and development of those in the class, but you do not become the absolute leader. Talk with your students. There is nothing better than sitting down with your students and having a chat with them during break time. This shows students you care, you're human, and that you want to establish a relationship with them. This will surely make you feel better. You'll feel you are among friends and not strangers, your students will feel the same. It does wonders for classroom atmosphere.

Pitfall # 4

Not making things clear - Students need to know where they are heading, what the course is all about.

Tip - On the first day of class, tell your students what the objective of the course is, what the objectives of the specific level you are teaching are, what your own objectives are, and what is expected of students in that level. Ask your students if these objectives match their own objectives. This will allow you the opportunity to clarify any doubts, lower students' anxiety - people get anxious when they don't know what they are getting into - and get to know your students' needs and interests a little better.

Pitfall # 5

Sketchy plans - An inexperienced teacher can not just simply number the activities and steps she/he will follow during the class.

Tip - When preparing, you should calculate how long you will take to do each activity, how you will give instructions to your students, what comments you will make during the activity, how you will explain the content, how you will vary the class, how the students will carry out each task, how you will pair up students. It's a good idea to talk someone through your plan. If it's clear to the listener exactly what you will do and how, then your plan is ready.

Pitfall # 6

An "unbalanced diet" - Too much of the same kind of activity tries your students' patience.

Tip - Always prepare to offer students different activities - a little bit of listening, a little bit of grammar, a little bit of reading, a little bit of writing, a lot of speaking, a lot of interaction and a lot of fun. For a two-hour class, have in mind at least 6 different tasks. Even if you have to cover a long vocabulary lesson, you can plan this in a way that your students will be studying the same thing - vocabulary - but in many different ways. For example, your students can watch a scene from a movie and describe the scene using the words they are working with or try to spot the use of these words; your students can create a story using at least some of these words, students can then exchange papers and read each others' stories; your students can play a guessing game in which they will have to describe these words to each other until they guess what word is being described, and so on. Let your imagination take hold of you.

Pitfall # 7

Directing your attention to strong students - Many times inexperienced teachers will fall into the trap of directing their classes to stronger learners. It's a trap because it is misleading. You get the impression that all your students are following you while in reality only the good students you have established eye contact with are.

Tip - Make a point of covering the whole room with your eyes and checking for general comprehension. Learn to establish eye contact with all your students, it's a great comprehension check.

Pitfall # 8

Positive classroom atmosphere means being friendly with students - When students enroll in a course, they are looking for a teacher, a friendly teacher, but not just a friend.

Tip - Creating a positive classroom atmosphere in class means actively managing classroom events and classroom

continued

members at all times - giving everyone equal attention and equal learning opportunities, proposing well defined tasks within your students' grasp, being attentive to your students' actions and reactions, caring for your students' development, and being friendly.

Pitfall # 9

I am the star - Some teachers can mistake a classroom for a stage. Teaching gives you the opportunity to be in the spotlight. If you are not careful, you can make a fool of yourself - not to mention blowing your students' chances of actually learning something.

Tip - Limit yourself to guiding and directing your students' learning process. This does not mean you have to hide yourself from your students. Tell them about yourself, what your interests are and what your opinions are, have fun with them, but do not take over. Make sure your students interact with each other, not only you. Get your students to comment on each other's comments.

Pitfall # 10

Silence is evil - Silence in the classroom does not necessarily mean inactivity or boredom.

Tip - Students must be allowed thinking and planning time. Teachers may get too jumpy, jumping to their students' rescue with the words they need or the right structures too fast. This takes away your students' chances of looking for the right word or structure and locating the needed information. We know that this process is vital to learning.

Pitfall # 11

Going to ex... ..mes - Many times teachers are told they are using students' mother tongue too much in class and then they resort to "only English". Sometimes they are told to simplify their English with beginners and then resort to using too much of students' first language. Other times they are told they are correcting too much and then they drastically stop correcting. And, so on.

Tip - Try to find the right balance. The best way to do that is by watching other teacher's classes and your own class - video-taped recordings or cassete recordings. Assess your teaching performance regularly. Draw up plans to tackle your weaknesses.

The best way to spot and avoid your personal pitfalls is through experience and the will to improve. The ones above may fit you or just lead you to think about the traps you set yourself in class. Either way, my purpose for this article will have been met.

SESSION PLANS

Training for Primary School English

by Briony Beaven

Introduction

This is an account of some training sessions held for a group of primary school teachers in Bavaria. The teachers are involved in an experiment in the teaching of English to nine- and ten-year-olds. Up to four years ago, when the project began, most of them had no experience or training in the teaching of a foreign language and only a few had studied English at university. During the life of the experiment, they have attended in-service training courses twice a year for five days. The four sessions I shall describe formed part of their final course and exemplify the aims and approach of the practical element of the training. Given the increasing popularity of introducing English to children of primary age around the world, I thought the ideas and materials I used might be of interest to colleagues faced with similar training situations. The numbers in brackets refer to materials which are listed at the end of the article.

Session 1

The aim of this session was to recycle the language needed by teachers for the day-to-day management of their classes. Course books are not used in the Bavarian primary project: English is taught for two lessons per week through activity-based learning, and thus pupils are intended to learn the language through direct experience in a meaningful context, making it very important for the teachers to develop their ability to use English as the medium of instruction and interaction.

The session began with a brainstorming, in groups, of exponents for classroom functions such as greeting, praising and saying goodbye and for classroom activities such as introducing a song. Reference lists, drawn up prior to the session, were given to all the teachers. This was followed by a classroom role-play, a microteaching activity giving participants the opportunity of practising their classroom communication skills. In each group one person had a 'teacher' role card, describing his intentions for the lesson, while the others had 'learner' role cards describing classroom behaviour and language strengths and weaknesses(1). For example, one teacher role card instructed the teacher to have the pupils move the furniture in preparation for an action song, whilst one of the pupil role cards for this group told the pupil to ask for help and advice in performing the task. The pupil was to do this in a quiet and indistinct voice. Thus the teacher role not only required performance of his own instructions, but also the ability to respond appropriately to each pupil role. Groups then discussed in plenary any language shortfalls they had noticed while doing the role-play and suggestions for suitable words and phrases were made. The third activity revised the language of things in

the classroom, using pictures to be labelled. Finally there was a board game with squares such as

Tell pupils to make a 180° turn	Offer the children a choice of activity	Check if everyone can see and hear the video

In the game the person whose counter landed on the square had to suggest something suitable to say; the players then decided if the suggestion was acceptable, but there was also feedback at the end on difficult items (2).

Session 2

Here the focus was on general language improvement and on looking at opportunities to maintain a good level of English after the in-service courses. The teachers in this project have to select, modify and evaluate materials. To help them do this, they need to be able to read books in English about teaching young learners.

In this session participants were divided into two large groups and each group was given copies of a different passage from *Teaching English in the Primary Classroom* by Susan Halliwell, (Longman 1992). True/false statements were provided for each passage and the groups then worked separately on their statements. This led to a lot of discussion in English, resulting in clarification of some common terminology. After checking the true/false statements, each teacher joined a partner from the other group and in turn they summarised and commented on the contents of their passage. The next activity was designed to pool the knowledge the teachers had gained over the last four years and to give them confidence in their abilities as teachers of English. I used the idea of the game 'Sound Advice' in *Advanced Communication Games* by Jill Hadfield, (Nelson 1987), but replaced her general problem cards with cards which, like the two examples below, are specific to the teaching of primary English and to the teachers' professional development (3).

You want to maintain and improve your own English skills when the in-service training is finished	You'd like to know of a new game to practice numbers

Session 3

The purpose of this session was to revise what the teachers knew about important features of English pronunciation. Near native speech is postulated as desirable for teachers on this project and although this is probably unrealistic as a discourse aim, considerable progress towards near native speech has been achieved in the area of pronunciation.

In session 3 rhythm and weak forms were listened to and practised using a variety of children's rhymes and songs. This was followed by attention to prominence and variations in prominence with mini-dialogues about school life as the practice material (4). In a previous training week the teachers had made an initial exploration of the effects of intonation through ambiguous dialogues. This time we looked at foregrounding and pitch change through the topic of changes in education; a 'minister for education' briefed the press and was constantly corrected by an aide (5). I am indebted to *Teaching English Pronunciation* (p.66,67) by Joanne Kenworthy (Longman 1987) for the idea behind this last activity.

Session 4

As well as exposure to the target language the Bavarian English experiment aims to bring the children into contact with the target culture and to foster recognition and acceptance of cultural differences. To this end it was important to extend the teachers' knowledge of English speaking countries through a process that would mirror this view of cultural training.

On this occasion Britain was the country chosen for study. Topics of interest to the teachers and their pupils, namely homes and food, family life, education and the environment were introduced through pictures, collages and headlines. The teachers worked in small groups to draw inferences about British life and values and they made comparisons with German life and values. The contact was deepened by each group choosing one of the four topics, and extra material was available on each one. The groups were then able to make culture comparative presentations of their topic in plenary. Next the teachers were asked what they would most miss if out of Germany for a long time and this was compared with an article (source unknown, but first shown to me by Ann Schmid, VHS Neubiberg, Bavaria) in which Britons describe what they miss about Britain when abroad (6). An interesting and tolerant discussion of the respective collective mentalities resulted.

Conclusion

Since initial results have been very encouraging, the Bavarian experiment in early foreign language learning is to be continued and expanded from fifteen to fifty schools (this also includes schools teaching French and Italian). The teachers involved have learnt to 'sell' their project, to understand their pupils better, to develop materials for and to write articles about the experiment. They will have an important role to play in the expansion as some of them are expected to train other teachers through the cascading system. At the end of the sessions described above, the teachers said they had found the global nature of the revision activities most helpful in sending them out with confidence to 'multiply'. I would be pleased to send the materials and further details to anyone interested.

Materials reference

1 Classroom role-play
2 Classroom language board game
3 'Sound Advice' for primary English
4 Moving sentence stress
5 Government spokesman for education
6 Reasons to be cheerful

With the exception of (6) I made these materials myself and have given them handy titles.

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Peering at your peers by Frank Fitzpatrick

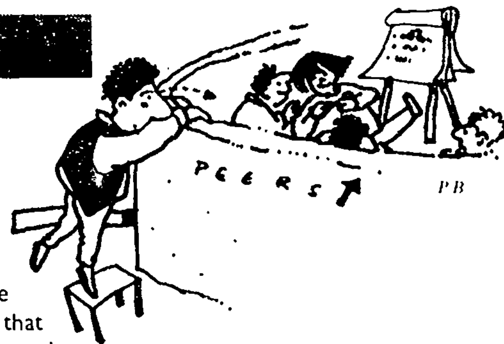
Perhaps one of the questions foremost in the minds of qualified teachers is how to develop professionally once training is over. Pedagogical isolation can be demotivating and teachers can quickly run short of ideas. In such cases, it is important to search for a way to bring teachers together to act as a resource for one another by creating an atmosphere of collaboration and critical discussion of teaching approaches. In this article I would like to argue how a peer observation scheme can be a valuable way of sharing ideas with colleagues and a means to achieving professional growth.

Setting up the scheme: the importance of consensus

The first step in such a scheme is to seek teachers_ agreement for it, which may require a fair bit of discussion about the nature of observation. Classroom observation for some teachers can be a threatening concept, probably as a result of negative experiences during training. It may be that the judgmental role of the observer in such instances makes teachers subsequently reluctant to let a colleague into their classroom. Consequently, it is important to remove any notion of 'the right way to teach' and to provide a clear framework for the way that the observations are to be carried out if the scheme is to be constructive, 'safe' and rewarding. Of course, some schools may already be running a formal observation scheme as part of their quality control or appraisal system, but this kind of set up tends to reinforce teachers' negative experiences of judgmental observation. In order for an observation scheme to be developmental, it is important that it is voluntary and not for formal evaluation purposes, that teachers have a say in who they want to observe and be observed by, and that they themselves select what the focus of the observation is to be. However, in order to coax sceptical teachers into seeing the benefits of the scheme, it may be necessary to offer some sort of incentive in the initial stages for teachers who have limited time or who are wary of being observed. Such incentives may include encouraging teachers to observe somebody more experienced or more senior first, before being observed themselves by a peer; or organising a substitution system so that a teacher may be released in order to observe; or replacing a formal management observation with a peer observation, and so on. Finally, it is essential that confidentiality is maintained on any observed lesson, so that teachers will not feel vulnerable and open to arbitrary comparisons.

Providing a focus: the importance of data

I have mentioned how important it is to move away from the judgmental model of observation encountered in initial teacher training, which is often intensely personal and prescriptive. In in-service development the focus is much more on bringing to the surface issues and events that can be reflected upon by both observer and observee for the purposes that they desire. This means that we are looking for a framework that will provide a way into what is going on in the classroom and that will yield data for analysis.



In this way we can distinguish between systematically 'observing' a lesson, by way of a definite focus which will lead to data collection and subsequent objective discussion, and simply 'watching' what is happening in a class, which inevitably favours picking up on isolated incidents, comments, impressions and so on during the lesson. We need to promote systematic observation in order to focus on the teaching and learning process in a professional way, and to protect the teacher from arbitrary subjective or overtly personal comments. A framework for observation, then, should have the following characteristics:

- a previously established focus jointly agreed upon by both observer and observee, probably with some preliminary discussion and exchange of views on the topic;
- a means of collecting and recording information on what happens during the lesson in order to feed into the post-lesson discussion;
- a follow-up discussion and reflection on what went on in the lesson.

These principles can be embodied in a series of task sheets (see appendices for examples) that teachers could select from freely for an observation. The advantage of this is that it ensures that observation will focus on professional categories, which protects teachers' personal style and choices. The importance of this for building trust amongst teachers and removing the potential threat involved in laying oneself open to comment cannot be overstressed. Teachers' doubts, fears and experiences must be acknowledged if the scheme is to be successful and valid.

The task sheets are based on areas that were of concern to teachers. In some cases, teachers were looking for ideas for their own lessons, in other cases they wanted to see how other teachers approached a particular task or language point, or were interested in someone looking at a particular aspect of their teaching or a problem they were having with a class. Up to date references for reading up on the area in question were provided in order to enhance teachers' perspectives and experiences for the pre-lesson discussion. During the lesson the categories provided a specific focus for the observer, who could jot down examples or reflections to be discussed with the observee after the lesson

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The post-lesson discussions often yielded a wide range of unexpected reflections for both teachers involved, and in some cases often broadened out into more general issues of language learning, methodology or classroom management. Many teachers, for example, were interested to receive data on things that they found difficult to observe themselves, such as the general atmosphere or pace of a class, or the reactions of students to particular activities, or how certain students worked in a particular group, and so on. Many post-observation discussions raised important issues, such as how much a teacher should stick to a set plan or how much L1 to use, or to what extent students should be involved in planning the course. Apart from this, a lot of teachers commented on the number of ideas that they got from observing other teachers' styles and seeing how they dealt with such things as correction, vocabulary revision, assessment, and so on.

Conclusion

In general, the overriding feature of the scheme was its breadth and flexibility. The range of issues discussed and ideas exchanged, as well as the number of universal problems that teachers found that they could work on together, was considerable.

Furthermore, observation came to be viewed by teachers in a positive way. It became both a learning experience and a means of sharing ideas and exploring difficulties in a non-threatening, non-judgmental and reflective way. Teachers were reading, observing, reflecting, discussion, developing and changing - essential elements of any training scheme.

Task 1

Correcting Errors

Before the lesson think about your approach to error correction:

- What do you think is the main source of learners' errors?
- Do you think errors should be corrected? Why? How?
- Do you think learners benefit from correction? If so, how?
- Do your students have different attitudes from yours towards errors and how they should be corrected? How do you deal with these differences?

During the lesson make notes on students' errors and the way the teacher deals with them. Is s/he consistent? Would your approach be different? How? Why?

Error	Source	Corrected?	Technique

After the lesson discuss your notes and your approaches.

Task 2

Observing young learners

Before observing the class think about the following:

1) How do you think children learn best?

2) What sort of activities do you select? Why?

3) How do you approach discipline problems?

4) Does your approach alter when you teach adults?

During the lesson make notes on the following areas:

Classroom atmosphere	
Type of activities	
Student involvement	
Student interaction	
Teaching approach	
Use of L1	

After the lesson discuss your notes with the teacher.

continued →

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Task 3

Approaching vocabulary

Consider the following questions before you start?

- How important is vocabulary in language learning?
- Does this importance vary according to level?
- Do you try and avoid translation? Why?
- Do you do dictionary work in class?
- How do you instil a concern for vocabulary in your SS?
- Do you train your SS in learning vocabulary? How?
- How do you help your SS to cope with new words?
- How do you help your SS to cope with a lack of words?
- Do you do revision? How?

During the lesson make notes on the following areas:

New vocabulary	
Ways of coping with vocab lack	
Techniques for learning vocab	
Techniques for organising vocab	
Ways of revising vocabulary	
Correction of vocab errors	

After the lesson compare your notes with the teacher.

Task 4

Learner-teacher roles

Before the lesson consider these questions:

- Are self-directed learners better learners? Why?
- Do you encourage independence? How?
- Do you plan your lessons carefully or are you open to deviation during the lesson?
- What does this depend on?
- Does your approach vary according to level or class type?
- Does all input come from you?
- Do you spend time discussing teaching and learning with SS?
- Do you use more 'language getting' activities or 'skill getting' activities?
- How do you deal with very dependent/very independent SS?

Watch the lesson and mark the degree of teacher-learner focus on the continuum with a cross.

Teacher-centred —— x ——Student-centred

Teacher-centred		Student-centred
T provides lang input		SS initiate the learning topics
T follows set plan		SS plan main points of lesson with T
T selects all activities		SS select all activities
T controls pace and staging		SS influence pace & staging
T corrects errors		SS asked to work out errors
T always gives correct answers		SS consult T if answers required
T organises all activities		SS organise activities
All activities focus on lang		SS reflect on learning process
T unaware of SS opinions		SS comment on activities.

After the lesson discuss your notes with the teacher.

Lesson Planning - Focusing on the learner

Background

CfBT Education Services has been running an in-service training course in Teaching English as a Foreign Language at Primary and Secondary Level (Cambridge/RSA Diploma TEFL P/S) for six years in Brunei Darussalam. The course is intended primarily for CfBT teachers working in Bruneian Primary and Secondary schools although a number of local teachers have also followed the scheme. The course is internally assessed with standards monitored by an External Moderator.

Introduction

In the Teaching Practice component, candidates are observed six times during the course with their own classes, mostly with the same tutor who follows their development throughout the 9-month course. On any scheme where observed lessons form part of the assessment, and where external assessors are involved, there can be a tendency for candidates to produce a couple of showpiece lessons, sometimes with classes assembled especially for the purpose. This scheme allows for candidates to be observed with their classes over several months and to teach lessons that are an integral part of an ongoing teaching programme.

It has been stressed from the scheme's outset that although each candidate needs to demonstrate a variety of skills during the course, one-off 'performances', put on to impress the assessor, were neither required nor desired.

However the myth of the "Pass Lesson" is powerful and the tendency to perform discreet showpiece lessons has persisted. The course tutors must share the blame for this since candidates are expected to work on new ideas and activities, and to demonstrate that they can facilitate students' learning across the range of language skills. This undoubtedly puts pressure on the candidates to focus on their teaching, as does the requirement that detailed lesson plans be produced.

The External Moderator visits each year's course, co-observing lessons with candidates' tutors. This tendency for some candidates not to focus primarily on the needs of the learners in planning their observed lessons has remained a concern. The focus and pacing can appear to be driven by the lesson plan itself and by activities and materials. Additional guidance and encouragement is therefore needed so that candidates:

- integrate observed lessons within ongoing units of work with the class
- justify the learning purpose of each activitv from the students' point of view
- specify how each stage contributes to the lesson's progression and overall purpose

Pre-observation lesson overview

Following discussions with the course tutors, the External Moderator produced a prototype form intended to guide candidates' thinking at the beginning of the lesson planning process. For the past year, candidates have been expected to complete this form and talk it through with their tutor before they start planning their lesson in detail

(see Figure below)

Pre-observation lesson overview: Focus on the learner

Complete this before producing a full Lesson Plan and discuss it with your tutor Lesson Observation No.

Name:	School:	Class:	Time:	Date of Visit:

Reasons for teaching this lesson:

Time	Step	Interaction	Steps and Input	Facilitating Learning	Facilitating Motivation
				Cognitive Needs	Affective Needs

Expected learning outcomes:

continued

The form asks candidates to consider their students' cognitive and affective needs - in general and at specific stages in the lesson. In considering cognitive needs, the teacher should try to accommodate students' learning styles, age, attention span - and thus facilitate the learning process. Cognitive Development is included in our seminar programme and Universiti Brunei Darussalam is piloting a LEAPS (Learning and Progress in Style) project in local schools. LEAPS is based on the work of Rita and Ken Dunn of St. John's University, New York and provides a model for analysing individual learner styles and ways of catering for these. A seminar on LEAPS was included in this year's course.

It is also important to be aware of and try to cater for students' affective needs - such as ways of gaining and holding their attention and interest through choice of topic and activity. Our seminars on Lesson Planning, Classroom Management and Factors Affecting Language Learning may help, though this awareness is largely dependent on a teacher's relationship with and sensitivity towards his or her students.

Candidates are asked to give their reasons for teaching the lesson - not in terms of teaching particular language skills or syllabus items but in terms of students' needs and how these fit in with the current unit of work. Why teach this lesson at this particular time? For example, a need may have become apparent in recent written work or during class discussions about future study or career plans. Some CfBT teachers encourage their students to keep a journal, recording their activities, thoughts and feelings about events both inside and outside school. These can provide revealing insights into individual student opinions, needs and motivations.

Before planning stages and activities, the teachers are asked to identify the expected learning outcomes of the lesson - what they hope will have been achieved. Too often, aims are expressed in terms of covering language items or completing activities, rather than what the students themselves may have gained.

At this point only an outline of the lesson stages is required. Once the desired outcomes have been stated, the steps needed to achieve these can be viewed as building towards the learning goal. It makes sense to plan the necessary steps in reverse order - working out what will be needed to enable students to progress towards the outcomes. Three basic and fairly universal stages seem to be involved in building towards a learning goal:

1 Activating (interest, prior knowledge)
2 Clarifying (concepts, forms)
3 Consolidating (production, skills)

In discussions between tutor and teacher, the following areas are discussed:

- The importance of variety during the lesson, particularly with younger learners. This may be provided through switching the type of cognitive activity, interaction, task or materials.
- Transitions between stages, governed by the pace of the students, not by the amount of time allotted in the lesson plan. How to 'signpost' each step - to wrap up one stage and introduce the next. Discussing with the students what they are doing and why should facilitate their involvement, motivation and attentiveness.
- Giving due consideration to attention spans and 'chunking' steps in the lesson accordingly.

The form in more detail

Some headings, such as "Time" (5 mins or 9.10 - 9.15), "Step" (1,2,3), "Interaction" (lockstep, individual, whole class, or S-S, Ss-Ss) are self-explanatory. "Reasons for Teaching this Lesson" and "Expected Learning Outcomes" have been explained above. The headings of particular interest then are: "Facilitating Learning/Cognitive Needs" and "Facilitating Motivation/Affective Needs". Although these areas overlap and the identification of them is not (yet) a precise science, the aim is to encourage course participants to **think** about these domains and to consider the learning process as well as the "product" of the lesson. Under "Facilitating Learning", teachers will write phrases such as those below to express the **learning** function of each step of the lesson:

- activating prior knowledge/experience
- clarifying task strategies
- setting lesson goals
- focusing attention on...
- introducing/clarifying the context
- sharing task purpose
- exemplifying/guiding discovery of and checking concepts
- drilling (for accuracy), practising (for fluency)
- enabling next step to be completed
- consolidating, recycling, reinforcing, reviewing, testing

Under "Facilitating Motivation", the teacher is encouraged to consider and record the way selected tasks and materials can enhance motivation during each step in the lesson. Here are some of the phrases teachers have used under this heading:

- warm up - switching to English
- stirring/settling
- arousing interest
- activating schema
- setting task purpose
- providing a context for learning
- encouraging interaction/participation
- providing change of pace/focus
- ocusing concentration

Conclusions

The form has proved a useful tool in counterbalancing the "Pass Lesson" syndrome - both for the tutors and the candidates. Teacher trainers need to be reminded to evaluate the students' involvement as well as the teachers' skills and the quality of the lesson's content. By referring to the form, teachers are also reminded to stick to trying to achieve the planned outcomes while selecting materials and planning activities.

Although some have found the form clumsy, it does seem to have succeeded in highlighting the primacy of student needs. This primacy can be forgotten in the stress of teaching an observed, assessed lesson and in the artificiality which is inevitably involved.

Whilst there has been an improvement in planning individual lessons, what continues to be lacking in certain candidates' planning process is demonstrating how the lesson integrates with the longer-term unit of work or teaching programme. Attempts will be made in future courses to refine the Pre-Observation Lesson Overview to further highlight this aspect of planning.

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PEOPLE WHO TRAIN PEOPLE

Sarah Andrews is a partner in 'Nursing First' a new organisation in the UK providing training and development for nurses working in an ever changing national health service (NHS). In fact, Nursing First works with nurses in general practice, managers, health service executives and nurses in community as well as hospital care. Sarah still does some night nursing and has been involved in teaching, research, curriculum development and management as well as nurse training.

TW Sarah, could you give me an idea of how you and nursing first works?

SA Yes. Each group we work with has between 5 and 10 people and meets for a half or whole day workshop once a month for a year. The groups can be made up of pure managers, that is desk people, or for example of senior clinical nurses in the community. We work with different groups all over the country.

TW Tell me about the group of nurses you are working with at the moment.

SA Well, they are used to being community nurses but now they are assuming new managerial responsibilities. This is one of the ways the NHS is changing. Instead of the very hierarchical system with many levels of nurses all taking orders from each other, the pyramid is being flattened and those at the sharp end have more responsibility than they did.

TW So how do you start off with them?

SA We spend the whole of the first workshop discussing what it feels like to be turned upside down! We analyse the new situation, raise issues and set an agreed agenda for the training. The whole thing is a reflective workshop

TW The word 'reflective' is a buzz word in our field at the moment. Do you take it from Schon by any chance?

SA Yes. We've been using Schön in our curriculum development since 1984. He was in Britain for a conference I attended at the Office for Public Management just this year. All our training is based on Schön.

TW Well that's a clear parallel between our fields then! So how do the nurses take to the first reflective workshop?

SA Formerly nurses were not encouraged to take a lot of initiatives. It is only 20 years since breaking a thermometer could incur matron's wrath! And now suddenly they are in a room all together with nothing but a table and some biscuits and someone is asking them what they want to do! For nurses like this we have take-home work packs focusing on particular issues. The work packs invite people to do some active learning.

continued →

TW We have that term too but I don't know if we use it in the same way you do.

SA In our active learning there is a group of people called a learning set. They stick together for one year. With the learning packs people not only do some reading but also go back into their sphere of work, do some tasks and then write a diary or journal recording their actions, judgements, and feelings as well as the facts. They write about critical incidents. Community nurses all have standard NHS diaries that we have to record in anyway so we can write these things in alongside.

TW Do you ever have a problem of people knowing they are supposed to show signs of reflection and professional development and so writing accordingly in order to please?

SA The diaries are never inspected by us so this is not a problem. I don't care what they write in them. I care what they bring back to share with the group.

TW Ah! Simple! So what do they bring back?

SA The participants come back with a variety of examples of whatever we are concentrating on, from their current case load or work area. Now, we may be working with nurses or a group of managers or board members. They bring back examples from different types of work and yet what is fascinating for me as I move from group to group is the similarities in the issues raised. Everyone is concerned with managing change, doing things differently, and since in the NHS we live in a world of meetings, everyone is concerned with how to get a point across, how to be assertive, how to handle themselves. Many of the things worrying the clinicians in Wigan are also worrying the board members in inner London.

TW So, the first term is the reflective workshop supported by the work packs and the active learning.

SA Not everyone needs the work packs. Some groups are ready to come with their own examples rig . from the beginning. But with every group we meet from 9-5 and eat together too. So we have four structured chunks of work time in between the breaks.

TW With such a democratic approach, working totally from the participants' data, do you find that it takes a long time to get organised and for the group process?

SA We always spend the first block of time on what we call TTJ-Trivia, Traumas and Joys. In that session people catch up with each other and discuss what went well or badly with the workpack and check out how they are going to work for the day.

TW So you allow a quarter of the time deliberately for group process. How do you organise this?

SA We use the usual buzz groups, pyramid discussions, task groups and whatever else is needed as we go along. All the "How to..." stuff is in the first work pack in written form. (How to write a diary entry, how to do a critical incident analysis). And throughout the day we take the temperature, get feedback and make changes as necessary.

TW What do you do in the second term?

SA There is much less guidance needed. For example, the group might decide to use the opportunity of ten people doing almost the same thing, to save time, bring back data about their field, analyse it and synthesise it.

TW Could you give me an example?

SA Yes. A group may decide to do a literature review. They decide which people will concentrate on which journals and which countries. They go away and explore. And when they've finished they have something they can bind up and circulate. Another group are looking at what there is in the field of clinical audit in primary health care teams.

TW Er, what's a clinical audit?

SA It's when you actually check the results of, in this case, interventions by doctors, nurses and therapists with a specific patient or group of patients. And you look at the outcomes.

TW So, you look at what the patient says, the advice they are given, if it works, the pro's, the con's, the time spent, etc.

SA That's right. In fact this kind of information is very sparse. In 40 years the NHS has not been good at keeping information. For example, all over the country surgeons are doing hernia operations in a number of different ways. By doing a clinical audit, we can find out why they are doing it differently and if one way is more effective than another.Another group, running in parallel with the groups I've just mentioned, wants to come up with a framework for allocating patients into different groups according to their degree of dependency. The group doesn't feel that any of the published models work well in their area, and they are right. They've arrived at that conclusion as a result of working together through this term and really reflecting on what's happening. They've come up with a whole variety of fascinating reasons embedded in the local culture, population history, social background...as to why the published models don't work in their situation.

TW So, in the second term the work can lead off in all sorts of different directions, but the participants are in control of the learning?

SA Yes, and they can come out with really practical tools for their daily work. Of course the work of these groups sound very clear and organised, but actually it unfolds and it's the only at the end that you can look back and see how it has worked.

TW Who pays for the courses?

SA The NHS trusts. But we can't call them 'courses', that's too structured. So, we call it 'a set of people working together'.

TW What do you enjoy about the training?

SA I really love the variety. I'm working with people at

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different points in the health system, with nurses one day, chief executives the next. That keeps me up to speed. And, because of the way we work, the participants have real ownership.

TW What are the problems?

SA It's relatively easy to write policy. It's much more difficult for people to own something they haven't developed for themselves.

TW Is the reflective learning cycle a perfect answer then?

SA No, of course not. Sometimes people don't invest the time and effort in the activities. But when we meet, they just have to fill the time somehow, and that makes them feel silly. It doesn't usually happen twice. Other times people get cross. It could be about the subject matter or the fact that they've been sent by their organisation, rather than choosing to come. Some find the learning methods a surprise. And there are sometimes boundary issues too. The group is bottom-up, but we can't have people picketing The House of Commons in group time, for example. So sometimes we have to control things. Instead, they could use the structure of the organisation to make their views heard.Also, you can't expect people to do something that they don't feel an affinity for. Nurses in particular do not feel an affinity for the 'market of health care'. We have to cost things now. We can't go on the way we did before.

TW Do you think the changes in the NHS are taking us in the right direction?

SA The world is taking us into a very different age. Health care is getting more expensive all the time because we have so many high-tech opportunities and advances in care and treatment possibilities. We also have an ageing population which is presenting us with unfamiliar health care challenges. Understanding health care and health care costs is important for everybody whether professional or patient.

TW So, the two main areas in the NHS that you are helping professionals to deal with are the 'flattening of the pyramid' and costing?

SA Yes, and they are totally related. The quality, the cost effectiveness, and the efficiency of care will improve simultaneously with the flattened structures. Hierarchical structures are costly and ineffective. We are trying to get our earlier ten levels of nursing hierarchy down to three or four, which is about normal, if you look at ICI and Shell. Ward sisters and District Nurses are now holding budgets. We are going back to pre-NHS days when the matron, or sister, took real decisions about nursing care and budgets. They knew the cost of every last piece of lint! Effectiveness will improve when you let the people doing the job have control of the budgets. You can't expect a district nurse to care whether she goes to this village first rather than that one if she can just turn her travel expenses in at the end of the week and get them paid automatically.

TW How did you become a trainer?

SA When I was a clinical nurse, I was the one with the enthusiasm and the experience, so I tended to do the clinical teaching. Then I went off to university to do a post-graduate teaching certificate. I went to Surrey. It was steeped in reflective practice. Then I went to Southbank University to do my curriculum development and clinical research. From, there I became director of the Queen's Nursing Institute. I have no formal continuing training. I work with colleagues, many of whom are qualified nurse educators. So, we almost have our own learning set where we replicate the process we use in our training with each other. And I learn from the people I'm working with in the groups. More formal than that? The days at the Office of Public Management and other conference opportunities and as a nurse I am bound by my professional body - the UKCC (United Kingdom Central Council for Nursing, Midwifery and Health Visiting) to engage in Continuing Professional Education and profile my own performance. Of course, nowadays, all the nurses in the country will be doing reflective practice from day one of their training. In the schools now, our children do project work all the time, and they're using these processes too.

TW Apart from the reflective learning cycle, do you have any particularly useful training tools to share with us?

SA Well, we do a lot of drawing in groups. For example, having built the notion of partnership in one group, they were asked to draw, and then present by mime, what partnership meant to them. By the end of the year, when we'd got into the area of the relationship between providers of health care and purchasers, we brought the pictures out again to remember that original spirit. It worked well, but you never know with another group. One group wants to get stuck into a clinical audit, a parallel group wants to express anger and fury. That's training! But with the reflective learning cycle, it doesn't matter. It can hold it all.

For information on: Nursing First, contact Sarah Andrews via the Editor.

Reflection see D. Schön The Reflective Practitioner, Avebury 1991

Action learning see McGill and Beaty Kogan Page 1992.

BOOK REVIEW

Classroom Observation Tasks by Ruth Wajnryb is aimed at language teachers, trainers or trainees, at anyone who is observing other people's classes for the purpose of professional growth and development.

The body of the book consists of detailed observation tasks with different focuses such as the learner, language, teaching skills and strategies. These tasks are intended to be used as a resource. They can be used in any order, and are well-indexed for easy reference.

Throughout the book, the emphasis is on supportive observation, and several of the tasks depend on open discussion between teacher and observer about the aims of the lesson or the lesson plan. This may not always be practical in a teacher/trainee situation, but makes the tasks particularly suitable for in-service use between colleagues who have the chance to observe each other, or between trainees following the same course.

Each task has a brief background introduction, touching in a very accessible way on current discussion areas about the topic. The task objective is clearly stated, and there is a detailed procedure for what the observer should do before, during and after the lesson. The observation tasks themselves consist of questions, grids or diagrams, with emphasis not on evaluation, but on gathering data on a particular aspect of the lesson. After the lesson, the observer is asked to analyse that data, generalise from it, and finally reflect on its relevance to their own classroom experience.

The post observation discussion points are open and unprescriptive. Ancient "rules" of teaching such as "Don't echo" or "Simplify instructions" are laid open to question. For example, the book quotes apparently conflicting standpoints:- "Instructions should generally be below the level of the language being taught" and "Learners usually understand at a higher level than they speak or write". The observer is asked to consider these, and to formulate their own opinions on the basis of what they have seen in the classroom. They are encouraged to go into the classroom with a clear brief of what to look for, but without preconceptions or expectations of what they should find. They can draw their own conclusions, and the book never suggests there is a right or wrong answer.

On a typical initial EFL training course, trainees may do up to 40 hours of observation of teachers and other trainees. It's time when trainees can observe and evaluate what goes on in the classroom without the emotion and adrenalin that might accompany their own lessons. They can see what decisions teachers actually make in the real world, and question why those decisions are made. But on many courses (and I include my own) the observation time has sometimes been an under-exploited resource, which trainees may regard as "making up" the hours, rather than valuable learning time. Feedback on observation is a stage that can easily be skimped under the pressure of an intensive course. The chief value of Ruth Wajnryb's book is to put classroom observation back in the centre of the learning process. It becomes a part of the learning cycle, an active exploration of other people's classroom techniques and decisions. Used well, it can help us to avoid ritualised teaching behaviour and enable us to reappraise what we are doing.

Certainly for trainers, or for any teacher involved in in-service training, this is a useful book, suitable for anyone who wants to develop or extend their own set of classroom observation tasks. Although the tasks would be useful to pre-service trainees, the book as a whole is not aimed at them and they would need a trainer to direct them round it. My only regret is that the book does not contain photocopiable, hand-out-able pages for easy access together with the appropriate copyright permissions. But this is a minor point; I'd recommend the book to anyone involved in observation of language classes.

Kate Evans

!NEWS!

"Expanding horizons in ELT". International Conference, November 27-29, 1995. Chulalongkorn University Language Institute (CULI), Information from Assoc: Prof: Chaniga Silpa-Anan, Director, CULI, Phaya Thai Road, Bankok 10330, Thailand, Fax (66-2) 252-5978.

Would you like to send something in to "The Teacher Trainer"?

"The Teacher Trainer" is designed to be a forum for trainers, teachers and trainees all over the world. If you'd like to send in a letter, a comment, a cartoon, a taped conversation or an article sharing information, ideas or opinions we'll be very happy to receive it. If you would like to send us an article, please try to write it in an accessible non-academic style. Lengths should normally be 800 - 4,000 words. Send your first draft typed in double spacing with broad margins. Your article will be acknowledged by pro-forma letter. Once you have had comments back later and have finalised your draft in negotiation with the editor, we will ask you to send us three hard (paper) copies and if at all possible a floppy disk (micro 31/2" or 9cm). Your article needs to be saved on the disk as an ASCII file. Keep your headings and sub-headings in upper and lower case throughout. We try to publish your article within about three issues, but if it is an awkward length it may be longer. It will be assumed that your article has not been published before nor is being considered by another publication.

We look forward to reading your article!

HAVE YOU READ.....?

The Language Instinct: the new science of language and mind by Steven Pinker, 1994

(Allan Lane: The Penguin Press. 494pp. £20 hardcover.)

This is a survey of linguistics. In it, Pinker rounds up the usual big time suspects: Syntax, Vocabulary, Phonology, Semantics, Psycholinguistics and so on. Additionally, a few other subjects such as the Language of the Mind, Mind Design and the Psycholinguistics of Sign Language are given unusually full interrogation (some readers might think Pragmatics gets off with a slap on the wrist).

One way of giving a rough measure of Pinker's accomplishment is to say that here is the long-overdue successor to the superb unabridged first edition of the late Dwight Bolinger's aspects of language. Like Bolinger, Pinker is not just a witty and knowledgeable reporter on the state of the game, but a major player himself as well as a master of sustained and incisive argumentation in plain English. Moving more towards the heart of the book, what makes this one so special is Pinker's varied yet impressively cohesive argument that linguistics is smack dab in the middle of 'evolutionary psychology', a new branch of cognitive science which involves the belief that language is a hard-wired instinct, in the same sense that migrating to a certain lake near the equator, is an instinct to a swallow.

A particular pleasure in reading this book is that, as Pinker argues his way through the big issues, he takes a broom to several undusted corners of linguistics and the social sciences. Here are some examples:

- Since the time of Margaret Mead and John Watson a key element of the standard social sciences model has been the doctrine of cultural relativity. Pinker contends that this model clashes severely with the strong probability that human beings have lots of hard-wired instincts besides language, and that some of these instincts underlie morality, and other aspects of culture.
- Pinker argues, compellingly in my opinion, that the whole business of chimps and gorillas learning language has been, in effect a hoax.
- Adults cannot acquire languages the way children can. They've missed that boat in certain important respects. So much for the Natural Approach for the over-teens?
- Pinker provides a fascinating case history of the 'factoid' that Eskimos have umpteen dozen words for different kinds of snow.
- What are the genetics of language? Pinker outlines the shape of an answer.
- He contends that much contemporary social science rests on vacuous, undefined uses of the word "learning".

The gist of Pinker's conception of learning is that "Complexity in the mind is not caused by learning; learning is caused by complexity in the mind" (p.125).

I reckon this to be an extremely worthwhile read for amateurs and students of linguistics as well as for specialists. I especially recommend it if (as with me) it's been a while since you took your last syntax or language acquisition course.

Seth Lindstromberg

PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED

The following may be of special interest or relevance to teacher trainers:-

● **Action learning** by I. McGill and L. Beaty (1992) Kogan Page ISBN-0-7494-0580-5. This guide tells you how to do action learning (a process of learning and reflection that happens in groups or "sets" of colleagues working with real problems and with the intention of getting things done). If you are unhappy with the lecture-mode then check out action learning as a possible student-centred approach also transferable to almost any organisation or staff-development programme.

● **Appropriate methodology and social context** by A. Holliday, CUP (1994) ISBN 0-521-43745-8. A book that flags, doggedly and sternly, the ethnocentric nature of English language education. A ethonographic framework is used to explore the complex cultures of classrooms and teacher communities in different countries. A must for anyone involved in EFL.

● **Teachers' voices:** exploring course design in a changing curriculum, eds. A. Burns and S. Hood (1995) National Centre for ELT and Research, Macquarie University, ISBN1-86408-028-0. First person accounts by researchers and teachers of how the introduction of a new competency-based curriculum has had an impact on their own practices in learner-centred course design. The papers arise from a national action research project involving a year of workshops, action research cycles, data collection and analysis.

● Penguin has more books out (1995) in its introductory guides to applied linguistics series. Small but perfectly formed, these books now also have unusually fresh, apt, cover designs. The latest ones are: Introducing classroom interaction by Amy Tsui ISBN 0-14-081-451-5.

Introducing Standard English by Jeff Wilkinson ISBN 0-14-081391-8.

Introducing Reading by Florence Davies ISBN 0-14-081390-X.

Introducing Grammar by Edward Woods ISBN 0-14-081411-6.

The series editors are Ron Carter and David Nunan and the guides are genuinely introductory, practical and interactive.

● The Centre for Information in Language Teaching (CILT). Publications are written for modern language school teachers in the UK and are available from CILT Mail Order, P.O. Box 8, Llandysul, Dyfed, SA44 4ZB, Wales. Latest titles are:

● **Mixed ability teaching:** Meeting learners' needs by S. Ainslie. A basic booklet for adult education teachers discussing how students can differ and outlining some strategies (e.g. core and branching work) for responding to the differences.

● **Self-access and the adult language learner** ed. Edith Esch. Written for those setting up or running self-access centres in higher education or industry the book groups 20 contributions around the themes of: relevant resources, learner support systems, staff and management training, learners' beliefs, technology, and a Hong Kong case study. A4 size.

● **Developing skills for independent reading** by I. Mitchell and A. Swarbrick. A booklet discussing strategies to give pupils confidence, competence and then enjoyment from independent reading.

● **Languages for the international scientist** (CILT) eds. G. Parker and C. Reuben (1994) ISBN 1-874016-31-3. Teaching languages to science students, teaching science subjects in a foreign language...these are the topics of this collection of 19 articles. Should groups be composed of mixed scientists or should chemists study with chemists? Should technical language be taught? If so, how much? Case studies included.

● **Teaching by principles** by H.D. Brown (1994) Prentice Hall ISBN 0-13-328220-1. A long letter from San Francisco State University direct to the beginner EFL or ESL teacher, touching on matters such as (working from the back to the front of the book) class management, lesson planning, tests, the "4 skills", learner training, teaching context, methodological history. A little old-fashioned (action research squeaks in as a P.S.) but the background principles clearly laid out up-front so you can see if you agree. If you want more on the principles see Brown's companion paperback "Principles of Language Learning and Teaching" also 1994.

● **Righting the educational conveyor belt** by Michael Grinder (1991) Metamorphous Press ISBN 1-55552-036-7. The techniques of NLP are applied in this book to the classroom. Large pages with large, black print cover differences in learner styles and how to respond to them effectively and often non-verbally. Although the writing and picture style may be a little hard to settle to, the author touches on subjects (such as respect, kids at risk and recharging your batteries) that other teacher manuals rarely discuss.

● **Metaphor and thought** Ortony, Andrew (ed.) 1993 2nd edition, 678pp. CUP ISBN 0-521-40561-0. This is a partial updating of the influential first edition of 1979. Some articles remain unchanged, e.g. Michael Reddy's seminal article on the power that a conventional, non-literary metaphor may exert in shaping viewpoints and Donald Schön's article on metaphor and problem setting. Other articles have been revised, e.g. Hugh Petrie and Rebecca Oshlag's article on metaphor in education. Finally, there are six new articles, including a survey of contemporary metaphor theory by George Lakoff. The 71pp section on metaphor and education is likely to be of most direct interest to teacher trainers.

● **The World on paper** by David Olson CUP (1994) ISBN 0-521-44211-3. Hardback. This one is for pure (and rather erudite) enjoyment. Drawing on recent work in history, anthropology, linguistics and psychology Olson argues, with lively quotes and little jargon, that our consciousness of language is structured by our writing system.

● **What's really going on here?** by S. Orbach (1994) Virago ISBN 1-85381-798-8. As Olson's book (above) is about the meaning of literacy, Orbach's is about an emotional illiteracy that Orbach feels is culturally transmitted. Made up of reprints of Guardian Weekend columns the book provides 50 short readings on emotional minefields such as War, Sex and Christmas!

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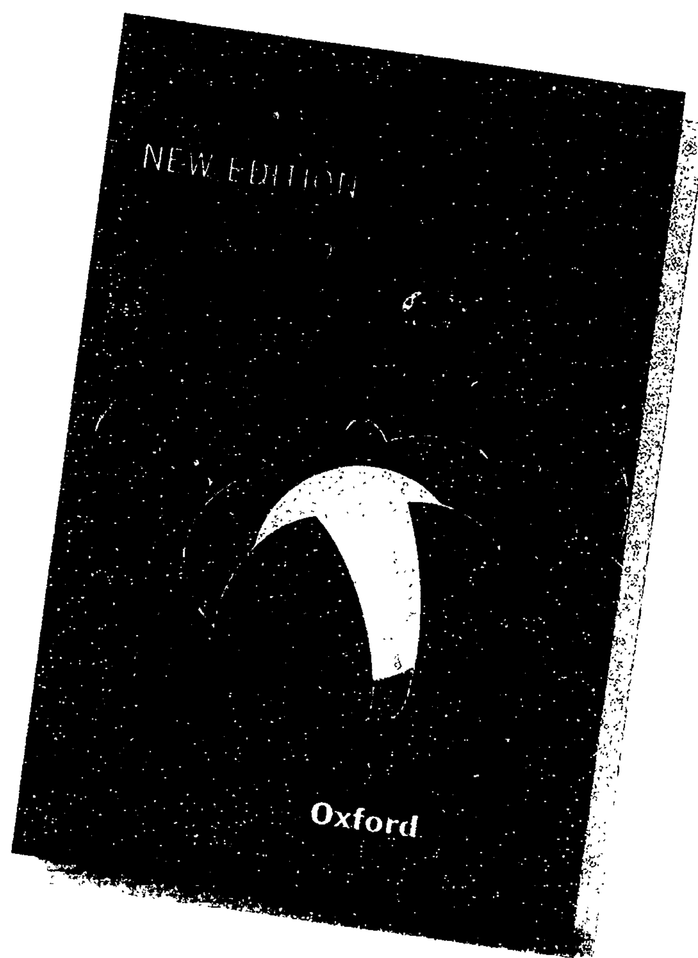

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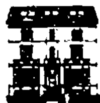

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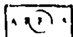

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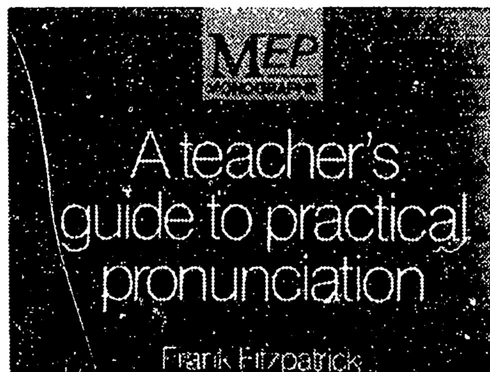

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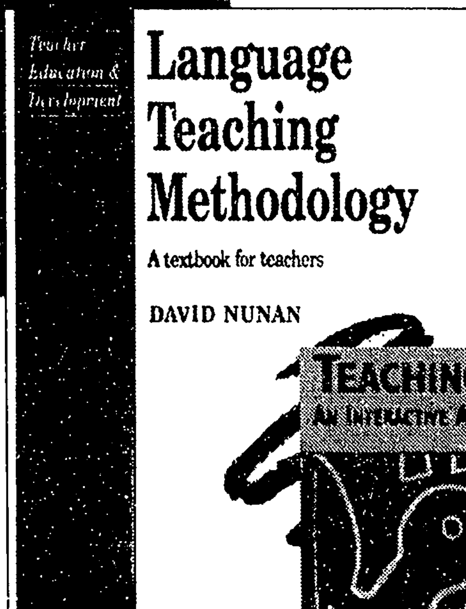

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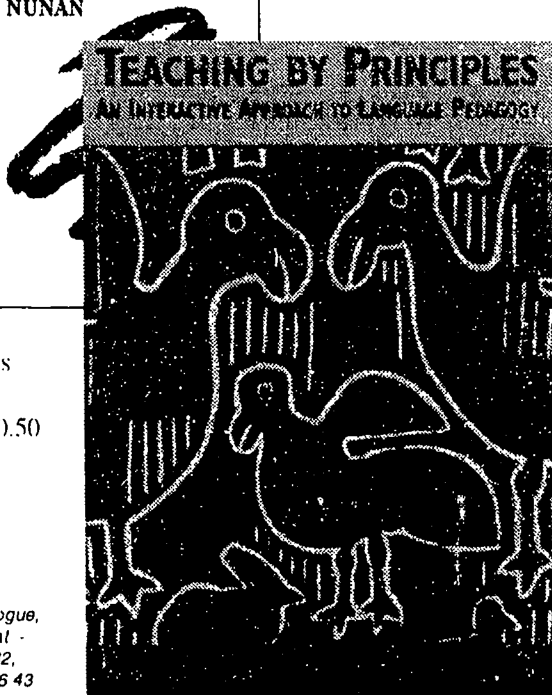

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9521: English across the curriculum

3 - 16 September 1995, Canterbury
Directed by Adrian Halliday

The seminar will consider the aims of cross-curricular language policy; investigate methods of organising English as a service subject; and consider the skills necessary to analyse needs and design appropriate teaching strategies.

The programme will be of particular interest to school inspectors involved with implementing language policy, headteachers developing service English in their schools, department heads at secondary and tertiary levels developing inter-departmental co-operation, and materials developers.

Fee: £1,490 (inclusive)

9551: Communicative language testing revisited

3-14 September 1995, Lancaster University
Directed by Professor J Charles Alderson

The aim of this seminar is to attempt to take stock of what the achievements of communicative language testing are, what issues in test design, delivery and analysis remain outstanding and what problems need to be defined and addressed.

The programme will be of particular interest to senior staff in ministries of education responsible for language assessment in examination units, boards, curriculum development centres; language test developers; applied linguists with an interest in assessment issues; language education researchers who need to use language tests; others involved in devising, using or thinking about language assessment instruments.

Fee: £1,770 (inclusive)

9557: Managing evaluation and innovation in ELT

10 - 22 September 1995, University of Warwick, Coventry
Directed by Dr Pauline Rea-Dickens and Tricia Hedge

Many ELT practitioners are involved in managing evaluation and innovation in ELT. The seminar will aim to look at the role of evaluation in change and at procedures in the process of evaluation, and it will consider the range of strategies available to the managers of change. Participants will be invited to bring with them data, documentation and case studies for discussion.

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9567: Materials Writing for ELT

12 - 20 September 1995, Oxford
Directed by Philip Prowse and Simon Greenall

The aim of the seminar is to bring together people who work with secondary and adult learners around the world and who are interested in writing materials with authors and producers of ELT materials in the United Kingdom. The seminar will focus on key issues in textbook writing and raise awareness of the writing process. In addition to input from the seminar team, the participants will contribute from their own perspectives and experience.

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Fee: £1,190

9593: New perspectives on policy and planning for foreign and second language learning

24 October - 1 November 1995, Durham
Directed by Professor Michael Byram

The seminar will consider the internationalisation of foreign language learning and participants will start on developing a strategy for reviewing the policy in their own systems in order that the most effective systems are implemented.

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9555: Developing materials and resources for self-access

12 - 24 November 1995, Saffron Walden
Directed by a team of tutors from Bell Language School

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9583: Contemporary English: keeping up to date

10 - 16 March 1996, Oxford
Directed by Katie Gray

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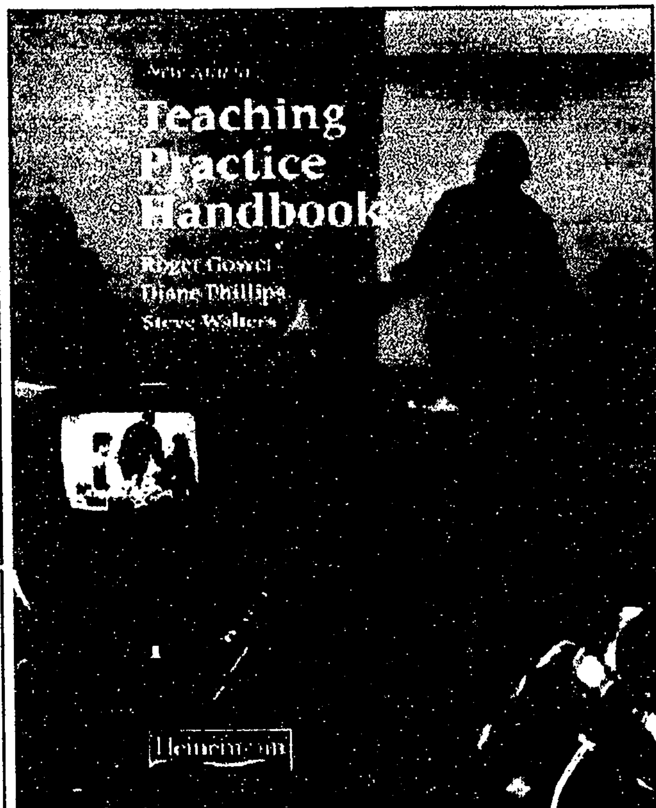

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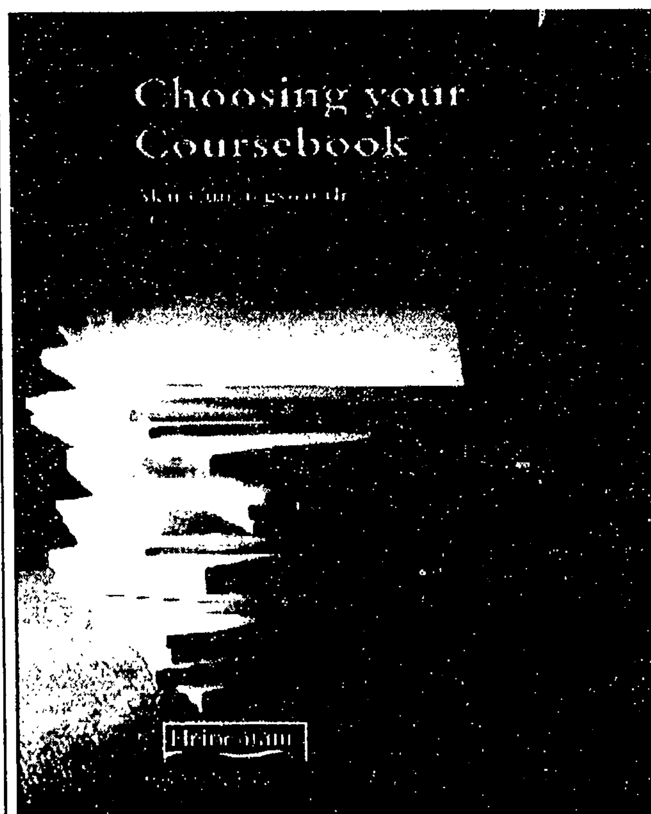

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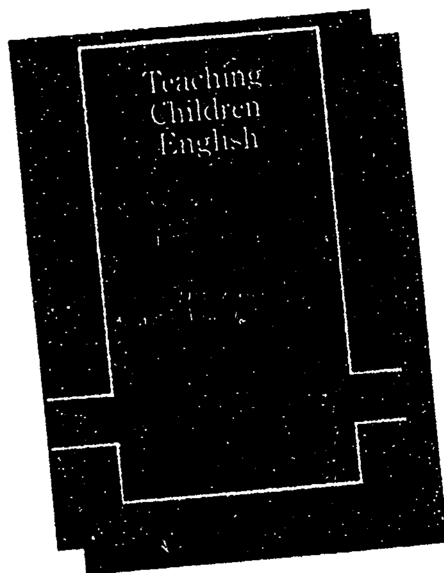

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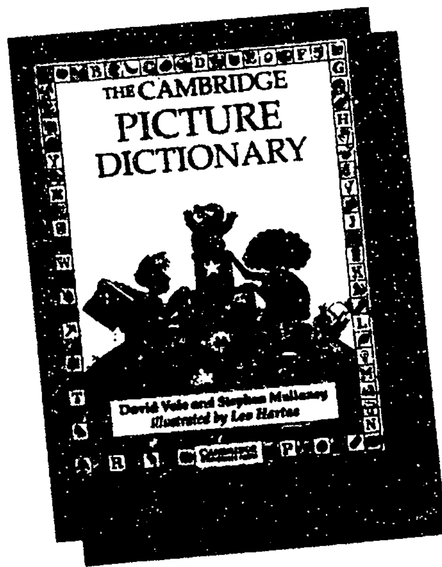

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VOL.9 No.3 AUTUMN 1995

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ABOUT "THE TEACHER TRAINER"

"The Teacher Trainer" is a journal especially for those interested in modern language teacher training. Whether you are a teacher who tends to be asked questions by others in a staffroom, or a Director of Studies with a room of your own, whether you are a course tutor on an exam course, or an inspector going out to schools, this journal is for you. Our aims are to provide a forum for ideas, information and news, to put trainers in touch with each other and to give those involved in teacher training a feeling of how trainers in other fields operate as well as building up a pool of experience within modern language teacher training.

The journal comes out three times a year and makes use of a variety of formats e.g. article, letter, comment, quotation, cartoon, interview, spoof, haiku ideas. If the idea is good, we'll print it whatever voice you choose to express it in.

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ERIC

Editorial

Welcome to the last issue in Volume Nine of The Teacher Trainer. There are some old friends returned in this issue – not just the book review and publications received columns but also some other well established series:

Observation and feedback. Dominic Cogan takes a look at the counselling approach to teacher supervision. He does not accept the stereotypical view in language teaching circles that a counselling role means soft-pedalling or sweetening criticism. Instead he discusses challenging trainees with more directive strategies.

Trainer background. In case you've heard of the term "total quality management" and not really known what it meant, I've printed an interview with Bob Richard of Pilgrims who has brought in the concept of TQM to improve systems and processes in the company.

Training around the world. Although Carolyn Shields and Michael Janopoulos work in the U.S.A. and thus give us a view on a teacher education programme there, the most interesting feature of the article, in my view, is the care with which their MATESOL students are canvassed for their views and the "response-ability" of their programme. Would that more MA courses were so client-centred!

Conference report. Marcial Boo went to the SEAL conference in Brighton this year. He talks us through the choices he made ... which plenary to attend? What notes to take? What questions to ask? What follow-up reading to do? Marcial's sincere approach, trying to actually learn something from a conference, will strike a chord with many conference-goers. It will also act as a gentle warning to presenters who are rather cavalier about the citations and references they casually toss out!

I'm happy to introduce another new series this issue. It's called "Language Matters". A colleague's chance remark made me realise that although we have plenty of articles on how the language, component of a training/teacher education course can be approached, we have had very little on language itself. The new series will address this imbalance. We will have contributions from David Crystal, John Ayto and others and we start with one from Sylvia Chalker who discusses some problems of grammatical terminology.

If you are a non-native speaking teacher trainer then you'll know how important language improvement is as you work with groups of teachers discussing methodology in the target language. Richard Cullen, working as a trainer-trainer in Tanzania, discusses some difficulties that trainee tutors there typically experience in leading discussions and describes a procedure for categorising questions that he has developed to help structure discussions.

The book reviewed by Mihaela Tilincă is "New Ways in teacher education", edited by Freeman and Cornwell.

This has been a good year for The Teacher Trainer. We have launched three new series - Trainee Voices, Readings for Trainees, and Language Matters. We have increased our circulation and expanded the number of advertisements carried. We have a great new discount for you when you re-subscribe (see P.5 for details) and have continued to forge links with sister publications and national trainer groups. We are always looking for new subscribers, new article contributors and new advertisers. We do almost no marketing and all our contacts come from word-of-mouth recommendation. So...please tell your friends! We really value any new contacts you can bring to us. Looking forward to hearing from you on any issue!

Tessa Woodward, Editor.

COMMENT

In an article in the last issue of 'The Teacher Trainer' Peter Grundy invites responses to the question: "The language awareness component of CTEFLA courses – is it a joke?" He cites a presentation that I gave over two years ago as evidence of the current situation in CTEFLA courses. He implicitly criticises the lack of attention to word order on such courses, but then 'argues' the case against teaching syntax. The dismissal of the significance of syntax is achieved by lumping together syntax and morphology, by making no further reference to syntax, and by offering a critique of a small area of morphology of admittedly questionable classroom usefulness.

"So", he continues (suggesting some kind of logical connection), "[ ] the LA component of CTEFLA courses is not to be about what language is, about its form". The alternative he proposes is the teaching of pragmatics. The kind of pragmatic analysis of discourse that he proposes is not new to the world of CTEFLA, and a much simplified analysis of this sort is a standard feature of many CTEFLA pre-course tasks. However, he does not address the central question of the relevance of pragmatic analysis to the context of a short, practically-oriented pre-service training course, and the immediate classroom applications of such work. In recent years the University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate has conducted what is possibly the most extensive consultation exercise in the history of British ELT. The feedback from the various stakeholders in CTEFLA (the trainees themselves, employers, academics, etc.) indicates that they do not share Peter Grundy's views. Their opinions do not detract from the importance of the teaching of pragmatics, but they do suggest that the debate concerning the content of the CTEFLA syllabus needs to be rooted in the practical realities of an initial teacher training course of approximately 100 hours.

Extract from a letter from Philip Kerr.

Using a Counselling Approach in Teacher Supervision

by Dominic Cogan

The Dual Function of The Supervisor

Many trainee teachers naturally feel anxious when talking to their supervisor as they are concerned with how they are going to be evaluated How do we put students at ease in the post-lesson conference and allow them to reflect on their own teaching?

One way is to consider the supervisor as not being there just to evaluate but also to provide feedback which will benefit the trainee in their future practice (Raz, 1992, p.16). If evaluation can be de-emphasised and seen as something that largely happens at the end of a course then feedback can be more real. Self-reflection on the part of the trainee can be encouraged, though as Kerr (1994) points out, this might be unrealistic on shorter courses (such as the RSA/UCLES TEFLA) where time pressures may make such reflection unfeasible. However on longer courses there is a greater possibility for supervisor and trainee to relax and explore issues.

Given a longer course, the supervisor can more easily adopt a counsellor type role which predisposes him or her to a certain set of values and attitudes. These concern an emphasis on the individual worth of the person (Edge, 1992). Out of this belief in person-centredness develop attitudes to the other person of respect, empathy and honesty (p.63).

There are many reasons why these attitudes have been borrowed from the literature on counselling and adapted to language teaching. Language teaching is essentially concerned with the mediation of interpersonal communication through language. It is about relating to people and helping learners to relate effectively with other people in another language. If this is true of the classroom it will also be true for the sensitive area of teacher education.

However, as King points out (1983), the term "counselling" is a much abused term in language teaching circles these days (p.324). A general assumption has developed which views the 'counselling' label as indicative of a 'softly softly' approach where the supervisor is at pains to sweeten the pill of criticism thereby keeping the trainee happy at all costs. Drawing on the work of Egan (1990), I want to suggest that this notion of counselling is erroneous.

continued

ERIC

Egan's Counselling Model

Broadly speaking, Egan envisages three stages in the counselling process. These are: *'exploring'*, *'understanding'* and *'action'*. Within these stages particular skills will typically come into operation.

At the exploratory stage, the supervisor is anxious to establish rapport with the trainee. Essentially this is done through paying close attention to the trainee and being empathic and accepting in responding to the trainee's point of view. The supervisor would at this stage employ such skills as: focusing with open-ended questions, paraphrasing and reflecting meanings and feelings, as well as summarizing. Some typical utterances of the supervisor might be:

Can you take me through the lesson, step by step?

(Open ended questions)

...As you said, though the students were interested in the topic

they needed more language input before they could carry out the task? (paraphrasing)

...you thought the presentation stage went on too long so you felt rushed during the rest of the lesson. (summarising).

At the understanding stage the supervisor enables the trainee to see the broader issues involved in their teaching and allows the trainee to reflect upon the patterns or dynamics of the lesson. At this stage the skills of immediacy, recognising patterns, confronting discrepancies as well as self-disclosure would be utilised. Some examples of supervisor talk might be:

Did you notice how the students were ill at ease too until you yourself relaxed? (immediacy)

...There was plenty of student to student interaction... (recognising patterns)

...So why did you use that pattern drill when you didn't think it was very meaningful? (confronting discrepancies)

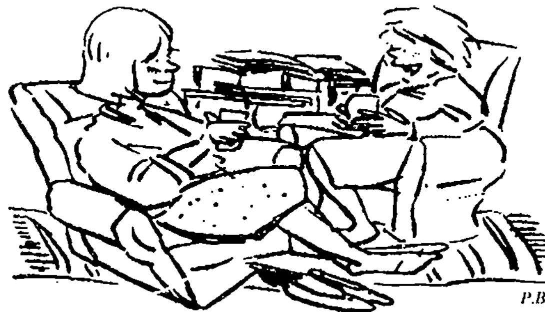
I've had a similar sort of experience with beginners so gradually I learned to write key words on the blackboard to signpost what I wanted them to do. (self-disclosure).

While in the final stage of action, the aim is to work with the trainee in using what has been learned from the previous conversation to plan what approach they now want to adopt in the classroom. Here, the skills that would come into play would include evaluation and goal-setting. Samples of supervisor talk might look like this:

Of course there are risks involved in using group work with large classes. Do you think your students would go along with the idea of co-operative problem solving? (evaluation)

Why don't you draw up a list of the things you want your students to be able to do by the end of the term? You could use this to guide your lesson planning. (goal-setting)

However a supervisor in teacher education using this model might well re-arrange the order in which the skills



are used or opt not to use certain skills at all. For example, it may not be at all appropriate for a supervisor to self-disclose about their own teaching, unless this has particular relevance to the work of the trainee being supervised. On the other hand, some trainees may need to be confronted with discrepancies in their own line of thinking, especially when their level of self awareness is low.

The skill of immediacy involves telling the trainee how the supervisor sees them behaving at a particular point in time of the post lesson conference. It may involve challenging the trainee's behaviour and draws on the essential attitude of genuineness as described by Rogers (1983).

One of the central arguments of the counselling paradigm for supervision, is that the trainee's perceptions of their own classroom experience must be seriously taken into account. If the supervisor doesn't take time to understand the perceptual world of the trainee, they will be working at cross purposes. Essentially this involves inviting the trainee to describe how they feel their lesson proceeded.

This invitation to allow the other to first relate how they see things must be followed up by a willingness to listen on the part of the supervisor. Such listening activity will be deeper than the conventional and sometimes relatively inattentive listening pattern of the ordinary conversation. It involves being empathic through an effort to pick up the underlying feeling quality of what is being said. Indeed, listening at this level is a skill the supervisor needs to employ throughout the different stages of the post lesson conference. It includes such attending behaviour as making eye contact, leaning slightly forward in the direction of the speaker and occasionally making reflective listening responses like: 'Okay', 'Yes', 'You felt pressed for time' etc.

By taking the perceptions of the trainee seriously, the intention is not to simply accept them as fact. Instead it is left to the skill of the supervisor to challenge them as appropriate and negotiate between the trainee's perceptions and the perceptions of the supervisor.

The overall aim is to encourage the trainee to think critically about what they do in the classroom and to take responsibility for their own teaching behaviour. Thus the supervisor will be reluctant to offer advice as soon as it is asked for. Proffering advice has its place, especially with very weak trainees but it can only be a stop gap measure, a survival technique while the trainee learns to rely more on their own abilities to respond adequately to the teaching situation. The main aim always in view will be :

to mobilise what Patrick Casement calls the "internal supervisor"... This is the ability we all have to observe and critique ourselves.

(Houston quoted in Woodward, 1990, p. 15)

Stones (1984) argues similarly in his advocacy of a counselling approach to supervision:

All the time the emphasis is on encouraging student teachers to analyze their own teaching in the light of principles related to effective human learning...

(p.123).

To do this effectively as Stones argues, one needs 'to be sharp and probing as well as warm and supportive...' (p.121).

To sum up then, a counselling approach to supervision draws on many of the attitudes and skills associated with counselling practice. Essentially it is a commitment to an approach that recognises the importance of the dignity of the individual and sees this recognition as the basis for appropriate action. It does not rule out directive strategies or approaches which present trainees with alternative options for implementation. It includes all these and others when they adequately respond to the professional and personal needs of the trainee.

Supervision or Therapy?

Not everyone will be entirely comfortable with counselling techniques. Talk of counselling may immediately make some supervisors and trainees rather suspicious. For some, it may smack too much of therapy and its associations with mental instability . But in this view , there is a confusion between the conventional counselling setting and the use of some of the principles and practices of counselling in supervision.

As Houston rightly points out (p.15), the focus of counselling or therapy differs from that in the supervision of teacher trainees. In counselling or therapy it is the individual self which provides the focus for discussion while in supervision the talk is centred around the work of the trainee in the classroom rather than on their personality. Stones reiterates this point when he states: 'There is ... no suggestion of therapy merely because counselling notions are used' (p.119).

Cultural Differences and Institutional Constraints

Some may also be sceptical of person-centred approaches which they feel ignore differences in cultural perspectives or institutional constraints. This is a difficult argument to address because it implies a belief that cultural values or institutions that reflect them, don't change or that they shouldn't be encouraged to do so. It has to be admitted that certain approaches to supervision may more readily be accepted and adopted within one particular cultural setting than another. Directive approaches obviously fit in

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better in authoritarian settings. But this is not to say that alternative approaches could never be tried or at least partially adopted. The important thing is to be sensitive to the likely reactions to such change.

As was stated earlier, drawing on counselling skills is not an attempt to dictate one particular method of supervision but rather provides greater flexibility . All cultures will be anxious to foster professional development of their teachers , though the strategies they employ may on the surface, be different. As Underhill has observed:

I am always looking to see if the psychological climate that facilitates development is different between cultures. Sometimes I notice differences in superficial manifestation, but underneath I cannot find any significant differences at all.

(p.77)

Conclusion

Conventional approaches to supervision frequently fail to properly address the interpersonal issues inherent in the supervision of trainee teachers and sometimes leave trainees with an inappropriately negative view of themselves and their teaching abilities. One of these issues is the obvious power differences between trainee and supervisor. In fact the very terms 'trainee' and 'supervisor' themselves reinforce these differences. Using a counselling model is an attempt to distance oneself from the power implicit in the term 'supervisor' and to frame the relationship between supervisor and trainee within a supportive and empathic context.

Using counselling skills can also effectively guard against a particular view of what constitutes effective teaching, It also tries to guard against the notion of 'the way' to supervise. Instead, it allows the supervisor the same scope for action based on reflection, it hopes to foster in the trainee. Inevitably, this requires training for the supervisor – a good basis from which the supervisor can learn to empathise with the joys and pains trainees undergo while training at another level.

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Helping Non-native Speaker Teacher Trainers with Questions For Leading Discussions

by Richard Cullen (Dar es Salaam Teachers' College, Tanzania)

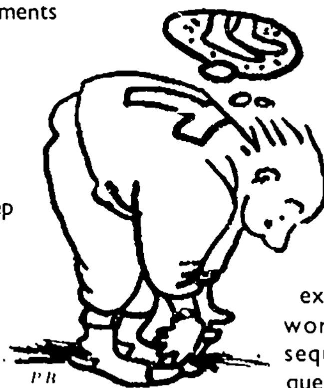
Introduction

The ability to lead a discussion effectively is essential for anyone engaged in teacher education. It consequently comprises one of the training skills which we focus on in our trainer training courses for in-service English tutors and College lecturers in Tanzania, held at the Centre for Tutor Training (CTT), at the Teachers' College in Dar es Salaam. In this article, I shall discuss some of the difficulties which our trainee tutors typically experience when conducting a 'discussion' session, and describe a procedure which I believe has helped the tutors on these courses develop their skills in this area.

Leading discussions: the challenges involved

Leading a successful discussion involves a complex web of interpersonal skills and classroom management skills, which can present a major challenge to anyone facilitating a training session - all the more so when the tutor is conducting the discussion in a language which is not his or her own. This becomes readily apparent when one tries to break down the range of skills involved. These would include, for example, the ability:

- to pose a series of relevant, connected and clearly expressed questions and discussion points which provoke interest and ideas;
- to listen sympathetically and carefully to the views of others, to follow and evaluate their arguments and retain the main points;
- to think on one's feet and respond quickly and appropriately to the unpredictable and often unexpected contributions of the participants;
- to intervene as appropriate in order to keep the discussion focussed and 'on track';
- to rephrase, reinterpret and summarise, as and when appropriate, the various contributions made, and perhaps list them concisely on the board or flipchart;
- to draw out contributions from a broad cross-section of the group and not let the discussion be dominated by a few individuals;
- to remain diplomatic and respectful of the different views and ideas expressed.



Thinking on one's feet

Readers will no doubt think of other abilities to add to this list. It can be seen though that, quite apart from the interpersonal and group management skills required, the tutor needs to have an easy and flexible command of the language of instruction (i.e. English) and a secure background in the subject matter of the discussion, i.e. the various issues and topics that fall under the broad umbrella of ELT methodology. The prospective in-service tutors attending the trainer training courses at the CTT, selected from among secondary school teachers and College lecturers throughout Tanzania, frequently lack confidence in using the language and have had little opportunity to acquire a firm and up-to-date knowledge in the subject matter. Furthermore, participatory methods of instruction, relying on discussion and debate with teachers, are for some of the tutors, particularly the lecturers from the pre-service Colleges, a fairly radical and not altogether welcome departure from tradition. Consequently, the whole methodology of conducting a discussion, particularly the kind of 'socratic' discussion which aims to make certain points by stimulating thinking through questions, may be unfamiliar and initially somewhat intimidating to the prospective tutors.

Initial attempts by the tutors to conduct discussions (e.g. in micro-training sessions or on their first 'practice' INSET course) are frequently marked by a lack of focus and sense of direction in the questions they ask and by difficulties in following up on the responses made by the participants with appropriate comments or additional, related questions. This is particularly the case in discussions which follow observation or direct experience of a teaching technique, e.g. one which the tutor has just demonstrated. A typical problem concerns the use of broad, imprecise questions, the intention of which is unclear to the participants (e.g. 'What was the purpose of the activity?'), even though it may be quite clear to the tutor. The result is invariably a prolonged silence, followed by a repetition of the same question, because the tutor lacks the experience and/or the linguistic flexibility to re-word the question, and break it down into a sequence of more narrowly-focussed, specific questions. Another weakness concerns the use of questions (e.g. 'Was the activity teacher-centred or student-centred?') which are not followed up in a way which might take the participants beyond a bland description of an activity to a consideration of underlying principles and rationale. (E.g. 'In what way was it teacher/student-centred', 'Was this appropriate?' 'Why?' etc.).

continued

Helping non-native speaker teacher trainers: categorising questions

It is not the purpose of this article to address every difficulty prospective teacher trainers may have in handling discussions, but to focus on one particular aspect of leading discussions, and to describe a procedure used on our courses for tutors in Tanzania to help them develop their skills and confidence in that area. This aspect is the role of questions used by the tutor at the various stages of the discussion, from starting it off, keeping it going, and directing it towards a conclusion. The procedure consists very simply of taking the group of trainee tutors through a training sequence consisting of a short language activity followed by a 'discussion' session. In the example described below, I use a classroom activity (such as the one included here, taken from Headway Intermediate - see Appendix 1) to demonstrate a technique for practising reading skills. At Stage 1 I demonstrate the activity to the tutors who participate as 'students'. During the subsequent discussion (Stage 2), most of the tutors participate as 'trainee teachers', while a small group of two or three are observers, noting down the questions that I asked. The discussion could also be videotaped for closer analysis later, if required[1]. Finally, Stage 3 is the discussion of the discussion, during which the tutors will be examining the whole process as tutors/ teacher trainers.

Before analysing and evaluating the discussion process (Stage 3), the tutors would be asked to spend a few minutes reflecting on the experience as 'trainee teachers' and note down what they feel they have learnt or gained as a result of the discussion at Stage 2, e.g. what ideas about teaching reading they have learnt. This is important to help keep in mind the value and purpose of discussions as a training medium, and their role as a vehicle for transmission as well as the elicitation and sharing of ideas. Having established the credentials, as it were, of the discussion process, the actual procedure followed by the trainer trainer (i.e. myself in this case) can be explored and analysed with the group. First, the questions I asked would be elicited from the observers, listed on the board, and then discussed. Discussion would initially focus on the questions themselves, and in particular, on:

- my purpose in asking particular questions;
- any questions which failed to elicit a response: why this was the case, and what I did to rectify the situaiton (e.g. paraphrase the question, or ask a more specific question). Questions 5 and 8 in the table below, for example, were attempts to clarify the preceding questions, which failed to elicit an immediate response;
- sequences of related questions;
- questions which were direct responses to contributions made by the 'participants', i.e. the tutors themselves (of questions 2, 3, 9)
- questions which signalled my wish to change the subject and move on to a new topic (cf question 10).

Next, the tutors would attempt to group these questions into a few broad categories, relating to the various 'topics' dealt with during the discussion . The table below shows some of the questions I used (in sequence) in the discussion following my demonstration of the reading activity, and the five categories suggested by the tutors during a discussion of these questions.

CATEGORY	QUESTIONS
1. Did you find the activity enjoyable? 2. Why? 3. What made it motivating?	A. IMMEDIATE REACTIONS
4. What sort of activity was it? 5. What were you doing in the activity? 6. So what language skills were you practising?	B. OBJECTIVES OF ACTIVITY & GENERAL DESCRIPTION
7. What were the different teaching stages? 8. What did I do first? 9. Didn't we do an example first?	C. TEACHING PROCEDURE
10. How do you think your students would like this? 11. What Form could you use this text with? 12. Would you need to make any adaptations? 13. What parts would you change? 14. How long do you think the activity would take to do?	D. APPLICATION TO THE CLASSROOM
15. What could you do as a follow-up activity? (small group discussion) 16. What other texts could you use in the same way? (small group discussion) 17. Where could you find them?	E. FOLLOW UP/ ALTERNATIVES

Table 1 Questions and question categories used in a discussion following a demonstration of a reading activity

[1] *The videotape can be used later to look at other aspects of the discussion, apart from the facilitator's questions, e.g. his/her responses to individual participants, tone of voice, gesture, facial expression, involvement of the group, use of flip-chart etc. Similarly, a transcript of the discussion can also be useful for focussing on particular aspects of the way the facilitator directs the discussion and responds to contributions from the group*

Advantages of the procedure

The advantage of this categorisation is twofold. First it helps the tutors to see a basic structure to the discussion they have experienced, and a logical sequence of question types which they can apply to almost any discussion of a classroom activity or teaching procedure. Secondly, the 'topic' categories themselves can be used to generate many other questions which it might be appropriate to ask, either about this particular demonstration, or any other. The next stage, therefore, would be to move away from the actual questions I asked, and to ask the tutors to suggest other questions under each category which might be useful, or which might serve as alternative way of asking essentially the same questions. This can be a useful exercise for tutors whose linguistic skills in the area of framing questions, and then clarifying and paraphrasing them, need developing. The exercise can also lead to a consideration of additional topics which might not fit into the categories.

Conclusion

Teacher trainers attending courses at the Centre for Tutor Training in Dar es Salaam have found that this categorisation of questions serves as a useful guide to help them to structure their discussions, and to prepare relevant and purposeful questions. However, it should not be seen as a prescription which they are expected to apply rigorously to every discussion they lead. On the contrary, they are encouraged to vary the format according to the objectives of the discussion, and the time they wish to spend on it. One classroom activity may require a fairly detailed analysis while for another a five minute review might be all that is necessary. And of course, it should be remembered that there can be no such thing as a blueprint for leading a successful discussion, since a discussion is by nature a two-way process between facilitator and participants, and as such unpredictable.

Nevertheless, models can act as useful guides, and we have found that a model such as this can help the trainee tutors prepare for the discussion, and act as a useful reference point during it. Furthermore, the range of questions which can be generated under each category, and which can be elicited and practised at the trainer training stage, helps to build up the tutors' own confidence and flexibility in using the language they need to lead a discussion competently.

Appendix 1

Find the contradictions......

John and his family have just come back from holiday. They are going through Customs, and the Customs Officer wants to know the details of their holiday. But John contradicts himself. Can you find his mistakes?

John:

Well, we left England on the 4th, and it's now the 29th, so we have been away just over a fortnight. We stayed in the country. We didn't go to any big towns. We drove straight to a farmhouse that we were renting, without stopping.

We didn't have very good weather, unfortunately. While we were there we bought some nice pottery for my father, but apart from that we didn't really buy anything. We went swimming every day, but didn't travel around at all.

We left the house a few days ago. We probably won't see it again, because we are going to to sell it this winter and buy somewhere in Spain. The hotel on the way back was nicer than the one on the journey there, and the children liked Paris very much.

Customs Officer:

Have you got anything to declare?

John:

We didn't buy any presents for anyone, but we bought some wine from a farm about sixty kilometres from our farmhouse. That's all.

Customs Officer:

Could I look through your car, please?

(From Headway Intermediate Workbook, by John & Liz Soars, OUP, 1986, reproduced by permission of Oxford University Press)

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ERIC

Total quality management

Everytime I bump into a subscriber to The Teacher Trainer I am reminded of how many different roles our readers have. As well as working with teachers, observing lessons and giving input sessions, readers of this journal also have to write syllabuses, run meetings, write reports and budgets, help with marketing and client relations, and involve themselves in quality control and assessment. The trainer background column aims to help here by running articles on these new tasks, ones which trainers may not have had the time to get trained in themselves. This time the column is about total quality management, an idea originated by an American statistician, W.E.Deming, adapted and implemented by the Japanese, re-imported to the USA and now used in British EFL businesses to transform administrative structures, cut costs, change attitudes and democratise organisations. I spoke to Bob Richard, director of Pilgrims.

TW I understand there were some administrative problems in the organisation a while back?

BR Our company had experienced a 33% growth over 4 years. Although the number of staff had been increased to cope with this and the salary bill had gone up, no money had been invested in systems and processes, so there were big problems in getting out information, invoices and so on. 1993/4 saw an increase in complaints and errors so management decided to make the solving of this problem an urgent company priority.

TW So you brought in the concept of TQM?

BR The reason I decided on using total quality management for fixing the problems was that we had a situation where the employees closest to the work had the highest quality standards. We did have a quality problem but it didn't lie with the people doing the work. So I thought if we empowered them and gave them the resources they needed to work in cross-functional groups, they would solve their problems. And it's worked very well.

TW The main principle behind TQM then is...?

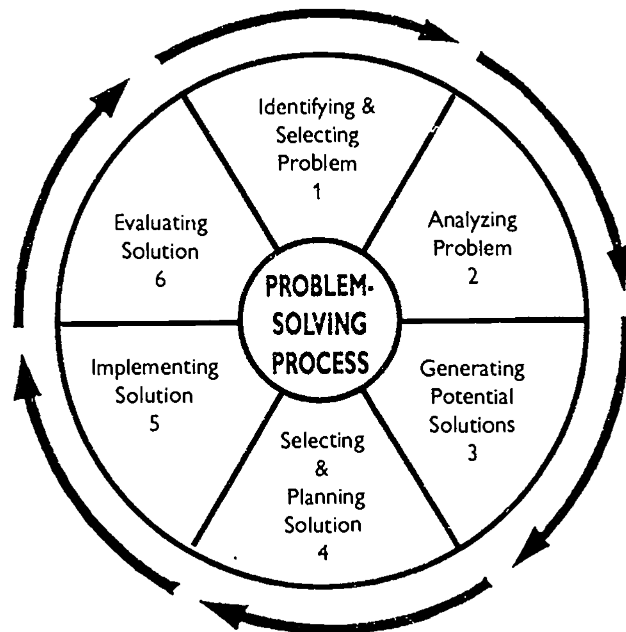
BR If you get the people who actually do the work involved in on-going cross- functional quality circles, you will have a process of gradual but constant improvement. This, to my mind, is the soundest principle in TQM. If you've got the right people at the coal face, they will have the highest standards of anyone.....for coal!

TW Higher than management?

BR Yes. In our case, all that management had acheived with uninformed, top-down directives about computer systems was to screw things up!

TW OK.So what's involved?

BR We had an external TQM facilitator in to kick things off. Then the quality circles met regularly. They defined problems,proposed solutions,developed plans etc. We used a TQM problem solving process. (see diag above)



BR This process involves aanalysing problems and collecting internal and external customer requirements in excruciating detail BEFORE any solutions are proposed. You can use questionnaires, reports, sub-groups, and full circle discussions. This is a proven process which results in high quality, creative, innovative solutions but not before driving everyone batty with the degree of process detail and the time it consumes! I had to warn everyone about that.

TW I do remember hearing staff commenting on how they had to keep up with all their normal work and prepare for and attend the circle meetings, which of course generated more work!

BR Time is never, in any organisation, NOT a problem!

TW What other problems are there with this approach?

BR A lot of the employees were concerned...."Gosh! You're letting the lunatics run the asylum!". But I said,"You can't mess it up more than management has! At least you are close enough to the issues to recognise when you are making an incredibly stupid decision!" I'll give you an example. As one of the managers of the company, I had spent hundreds of thousands of pounds on getting our phone number 762111 known all around the world. Then, in our key booking month, I put an untrained 18 year old with virtually no knowledge of the company, on the end of the phone as the first line of

contact with our customers! Now I doubt very much if a member of a quality circle would propose a system of such idiocy to me!

TW What have employees proposed to you?

BR A lot of things. Half of which are too expensive and half of which are really great. And the half that is too expensive we are going to look at again when we have more money. Another problem was that while the quality circles were getting on with their work analysing problems and mulling over solutions, the concrete was hardening on the management plans for the year. New products were being launched, decisions were being made about staffing and budgets. I didn't make the point forcefully enough to the circles that although they didn't have to bring in management unless they wanted to , it would behove them to stay in touch with management decision-making timetables. At the end, the quality circles had some great ideas but it was too late to implement some o f them that year. There was some bitterness and disappointment around that. Next year we will start the circles off earlier in the planning cycle.

TW When did you find out about TQM?

BR I did a 2 week course in it in the mid-80's. Everyone did at my last company, Xerox.I absolutely hated it at the time. I couldn't believe how much time it took! I thought it was just a management charade that was going to leave me with more work on my desk. That was 12 years ago, but it meant that I respect that point of view when I hear it from other people now. But it's better to spend time on improving things than whingeing about them!

Reading

UK Quality:the official journal of the British quality foundation. 215 Vauxhall Bridge Rd, London SW1V IEN.

Total quality management and the school by Stephen Murgatroyd & Colin Morgan. Open University Press.1994. (See *Publications Received* this issue P.24)

TRAINING AROUND THE WORLD – THE NORTH AMERICAS

A FLEXIBLE AND PRACTICAL PRACTICUM

The practicum is widely accepted as an integral part of master's degree programs for teachers of English to speakers of other languages (MATESOL) throughout the United States and Canada. Although there is considerable variation from program to program, the practicum generally includes at least three components. One is the seminar, in which students and professor meet to discuss issues and ideas relevant to second language teaching pedagogy. Another is observation, both systematic and informal, of a variety of foreign and/or second language classes. The last is the practice teaching component of practicum, in which practicum students work under the direct supervision of an experienced ESOL teacher. Typically, this component serves as the culmination of the MATESOL program.

According to the 1986 *Directory of Professional Preparation Programs in TESOL* in North America, 85% of the MATESOL programs surveyed require some sort of practicum experience. Richards and Crookes (1988) consider the practicum to be:

> ... the major opportunity for the student teacher to acquire the practical skills and knowledge needed to function as an effective teacher (p.9).

Ironically, however, Janopoulos (1991) has noted that although North American TESOL educators agree that practicum is important, they are far from agreement on just what form a practicum should take and what its goals should be. Indeed, even Richards and Crookes (1988) admit that there appears to be a "lack of agreement on objectives for a practicum"(p. 23). Such pronouncements, coupled with first-hand observation of the MATESOL program at the University of Northern Iowa (UNI), have prompted us to conclude that although most TESOL educators believe in the usefulness of and need for the practicum, most practica either lack a comprehensive set of goals or operate under a set of assumptions that have neither been clearly articulated nor actually modelled.

In this paper, data gathered from questionnaires administered to three groups of practicum students are presented. These questionnaires (see Figure, p. 6) were designed to elicit responses concerning student expectations, attitudes, and perceptions of the practicum, as well as recommendations for its improvement. From the data gathered, along with feedback elicited from conversations with practicum instructors, we hoped to gauge the extent to which the practicum was successful in influencing our students' professional development, as well as to identify specific features of the practicum they perceived to be particularly effective.

The Uni Program: Student Characteristics

In many ways, students enrolled in our program are typical of clients of the MATESOL programs described by Day (1984) and England and Roberts (1989). Studies by

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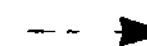
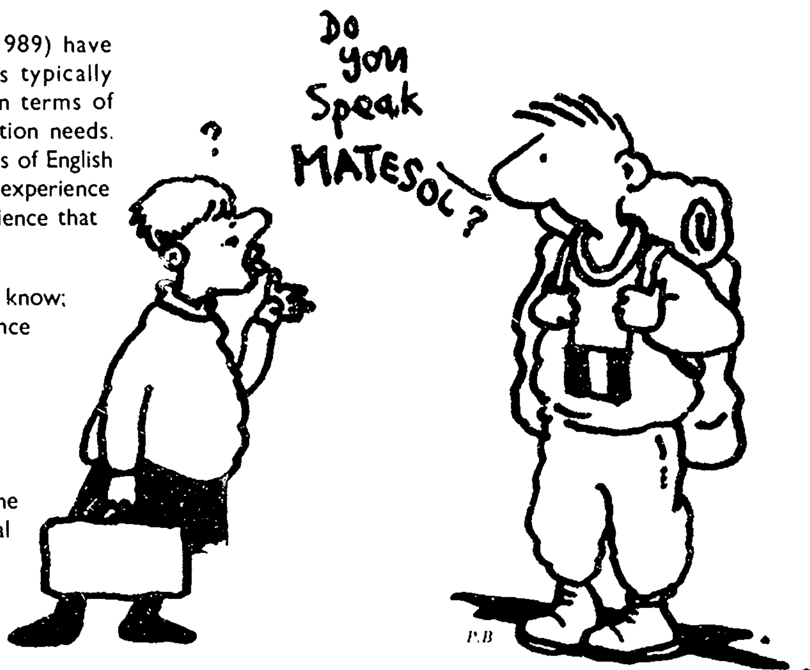


colleagues (e.g., Roberts & Shields, 1988;1989) have identified three distinct types of students typically enrolled in our MATESOL program, both in terms of prior experiences and self-perceived preparation needs. The first group is comprised of native speakers of English (NS) who either have or want to get overseas experience teaching ESOL. They want a practicum experience that allows them to:

1. attach some theory to what they already know;
2. validate previous training and/or experience by earning a MATESOL degree;
3. expand their knowledge of the field.



Non-native English speakers (NNS) who are already experienced ESOL teachers make up the second group. Their goal is to earn professional degrees in ESOL from an American institution, usually for purposes of career advancement. They want the practicum to provide opportunities to:

1. apply some of the information and skills they have been learning about in the MATESOL program;
2. gain experience teaching English to others whose native language is not the same as theirs;
3. verify their own proficiency in English;
4. explore distinctions between teaching ESL and EFL.

The third type consists of a relatively small - but steadily growing – group of predominantly NS's who wish to obtain state ESOL teacher certification. They want a practicum that allows them to:

1. complete requirements for ESOL endorsement/certification;
2. gain experience teaching various levels and ages of ESL students;
3. teach in simulated public school situations.

These two studies have also revealed that both the range of student experience in ESOL classrooms and specific practicum needs with respect to individual students' knowledge, skills, attitude, and awareness can vary greatly from semester to semester. Additionally, such factors as the ratio of NS to NNS students in the practicum and the NNS country of origin also change from term to term, and so need to be taken into account in course design. This, again, is consistent with findings reported by Day (1984) and England and Roberts (1989). Thus, as is no doubt true for other programs, what may be an appropriate experience for one group of MATESOL practicum students at UNI may not be entirely appropriate for another group.

THE Uni Program: Organizational Characteristics

Our program's faculty are strong advocates of a teacher education approach that is "...individual-oriented... with a focus on developing decision making and hypothesis-generating skills" (Richards & Crookes, 1988, p. 12). In keeping with this philosophy, the practicum is seen as the culminating experience in the MATESOL course sequence. As such, it is generally delayed until late in a student's program of study. The course lasts one full semester, and enrollment is limited to eight or fewer students per term. Although a good deal of variability exists with regard to specific assignments depending on which faculty member teaches the course, the program typically consists of weekly seminar meetings in which a variety of topics are discussed, a series of assigned observations of a range of ESL and other language courses, and placement in an Intensive English Program (IEP) course under the close supervision of a cooperating teacher.

As indicated earlier, our faculty generally endorse the practicum model proposed by Richard and Crookes (1988). In practice, this model typically consists of a cycle of presentation of theory, modelling, feedback, practice, and indirect experiences. Richards and Crookes provide a curricular model that lists student duties within the IEP class. This model includes observation, team-teaching, tutoring, teaching mini-lessons, and, ultimately, a student teaching assignment which, in the case of our program, usually lasts no more than two weeks or ten instructional hours. For students employed by the IEP as graduate teaching associates, the practice teaching requirement is waived in lieu of periodic observations by the practicum instructor.

Within this matrix, which is designed to provide for student needs in what Richards (1987) describes as the micro- and macro-perspectives of ESOL teacher preparation, individual practicum instructors are encouraged to draw upon their own backgrounds and insights to provide a practicum experience that is responsive to both program guidelines and student needs. Thus, depending upon such factors as need, time,

preferencè, or circumstance, the 'practice' phase of the practicum might take the form of microteaching, either in simulated situations or ESOL classroom settings, while 'indirect experiences' might include a combination of peer observations, observations of an experienced teacher, or viewing of preselected videotaped sample lessons.

The Study

Subjects

Data were collected from three consecutive practicum classes, beginning with the Summer Session, 1992 class and ending with the Spring Semester, 1993 class. As is customary in the department, each practicum was taught by a different MATESOL faculty member. A total of 23 students were enrolled in these three practica. Ten were native English speakers, while the remainder came from a variety of language backgrounds, including Japanese (6) and Spanish (4). In terms of prior teaching experience, most had either teaching, student teaching, or tutoring experience in ESOL (11 of 23) or another foreign/second language (8 of 23); only two students reported being true teaching novices.

With respect to number of years teaching experience, students reported a total of 39 years of ESOL, 21 of other foreign languages, and 24 of other, non-language teaching experience. Thus, with the exception of the two students who reported no prior teaching experience, this group as a whole entered the practicum with a great deal of experience.

Instrumentation

Data were collected by means of administration of a questionnaire administered twice per term, PRE-PRACTICUM, during the first week or two of class, and POST PRACTICUM, in the last session of the term. These questionnaires differed primarily in that the former established a baseline of attitudes and beliefs, while the latter focused on changes that occurred over the course of the practicum (see Figure, below). In addition to data collected from analysis of questionnaires, we also elicited student information from various writing tasks, including journals and philosophy of education statements that were required assignments of some, but not all, participating practicum students. Finally, practicum faculty and IEP cooperating teachers were interviewed at length to elicit their impressions of the classes they taught.

Results

Question #1: What are the characteristics of "good foreign/second language teaching" in general?

The same question was asked in both questionnaires. A substantial majority of all three groups of practicum students underwent a shift from PRE-PRACTICUM responses, where they were most likely to list specific 'skills' as those characteristics they felt were most important, to POST-PRACTICUM responses that demonstrated more general 'awareness' traits. Specifically, responses moved from being technical, specific, and narrow in nature (i.e., a more linear, "This is the problem. Show us the solution." orientation) to a broader, more global view of the teacher/learner relationship. For example, POST-PRACTICUM responses identify such characteristics as:

- "awareness that solutions are made within the context of program/institution/student needs, goals, etc;"
- the need for "balance of empathy and concern with content;"
- developing an "awareness of micro/macro levels of learning;"
- recognizing the "number one essential: a desire to improve" and;
- building "awareness that different teachers may use different methods to meet student needs."

While the shift was marginally more prevalent among American students, it was also evident in the responses of most international students.

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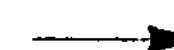


FIGURE

Pre-practicum questionnaire	Post-practicum questionnaire
1. What are the characteristics of a good second/foreign language teacher?	1. What are the characteristics of a good second/foreign language teacher?
2. Which of the characteristics in Question #1 think you already possess?	2. Which of the characteristics in Question do you #1 do you think you have acquired as a result of the practicum?
3. What are your expectations for this course ?	3. Were your expectations for this course met?
4. Please list all teaching/tutoring experience you have had. Indicate how long you did it and whether it has come in ESL/EFL, foreign language, or another discipline or disciplines?	4. What recommendations would you like to make to improve future practica?

Question #2: Which of the characteristics you mentioned in Question #1 do you feel you have now?

This question was also asked in both questionnaires. Several students, both NS and NNS, offered responses that were very introspective, reflective, and honest, with detailed analyses, both of what they felt they already knew and what they needed to learn in content knowledge and interpersonal skills. Overall, responses in both PRE-PRACTICUM and POST-PRACTICUM questionnaires were fairly evenly split between technical (e.g., "organizational skills," "able to plan lessons") skills and interpersonal (e.g., "people-oriented," "empathy," "enthusiasm," "communicate well with people from other cultures") skills.

There was a slight predominance of interpersonal skills in PRE-PRACTICUM responses and technical skills in POST-PRACTICUM responses, especially among NS students. Interestingly, however, several Japanese students apparently underwent just the opposite change, as exemplified by the comments of "Y", whose perceptions shifted over the course of the term from "teacher as technician" to "teacher as humanist."

Overall, subjects reported that their initial self-evaluations were borne out by their practicum experience. There were no major revisions of their original lists of qualities. Instead, there was a refining, an expanding of already-present traits, as well as mention of newly-acquired abilities and insights. In conclusion, POST-PRACTICUM results revealed that students reported discovering and/or developing more positive traits that they attributed to their practicum experience.

A case in point is the response of "M", a NS with some practical TESOL experience but no formal training. "M"'s initial comments went from listing very general "people-oriented" characteristics in the PRE-PRACTICUM questionnaire to much more practically-oriented, specific "craft skills" comments in his POST-PRACTICUM remarks. This shift in attitude is probably an outgrowth of his experience as a teaching assistant in the IEP, where he initially struggled to balance his professional and interpersonal personae. The teaching process was an eye-opener to him in that it made him realize that good intentions and empathy aren't enough to guarantee a successful teaching/learning experience.

Question #3: "What are your expectations for the practicum?/Were those expectations met?"

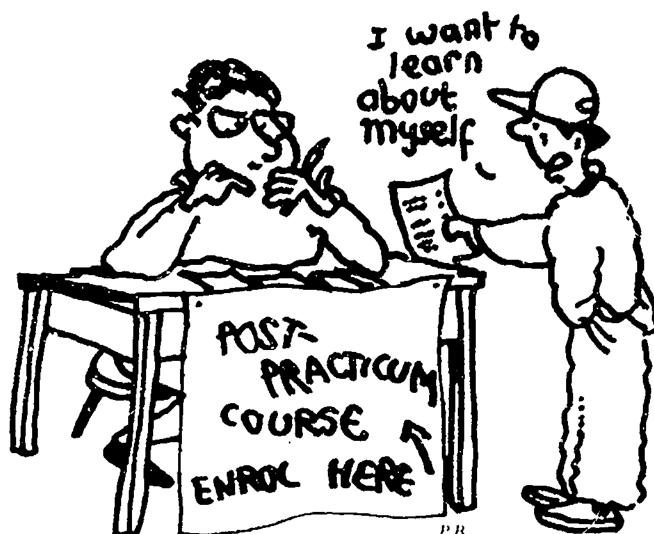
In the PRE-PRACTICUM responses to the question, "What are your expectations for the practicum?" three prevailing themes emerged:

1. Students were generally interested in obtaining "hands on" classroom teaching experience.
2. Students expressed a desire to put theory into practice.
3. Students saw the practicum as an opportunity to receive constructive feedback on performance.

In addition, many NNS students expressed a desire to obtain teaching experience in an English-speaking environment ("teaching English in English" and "teach in an English-only environment since this can't happen in my country.").

Analysis of POST-PRACTICUM responses to the question, "Were these (previously expressed) expectations met?" indicates that, in general, student expectations were met. In addition, several references were made to the usefulness of reflective teaching as a strategy for professional growth and development, and how the course helped develop the abilities of self-questioning and introspection:

- "the ability to retrospect on and evaluate my own teaching performance;"
- "helped... (me) to judge myself objectively;"
- "helped me... recognize ways in which I could improve;"
- "... reflective teaching... must be developed over the course of an entire career;"
- "helped increase my self-awareness;"
- "I learned a lot about myself;"
- "helped me reflect on my views on teaching;"
- "(I) have really improved... the ability to retrospect on and evaluate my own teaching performance," and;
- "Before I began the program I thought of practicum as similar to my undergraduate student-teaching experience. It was not. I see practicum now as a kind of awareness training."



Students also mentioned the usefulness of practice teaching as a means of aligning one's perceptions with reality ("I learned that teachers often do not accomplish everything they would like.") , as well as the need "to be flexible at any time" when trying to meet the needs of ESOL students. Finally, several students commented favorably on the opportunity the practicum afforded them to share ideas and experiences with each other as well as with their practicum instructor.

Question #4: What recommendations would you like to make to improve future practica?"

Question #4 in the PRE-PRACTICUM questionnaire asked students to list their previous teaching and tutoring experiences. On their POST-PRACTICUM questionnaires, subjects listed 34 separate recommendations for improvement. While spanning a broad spectrum of topics, responses clustered in five major categories. Listed in order of frequency, they are:

1. More practice activities in the seminar phase of the practicum, especially with respect to methodologies and techniques (e.g., micro-teaching, demonstration lessons, modeling, etc.). [7 mentions]
2. More time for peer feedback/discussion of experiences [6 mentions]
3. More, both in quantity and range, of practice teaching experiences under the supervision of the cooperating teacher. [6 mentions]
4. More opportunity for observation, especially outside the cooperating teacher's classroom. [5 mentions]
5. More instruction in how to engage in introspection/reflective teaching (e.g., "'How do you reflect?' becomes as important as how you teach because reflective teaching is the only way for new teachers to improve." and "If I can keep a journal in my language, I think I will have an opportunity to think about teaching more deeply."). [4 mentions]

Other suggestions included improving communication among all parties involved in the practicum [2 mentions], and waiving the practice teaching requirement within the practicum for students who already hold valid teaching credentials in other disciplines [1 mention].

Discussion

Student responses provided much to think about with respect to how the practicum experience should be structured at a university. Particularly interesting are the following observations that were most frequently made by student respondents:

1. Responses 1, 3, and 4 to Question 4 of the POST-PRACTICUM questionnaire ("What recommendations...?) suggest that in order to be responsive to the wide range of backgrounds, goals, and experiences MATESOL students bring to the practicum, a wide range of teaching experiences should be offered, even if these experiences are only of relatively short duration and limited to such strategies as microteaching and peer observation (see Janopoulos, 1991, for examples of how practicum experiences can be individualized to meet the needs of individual students). From the standpoint of NS students, exposure to such diversity is beneficial if for no other reason than it helps foster the sort of flexibility and adaptability exhibited by experienced ESOL teachers. But perhaps even more important is the potential benefit conferred to NNS students by providing a wide range of teaching experiences and options, since Greis (1984) points out that TESOL preparation programs need to offer their NNS clients experiences that are as relevant as possible to the instructional realities of their home countries.

2. Response 2 in Question 4 spoke to the need to allow ample opportunity for student-student as well as teacher-student feedback in the seminar phase of the practicum. Student comments indicated they not only felt they could learn from one another, but that they actually welcomed the opportunity to share their experiences. From a philosophical standpoint, another advantage to encouraging student-student interaction is that it weans students away from an over-dependence on directive teacher feedback (see Freeman, 1982 & Gebhard, 1984, for a thorough discussion of this issue), thus further fostering the qualities of flexibility and adaptability cited in Observation 1.

3. Response 5 in Question 4 spoke at some length of the value of introspection and reflective thinking. In addition, responses to Question 3 of the POST-PRACTICUM questionnaire ("Were your pre-practicum expectations met?") indicate a strong interest on the part of these practicum students to be systematically provided with both opportunities for and training in methods of introspection and reflective thinking.

4. Although only mentioned by two students in Question 4, the need for clear communication between all participants in the practice-teaching phase of the practicum manifested itself in discussions with practicum professors, cooperating teachers, and IEP administrators. Here we refer specifically to questions of protocol regarding the cooperating teacher and her or his practicum student. From a procedural standpoint, this means that guidelines for student placement within an ESOL class must be clearly communicated to all participants in the practicum, from MATESOL student to practicum professor to cooperating teacher. It also means that expectations concerning the roles and responsibilities of all participants must be made clear from the onset. Items of information should include an overview of the teaching situation into which the practicum student is placed, the role of the cooperating teacher in evaluating the practicum student's in-class performance, duties and responsibilities of the practicum student apart from practice teaching, and a schedule of frequent communication between cooperating teacher and practicum professor (see also Woodward, 1994).

Conclusions/Implications

Clearly, MATESOL students in this study entered the practicum with fairly precise ideas about what they wanted and what they needed from the experience. What this study has confirmed just as clearly, however, is that virtually all of them came away from the experience changed – and in most cases enriched – by their participation in the practicum. Thus, we conclude that the practicum is useful, even in cases where participants are experienced teachers and in programs that offer a limited range of actual practice teaching opportunities. Granted,

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such a conclusion is hardly surprising, especially for the vast majority of faculty and administrators of MATESOL programs who share the same viewpoint. Indeed, several studies (e.g., Brinton & Holton, 1989; England & Roberts, 1986) have reached similar conclusions. Still, as Frank-McNeil's (1986) findings illustrate, fully 15% of her respondents did *not* offer practicum, and while the most recent version of the *Directory of Professional Preparation Programs in TESOL in the United States* (Kornblum, 1989) does not speak directly to this question, there is little reason to believe that these figures have changed in any appreciable way since 1986.

Another conclusion we have reached is also supported by the literature (e.g., Gebhard, 1990; Williams, 1989); namely, that a program of study within the practicum which stresses the development of reflective teaching is highly desirable. This is especially true in programs where, because of limited range of available practicum teaching experiences, MATESOL students may be obliged to practice teach in venues that are radically different from the teaching environments they will encounter as ESOL teachers. Thus, if the focus of the practicum is directed more toward personal introspection and reflection than toward merely coping with the practice teaching situation of the moment, the practicum experience can teach an invaluable lesson: teaching situations can and frequently do change, but what should remain constant is the teacher's ability to adapt, analyze, self-evaluate, and grow. Such a lesson can be especially useful to NNS students who may find themselves in practice teaching situations that – on the surface, at least – seem to bear little resemblance to what they will face at home.

Finally, we find the recommendations of Roberts and Shields (1988, 1989) regarding evaluation of MATESOL programs in general to have particular merit with respect to evaluation of the practicum component. Specifically, practicum evaluation, as well as overall MATESOL program evaluation, should be an ongoing process if we are to keep abreast of the changing needs, goals, and expectations of our students.

To this end, MATESOL programs first need to constantly elicit information from students, not just at the beginning and end of their program of study and perhaps a year or two after graduation, but also at the beginning and end of the practicum experience, itself. Then, MATESOL programs must be flexible enough in planning and executing the practicum experience to apply what has been learned. In this way, even practicum courses that are limited in terms of facilities or teaching/observation options are in a better position to anticipate and respond to the needs of a diverse student clientele than are programs that lack such flexibility.

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! NEWS !

English Teachers Association Switzerland
Annual General Meeting

Place: HTL, Brugg

Date: November 11, 1995

For further information contact: Illona Bossart, Lindaustr. 29, 9524 Zuzwil, Switzerland.

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Language matters is a new column. I've only just realised that although this journal is for modern language teacher trainers, we have had relatively little on language itself (as opposed to how the language component of a teacher training course is handled). This new column will address this imbalance by tackling such matters as language change, naming, new words and the most important things to impart to language teachers. Our contributors to this column will include John Ayto, Sylvia Chalker and David Crystal.

The name of the game

by Sylvia Chalker

What is a group noun? indirect speech? a name? Can you define a phrasal verb or a sentence adverb? Is a mass noun the same as an uncountable? What's the difference between progressive and continuous?

As a teacher trainer you are expected to provide short simple answers to these and any other questions of grammar that a mere teacher may throw at you. Can you?

You would be clever if you could. For the fact is that there is no single way of describing the grammar of English (or any other language). Different grammarians analyse the data differently. This is reasonable. But few grammar books, and still fewer coursebooks, point out where their usage differs from other people's.

Of the terms mentioned above only progressive, actually synonymous with continuous, has one and only one meaning. It describes tenses made with part of the verb be plus an -ing form, eg. I am learning – the present progressive. (In more linguistic terms, progressive, like perfect, applies to aspect and the term tense is reserved for the simple past and simple present.)

Other virtual synonyms are agreement and concord, and defining and restrictive as applied to relative clauses, along with their opposites, non-defining and non-restrictive.

Mass or uncount(able)?

But few other apparent synonyms are quite that. You might think that a mass noun and an uncountable or uncount noun are the same , and in general they are – a noun (eg. courage, rice) that cannot be counted, always takes a singular verb, can be used without an article or determiner, has no plural form and can use some exclusive determiners (much courage, a little rice). The trouble is that most grammatical categories are fuzzy at the edges, with certain words that do not quite fit. So Collins Cobuild English Grammar (1990), for example, makes a distinction: mass is for a noun 'which is usually an uncount noun, but which can be used as a count noun when it refers to quantities or types of something:eg...two sugars', while an uncount noun is one that has no plural form (eg. furniture). You will find a further refinement-a collective uncount noun, a type of uncount noun which 'can be used with either a singular or plural verb' (eg. livestock). This dictionary, incidentally, distinguishes 16 different types of noun on syntactic grounds.

Groups, collectives, plurals

Among them, in addition to a collective uncount noun, are a collective proper noun, a collective singular noun and a collective variable. The new edition of the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary makes do with nine types of noun in all. It has an undifferentiated collective noun as one of its headword entries, but prefers the term group noun in its coding. This is fair enough, because loosely collective noun and group noun are synonymous – a noun that denotes a group of people or animals, and which even in the singular can take a singular or plural verb (eg. The committee is/are..). But as the elaborate Cobuild coding suggests there are further grammatical distinctions to be made. The only one Oxford make here is between what they call a countable noun group (eg. committee, committees) and a group noun, defined as one that can never be counted, eg. the press (in the sense of newspapers etc) or the Vatican, which may use a singular or plural verb, but never takes a plural form (* the Vaticans). Thus to Oxford, group noun has a narrower meaning than it may have elsewhere.

All good learner dictionaries these days codify on syntactic grounds, so some nouns that semantically refer to a group but which can only take plural verbs (eg. people, police) will be coded separately. But how far do you go? OALD codify those two words as [pl v], a little reminder to ignore their 'singular'appearance, while words for two-part items such as trousers or scissors are coded [pl], which they tell us stands for a word that 'behaves like a plural countable noun'. Alas, this is a slight simplification-it would be odd, wouldn't it?-to speak of three trousers or several scissors.

Proper?

Still on nouns, would you make any distinctions between proper noun, proper name and name? For many people such terms are interchangeable, but again distinctions are sometimes made. Carefully defined, a proper noun may be a single word usually written with a capital letter (eg. Canterbury)- in contrast to a common noun (eg. city), while a (proper) name may consist of several words and does not necessarily contain a proper noun (eg. Canterbury Cathedral and Murder in the Cathedral are both by this definition names.)

Turning now to some of the other terminology mentioned above, what is a phrasal verb? Answer-you choose! Some people use the term for almost any multi-word verb. Others define it narrowly as a verb plus an adverb (as in The plane took off, Take off your coat, Take it off), contrasting this with a prepositional verb (eg. Look after them) and with a phrasal-prepositional verb (Put up with, look down on). Some make metaphorical or idiomatic meaning a criterion, though the dividing line between metaphorical and literal is not always straightforward.

continued

As for indirect speech, loosely this is synonymous with reported speech, but Quirk and colleagues use reported speech as a cover term that also includes reporting by using direct speech, while some learner books on the other hand include grammatically similar structures that refer to thoughts rather than to speech (I decided that ..., We wondered whether...)

And a sentence adverb? Adverbs are a notoriously mixed 'word class' and can be analysed in many different ways. In Quirkian grammar they are first divided according to detailed syntactic analysis into four broad types that include two categories that stand apart from sentence structure: conjuncts, words such as consequently, nevertheless that show a meaning connection between one sentence and another; and disjuncts, words that indicate how the speaker is speaking (personally) or which indicate how the speaker views the matter (fortunately, surprisingly). Both these categories are sometimes lumped together as sentence adverbs, other books only use the term for those words described here as disjuncts (perhaps calling conjuncts 'connectors'); other books again include a number of words, or rather a number of usages, that in Quirkian terms fall outside both categories.

Naturally neither teachers nor language learners want to be burdened with too many technical terms. But you do need to be clear in your own mind what the coursebooks or dictionaries you are using mean by any particular term. The same could turn out to be different. But then different may prove to be the same.

The Little Oxford Dictionary of English Grammar, a dictionary of grammatical terminology , by Sylvia Chalker is due from OUP in the autumn. The Oxford Dictionary of English Grammar by Chalker and Weiner, a fuller version with entries on linguistics and semantics, was published in 1994.

Who reads "The Teacher Trainer"

Here is a sample list of subscribers:

The British Council, Bahrain,
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CONFERENCE REPORT

The Society for Affective, Effective Learning (SEAL)

Brighton, April 1995

The conference

Conferences are places that confuse me. I had gone to SEAL to learn – to be a student again – to reaffirm or to challenge or to add to the ideas I have about teaching and about learning. Yet, receiving the conference programme with less than fifteen minutes before the first sessions were to start, I felt the heavy responsibility of learner independence. What should I learn? How could I spend my limited time, taking advantage of the resources available, most effectively?

I began subjectively. Peter Kline's plenary, entitled "Five Neurological Models of the Brain for the Classroom", sounded interesting. The conference programme said that he is "Chairman of the Board of Integra Learning Systems, a firm that specializes in providing culture change designed to create learning organizations to corporations, schools and governmental systems. He is the co- author of School Success and Ten Steps to a Learning Organization and the author of The Everyday Genius". This was no great help to me and it left me with no clearer idea why I should attend his plenary rather than one of the other four or five which were taking place at the same time. I needed, as with many independent learners faced with a similar dilemma, some professional guidance. Colleagues, whose views and experience I respect, together with the not inconsiderable fact that I had been asked to interview Peter Kline for The Teacher Trainer, made my decision.

I approached Peter Kline before he spoke and we arranged to meet over lunch. I am not the greatest note-taker in the world, I admit. But here, eager to learn, I was more assiduous, and successfully filled a page of closely scribbled notes and references.

The Plenary

Peter Kline was indeed interesting. He was calm, authoritative and persuasive in his speech. He disagreed with the general linearity and the negativity which characterize many approaches to education. The linearity is evinced in the tendency of some to argue that x cannot be learned by students until they have first studied a, b, c and d, and thus to teach first what is deemed to be "easier", ignoring other areas. The negativity is revealed in appraisal as well as in the classroom where teachers focus on what the students cannot do rather than on what they can. He later gave me an example which exemplified the latter point. He spoke of his 13-year-old grandson whom he described as a child with a fine grasp of large-scale shape and colour and able, in an art gallery, to identify, at

a glance, which paintings are by the same artist. Yet his teacher describes him as a slow reader.

The content of Kline's plenary, I now feel, was constrained by the time limitations. In 90 minutes, he took us through the five neurological models of the talk title, then moved on to the ten steps to a learning organization, and mentioned a number of other matters, such as differing national learning cultures and a dynamic means of assessing learning, along the way. I felt, at the end, as if I had been hurried along by a guide through a museum which was about to close. Instead of being able to examine the exhibits and read the explanatory notes beside the artifacts, identifying areas of interest, I had been pointed out display cases from afar, always aware that the museum's caretakers were closing the doors to each room behind us as we passed to the next. I resolved to revisit, as best I could, what I had glimpsed. Fortunately, I had the opportunity to speak to the guide over lunch.

What follows is an attempt to reconstruct in my own mind, that of a new and interested learner, the knowledge alluded to by Peter Kline. Thus there are two themes in this article; the first focuses on the content of Kline's plenary. Second, as Kline himself focused on differing learning patterns and the uniqueness of each learner, so I will also allude, through my experiences at the conference and during the research for this article, to the process one individual, and independent, learner has gone through in acquiring new knowledge

The notes

Looking back, I have found that the notes that I made at the time are no more than an outline of the material and a few indicators for myself. There were, unfortunately, no photocopied lecture notes for me to use as a basis for remembering, or if there were, I was unable to get my hands on a copy. I found myself misremembering arguments and lacking detail. What seemed to be clear and logical at the time was, on review, either obvious or obscure. Yet these notes were, and are, my starting point. The five neurological models of the brain I summarized as follows (reproduced with more 'linearity' than I originally wrote them):

1. Holographic Model – Karl Pribram

There are no local events – thus in biology each cell contains in its DNA enough information to recreate the entire organism, and in quantum physics local events are impossible to define. The brain operates in a similar way – there is no linear one-to-one neural mapping as there is in conventional photography where one source of light is mapped onto the film. Each part of the holographic film contains information about the whole image. This has important implications for syllabus design in teaching. It doesn't matter where you start If things are presented in a local linear way, the relationships between them can disappear.

2. Triune Model – Paul McLean

The brain can be divided into three levels; the reptilian brain, the mammalian (limbic) brain and the neocortex. Some threatening classroom events can trigger reptilian or mammalian responses rather than those from the neocortex where the higher learning takes place. Thus for effective learning to take place, any threat must be minimalised.

3. Split Brain Model – Roger Sperry

The brain is divided into the left hemisphere (which deals more with logical, sequential and linguistic processing) and the right hemisphere (where the spatial, kinesthetic and intuitive processing is concentrated). Traditional learning often focuses on left-brain functions. Although the right hemisphere sometimes calls into question the learning of the left hemisphere, these objections are not often taken into account. Successful classroom technique will give both hemispheres of the brain an opportunity to contribute to the learning process.

4. Environmental Enrichment Model – Marion Diamond

By enriching the environment of the learner with stimuli and challenges, the neural connections of the brain will also become physiologically enriched, thus enhancing learning potential.

5. Multiple Intelligence Model – Howard Gardner

There are seven intelligences which each of us has to differing degrees, and only the first two are taught in a structured way at school. If a student is strong in another type of intelligence, this is rarely recognised and even less frequently formally assessed. The intelligences are (a) logical/mathematical, (b) linguistic, (c) spatial/visual, (d) bodily/kinaesthetic, (e) [missing – auditory/musical?], (f) interpersonal, and (g) intrapersonal. Different cultures give prominence to different intelligences and a knowledge of this can be of use in cross-cultural situations and in multi-cultural classes.

Dynamic Assessment

Traditional testing techniques tend to focus on the student choosing the one 'right' answer (i.e. the answer that the teacher had already thought of) and if the student responds appropriately but differently, the answer must be wrong. Dynamic Assessment focuses on what is right rather than on what the student doesn't know.

I now wonder whether my own notes are similar to the notes which learners take when I am delivering a seminar. There are many holes, and a lack of context. I had noted some names and ideas which I had thought were important, but all the examples, illustrations and asides which surrounded them were omitted. Now, without that context, I am unsure whether I have noted down only the chapter headings, so to speak, or whether in fact this is all that there was. Maybe Peter Kline was intending just to

continued

give a brief overview of the models he was describing. Yet, although my notes are wholly unsatisfactory as any explanation of the new currents in neurological understanding, what Kline has done, as indeed I hope I do myself when teaching, is to act as a signpost at a crossroads where there are numerous destinations. Intrigued by his brief descriptions, I took it upon myself to explore some of the roads.

I still had the chance to ask Kline about some of his talk in more detail and I resolved to ask him in detail about one of the topics he mentioned

The interview

Although Peter Kline and I missed each other at lunch, I managed to catch up with him in the hotel foyer the following day waiting for the arrival of the last speaker at the conference, Reuven Feuerstein, whose plane from Israel was late. In the 20 minutes delay, we sat on a sofa and I asked him to talk about Dynamic Assessment.

P.K. Essentially Dynamic Assessment looks at the different kinds of patterns of thinking that the student manifests and looks at what is successful in the way that it is structured so that the student can build on that success. This is something that good teachers already do intuitively. Some people are good in writing, some in class discussion and so on, and the way you conduct the classroom is to capitalise on the skills each student has as well as those of the other students, really focusing on them as a resource. The attitude of teaching in assessment often tends to be on deficit; what the student doesn't know and what they don't understand. Dynamic Assessment focuses on what they do understand and what they are building on – there are no blank slates. We often begin classes by tossing a ball around and asking the students what they know about something, and we often find that they know a good deal – really it's a process of self-discovery where the students can say "This is what I know, this is what I'm good at, this is what I can do". So that the students can recognise their own contributions as well as the contributions of the others in the class in whatever way they manifest themselves – like a drama, everyone has a role which is important.

M.B. How do you encourage the students to recognise their skills and those of others?

P.K. First by modelling. Let's take an outlandish example. I say to you "What's two and two?" and you say "Green". So I say to you "So, you associate colours with numbers. That's a very special talent." So I take every response as having a value. This only doesn't work if the response is frivolous, but even then, the class tends to realise that that isn't an effective response, so that the modelling begins to catch on. To give you another example, in the school where I taught, there was a course in music even though no-one in the faculty taught music. People taught each other to play the guitar, for example, and people recognised that somebody else knew how to do something that they wanted to do – so the culture was saying "look around at all the resources that you see, and learn from them". We'd also ask people how they were doing and to describe that to the rest of the class. People would learn to be honest in their own assessment of what their contributions were. Occasionally somebody was off target but there would be a sense that other people knew that, and that in this culture what we try to do is to be honest and to build on that so that we become better and better at what we do.

M.B. How long do you find that it takes students to do this?

P.K. The question is whether the culture such as I have described exists or not. If it does then it will only take ten minutes for a student to pick it up. If you have to create the culture, it could take a year or two. So we try to uncover a natural tendency within the human being to respect and admire each other, and love each other if they feel safe and supported in doing so.

The problem with educational systems is that there is a demand for valuation, so they give IQ tests and suchlike. These are very deficit-oriented. What dynamic assessment does as a model is to say, "let's throw out all these IQ tests, and let's spend some time with the students and find out what they can do well and focus on that". The main resistance to that is that it takes more time – but we're reaching a stage now in education where teachers are saying, let's throw out all these old tests because they're not effective enough – they don't predict success in life and so on.

I was somewhat dissatisfied Kline's answers – he seemed to be speaking in general terms about something which many teachers know intuitively and about which there has been much research and many recent changes. Maybe, I thought pompously, he was talking to those working in another education sector. I wished afterwards I had asked him about something else – about one of the neurological models I had not heard of before perhaps. But I know that the reason I did not was because I had been frightened of revealing my own ignorance in the area – I am a teacher and I am supposed (so my reasoning went) to know about these areas of learning. Perhaps, by underestimating my own ability to understand as well as his ability to explain without being patronising, I had led him to believe that I would be satisfied with the more general aspects of his work.

When I heard the cassette of the interview, I thought "Yes, I know that's right, but how do I do that in the classroom?". I began to wonder about my own teaching – do I give the students details – anecdotes almost – in an attempt to give them a key to understanding, or do I give them the broad picture in an attempt to foster a more global understanding. In my interaction with Kline, there were two essential elements missing. The first was that of dialogue. In both the plenary and the interview, I was being talked to. Kline had no opportunity to assess my own needs and my own understanding and thus guide me to knowledge. I was being told, and I was listening. Secondly, of course, there had been no chance to build up the trust which, as he himself had said, was a prerequisite of learning. I was thus in a situation in which I was, perhaps, threatened, allowing my responses to be triggered by the fear of asking the 'wrong' questions, of not understanding 'correctly'. And although I try hard to calm these fears in my own students, I was still, as a learner, unable to resist having them myself.

The need to write this article presented a number of other challenges – how do I write about something I know little about? Are my own thougnts in this matter shallow and uninformed? Where do I start in order to clarify the little I have learned. So, I began to read.

The reading

As at the conference, when presented with the programme of events, I found myself at this stage facing a certain confusion. I had gone to the University library and typed in the names of those quoted by Kline and come up with remarkably little. McLean and Diamond were not listed at all, Roger Sperry's only book was out on loan and Karl Pribram's book seemed at first glance to be (neurologically speaking) way over my head. Again, as at the conference, I was helped by colleagues who signpost-like pointed me in certain directions. I have ended up reading a number of articles and chapters of books, some of which are far from related to the area which I set out to research initially, but all of which I have learned from. Thus, rather than pretend that I have mastered the subject matter, what follows is, in effect, an annotated reading list; my attempt to offer a signpost to others.

General reading on the cognitive neurosciences

FARBER, Ilya B. & CHURCHLAND, Patricia S. 'Consciousness and the Neurosciences:

Philosophical and Theoretical Issues' in Gazzaniga, Michael S. (ed.) op.cit. pp.1295-1306 A fascinating overview of the models of consciousness that have appeared and disappeared over the last decades.

GAZZINIGA, Michael S. (ed.) The Cognitive Neurosciences (Cambridge, Mass. 1995) All 1447 pages of it – the most up-to-date and comprehensive collection of work in the field that I came across. Surprisingly readable in parts, but none of Kline's models is mentioned as far as I could make out. This leads me to think that his models are metaphors to aid in the understanding of the brain and its processes rather than descriptions of the functioning of the brain itself.

LURIA, A. R. Higher Cortical Functions in Man (New York 19??) A dense but absorbing account of areas such as kinesthetic functions, receptive and expressive speech and reading and writing; often quoted in the more recent works, but for that reason, I suspect, a little out-of-date.

PINKER, Steven The Language Instinct: The New Science of Language and Mind (London 1994) A readable and, at times, witty account of what we know about neurolinguistics.

SACKS, Oliver The Man Who Mistook His Wife for a Hat (New York 1990) A fascinating collection of case studies of patients with neurological 'abnormalities', written without jargon and with humour.

READING RELATED TO KLINE'S MODELS

1. Holographic Model – Karl Pribram

PRIBRAM, Karl H. Languages of the Brain: Experimental Paradoxes and Principles in Neuropsychology (New Jersey 1971) Chapter 8, particularly, details the analogy between the way a hologram is built up and the way the brain stores and processes information. One anecdotal piece of evidence is the brain's ability to recall a great deal of information when provided with the appropriate trigger, such as a smell which reminds us of childhood experiences. Pribram admits that there is little quantitative data on the information processing capacity of the neural holographic process.

2. Triune Model – Paul McLean

HART, Leslie 'The Three-Brain Concept and the Classroom' in Phi Delta Kappa, 88 March 1981 p.504 A short overview of the model.

3. Split Brain Model – Roger Sperry

SPERRY, Roger Science and Moral Priority: Merging Mind, Brain and Human Values (Oxford 1983) This book was on loan, so no comments.

SPRINGER, S. P. & DEUTSCH, G. Left Brain, Right Brain (New York 1985) Theories of the possible existence of independent systems of consciousness in each hemisphere, following up on the investigations of Sperry on split-brain patients.

4. Environmental Enrichment Mode – Marion Diamond

I still haven't managed to find anything specific to this model, but: IRELAND, Timothy D. Antonio Gramsci and Adult Education: Reflections on the Brazilian

Experience. (Manchester 19??) Ireland argues (p.42) that there is substantial medical evidence that the environment directly affects learning with regard to nutritional, economical and other socio-economic factors. He and Kline agree that education has often been characterised in negative terms, such as talk of the 'plague' of illiteracy and how the 'educational deficiencies' or 'shortcomings' of these 'disadvantaged' adults can be alleviated. His thesis is, following both Gramsci and Freire, that effective adult education must stem from the learners themselves and not be imposed by those who feel that they know what the learners should be learning.

5. Multiple Intelligence Model – Howard Gardner

GARDNER, Howard The Shattered Mind: The Person After Brain Damage (London 1977) Chapter 10 has a compelling summary of aphasics' own accounts of their condition. This leads him to speculate on how the brain might give rise to perception of mind.

6. Dynamic Assessment

'The Status and Role of Teachers' in Education for All: The Requirements pp.17-24 Vol III

Monograph on the World Conference on Education for All Douglas M. Windham (ed.) (UNESCO, Paris 1992)

These 3 monographs, available from UNESCO, contain numerous articles on aspects of education such as literacy, distance learning, primary education, the cost of education,

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etc. A survey of the current state of international education with many examples of exciting projects across the world.

'Utilizing assessment capacities to improve learning_ in Education for All: The Requirements pp.55-60 Vol. III Monograph on the World Conference on Education for All Douglas M. Windham (ed.) (UNESCO, Paris 1992) "To be fully effective, assessment must be interactive with the teaching/learning process. There must be a feedback mechanism to tell the pupil, teacher, school and parents what has and has not been learned and why." (p.56)

FREIRE, Paulo The Pedagogy of the Oppressed (1968) Freire formulates his 'banking' concept of education (p.59) where "the teacher teaches and the students are taught; the teacher knows everything and the students know nothing; ... the teacher talks and the students listen; ... the teacher chooses and enforces his choice, and the students comply" "For," he concludes (p.58), "apart from inquiry, apart from the praxis, men cannot be truly human. Knowledge emerges only through invention and re-invention, through the restless, impatient, continuing, hopeful inquiry men pursue in the world, with the world and each other."

GIPPS, Caroline V. Beyond Testing: Towards a theory of edu ational assessment (London & Washington 1994) Focus primarily at the state sector.

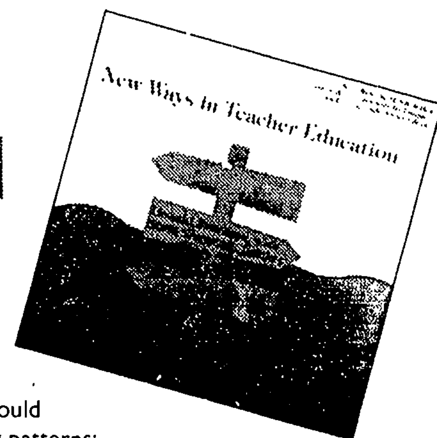
ILLICH, Ivan Deschooling Society (1971) A powerful argument for a radical reassessment of traditional means of education. His thesis is elucidated at the beginning of the first chapter: "The pupil is ... 'schooled' to confuse teaching with learning, grade achievement with education, a diploma with competence, and fluency with the ability to say something new" (p.20)

The writing

It may well be that, like Kline, I have tried to do too much in too little time, and that my own thoughts would benefit from spending greater time discussing one particular aspect of my encounter with Kline and his ideas. Yet I have learned about two things (at least) in the process I have gone through – apart from the specific knowledge that I have gleaned from the reading and the opportunity to reread half-forgotten material. I have undergone, as I intended when I went to the SEAL conference, a process where I have learned and reassessed my own knowledge. Despite my occasional reservations about Kline and the effectiveness of our communication, he has stimulated learning in me. I have felt what it is like to be a student again, learning not in school but independently, asking for guidance, sometimes misled, sometimes confused, wanting clarification. I have questioned how it is that I choose what to learn (something I frequently ask my students to do). I have experienced the benefit of 'professional' guidance. I have wondered how effective note-taking is. I have experienced the tricks that memory can play. I have experienced the lack of security in the interview which limited the effectiveness of my learning. I have found out how interesting neurology is, and of course, how much I still have to learn. All that has been instructive. And, I hope that this article, a 'work in progress', will act as a signpost to possible paths which others may be interested to travel. So, finally, I would like to thank those who have signposted this path for me so far; Glen Stephen, Mario Rinvolucri, Paula Maggi and Tessa Woodward.

Marcial Boo

BOOK REVIEW



New Ways in TESOL Series, Series editor: Jack C. Richards Alexandria, Va: TESOL, 1993

Like that of any teacher trainer my permanent preoccupation is to find 'new ways' to express myself or to challenge my trainees with. So when I received this collection of 46 activities from 46 different contributors (mainly from the USA) I was eager to read it.

As the editors say, the book (or rather, in my opinion, 75% of it) is meant for teacher trainers. The target audience for the activities themselves is wide: pre-service or in-service, novice or experienced practitioners – or in some cases, any students of language.

After reading the book from cover to cover, I went back to one of the editors' statements in the Introduction, namely: 'This book contains 46 different activities that teacher educators [...] use in helping people learn to teach.' Intuitively I felt that not all the activities should be put in this category. Looking again at the activities and their relation to the process of learning to teach, I could discern the following patterns:

(a) Activities for the language-learner group (10 items)

e.g. Kathleen Bardovi-Harlig, 'Using student-selected readings in a teacher education course' Miriam Isaacs, 'Grammar awareness' Nancy Lee Lucas, 'Face-to-face: experiences in cultural adjustment'

(b) Either a training activity relating to training course content or a type-(a) activity with a reflective stage (26 items)

e.g. Amy B.M. Tsui, 'Helping teachers to conduct action research in their classrooms' Bill Conley, 'Using case studies in teacher education' Magali de Moraes Menti, 'Self-observation in teacher education' Marti Anderson, 'Looking at how discussions work'

(c) Organisational items with little relation to specific content areas in the training course (8 items)

e.g. Linda Schinke-Llano, 'Course versus workshop: a compromise' Jerry G. Gebhard, 'The materials/media fair'

I think that any activity aimed at teaching *others* to teach should contain a more or less explicit reflective stage – with participants looking at it from the outside. Otherwise it cannot be considered a proper 'teaching to teach' activity. Activities in this book that fall under (b) **are** 'teaching to teach' activities; those under (c) are activities that help the trainer with organisational matters (how to keep a database, how to organise a materials fair, how to plan workshops, etc.); but those that fall under (a) can in fact be used in *any* language lesson with *any* type of pupils. (Obviously type (a) activities may be used in a training course if one adds a certain 'reflective stage' to them.)

But the activities themselves are almost all interesting. Even though not all of them are quite such *'new ways'*, many gain extra interest because the contributors have added their observations and experience, and have enriched the core ideas with new variants.

I very much appreciate the standardised layout of contributions, which is clear, helpful and time-saving. Within this layout the headings are: narrative (the contributor gives a snapshot of the activity in practice), *procedure* (a step-by-step description of the activity), *rationale* (why the contributor finds it useful), *caveats & options* (where the reader finds suggestions for ways to modify or extend the activities), *reference & further reading* (where bibliographical information is provided). So you can read only the *rationale* or *narrative* to see whether the activity is of interest to you and, only if it is, then read about the activity in detail

The ready-to-use handouts are also valuable.

Mary Scholl has been ingenious in the organisation of the material for the reader. She offers us not only a table of contents, but a *User's Guide to Activities*, in which five different organising principles are used so as to arrange the entire contents in five different ways. Thus there are classifications according to time (duration of activities); according to participant level (point in teaching career); location (academic or school settings, or a mixture); means of learning to teach (nature of interaction in the training process); underlying purposes (teaching skills, awareness, or classroom research).

This *User's Guide* is of great help (although such vague headings as *Drawing upon a shared experience* or *Accessing complex ideas* appear to function as residual categories) But the very existence of a user's guide probably reflects the editors' own feeling (which I share) that the volume lacks structure. There are some very nice ideas, and yet the final impression one gets is of rather a 'bitty' collection.

But I think the book is well worth buying – for its many good activities and ideas, the handy layout in which each activity is presented, the ready-to-use handouts, and the bibliographical information. The question is, **how** should one use it, since it is neither a systematic methodology handbook addressed to the participant teacher or trainee (like Harmer, Cross, Nunan, Dawson or White); nor a training course with separate material for the participant and for the trainer (like Gower & Walters, Doff and Parrott). Nor again is it a coherent course in *training the trainer* (like Wallace or Woodward).

If I turn for instance to Tessa Woodward's *Ways of Training*, I find a systematic, coherent approach to training. I am given ways of using the book: I am given an instrument (Ch. 1) to help me analyse the rest of the book, and I am given the essential theoretical background (beginning of the book, beginning of each chapter) for each activity type. In using *Ways of Training* you can build up your own system to structure all the information you get, and in the end you become more creative yourself. This, in other words, constitutes training for the trainer that one can use to develop either a whole training course of one's own or a specific part of it.

In contrast, *New Ways in Teacher Education* presents no coherent theory of training; it is an ideas book to dip into, to search for useful activities that accord with your style, which you can file away for future use perhaps under some of the category headings Mary Scholl suggests. As such it isn't training for the trainer – it's more of a refresher course – and in that way, I think, potentially very useful. After all, whether 'old' trainers (like, I presume, the contributors to this collection) or 'new' trainers (like me), we all need to add fresh ideas to our stock. A trainer who never experimented with new activities would be as fossilised as the teacher who never changes her classroom routines.

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PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED

Of particular interest or relevance to trainers are the following:-

● **Open learning in languages: A guide for tutors** by Duncan Sidwell (1994) The Open University Press ISBN 0-7492-6271-0. Up-to-date in its methodology, the guide favours active learning, tutors as facilitators, student self-assessment. The video shows adult education classes in French. The audio cassette lets you overhear these and also has a side on telephone tutoring. Natty presentation and no EFL terminology anywhere as it is produced by the O.U. centre for modern languages to help its own tutors of adults in Britain.

● **Teacher Education Quarterly**. This is a journal edited and published four times a year by Alan Jones of Caddo Gap Press, California, ISSN 0737-5328. The issue I saw (21/3 Summer 1994) was mainly on constructivism. Interesting therefore to read articles that take constructivist principles as a given and move on to discuss how these can be employed in the process of teacher education. There is new language in here, "connected learning", "honoured voice", as well as familiar old friends such as mind maps and co-operative learning.

● **Controversies in classroom research** (2nd Edition) Ed. M. Hammersley (1993). Open University Press ISBN 0-335-19040-5. The shift away from quantitative towards qualitative investigations in classroom research and the pros and cons generally of the teacher-as-researcher movement are the main subjects of this collection of eighteen articles. Interesting updates from the 80's by Delamont and Hammersley as well as reprints of original articles by Stenhouse, Carr and Kemmis.

● **Circles of learning, co-operation in the classroom** by Johnson, Johnson and Holubec (1984). Interaction Books ISBN 0-939 603-12-8. A description of co-operative learning, research on it, basic elements of it, how to do it, how to teach students the skills needed, how to assess it - all in a fat little paperback.

● **The acquisition of a second writing system** by Rosemary Sassoon (1995), Intellect Books ISBN 1-871516-43-9. If you're interested in handwriting, different writing systems and how to compare them, or have students trying to change from one writing system to another then you may well enjoy this slightly quirky but well illustrated book which also deals with the personal and cultural messages of hand writing.

● **Collaborative language learning and teaching** ed. D. Nunan CUP (1992) ISBN 0-521-42701-0 paperback. A collection of twelve articles on how teachers, learners and researchers can work together and learn from each other. The book is divided into two sections - focus on learning, and on teaching. Of most interest to trainers perhaps are chapters 6, 7, 8 on team teaching and the utterly charming (as well as impossibly positive!) report by Gebhard and Ueda-Motonaga on a collaborative teacher "training" exploration using Fanselow's Focus observation system.

● **Power and inequality in language education** ed. J. Tollefson (1995) CUP ISBN 0-521-46807-8. A collection of twelve research articles on how existing inequalities in the distribution of economic, social and political power are reflected in language planning and education and how language policy is used to obtain and maintain power. Migration, teacher low pay, the spread of English, bi-lingual support, official languages, the link between language and income and economic muiti-culturalism are some of the issues included.

● **A grammar of speech** by David Brazil (1995) OUP ISBN 0-19-437-193-X. In the 'Discussing English language' series and based on recent research with corpora of naturally-occurring data, this exploratory book examines monologue speech for its grammatical structure. This is done without reference to the received conventions of grammatical description since these arise mainly from the study of written language. A linear grammar concerned with time-new elements, new terminology, this is a book to open up new considerations rather than to quote as definitive or to teach/train from.

● **English conversation** by Amy Tsui (1994) OUP ISBN 0-19-437143-3. In the same 'Describing English Language' series as Brazil's above, this book provides a comprehensive description of the functions of conversational utterances in English. Tsui sees conversation as rule-governed and specifiable, proposing a descriptive framework for characterising conversational utterances, organisation and development.

● **Academic listening, research perspectives**. Ed. J. Flowerdew (1995) CUP ISBN 0-521-45551-0. A collection of thirteen original papers on second language lecture comprehension, the cognitive processes involved, the discourse of academic lectures, the ethnography of second language lectures and pedagogic applications. Of particular interest to EAP teachers and lecturers in content areas to NNS of English.

● **Grammar and the language teacher** eds. Bygate, Tonkyn and Williams (1994). Prentice Hall ISBN 0-13-042 532-X. For students and teachers to look on grammar as a systematic, systemic, enabling device (rather than a constraining set of shackles) is the general editor's aim for this collection of fifteen papers many of which are based on pages from a BAAL conference in Reading, 1991. Questions discussed are...What is a pedagogical grammar? What do teachers know of grammar? How do learners acquire grammar? How can teachers work with processes of language acquisition?

● **Pronunciation** by C. Dalton and B. Seidlhofer (1994). OUP ISBN 0-19-437197-2. A clear distinction is made between what the teacher needs to know (Section 1) and what learners need to learn (Section 2). Tasks for testing out ideas in Sections 1 and 2 against classroom reality come next. Connected speech, discourse intonation and articulatory settings are included as well as individual sounds and stress.

● **Total Quality Management and the School** by S. Murgatroyd and C. Morgan. Open University Press ISBN 0-335-15722-X. The first book to examine the practice of T.Q.M. in the context of primary and secondary schools rather than business. The business language of "customers", "suppliers", "managing processes" is still there and, more importantly, so is the TQM idea of giving those nearest to the customer the chance to change processes. Thus the rank and file of teachers are seen as significant leaders and managers of processes used with student and parents (see also article in this issue).

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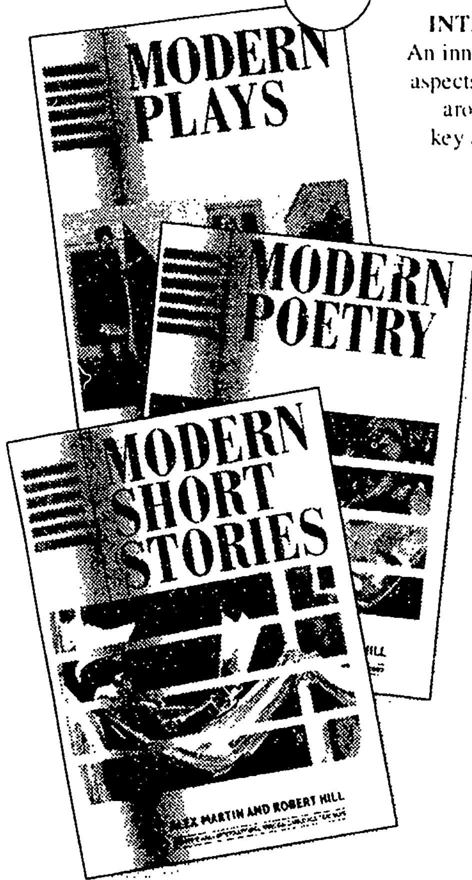

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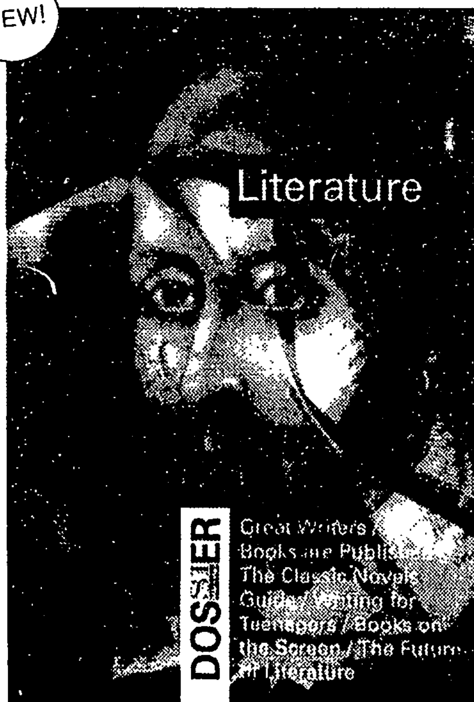

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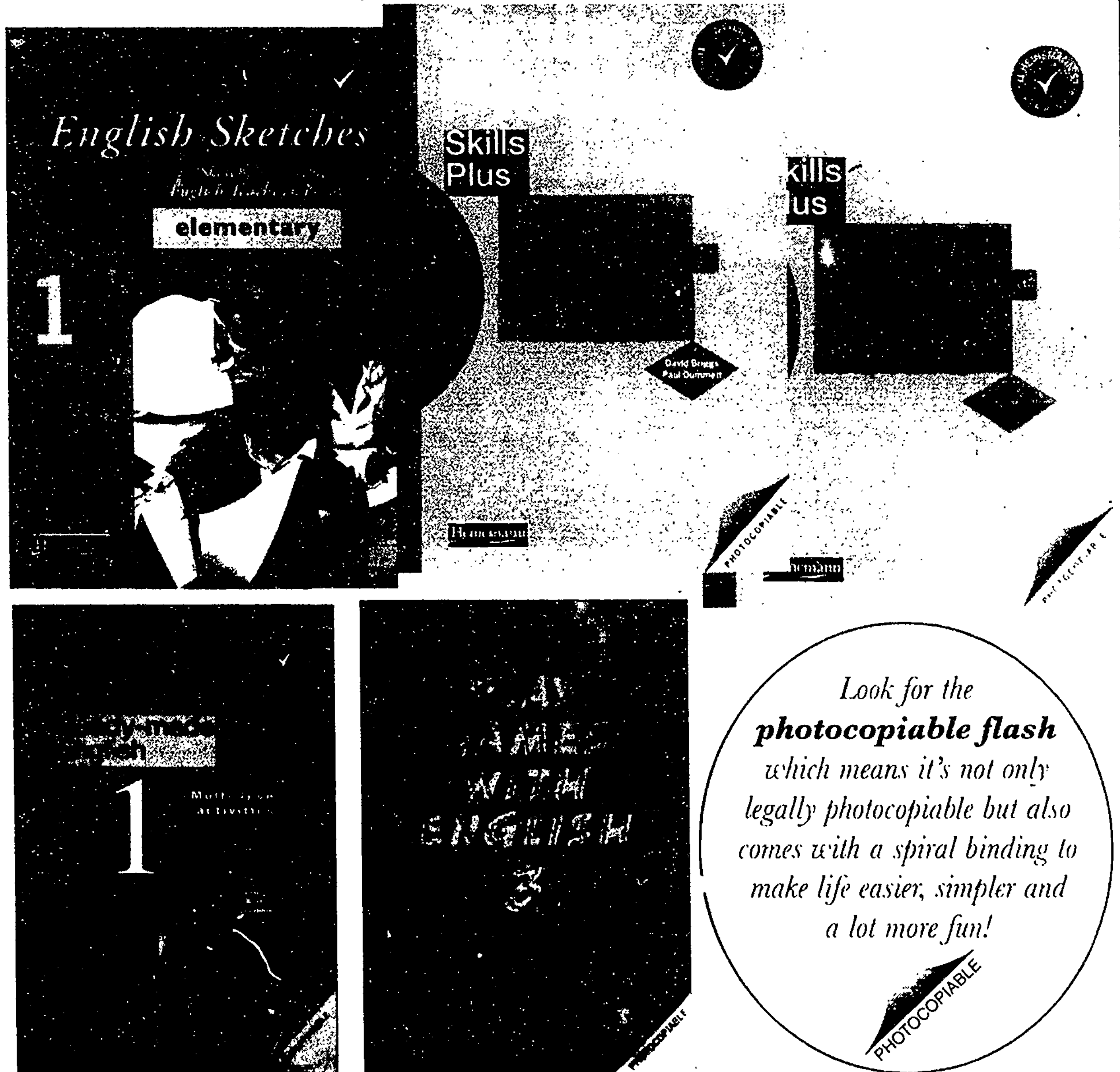

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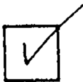

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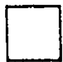

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