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ABSTRACT

The three issues of the journal on second language teacher education include these articles: "Monitoring and Evaluating the Production of Materials on a Large Scale Trainer Training Workshop" (R. Williams, Choong Kam Foong, Diana Lubelska); Sensory Channels in ESL Instruction" (Michael E. Rudder); "Using the In-Service Feedback Session To Promote Teacher Self-Development Actively" (Henny Burke); "Training Practice as a Component of an MA Course" (J. A. Hartill, J. E. Kendrick); "Ideas for a Workshop on Pre-Writing Strategies" (Rima Turk-Iskandarani, Glyn Mason-Jabbour); "What Is NLP" (Mario Rinvolucri, Marjorie Rosenberg); "Lesson Planning and Teaching by Threads" (Seth Lindstromberg); "Interview with Angela Johnson"; "One Size Doesn't Fit All: A Taxonomic Perspective on ESL/EFL Teacher-Preparation Programmes" (Lynn E. Henrichson); "Interview with Donald Freeman"; "Trainee Voices" (Bonnie Tsai, Maria Dessaux-Barberio); "Learner Difficulty: What Is It and How Well Do We Understand It?" (Akira Tajino); "Development in Party Clothes" (Regina Guimaraes); "People Who Train People: Rachel Bodle"; "Welcome Back! Sharing Ideas After a Conference" (Izabella Hearn); "Are ARC, CPFU, or ESA of Any Use?" (Anthony Bruton); "In-Service TESOL Workshops: Suggestions for Novice Trainers" (Maureen Andrade); "The Czech Republic: Cascades or Irrigation Systems?" (Lin Dawson, Carol Berezai); "Working with Teachers Interested in Different Methods" (Tessa Woodward); "The Parable of the Good Language Learner" (Mike Church); "Interview with Ted Rodgers"; "Trainee Voices" (Bonnie Tsai, Maria Dessaux-Barberio); "People Who Train People: Monty Roberts"; "Collaborative Language Teaching: A Catalyst for Teacher Development" (Eddie Edmundson, Steve Fitzpatrick); "Making Meaning: Authorship as a Shared Activity" (Marion Williams, Robert Burden); "How Grammar Aware Are You?" (Sylvia Chalker); "How To Procrastinate and Still Get Things Done" (John Perry); and "Looking at Language Classrooms Reviewed"

(Seth Lindstromberg). Notes on publications and professional activities are also included in each issue. (MSE)

The Teacher Trainer

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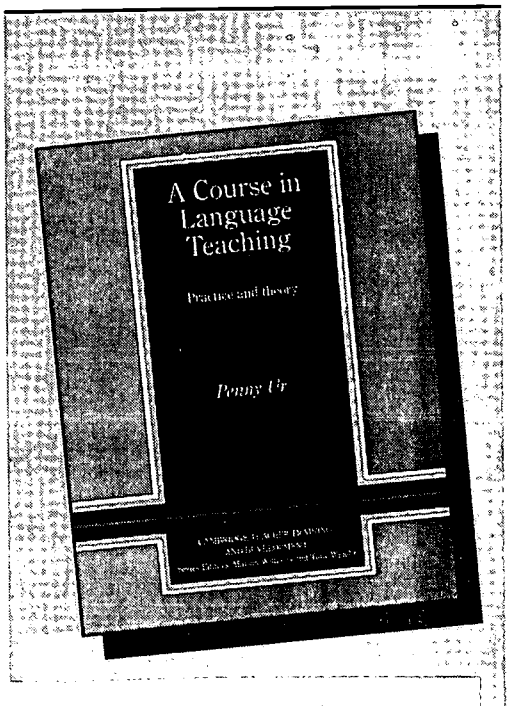

'For teachers, it is a reference book of ideas to dip into when inspiration wanes. ... It is not simply a recipe book, but a principled guide for teachers; dipping in would expose one to theory again and perhaps kindle enthusiasm at a deeper level.'

Arlene Gilpin in *EL Gazette*

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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

Welcome to the eleventh volume of The Teacher Trainer and to a brand new colour cover! For those of you new to the journal, let me explain that the following regular series pop up from time to time:

Observation and feedback, Conference report, Interview, Author's corner, Process options, Letters, Have you read...?, Publications received, Questions and answers, Current research, Language matters, Trainee voices, Training around the world, Meet a colleague, People who train people, Book reviews, Trainer background and Readings for trainees.

We used to have a Spoof page too but things seem to have got a bit serious lately! If you are interested in seeing what has come up in these series or in past issues generally, send in for a copy of "The story so far", our informal index (price £4 including postage).

Our lead article this issue (P3) gives practical assistance to those producing materials in large workshops and wishing to monitor and evaluate them carefully and consistently without workshop leaders duplicating or contradicting each other.

If you are interested in multi-sensory work you will want to look at both Michael Rudder's article on show (touch, taste, smell) and tell (P6) and Mario Rinvolucri and Marjorie Rosenberg's parallel answers to the question "What is NLP"(P19).

Henny Burke introduces us to some questions, circle diagrams and field notes that should enable us to stop talking and start listening to teachers in feedback sessions (P8).

We are used to teaching practice on teacher training courses but Hartill and Kendrick (P12) introduce us to some training practice on an MA course.

If you or the teachers or students you work with suffer from writer's block or pen procrastination, there are some ideas on pre-writing strategies from Rima Turk-Iskandarani and Glyn Mason-Jabbour (P14).

On a recent visit to the USA I was lucky enough to interview Prof DeCarrico about her work with James Nattinger on lexical phrases (P17).

Seth Lindstromberg joins us again (P21) to add to our texts on lesson planning. He discusses planning by "threads" rather than by "blocks".

For extra interest I have included an interview with a language student who helps to swell the numbers of a practice class for pre-service teacher trainees(P22), and an article on the naming of newly-discovered objects in space! (P23) Towards the end of the magazine (P24) you will find some thumbnail sketches of books useful for teacher trainers.

Keep sending in your letters, comments and articles whether short or long. Thanks too to those who have sent us the names and addresses of contacts who might like to know about The Teacher Trainer. They are a great help!

Happy reading!

Tessa Woodward

Editor

Monitoring and Evaluating The Production of Materials on a Large-scale Trainer Training Workshop

Ray Williams, Choong Kam Foong and Diana Lubelska

A large-scale workshop which has as its main goal the production of materials for ELT trainees requires very careful and consistent monitoring and evaluation of those draft materials - both by those directing the workshop and by peer trainer-participants. This article demonstrates and expands on two simple pieces of documentation that we have written and successfully used on a workshop held recently at Melaka (Malaysia) as part of the PETEP Project.

By way of background, the Malaysian PETEP (Primary English Teacher Education Project) is a three-year project targeted at staff of English Departments in Teacher Training Colleges throughout Malaysia (31 departments in all), who prepare pre-service trainees to become Primary school teachers. The project focuses on introducing learning-centred approaches into the methodology and materials used in the colleges.

The Melaka workshop was the third in a series of PETEP workshops to focus on materials production, ie, materials to be used by trainers with their pre-service trainees, in order to deliver the ELT Methodology component of the College syllabus. The overall workshop programme was:

As can be seen, the objective of the workshop was for each group of trainer-participants to produce two sets of materials - labelled Set A and Set B in the timetable above. With 61 participants working in groups of four, this meant 30 sets of materials to be produced.

We had four monitors/advisers - the three authors of this paper plus one of our most experienced teacher trainers. With 15 groups simultaneously drafting materials and with four monitors, the first issue was to decide on the most effective way of monitoring. We could have simply

WORKSHOP PROGRAMME

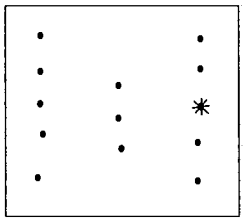
	8.30	10.00/ 10.30	12.30/ 2.00	4.00	Evening Session (8.30-10.00++)
Tuesday 12.12.95	*"Veterans"*: 1. Identify syllabus areas not yet covered 2. Review Books I (Proficiency and Teacher Dynamics, II (Methodology) and III (Methodology) for broad comments and identification of problem units 3. Identify non-trialled units of Books I, II and III, and why not trialled 4. Assemble trialling pro-formas in respect of Book III *"Newcomers"*: Review of the learning cycle, the place of trainee materials in the cycle, and PETEP course design		1. Plenary review of materials design format 2. Groups of four (2 "Newcomers") select non-covered syllabus item, and commence writing materials Set (A)		Continue writing materials Set (A)
Wednesday 13.12.95	Continue writing materials Set (A)				Complete writing materials Set (A) and display on table or wall; begin promenade peer-review
Thursday 14.12.95	Continue promenade peer-review of all materials Set (A) against key criteria	Commence writing materials Set (B)	Continue writing materials Set (B)		Revise materials Set (A)
Friday 15.12.95	Continue writing materials Set (B)				Complete writing materials Set (B) and display on table or wall; begin promenade peer-review
Saturday 16.12.95	Continue promenade peer-review of all materials Set (B) against key criteria	1. Revision of materials Set (B) 2. Round-up + future directions in PETEP			

continued

decided to divide the 15 sub-groups among the four monitors - three or four each. But we quickly dispensed with this option, since it would have deprived groups of the variety of advice and experience that four of us could offer collectively. Having decided, then, that we would monitor all 15 groups (or as many as possible) as a team, we needed to devise a mechanism for ensuring that we kept each other informed of our individual monitoring sessions, and that our contributions to each group were not contradictory. We therefore designed the following Monitoring Record Sheet:

MONITORING RECORD SHEET FOR MATERIALS WRITING

GROUP MEMBERS
(CHAIRPERSON
UNDERLINED)



ADVICE GIVEN, PROGRESS, PROBLEMS ETC	MONITOR, DAY, DURATION

SYLLABUS ITEM:

There was one sheet per group, and the sheets were kept on a table at the front of the workshop room. The diagram and symbol on the top right-hand corner indicated where the group were sitting in the workshop room. Monitors collected the sheet from the table, read the previous monitors' comments, added their own comments as they interacted with a group, and returned the sheet to the table at the front when they had finished. We found the record sheet very useful. Apart from:

1. information-sharing among ourselves, and
2. avoiding giving contradictory advice,

the record sheet had a number of other benefits:

3. It meant that we did not have to waste time asking each group to recap on progress to date, problems encountered etc.
4. It ensured that each group received approximately the same number of monitoring visits.
5. It sometimes enabled us to 'cross-fertilise', taking ideas from one group to another.
6. We learnt something from each other's monitoring practices.
7. The act of record-keeping in this manner reminded us - at the end of a monitoring session - to recap on points agreed with a group.

Of course, we did not totally depend on the record sheet, and we needed quick conversations with each other while group work was proceeding or over the coffee cups - to clarify a written comment, to double-check an idea etc. But overall, the monitoring record sheets proved a great success, and we certainly plan to use them in future materials production workshops for trainer training.

The materials being produced, of course, are intended to be used by all the trainers, nation-wide. In addition to input from monitors/advisers during the process of drafting materials, it was therefore crucial that participants also received advice and feedback on their completed draft materials from their peers (and from monitors), as input to materials revision and finalisation. Normally, if one displays or circulates draft materials for peer evaluation, such advice is not very constructive, eg 'Very nice' or 'Good activity'. We therefore designed the following peer-evaluation checklist:

PEER-REVIEW CRITERIA (Please do not write on this sheet.)

1	To what extent do the materials fulfil the syllabus item? (If you respond PARTLY or NOT AT ALL, please explain.	FULLY	PARTLY	NOT AT ALL
2	Are the materials likely to be teachable by a trainer "yet to be appointed"? (If you respond NOT COMPLETELY or NO, please explain.	YES	NOT	COMPLETELY NO
3	Is the predicted timing realistic? (If you respond NO, please suggest a more suitable timing.)	YES	NO	
4	Are the materials complete? eg Have all the indicated handouts been written? (If you respond NO, please indicate what is missing.)	YES	NO	
5	Are the materials written in suitable language? eg. suitable vocabulary, absence of terminology, simple English? (If you respond NO, please explain.)	YES	NO	
6	Are there suggestions for follow-up activities? eg recommended reading for trainees. If you respond NO, what do you recommend?)	YES	NO	
7	Is there an indication of the trainee ability level aimed at? (If NO, what is your opinion?)	YES	NO	
8.1	Are the activities in the set of materials suitably linked?	YES	NO	
8.2	Is the link made explicit to trainees? (If NO, please advise on linkage.)	YES	NO	
9	Are the teaching points within the Unit highlighted at the end of the Unit?	YES	NO	

10 Do you have any further comments and/or advice?

Many of the criteria, in fact, emerged from an analysis of pro-formas from the first morning of the workshop, the pro-formas having been completed during observation of previously written training materials being used in the colleges. The following whiteboard notice explains the actual peer-evaluation procedure:

PEER EVALUATION OF MATERIALS

This is a **very** important activity. Please ...

1 Work as a (materials writing) group.
2 "Promenade" - Read and discuss your colleagues' materials.
3 As you read and discuss, write comments on one side of a blank sheet of paper.
4 Having done that, on the other side respond to the checklist questions 1 - 10.
5 Put your response sheet in the envelope and proceed to the next set of materials. (Do not waste time reading other groups' comments.) Write the names of your group on the response sheet, in case the authors of the materials wish to clarify anything with you.

Please give careful, frank and detailed comments and advice.
Remember - **you** will be teaching these materials.
We are aiming at about eight responses for each set of materials.

Each group of authors thus had about eight sets of structured feedback and advice from other groups, which they were able to draw on in revising their materials. As monitors, we followed the same procedure and checklist as the peer evaluators. We found that peer-group evaluation based on such a checklist focused our attention (and participants') on key criteria. The process certainly led to better second draft materials - which was the objective.

The two documents demonstrated in this article (or variants of them) are simple to devise and effective in practice, and we commend them to others responsible for directing large-scale materials production workshops with ELT trainers.

Ray Williams and Diana Lubelska train teachers and trainers at the College of St Mark and St John (Plymouth) - the UK Link Institution for PETEP. Choong Kam Foong is Project Officer of PETEP, in the Teacher Education Division, Ministry of Education, Malaysia.

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Sensory Channels in ESL Instruction

Tell me and I'll forget
Show me and I'll remember
Involve me and I'll learn
(Chinese proverb)

'Show and tell' are traditionally the basic tools of the language instructor, particularly in the presentation stage of the lesson, i.e., the introduction of new vocabulary and structures. Teachers show, tell, and explain language items, forms, etc. with the help of visual aids in the form of diagrams, paradigms, pictures, and realia, to mention only a few such means. Nowadays much more discussion is devoted to ways of getting students more directly involved in the learning process, as is illustrated by communicative teaching approaches in which cooperative learning plays a significant role.

Exploitation of the five senses is one means of increasing such involvement, on the part of the student, in the learning process and is, as well, an area which merits further methodological research and discussion. My aim here is to share with other teachers and teacher trainers the results of my experimentation in exploiting the senses as part of the pedagogical preparation for students and practice teachers in my Methodology classes at Cairo University (Fayoum, Egypt).

In this article I choose not to discuss the auditory channel, as there are now available on the market hundreds of books and assorted materials devoted exclusively to developing and improving listening skills. Nor will I discuss the visual channel, since all ESL teacher training manuals generally incorporate the use of visual aids for presentation of vocabulary and structures. My focus is therefore on the three generally untapped channels (tactile, gustatory, and olfactory), which have been largely neglected in the literature on methodology.

One exception is *Purple Cows & Potato Chips* (Christison and Bassano, 1987), in which the authors present a series of non-traditional multi-sensory activities for language acquisition. In this stimulating resource book one unit deals with touch and movement, while another explores the senses of smell and taste.

Cross (1992) discusses ostensive (or non-linguistic) means of presenting and practising vocabulary, ranging from realia to body language. In my experience, such ostensive ways of 'showing' meaning need not and should not be restricted to a visual experience, but can often be effectively accomplished as well through other sensory channels, i.e., touching, tasting, and smelling.

My student teachers and I have recently found such multi-sensory activities to be both fun and useful pedagogical tools. To conclude, I will enumerate some of the benefits which may result from the types of activities which we have implemented in our teaching of English as a second language.

Tactile

Due to L1 interference, students sometimes confuse, or rather fail to distinguish between, words which have different meanings in English. An example is the Arabic **naa'em**, which translates sometimes as 'soft' and at other times as 'smooth'. I tried to clarify this particular confusion in my class by enumerating examples of soft and smooth objects, but later I realized that, at least for some students, the distinction was still not clear. In a micro-teaching session a student teacher called two of his peers to the front of the class. He touched one student's hair and said, "Mohamed's hair is soft". Then he touched the other student's hair and said, "But Mustafa's hair is hard". The student teacher was in fact mistranslating the Arabic **khashem**, which is an antonym of **naa'em**.

Walking to the Faculty of Education the following morning, I picked up some stones of varying texture, which I had the students to pass around and feel. This time it seemed that they were better able to grasp the meanings of *hard, smooth, rough*, etc. and to make the appropriate distinctions. I concluded that the act of touching, i.e., using the tactile sense, was instrumental in resolving the problem. At the same time, students became more directly involved.

Exploiting the sense of touch can be especially useful for explaining many words, of which the meanings are closely tied to a tactile sensation. Examples which come immediately to mind, in addition to *hard, soft,* and *smooth* are: *rough, rubbery, silky, slick, sticky, stiff, velvety, wiry, wooly,* etc. Such words are often difficult to explain, or even translate, but a simple touch can convey the meanings quickly and clearly.

Gustatory

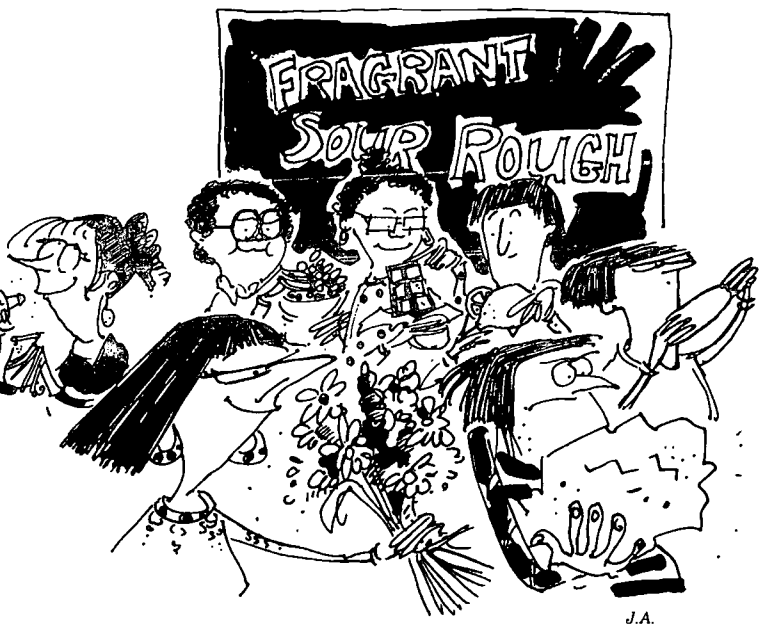
Here is where we really had fun! I brought to class small samples of a variety of foods (topic of universal interest) to illustrate the basic tastes, i.e., sweet, sour, salty, and bitter. The samples included: (1) sweet: sugar, chocolate, cookies, and honey, (2) sour: lemon, orange, vinegar, and mustard, (3) salty: salt, chips, peanuts, and olives, and (4) bitter: unripe date, lemon peel, unsweetened coffee, and an aspirin, which a student with a headache volunteered to taste.

Among the students there was not always a consensus as to which category a particular item fell into. For example, what was sour to some was bitter to others. Thus, interesting discussions and arguments (in English) ensued, as students were keen to talk about their preferred

tastes and favorite foods. What is most noteworthy about the activity is that we all enjoyed it and everyone got 'involved'. In fact, students who were generally shy about speaking and participating in class discussions were suddenly eager to taste all the items, including the salt and lemon.

Olfactory

My Methodology classes each meet twice a week, and the two sessions generally include a lecture on the readings and topic of the week, a demonstration lesson like the one described above with the food tasting, and micro-teaching by volunteers from the student teachers. After the tasting demonstration, I asked them to prepare brief presentations which exploited a combination of two or more of the five basic senses. They were instructed to implement these micro-teaching presentations in their lesson plans for their practice teaching at the secondary schools. I purposefully had not tapped into the olfactory sense in order to allow room for creativity.



So, the next day I had the pleasure to observe demonstrations, in which students passed around various kinds of soap, perfumes, flowers, and plants for their peers to smell and comment on. They presented lexical items, such as *odor, fragrant, fragrance, gaseous, stench, stink, stinking*, etc. and discussed their preferences for soaps and perfumes. Again there was a high level of interest and participation.

Conclusion

As a result of the experience that my student teachers and I have had tapping into our senses for teaching aids, it appears that the benefits coincide with our general instructional objectives, namely (1) to motivate, (2) to reinforce memory, and (3) to enhance and facilitate learning.

Teachers who supplement the textbook with visual aids (realia, pictures, etc.) and auditory aids (tapes, chants, music, etc.) nearly always manage to spark interest and increase participation on the part of their students. There is no doubt that the additional experience with the sensations of touch, taste, and smell likewise help to sustain interest and increase motivation.

It seems that the more means (channels) one has to experience the unknown, the easier it becomes to remember. As an example, many of us find it much easier to recall names, facts, and figures if we write them down. In other words, the aural medium is reinforced by the written medium. It follows that students are more likely to remember new language items if spoken words are accompanied with visual images. I would theorize that this happens as well when the language is accompanied with the sensations of touch, taste, and smell. In other words, the more associations the learner makes, the easier it is for him/her to process and remember the new information.

If students are motivated and given the opportunity to participate and get directly involved in the lesson, it is only natural that learning will be facilitated and enhanced. 'Involve me and I'll learn.' If 'seeing is believing', then let's consider as well feeling, tasting, and smelling.

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Michael E. Rudder
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NEWS

The Ben Warren International House Trust Prize of £2,000 will be awarded to the author(s) of the book/research project judged to have made the most significant contribution to the field of language teacher education in the previous year.
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Using The In-service Feedback Session To Actively Promote Teacher Self-Development

by Henny Burke

Situation: In-service Feedback On Observed Classes In A Language Academy

The teachers at the British Language Centre, Madrid, where I work, receive six observations throughout the academic year as part of an in-service development programme. As all the teachers hold the RSA/UCLES CTEFLA*, there is a tendency for these observations to resemble an official Teacher Training course. The teachers put into practice techniques they were exposed to on their CTEFLA courses and feedback sessions are spent discussing these techniques. Teachers find observation by a supervisor stressful and feel safer sticking to tried and tested ground. However, in this article I intend to show how supervisors can use in-service feedback sessions to move beyond discussion of techniques and towards the active promotion of teacher self-development.

Defining Development

According to Freeman, development encompasses, "aspects of a teacher's teaching that stem from attitude toward, and awareness of, self in the classroom." (Freeman 1989:40) In order to help the teacher to develop I believe the supervisor needs to allow the teacher to speak in the feedback session.

"We learn by speaking: by trying to put our thoughts together so that someone else can understand them." (Edge 1992: 6)

The feedback session is the ideal place for a teacher to express him/herself about teaching and to put his/her thoughts together. However, due to the power differential that exists between supervisor and teacher, it is normally the supervisor who does most of the talking in a feedback session. Therefore, it is necessary for the supervisor to use a structured feedback framework and adopt strategies that will allow the teacher to express him/herself.

A Three Phase Framework For Feedback

I propose the following three phase framework:

1) Post Lesson Task 2) Focussing 3) Prescription

Phase One - Post Lesson Task

The first phase consists of the teacher talking through a Post Lesson Task. This task is given to the teacher before the actual observation and the teacher is asked to complete it after the lesson and bring it along to the feedback session. It consists of six questions and is designed to encourage the teacher to reflect on the lesson.

POST LESSON TASK

1.How do you feel about the lesson you taught?

2.Did anything(s)happen that you had not planned for or anticipated?

3.How do you think your students felt about the lesson?

4.How did this observed lesson compare with one of your unobserved lessons with this group?

5.Could the observer have done anything to help make you feel more comfortable? Did the observer do anything which made you feel uncomfortable?

6.Any other reflections?

The six questions are constructed so as to restore some power to the observed teacher. Question 4 gives the teacher the chance to discuss how the class is normally, when there is no change in the dynamic caused by the presence of an observer. Question 5 is also designed to restore more control to the teacher.

As mentioned above, the feedback session begins by the teacher talking through the Post Lesson Task. It is important that the supervisor does not just take it and read it as the aim of this part of the feedback session is that the teacher **expresses** his/her views orally. Having written something down earlier, there is less possibility of the teacher "drying up" or feeling stuck for words. While the teacher talks through the lesson the supervisor should adopt the role of understander and "actively listen" to the teacher.

In a normal conversation or discussion the speakers listen to each other mutually, but they have a tendency to concentrate on what they themselves are going to say and how this will fit into the interaction. In active listening the interaction pattern is distorted as only one participant acts as speaker and the other participant acts as understander and concentrates on helping the speaker to clarify his/her ideas.

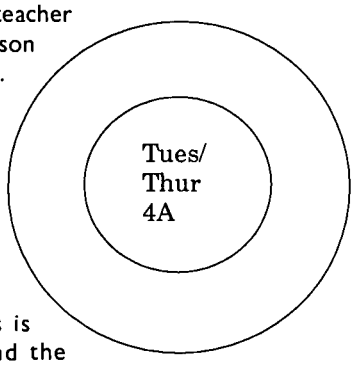
When a supervisor acts as understander in a feedback session (i.e.actively listens) the teacher is encouraged not only to speak, but also to hear him/herself. I find it useful to use the interactive skills of attending, reflecting, focussing, thematising, challenging and disclosing as outlined in Julian Edge's Cooperative Development (Edge 1992: 21 - 64).

(nb:although these interactive moves are partly derived from Egan(1986) the idea of using them in teacher development is very much Edge's own interpretation (Edge 1992: 92-93))

* ow named CELTA

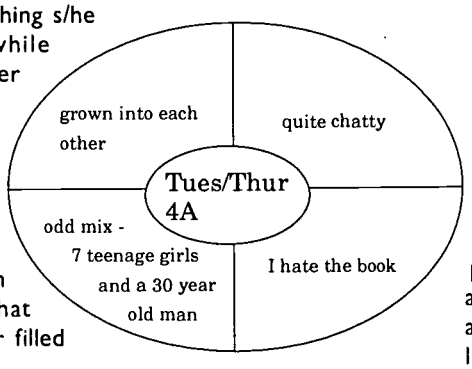
Phase Two - Focussing

The second phase of the feedback session also consists of the supervisor in the role of understander actively listening to the teacher. However, the aim of this phase is to encourage the teacher to think beyond the observed lesson and reflect on the class in general.

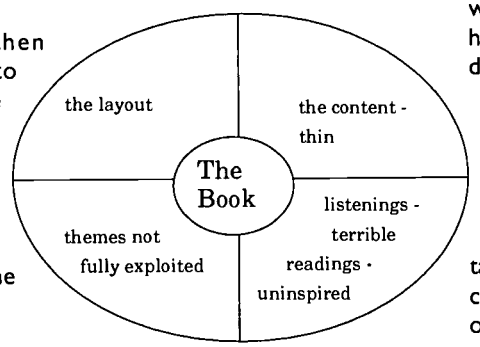


In order to do this I use focussing circles (Edge 1992:37-39). I ask the teacher to write down the name of the class and draw two circles round it.

The space between the circles is divided into four segments and the teacher writes in anything s/he wants to, all the while talking out loud his/her thought processes. At first the teacher may find it difficult to think of anything but it is important for the supervisor to resist the temptation to tell the teacher what to write. One teacher filled in the following:



The supervisor then invites the teacher to take one of the elements and put it into the centre of another circle and then repeat the process. This teacher chose to focus on the coursebook.



By talking through and re-focussing in this way this teacher was able to identify a problem she was having with the class which in this case was her dislike of the coursebook. However, there were other problems also going on in the class which became evident from her initial circle. There was an odd mixture in the class - seven teenage girls and a thirty-year-old man. She felt it was difficult to find material that could engage all the students.

This teacher and the class had "grown into each other". They had not started off the course together and the teacher had taken the class over from a much more experienced teacher who had had a very good rapport with the group. The new teacher felt unable to take the place of their former teacher, but felt at least she and the students had grown used to each others' way of working.

All the areas mentioned above were touched on while the teacher was talking through the focussing circles. These are areas that an observer might not see in a sixty minute observation because they are not immediately obvious or visible. The observer might perceive tension in the class and speculate as to why it might occur, but it will always remain speculation.

Teacher self-development

If feedback sessions are to be of any benefit whatsoever, the observer/supervisor must have a clear picture of what the teacher is perceiving. I feel this can be achieved if the supervisor acts as understander and actively listens to the teacher. Furthermore, being actively listened to is of the utmost importance for the teacher who learns more about him/herself by expressing him/herself and hearing him/herself. In this way self-development can take place.

Phase Three - Prescription

The third phase of the feedback session entails the supervisor coming out of the role of understander and talking through his/her own impressions of the observed class. I find it useful to refer to notes made during the observation under the headings of:

Time	Interaction	Field Notes
4.30	*T - SS*	*Building up situation at board*

As far as possible, under the headings of field notes, I try to describe what is going on in the class rather than evaluate. There is obviously a place for evaluation, but I feel spoken evaluation should take place during the face-to-face interaction of the feedback session in phase three. The written notes can serve as a visual record of the observed class which is useful for both the supervisor and the teacher.

The advantage of doing more prescriptive feedback after spending at least two thirds of the feedback session on active listening is that the observer has a much clearer sense of what the teacher is aware of. Thus one interesting aspect that came up from my observation was that José, the thirty year old man, seemed much weaker than the other students. The teacher had interpreted the problem in classroom dynamic as being one of a problem

continued

in age difference whereas, for me, it seemed to be more of a problem in language level. Tracing the interaction patterns on the written profile is also useful as it became clear that José had sat on the edge of the semi-circle throughout the whole lesson and had in fact only talked to one other student throughout the whole period. The teacher realised that she could be changing the groupings more often and José needed to be shared around the class more and more physically integrated into the group dynamic.

Flexibility And Appropriacy

The above teacher had done her CTEFLA course in November 1993, and had only been teaching for three months when this observation and feedback session took place. Freeman (1982) would probably advocate, according to his "hierarchy of needs", that this teacher would be best suited with his Prescriptive or Alternatives approach. However, I would argue that any teacher at any stage of his/her career could benefit from the feedback framework I am proposing. Possibly, the more experienced the teacher, the less need for phase three, but this is not necessarily so. What is important in this framework is that the three phases are flexible. The responsiveness of the teacher to each phase dictates the length of time it is necessary to spend on each one.

Teacher Evaluation Of The 3 Phase Feedback Framework

In order to evaluate the 3 phase feedback framework, I asked eight teachers who had been observed by me from October 1993 - May 1994 to fill out a questionnaire in June 1994.

Results of Questionnaire

a) How did you feel while you were receiving the feedback?

In response to this question all teachers felt relaxed during the feedback session.

"Relaxed. I felt that I was really thinking about and analysing my own teaching, approach to teaching and that class in particular."

"I didn't feel as though I was being criticised. In some ways teaching is quite a "private" thing - only your students know what you actually do in the classroom and it's quite strange to be sharing it and then discussing it, but it's also quite reassuring."

b)How did you feel after the feedback sessions?

All teachers felt positive after the feedback session:

"Optimistic that students' problems might be able to be tackled."

However, more than one teacher reported feeling tired.

"Quite tired, due I suppose to the fact that I did all the talking and thinking - not a bad thing."

The fact that some teachers found the feedback sessions tiring indicates to me that they were participating very actively in the process and self-development was indeed taking place.

c)To what extent do you think you will consciously try and incorporate the feedback given in the prescription stage into your teaching?

The responses to this question suggest that all teachers

did try and incorporate the feedback into their teaching.

"I've since done a couple of lessons on revision/improvement which have been very successful and helped the students realise how much more they know."

However, not all the ideas that came up in the feedback

sessions proved to be successful with the students.

"Gave them learner diaries but absolutely no response from them."

d)Did you find the feedback relevant to your general teaching situation?

In answer to this question all teachers found the feedback relevant. One teacher's answer to this question helps explain why this was so:

"The opportunity for guiding the feedback towards areas you yourself would like to explore is there which is great."

e)Was this feedback similar to or different from the feedback you received on your CTEFLA course?

This question raised interesting responses. One teacher felt both feedback situations were similar; two teachers felt they were similar in some ways and five teachers felt they were completely different.

"Similar in that you were expected to analyse and criticise the lesson for yourself, but different in content."

"It's different. This feedback is more discussing techniques, ideas etc. and during the CTEFLA course the feedback is more critical."

f)Did you feel the observer had a particular view of teaching which was not necessarily compatible with your view of teaching?

In response to this question everybody answered in the negative.

"In fact, I don't think the observer's view of teaching was a central issue. Feedback is more about one's own view."

g)Did you feel you were being allowed to develop and get to know yourself as a teacher in the feedback sessions?

All the teachers felt they were listened to and allowed to express themselves in the feedback sessions. However,

one teacher felt she could have benefited from more prescription.

"Yes, but I would honestly like your opinions too. I know you don't like to influence people but for me it would have been helpful to have been given a little more direction."

This is an interesting comment as I felt I had given quite a lot of direction in the third phase of our feedback sessions, but she obviously had not perceived it as prescriptive enough. My interpretation of this point is that the fault does not lie in the feedback framework I am proposing, but probably lies in the way I handled that part of the feedback sessions. I needed to mark the stages more clearly.

Another factor might have been that the above teacher was less convinced about the value of self-exploration and wished to receive advice from an authority figure. Freeman(1982) might argue that, being a relatively new teacher of eight months' experience, she needed more prescription. However, I feel this is more related to personality and learning background as another teacher with even less experience in response to the same question wrote:

"I definitely feel that I have developed a lot throughout these months. Feedback did have a part to play, but quite small, and I think that student responses and a process of trial and error have been far more important."

h)How did you feel about doing the focussing circles?

Most teachers found it quite difficult to do the focussing circles:

"They're a good idea, but I do find it difficult to think of things to write."

A teacher of nine years' experience, made an interesting point with respect to focussing circles:

"Self-criticism has to be taught from the beginning of one's TEFL career instead of so much observation. I mean, this technique should be used from Day 1 as a constant self-criticism technique."

i)How important was the written feedback for you? Did you feel oral feedback would have been enough?

The oral feedback was valued more highly than the written feedback, but the latter was viewed as a good record.

"Not as important as the oral, though a good reference point."

j)Do you have any comments/suggestions on how the oral/written feedback you received throughout this year could have been more effective?

An interesting comment was made in response to this question:

"Perhaps there could have been more involvement and feedback at the lesson planning stage."

k)Please feel free to add any other comments you feel it would be useful for me to be aware of?

In response to this question, the comments below show how stressful in-service observation is for many teachers.

"Inevitably fear of the observation changes the class to a certain degree from a normal one. Perhaps the observee should be encouraged to compare these or have it more clearly indicated that the idea is one of self-improvement and not "boss-employee" criticism."

I had hoped that the feedback framework I am proposing would have solved the problems this teacher raises. However, fear of observation often runs deep. It is my belief that the more this kind of feedback framework is employed, the more teachers' minds will be put at rest because its main aim really is to promote teacher self-development.

Conclusion

Having listened to audio-tapes of the feedback sessions and studied the Post-Lesson tasks; Focussing Circles; written profiles and having read the teachers' evaluation of this feedback framework, I am convinced that it is possible to actively promote teacher development in the feedback session. An essential factor in this process is the supervisor's use of active listening whereby teachers are

encouraged to express themselves; hear themselves and ultimately become more self-aware.

On the theme of development I have also become convinced of the validity to supervisors of audio-taping feedback sessions that they conduct. By listening to what we, as supervisors, are saying we also become aware of prejudices and fixed ideas that we hold. Freeman claims that development encompasses, "aspects of a teacher's teaching that stem from attitude toward, and awareness of, self in the classroom." (Freeman 1989: 40) In order for teacher educators to develop they need to be equally aware of aspects stemming from their attitude toward, and awareness of self in feedback sessions.

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Training Practice as a Component of an MA Course

J.A. Hartill and J.E. Kendrick

This article arises out of our experience as students on an MA course in TESOL. As the time for job searching approaches we have reflected on the orientation of traditional MA courses and how well they prepare us for future careers.

Why do people do MAs?

The traditional MA course in Applied Linguistics and TESOL, or similar, is often theory-based with an emphasis on the pursuit of academic excellence.

The majority of participants on the University of Leicester MA, however, were motivated by perceived opportunities for career enhancement. Indeed, as part of a survey on this year's MA, students were asked to give their reasons for doing the course. The responses included,

- to get a State of the Art overview of key areas in TEFL/TESL
- to learn about the theoretical background to my practice

However, when asked to rank our reasons we all, native and non-native speaker alike, put

- to help me get a better job

as our number one reason for doing the course.

In light of this, perhaps MAs should be offering more opportunities for the kinds of 'hands on' experiences which students require and which meet their wants and needs.

Bearing in mind that these wants relate to being better prepared for the EFL jobs market, course programmes might do well to allow more provision for experiential self-development. We would like to share with readers our experience of cooperative self-development while planning, organising and running an introductory TEFL taster course for recent graduates thinking about becoming EFL teachers. This was a short three day course which we MA students organised and ran at Leicester University. As a result of it we were able to present a portfolio including a profile of skills developed on the taster course as part of our MA assessment. This was in addition to traditional academic essays on other parts of the course.

Skills Development - What we learnt

The planning and implementation of all phases of the brief pre-service teacher training course we ran incorporated the following elements:

- negotiation of roles and responsibilities
- management and coordination of people and resources
- administration
- marketing and promotion
- establishing criteria
- interviewing and selecting participants
- course design and process options
- evaluation procedures

Although the MA had given us sufficient theoretical knowledge of the above (within the Teacher Education and Management strands of the course), we feel that it is only by putting them into practice that we have been able to develop real skills in these areas.

People

From the outset the team of taster course trainers comprised a core of four people, with one change early on. This change was quite significant as it meant re-defining roles and responsibilities. Fortunately, the person who stepped in was already involved in the course, although to a lesser degree.

It was interesting to note that although the intention was to build a team based on cooperative and non-hierarchical principles, it was impossible to prevent a team leader from emerging. With hindsight we believe that we were trying to be unrealistically 'caring and sharing' and that an approved leader is essential to the success of any project of this nature. This person proved to be vital for the following:

- chairing meetings
- delegating the workload
- reaching compromises
- setting goals and checking on progress
- motivating participants
- keeping participants on task
- overseeing a constant cycle of planning and review
- liaison with people outside the core team
- encouraging positive relationships

Although the team leader's role and responsibilities were not explicitly defined, the above functions were carried out and the team was able to work efficiently and effectively. We were fortunate to have a mix of personalities that were compatible.

Marketing and promotion

The limited time available meant that marketing and promotion of the course were the first aspects we dealt

with. This involved establishing an agreed set of criteria for who to target, which form of advertising to use and how widespread its distribution should be, who would produce the advertisement and when it had to be produced by.

Interviewing and selecting participants

The rationale for holding interviews was based on an attempt to create a homogeneous group, with limited teaching experience, who could all somehow benefit from a three day introduction to TEFL. We also decided that an interview would allow us to meet the participants beforehand - something we felt would provide valuable input into subsequent course planning.

We then established a set of interview questions which were written with both these factors in mind and also in order to elicit sufficient information for our 'getting to know you' activity - Find Someone Who - planned for the first session.

The interviews gave us a taste of being on the other side of the interviewing fence. The insights gained will hopefully help us to improve our own performance in job interviews. In addition, we felt that we had an opportunity to develop our own interviewing technique.

Course design

Designing the course involved deciding on:

- aims and objectives
- content
- timetabling (including sequencing)
- process options
- allocation of sessions

The aims of the course were governed by the needs we predicted the participants would have, those mentioned in the interviews and by the time constraint of three days. We were not able to provide opportunities for teaching practice.

Once our aims were established, the content, timetabling and allocation of sessions underwent constant review and change until we successfully negotiated the timetable.

To a certain extent we found that the content and nature of the session influenced our choice of process options. For example, we decided that a 'foreign language lesson' would give participants the chance to experience and reflect on the language learning process, using only the target language via one of the methodologies they are most likely to encounter on a preparatory EFL teaching course.

The decision to use loop input where possible also influenced our choice of process options. For example, the session on speaking skills clearly needed to provide opportunities for oral interaction. A gapped handout followed by comparison of notes while actively listening to a 'lecturette', interspersed with speaking activities and tasks therefore seemed most appropriate.

Evaluation by Tutors

We evaluated how we thought the course was progressing at the end of each of the three days.

This enabled us to give each other feedback and support and to decide if any changes needed to be made for the next day.

Evaluation by the Participants

On the first morning, participants were asked to write down three expectations they had of the course. On the last afternoon these were returned and they were asked to note whether or not they felt their expectations had been fulfilled and to add any other comments.

In addition, participants were asked to produce a poster of comments about all aspects of the course, including tutors, the materials, the methods, the room etc.

We found that the participants were satisfied with the course as a whole. Inevitably, there were those who did not like lectures but also those who felt there was too much pairwork. This acts as a reminder that, in the training room as in the classroom, different learner styles need to be catered for.

The structure of the timetable was well received and the participants felt that the informal atmosphere and environment were appropriate to the nature and aims of the course. They acknowledged the wide variety of teaching methods and issues covered and seemed to enjoy the practical sessions in particular. The TPR and language learning lessons were especially popular. On the whole they seemed to want activities and handouts which gave them skills and ideas to take away.

Conclusion

The outline above shows how numerous and varied the aspects involved in running our introductory TEFL course were. It gave us the opportunity to gain valuable experience in applying much of what we had learnt on our MA course to a real situation.

We feel that we were able to develop many of the skills needed in any teaching and training contexts, such as listening skills, negotiation skills and organisational skills. We also feel that we have acquired new skills in and insights into areas such as establishing criteria, course design and management. Reflecting on all aspects of the course naturally led to an increased awareness and evaluation of how we were interacting and employing our communication skills. We are all convinced that our interpersonal skills have improved considerably.

For those of us interested in making a career move in the direction of teacher training it offered the first chance to experience learners as trainees, rather than learners as language students.

We hope and believe that this will make us even more employable and better employees.

Ideas for a Workshop on Pre-Writing Strategies

Lebanese ESL instructors in general feel ill-at-ease when it comes to teaching the writing skill. Indeed, our experience in teacher training has revealed that this is a chronic problem. What we basically wanted to bring to the fore in this workshop is the fact that many of us (nascent and experienced writers alike) are afraid of writing. Unfortunately, good writing comes naturally and effortlessly to very few people. So, unless one happens to be one of the chosen few, the mere thought of embarking on a writing task can create a great deal of stress. It is therefore crucial to remove the fear, tension, and mystique that we associate with writing. What is thus needed is a humanistic approach that completely demystifies the writing process and provides us with workable strategies that actually help them get started.

Session Plan: Warm-up Activity 1:

Toss the Ball

Purposes

1. To elicit the problems language students face in writing

2. To list and prioritise problems in writing

Procedure

1. Divide trainees into groups of 4.

2. Distribute a paper ball to one trainee in each team.

3. Explain that the trainee with the paper ball has to share with teammates one problem their students encounter in writing.

4. When the trainee finishes this, they toss the ball to another team member who, in turn, mentions another problem which their students have with writing.

5. Team members continue tossing the ball until they have shared all their problems.

6. Team members list then prioritise these problems.

Comments

1. With one particular group, the prioritised list appeared as follows:

a. Generating ideas for getting started

b. Organizing information logically and clearly with a specific type of reader in mind

c. Enriching content

d. Handwriting, spelling, punctuation, and sentence construction

e. Making the right word choice

f. Linking sentences

2. It is noteworthy that there was general consensus that getting started was the most difficult problem students face.

Warm-up Activity 2:

Modelling: A Mime Sequence

Purpose

1. To demonstrate that writing rituals are highly individualised

2. To show that rituals are an integral part of the writing process

3. To raise trainees' awareness of the fact that personal writing rituals should be encouraged and respected

Procedure

1. Write the following memo on the blackboard (adapt to suit your particular context).

To: R. Iskandarani
From: Dr. K. Shaaban
Subject: Report on ESL Workshop-September, 1997
Please submit a 2000-3000 word report on the workshop by October 5, 1997.

---

2. Read the memo aloud, hum and haw, and then proceed to present a mime sequence which illustrates your own indispensable writing ritual, e.g. start by building your nest: gathering pens and paper, pinning up your hair, turning on the radio, filing your nails while in deep thought, organising the table, scribbling notes and tearing them up in exasperation.

3. Needless to say, the mime sequence might elicit a lot of quizzical smiles and laughter. When the laughter dies down, invite trainees to Think-Pair-Share* about the following two questions:

A-What was I trying to show you in this mime sequence?

Why?

B-Do you ever go through a process like this? Describe your personal process.

* Think-Pair-Share proceeds as follows:

1. Think about the answers to these questions on your own.

2. Pair off and share/discuss the answers with a partner.

Comments

1. What better way to begin the demystification process than to open the session by demonstrating to trainees exactly how we ready ourselves for the writing process by going through our own idiosyncratic writing rituals.

2. For many trainees the discovery that rituals are an integral part of the writing process was a real eye-opener.

At this point we summarised with the following quotation:

"Rituals help too, but they are preliminaries to the truly necessary things." (Morrison, 1992, pp 27-28).

Main part of Session Activity 1:

A Multi-Faceted Flower

Purpose

1. To demonstrate how brainstorming on a specific facet of a topic can generate a multitude of ideas for writing up.

Procedure

1. Ask trainees to describe a flower.

2. Wait until trainees start grumbling about the fact that they have nothing to say before you place a large cube on the table.

3. Distribute a flower to each table.

4. Explain that trainees should imagine that the flower is inside the cube and then begin to reconsider it from the following six perspectives: description, comparison, association, analysis, application, argument.

5. Request that trainees work in teams and brainstorm the topic of flowers from these newly-discovered sides/angles.

6. Invite the secretary in each team to jot down all the team's ideas.

7. Call upon trainees to focus on the side/facet that elicited the most ideas.

8. Ask them to develop these ideas into a team paragraph.

Comment

The use of the cube to enable a topic to be explored from six different angles is called "cubing" (Spack 1984, pp 42). Trainees quickly latched on to the fact that they had moved from a state of unease to a state where they had enough ideas to confidently begin drafting a paragraph.

Activity 2:

Rituals via Looping

Purpose

1. To help trainees develop ideas with their partner

Procedure

1. Ask trainees to write individually about their personal writing rituals.

2. Pair trainees off and have them exchange papers.

3. Trainees read their partner's paper and choose an idea that appeals to them.

4. Trainees write this idea in a new sentence. This sentence is the starting point for a new free writing activity.

The trainee pursues the idea by developing and expanding it.

Comment

The technique described above is called "looping"(Spack 1984)

Like cubing, looping is a pre-writing strategy which provides a stimulus for getting started.

Activity 3:

*Group Product: Pictorial Representation

Purpose

1. To discuss the strategies used thus far, i.e., brainstorming, listing, prioritising, modelling, cubing, and looping.

Procedure

1. Tell trainees that you conceptualise the strategies mentioned above as a tool to draw out/extract ideas.

2. Ask trainees to come up with their own analogy for these strategies.

3. Invite trainees to represent this analogy pictorially .

4. Ask them to do steps 2 and 3 in groups and to come up with a group product.*

5. Once trainees have a rough sketch, hand out transparencies to be used for a mini in-class presentation of their product. Stipulate that each team member has to participate actively in the presentation of the group product. Individual tasks may vary from simply placing and focusing the transparency to explaining the drawings.

* A group product is a long-term synthesis of complex ideas. It might include a written report, a group presentation such as a skit or several related oral reports, or a visual such as a bulletin board, a mural, a poster, or overhead transparency (Winn-Bell Olsen, 1992, pp. 223).

Comment

The group product activity was the highlight of our session. Indeed, trainees clearly demonstrated that they were able to move beyond the recognition stage into actual production.

We believe that the samples of their work bear testimony to this (see attached).

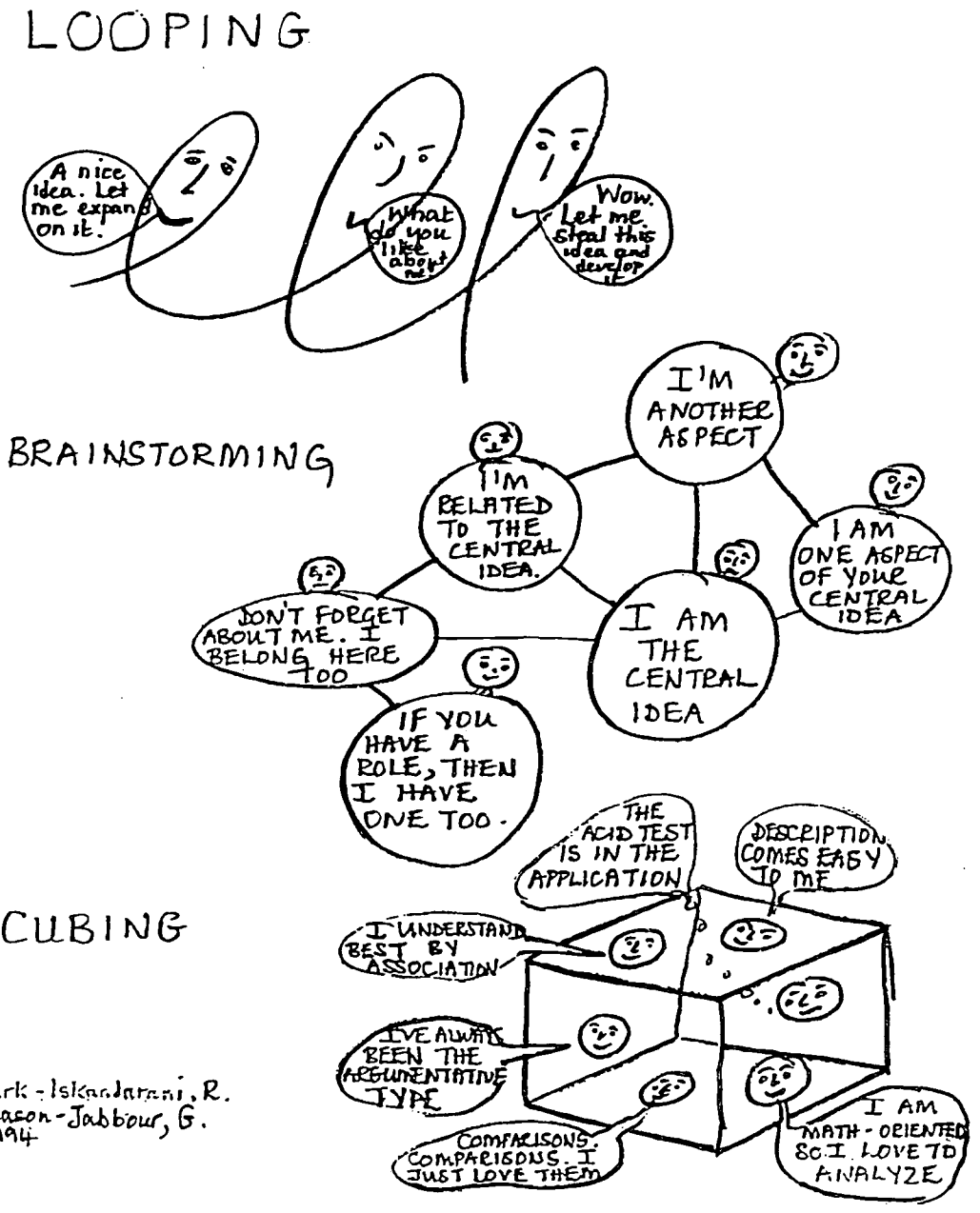
Conclusion

Our main aim in this session was to encourage trainees to discuss the problems their students have in writing and to encourage them to experience some possible solutions. We introduced the strategies of brainstroming, prioritising, modelling, cubing and looping to demonstrate how writing blocks can be shifted.

Following the workshop session a questionnaire was administered to all participants. The main objective was to determine whether the strategies demonstrated had in

continued

Examples of group pictorial representation



fact facilitated the learning process. The response was highly positive. Indeed, trainees remarked that these new strategies not only created a stimulating learning environment but also succeeded in removing writers' blocks.

We feel that the session plan presented is flexible enough to be effectively adapted to suit a variety of ESL contexts.

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Rima Turk-Iskandarani and Glyn Mason-Jabbour.

AUTHOR'S CORNER

On a recent visit to Portland State University (PSU) in Oregon, USA I had the chance to talk to Jeanette DeCarrico who with James Nattinger wrote "Lexical phrases and language teaching" (OUP 1992) which received a Duke of Edinburgh award. James Nattinger was a professor and department chair in the Department of Applied Linguistics at PSU when he died in October 1995. It was talk of James Nattinger that opened our conversation.

JD We all miss him very much. You know, sometimes members of faculty will nominate a colleague for the Burlington Northern Award for teaching excellence but in 1986 it was a spontaneous uprising amongst the students. They said, "Let's do it!" They really loved him.

TW How did the book start? For you had worked together for years, hadn't you?

JD Yes. Jim was the first one, I believe, to publish on prefabricated language in second language teaching. This was in 1980. He wanted to carry the research further with some empirical work. He asked me to work with him on lexical phrases. It really arose because some excellent TESOL students we knew were having terrible problems when they transferred to their university departments. They were flunking after just a few weeks. We taped the lectures they had to attend and found that they just couldn't understand them. We did a paper on this for the ESP Journal (see ref). The problem was mostly with idiomatic lexical phrases. Next we started looking at the structure of conversation and other types of discourse.

TW How did you work on that?

JD We looked at transcripts of various types and at reconstructed conversations. Also at teacher/student conferences, with permission of course!

TW So you moved from lectures to conversations.

JD Ones with a transactional as well as an interactional focus, yes. We had to revise the categories of lexical phrases once we had enough examples in the corpus. We then got interested in seeing how lexical phrases would differ in different kinds of transactions e.g. faculty/senate meetings, committee meetings.

TW Nowadays all this would be done with concordances and computer corpora. Was any of that available then?

JD No. No corpora of this kind were available at that time. We did it all ourselves. So then we said, "We should do a book on this!".

TW How did the writing go...with two of you?

JD We would divide up different sections of chapters according to our interests. For example I mostly did the pragmatics section. Then we'd read and critique each other's work. We would meet and talk through each chapter at a time. It was a highly collaborative study.

TW Did you write the book and then send it to a publisher?

JD No. Our agent sent several chapters to OUP. They didn't take it right away. They wanted to see the whole thing. Then we were absolutely delighted to be told that Professor Henry Widdowson was to be our advisor. All his suggestions, for example to have two parts, to expand part one and so on, were marvellous. He was a wonderful advisor.

TW Were you pleased at the reception of the book once it was out?

JD Yes, most of the reviews were fair. We were very surprised to get the Duke of Edinburgh Award. We had no idea the book had been submitted. I was visiting Professor at the University of Hawaii at the time. I had to fly from Hawaii to London to receive the award. That meant I had to find a dark suit to wear. And in Honolulu black suits are not easy to find I can tell you!

TW I can imagine that turning up in a shirt covered in large print pineapples might not be quite the thing!

Are you working on anything else now?

JD Yes. I've done 9 out of 11 chapters on a new book.

TW This time you are working alone?

JD Jim and I were going to do the book together. We had some early conversations on the approach we would take. So he really is the inspiration. He was very disappointed not to be able to do it.

TW What is the new book about?

JD It's a book for undergraduates majoring in English Literature who wish to study grammar from a functional point of view. It looks at how grammar functions in discourse, at phrase rather than at sentence level.

TW What does writing a book mean to you really?

JD It's an exploration. It keeps me professionally alive and current. This particular book helps me to combine my three great interests; literature (since I use passages from literature as examples in the book), linguistics and language teaching. I'm looking at definite and indefinite at the moment. There is much more to this than you find in the grammar books. It also involves pronouns and other structures. For example, I take this one play where the audience enters in the middle of a conversation! There are pronouns and other definite expressions used for events and people that the audience knows nothing about. Little by little, by understanding the use of pronouns, definite and indefinite articles and so on, the understanding unfolds. Definite and indefinite in literature is all about how much the reader and the protagonist are supposed to know.

TW What are you hoping, for the readers of this second book?

JD I'd like the students to understand how grammar works and why it's a big advantage to us to know as much about it as we can, especially about how it works in discourse. I want them to understand it not because they are "supposed to" but so it can make them more effective in communication, in writing. You know the character of Benjy in William Faulkner's "The Sound and the Fury"? He has a four year old's mind in an adult body. You read his words in the book....no relative clauses, very few modifiers of any kind, short stretches of simple English....and suddenly you realise how important all those clauses are for full adult self-expression! I love this stuff!

continued →

TW When will we be able to read this one?

JD Well, it will be with an American publisher, I think.

TW You mentioned that one of your interests was language teaching. Do you still do some?

JD No. As Professor of Linguistics and Applied Linguistics with the department here I teach undergraduate and graduate courses in theoretical and applied linguistics. I used to teach ESL back in the seventies before I had my Ph.D. in Linguistics. I don't have enough time now. You can't do everything!

TW That's true enough! Thanks for your time!

Reference

DeCarrico, Jeanette S, and James R. Nattinger. 1988

"Lexical phrases for the comprehension of academic lectures." in English for Specific Purposes 7:91-102.

Journal Exchanges

"The Teacher Trainer" has arranged journal exchanges with

IATEFL Newsletter (UK)
English Language Teaching Journal (UK)
Modern English Teacher (UK)
English Teachers' Journal (Israel)
RELC Journal (Singapore)
Teacher Education Quarterly (USA)
Forum (USA)
Focus on English (India)
TESOL Matters (USA)
University of Hawaii Working Papers in ESL

and is abstracted by 'Language Teaching',
The British Education Index, the ERIC clearing house
and Contents Pages in Education.

Have you read ...?

Teaching Children English - A training course for teachers of English to children by David Vale and Anne Feunteun, (1995), CUP

Teaching Children English aims to introduce teachers to an activity-based approach to teaching EFL. It is aimed at pre- and in-service teachers of EFL to young learners of seven years and over, and is addressed to both native and non-native speakers of English.

The book adopts an experiential approach with teachers being asked to try out many activities they might later use in their teaching. Thus, teachers are invited to 'learn in the manner in which they may wish to teach', an approach the authors call 'spiral input'. Some of the tasks focus on classroom activities, such as the fun task of constructing a spider mobile, and on the language requirements and adaptability of the task to different age groups. Others, such as designing cross-curricular topic webs, focus on classroom practice and on lesson planning. The readers are regularly invited to reflect on the tasks and the manner of learning, both individually and through group discussion.

The authors recognise that an activity-based approach may be new to teachers and anticipate that there may be some resistance from those who are already familiar and more comfortable with other approaches. This is addressed in the first unit, Establishing common ground: attitudes and approaches to teaching children, and later in unit five, A balanced teaching diet, by encouraging readers to compare activity-based work with a language-based approach through discussion activities and through jigsaw and shared reading tasks (based on texts which appear to have been written for this purpose). The authors acknowledge that the ideas and approach in the book may seem 'dogmatic' but say they want teachers to consider the relevance of a different approach to their teaching situation.

The book is divided into two sections: the Training Course, which is addressed to the teachers and the Trainer's Notes. There is also a forty-page Resource File at the back of the book, containing examples of materials (songs, games), instructions for activities, questionnaires and examples of topic webs. Unfortunately, very little of this (4 pages in all) is made available for photocopying.

The book is organised into ten units: each unit is dealt with in the teacher's section and in the trainer's notes, and is based on an area of methodology and classroom practice, for example "Starting points: starting lessons in a language course", "Content and Curriculum", "Observation, assessment and records".

Although the title presents this as a training course, the authors introduce it as a training resource book. Given that most teacher education courses are designed for specific groups and have built-in course requirements, those involved in such courses are likely to find this book more useful as a resource book, selecting those areas and activities which are appropriate to the course and course participants. Some activities also seem to assume a certain level of knowledge or experience of the language teaching classroom.

I think that, in particular, the growing numbers of experienced teachers who are moving into teaching EFL to young learners either from other areas of primary school teaching or from other areas of EFL and who feel they lack expertise in teaching EFL to young learners will find it worthwhile having a closer look at this book. They will find a stimulus for discussion and for developing their own theory of practice, as well as some practical ideas to add to their repertoire.

Deborah Robson

What is NLP? Answer One

Mario Rinvolucri

NLP is short for Neuro-Linguistic-Programming, or Never Lower Prices (its training courses are very expensive within the therapy course market).

● A definition of neuro-linguistic-programming?

It's a theory and practice of communications.

● Where does one find people using NLP?

All over the place. A year ago I was NLPed by a door-to-door salesman pushing water purifiers - I offered him coffee and asked him about his training course. He'd done a week-end on rapport skills and said it had really changed his feeling about his job and his success rate. Both had improved.

For several years now FIAT in Torino have had Robert Dilts come and do NLP courses for their senior managers. Several police forces in UK are putting their inspectors through NLP courses.

I have a friend who is currently in therapy with an NLP specialist. Last November IH got together about 150 EFL people for a NLP first taste week-end. Pilgrims in Canterbury offer two and three week courses in the summer for people who want to use NLP for language teaching.

● How long has it been around?

Since 1972 when John Grinder and Richard Bandler first met.

● What does it derive from?

From these sources:

computer and maths thinking
therapies in general
Gestalt therapy in particular
Geoffrey Bateson
Chomskyian Linguistics
Close observation by Bandler and Grinder of the therapy work of Milton Erickson (hypnotherapy) and Virginia Satir (family therapy).

○ Why Neuro?

Because a royal road to understanding what a person is doing inside is to watch the outward signs they give through their colouring, their facial muscle tension, their breathing and the ways their eyes move. From a person's eight major eye movements you can tell fairly accurately whether they are thinking in pictures, in sound or via feelings and sensations. People are constantly speaking to you with their visual and auditory neurology, if you take time to notice.

● Why Linguistic?

Because Grinder brought with him a fierce language awareness from his previous work in transformational grammar (TG) and because Milton Erickson (see above) achieved much of his brilliant success with "sleight of mouth". An example would be an exchange like this:

Patient: I have a real problem with my husband.

Erickson: This problem you had with your husband, tell me more...

By perversely shoving the problem into the past, Erickson is unblocking the way towards a solution.

A very important area of early NLP was "meta-model". This is the analysis of the ways in which people talk in diffuse, inaccurate and self-limiting ways. The ways that trainees and trainers bandy round models in post lesson interviews is bang in the "meta-model" area.

e.g: You should've...

I just can't...

I just never...

A "meta-model" challenge to "I never seem to get that right" might be:

"Was there maybe one time you got it right?"

● Why Programming?

NLP introspection, observation and research has identified quite a number of unconscious patterns that mould the way we think and feel and some of these are very relevant to teaching. If a student is much happier with general ideas than details, it is frustrating for him if you don't offer him the big picture first. If, on the other hand the student is by internal programming a detailist, then the big picture will seem empty and boring without plenty of detail.

There are people programmed to go for the general (e.g. H. Widdowson) and others who love detail.

This is one of many thought/feeling patterns or programmes unearthed by NLP folk, with plenty of help from the Jungian tradition.

● Do I need to learn NLP to be a good trainer?

No, of course not - NLP is one of many ways towards understanding people less stupidly.

continued →

● Why, Mario, are you interested in NLP?

Because though I dislike much about the NLP community I find the ideas it has produced a brilliant synthesis of earlier therapy thinking plus much more that is original. I have found NLP to be a mine of new exercises for both teacher training and language teaching.

What is NLP? Answer Two

by Marjorie Rosenberg

NLP (Neuro-Linguistic Programming) began in the early 1970's in Santa Cruz, California. Richard Bandler, a psychology student, and John Grinder, an Assistant Professor of Linguistics, began to study the successful therapists and communicators Fritz Perls, Virginia Satir, and Milton Erikson to determine what made their strategies work so that it would be possible to teach these strategies to others. Through the use of video and audio tapes Bandler and Grinder were able to isolate and refine the particular linguistic patterns used by these therapists. Grinder and Bandler were convinced that modelling successful people and defining exactly what they do can lead to effective communication. The name Neuro-Linguistic Programming refers to the relationship of the body and mind: "Neuro" representing the brain where all human behavior is created, "Linguistic" referring to the language we use to express our thoughts and feelings, and "Programming" referring to the organized patterns we use to produce results and achieve our goals. NLP was at first used only as a therapeutic tool in the early stages of its development. It gradually began, however, to gain a foothold in the educational world. Today, many teachers and trainers are using the techniques in their classrooms to improve communication and get the results they are looking for.

Why is NLP important for teachers?

It is vital for us as teachers to realize that each of us processes information differently. We all have a primary representational system in which we process and store information. In stress situations this primary system becomes even more predominant. We express this through our eye movements: looking up indicates a visual accessing of information, looking to the side and down to the left indicates an auditory accessing, and looking down to the right indicates kinesthetic; and in our choice of words:

"Is it clear?" (visual), "Does that sound right?" (auditory), and "Do you get it?" (kinesthetic). While we as teachers can influence the input and the output of our material we cannot influence the storage of it by our pupils. In order to reach all of our pupils it is essential for us as teachers to be aware of these different thought processes and consciously try to communicate with each one of them.

How specifically can we use NLP in the classroom?

In planning activities it is important to give some thought to the different representational systems. For the visual learners we can work with pictures, write out words they have only heard, and give them tape transcripts. For the auditory learners, we can sing, speak rhythmically, encourage discussions, tell them to read aloud at home, and listen to cassettes. For the kinesthetic learners we need to find activities which entail some movement or emotions. By using cards or real objects they can manipulate, we can help to increase their understanding of abstract ideas. We may see, hear or feel the same things that they do, but the question is if we see, hear or feel it as they do. When we find activities which incorporate all three representational systems, we can reach all of our pupils and establish rapport with them, thereby creating an atmosphere of trust, cooperation, and learning.

How is NLP used in training teachers?

My colleague, Brigitte Jug, and I have been training teachers of all subjects from all the different school types in Austria for the past several years. Most of the teachers attend seminars offered by the Ministry of Education through the "PÑdagogisches Institut" which is designed to offer in-service training for teachers in public schools. In addition, I have done training in basic NLP techniques for teachers in adult education in various institutions. We have found that NLP has met with an extremely favorable response and many teachers report back to us on the differences in their approach to classroom problems as well as the new ideas they have discovered in presenting and practicing material. In our seminars we have found that the basic techniques such as communication, rapport, learning styles, perception, goal-setting and information gathering as well as more complicated techniques such as conflict resolution and creativity strategies have been very well received. We feel that NLP training for teachers is essential and hope to be able to continue with the work we have been doing. When we receive positive feedback we then know that we have been communicating our ideas and knowledge effectively.

References Dilts, Robert & Epstein, Todd 1995 Dynamic Learning Meta Publications Grinder, Michael 1991 Righting the Educational Conveyor Belt Metamorphous Press O'Connor, Joseph & Seymour, John 1990 Introducing Neuro-Linguistic Programming Mandala/Harper Collins

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J.A.

Readings for Trainees

This 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 that your course participants/trainees need a change from your voice or would be interested in the content of this column, then please feel free to photocopy it for them. We will be providing you with more photocopiable handouts for trainees in later issues.

Lesson planning and teaching by threads

Seth Lindstromberg

Looking at lesson structure at the most general level, we can say either that the activities in a lesson are connected with each other or that they are not. Restated as a guideline, the first possibility runs something like this: 'It is generally a good thing for lessons to consist of linked activities.'

From training courses and from reading how-to-teach books we learn the accepted categories of link. For example:

- Two 'adjacent' activities may be on the same or on related topics.
- One or more elements or aspects of language may be introduced in one activity and practiced, used or tested in the next.
- The first activity can set the stage in some other way for the next as when two halves of a class read different stories so that students can go on to tell each other their stories in pairs.
- A later activity can be a 'personalization' of what came before as when students who have just read a story about a favorite place, tell each other about their own favorite places. And so on.

We learn that occasional exceptions are allowed. Thus, a warm-up need not have a clear connection to work that follows. The ideal, almost always, is to fill up a whole period with a unified block of activities following one of the standard structures for 'block lessons', for example:

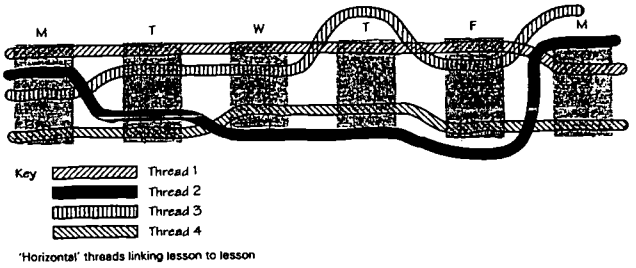
- pre-reading/pre-listening tasks then reading/listening tasks then consolidation and follow-on tasks
- presentation of language item(s) then practice then use
- study of model text then imitation of it
- testing then (re)teaching then re-testing

Conversely, anyone on a training course who dares to do *two* activities in a row that have no clear connection either with each other or with what precedes or follows is likely to garner a rap on the knuckles

Interestingly, this traditional emphasis on connection *within* lessons does not support, in any obvious way, an emphasis on connection *between* lessons or between different sets of lessons. Look in any course book. What rationale can you find for having a unit on understanding and giving directions after (or before) one on daily routines? Why a suite of activities about Marilyn Monroe before (or after) one about a motorcycle rider? Why the Past Continuous before *used to*? And so forth. Everywhere one sees the results of wholly arbitrary decisions. New (and even not so new) teachers often remark on the difficulty of lesson planning. I think that the difficulty of developing rationales for linking series of 'block lessons' is a major reason for this difficulty.

Let's go back to the beginning and think about a lesson in which some, most or even none of the activities are linked to any other activity that occurs *in that lesson.* Imagine, for example, a lesson such as this one where there is no planned link between any two activities:

(90 hour, lower-intermediate):
Today's proverb (5 min); Today's animal (5 min); What's the weather like today? (5 min); Variety dialogues (5 min); Reading/Listening (30 min); A talk, a student brings in an object (5 min); Writing sentences (10 min); Review, mapping the day (25 min).



'Horizontal' threads linking lesson to lesson

Imagine, however, that each activity is the continuation of a 'thread' of work already done on a previous day. To give just five examples:

- 'Today's proverb' involves students saying all or some of the proverbs they remember from previous days (no more than one is introduced per day) as well as (if they have remembered well) learning a new proverb and practicing how to say it well.
- 'Today's animal' involves review of a previous day's animal as well as learning vocabulary relating to a new animal (eg, for a slug, the nouns feelers, slime, trail; the adjective slimy; the verbs retract, roll up and the metaphors feel sluggish, a slimy personality.)
- 'Variety dialogues' reviews a few previously learned short, highly likely dialogues (eg, How're you today?/Fine thanks. And you?; Sorry I'm late./That's OK; Sorry I'm late./Hmmmm.). The teacher elicits or teaches an extension/variation of one of these (eg, Sorry I'm late. I had a problem with.../Oh. I hate it when that happens.)
- 'Writing' is a continuation of a thread of work whereby each day or so students work with a new linking word and/or review ones met earlier. Today students learn to use though, the grammar of which is as follows:

continued →

"Negative comment. Positive comment though." or "Positive comment. Negative comment though." They make lists of their positive and negative features and then write two or three sentences like "I smoke. I don't drink though."

- 'Review, mapping the lesson'. Students each make a route map of this lesson and the preceding one. Each activity they recall is a place for which they must think of a name. Students write down what they remember meeting there. They then compare maps in pairs or threes.

This 'non-block' approach to structuring a lesson places a high premium on thread-like connections between (not within) lessons. That is, each lesson consists partly or wholly of activities which carry on an on-going strand of work. 'An animal a day', for example, can go on for dozens of lessons not only by covering new animals (*cat, fish, chicken, snail, slug, spider, crab, bee, scorpion, horse, snake, duck, kangaroo...*) and reviewing old ones but also by including new kinds of language (different parts of speech, colloquial and formal language such as pull in vs retract, prefixes and suffixes such as *retractable*, different phrase structures such as eyes *that* shine in the dark, metaphorical expressions such as *withdraw into her shell*, and proverbs such as *There's more than one fish in the sea*).

Additionally, this kind of lesson is much easier to plan since, once threads have been introduced, they suggest their own continuations.

If you want to find out more, look at *Planning from Lesson to Lesson* (T Woodward and S Lindstromberg Longman 1995)

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School for International Living, Brattleboro, USA.

Teacher trainers in Korea, Malaysia, Netherlands, Portugal.

Directors of studies in UK, English inspectors in Tunisia, University lecturers in Spain.

Adult Migrant Education Service, Australia.

Interview

with a language student taught by teachers in training

Angela Johnson is from Brasil. She has been living in the UK for 3 years now and attending English language classes for about 5 months. The classes she attends are taught by pre-service, native-speaking trainees doing a short, intensive teacher training course. Angela is taught by as many as 5 trainees in a single morning. These inexperienced teachers teach one after the other, watch each other and are in turn watched by a teacher trainer so the rooms are pretty full of language students, teacher trainees and teacher trainer- observers. I interviewed Angela to see what she had noticed about the classes and the training process the trainees were going through.

TW. What do you see, from your point of view, that the teachers in training are trying to learn?

AJ. Well, they do learn a lot. What amazes me most is the techniques. The techniques are fantastic. That way it doesn't get so boring. (Sorry! But classes can be! You can't help it.) The trainees get your attention in an amusing way. That way the learning is easier. Sometimes it's fun.

TW. Could you give me an example of one of these techniques that you notice?

AJ. I like the little pieces of paper we have to match. That's a good way of learning. And of course the competitions, the teams, memory games. That makes you realise how much you've remembered and learnt,

TW. So you can see the trainees are learning individual classroom exercises. Do you see them working on anything else?

AJ. How to deal with each nationality?

TW. Yes?

(pause)

TW. Do you see any changes in the trainees from the beginning to the end of the course?

AJ. Well, with the first group I did. It was a very strong group of trainees. They used a lot of techniques. They told stories and reviewed the vocabulary. Always in a funny way. It really helps us! The recent group weren't so strong.

TW. Do you see them working on their own nervousness for example or voice or presence?

AJ. You do notice nervousness but this group seem quite calm and really friendly.

TW. What else do you notice?

AJ. Well, mostly the level. We had more low level language students this time so then it's difficult. Sometimes I hold myself back because it looks like I'm showing off but...

TW. Oh no! We know you are not showing off. We know you are the most able speaker.

AJ. You see if I speak all the time I don't give the others a chance.

TW. Yes, it's a tricky situation for you. How do you feel about having observers in?

AJ. Oh it doesn't make any difference. We pay attention to the lesson. We don't remember you are there.

TW. Can I ask if you notice the way the lessons are structured?

AJ. Not really.

TW. I mean for example there might be a warm up at the start...

AJ. Oh I love the warm ups!

TW. Then maybe you will move into a listening by the teacher introducing the topic and vocabulary. Then the listening. Then out of the listening and into a discussion on the same topic...

AJ. Oh yes. That's new. Now they make sure you know all the words before you start to listen. Before we just went straight into the text and the time was so short you couldn't understand. Now you can understand the text better and we can do the discussion better because we know all the words.

TW. So that kind of structure suits you. What about with a grammar point or a language pattern? Do you notice anything about the way the lessons are structured?

AJ. I don't really see any difference.

TW. It's not something that is really obvious to you?

AJ. No. Really, now that you are asking, it's only the level. If it's too low then sometimes I don't feel like coming. When there are too many levels in the class the teacher has to stop the class too many times to explain.

TW. So the level is the most important thing for you. More than the teachers being young or inexperienced, more than nervousness, more than the activities or the way the class is structured?

AJ. Yes! At the moment it is not challenging enough. Anyway I still keep coming 'cos I still learn. You always learn something! Plus I like to give the support. I really like the team here . The teachers.

TW. Anything else?

AJ. Just one class plan I liked. When one teacher started something and the next one kept on with the same topic or structure. Not 3 separate lessons but when they carried on from each other. I think the trainees worked together. That was interesting that way.

AJ. Is there anything you would say to individual teachers if you could, to help them to be better teachers?

AJ. Keep it up! They don't patronise us. They leave you very comfortable if you make mistakes. They correct you very carefully without making you feel embarrassed. They are not too serious. So.. no... they are alright!

LANGUAGE MATTERS

On naming things in space

An article about the naming of the hundreds of astronomical objects that are discovered every year, written by Govert Schilling a science writer in Utrecht, Holland appeared in The New Scientist. Here is an edited version printed with their kind permission.

So, how do newly discovered objects in space get named?

Joseph and Mary were lucky: an angel appeared to Joseph in a dream and told him which name to give their son. But astronomers rarely, if ever, experience such divine assistance in naming comets, asteroids, planetary satellites or craters. And the problem gets worse every year as more objects are discovered, and space probes find ever more details on the surfaces of planets, moons and asteroids.

In 1991, for instance, the Galileo spacecraft revealed numerous craters on the asteroid Gaspra. The astronomers named it Gaspra after a health resort in Crimea. The craters on the asteroid will all bear names of other spas around the world, including Bath (England), Aix (France) and Spa (Belgium).

These are just some of the hundreds of new names approved by the 23rd General Assembly of the International Astronomical Union (IAU) at The Hague in August. "It's a time-consuming business," laments Brian Marsden, director of the IAU's Minor Planet Center and chairman of the task group responsible for dreaming up names for newly discovered astronomical objects of all sorts. Naming things is fun and Marsden could talk about it for hours.

Thousands of new names on Venus were necessary after the American Magellan spacecraft mapped the planet in extreme detail between 1990 and 1993. Because Venus was the Roman goddess of love, the IAU decided that all the new surface features should be named after women. The scientists involved came up with a large number of suggestions for names, but not enough. So many were needed that the IAU put announcements in astronomy magazines asking for more ideas from readers. Among the hundreds of new names that the union approved in August are those of Austen (for the English novellist Jane Austen), Fossey (for Dian Fossey of Gorillas in the Mist fame), Akiko(for Yosano the Japanese poet), Aksentyeva (Zinaida a Soviet geophysicist and astronomer), Kakilani (first female ruler of Hawaii) and Martinez (Maria, a pueblo artist).

The solar system has become a veritable Who's Who_not only of astronomy, but also of the other sciences and the arts. Craters on the Moon are named after scientists, while on the planet Mercury you'll find writers, painters and composers, from Dickens, Durer and Dvorak to Rilke, Rubens and Rameau.

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ARELS

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"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 3½" 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. Finally, please give an accurate word count. 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.

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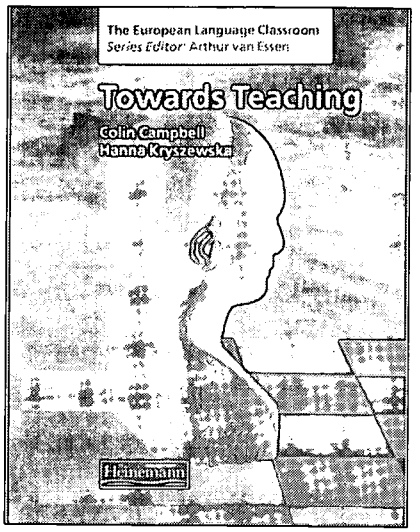

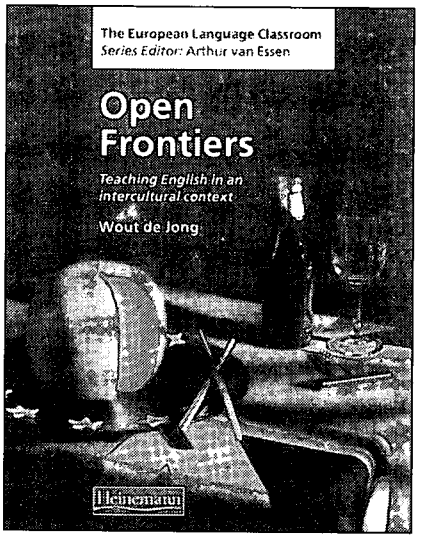

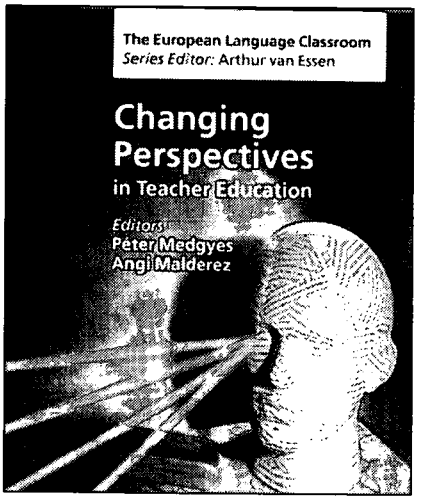

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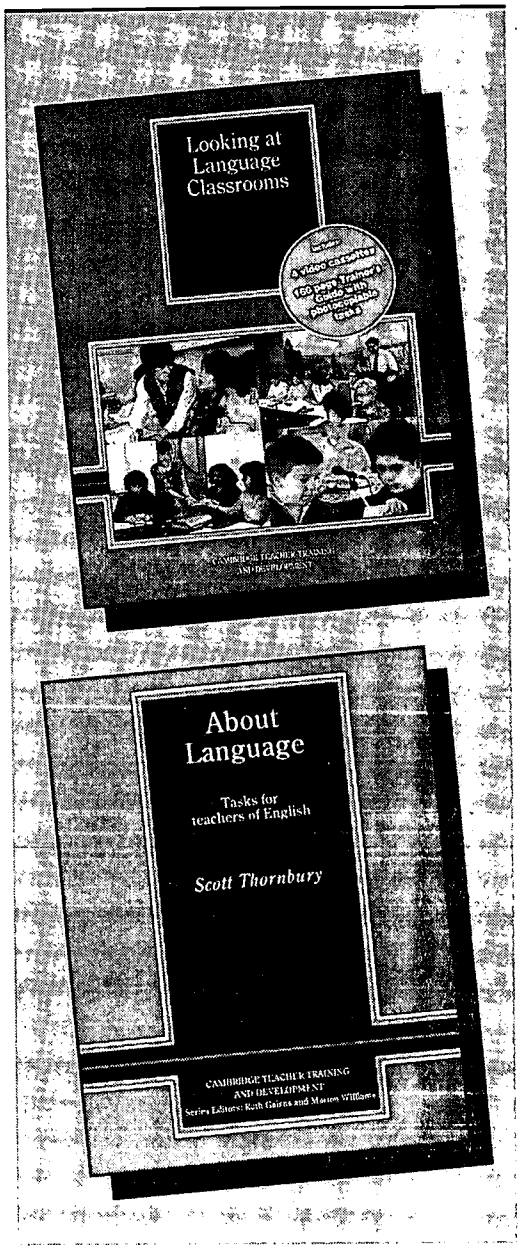

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ABOUT "THE TEACHER TRAINER"

"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

Welcome to the 1997 Summer issue of The Teacher Trainer!

I'd like especially to welcome North and South Americans in this issue as it seems our journal is beginning to be known on both continents.

Our lead article this time is thus from Lynn Henrichson who captures and categorises the many different kinds of ESL/EFL teacher programmes existing in an 8 dimension taxonomy designed to remind individual trainers that our own situation is not the only one in the world! (P3)

I had a very interesting conversation with Donald Freeman when I met him at a London conference recently. In the recorded interview (P9) he states what he feels are the most important issues for novice and experienced trainers to grapple with. Our last North American is Maureen Andrade who has some suggestions for trainers going out to do overseas workshops for the first time (P24).

Regina Guimaraes from Brazil, our fourth contributer from the Americas, has been involved in "updating circles", democratic, conversation groups for in-service teachers working on their own professional development (P14).

We have the start in this issue of two, three- part articles. First in the People who train people column, Rachel Bodle, a UK business consultant, tells us how she would go about tackling the sorts of problems a modern languages teacher trainer might face. She brings her consutancy skills in this issue to the problem of a new Director of studies in an old staffroom! (P17) Rachel will be back in later issues to give us her perspective on other prickly areas.

Bonnie Tsai and Maria Dessaux-Barberio will also be with us three times, in the Trainee voices column. This time they invite two UCLES/RSA DTEFLA trainees to comment on their course once the courses are over and the grading finished (P11).

Another regular series, Current research, is back with work from Japan by Akira Tajino on what "Learner difficulty" means, why we should care about it and how we can diagnose it. (P12)

Have you ever come back from a course or conference feeling brighter and more enthousiastic only to get a rather cool reception from your peers? Izabella Hearn discusses reasons for this reaction and ways to involve all staff prior to the conference and the "escapee" more on return! (P18)

Other regular columns are "Comment", Anthony Bruton adds his twopennyworth to the ARC, CPFU, ESA, ETC debate (P20), and Book review which has Gabriela Grigoroiu and Carmen Nedelcu discussing three books from the Heinemann TT/TD series. In Publications received (P26) I try as usual to give you a trainer's thumbnail sketch of the latest arrivals. You might have noticed too that the English Book Centre in Oxford has a flyer in each issue this year giving special offers on some of the books mentioned in the journal. How's that for co-ordination!

There are two things I'd especially like to have your views on this time. One is whether you think it would be a good idea to publish a number of articles from the last ten or so years of The Teacher Trainer in a paperback book. And the other is which articles in recent issues you have found particularly interesting or useful. Please drop me a postcard, letter, email, fax or phone depending on your preferred channel of communication.

Looking forward to hearing from you.

I hope you enjoy this issue!

Tessa Woodward

Editor

One Size Does Not Fit All: A Taxonomic Perspective on ESL/EFL Teacher-Preparation Programs

by Lynn E. Henrichsen, Brigham Young University, USA.

Reading the news this morning, I happened across a headline that proclaimed, "One-size-fits-all economic solutions don't always work." The article discussed challenging social and economic conditions in places like Belgium, Japan, and the United States and the different programs that have been designed to address them. The main idea was that a program that works successfully in one setting does not necessarily produce the same results in others.

The same principle might profitably be applied to ESL/EFL teacher-preparation programs. In the world of English language teaching, teacher-preparation courses exist for many different purposes, serve disparate audiences, and operate in diverse settings. Unfortunately, however, when teacher educators consider principles and procedures, we sometimes fail to take this variety into account .

In the most general sense, of course, all of us who work preparing teachers of English as a second or foreign language have a number of professional concerns in common, such as improving our own understanding of the processes involved in helping people learn to teach ESL/EFL. Despite such commonalities, however, there is great variety in what we do and the situations in which we operate, as well as in the teachers we prepare and the teaching situations they will find themselves in.

Stepping back and considering the various purposes our ESL/EFL teacher-preparation programs serve and the diverse settings in which teacher educators operate provides a perspective that can be extremely useful for several reasons.

First, the realization that many different variables shape ESL/EFL teacher-education programs throughout the world naturally leads to an acceptance of the great diversity among them. In fact, in light of the many different factors that shape these programs, it would be foolish to expect them all to be alike. For example, a university-based, M.A.-level, full-time, pre-service program in Canada for native-English-speaker teachers planning to teach ESL to adults will (and should) be dramatically different from an add-on EFL teacher certification course that meets weekly and is offered in a Southeast Asian country by its ministry of education for practicing primary school teachers who are minimally proficient in English. The differences among teacher preparation programs exist because of the particular concerns and challenges associated with their setting, objectives, and audience. Recognizing this will help us design our teacher education curricula more appropriately. Understanding that each program type faces particular challenges and needs to address them in its own distinct ways, we may also become more cautious in our prescriptions regarding what teacher preparation programs "ought to look like."

An awareness of the variables that shape ESL/EFL teacher preparation programs can, in turn, increase our understanding of why something that works well in one program may not in another. The further realization of how and where the characteristics of our various teacher preparation programs differ and where they overlap may lead to a more careful sharing and adoption of ideas.

In addition, employing a taxonomy of these variables to map out where a particular teacher-preparation program fits on each dimension can (1) make it easier to understand the ways it is similar to, or different from, other programs and (2) help us realize its unique nature and potential.

Needless to say, an understanding of the variables that shape teacher education programs can also guide our research dealing with the processes of preparing English language teachers. Similarly, such an understanding will help us to interpret research findings in this area more appropriately.

In sum, understanding the different types of ESL/EFL teacher-preparation programs that exist and the dimensions along which they vary is more than just an enlightening, academic exercise. The resulting taxonomic perspective can inform and guide our work in designing and improving teacher education programs.

The Taxonomy

In an attempt to capture and categorize the many different kinds of ESL/EFL teacher-preparation programs that exist, the taxonomy that constitutes the remainder of this article has been drafted. It is organized across the eight different dimensions shown in Table 1: institutional base, objectives, timing, educational purpose, intensity, length, target teaching level, and linguistic/cultural setting. As the possible types within each dimension are discussed below, mention will also be made of some of their distinguishing features and challenges.

continued →

INSTITUTIONAL BASE

University or College	Government Agency (School District, Ministry of Education, etc.)	Language School (Commercial or Non-profit)	Business (In-house Staff Development)	Church, Community, or Social Service Agency	Distance Learning Arrangement

OBJECTIVES

University Degree (B.A., M.A./M.Ed., Ph.D./Ed.D./D.A., etc).	Teacher Certification (Initial or Add-on)-	Certificate (RSA/Cambridge CELTA, COTE, etc.)	Teacher Requalification	Volunteer Training

TIMING

Pre-service	Pre-service	Post-experience

EDUCATIONAL PURPOSE

Training	Development

INTENSITY

Full-time	Part-time	Periodic

LENGTH

Short	Medium	Long

TARGET TEACHING LEVEL

Primary	Secondary	University	Adult Education

LINGUISTIC/CULTURAL SETTING

ESL	EFL

Table 1. Dimensions and Categories in the Taxonomy

Institutional Base

The first dimension along which ESL/EFL teacher preparation programs can be classified is based on the type of institution where they are located.

Many of the more prominent courses of study are based at universities. It is interesting to note that these university-based programs are housed in a variety of departments and schools—linguistics, English, education, and international programs, to name a few of the more common ones. Different home bases tend to produce different emphases in the teacher-preparation curriculum offered.

It is even more important, however, to recognize that many ESL/EFL teacher preparation programs exist outside of universities. Government entities of various sorts—local school districts, state/provincial departments of education, national ministries, and international outreach organizations—are the home bases for the greatest number. For instance, in Australia, state Adult Migrant English Services programs provide much training for ESL teachers. Internationally, the British Council is well known for its worldwide efforts involving ELT and teacher training through its international seminars. Along similar lines, the United States Information Agency sends TESL/TESL "academic specialists" to dozens of countries and supports binational centers throughout Latin America. Teacher educators in these government-sponsored programs, whether they work in their local schools or travel around the globe, create and engage in many pre-service, in-service, and staff development programs.

Sometimes an entity has a dual base and fits both of these categories. An example is Australia's National Centre for English Language Teaching and Research, located at Macquarie University, which plays a major role in the professional development of teachers working in Australia's Adult Migrant English Program.

Teacher educators also work in "private-sector" language schools (commercial or non-profit), training new teachers and upgrading the teaching skills of others. The many schools that offer courses leading to the RSA/Cambridge Certificate in English Language Teaching to Adults provide the most well known example of such training. Originally developed and piloted at International House in London, the approved teacher-training course leading to the CELTA is now offered at hundreds of institutions worldwide. While many of these are colleges and universities, a large proportion are commercially operated language institutes, centers, and academies.

One of the largest of the non-profit English language schools that is also heavily involved in ESL/EFL teacher preparation is the *Sociedade Brasileira de Cultura Inglesa* (Brazilian Society of English Culture). *Cultura Inglesa*, recognized and supported by the British Council, offers English language courses for many thousands of students at its various branches throughout Brazil. In the state of São Paulo alone, there are eleven branches, enrolling 37,000 students and employing 350 teachers. These *Cultura Inglesa* teachers go through a series of in-house pre-service and in-service training courses leading to the UCLES/RSA Certificate for Overseas Teachers of English (COTE) and eventually the UCLES/RSA Diploma for Overseas Teachers of English (DOTE).

Some business operations, such as the growing number of *maquiladora* assembly plants operated by U.S. companies in Mexico, also serve as a base for ELT teacher education activities. These businesses include English teaching as part of their human resource development programs or as an employee benefit. To ensure that their English classes are as effective as possible, they sometimes employ experts to do in-house teacher training.

ESL teaching programs often operate under the auspices of churches, community programs, or social service agencies also. For example, in the United States, a multitude of Jewish, Catholic, Lutheran, and Baptist organizations provide ESL courses for immigrants and refugees. In like manner, private agencies, such as Laubach Literacy International (which in 1992 reported 940 local councils and thirty state offices) also work with ESL learners. Because the teachers (or tutors) who work in these programs are frequently part-time volunteers with little or no previous preparation or experience in teaching, teacher-training is an essential and ongoing part of their operations. Of course, the training they provide is appropriately different from what is usually offered in a university-based program.

The final type of teacher education program in this institutional base category might be considered a separate dimension since its "home" is most often a university or department of education, which have already been mentioned in this category. The distinguishing characteristic for this type is the physical distance that separates the institutional base from the teachers who participate in the program. In these "distance-learning" teacher-education programs, participants may live and work far from the instructional base. The distance is bridged by various communications media. Teachers in

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training interact with the teacher educators at the base by means of television broadcasts, radio transmissions, telephone lines, video tapes, audio tapes, and/or print-based materials. ESL teacher-education programs of this type may seem a bit futuristic, but they are already operating successfully in many countries.

Objectives

ESL/EFL teacher-preparation programs can also be categorized according to their objectives. For example, many university-based programs lead to B.A., M.A./M.Ed., or Ph.D./Ed.D./D.A. degrees. Such programs are often characterized by traditional, academic approaches and emphases (e.g., course work in methodology, linguistics, learning theory, research, etc.) that reflect university requirements.

Other university-based programs, in contrast, lead to certification for public school teachers, which may be initial (for new teachers) or add-on (for practicing teachers). The curriculum in such programs varies accordingly. Participants and courses must satisfy state/provincial or national standards, such as those of the U.S.-based National Association of State Directors of Teacher Education and Certification (NASDTEC), that emphasize not only language teaching skills but also school system concerns.

Another type of ESL/EFL teaching certificate, which is very popular throughout the world, is administered and validated by the University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate. UCLES (or RSA/Cambridge) certificates for teachers include the CELTA (Certificate in English Language Teaching to Adults) and the COTE (Certificate for Overseas Teachers of English). UCLES approves courses leading to these certificates, but it does not run them. They are offered by a variety of universities, colleges, and language schools. The courses are designed primarily for people with no previous teaching experience and focus on practical, classroom matters. While holders of UCLES certificates may later enroll in an M.A. program, these certificate courses provide a basic, entry-level qualification for teachers for whom a graduate-level degree may not be appropriate or feasible.

A fourth program type on this dimension has as its goal teacher requalification, meaning it aims at retraining experienced teachers of other languages (e.g., Russian) or subjects to teach English. Relatively rare in the United States and United Kingdom, programs of this type are quite common in some parts of the world (e.g., the Czech and Slovak Republics). Since participants already have considerable language teaching experience, these "retread" programs tend to emphasize the development of their English language skills. Of course, if their original training was limited or dated, participants also need to develop new teaching skills.

A final type of program involves no degrees or certificates at all. Rather, its objective is to give volunteer teachers the skills they need to function in a classroom or tutorial situation. Preparation programs for these teachers are usually short (since volunteers cannot be expected to invest a lot of time and energy in training) and relatively mechanical (focusing on particular teaching techniques).

Timing Relative to Participants' Teaching Experience

Another categorization of ESL/EFL teacher preparation programs is based on whether they occur before, during, or after participants gain teaching experience.

Pre-service programs provide instruction before participants do actual teaching. Many pre-service programs are university-based. Since the students seldom know where they will end up teaching, their professors emphasize general principles that graduates will need to apply and adapt once they begin teaching in a particular setting. Unfortunately, some pre-service students have little idea what the "real world" of teaching is like and have difficulty relating the concepts they are studying "now" to the actual practice they will be involved in "someday." Therefore, teacher educators in these programs often arrange in class micro-teaching or more extended, concurrent practicum experiences.

Of course, not all pre-service programs are offered at universities, and the training they provide varies accordingly. The many UCLES/RSA courses for pre-service teachers offer focused methodological instruction with a strong practical orientation and classroom connection. Pre-service courses for teachers at *Cultura Inglesa* in Brazil are naturally oriented toward the teaching situation and methods used at that particular institution.

In-service teacher education programs are distinctly different from pre-service courses in that participants are usually employed, experienced teachers who know their particular teaching situations well. In fact, they are typically pressured with many immediate classroom concerns, and if course work is not practical or relevant to their specific situations, these people (who are probably taking the course after or during work hours and must face the "real world" tomorrow) will become dissatisfied. Of course, instruction may also deal with more general concepts as long as their application to participants' immediate concerns is made clear. Examples of this kind of training include the workshops offered for teachers in many public school districts in the United States or those sponsored by the USIA at many binational centers.

Post-experience teacher development courses (designed for people who have gained considerable "real-world" teaching experience before starting the course) take various forms. Some may be found in the training departments of language schools. For example,*Cultura Inglesa* expects candidates for its UCLES DOTE course to have five years of teaching experience. Another post-experience possibility is offered by some RSA/Cambridge CELTA courses. Although the CELTA is described as an "entry-level" qualification, some schools that offer CELTA courses claim that they are also suitable for "experienced teachers of EFL who want a refresher course." At universities, post-experience teacher education programs are relatively rare, but post-experience students are not.

Studies have revealed that as high as 90% of the students entering some TESL M.A. programs have at least one year of teaching experience, and over half have three or more years of experience. After gaining English teaching experience abroad (in the Peace Corps, a language school in Taiwan, etc.), many people return home and enroll in ESL/EFL teacher education programs in order to (1) earn a degree or certificate, (2) learn how to "do it right," and/or (3) understand the principles behind the practices they used. Because of these students' previous experience, program/course requirements may need to be custom-tailored for them. If they are integrated into classes enrolling mostly pre-service teachers, an instructional approach that draws upon these returnees' experiences (instead of ignoring them) can turn such people into valuable classroom resources.

Educational Purpose

In teacher-preparation discussions, a distinction is often made between training and development. "Training" is short-term, competency-based, top-down (from the mind of the "authority" to the mind of the user), and skill-oriented in nature. In contrast, "development" is continual, holistic or integrative, bottom-up (developed or discovered by the user), and oriented toward the development of teachers' awareness, attitudes, and insights.

Those involved in teacher preparation programs that emphasize development sometimes look down on those that offer "mere training." Nevertheless, for at least some prospective teachers (e.g., unpaid volunteers who will work for only a few months as conversational tutors) a teacher-preparation program stressing development could be highly inappropriate, while focused training in a few procedures may be precisely what they need.

Of course, few programs focus exclusively on either training or development. These two titles do not really represent clear-cut categories as much as they do the two ends of a continuum. The binary distinction is still useful, however, for taxonomic purposes, and because many teacher-preparation programs do demonstrate a tendency toward either training or development.

Intensity

Yet another way of classifying ESL/EFL teacher education programs is by the intensity of the instruction they offer. Many programs require full-time study. The majority of university-based, degree-oriented programs are of this type. Some RSA/Cambridge courses are even more intensive, meeting up to eight hours a day.

Other programs, in contrast, expect only a part-time commitment since participants are involved in other work (often full-time teaching). For this reason, many university degree programs allow part-time study, as do many RSA/Cambridge courses. Distance-learning programs typically expect only part-time involvement.

Finally, in some programs participants meet only periodically. The annual English teaching conferences sponsored by the USIA at binational centers are one example of periodic teacher preparation. Language schools and businesses that provide monthly, quarterly, or semi-annual in-service workshops for the teachers they employ are another.

Each of these three levels of intensity creates its own challenges, which require different solutions. Full-time students typically enroll in various courses simultaneously and are suddenly immersed in a sea of new concepts and terms. They are often left to themselves to make connections among the barrage of ideas they experience in their different courses. Designers of this type of program must concern themselves with questions of correlation among courses so as to help students make the necessary conceptual connections.

Participants in teacher education courses that meet less often or who take only one or two classes at a time encounter new ideas and experiences in a less intensive and more sequential manner. This gives them time to absorb new material. This linear approach, however, can also be a special challenge. In a world of ideas where "everything is prerequisite to everything else," sequencing decisions become crucial.

Low intensity courses that meet only periodically must overcome challenges involving memory and shifting audiences. When a course stretches out over time, it is difficult for participants to make connections between concepts presented at widely separated points. Also, since participants have more time to forget concepts between sessions, more provision must be made for review. In addition, the longer a course runs, the higher the participant attrition rate rises. Only a fraction of the starting group may remain at the end. Further, if newcomers are allowed to join a long course in progress, questions of prerequisites and make-up work arise.

Length

ESL/EFL teacher education programs also vary significantly in the amount of time it takes to complete them. Some training courses, such as those designed to teach a few key skills or procedures to new tutors in church or community programs, are very short. The shortest may last only a few hours, but that may be all that can be expected from unpaid volunteers with no long-term commitment to ESL teaching. Naturally, this sort of training will be deficient in many respects, but if it is properly targeted and the teachers' duties are severely restricted, it may suffice to get them going.

In contrast, some teacher education programs take years to finish. Typically, these are university degree programs. Although some are as short as two semesters, most TESL master's degrees in the United States and Canada require around four semesters (two years) to finish. An undergraduate degree in TESL ordinarily takes four years but includes many non-TESL, general education courses. The relatively few doctoral-level programs that exist build on the master's degree and typically require an additional six to ten semesters (three to five years) of study and research. Of course, once teachers finish their formal

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preparation and gain employment, low-intensity, in-service programs may last throughout the rest of their careers. In fact, from a teacher development perspective, it can be argued that a teacher's education is never complete.

A number of other training programs are significantly longer than a few hours but still shorter than a few years. Most notable among them are the RSA/Cambridge certificate courses. Although schools offering CELTA courses may vary their requirements somewhat, the minimum length of an intensive course is 100 class hours over four weeks. Commonly, the number of class hours runs closer to 140. Less intensive, part-time CELTA courses require the same number of hours but spread them out over a period of several months (up to a year). Cambridge-approved courses for the Certificate for Overseas Teachers of English run even longer, over 150 hours, and may take two semesters.

Target Teaching Level

Target teaching level is another crucial dimension in this taxonomy. While some principles of teaching, learning, or language use are widely generalizable, many other aspects of teacher-preparation are level-specific. For example, a teaching strategy that is successful with adults may not work at all with young children, and vice-versa. Therefore, a major factor in determining relevant educational experiences for participants in a teacher-preparation program is whether they intend to teach in primary schools, secondary schools, universities, or adult education programs.

In most in-service programs, participants often work in the same level or type of program and need instruction targeted at that particular level. In contrast, pre-service courses often enroll people aiming at a variety of target teaching levels. In such situations, a common (and successful) approach is to emphasize general principles and procedures first. Then, as participants carry out particular assignments (e.g., a demonstration lesson) they may adjust the realization of each one to match their target teaching level.

Linguistic/Cultural Setting

A final dimension along which ESL/EFL teacher education programs can be classified is based on their linguistic and cultural setting. This dimension parallels the classic ESL/EFL distinction.

In most programs in countries where English is the dominant language, the majority of teachers-in-preparation are native-speakers of English or non-natives who possess high-level English language skills. They are also thoroughly familiar with the target culture since they live in it. Such programs, then, are free to emphasize subjects such as teaching methodology, linguistics, learning theory, etc. A TESL M.A. program in the United States typifies this type.

In contrast, the participants in many other English-teacher-preparation programs around the world are typically non-native speakers of English who have limited experience with the living English language and its accompanying cultures. A program at a university in China would perhaps be typical of this type. Students in such programs must devote much time to the study of English language and culture. Only after they have spent one, two, or more years building up their English skills do they study teaching methods or learning theory in the time that remains before they graduate. Even then, the major program focus remains on polishing their English speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills.

Putting It All Together

Of course, other dimensions in teacher preparation programs—such as the approaches, methods, and course models used—are also possible. But adding more categories to the taxonomy would make it less comprehensible, and it is already rather unwieldy. Mathematically, there are 12,960 possible combinations of the 28 variables distributed along the eight dimensions of this taxonomy. While that many distinct types of ESL/EFL teacher education programs probably don't exist, a great deal of diversity undeniably does. An awareness of this diversity will help us in the ways described at the beginning of this article.

Before concluding, however, it might be best to emphasize once again that despite the diversity in our programs and situations, we teacher educators do have many similarities and common concerns. Among these are the promotion of continuing learning by ESL/EFL teachers, regardless of their level of formal training and experience, and the implementation of policies that will improve the working conditions of ESL/EFL teachers and teacher educators wherever they may be.

Fortunately, while illustrating the many differences that distinguish our programs from one another, this taxonomy also allows us to see the many areas in which our programs and professional interests overlap. Building on our similarities while respecting our differences, we can more successfully work together and help each other move forward and accomplish our common and particular purposes in a more cooperative and truly professional way.

Note
The author wishes to express special thanks to the following people who provided valuable information and assistance during the writing of this article: Anne Burns, Richard Day, Madeline DuVivier, Dena Erickson, Lizika Goldchleger, Jeff Mohamed, Jeff Shanks, Steve Stoynoff, and Tessa Woodward

Bio-data
Lynn Henrichsen has been involved in ESL/EFL teacher education for the past twenty years—in the South Pacific, Latin America, and the Orient. He now teaches courses in ESL methodology, materials development, and research methods at Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah, USA. In 1993-94, he served as chair of TESOL's Teacher Education Interest Section.

Interview with Donald Freeman

Donald Freeman is Professor of Second Language Education at the School for International Training in Vermont, USA. There he directs the Centre for Teacher Education, Training and Research. His current research deals with how teachers develop and change their understandings of what they do in the classroom.

I was lucky enough to catch Donald Freeman for a chat at the International House conference on teacher thinking held in March, 1997.

TW. Do you work with trainers at all, Donald?

DF. Yes. I work with them in three ways. One we offer a train a trainer course or module as part of a graduate programme. We also offer short train- the- trainer courses on contract to different external groups. Also we have a new center in our department that I head up where we offer technical support to trainers. For example, we offer technical and professional support and training to institutions that are changing their ways of teaching, and transforming the culture of teaching and learning in their workplaces. We are working with a major project of this kind in Brazil, with the Cultura Inglesa de Sao Paulo, as well as with other institutions in the US and elsewhere.

TW. What do you think is important for a trainer to learn or to get to grips with?

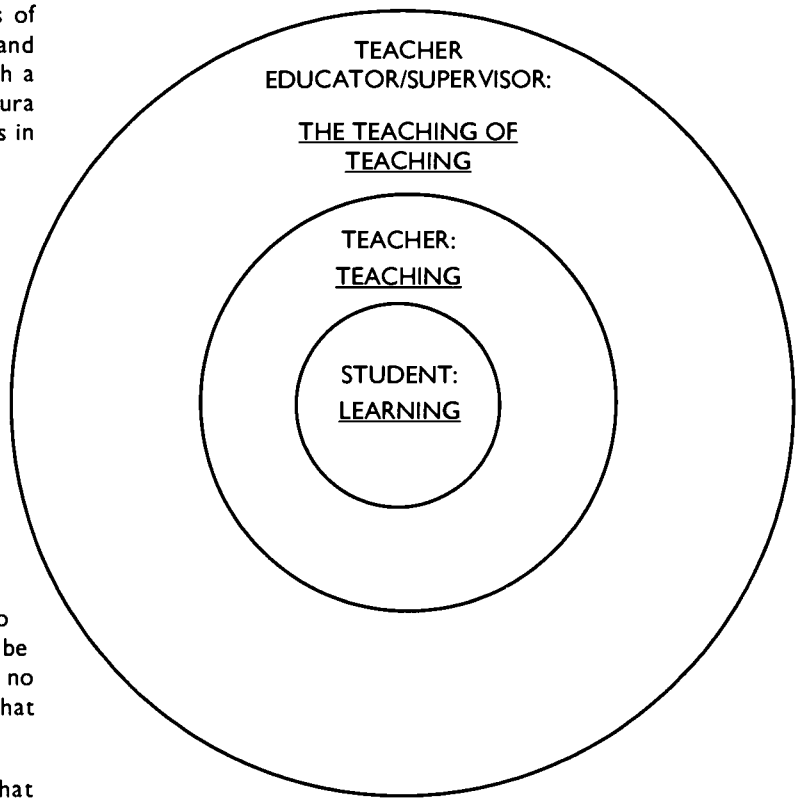
DF. Let's take novice trainers first. The main thing I would emphasise is that you know a great deal about teaching, about organising learning and groups of people by virtue of having been a teacher for a while. But when you become a trainer your subject matter shifts. You're no longer teaching language but the teaching of language. You often see with novice trainers what I call the marionette or puppet syndrome! It goes," I know a really good way of doing this in the language classroom and now I'm a trainer I'm going to show you how to do it my way. I'm going to try to get you to do it the way I do it. If I pull the right strings, you'll be able to do the activity the way I do it." So there is no distance on the new subject matter, between what teaching is and how to teach others to do it.

TW. Do you feel with novice trainers too that sometimes they feel, " I have so much to tell you. I want you to know it all, NOW!". So swamping people and not really prioritising or synthesising?

DF. Yes, exactly. Usually people become trainers by dint of being good teachers. They have the teaching expertise so we think they must be able to pass it on. There is an analogy in the common notion that somebody should be able to teach English just because they can speak it. Both notions confuse the expertise in content with an understanding of how people learn that content. The latter is what language teaching or teacher education is actually based on. Passing the content on is a problematic concept. I'll give an example. Some years ago, I put out a call for manuscripts on new ways of educating teachers (Freeman, 1991, New Ways of Teacher Education. Alexandria VA: TESOL). Most of what we got was actually, "This is what I do in my classroom so this is what I would get a new teacher to do." I think this is indicative of a level of conceptual confusion that reigns.

TW. Yes. I think if you take all the different people involved in this endeavour... language student, language teacher, teacher trainer,... novice trainers can get confused about which role and which classroom they are talking about at first. Using different language for the different levels can help.

DF. Yes, that's key. Andy Thomas, who used to work for the British Council in Cairo, used to have a diagram which looked like a bullseye or a doughnut with the language student in the middle, then the language teacher in the next ring out and the teacher trainer on the outer layer.



Adapted from: "Language Teacher Competence and Language Teacher Education" by Andrew L. Thomas (TESOL 1984: Houston)

TW. It would be nice to have that on the wall of the training classroom so that people could point to it and say, "Now we are discussing this ring " and so on.

DF. Right. So with novice trainers I'd emphasise that they know more about their new role than they think they do.

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However the knowledge needs to be made conscious. You have to become aware of what the new content is.

TW. How about more experienced trainers? Do you have a different message for them?

DF. Yes. The key thing I emphasise is for them to have a conceptual language or architecture for what they are doing. I think we do ourselves damage by shying away from a conceptual language. One of the reasons we don't have it is because we don't have a subject matter in the same way as a teacher does who teaches maths or science. Our subject matter, language learning, is like air. It's just out there.

TW. An instinct even.

DF. Yes. Someone could come to an English speaking country and stay with a family and learn the language or they can come to your class and learn it.

TW. More slowly perhaps!

DF. Exactly! So what do they gain in the classroom? What difference does teaching actually make? Where does this leave us? We have a subject matter that people can get without us. Caleb Gattegno used to say that "language is like the measles. You just catch it". In class or out of class! The fact that we don't have a subject matter that we can hold onto can give us a professional inferiority complex. When we move to being a trainer we almost compound the complex.

TW. Maybe this inferiority complex is actually a sign of learning. Lots of teachers and teacher trainers maybe haven't tumbled to the fact that we haven't got a subject matter, still believing in language as an out there transmissable package. They don't see language as an instinct or the measles! So the ones who do and who get a bit of an inferiority complex about it are possibly the ones who are really thinking about language and how it is taught or learned.

DF. Yes, I think the shift is to focus on the learning of the content and not the content per se. You know in the USA now even Maths is not taught the old way. Teachers now talk about mathematising, not learning a set of facts but learning how to consider a problem and generate alternative solutions. That's so much like what we do in language classes now. So if you sit down with a trainer of maths or science teachers ...

TW. You can talk!

DF. Yes, but only if you have a conceptual language! Otherwise you're just like two lines of traffic entering a tunnel. You get stuck at the entrance to the tunnel if you can only talk about content.

TW. Yes. The sort of language we have been hearing at this conference, "reflection", "practitioner", would you think this was some of this kind of language?

DF. Those would be two examples. The fact that reflection can have different meanings for different people is NOT for me a problem.

TW. It's just a sign that it's early days in our development of a conceptual language?

DF. Yes. Also teaching is an inherently messy, sloppy activity because it is interpersonal. So you are not going to end up with clear terms. Look at the mess clear terms got us into with language! It created false dichotomies like "grammar" and "communication" and so I think we need a coceptual language for teacher education. We need to start mapping the territory so that we can begin to talk. We can borrow some language, as we have done with reflection language. But we also need to start growing some of our own. We, of all people, should know the power of language so we shouldn't be afraid of developing a meta-lamnguge for what we do. And there are precious few venues where we can do this as trainers. There are very few conferences such as this one where we can focus on teacher education.

TW. This is where this journal comes in!

DF. Exactly true! So to go back to your original question about experienced trainers, the real work is to conceptualise what you do and put terms around it.

TW Naming for yourself and for your own work.

DF. Yes.

TW Thanks, Donald!

by Bonnie Tsai and Maria Dessaux-Barberio , France and Switzerland.

Introduction

Saying what you think about the quality of training is important in any trainee-trainer relationship, and on any teacher training course. Due to the reality of most training courses with time constraints, pending grades and end of course fever, end of course feedback often loses its value by being done too hastily.

Emotional Support for Trainees

Our first contribution to the « Trainee Voices » column comes from 2 trainees on an RSA/UCLES DTEFLA (Royal Society of Arts/University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate Diploma in Teaching English as a Foreign Language to adults) course. The trainees were simply asked to comment on their course. In both contributions emotional support for the trainees stands out as being very important to them both during the course and after (for trainees who fail). To what extent are trainers responsible for supporting trainees emotionally? Are trainers themselves either trained or willing to give the support? Is this just asking too much of trainers who want simply to train teachers and not to « do therapy »?

Like Emma , many trainees expect positive feedback at the start of their courses. While this expectation is understandable most trainers feel that they have to be honest so that there can be no misunderstanding as to what the trainee needs to do in order to get through the course and the exam successfully. Should building up the trainee's self confidence at the start be a greater part of the course so that trainees are better equiped to handle negative feedback later or even eventual failure? Or does self confidence grow naturally as teaching improves and trainees start to get more positive feedback from the students and tutors? Do trainees really accept that what is sometimes perceived as unnecessarily negative feedback is part of the learning process?

Emma's comments:

During the academic year of 1993-4, I felt exhausted, challenged, fascinated, nervous, excited and relieved, and ate, drank and slept TEFL. Why? Because I was following the RSA/UCLES Diploma course in TEFLA! I studied at a college of further education in London, attending two evenings a week. Teaching full-time as well as studying was very demanding, and the thought of giving up seemed very appealing on more than one occasion. During the first teaching practice, I began to question my practical skills. My tutor seemed to emphasise my weaknesses during the feedback session, and spent little time discussing my positive points. At the time, it was demoralising, but on reflection these sessions were extremely useful. I found myself improving and feeling more confident in the classroom as the course went on, largely as a result of the tutors' comments.

I was fortunate as I was teaching in a school where there were more than six students in the classes. Except for one occasion, I could therefore be observed for assessment purposes teaching my own groups. Other trainees had to « borrow » classes from the college. This added pressure and made the teaching practice a much more stressful experience because trainees were preparing lessons for classes they did not know.

I found observing other teachers a valuable and interesting experience. It is a pity that the only time most teachers have the opportunity to watch one another is when it is a requirement of a course. Another part of the course I thought particularly interesting, was the sounds and pronunciation of the language. I now get my students repeating almost everything!

The course was, on the whole, well-taught and certainly opened my eyes. It balanced theory with practice and called on us to reflect on our philosophies and methods. It gave me a thirst to try new ideas and find out more about the English language. It exhausted me yet refreshed me, a fascinating experience.

Emma Solloway

Nuala's comments:

During my Diploma course a large component focused on the tests we give and the assessing we do as teachers. It seems to me that we were being asked to do two contradictory things simultaneously. As trainees we were reading about, discussing, analysing and often criticising formal written tests. As teachers we were trying to find viable alternatives for assessing our students,alternatives which didn't rely on being able to demonstrate knowledge in a very limited time span. When the course was finished, however, as students ourselves we had to try to ignore our findings and suddenly knuckle down to an archaic system of examination, one which, not 2 weeks before, we had, quite rightly, criticised.

Although I don't agree with the exam procedure of the Dip. as it stands, the fact remains that that's how it is. Until the assessment procedure is changed, centres MUST give trainees exam practice.

In the ten-week course I attended in the UK, I did ten assignments: a combination of pre-course assignments, weekly untimed assignments, one and a half hour assignments where we had a week to prepare what we would write, and one mock exam, where in two hours we had to make notes on six questions we would choose to answer in an exam. All these assignments were useful in helping me to examine different aspects of my teaching on

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a practical and on a theoretical level, but they did not prepare me adequately for the exam and were of little or no consequence to the final mark I received on the Dip. The final mark for the majority of trainees (those not involved in the Written Component Pilot Scheme) is heavily weighted towards what those trainees do on the actual day in the exam. For me, failing the Dip. was a direct result of lack of practicing Dip. written exam technique. Dip trainers have to strike a balance between, on the one hand, setting assignments which will help the trainees grow as critical, self-analytical teachers, and on the other hand, setting assignments that prepare trainees for the conditions they will face in the exam.

As my course progressed and I continued to pass each written assignment I really thought I hadn't much to worry about. Passing the exam would be hard, but it certainly wouldn't be impossible for me.

A phone call to the centre at the beginning of September told another story. In answer to the question « Are the results out yet? » the receptionist said « Yes, and you were referred in the written part. »

That casual conversation with the receptionist made me feel my failing was unimportant to the centre. My failure seemed to embarrass them and they couldn't overcome their own embarrassment and help me come to terms with my failure.

It seems to me that the easy part of teacher-training is telling trainees they've passed the course. The hard part is telling trainees they've failed, being sympathetic to their feelings of frustration and disbelief, listening if trainees want to talk about their failure and, finally, offering practical support in preparing trainees to take the exam again. No one at the centre where I took the Diploma suggested how I could prepare for a re-sit. Only through a friend of a friend did I hear about the excellent revision course that International House, London, runs.

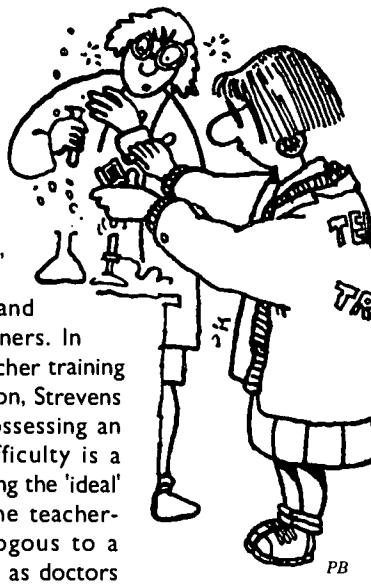
A year later, as I wait for the results I feel more ready to face the possibility of failure. Despite my depression at the time, failing the Diploma didn't lead to the end of my teaching career, and my world didn't fall apart as I thought it would. I'm more ready to laugh at what my mother said. then: « Well, Nuala, at least you've got your health. »

Nuala O'Sullivan

CURRENT RESEARCH

Learner Difficulty: what is it, and how well do we understand it?

by Akira Tajino.
Hiroshima Shudo University, Japan



Teachers, whatever they teach, would probably agree that they should recognize and understand what is difficult for their learners. In outlining some principles of teacher training in foreign (L2) language education, Strevens (1977), in fact, claims that possessing an ability to discern learner difficulty is a necessary condition for becoming the 'ideal' language teacher. He views the teacher-learner relationship as analogous to a doctor-patient relationship. Just as doctors need to diagnose their patients' illnesses to help cure them, teachers are expected to diagnose their learners' difficulties to help them learn.

What does 'learner difficulty' mean?

One of the most fundamental questions addressed here is, 'What do you mean by learner difficulty?'. A review of the literature of L2 learning and teaching shows that there have been at least three basic ways of viewing the notion of difficulty: 1) difficulty as a matter of linguistic difference between L1 and L2, 2) difficulty as a matter of errors learners make, and 3) difficulty as a matter of markedness.

In other words, 1) Can we say that the 'th' sound is difficult for Japanese only because their language does not have that sound?, 2) Can we say that 'doesn't' is difficult for learners just because they might say 'he don't', an error? -- even some native English speakers say this in conversation, and 3) Can we say that the English indefinite article 'an' is more difficult (or more marked) than 'a' just because the former has an additional sound and restricted distribution? The first view is taken predominantly in research based on the contrastive analysis hypothesis, which assumes that "those structures that are different [from L1] will be difficult [to learn]" (Lado, 1957: 59). However, as Littlewood (1984: 19) argues, "'difference' and 'difficulty' are not identical concepts", since the former is concerned with linguistic description whereas the latter with psychological processes. The other two ways of viewing difficulty also appear weak to us for the same reason. That is because the notion of difficulty is "a matter of subjective judgement" (Corder, 1973: 226). One might think that learner errors can be a reliable indicator of learner difficulty. But this is not always the case. It is possible, for example, that "a highly erroneous sentence may cause the learner no difficulty at all" (Kellerman 1977: 87, cited from James 1980: 183), or conversely, "we may find a low incidence of error in

conditions where the learner is experiencing great difficulty" (James, ibid.). I have, in fact, found that almost a third of the 'accurate' performance on a grammar exercise commonly used in a Japanese junior high school was actually perceived as relatively difficult by the EFL students, regardless of gender or grade, and that about 40 percent of the 'inaccurate' performance was perceived as relatively easy (Tajino, 1995).

Accepting the view that difficulty is a psychological issue, it is necessary for us to recognize that learner performance cannot always be a reliable indicator of learner difficulty. Teachers would then need to attempt to understand the problem of difficulty from the learner's point of view.

Why should we care about learner difficulty?

Some researchers allude to the significance of understanding what learners think is difficult, which I have called LPD: i.e. learner perception of difficulty. Horwitz (1987: 123), for instance, states that "student judgements about the difficulty of language learning are critical to the development of students' expectations for and commitment to language learning". Do we know what happens when learners perceive difficulty in the course of learning? Does LPD result in success or failure? It may depend on the individual learners' personalities or the situations in which they learn an L2. Research shows that LPD has a negative influence on language learning. Schachter (1974), for example, reported that learners avoided using a particular item just because they found it difficult. Some surveys conducted in Japan also revealed that LPD operated in a negative way. Hatori and Matsuhata (1980) as well as Nakayama (1986) demonstrated that LPD was the primary cause of students' negative attitudes toward learning EFL at the secondary school level. Gardner (1985) claims that such learner attitudes are closely related to motivation, which researchers generally believe is a powerful factor in successful language learning (e.g. Ellis, 1985).

If we take motivation seriously, we should then get to know LPD. It may lower learners' self-confidence, increase their anxiety, decrease motivation, or promote task avoidance. In talking of his 'reasonable challenge', Prabhu (1987) claims that "a task should, ideally, look difficult but attainable to learners". He says:

> ... learners should not be able to meet the challenge too easily but should be able to meet it with some effort. This is not just a matter of the teacher's assessment of the learners' ability; it is a matter of the learners' own perceptions, too. If a task looks very easy to learners, they expect no sense of achievement from success in it and are likely to be less than keen to attempt it. If, on the other hand, the task looks so difficult that they feel sure they will fail in it, they are likely to be reluctant to make an effort at all. (p. 56)

Making a task look difficult to learners would, then, presuppose teachers' understanding of learner perception of difficulty.

Teacher diagnosis of learner difficulty

Bennett and Desforges conducted a study on how infant school teachers in Britain allocate or match tasks to students (see Desforges, 1985). Their study suggests that teachers are not always good at diagnosing learner difficulty. Their findings can be summarized as follows:

1) Overall, about 40% of the tasks were found to match the students' learning situations; about 28% of the tasks appeared to be too difficult, and 26% too easy. There was little difference in the matching record for number and language tasks.
2) High achieving students were underestimated (i.e. mismatched) 41% of the time; low achieving students were overestimated (i.e. mismatched) about 44% of the time.
3) Teacher judgements about the matching were quite different from researcher judgements. Teachers were more inclined to see mismatching as a case of overestimating students' abilities; perhaps more important, they did not perceive underestimating student abilities to be a problem at all.
4) Teachers had difficulty diagnosing student problems, and they even believed that diagnosis was unnecessary: problems underlying student errors were self-evident.

From these, the finding that teachers had difficulty diagnosing learner problems and were of the view that diagnosis was even unnecessary seems to be the most striking. Desforges argues that this was mainly due to the teacher's over-reliance on learner performance. This echoes the difficulty-error equation in L2 research.

There is no reason to assume that L2 teachers would be significantly different from the teachers in Bennett and Desforges's study. In fact, the results of a study carried out by myself in Japanese high school EFL classes with three hundred and seventy-six students and their four teachers show that the teachers were not good at identifying LPD (Tajino, 1995). In the study, the students were asked to rank nine L2 English grammar questions according to their perceptions of difficulty. Their teachers were also asked to rank the same nine questions according to their perceptions of the difficulty of the questions for their students. Statistics showed that the difficulty order obtained from the students did not match the difficulty orders obtained from their teachers. Only one teacher out of the four succeeded in identifying what the students thought was the most difficult and the easiest. Surprisingly, there was one teacher whose order of difficulty negatively correlated with the students' order of difficulty. In other words, what the teacher thought was easy for the students was perceived as difficult by the students, and vice versa.

If we fail to even identify what learners think is difficult or easy, how is it possible for us to make a task look difficult or easy to the learners?

continued

Conclusion

Teachers should recognize that learner difficulty or LPD, which can affect success in L2 learning, is an unobservable factor, and therefore no performance data can be completely reliable. To better understand LPD, teachers should be encouraged to share meanings, experiences and affects with their learners in the classroom, as Edelhoff (1985) argues. For this purpose, teachers' "empathic understanding", a core condition necessary for Client-centred Therapy (Rogers, 1983), should be developed. Empathic understanding means that teachers understand accurately the feelings and personal meanings of the learner. Rogers, in fact, suggests that "empathy" is the most trainable among the core conditions necessary to facilitate learning. In our efforts to understand LPD, this trainable quality should not be overlooked.

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TRAINING AROUND THE WORLD – BRAZIL

Development in Party Clothes

by Regina Guimarães, Brazil

I have read a lot about the concept of "received knowledge" – i.e. the kind of input teachers get during pre-service/in-service courses when there is the need to feed them with theories, concepts , skills and even the basic jargon of the profession. . According to Wallace (1993), you acquire received knowledge from tutors or instructors, taking for granted that whatever they are giving you is what is usually accepted by most people in the field. By contrast, "experiential knowledge" , which could also be called "knowing-in-action"or "knowing by observation", can only be internalized via experience and observation , not only of your own performance but of others' as well.

If we accept the dichotomy above, then it seems logical also to accept the idea that institutions where teachers are simply "told" that they should try to develop as professionals are doing only part of their job. Very often teachers do not know where or how to start. When they say: " I feel I should be doing something to improve my performance" they are in fact, giving evidence of having "received" the idea of development, but the development itself can only be materialized through "experience" . I think it is our job as trainers, to provide teachers with the means to develop "strategies for professional development" .

With this in mind, I decided about two years ago to start an idea called " Updating Circles" or maybe, to be more precise, I should say the Updating Circles decided to start themselves. Everything began when one teacher who happened to be an old friend of mine dropped in for a visit and complained that she had been feeling rather lonely lately (she had been working with private students for some time and missed the atmosphere of an institution with colleagues, tea-time in the staff room talking shop, etc.). The idea of inviting other teachers in the same situation to come regularly to my office so that they might meet, make new friends, exchange ideas, etc. was the natural result of that first conversation. A date was set and Adriana – that's my friend's name – said she would try to organize a small group of people to come. I must admit that , although I thought the idea was very good, I was not expecting much to come of it. After all, who in his or her sound mind, would give up going to the cinema, the seaside or simply staying home with the family on a Saturday afternoon to spend two hours "talking about teaching" ? I had come from a very big institution where teachers often felt reluctant to attend workshops, talks, etc. without getting paid extra, and knowing that their presence or absence would not really be noticed! Time would prove that my predictions were absolutely wrong!

Not only did Adriana and her friends come but, what began as a small group of 4 teachers trying to support each other has now become a big chain of 11 groups so far, with between 5 and 10 members each. And new groups keep on being formed and more teachers spontaneously join them. A miracle of what good marketing can do? Not really! The success of the Updating Circles – as they decided to call themselves , or UDCs, for short – is, in my opinion, due to a number of factors which together provided the ideal environment for genuine teacher development to take place. These factors are, I think:

1. Real democracy prevails and decisions are always taken together .

2. There has never been any pressure of any sort. For instance, members attend the sessions once a month, always on the same day of the week and at the same time but are left free to decide which particular Friday or Saturday of the month they would like to come for the next meeting.

3. Of course we had to decide about a format for the meetings and "flexibility" was the answer. For instance, there are groups and times when I, as the "tutor" (although I try very hard to keep a low profile) am asked to adopt the "lecturer" mode for the initial 5 or 10 minutes , either introducing something new or clarifying doubts still pending from the previous meeting. But this happens very rarely and the most common situation is for a provocative statement or question to be offered as a starting point for discussion.

4. There is no programme , no pre-established order of topics for discussion. Things simply "happen" as we say, naturally. For example, the Circle meeting where somebody mentioned by chance that s/he knew nothing about NLP. Another member reacted spontaneously by saying that she knew something – in fact she had just finished taking a course on Neurolinguistic Programming and was willing to share some of what she had learnt with the group. Everybody was enthusiastic and it was agreed that the next session would be dedicated to Richard Bandler and his ideas. The day of the meeting came and our "tutor" for the session presented what she had brought. There was a very profitable discussion afterwards and for the session after that, it was my turn to provide the group with articles, interviews, etc. about NLP in order to enrich their experience in the area. While this particular Circle was having their session on NLP , another one, meeting the day after, had decided to get to know more about Fears and Myths and how they can influence the teaching/learning situation. Yet another one was very busy with all the members discussing to what extent Krashen's theories could be put into practice in our particular teaching situation. So, each group was following a different route which had been "chosen" exclusively by the members and their own interests and needs.

5. I constantly try to cater for individual needs while, at the same time, trying not to forget to think of the individuals as a "group" and , as such, with its own particular characteristics. For example, I always make a point when a new group is being formed to ensure that members "fit" into it, both in terms of academic competence/experience but also in terms of personality. I may even have some groups where the academic level is lower than in others but the overall result is positive in both cases, because what matters is the fact that both are growing at their own pace and according to their own characteristics. This criterion for forming groups is sometimes difficult to put into practice since new members come to you with their own availability in terms of days of the week, and times they would like to attend the meetings. However, I always try to suggest a group where I think the person is going to feel comfortable . What may happen, and sometimes does, is that a new member starts in a particular Circle and after a few meetings asks to see other Circles at work in order to decide where he or she would like to stay.

6. From the very first session, members are completely free to express their feelings, emotions, etc. This is obviously facilitated by the fact that there is no hierarchy and no "big white chief" watching them. It's often moving to see colleagues coming from all the walks of our profession, opening up their hearts and talking freely about things they would probably never mention in their own schools. The common criticism that "group work is time-consuming" with very little being achieved at the end does not happen in the Circles – we suspect it is so because all members feel free to express not only their ideas but their feelings as well. As Wallace says (1993:42) : ..."*there is also almost a conspiracy in higher education to pretend that group work is only about ideas and feelings don't enter into it...overcoming this problem requires, first, a recognition that they exist (..feelings), and secondly the intellectual and emotional honesty to bring things into the open and deal with them. To do this effectively demands sensitivity, and perhaps some self-development, on the part of the tutor.*" Although I do not consider myself their "tutor"and insist on making clear that I am only another peer in the group, I still see the point of Wallace's comment. However, this is not always easy to do and sometimes you have very tactfully to fight resistance from some members who still find it difficult to "open up " and reveal themselves. But this is a battle which so far I have not lost yet – give them time and they will naturally respond to the general atmosphere.

7. Members come from all sorts of places but competition simply does not exist. It is very common to see an academic coordinator of a big institution sitting side by side the director of studies of his/her fiercest competitor and yet feeling quite happy to exchange experiences, ideas, offer help etc., everybody working together to solve a particular problem or discussing an issue which happens to be the topic of the meeting. At the same time, because in each Circle there are people who come from different professional backgrounds, discussions are always very interesting because they emerge from colleagues who may see the same fact through different perspectives, e.g. teacher motivation seen from the point of view of a school owner, a director of studies and teachers themselves.

8. Strange as it may seem, the physical arrangement of the Circles seems to contribute to the relaxed atmosphere . A round table discussion has proved to be more "intimate" than a group discussion without a table in the middle. By the way, once I tried to remove the round table for space and the group unanimously said : "No!" (some members

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literally grabbed it in case I decided to go from thought to action!) Who knows? This might have to do with the myth of King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table!

9.It is difficult to believe but, some members come to the Circles without ever having learnt to say "I don't know" and still thinking that a teacher should be able to answer all the questions. One of the first things we try to do when a group is formed is to play a game where participants are encouraged to say aloud and clear "I don't know", if it is the case. As a consequence, I believe nobody is afraid to confess their limitations /problems and , consequently get help from the group. Sometimes I use some good games for teachers (e.g. Practical English Teaching -Mary Glasgow Magazines – Volume 14, nos. 1, 2 and 4 – 1993/94) to get them used to the idea that one should not feel embarrassed if one needs clarification in this or that particular aspect of ELT. Very often, members who already feel more at ease and confident in the group, ask for their colleagues' help with particular research projects they are carrying out at the moment. Recently we had the example of a teacher who recorded part of one of her lessons and brought the cassette to the next meeting so that her friends could listen to it and help her identify problem areas

10. All the topics chosen for discussion are immediately transferred to the participants' individual teaching situations which encourages the teachers to make use of their problem-solving abilities .

11. Group cohesion keeps getting stronger and stronger. Sometimes it is so strong that one can almost "see" the members holding hands as if they were attending a s,ance. Mutual support is always present. It is very frequent for members to verbalize a problem they might be having and immediately receive a warm response from the others, be it in the form of practical advice or even only a gentle pat on the back which often is worth more than a hundred words !

12. The atmosphere of trust and honesty enhanced the quality of feedback which is always given in a very flexible way: participants to tutor, participant to participant, etc. I also keep a diary where I jot down the most important things which occur in a particular group. For instance, below is my first entry for the very first group to be formed:

..."*There were four people present. Nobody knew exactly what to expect. Ice breaker for 5 minutes. Atmosphere was relaxed because some people already knew each other. Attitudes = waiting to be fed. I suggested establishing aims and objectives for the meetings. Details like frequency and time of the sessions had to be discussed. I suggested some possible formats for the meetings. Members chose their favourite: input (not necessarily through me!) plus discussion of it the next meeting. I felt a bit in doubt as how to establish the limits between a social gathering and a professional event ! "*

After some time they also filled in a feedback questionnaire and below are some extracts of what some of them wrote:

..."*the most important aspect is that I can share my fears, failures, successes with the whole group and from all that, learn and improve...*"

..."the Updating Circle has helped renew my interest / curiosity in current ELT issues, among people I have really *enjoyed working with and from whom I have been able to learn.*"

..."*I never feel we are being strongly tutored in the Updating Circles. We are being helped and guided and trained to use our own capacity to think and express our opinion...*"

..."*the Updating Circle is to me one of the richest experiences I have ever had in both my professional and personal life. Meeting the group ... being helped to grow, have been worth all the effort to come all the way from out of São Paulo...*"

..."*forming these groups was a wonderful idea and I am delighted to belong to one of them. My impression is that we are doing important work towards keeping us, private teachers, in the stream of things...this is strongly reflected in our classes, as it gives us a sense of confidence in our work which might otherwise be missing...*"

..."*it has helped me to be more critical, more open to criticism but, at the same time, to feel reassured...*"

" *In our Updating Circle we meet once a month for about two hours with our tutor and colleagues who have similar previous working experience. We discuss and appraise (the latest) trends in EFL and their suitability to our specific working conditions. We have the chance of questioning our performance as teachers and of sharing problems, fears and worries. It is a refreshing possibility of being helped and help overcome difficulties in a warm and supportive atmosphere. " (Adriana Miglioretti Pardini)*

" *I have been part of the Updating Circles for the last two years and a half. I joined it not knowing exactly what to expect or what I was looking for. Now I know it is an important point of reference in my professional life as a self-employed teacher; a reference point by which I can gauge what I'm doing and where I'm heading. In the casual and supportive atmosphere of our monthly meetings I can discuss doubts, share experiences and apprehensions and find answers to personal;professional queries. " (Taroub Nahuz)*

13.Reflection is facilitated through completely open discussion not only of new topics but also of the results of the self-assessment process which they are encouraged to use.

All in all, if someone asked me to explain the growing popularity of the Updating Circles and if I decided to disregard all the issues raised above , I would still have – not as one but as two aces up my sleeve :

1) drop out rate in the groups after three years = almost nil and they keep proliferating.

2) what Adrian Underhill wrote in his message to teachers who participate in these groups:

..."BUT OF COURSE WE NEVER ARRIVE – IT'S THE JOURNEY THAT MATTERS !"

Reference

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Practical English Teaching (1993/94) (Volume 14, nos. 1, 2, 4) – Mary Glasgow Pubs.

Rachel Bodle is a business consultant in the UK whose specialist areas include the facilitation of group problem solving – for which clients range from Rank Hovis to the National Health Service.

T: You work with managers and teams of employees, applying problem solving frameworks to help them get to where they want to go. Over the next couple of issues of the journal I'd like to describe a few problems that our readers can identify with to see if the problem-solving frameworks you use can be adapted to help us out.

R: OK – go ahead.

T: Here's our first problem – a new Director of Studies comes into a staff-room that has had the same people working in it for many years. Some people are friends, some are enemies. The place feels a bit static. The DOS is not too sure if anything is happening, if anyone is learning or moving at all ...

R: This is a class of problem which crops up in a wide range of environments. The new DOS can observe and wait to make judgements in due course – or may do some active information gathering to inform an early reaction to perceived needs. Because the new DOS is an unknown quantity, people may be reticent in how they reply to questions, make suggestions, or comment on colleagues. To use one of the existing staff as the sole information source is not sensible if there's any suspicion that staff fall into different camps. An outsider can help if they're perceived to be neutral and demonstrate a willingness to listen. So what would I do here?

It depends on the size of the staff room – Could I interview everyone or would it make sense to ask for interviews with a cross-section of individuals? (Either of these would be preferable to meeting staff in small groups.) I'd frame an open-ended question which would get each 1-1 interview started. I'd need to test a few ideas but would start from something like:

"From your perspective, what are the issues the school must address over the next 3-5 years?"

A good question would be one which clearly values the individual's experience and interests and doesn't presume anything about issues being internally/externally; present/future; or problem/opportunity focused. Assuming that I'm able to adopt an unprejudiced information-gathering stance, the question would be as far as I'd go to structure the interview content. Beyond that I'd listen carefully, joining in only to seek clarification as necessary.

I'd capture the comments made in each interview whilst it was in progress. My notes would be in headline form – one for each point made – and I'd display what I'd written so that the interviewee could see what I'd heard. I'd do this capturing on separate pieces of paper or card.

T: What do you do after you've captured the ideas tangibly?

R: I want to get behind the ideas raised so that I can start to understand how each interviewee believes things work around the establishment. Where the power is, what helps to build reputation, what impedes progress etc. So in the second part of the interview I'd like the interviewee to move points around and, by clustering, labelling, adding arrows to show how perceived factors influence one-another, and other annotations create a map which illustrates how their ideas link together. This task is relatively straightforward using small post-its on a flip-chart sheet or more durable magnetic-backed pieces of write-on/wipe-off plastic positioned on a portable whiteboard. For maximum flexibility, it helps the clustering activity if the pieces of paper/plastic are hexagonal and this is what I normally use in my consultant role. Whatever technology the DOS used, each interviewee could have a photocopy of the map after the interview so that they have a record of their contribution. Hexagon mapping is a good way to assemble and organise ideas and opinions where the outcomes of the exercise are not known at the start of the process. I use the technique a lot, both in 1-1 situations like this, and when helping a group to share ideas.

T: Where could I get hexagons from? Where could I find out more about hexagon mapping?

R: Plastic hexagons in a range of colours and sizes are available from Idon Ltd, Edradour House Pitlochry, Perthshire PH16 5JW; or from Inspiration Resources, High Trenhouse, Malham Moor, Settle, Yorkshire BD24 9PR. Hexagonal post-its are not produced in the UK but are imported and distributed by TeamTalk Consulting Ltd. 26 Highgrove Hill, Great Holm, Milton Keynes, Bucks MK8 9AG. !

T: What would you do next?

R: The simple maps thus created would provide a rich seam of information to mine. In fact it's likely that, in this raw form, the mass of information assembled would be overwhelming at first! I'd want to review themes emerging in the interviews – ensuring that sources of any individual comments were protected. My earlier contacts with the establishment might have led to some preconceptions which I could now verify or discount, or new themes may emerge naturally from a review of the interview material. It would be interesting to notice ideas which were the subject of broad agreement – and instances where opposing points of view are represented amongst the staff. Not only would I be able to study all these separate ideas once the interviews were completed: I'd also be able to see commonality or differences in the ways interviewees had related ideas together. One person's root cause of a perceived problem might appear as a symptom of something even deeper in another person's understanding. I'd aim to create a map which illustrated the broad consensus, and supplement this with a set of questions addressing issues raised in areas of disagreement. Some form of summary of messages emerging from the exercise should also, clearly, go back to the interviewees.

My next moves would depend on my preferred operating style and the existing culture of the establishment: to what

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extent do I wish to proceed alone – and to what extent do I want to work with and through other members of staff? If I opt for involving others in my thinking and decision-making process then this might be the time to share the results of my interviews with a selected sub-group. We could use a workshop process to discuss the messages from the interviews, to recognise the unrealised potential of the establishment (if this was confirmed by the interviews) and to create objectives for its development. We could go on to identify possible actions which would help – perhaps analysing specific data relating to the performance of the establishment, or setting up experiments to test a few theories in those areas which generated questions. It would be difficult for the DOS, or one of the staff, to run this session – and it's in this type of situation that an external facilitator can be usefully brought in. Even then, a participative decision-making process would only work if the people in the group trusted the DOS not to abuse his/her power. If the interviews showed trust to be an issue, then a DOS committed to involving people might need to stick to a series of smaller discussion sessions consulting and listening to selected staff in turn – and demonstrating this willingness to listen would be crucial!

!GRAMMAR PROJECT NEWS!

I am planning to edit a series to be published by Intellect, and provisionally entitled *A New Handbook of English Grammar*. It will be based on the idea that grammar is essentially meaning, just as vocabulary is, but in a 'general' rather than a 'specific' way. I have explained this approach in *Antilinguistics* (Intellect, 1990, particularly pp.5-10, 63-67, 75-89, 93-113) and *The Art and Science of Learning Languages* (Intellect, 1996, particularly pp.108-110, 117-118, 122, 292-304). I should be grateful to hear from anyone who holds a similar view and would like to make a contribution to the series. It is intended first and foremost as a comprehensive but practical grammar of English as a foreign language, but it will also be a critical grammar in the sense that it will discuss earlier accounts of English where it is considered necessary. As this is an ambitious and long-term project, I am also eager to hear from anybody interested in collaborating in a group of co-editors.

Please reply to: Amorey Gethin, c/o Intellect, EFAE, Earl Richards Road North, Exeter EX2 6AS (fax 01392 475110).

Welcome back! – Sharing Ideas after a Conference

by Izabella Hearn, Spain

It was a great conference! You feel exhilarated and exhausted. As well as attending several first-class talks, you met up with other teachers who share similar problems and are searching for solutions. What a relief, that wonderful feeling that you are not the only one struggling with a particular classroom problem. But how can you convey the intense and concentrated experience of a conference to your colleagues back home? Colleagues who on the whole are overworked and stressed and therefore, understandably, are likely to be only mildly interested in what you have to say.

A Realistic Approach to Sharing Information

First of all, don't try too hard. What each of us gets out of a talk, or an entire conference, is very personal, and not everything can or should be shared. Sometimes a talk or lecture can stimulate quite a profound reflection on our own performance in the classroom, and we may need time and privacy to analyse and absorb alternative views. Also our perception of what a talk offers can differ depending on our stage of development. My own teaching was greatly affected by a brilliant lecture which I attended with a group of colleagues and friends several years ago. From later discussions I realized that that our versions of what was said varied enormously – so much so that we could all have been attending different lectures.

Factors that Influence the Experience of Sharing Ideas

Talking to teachers about post-conference information sessions, I have been amazed at the number of factors that play a key role in determining the failure or success of these sessions. An institution that can send a group of staff to a conference may find that the interaction between the "chosen ones" is so worthwhile that everybody benefits that much more. However, what about the ones left behind? Was attending the conference optional? Maybe some teachers volunteered not to go, or perhaps were not given the chance. Did classes and other duties need to be covered. Where did the funding come from and was it seen to be allotted fairly? It may be that there is a rota system in operation which allows everyone the opportunity of professional development. This would imply that everyone would, at some point, be in the position of giving information as well as receiving it and could make a significant difference to the sessions. It also makes a difference if those attending talks are aware that they will be required to report back on the conference,

on their return. Another point worth a mention is that interestingly enough, the location of the conference can have quite a bearing on the attitude towards the session.. An autumn conference in Birmingham can provoke a completely different reaction to a spring conference in California. I have seen this point tackled in several ways. There's the teacher who breezes into the staff area with a very loud " Oh no! Goodness gracious! I didn't have any time for sightseeing or shopping! It was all so exhausting – workshops, lectures, book exhibitions to get through, I just didn't stop all week-end". Of course no-one believes it anyway. Far better to come clean and say "Amsterdam was delightful, and I even managed to go on a boat trip on the canal – and incidentally, there's a bottle of duty-free to break open when we have the information session next Tuesday."

Organising the Post-Conference Teachers Meeting

And now for the actual reporting back! How best to set about it ? Most busy teachers are interested in practical tips on how to cope with very specific problems, which are making life in the classroom difficult, rather than for example, the theory behind the latest trend in analysing second language acquisition. So if a fairly large group of teachers are attending your session, (and even more so if they are obliged to attend by their superiors,) be selective and be brief. Offer to expand on any points that a colleague shows a particular interest in, at a later time. Recently, I attended a very successful post-conference session where a paper had been previously circulated outlining the talks that our colleague had attended. Many of us came to the session with questions already prepared which led to a certain degree of interaction and some useful and interesting discussions in which we all participated. This colleague had also picked up a number of free samples and other "goodies" such as posters and stickers that the publishers and exhibitors provided, and this helped to create a positive collaborative atmosphere in which we were all prepared to listen, learn and comment.

The Alternative. A Practical and Positive Solution.

There does exist an alternative to the traditional staff get-togethers which, however enjoyable (or painful), rarely result in the staff actually adopting the ideas that are explained. A speaker once finished his workshop with the words "If you don't use it, you'll lose it." He had just given a workshop full of extremely practical activities and suggestions for coping with kinesthetic learners with spelling problems. I was keen to try out the ideas (use them, so as not to lose them!) but I didn't have an appropriate class at the time. So on my return I asked a fellow teacher if she wouldn't mind letting me take her class so that I could put these ideas into practice. She agreed, and the activities worked! In fact she stayed to watch, and has since adopted the exercises herself, encouraged by the class who had enjoyed doing something new and different. So quite by chance this turned into an extremely successful session, or "passing on" and sharing of newly learned techniques. There is also the added advantage of giving your colleagues a "break" from taking their class, and nobody had to give up a lunchtime to listen to explanations that can be tricky to get across. So now, if I'm asked "Was it a good conference?" I often say " It was great, I picked up something that your group may really enjoy. Would you mind if I came in and tried it out one day next week?" If the activity doesn't work out as well as you'd hoped, your colleague will probably be very willing to collaborate on improving the exercise or discussing its validity. Either way, by taking the idea or exercise into the classroom, it becomes far easier to generate interest in what happened at the conference, even without the duty-free!

So now its your turn. A pre- programme has been sent to your place of work and you are busy trying to decide how to spend your time at the conference most productively. Involve your colleagues, ask for help and advice from the rest of the staff. Offer to bring back catalogues and hand-outs. Be aware of any specific topic that's being covered so you can keep your eyes open for any relevant information or materials. If somebody is taking over your class leave plenty of work. Swop any duties so that your absence is as painless as possible for all concerned. And when you get back, slide back gently into your routine, put up a little note on the staff notice board to say "Thanks for covering my classes, there are some chocolates on the table, help yourselves!" and when your friends ask "How was it?" say "Great. Would you mind if I took your class.....?

Are ARC, CPFU or ESA of *any* use?

by Anthony Bruton, Spain

I think Thornbury (1996) is probably overgenerous in suggesting that Scrivener's ARC (1994) has even 'restricted use'. The conclusion that most readers would reach from Thornbury's insightful article is that it has no use, except to express a disenchantment with the lack of a generally accepted alternative to the PPP model, as described by Byrne (1976) in the UK context. It would seem that ARC (Scrivener, 1994), CFPU (Lovelock, 1996) and ESA (Harmer, 1996) have similar problems, but their fundamental flaw is the lack of clarity of purpose.

Generally, we can identify explanatory language learning models, pedagogic models and descriptive frameworks. Most pedagogic models, which must be somewhat prescriptive by definition, reflect a language learning model, or significant aspects of second language acquisition research.

On the one hand, communication-based models usually limit themselves to defining activity types, for the skill development aspect of language learning, without elaborating how the acquisition of linguistic knowledge is expected to occur. For example, current task specifications only add precision to the planning of different types of interactive practice. At least PPP attempted to focus on learning, although it failed most notably to include the analysis of input for learning/ comprehension. There was also a certain ambiguity as to whether the productive pracrice was for correctness or automaticity.

In addition to these limitations, ARC, CPFU and ESA suffer from the additional fact that they are subjectively prescriptive, but are not objectively prescriptive enough, as Thornbury rightly points out. Consequently, they do not offer guidance on, nor permit evaluation of, more or less effective classroom practice. An alternative to PPP, as a pedagogic model, cannot be nothing at all, or everything goes.

On the other hand, the three frameworks attempt to describe classroom behaviour using a limited set of dubious categories, into which all classroom behaviour is apparently insertable. In the case of ARC and CFPU, the authors propose a learners' perspective, but fail to realize that a crucial means of uncovering non-conspicuous learner behaviour is by introspective elicitation, in addition to observation. Furthermore, one can only take expected learner perspectives before the teaching event, or attempt to describe actual learner perspectives during/ after it – the same is true of teacher behaviour. In this respect, at least ESA is clearly a framework for instruction. However, in all three cases, we are offered different categories that are so limited and lacking in underlying operating principles as to be inherently hollow. Moreover, they could be applied to a teacher's lesson plan, without actually observing the implementation! Finally, these frameworks are not an alternative to Byrne's PPP for the simple reason that it was never intended as a descriptive framework.

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In-Service TESOL Workshops: Suggestions for Novice Trainers

by Maureen Andrade, Brigham Young University, Hawaii

Many TESOL* professionals, whether teacher trainers or not, are asked to give workshops at some point in their careers. If you think you might be giving teacher training workshops during your next overseas assignment, or know you will, the following suggestions may be helpful.

Do Your Homework

Before you leave for your assignment, find out as much as possible about the school system, curriculum, teaching and learning styles, and available resources in the country and institution where you will be working.

Talk to People

If possible, meet or talk with the school administrator to get information about the school system and curriculum and get a sense of the teachers and their needs. Also, talking directly to former or current teachers and students of the school will help you learn about interests, English proficiency, teaching styles, and attitudes. If time allows, send a survey to prospective trainees. Furthermore, an inquiry through TESL-L (an international computer bulletin board for those involved in English language teaching) could yield insights from those who have been to the country and are familiar with TESOL in that area of the world.

For example, when doing teacher training in Fiji, I was able to meet with the school administrator and learn about Fiji's school examination system and curriculum before I went. He told me the school had an English-only policy, teachers were comfortable using English, most had completed two-year teacher training programs, would be excited to learn about TESOL, and would prefer practical rather than theoretical workshops. He also said that teaching methods needed improvement. From former Fijian students I had taught, I knew that their level of spoken English was advanced although their written English was lower. I also knew that English was the official language of the country and widely used. This information helped me develop effective workshops.

Read Articles

See what has been written about your destination in professional journals and what research is being conducted. From articles I read about Fiji, I learned that the audio-lingual method was widely used in primary schools and was not always effective as teachers sometimes had limited English proficiency. Also, course materials did not meet the needs of students and were not culturally appropriate. Research and in-service training was being conducted by the local university to promote reading in the schools, and to train teachers to create more appropriate materials. The articles also provided me with names of people working in TESOL and education fields at the local university whom I contacted when I arrived.

Locate Institutions

Local universities, embassies, and international volunteer organizations are sources of support and materials. Many of them have libraries or TESOL professionals who can offer materials, advice, and ideas. Through my contacts at the University of the South Pacific in Fiji, I was able to learn what was being done to improve English teaching and learning as well as what books, journals, training, and courses were available to my trainees.

Plan Tentative Workshops

Once you have gathered preliminary information, decide on topics for your workshops and begin reading and collecting materials and ideas. Choose topics that both fit the needs of your trainees and your own expertise and knowledge. Planning several topics ahead of time will help you narrow the number of books you need to take and make your suitcase lighter. Also, having a general outline of each workshop means you can begin when you arrive, but you can still be flexible if you find the situation and needs are different from what you expected.

At Your Destination

Once you reach your destination, continue gathering information as you present your workshops. Talk to teachers, administrators, students, and parents, either informally through social interaction, or formally through interviews or surveys. Find out about their needs, interests, concerns, available time, education, and English proficiency. Visit local universities, embassies, and other institutions to locate resources for English teaching. Determine what the role of English is in the country where you are working. How important is it? What are people's attitudes towards it? How is it used and why is it needed? This information will help you tailor your workshops to the needs and interests of your trainees.

Another way to ensure that workshops fit the needs of trainees is to visit their classes. This will give you an idea of teaching styles, culture, and English proficiency. Be sure to tell teachers that you are there to observe, not to evaluate.

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*The term TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) is used in this article as an umbrella term that encompasses TESL, TEFL, and other related areas of English language teaching.

When I visited the classes of my trainees in Fiji, I learned that teachers used English almost exclusively in their teaching and used it well, but because classes were teacher-centered, students did not have enough opportunities to use English. Thus, the overall objective for my workshops was to help teachers find ways to increase the use of English in their classrooms. Visiting classes will help you plan and present appropriate workshops.

The Workshops

Always model what you want your trainees to do. For example, I introduced a lesson planning method called R.O.P.E.S (review, overview, presentation, exercise, summary). Thereafter, I used this method in each workshop and included a variety of activities for each part of the lesson so that trainees could see the method in action and experience it the way their students would.

Also, because I wanted to encourage learner-centered classes, I made my workshops learner-centered, emphasizing pair and group work and student (trainee) talking time. We also had specific workshops on these topics where we discussed the advantages and disadvantages of increased student participation and learned how to effectively structure pair and group work and student talking time in the classroom.

When visiting my trainees' classrooms, I noticed that students needed to work on reading skills and vocabulary. They often recited texts aloud in a chorus but did not always understand what they were reading. In the workshops we learned about prereading, postreading, and teaching and reviewing vocabulary. To model this, I made sure to introduce assigned readings to my trainees in a way to capture their interest. I also gave them guiding questions so they would have a purpose for reading, and followed up with comprehension checks, discussion, and other postreading activities. As a result, trainees were able to see how to teach reading in their own classes. In addition, we participated in a variety of vocabulary review activities using technical words and concepts that we had learned in previous sessions. This enabled trainees to review the content of the workshops and at the same time practice new ways to review vocabulary with their own students.

Trainees were also given the opportunity to evaluate themselves and the techniques they were learning. They filled out a self-evaluation form each time they tried a technique we had learned in the workshops. Sometimes they discussed these in pairs or small groups. At other times, trainees were asked to give brief reports on what they were doing in their classrooms and a group discussion followed. Evaluating themselves and discussing their teaching helped trainees become more reflective and learn from each other.

Evaluation

One way to evaluate your workshops is by noting attendance and the verbal feedback trainees give you. A more direct method, if it is possible, is to visit trainees' classrooms, and see if they are using the techniques you have been teaching, or if they are having problems incorporating them. This will help you identify what needs reviewing or reteaching or what does not work in the culture. Another method of evaluation is to give a survey in which trainees rate the usefulness of the workshops and provide additional suggestions and comments.

Giving TESOL training workshops can be a rewarding and enriching experience. Careful preparation and consideration of content and methods of presentation will give you confidence and help your workshops be successful.

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We look forward to reading your article!

Three more Heinemann books on EFL teacher training

Reviewed by Gabriela Grigoroiu and Carmen Nedelcu, Romania

Inside Teaching

Tim Bowen and Jonathan Marks 1994
Heinemann Teacher Development Series
181 pp £12.50
ISBN 0 435 24089 7

Learning Teaching

Jim Scrivener 1994
Heinemann Teacher Development Series
221 pp £12.50
ISBN 0 435 24089 7

Towards Teaching

Colin Campbell and Hanna Kryszewska 1995
Heinemann European Language Classroom Series 104 pp £12.50
ISBN 0 435 24077 3

Heinemann books on teacher training (TT) and teacher development (TD) are obviously not priced by weight: you get more than twice as many pages for your pound with the second of these titles as with the third. (We trust the authors' royalties are adjusted accordingly.) In other ways too these three books could scarcely be more different, setting themselves different goals and addressing different audiences, thus complementing one another and others published in these two Heinemann series. Bowen and Marks's book (subtitled *Options for English language teachers*) is straight TD, very similar in approach to Parrott's *Tasks for Language Teachers* (though in our opinion with more motivating tasks); Scrivener's (subtitled *A guidebook for English language teachers*) is a training course for pre-service trainees or untrained teachers; and Campbell and Kryszewska's (subtitled *An exploration of teaching skills*), while also intended for pre-service trainees, practises not only language but also interpersonal skills that are, in a sense, prior to the methodology course.

A stance shared by the first two (as their subtitles suggest) is the commitment to a reflective approach to TD or TT – the authors' repeated insistence that there is no single right way to teach, but that teaching styles (just like learning styles) vary between individuals, and that even for the same teacher, there should not be a single all-purpose teaching style for use on all occasions with all learner groups. Bowen and Marks's starting position, for instance, quoted from Donald Freeman, is that:

- we don't know for sure how languages are learnt or what makes good language teaching
- prescriptivism in teacher training is often ineffective
- classroom teachers know more about successful language learning and teaching than outside experts do.

This last piece of intellectual levelling is also, of course, a standard plank of the reflective platform. Obviously the anti-authoritarian position *can* lead to complete relativism, if every teacher is considered to be the ultimate expert on what happens in her own classroom; but Bowen and Marks do give their own opinions (after reader/participants have been asked for theirs), though virtuously stressing that they are merely personal points of view and they themselves in no way authorities. They also sneak in quite a few pieces of conventional methodological wisdom or received knowledge in the form of views quoted from teachers with whom they have used these or similar TD activities (as well, of course, as not-so-conventional views). This device of "peer-mediated input" has a second pay-off, if our own reactions are anything to go by: other teachers' views make compulsive reading and contribute a lot to the liveliness and interest of the book.

In their first chapter – *Faith, guilt and doing the right thing* (a fair example of their wacky style in chapter headings) – Bowen and Marks confront the issue of what TD actually is. The reader/participant is led through the rationale of the reflective approach, the need for continual change, and the concepts of guilt-free change and teacher autonomy. This is no empty academism if indeed, as we are told, some native-speaker EFL teachers perceive TD as a stratagem on the part of management to keep them happy, year after year, as they go on doing the same job. There follow rather lacklustre chapters on language-teaching terminology (how much? how useful?) and on peer-observation and classroom research (*On the inside looking in* – an allusion, we understand, to a well-known saying about tent hygiene). After this clearing of the ground, successive chapters deal with learners' errors, pronunciation teaching, grammar, vocabulary, reading (excellent coverage, stimulating tasks), listening, writing, humanistic approaches (the same old threesome – the Silent Way, CLL and Suggestopaedia) and a final section on continued development.

The coverage, therefore, is idiosyncratic, with nothing, for example, on functional teaching, fluency work, cultural content, literature, planning or testing; but there is no claim to explore all areas of methodology, and the authors are in any case far more concerned with concept and attitude development than with actual teaching skills. Discussion of classroom skills is not entirely absent, but the skills/attitudes balance varies a lot from chapter to chapter. On *reading*, for example, there is a wealth of possible task types for discussion and evaluation, whereas pronunciation teaching is treated almost entirely in

continued

abstraction from practical classroom techniques. Under *writing*, a wide range of tasks are considered, but there is little or no discussion of the crucial areas (especially for TD, we believe) of communicative effectiveness and of feedback to the learner.

The chapter format is flexible, but all chapters show the three features which Nunan is quoted in a recent *EL Gazette* as considering indispensable in a methodology book – it should contain input, be at least partly data-based and be interactive. The authors provide lively chapter introductions and commentaries linking the tasks; data is provided in the shape of the teacher quotes already mentioned and the results of teachers' opinion surveys (also compulsive reading); and there are excellent, motivating tasks, e.g. listing, prioritising, playing the metaphor game, answering questionnaires (often with pop-magazine-style interpretations of your results, on the lines of "If you scored over 20, you are a ..." – also very motivating, we found).

The book is addressed to the individual reader/participant (who needs her own copy) and to the group. This raises of course one of the paradoxes of TD: that an activity in which individual autonomy is stressed is often such a dreadful bore if pursued solo, but can be stimulating and effective in a group. A drawback though may be that attempts to think for oneself can easily drown in group-think.

In conclusion, *Inside Teaching* is an excellent book, better even in our opinion than Parrott's also excellent book, and might actually make TD the fun it is always supposed to be.

Scrivener's *Learning Teaching* shares, as we have said, Bowen and Marks's rejection of prescriptivism in methodology, though Scrivener believes that certain high-level features should be compatible with all good language teaching, viz. learning through doing, whole-person learning and learner autonomy. In this he resembles Ellis and Robinson in their belief that certain learner-centred criteria for evaluating lessons are actually method-independent; or the classic study by Rosenshine and Furst abstracting, from numerous studies of teacher effectiveness, the teacher characteristics most frequently found to be associated with successful teaching. Scrivener states a further meta-methodological belief, namely that all teaching is a matter of selecting options from among those available to the teacher at a given moment; and that the best teachers are those with the most options – the largest bag of tricks. (There are strong echos here of Stevick, and others, although they are never cited.) Choice is the principle on which the book is constructed (and indeed Bowen and Marks's subtitle would have fitted Scrivener's book better; perhaps it was already pre-empted). We are not convinced that, as an empirical truth, this proposition stands up; but as a guiding principle in TT and TD it undoubtedly makes a lot of sense. And it is thus that at every stage in the book Scrivener is concerned to widen his novice teacher's repertoire and provide him/her with more choices.

Like Bowen and Marks, Scrivener meets Nunan's requirements for a good methodology book. It is thus that we find: input (the main text); data (transcripts, student language, teachers' notes, etc.); and interactivity in the shape of a wide variety of tasks – choices between options, agree/disagree (N.B. not true/false!), language analysis, analysis of lesson material, appeals to language-learning experience, introspection (*How do you listen to a weather forecast in your own language?*), personal responses to data supplied, and plenty of planning tasks.

Classroom management is the subject of an early chapter and is then reverted to in later chapters (*Toolkit 1* and *Toolkit 2*), which spreads it out nicely through the course (for this is a course to work through). Other early lessons deal with use of the textbook (very sensibly viewed as a normal support for teaching and learning, particular for beginning teachers) and with lesson planning. Scrivener gives the lie to the teacher trainer's common pretence that *all* good teachers, *all through* their careers, plan *all* their lessons in minute detail. Formal lesson planning, he says, is essentially a learning activity itself, though experienced teachers too will of course make informal plans, if they are wise, especially when dealing with new students, materials or activities.

Later chapters deal with the speaking skill (lots of excellent material), vocabulary and grammar. The three other skills are packed, rather surprisingly, into a single shortish chapter. Perhaps this is on the grounds that if the beginner teacher sticks mainly to a published course, the teacher's book will give detailed guidance on the treatment of these skills. Greater interest in language systems rather than skills may also reflect Scrivener's theoretical concern with learning paradigms and promotion of his own ARC paradigm (here set out at the end of the chapter on grammar teaching). Much ink has lately been spilt on this (see for instance Scrivener's or Willis's articles in *The Teacher Trainer**, or Harmer's in *MET*), though Brumfit's test-teach-test presented the basic alternative to PPP fifteen years ago. We will not go into it here, except to say that ARC is part and parcel of Scrivener's option-based concept of teaching and teacher-training, and that he treats it, here, with commendable modesty.

The book concludes with a series of photocopiable observation sheets and a somewhat patchy index – authors and publishers never seem to realise how often methodology books are used for reference by both teachers and trainees. A little extra expense on a decent index makes a world of difference to the user.

We enjoyed reading Scrivener's book and found it often challenging ourselves – as trainers, because one realises how few options one often gives trainees, and as teachers, because so much of one's work becomes a routine in which the choices available are often not considered at all. Scrivener may make more demands on the trainee than would a more prescriptive approach, but in a number of areas (notably presentation of new language) his book

* See also Bruton's Comment p.20 of this issue.

presents more ideas – and of course options – than do standard textbooks like Harmer or Hubbard.

The third book, *Towards Teaching*, is the fourth to appear in the series *The European Language Classroom*, and it does indeed address an area on which British or American TEFL would probably have little enough to say – the pre-methodology training of pre-service trainees. Campbell and Kryszewska have written a recipe book for P/S teacher trainers comprising 79 activities they have used with their own trainees and based, they say, on observation of skills actually used by successful teachers. It may be (as we suspect) that the alleged derivation from classroom observation of the skills practised in the book is a rationale that was added later to a skills repertoire actually based, much more subjectively, on the authors' joint experience; but there is no doubt that the linguistic and interpersonal skills that these activities call for are all such as to be useful to language teachers.

The tasks are multi-layered and often ingenious, combining language skills, sometimes study skills, and different sorts of interactive behaviour so as to develop concepts useful in language teaching, raise awareness of teachers' and learners' roles, and perhaps also enhance trainees' image of teaching as an attractive profession requiring interpersonal skills of a very high order. This last is particularly important in countries where possible future teachers study alongside others who do not intend to teach. These activities could be used on such a course, since many (but not all) of them, it seems to us, would be useful for language students who were not future teachers.

The problem, of course, is where to find the time. The authors present their material as part of the first of three strands in P/S training – language development, methodology and "supported teaching practice". Our experience is that in most P/S training, syllabus pressure and curriculum constraints are so great that it is extremely hard to find a place for extras like these, however admirable.

Another problem concerns the balance between awareness raising and skills training. "*Where are the coins?*" for example is an activity in which observers have to watch a number of people at the same time so as to see who places coins around the room, and where. It is designed to make trainees conscious of the teacher's need to observe a lot of different individuals at the same time, and also to practise the skill of "observing what students are doing". This is admirable and the skill is indisputably useful to teachers; but how many times would you have to repeat this activity in order to make a significant difference to the participants' powers of observation? In other words, we feel that what may be amusing activities (even if, as in this case, language content is not very significant), and useful for awareness raising, are often unlikely to make a significant contribution to trainees' future classroom skills.

In spite of this doubt, we feel that Campbell and Kryszewska's book is a valuable contribution to the growing tendency to relate the language-teaching component of P/S training to the concurrent or subsequent methodology component. In our own country (Romania), this is increasingly the case in university English courses, from which future teachers graduate. We are grateful for the interesting ideas and ingenious communicative activities that this book provides.

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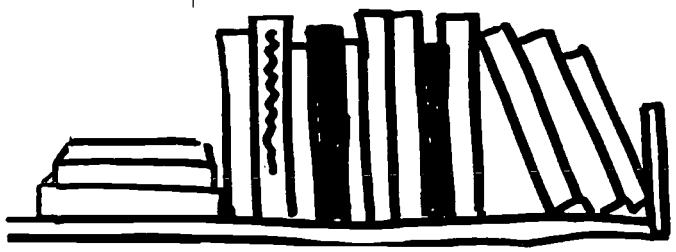
Biodata

Gabriela Grigoroiu and Carmen Nedelcu are senior lecturers in the English Department at the University of Craiova in Romania, where they concerned amongst other things with the methodology courses and teaching practice. Both are working on their doctorates – Gabriela on a reflective approach to teacher training and Carmen in lexicography.

PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED



Of particular relevance or interest to teacher trainers are three books from CUP that underline the present shift from studying the teacher and the language class from the outside to studying from the inside.

Voices from the Language Classroom. Bailey K & D Nunan, eds. (1996) CUP ISBN 0-521-55904-9. A collection of 19 original papers by teachers and researchers using mainly qualitative/naturalistic enquiry methods in real live classrooms. Divided into 5 sections, e.g., classroom dynamics and interaction, curricular issues, socio-political perspectives. Collections are often disparate texts shoehorned into a tight pair of covers. Not so this time. This collection is interesting, easy to read and remarkably coherent in pace, methodology and theme.

Teacher Cognition in Language Teaching by Devon Woods (1996) CUP ISBN 0-521-49788-4. Attempting to understand teaching from the point of view of teachers, Woods focuses on how teachers' knowledge, beliefs, attitudes and experience shape their planning and instructional decisions. He also uses interviews, stories and lesson transcripts from a case study of university level ESL teachers in Canada in this wonderfully painstaking record of ten years work. Whilst at times Woods seems to take twenty pages to state what would seem to an experienced teacher to be obvious, he also shows clearly how practising teachers construct a personal and workable theory of teaching.

Teacher Learning in Language Teaching. Freeman, D & J Richards, eds. (1996) CUP ISBN 0-521-55907-3. 15 original articles based on studies conducted in N. America, Asia and Australia examine the process of learning to teach a second or foreign language through the descriptive accounts of the experience of teachers. Sections on starting out in language teaching, learning while teaching, the role of language teacher education. The book includes a full discussion plus index of research methods.

The Self-Directed Teacher by David Nunan & Clarice Lamb (1996) CUP ISBN 0-521-49773-6. Aims to prepare teachers to make independent decisions in key areas such as lesson planning, teacher talk, group work, error correction, resource management and evaluation. Provides a variety of models and tasks for readers to work with. It is doubtful that many inexperienced teachers would have the time or energy to work through the whole book but either reading and doing the tasks in your head or selecting sections to work through thoroughly could prove very fruitful. Experienced teachers will find interesting discussions of familiar areas.

Observation, a Course for Teachers by Melanie Ellis (1996) ISBN 83-85910-174, This slender booklet gives a peep into the training-for-observation component of a course for teachers in Poland. The book has enough tasks for 10 hours of self and 10 hours of other observation plus three written assignments on each. Instructions are exceptionally clear. Available from Ellis, wl Wolnoski 38, Zbroslawice 42-674, Poland.

Dyslexia. How would I cope? by Michael Ryden (1989). Jessica Langley Pubs ISBN 1-85302-385-X. A 64 page booklet written for ordinary members of the public by a dyslexic author. It shows how written communication can appear to a dyslexic person and how difficulties and frustrations can be minimised.

30 Years of Language Teaching, Eric Hawkins, ed. (1996) ISBN 1-874016-67-4. (CILT, 20 Bedfordbury, Covent Garden, London WC2N 4IB.) Published to celebrate the birthday of the Centre for Information on Language Teaching in the UK, 25 contributors consider primary to university level performance of girls and boys, national need for languages, Britains own community languages (including Welsh and Gaelic). Part 7 is on who trains the trainers.

Enabling Student Learning. Gina Wisker & Sally Brown, eds. (1996) Kogan Page. ISBN 0-7494-1790-0. For those in higher education providing guidance and support to students to help them learn. Case studies illustrating guidance systems and strategies in modular schemes, in personal and peer tutoring, in computer-based learning, assessment and supervision of research students. Small print. Mainly UK university based.

Interaction in the Language Curriculum by Leo van Lier (1996) Longman. ISBN 0-582-248795. Born of a real desire to understand what part of academic content matter is relevant to the ESL classroom and what part of the ESL classroom is relevant to academic content matter, this book treats theory, research and practice as inseparable ingredients in the work of a language teacher 'doing' the curriculum. It is written in an unusual style for an EFL book in that there are constant references to sociology, philosophy and cognitive science. The author focuses on awareness, autonomy and authenticity as underlying principles in the social process of learning and teaching. Dense, thoughtful, cross-disciplinary.

Learning about Language, issues for primary teachers by Alison Sealey (1996) Open University Press. ISBN 0-335-19203-3. Taking the approach that learning about language can take place wherever learning takes place, the book tackles issues such as what schools are like, what formal education is for, and what

continued

children and language are like. Examples are given of complete stretches of naturally occurring spoken and written language and of ways of working with these.

Second Language Practice. Georges Duquette, ed. (1995) Multilingual Matters. ISBN 1-85359-305-2. 13, mainly Canadian, papers giving practical strategies for implementing the communicative approach in different languages at different levels of competence while referring throughout to second language acquisition (SLA) research and methodology books. The mood is, we know enough about SLA now. Let's get started!

New Ways in Teaching Writing. Ronald White, ed. (1995) TESOL. ISBN O-938791-57-9. A range of activities that develop composing skills, attend to the social processes of reading and writing, involve the peer group in evaluation and responding to drafts and focus on different types and formats of writing. Use of cassette recorders and e-mail included. Recipe format. Lack of indexing makes it a little hard to find useful things again without re-reading all the way through.

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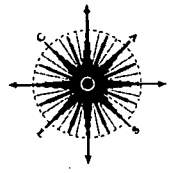

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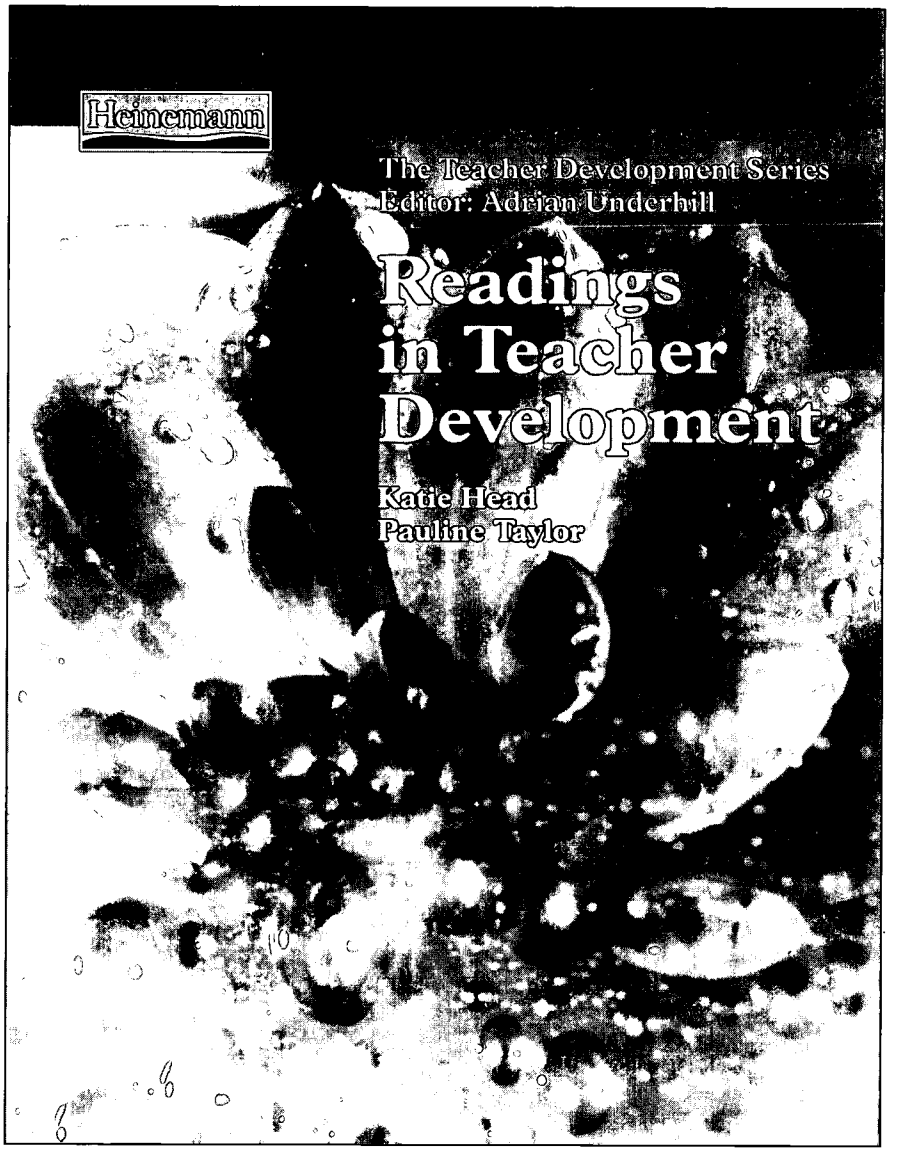

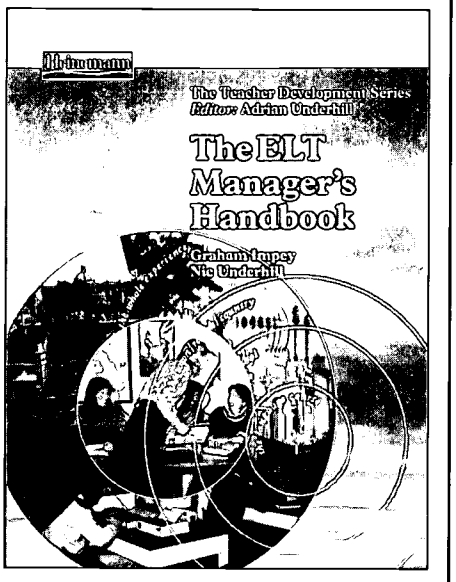

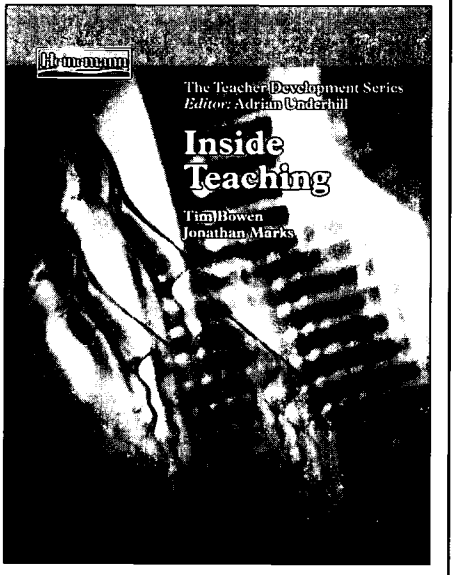

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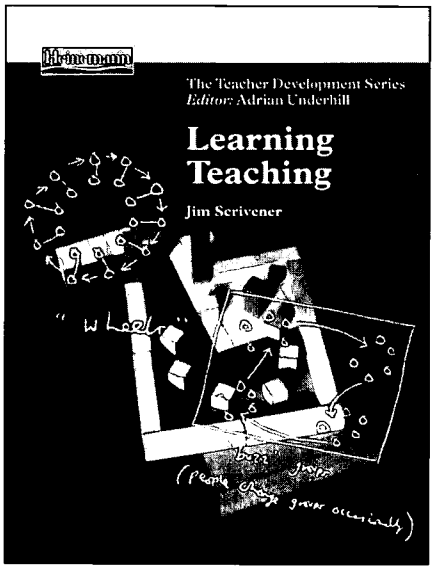

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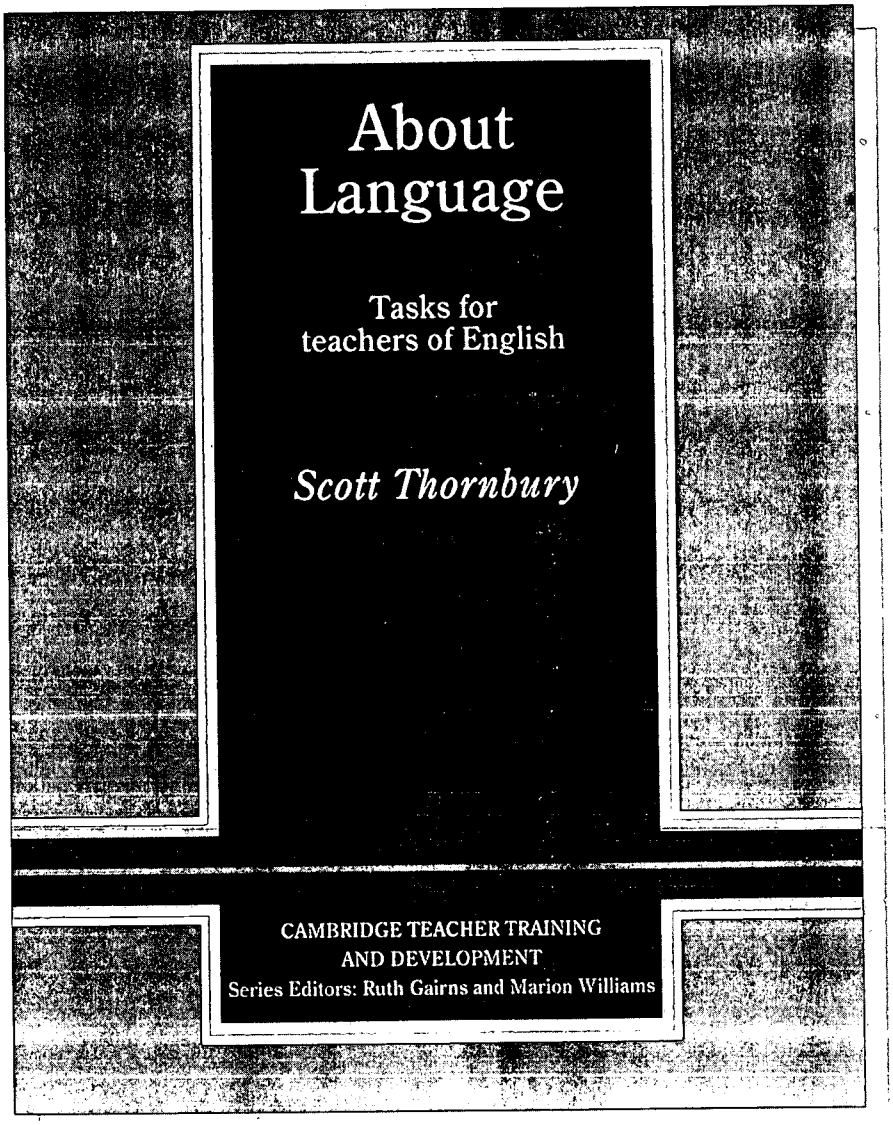
About Language

Tasks for teachers of English

Scott Thornbury

NEW



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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

Welcome to the third and last issue of 1997!

Lin Dawson and Carol Berezai start us off this time with a discussion of a cascade training project in the Czech Republic. The project was unusual in giving support to newly- trained teachers by letting them experience some training practice before actually letting them loose as trainers (P3).

Next are three separate articles loosely linked together around the topic of teaching methods. First, the Session Plan (P7) details one way of encouraging teachers to consider what constitutes a "method", how methods are the same and different from each other and what sort of method they may practically be using themselves. This article is followed by Mike Church's adaptation of the Parable of the Good Samaritan (P9). A language student in need finds that passers-by representing different methods offer very little in the way of practical help! Ted Rodgers (P10), well-known for his book on approaches and methods written with Jack Richards, (as well as for singing and dancing while he teaches!), tells us what he is up to these days and also provides us with an alternatiive ending to Mike Church's spoof parable.

Bonnie Tsai and Marie Dessaux-Barberio are back in the Trainee Voices column. (P12). As in Volume 11 Number 2 they wait until teachers in training have finished a course and had time to draw breath before asking for their comments on the experience.

Best selling author Monty Roberts kindly found time to give me an interview earlier this year (P14). A successful competitor and trainer in the horse world, he is now much sort after as a consultant in business and social work because of his ideas on how mammals learn best.

A welcome addition to the sparse literature on team teaching is the article by Eddie Edmundson and Steve Fitzpatrick (P16). For a couple of years, The British Council in Recife, Brazil had the wonderful luxury of weekly timetabled team teaching. The article records lessons learned from that experience.

Our guests in Authors' Corner (P19) this time are Marion Williams and Robert Burden. Their article, written while they were stranded at an airport on their way to a conference, records the gradual building of their friendship and way of working together.

Sylvia Chalker returns to contribute to our Language Matters column again. She gives us 15 oddities found in current writing and invites us to consider whether they are mistakes, correct usage or a sign of language change. Fortunately comment is provided for the uncertain!

A new column starts this issue. It is called Just for Interest and will give space to articles that are either amusing or interesting but definitely NOT written with TESOL professionals in mind. It is often when you are not thinking about work that the best ideas come. Also when browsing through a business book the other day, I noticed an exhortation to read something each week that you would defifnitely not come across in your usual diet of work and leisure reading. In this spirit Professor John Perry offers you thoughts on creative procrastination!(P22).

Rounding us off nicely, near the books section (P26), is Seth Lindstromberg's review of "Looking at Classrooms", a new video package from CUP.

Looking through this issue again prior to going to print, I realise that every article, either via its author, subject matter or style has a healthy dash of iconoclasm about it. A good way to go into winter!

I hope you enjoy the issue

Tessa Woodward.

Editor

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Cascades or Irrigation Systems?

by Lin Dawson and Carol Berezai, The Czech Republic

A plea for the inclusion of "supported experiential learning" in any trainer training process.

Have you ever met a project leader from an inset scheme designed to "cascade" its message down through the teaching population? The ones I have met were full of enthusiasm, commitment, and of the numbers of teachers who would be showered by the scheme.

And have you met the teachers who were on the course? – full of praise and enthusiasm about the quality and content of the course, full of commitment to the new ideas that they are using in their classroom, – and full of excuses explaining that their colleagues were too busy, too nervous, too suspicious, too content with their own practice to want to make any changes.

Could it be that a cascade is too similar to a fountain? – with no clear sense of direction, no protection from the wind and subject to blockages in the nozzle! Would we really try to grow crops with a fountain in the middle of the field? When we irrigate crops, do we not take care to guide the water to where we need it, to prevent leaks and wastage and to monitor its quality?

If we are putting time, effort and energy into a training scheme that we value and feel should be spread, should we not work at guiding and protecting that part of the process?

This, at least, was our idea when, in 1993, a group of British Council teacher trainers decided to train some Czech and Slovak practising teachers to deliver inset seminars instead of us on the British Council summer schools. Our aim may not sound too ambitious now, but in the ELT climate of the time it went strongly against the conviction current then, that English native speakers were the best English teachers and the ONLY trainers for teachers of English. The ground was not at all fertile for non-native speaking TESOL trainers – the conditions for growth were quite hostile.

The project in Moravia

In Moravia, in the east of what is now the Czech Republic, we started our own trainer training scheme. [Throughout the article "[teacher] trainers" are the Czech teachers who were trained under the scheme, and the "project leaders" are the British Council inset trainers who led the project. The term "adviser" is used to refer to a more experienced colleague; at the beginning that was usually the project leaders, but is used later to refer to trainers who have been in the project longer.] The scheme started as an experiment with no long term plan and has developed into an on-going project which has trained 18 local practising teachers as teacher trainers, six of whom are now experienced trainers of trainers. Our awareness of the local ground conditions meant that we paid attention to where and how the trainers would work – particularly to helping them feel confident – and of course, to the quality of their work. We could not risk seminars which could be dismissed as "not as good as seminars with English native speaker trainers".

In selecting the trainers we used group interviews to choose six teachers who were potentially good team members. We also took into consideration

- experience of inset
- ideas on teaching and learning
- experience with new materials/approaches
- competence in English
- type of school
- geographical location

We sent the teachers on a trainer training course in the UK. This was partly because there were no such courses available at the time [the very idea of Czech TESOL trainers was unthinkable] and partly because it would have been virtually impossible to persuade any Czech teachers to entertain the idea of working as trainers without such a course.

"Supported experiential learning"

What happened after the UK course sets our scheme apart from many cascade systems of training. It is the irrigation system of the title. We required the trainers to teach the methodology component of a summer school for teachers with little or no experience of inset and we gave them systematic support and guidance in doing it. In effect, we chose the ground and we tended what we were trying to grow.

The support took the form of planning discussions [both for the course and for seminars], organising the trainers into "teaching pairs", encouraging trainers to set personal development aims for each session, and leading feedback discussions after sessions. Towards the end of the summer school the project leaders also conducted formal observation of methodology seminars and gave the trainers feedback. It is this whole process that we are calling "supported experiential learning". It could be described as "forced" experiential learning, but looking at it more positively, we prefer to say that it provides the stimulus for reflection and self evaluation, and that without such a stimulus it is not easy for a trainer to reflect constructively on difficult issues.This is true particularly in the early stages of working reflectively and in a culture where this is a new concept. We believe that many cascade training systems may not be as successful as they could be, simply for lack of supported experiential learning.

Outcomes

There was good reason to be satisfied with this summer school idea of "training" practice:

- the teachers were very appreciative of their Czech trainers [particularly of the fact that their work was based on experience of Czech classrooms, and of the

continued

"bonus" provided by the trainers' ability to conduct parts of sessions in Czech];

- the trainers felt sufficiently confident to continue their work and, had enjoyed the experience!
- the project leaders had observed directly and indirectly the effectiveness of the sessions.

The trainers needed little encouragement to become involved in inset during the school year, with the same support available, and all of them decided to teach on the next [1994] summer school too – this time extending their experience by running the whole course themselves, with one of them as course director instead of a British Council course director.

The project leaders needed equally little encouragement to repeat the process with six more Czech teachers and the whole project doubled in size. The third trainer training summer school [1995] was radically different from the first two; the six novice trainers fresh from their UK course were guided and supported by the six original trainers, and the project leaders became consultants with little direct involvement in the training process.

Organisation of the Moravian summer schools

1993
BC course director
3 pairs of Czech trainers
3 groups of 10 inexperienced teachers
BC language teacher
also providing trainer support

1994
BC course director
Czech Director of Studies
5 Czech trainers
30 teachers
2 language teachers
+
BC Director of Studies
3 pairs of novice trainers
3 groups of 10 inexperienced teachers
2 language teachers

1995
Czech course director
5 experienced Czech trainers
30 teachers
2 language teachers
+
3 pairs of novice trainers
3 groups of 10 inexperienced teachers
2 language teachers
+
Czech course director
5 Czech trainers
30 teachers
2 language teachers
+
2 BC course consultants supporting the trainers
involved in trainer support

As the project became technically sustainable, with the trainers experienced in supporting new trainers, it developed a life of its own. It became possible for the project leaders to reflect on the scheme. We had always believed that the supported experiential learning, the hands-on learning component, with its systematic support and guidance for the trainers, was an important part of the success, and the collection of data from the trainers and an analysis of our own experience has reinforced this belief and given us some new awareness.

Trainers' perceptions

Comparing the value of learning from input on courses with the value of trying things out, most trainers felt that theory and practice could not be separated. They commented that the input that they had had on the UK courses had been the building material for their practice and had helped them to understand the role of a trainer, but that trying things out had helped them BECOME trainers.

At the beginning it had been very important to try things out with an adviser who they could discuss everything with. Later on they became more independent, and trying things out on their own or with a colleague has become the method they value most.

The chance to talk through seminar plans with an adviser [provided by the supported experiential learning] was perceived as a very important part of the whole process. They said it made them feel secure, more confident, less likely to have things go wrong. It helped them organise their ideas.

Pre- and post- seminar discussions were valued as a means of making the trainers think about their aims and everything involved in training, teaching and learning from different points of view. It made them question everything they had planned and made them come to their own decisions based on careful consideration and evaluation of all the issues. Last, but by no means least, the trainers perceived that this had resulted in their building the process of reflection into their everyday working habits.

Project leaders' perceptions

We had no doubt that the project generally was a success: that we have18 trainers who are active in inset, out of 18 who have been trained during the three years, is a figure that speaks for itself. The acceptance of the Moravian trainers by Moravian teachers of English was another highly desired outcome. We believe that the supported experiential learning made a very significant contribution to these and other positive outcomes:

The team of trainers

One of the clear successes of the project is the very high level of personal commitment from the trainers, and we believe that this is a direct result of the personal involvement that is required by the supported experiential learning. The level of bonding and of mutual support that exists would not have developed without, for example, the "teaching partner" system and the general atmosphere of caring teamwork that the instances of experiential learning enabled – and demanded.

It is impossible, in our opinion, to overestimate the value of such group support in the situation that the Moravian trainers work in. It is no exaggeration to say that the changes that are happening in the Czech education system are being led by teachers of English, nor to say that this often makes life less than comfortable for them with their colleagues, headteachers, and even with pupils and their parents! The principles of the communicative teaching of English, particularly the idea of more learner-centred teaching, are very different from traditional values of education in central Europe. By being part of a like-minded group, the Moravian trainers have not only managed to maintain their commitment to a different way of teaching, but they have also managed to develop their understanding and practice of such an approach, and, have kept faith with the idea of sharing their development with other teachers of English.

It is possible to cite examples of other teachers and trainers who have attended top quality UK courses on teacher training, but who, if they are involved in any inset [or preset] at all, deliver seminars that retain little that is not an accepted part of traditional educational practice here: people who "know all the words and formulae" but whose practice does not bear them out. We feel that such people might have retained more "modern practice" had they had chance to be part of a team.

Greater confidence

It seems that the availability of support enables trainers to develop their confidence more quickly. Possibly they feel protected from "disaster". They are able to take risks in a secure environment and for every risk taken that is not a disaster, they can add another measure of confidence. We have to say that the confidence developed is "genuine"; it is not dependent on the presence of an adviser. Indeed many of the trainers have sufficient confidence NOT to follow our recommendations!

Quality

We would also argue [from our formal and informal observation of seminars, from formal and informal feedback from participants on Czech-led courses and from the consistent and increasing attendance on courses] that the experiential learning has produced good quality trainers. Awareness raising – a vital part of any learning process – is based on immediate reality. Trainers often comment that a concept from the UK course has suddenly "become real" as they discuss something for [or from] a seminar that they will give [or have given]. It seems that the supported experiential learning gives depth to the learning from the UK course. A course which, for our trainers, preceded the reality and was, necessarily, based on abstract concepts.

Supported experiential learning optimises the chance of development from reflection, and optimises the value of input from any course. The trainers' comment on the value and inseparability of both parts of the learning process is apposite.

Perhaps we could say that the support of experiential learning can be seen to minimise the "error " of learning by "trial and error"

continued →

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Optimising experience

There are many advantages in using practising English teachers as part-time ELT trainers, not least their thorough understanding of the situation that the teachers attending their courses work in. But there is also a disadvantage: it takes a long time for trainers to get a significant number of hours of training "under their belts". If some of these hours involve experiential learning [ie. if support is available] then the value of those hours is in itself more significant and we think that this more than compensates for the disadvantage.

Rate of development

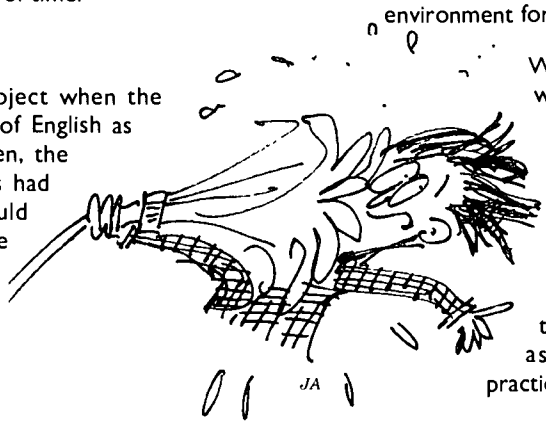
Throughout the 3 years of the project a recurrent problem has been convincing trainers that they are able to take the "next step" in their development. Initially, we could not have succeeded without the perceived "magic" of the UK course. Later, we found that the promise of support tipped the balance – the trainers trust the process of supported experiential learning. Without this "forced" rate of development, it would not have been possible to achieve a project that is sustainable, with its own trainer trainers in place, in such a short time.

Value for money!

The inclusion of supported experiential learning in a trainer training project means that trainers start delivering seminars after a relatively short period of time.

Trainer credibility

At the beginning of this project when the idea of non-native speakers of English as trainers was so new and alien, the risk of poor quality seminars had to be minimised – they could have put the success of the whole project at risk. Supported experiential learning proved itself to be an effective way of minimising that risk.



At the first two summer schools, where the British Council profile was quite high, it lent the Czech trainers a kind of legitimacy. We capitalised on the the prevalent attitude and used the BC presence as a sort of New Appt."rubber stamp" on the courses. In contrast, the 1995 summer school deliberately played down British Council support – the two course consultants were very much in the background. For us, this represents very real progress in a very desirable direction.

Too good to be true?

Yes! There is a serious flaw in the scheme. The workload for the trainers – a full school timetable PLUS all the inset work – is far too heavy. There is no system for these trainers to work in, no way in which their hours in school could be reduced in order to release them for inset work. Consequently, there is the constant risk that either the training programme or the schools will lose skilled and able people. Both of these are to be avoided: trainers who are also full-time teachers have proved extremely valuable, and there are still too few English teachers available to the schools, let alone top quality ones.

Despite this serious problem, the project leaders believe that the apparently illogical step of training trainers before the existence of any infrastructure for them to work within was appropriate.

Conclusion

We believe that supported experiential learning is an essential part of any serious trainer training project. In this project, the trainers appreciate the way they are being trained and believe that they have benefitted from it greatly; gaining confidence and developing more quickly professionally. They feel that the training that they have had and the training that they have done have together been a very satisfying professional experience – an experience that has also refreshed their normal classroom practice and their attitude towards it. On the other hand, they point out that being a full-time teacher and a part-time trainer is often more than one person can manage.

From the project leaders' point of view, supported experiential learning promotes the strong group bonding and mutual support which is so vital, helps trainers become more confident more quickly, produces quality trainers, compensates for part-time trainers' slow acquisition of training hours, enables a swift rate of development, provides competent trainers in the classroom a short time after initial training and creates an optimum learning environment for all the participants in the process.

With apologies for stretching the metaphor, we feel that we have systematically laid valid and lasting irrigation channels. We have established a system with 18 outlets – thus avoiding blocked nozzles! – that is at present reaching about 470 teachers of English in Moravia. Does it not seem that cascades are a relative waste of water? Running an excellent course for teacher trainers, without giving them active support as they put what they have learned into practice, is only doing half a job.

This article is based on a presentation given by Lin Dawson and Bohdana Navratilova [one of the trainers] at the Edinburgh University IALS Symposium on "training the trainers" in November 1995. A more detailed account can be found in the papers from the symposium published in summer 1997.

Lin Dawson is the co-ordinator for inset in Moravia, employed by the Centrum pro dalsi vzdelavani ucitelu, Masaryk University, Brno, Czech Republic and supported by the British Council. CDVU has provided all the local administrative support for the summer schools and for much of the year-round inset. She was trained as a teacher trainer at IH Hastings, was Director of Studies of ILC International House Brno and has been working in her present post since 1992.

Carol Berezai is a teacher trainer employed by the Jan Hus Educational Foundation, Brno, Czech Republic and partially supported by the British Council. She was part of the advisory service in the London Borough of Harrow and has been involved in inset in the Czech Republic since 1991.

Working with Teachers Interested in Different Methods

by Tessa Woodward, UK.

Experienced teachers who spend hours each week in language classrooms are often intrigued when they watch, or experience for themselves as learners, radically different methods from the one(s) they use themselves. The sort of methods I mean are, for example, total physical response, silent way, counselling or community language learning, suggestopedia, co-operative language learning, the natural approach, the direct method, grammar/translation, psychodramatic language learning or all's well.

Some problems can arise when teachers meet new methods. First of all there is the question of what actually constitutes a method and how this differs from an approach or a set of classroom activities. Next, if the meeting with the new method is brief, teachers can come away with very little information on which to make their judgements and so may start thinking that a particular method is for example, "only good for beginners" or "only useful with small/monolingual/advanced classes". If several different methods are met in a shortish space of time, such as on a short refresher course or in a number of quick sessions towards the end of an exam course, conversations comparing and contrasting the different methods can be a bit confused and hazy. They can sound a bit like this:

" Do you know anything about TPR?"

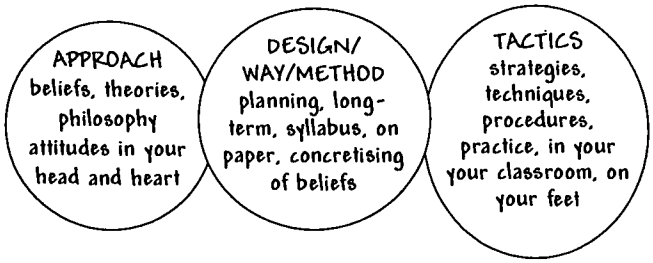
" Erm, that's one of those humanistic methods like the Silent Way, isn't it?"

" Yes. I think they both have a silent period so I guess they must be pretty similar to each other."

With both the genuine interest of teachers in methods new to them in mind and the difficulty of experiencing and discussing the methods seriously and thoroughly, I have evolved a way of working with methods on training courses.

1. If the group of teachers you are working with start showing interest in different methods or start using the names of different methods and approaches, wanting to know more, it is a good idea first of all to make sure that they are clear in their own minds on the distinctions they would make between individual teaching/learning ideas, a method and an approach or belief. I usually work on this by clustering my and participants' terms or associations into three rings on the board like this:

Fig 1.



Whilst the different terms and definitions are coming up there will usually be discussion of overlap between terms, the influence of each of the circles on the other two, and the misuse or loose use of the terms approach and method. If you or your participants would like some background reading here, try Richards 1985 and Woodward 1991. I personally wouldn't dampen the teachers' interest and enthusiasm by telling them that we are considered to be in a post- methods era or by referring them to Richards and Nunan 1990, although you may want to have a think about this yourself!

2. Once the three terms are up and discussed, ask for specific, true examples from the teachers for each term. Thus, taking beliefs (about people, groups, learning, teaching or language), ask teachers to give examples of some of the things they believe. You might get... people learn best when they are relaxed, or people learn best when they are slightly stressed or language is a system, or teaching is a power trip. All answers are fine as long as they are examples of beliefs the teachers really hold. Repeat the procedure with tactics.(You might get, I stroll around the classroom when I first come in making my presence felt in all corners of the room or I go straight to my desk and call the register.) I usually ask for examples of methods last as people always seem to grasp the idea of beliefs and tactics really quickly. Example methods might be any of the ones listed in the first paragraph of this article. You may, however, get completely other things such as NLP. I suggest you note these down somewhere and come back to them later. (See below)

3. Next, explain that you want help in making a list of all the important things to consider in a method. Start the list off with some easy obvious things like special materials or the normal arrangement of people and furniture. Write these two things down the left hand side of your board or OHP. Next, indicate that you are going to be building a sort of grid with the components of a method down one side and the names of different methods across the top. (See fig 2.) Write in two methods that you are sure the majority of your participants have experience of, either as teachers or as learners. Grammar/ translation and the communicative "method" are two that often work well.

Fig 2.

Components elements of method	grammar translation	communicate method	
materials			
organisation			

continued

4. Immediately discuss the first component you have chosen, e.g. special materials, with reference to the two methods on the grid. For example, in grammar translation the teachers might consider that the main materials necessary are, target language texts, parallel language texts, dictionaries and grammar reference books while in a communicative classroom there would be materials such as role play cards, tape recorders, gapped dialogues, materials for information gap activities etc. Do not show any preference for one set of materials over another, just write in some notes in the appropriate box on your grid thus:

Fig3.

materials	GT	CM
	T L texts, Dics, Gr-books,	roleplaycards, tapes, info-group activities

5. Next, elicit other important components of a method and write these and any extra ones you can think of in the list on the left. Ones that might come up are aims, beliefs, teacher's role, students' role, attitude to error, skill order, where the language learnt comes from, whether it is cut into bits, the size of the bits, usual topics and so on. Each time you get a new component make sure you discuss that component and your two basic methods e.g. grammar translation and communicative method. Make notes as you go so that everyone is clear what each component is about and thinks of the two methods carefully in terms of these components.

6. As you work, differences between methods will start coming clear. For example, when discussing the skill order people may note that grammar/translation seems to work with reading, writing, dictionary use and translating skills whereas in the communicative classroom listening and speaking seem more of a priority. Classroom arrangement is often different too with grammar translation using individual desks and the teacher at the front of the class, with clusters of pairs and groups showing up more often in the communicative classroom. Similarities will also show up too of course. Again, as you work, new aspects may be raised as important, for example teachers' attitude towards student co-operation. Add these extra aspects to the left hand column.
You have now got the beginnings of a very interesting chart.

Ways forward:
a) As teachers get to know more methods they can extend their chart to the right by adding more method headings (e.g. Co-operative language learning or the Direct method). Each time they do they can work through the components to see how much they have found out about the new method.
b) As teachers think more about methods and their components they can extend the list on the left further down the page. Teachers I have worked with have added "senses", meaning which of our five senses does the method most use.(Total physical response obviously uses touch, sight and sound.) Other teachers have added, founder, syllabus, reading references, supporting theory on language acquisition, evaluation, type of intelligence, level attitude to stress, and values clarification (see Wallerstein). Others have looked at methods in a more light hearted manner (see next page)
c) Once the teachers have got plenty of components of a method listed you can return to the question of the "odd" things raised earlier, such as NLP. Teachers will now realise that while Neurolinguistic programming has plenty of ideas in it, it hasn't really been applied consistently to language teaching yet and so is not a language teaching method but a feeder field like drama which may prove very useful in terms of insights and techniques at the very least later on.
d) Once some work has been done on more methods and more components or elements, teachers can start to work with the following questions:
Which method do I most use? How do I know this? (By sound taping? By asking an observer in?) Do I share all the components of a method with its "pure" form or have I transmogrified it in some way? What are my beliefs, methods and tactics? Are they consistent with one another? If not, should I get them more in harmony with each other? If so, how?

Conclusion

Working with the methods chart is useful for a number of reasons. It encourages teachers to go way past first impressions to a thorough discussion of what constitutes a method, how different methods are the same and different, and whether they use a method themselves. It can be an incentive to learning more about one or more methods and an incentive to learning about one's own method. By making sure that the teachers contribute their own components and by leaving empty spaces at both the bottom of the left hand list and to the right at the top, the chart or grid can be a stimulus to and a record of continuing professional development.

Related reading

Oller,J W Jr et al eds (1983) Methods that work Newbury House
Richards J C (1985) The context of language teaching CUP Chaps 2 & 3
Richards J C & D Nunan eds (1990) Second language teacher education CUP p 253
Stevick E (1981) A way and ways Newbury House
Wallerstein N (1983) Language and culture in conflict Addison-Wesley Chap 3
Woodward T (1991) Models and metaphors in language teacher training CUP pp 140-146

(For comment on this article please see part of the interview with Ted Rogers on page 10.)

The Parable of The Good Learner

by Mike Church, UK

The poor student lay there by the roadside, evidently in pain. After a while, an old grammarian passed by...

- Are you all right ? he enquired.
- No, I fall off my bike !
- Fell.
- Eh ?
- It's not "I fall off", it's "I fell off". Let's go back to the beginning...
- Eh ?
- Are you all right ?
- No, I just said you !
- Told you.
- Eh ?
- It's not "I said you", it's "I told you". Let's start again...

By the time the student had regained consciousness, the grammarian had long since disappeared, evidently giving him up as a bad job.

A few minutes later, an audiolingualist arrived on the scene...

- What's the matter ? she began.
- I broke my leg.
- Shall I call an ambulance ?
- Yes, please.
- Good. Now, I'll be the victim and you can be the passer-by...
- Eh ?
- Come on !
- Eh ?
- What's the matter ?
- I just told you !
- If you're not going to do it properly, I'm going.
- Hey !...

But it was too late, and the audiolingualist stormed off in a huff.

A short time later, a totally physical respondent came along...

- Get up ! he said rather abruptly.
- I can't. I broke my leg !
- Give me your hand !

The student, not daring to disobey, held out his hand, whereupon the totally physical respondent yanked him to his feet.

- Aaaargh !!!
- Now lie down again !
- Eh ?
- Lie down again !

The student did as he was told but, on being instructed to get up again, pretended that he had passed out. His torturer lost interest at this point and sauntered off down the road to look for another victim.

Next, a humanist passed by...

- Oh dear ! You look awful ! she began.
- So would you if you'd fell off your bike !
- So, how do you feel exactly ?
- There was this lorry and I—
- Yes, that's very interesting, but I said "How do you feel ?", not "How did you fall ?"
- I broke my leg.
- Yes, but emotionally speaking, I mean.
- Eh ?
- Come on, you can tell me, I'm your friend !
- Just call an ambulance, please.
- All in good time, but, first of all, I want you to tell me what's on your mind...

When the student came round again, the humanist was - mercifully - nowhere to be seen.

Then, a silent wayfarer turned up and made a gesture as if to say What the hell happened to you ?

- Help me, please ! the student implored him.

The silent wayfarer, unsatisfied with what he heard, waited impassively...

- I fell off my bike, I think I broke my leg... Well, don't just stand there - call an ambulance !

But the silent wayfarer simply looked at him in bemusement and wandered off back into the woods whence he came.

On looking up again, the student saw a communicative approacher. She was holding a piece of paper...

- I'll start, shall I ? she said.
- Eh ?
- My information is the following : there is a hospital 17 miles away in a town called Bradstock. Buses leave here at 10 minutes to the hour and 10 past the hour, except on Sundays and bank holidays, when there is a considerably reduced service. Today is Sunday. What's YOUR information ?
- I fell off my bike. Call an ambulance.
- Where's the nearest phone box ?
- I don't know.
- Oh dear, I haven't got that information, either...

Thereupon, the communicative approacher completed a small grid on her paper and walked on.

The student was on the point of tears when he heard a familiar voice.

- What's problem, Juan ?

Juan looked up at his classmate...

- Maria, thank God it's you ! Listen • call an ambulance, but don't ask me where is the nearest phone box.
- Don't worry, I find him.

As Maria ran off to seek assistance, Juan felt a great sense of relief. To pass the time, he slipped out his verb list from his back pocket and read to himself : fall, fell, fallen... feel, felt, felt...

INTERVIEW WITH TED RODGERS

I was fortunate to meet Ted Rodgers at a conference for teacher trainers held at International House in London in March 1997. Although we had no time to talk at the conference, we did get to e-mail each other afterwards.

TW Ted, I have used Approaches and Methods in Language Teaching, the book you wrote with Jack Richards for CUP, such a lot. I know you have written other things.

TR That's the text that most people have heard of. Back and Forth, a book of co-operative learning activities I did with Adrian Palmer and Judy Winn Bell Olsen. Prentice Hall distributes that now. I have done quite a few papers with both Jack and Adrian (Buzz) Palmer. I like co-authorship and feel I learn a lot from the process of dialog. I have done a number of pieces that have been published in the places where I have worked, especially in publications of the Regional Language Centre in Singapore and British Council series. I feel fairly strongly about supporting the publications of national ELT groups and try to contribute fairly often to these. Since I have worked in eight countries for a year or so each, this covers a range of such publications. A problem is that some of the things I am most pleased with don't have very wide circulation. There has been discussion with a couple of publishers about doing a collection of papers from some of these more remote sources.

I was also Director of the Hawaii English Project for almost 15 years. This is the largest K-12 Curriculum project of its kind in the US.(K-12 means Kindergarten through grade 12, thus the years of primary and secondary schooling). I am author or co-author of a number of texts in this series-Advertising, Sign Languages, Names, Popular Songs, Writing Systems, Animal Communication, and so forth. These are used primarily in language arts (mother tongue) classes and so are not widely known among ELTers.

TW You are at Bilkent University in Turkey at the moment. What are you up to there?

TR I direct an intensive MATEFL program for mid-career language teachers, predominantly Turkish. This position is supported by a Senior Fullbright Fellowship from the US government. I also teach in the program-SLA, Sociolinguistics, Research Methods, Linguistics. Part of my responsibilities assume availability to work with a variety of national and regional groups, so I bump around doing that as time permits. The teachers in the program are selected from a highly competitive set of applicants. The 18 teachers accepted are released from teaching assignments for a year at full pay, and we cram 36 hours of course work and a thesis into the 10 months we have them as students. So "intensive" is the critical adjective and "as time permits" is the limiting condition.

TW Phew! That sounds like hard work! What are your main messages when working with the mid-career teachers?

TR Hmmm. Being mid-careeer, these folk already have some ideas of what they would like information on and our course try to sample and be responsive to these inquiries. They differ year to year. The first year there was a lot of interest in whether in-service courses actually improve teaching. The in-service course included local Ministry of Education offered courses as well as the UCLES/RSA COTE,DOTE set. Five of the theses out of 18 dealt in one way or another with attempts to determine the pay- offs of such in-service courses. Nothing in our own course was pre-designed to deal with such concerns except peripherally. This year participant interests seem more diverse, but there seems to be an incipient and growing interest in socio-linguistic, community- based inquiry. Again the participants tend to be more expert, or at least have readier access to data, in these areas than the instructers do.

My particular concern the first year was to create a teacher friendly and projective course in Second Language Acquisition. By projective, I mean both predictive (trying to suss out which brand of SLA is likely to be the most insightful and influential) and useful (trying to relate SLA theories to what teachers do in classrooms).This year it was to create a similar course in Linguistics. My sense is that most linguistics courses and texts do more to alienate teachers than engage them. I think it would be great if teachers were intrigued by language. In an informal in-class experiment, the metaphor/image which our language teachers saw as most related to their professional sense of mission was that of a stencil from which students were imprinted with the inpressions of English which teachers brought to the classroom. I hope that our recent graduates have some self-images which extend beyond that of being stencils.

TW How do you think teachers could get intrigued by language?

TR There are some topics that have a lot of intrinsic interest. I was able to find the titles of a bunch of country and western songs that have double entendres or bad puns in the titles ("I made up my mind with your lipstick"). Here is a sample one of our composed songs exploiting multiple meanings of phrasal verbs:

She found make-up on my collar,
So I made up a story line.
Made up her mind I was a loser,
Now making up is on my mind.

I also use supposedly authentic headlines which have intended or unintendead double meanings. For example,

Stud Tires Out
Prostitutes Appeal to Pope
Panda Mating Fails; Vet Takes Over
Soviet Virgin Lands Short of Goal Again
British Left Waffles on Falkland Islands

Students had a lot of fun trying to disambiguate these and then identify, linguistically, what had misfired or why these were ambiguous.

Also a lot of teachers have a background in literature, so I try to tie some linguistics topics to stylistics and other matters of literary interest. One continuing and successful inquiry has been built on comparing translations of the

same piece of (usually) prose text. Commenting on how the differing linguistic choices of the translators change the sense of the text to the reader of the translation. I also have a number of devices to unite phonology, morphology, syntax and discourse so they don't seem like 4 separate disciplines. For example by taking a theme such as "markedness" and looking at the examples of marked and unmarked forms in the 4 disciplines. We use David Crystal's Cambridge Encyclopedia of the English Language as our linguistics text. It is attracive, laid out in small readable hunks and has lots of oddities and eye and ear catchers to amuse and bemuse the reader.

TW I always think of you as the expert on methods. I know you have read the article on page 7 about working with teachers who are interested in methods. Would you like to comment on the article at all?

TR I think the distinctions raised are useful ones. There has been long discussion, still continuing, as to whether communicative language teaching is an "approach" or a "method". In the R&R text we wound up using approach in two quite different senses because of late disagreements with readers of the manuscript. I don't feel as strongly about it as I once did, since a number of people have published materials which attempt to turn, say CLT, from an approach into a method. These distinctions,-approach, method, tactics,-seem to me now like stages of development which teachers go through as they move from instinct to instruction. I think most of the "post-method" discussions have something like this same distinction, or perhaps dilemma, at their core. Whether one is talking about reflection or principles or expertise, at some point the philosophical notion has to be made flesh in what teachers and students do. "Method" has seemed to me to be a useful term to refer to the waystage between philosophy and practice. If the term is unacceptably tainted by the recent promotional history of the Designer Methods-Silent Way, Suggestopedia, etc- then we need another term to act as a bridge between philosophy and practice.

TW Finally, I know you to be a man of excellent good humour. What did you think of the methods parable on page 9.

TR Well, I've added an ending of my own containing lots of buzz words from second language acquisition theory. Here it is:

Before he had gotten much further in his verb list, Juan began to hear (heard, heard) the sound of an ambulance siren coming to his rescue. He felt relieved that finally he would be in the hands of Professionals rather than the passersby who had assisted him so little.

When the ambulance arrived at Our Lady of Authentic Tasks Hospital, Juan was rushed to the emergency room where an intern- in- training was waiting. "This is the SLA (Surgical Learning Asylum) Ward. And I am your Cognitive Interactionist, Dr Overthink. You appear to have fallen off a Universal Cycle and have Multil-Dimensional Input injuries. It also seems you fell in some Pidginization so we first need to get you sanitized. Then, we will have to establish an Hypothesis about your Identity and see if we can Monitor your Acculturation. If your Competence seems sufficiently Variable we should in Theory be able to find you Accommodation. Am I Processing your attention? Do you follow my Interlanguage?

Juan began to look about him im panic. As soon as Dr Overthink turned to his instruments Juan bolted for the door. Maria was in the waiting room and jumped up as she saw Juan coming out of the SLA Ward.

"What's wrong? Where are you going?" she cried. Juan grabbed her hand and ran out the hospital door.

"I think I do it my own way", said Juan.

And they were gone.

!CONFERENCE NEWS!

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! IATEFL!

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by Bonnie Tsai and Maria Dessaux-Barberio, France and Switzerland.

Introduction

Think about it...For four years, due to a political situation beyond your control, you had been cut off from the world outside your own borders. This meant, apart from daily hardships and inconveniences on a personal and national level, that you had to carry on with your job teaching English without knowing what developments and innovations were taking place outside your country.

Then suddenly one day, there comes a shift and change. The British Council is going to run a three month UCLES-**COTE** (University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate Certificate for Overseas Teachers of English) course. This was a dream come true for EFL teachers in Belgrade who endured those four years of professional isolation.

English teachers from different sectors applied for a place on the course. For the public sector, it was simply too expensive, even with considerable aid from the British Council. So the majority who applied came from the private sector. 15 brave souls were selected to embark on this great COTE adventure. It took them literally through the storms of winter into the brilliant sunshine of late spring.

But what did it mean for these teachers in reality once the euphoria of being selected, once the fanfare and razzle-dazzle of the arrival of the foreign tutors and opening ceremonies (complete with ministers and ambassadors) was over?

We asked the 15 teachers questions about their course and this « Trainee Voices » is a compilation of their answers.

A large majority of the trainees worked for private language schools where students were promised small numbers in the classroom. The classes observed for the COTE had to have larger numbers according to UCLES regulations (in spite of great compromise and flexibility on the part of UCLES). Despite the immediate difficulty that this situation posed for their professional lives, the trainees felt the course affected them in a positive way.

Q. How did participating on this course affect your professional life?

After the course I started doing things differently in the classroom and thinking in a certain way more automatically than before. What I mean to say is that I have seen how some principles are put into practice.

It definitely affected my professional life, and in two ways. I had to do my full work load whilst doing the course which was quite difficult. Despite this difficulty, I could feel I was changing my teaching and that I was gradually incorporating more and more new things that I had learnt into my teaching.

My professional life has been affected in a positive way since the very beginning of the COTE. I started thinking about my teaching situation from a different viewpoint. I began reconsidering my teaching practice and I was involved in a process of seeing myself as a teacher of English in a new light.

COTE led us to the crossroads where we could decide whether we wanted to teach and teach, or teach and learn.

COTE gave me a frame.

Q. How did participating on this course affect your personal life?

What comes through loud and clear is that due to the intensity of the course, it wreaked havoc with the personal lives of the trainees. There didn't seem to be time left for family or friends and this put enormous stress on personal relationships. Still, a few trainees seem to have benefited from the course on a personal level also.

How did the course affect our private lives? Sorry, can you say that again?

As for my personal life, everybody suffered! My husband, my baby-boy, my daughter, even my dog who got fat since I stopped taking her for long walks.

I broke up with my girlfriend. Well, that was the price to pay.

My husband suggested a divorce a day before the exam. ...My dog was most understanding and started taking me for walks.

The course made me become more attentive to other people's needs and the course helped me to understand other people better due to the humanistic approach of my tutors.

This course is now part of me and I'll carry it inside me for the rest of my life. I have learnt a lot not only about ELT, but also about life and people.

Q. Did you feel the requirements of the UCLES team in Cambridge took into account your « foreign reality?

(The shuffling about of students in the private language schools mentioned above caused some discontent and tension in classes where students felt they were being « used ». In some cases it even caused complaints because of too great a variation in teaching style and techniques

*COTE will join with the parallel course for native-speakers, (the CTEFLA) to form a single course and certificate during 1997.

between the COTE trainees and other teachers. One teacher, a trainee on this course, had students in her artificially put together class (used for observation purposes) ask for their money back because her communicative style differed so from their regular classroom teacher's more traditional style,

Another source of misunderstanding was the marking system. Trainees found it very difficult to get a handle on a marking system where A's were very rare. Most of these trainees had gone through school with A's and had also achieved A's on the Cambridge Proficiency Exam in English.)

I found the syllabus very good but I question the clarity of the criteria for marking the assignments and teaching practice.What does it mean if a tutor says, Great! Brilliant! and gives a C or B. This is not about hurt feelings but I think the trainer's task is to show the criteria clearly because it is the only way for trainees to improve. Without clear criteria I don't know what to do to become better. Let me put it this way: I am not questioning the nature of the assignments but I am questioning the feedback or rather the lack thereof.

There was a problem with books. If there are two books and 16 people need them for the assignment, what do the other 14 do? A possible solution would be to give a list of assignments at the beginning of the course so that when a trainee reads a certain book, he/she knows what kind of notes to take and what quotations are relevant.

Q. How did you feel about working with tutors coming in from the outside who knew little about your country or culture?

(After four years of professional isolation, these teachers in Belgrade were understandably quite eager to meet and work with teachers from abroad.

This enthusiasm created an exceptional atmosphere of cooperation.)

Having outside tutors gave credibility to the whole course. I benefitted both professionally and personally from working with them.

I think it is imperative to have native speakers as tutors on a course like this one.

The tutors were very sensitive to our problems and worked out a very flexible timetable. They created a relationship with us that made us feel comfortable enough to go to them with any problem.

Sensitivity to local conditions—wow! Our tutors really tried hard and they did a great job!

They dealt with local conditions better than we did.

Q. What advice would you give to someone starting the COTE?

(Acquired wisdom after an experience is always precious for new trainees about to do a COTE or similar course. How many times do we say, If only I had known. So here are the pearls of wisdom gained by Belgrade trainees over their 3-month experience.)

Someone starting out on the COTE should be counselled as to its intensity and the time demanded to successfully complete the course. As the course is very demanding and time-consuming, private life should be reorganized accordingly and family support would be extremely beneficial.

I would advise teachers who are planning to attend the course to wisely assess their physical and mental resources if they have to work and attend the course at the same time.

If you are a slow writer like me, don't write draft papers during the exam, you will not have enough time!

Don't miss any imput sessions and keep to the deadlines for writing and submitting the assignments and language development tasks.

Brace yourself! But the effort is worth it!

BY THE WAY...!

If you would like an experienced Pilgrims teacher or teacher trainer to come and work with students or teachers in your local area, just let Sam Preston know at Pilgrims. All addresses and numbers on page one.

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 3½" 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. Finally, please give an accurate word count. 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!

Monty Roberts, USA

Born in 1935 in California, Monty Roberts has done all the things that romantic readers might expect of an American horseman. He started sitting on a horse in front of his mother's saddle before he was one year old and was giving lessons to children younger than himself by the time he was nine. He was raised on a rodeo competition grounds and has won championships for rodeo events like "bulldogging" (leaping from a fast horse onto an 800 pound steer and flipping it over). He's been in the movies. He coached James Dean in rope-spinning, and has bred and trained cowhorses, racehorses and jumping horses. He's worked hard, using his wits gaining, losing and re-winning land, and presently enjoys a large farm in California. He's also done some things that we might not expect, and it's these things that have especially endeared him to the Queen and to horse people all over the world.

When Monty Roberts was a child growing up with horses in the 30's and 40's, the normal method of working with a horse was called 'breaking', or 'sacking out', and included roping and tying up the terrified animal before throwing a weighted tarpaulin over its legs and back. Wild young horses treated this way will panic and will fight the sack and ropes as if their very lives were at stake. They will plunge and struggle violently for days until, exhausted and confused, they give up and cease fighting when the saddle, bridle and, finally, the rider are forced upon them. The process of breaking the horse's willpower and resistance this way takes as long as three or four weeks during which the horses will be bruised and bleeding from the tight rope and all the fighting.

It all sounds pretty barbaric to people in this country who talk of 'backing' or 'gentling' horses rather than of 'breaking' them. In the UK, but only in the kindest circles, horses are handled more gently and are slowly introduced to halter, lead rope, bridle, saddle and a little weight. Here it's sometimes a more gentle procedure than the one from the 'Wild West', but it does take a long time...weeks or months.

Monty Roberts and those who have learned his method called 'Join up' can meet a young wild or untrained horse and have them ready to ride away on, without having used any tethering or inflicting pain or discomfort, in about 20 minutes. That is how different this 'cowboy' is!

The way Monty works with horses is built on an understanding of the horse as a flight animal and one with an extreme sensitivity to and understanding of body movement. By squaring his position to a horse, looking it in the eye and tossing one end of a light line to send it away, Monty can engage the natural flight instinct. He advances and the horse retreats. But by keeping the horse in flight away from him for long enough (and this not violently but just gently and insistently), Monty causes the horse to wish he would stop. Monty notes certain messages, or signals, in the horse — ears flicked back towards him, head lowered, mouth licking and chewing, and notes that the horse is ready to discuss the matter! He stops sending the horse away and when he turns away, the horse will follow. This is the essence, swiftly described, of 'joining up'. Anyone who has seen the wonderful Francis Coppola move, The Black Stallion, will see, basically, the same instinct at work between the little boy and the black stallion. There is, of course, much more to Monty's system, but this is just to give you a tiny taste.

When I first read Monty's best-selling book, "The man who listens to horses", (see reference 1) watched a video of his work (see reference 2), and talked to people who had personally watched him achieve amazing results, it was as a rider and horse and animal lover. But the more I understood about him and his methods, the more I realised that this was work that cut across species boundaries and professional sectors.

Monty Robert was trained to work with horses in a combative, domineering manner. He chose to cast off this traditional system for one that respects their communicative system. This was and still is an innovation in the horse training world involving a major paradigm shift. (see reference 3) As we would expect with a shift of great proportions, Monty has had to change the language used to talk about his work. He doesn't break or sack out horses, he 'starts' them. He uses new materials, a round pen and a light line rather than a stockade, weighted sacks and ropes. He uses only one assistant after working on his own with a horse rather than a team of strongmen. The assistant hops up as the horse's first rider. New concepts are employed. There is 'advance and retreat' (see above) and 'join up', the moment when the horse chooses to follow this strange human s/he has just met. As usual, with a novel method that goes against a conventional one that is "tried and tested", the method did not gain immediate acceptance. Monty has had to suffer physical injury, slurs and disbelief for over 40 years. He hasn't given up and now his work and beliefs are gaining ground.

Quite by accident, from an unrelated source, I learnt that I had the wonderful opportunity to talk to this ground-breaking innovator on the same day he was meeting the Queen! I asked him about this but it was obvious that Monty regards his connection to the Queen and her horses as very special and private so we switched to other topics.

TW How much of your ability to listen and watch horses and thus to learn about their ways of communicating came, do you think, from an identification with their position? You being under your father's thumb as a child very much and watching them being subdued physically too?

MR Yes, there was definitely a kindred spirit feeling. And without the horses, I would have had no license to reject my father's way. Their language gave me a way to deal with a life that seemed to slap me around.

TW A lot of your learning about horses came from the time you went up to the desert in Nevada and watched them. Would it be true to say that you watched and listened to them before you tried to teach them anything?

MR Well, that's not exactly true. I had been 'at' horse for quite a while. I was already training them. So I brought a very practised eye to the wild mustang herds I saw in Nevada.

TW And this enabled you to see so much more than a beginner would have done?

MR I think so, yes.

TW You are now working with people, training them to train horses.

MR Yes, and I also work with parents and the education system in my area. Also with business executives. For the last seven years I've had many major corporations such as Jaguar, General Motors, Ford UK, coming to me for lectures and conferences. I also work with the penal system and I've raised 47 foster children.

TW Gosh! And none of those people has any intention of working with horses?

MR No. We use the horse as a lab animal in the sense that we watch a raw brain without human intervention. Then we can slide right over to human relationships in a business corporation or a family. Horses are different in their language, their reactions and the physical dimension, the complication of the brain and so on, but the basic concepts of working with them and humans — are absolutely the same.

TW What do you feel those concepts to be?

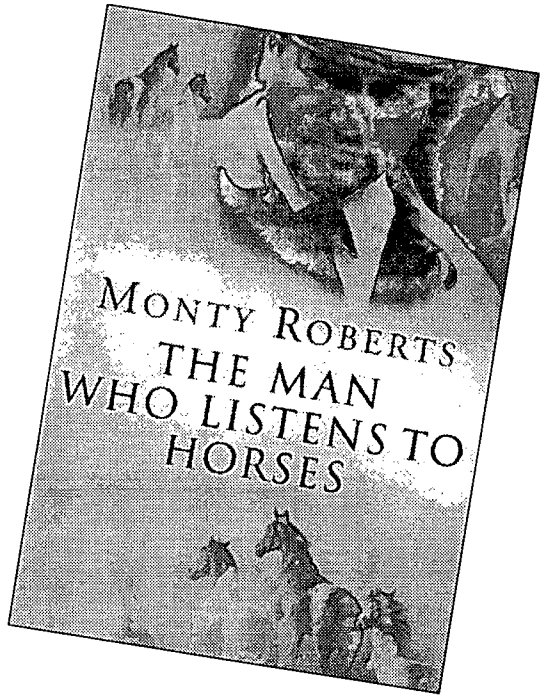
MR No pain, no restraint, no threat of physical domination. Pure and simple. I'd add some more principles too. We are all responsible for our actions. And, don't steal from people the right to fail. No safety net or masking of failure so then when the person succeeds, they know the success belongs to them. People say this kind of thing in the corporate world, but they don't often live by it.

TW You've gone from training horses to training people. Do you watch and listen to the people as carefully as you do to the horses?

MR Yes. When I was working with horses, I refined a technique that used the horses' respect and cooperation. To gain a horse's trust and willing cooperation, it's necessary for both parties to be allowed to meet in the middle. I feel that way about people too.

TW Is your work still progressing? Are you finding new challenges?

MR Yes. When I start a horse in the round pen and have them saddled, bridled and ridden in about 20-30 minutes without using any restraint or coercion. there's always someone in the audience who says, "Well, that horse must've been handled well beforehand. I bet he couldn't have done that with a real wild horse!" So I've just made another documentary with QED, where I did it with a real wild mustang in the desert - with no fences, no ropes, and no assistance!



TW Wonderful! You have given inspiration with your beautiful, gentle work to so many. Is there anyone you can turn to for inspiration and guidance?

MR Oh yes! I have leaned on the support and guidance of HM the Queen very much. She was the one who suggested I write a book (it's now on the bestseller list) and set up a course in the UK to train other people to use 'join up' (see reference 4). Kelly Marks, who has gone from lady-jockey to running my whole set up in the UK, guides me through the minefield of these packed visits each time too!

TW And today you'll have tea with the Queen again. Have a wonderful time!

MR I will!

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4. For information on demonstrations and courses call Kelly Marks, Monty Roberts' UK representative on 01684-594800 from the UK

Collaborative Language Teaching – A Catalyst for Teacher Development

by Eddie Edmunsdson and Steve Fitzpatrick, Brazil.

Previous studies in Collaborative Teaching

The bibliography on collaborative teaching is remarkably short. In an article entitled 'A fresh look at team teaching' published in 1990 in *The Teacher Trainer* [6], the authors report that there are virtually no articles or books dealing with team teaching in any depth and they conclude that such teaching practices seem to belong to "an oral tradition". Even a publication with the promising name of *Team Teaching in ESP* [2], which cites collaboration among teachers (of different disciplines), gives only superficial attention to the experience of team-teaching in the classroom 1*.

More recently, David Nunan writes in his Introduction to *Collaborative Language Learning and Teaching* [8] that "most of what one hears is anecdotal". He points out that some research has been carried out to evaluate the effectiveness of collaborative teaching, and that these studies find in favour of 'collaborative classrooms', but "like most empirical research, the implications are not particularly clear-cut, and some of the outcomes are open to question".

Background notes on the British Council Centre, Recife.

The British Council Centre opened in Recife in north eastern Brazil in November 1996 as a specialised centre for English language teaching and learning. The learners are all adults who are academics or professionals and, generally speaking, they require training in English prior to pursuing postgraduate study or training courses abroad in the medium of English. The teachers are committed to an approach which is learner-based and characterised essentially by a syllabus which is prospectively negotiated with the learners and written up as a retrospective account. There is no set coursebook, and there are no internal tests. This approach has been influenced by several leading ELT commentators, including David Nunan, Johnson [5], Campbell & Kryszewska [3], and important contributions have been made by Tony Dudley-Evans of the University of Birmingham on two consultancy visits to the Centre.

The main focus of this article is an account of the experience of using collaborative teaching as a teacher development tool at the Centre. The initiative arose when most of the original Centre teachers resigned at the end of 1992, to open their own school based on the same approach, and it was decided to evaluate the transferability of the approach to newly hired teachers. These teachers ranged from those just embarking on an ELT career to the very experienced. There was no time for a major pre-service effort, and it was felt that collaborative teaching offered the prospect of facilitating the necessary development in the shortest possible time.

Why adopt collaborative teaching as a catalyst for teacher development?

The decision to introduce collaborative teaching was taken intuitively, and there was little time to plan the innovation. Most of the responsibility for the arrangements lay with the Director of Studies with a smaller contribution from the English Language Teaching Adviser of The British Council.

In retrospect, we would strongly agree with the claims in favour of team teaching put forward by Armstrong [1]:

- Team teaching permits team members to take advantage of individual teacher strengths in planning for instruction and in working with learners.
- Team teaching spurs creativity because teachers know they must teach for their colleagues as well as for their learners.
- Team teaching facilitates individualised instruction because it is possible to provide learning environments involving close personal contact between teacher and learner.
- Team teaching provides for better sequencing and pacing of increments of instruction because perceptions of an individual teacher must be verified by at least one other team member.
- Team teaching builds programme continuity over time. Team teaching programmes abide. Specific teachers within a team do not.

In addition, a collaborative approach to teaching seems to us to synchronise very well with current trends in ELT that have already had a great impact in the 1990s. Nunan (1992) notes that collaboration reflects the 'philosophical shift' embodied in the movement from 'teacher training' (informed by external criteria) to 'teacher education' which answers to internal criteria, and is "characterised by approaches that involve teachers in developing theories of teaching, understanding the nature of teacher decision making, and strategies for critical self-awareness and self-evaluation", [Richards & Nunan, 1990].

A second important trend is towards teachers conducting 'action research' and doing this in a collaborative way. Kemmis & McTaggart [7] argue for a collaborative approach to teacher research for the following reasons:

- It helps to allow the enquiry to be seen as a 'project' rather than as a personal and introspective process.

* 1 We regard 'collaborative teaching' as a term that encompasses 'team teaching' since the latter suggests teaching as a team in the classroom while the nature of the collaboration over teaching may take other forms.

- It makes defining the issues easier because explaining the project to others demands clarifying one's own thinking.
- It allows others to help and become involved in a constructive participatory way.

We would add to this list our feeling that through collaboration ownership of the project is shared and is not perceived to be hierarchical. Wallace [11:110] makes a similar point when he refers to the 'supervisor as colleague' in his summary of the classic collaborative approach to 'clinical supervision'.

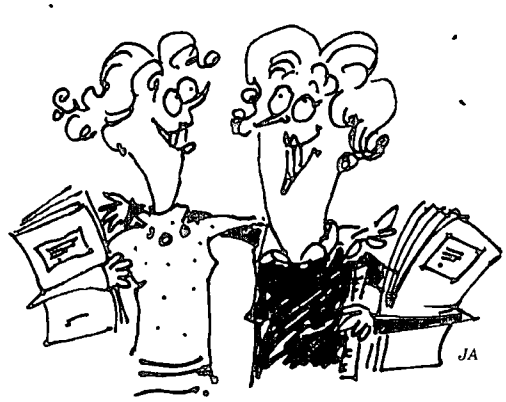
A third trend has to do with extending the repertoire of roles available to the teacher in the classroom, and sharing with others even those roles that conventionally have been viewed as the exclusive province of either the teacher or the learner. Increasingly, teachers are finding themselves as co-learners, co-communicators, co-decision makers, and even co-teachers. Campbell & Kryszewska [3] make the point that "Whatever the activity, a learner-based approach is aimed at narrowing the traditional gap between teacher and student. In learner-based teaching, the teaching and the learning are taking place on both sides". We would add to the first sentence, "... and the traditional gap between teacher *and teacher*".

We also believe that there is a value in drawing on one's perceptions of other teachers' behaviour as a means to assess one's own behaviour towards the learner(s) and understand why this is so. Adrian Underhill [10] neatly drew attention to this recently when he wrote of the 'discrepancy between how we think we teach and how we actually teach'. We feel that collaborative teaching is a tool to approximate closer to this kind of understanding. Furthermore, while the encouragement given nowadays to teachers to adopt reflective strategies for personal and professional development (see, for example, Wallace [11]) carries with it the potential for the experience being private and difficult to share, collaborative teaching goes some way to resolving this paradox by providing the basis for shared reflection on the same practical experience.

Finally, these shifts of emphasis clearly have implications for the teacher trainer too, and commentators recognise that new options are emerging, such as 'shared professional action' (Wallace [11]) and 'collaborative supervision' (Gebhard [4]).

The experience of collaborative teaching at the British Council Centre..

Team teaching was a hallmark of the approach developed at the Centre during its first two years of existence. Team teaching was timetabled, and it involved all teachers and all classes. Every week presented the teacher with a new timetable, but the same number of hours. After this initial period, for financial reasons, team teaching was restricted to groups with more than 10 students, and then eventually abandoned. The present Director of Studies was originally inducted as a teacher in this way, and commented in recent discussion that: "What we were actually getting from it, and consequently the group too, was the decision-making during a task in progress,



because we knew that we never knew what was going to happen with a task in action. We speculated, but we never knew. It became a bit of a standard joke for groups to listen in to two teachers chatting about things..." What's happening here?" and so on".

The recent experience at the Centre with collaborative teaching was scaled down in comparison, and took a variety of forms:

1. Director of Studies and teacher. A proportion of the DOS's timetable was given over to team-teaching.

2. ELT Adviser and teacher. While his contribution to team teaching was smaller, the ELT Adviser also took on a number of classes to enable the DOS to devote more time to this work. (The British Council considered that the survival of the Centre and the sustainability of the approach were priorities, particularly because many scholarship candidates and project trainees in the region, and wider afield, receive pre-departure language instruction there).

3. Teacher and teacher. Two formats emerged, that of peer-teaching one group of students, and that of peer-teaching two groups of students brought together in one classroom.

4. Two teachers swopping classes. We felt that one important outcome of this is that the learners grow to recognise that there is the same kind of belief system operating within the institution, irrespective of the teacher, and that they begin to trust and accept all the teachers. It also had the effect of bringing teachers together as members of a team rather than simply a group of individuals who happen to work in the same school 2*.

5. Teacher and teacher (or supervisor) planning together, but not actually team teaching the class.

The procedures adopted, which are especially relevant to formats 1 & 2 above, were as follows:

Pre-teaching collaboration: Johnston & Madejski [6] refer to two opportunities in this planning phase: to talk through the preparation of the lesson, which "in itself can

*2 As an interesting variation on this. Tessa Woodward has reported in correspondence with the authors on how, as a young teacher. she was teamed with an experienced teacher with whom she swopped classes every second lesson. They wrote the lesson plans for each other, and after the lesson discussed what had happened.

continued

be a huge source of relief, and a great builder of confidence", and the fact that two heads think and create better than one. In our case, the planning was undertaken with close reference to the wants and needs negotiated with the learners and written up daily as a retrospective account.

In-class collaboration. Johnston & Madejski [6] speak of certain advantages that result from this collaboration in the classroom. There is the positive effect on the learners who "seeing teachers collaborating together, are encouraged to follow suit, to open up and thus to cooperate in building an atmosphere of mutual trust and understanding". There is also the chance for teachers to see a peer at work, and not just sit in on classes as inactive observers.

Post-class evaluation. The ELT Adviser encouraged a joint self-evaluation to bring out the two perspectives in discussion, which he followed up with a written assessment for the teacher of the planning and execution of the lesson. The DOS adopted more of a coaching role, contributing to a joint written evaluation in the retrospective account and searching for topics to explore in the weekly teachers' meetings.

Reactions of the participants to the initiative.

The two supervisors [S] and the five Centre teachers [T] met at the end of the semester to discuss the experience. The following extracts from the discussion illustrate some of the positive aspects identified by the participants:

- "It's like mutual learning, mutual development" [T].
- "The basic advantage of two people being in the class is that I'll forget something and you'll remember, or you'll forget something and I'll remember" [T].
- "I think there is less belief in ... prescriptive solutions; we believe more in collaborative 'finding out', discovery and exploration. Solutions are to be discovered, to be talked about" [S].
- "Students also need to feel trust and respect from the other teachers. If students are able to see, and therefore describe, a feeling of trust among the teachers, then they will understand why trust and respect for each other are expected" [S].

Some reservations:

- "Maybe if there are too many students, but that was only because (..on one occasion..) we put two groups together and we underestimated the turnout" [T].
- (Of one of the supervisors) "Yours was more of a parachute drop" [T]. Implication: team teaching needs to be undertaken consistently over a period of time, and not just employed on a one-off basis.
- "Perhaps I bulldoze a little because I tend to focus too much on the students" [S]. The supervisor recognises here a possible tendency to dominate in the 'team' during the lesson.

By way of conclusion, we feel it is worth quoting Nunan [8]: "Team teaching is a difficult, but not impossible, mode of organising teaching and learning, even in cultural contexts where such modes are largely unknown, and the benefits for teachers and learners far outweigh the extra effort involved".

Eddie Edmundson, ELTA, The British Council, Recife, Brazil.

Steve Fitzpatrick, DOS, The British Council Centre, Recife.

Based on a paper presented at the LABCI Conference, Buenos Aires, July 1993, and adapted from an article published in *Past Present Future*, an ELT Newsletter from The British Council, Brazil. No.11, Jan.1994.

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CILT survey of current research in language teaching and learning

The Centre for Information on Language Teaching and Research (CILT) is currently undertaking a major UK-wide round-up of research in progress – mostly on foreign-language teaching but also on ELT.

If you are involved in research please let CILT know. Call Ruth Hansford on 0171 379 5101 x 224 or e-mail: ruth.hansford@cilt.org.uk for a research questionnaire form, or for further details about the survey project.

Making Meaning Together; Authorship as a Shared Activity

Psychology For Language Teachers, Marion Williams and Robert Burden, C.U.P. 1997

Marion

How did we start writing this book? Well, therein lies a story. About ten years ago I joined the School of Education at the University of Exeter, and embarked on the daunting job of running a Masters in Education in TEFL. As a teacher and trainer who had worked abroad for some 15 years, I had for some time been concerned about finding out more about the field of psychology. I reasoned that if I could discover more about how people learn, this might influence my methodology and psycholinguistics courses, and it might also help me to develop and underpin my views on teacher education. So, as a newcomer to the University I set about finding a friendly psychologist who I could talk to. Well, one day I knocked on Bob's door - after all, he looked suitably friendly - and asked him if I could discuss some issues with him. Little did I know what I'd started.

Bob

Imagine my feelings when I found myself confronted by this feminine but formidable little person wanting to know how psychology could enhance her language teaching. Since I had struggled throughout my professional career as an educational psychologist to determine what practical use psychology was to anyone, my initial reaction was one of trepidation. However, I was able to recommend an excellent book by Thomas and Harri-Augstein (1985) on the practical implications of George Kelly's Personal Construct theory which I was gratified to learn fitted perfectly with some central aspects of Marion's thinking at the time. When she came back for more I began to enthuse about the ideas of my friend and mentor Reuven Feuerstein who had revolutionised my own and many other's thinking about the nature of human potential and how this can best be realised within any education system. In particular, the notion of mediated learning experience (Feuerstein et al, 1991), which builds upon and extends many aspects of Vygotskian theory, struck an immediate chord in us both and provided the basis for our first joint article.

Marion

We were surprised by the way in which our conversations sparked off interesting ideas. Thus we began to work together on a regular basis. First we decided to team-teach a psychology course for the MEd in Language Teaching. This I remember as being tremendous fun as we developed the course together and our students responded enthusiastically (particularly to the arguments that we would have). It is this course that formed the basis for the book. We then began to present our ideas at conferences around the world. (One of the main problems here was getting Bob to keep to a time limit; he would get so enthusiastic that I found it hard to stop him talking.) We found that we made a very good travelling team. Whilst I organised the travel arrangements and made sure that we packed all the necessary handouts, Bob carried the bags and tried to ensure that I didn't leave my handbag on buses or aeroplanes.

Bob

One of the things that struck me most forcibly as we began to work together was how TEFL teaching was miles ahead of much other classroom practice in its task-based focus and truly interactive approach to learning. At the same time, however, there did not always seem to be a sound grasp of recent cognitive and developmental theories to help inform these practices. So it began to emerge that we each had something to contribute to the other's personal and professional development. What transpired was definitely greater than the sum of the parts .... In this way the idea of a book began to emerge and was formally conceived over a meal and a bottle of wine one evening.

Marion

We wrote together for a full day every week. It was mainly on the kitchen table. I'd look forward to our day together as the process itself was becoming as exciting as the product. The moment Bob arrived at my house we'd start talking, shaping and reshaping ideas; the conversation itself was like a drug. Sometimes we'd take hold of an idea and throw it backwards and forwards all day, and write very little. At other times we'd start writing on opposite sides of the table, and say nothing for several hours until we read each others' work and the talk started again. The process itself reflected one of the main tenets of the book, constructivism, which is concerned with the shaping and reshaping of knowledge. Our writing days always ended with a brisk walk in the Devon hills where we continued to argue out our thoughts. It's not surprising the whole process took about 6 years.

Bob

One of my most striking memories of these early days was that for once in my life someone had actually managed to pin me down to arriving (more or less) promptly at the same time each week and devoting all my thoughts and energy to the task at hand - producing our book. I tend to be a fairly spontaneous, creative thinker who spews out ideas in an undisciplined way. Marion, on the other hand, is much more organised and focussed. She's the best editor I have ever met and by far the most difficult to please! Although it can be initially irritating to be required to justify one's every written phrase, it soon becomes clear how much this can improve the lucidity of one's writing without detracting from the emotional power of one's thoughts and feelings.

Marion

I suppose we've talked about the process first as this was in many ways the most heady part. But I'd like now to move on to what the book is about. Basically, we looked at a number of different areas of psychology, for example

mediation, motivation, attribution, thinking, learning strategies and the role of the individual, and considered ways in which a knowledge about each of these areas will help the language teacher. However, we found that writers in the different fields approached their topics from a wide variety of perspectives; thus the topics lacked a coherent approach. We therefore begin the book by presenting a particular psychological approach, social constructivism, and our own interactive model of the teaching-learning process, and it is from this perspective that we approach the different topics. The most difficult chapter to write was the motivation one because of the vast and confusing literature on this topic which we tried to make sense of and then came up with our own views and our own model. However, by the end of this process we really did feel that we had produced a model which could encompass the often widely differing views of the enormous number of writers and researchers in this area.

Bob

I have to say that the most frustrating period for me was the one between our completion of the first draft of the book and its final publication. One of the publisher's reviewers, for example, was largely complimentary but seemed to think that we should be writing the book that he had in mind. This was gently but firmly resisted. We were prepared to make some suggested changes but we had also developed a very clear picture in our mind of what we wanted to say and how we wanted to say it. By the time the final version was in the publisher's hands we were talking to others about the book as if it were actually in print. However, it was to take another nine months to reach the bookshops.

Marion

So, where do we go next? Well, one of the surprising things is that the partnership is still going strong. We're still giving a number of joint papers at conferences. We seem to be known for every now and then violently disagreeing with each other in the middle of a paper! We also do a number of one-day workshops in different countries. It's an easy, comfortable partnership. We're so used to working together that we seem to know exactly when to complement each other, or interrupt or take over. We've also just completed a book for Routledge called Thinking through the Curriculum. We're now moving on to pursue a number of ideas further; mainly motivation and attribution, through research and plan to write them up for journals.

Bob

For once I've been asked to have the last word. Unfortunately, being given the opportunity to do so has left me completely speechless ...

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LANGUAGE MATTERS

Sylvia Chalker throws down the gauntlet in the column this time with an interactive challenge entitled,

How grammar aware are you?

One of the problems confronting teachers of English is how to react to some usage that breaks the rules as we know them. Is the usage an undoubted error? Or is it perhaps an instance of changing grammatical usage, to which Professor David Crystal referred in his article on language change? (The Teacher Trainer 10/1, Spring 1996)

If the puzzling usage is a one-off oddity then it may well be a one-off lapse. But some irregularities occur frequently. Here are some representative samples. How would you and the teachers you work with rate them?

1. He trots around Bosnia, comes back and makes a speech.....Sometimes he says more troops, sometimes he says less troops, just for effect. (Former Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd criticising the Lilberal Democrat leader in 1993).

2. There have been several highly publicised cases of schizophrenics attacking, even murdering strangers. In many instances they were found not to be taking their medication which has severe side affects. (The Daily Telegraph, 15 September 1996).

3. "They smoked before dinner, between courses and after dinner. If you'd have tested me, you'd have said I was a smoker." (Member of an anti-smoking pressure group, reported in The Sunday Telegraph, 18 December 1994).

4. The latest addition is a new block to house the singers when they arrive for the summer school. Carved out of an old water cistern, the architect John O'Connell has created another cool space, whose windows perch high up in the walls, and whose fans hang from the ceiling. (Perspectives on architecture, October/ November 1996).

5. I could only marvel. It would take my father and I a whole afternoon to create a vague semblance of something which we would then tear up in despair. (Written comment by Candida Lycett Green, at an exhibition of John Piper's paintings in London, July 1996).

6. Five times as many people chose to sit on a beach last winter than head for the snow. (The Daily Telegraph 19 April 1996).

7. Were it not for Alix, who on the contrary had many of the traits required to make her an ideal Queen Consort, the whispers of dissatisfaction with her husband would have swelled to shouts after the Mordaunt scandal. (Dynasty by Donald Spoto, Siman & Schuster 1995)

8. Like most aspiring social philosophers, it may have been the failings he saw in his own experience that made him invent a more satisfying alternative for others. (Younghusband-the last great imperial adventurer, by Patrick French, Harper Collins 1994).

9. Olympic madness is nearly upon us having already afflicted great-summer-of-sport BBC schedulers....Public service....demands some consideration for we who see it in prospect as the biggest peacetime bore since the last olympics. (Television reviewer, 19 July 1996).

10. They wanted the book translated into English which I eventually did. (The Spectator, 9 November 1946)

11. "I wish I had made this discovery earlier," Caine says. "Had I the wit at the time I would have made sure I got this patent and took all the royalties." (A British artist, Osmund Caine, claiming that he had invented the bikini in a 1938 watercolour.).

12. Often the designer will hand the costumier the sketchiest of indications of textile and cut and expect he or she to supply the artistry and the imagination as well as the stitching. (The Daily Telegraph, 14 December 1996).

13. The fear of otherness is an unattractive but constant human trait, and one that we social meliorists like to say, that education and peaceful co-mingling, will do away with in, as always, time. (The Daily Telegraph, 10 October 1993).

14. Its mood may reflect Psyche's brooding over the decision whether or not to kill cupid, whom her sister had persuaded was a monster. (From a caption to a picture in an art exhibition held at Christie's, London, in January 1997).

15. How old are you and how come you never get bored of going to the theatre three or four nights a week? (The Spectator, 11 January 1997).

Comments

1. The rule says fewer not less, with countables, but less seems to be winning this contest.

2. Possibly it is a bit unfair of me to classify a missing comma (after medication) as a grammatical error. But faulty punctuation can seriously affect the sense- and does here.

3. This variant on the past perfect tense in conditional clauses is usually considered non-standard or at any rate colloquial. It can appear in full as either "If I would have..." or "If I had have....". It seems increasingly common.

4. Grammarians have been railing against the unattached, or misattached, participle for many years, though many distinguished writers, including Shakespeare, have used it. In some contexts it is downright confusing: at best it is poor style. The example here is not untypical. Grammatically, the architect is carved out of an old water cistern: we have to look back for the intended meaning.

5. Pronoun usage is an area of ongoing change. Those of us who know the difference between a subject and an object deplore the confusion here, but for many people nowadays "my wife and I" or my father and I seem to be set phrases. Mrs Lycett-Green is John Betjeman's daughter and a respected writer.

6. Grammar books do not consider the possibility of as...than, but it crops up so often it may qualify as a example of changing grammar.

7. In 3 above we had an extra auxiliary in a conditional tense; here we have tenses simplification-were instead of had been. I have noted several examples in the last year or so.

8. An unattached like phrase is an old phenomenon. Grammatically, "as with" would have been safer. It is OK to say "it is we who see it" (BE+ subject pronoun + who), but a preposition wants an object pronoun- for us.

10. I do consider this as faulty gramar, even though it is common. WHich I did could substitute for an active verb plus some sort of complement (someone "to translate the book into English), but this is lacking here.

11. Another instance of simple past tense rather than a past perfect in a conditional.

12. A particularly glaring example of pronoun change!

13. Repeating the conjunction that before and after some sort of parenthesis is often useful, whatever the purists say. But here it is a maistake, which could easily have been avoided-"...and one, we social meliorists like to say, that education etc"

14. The use of whom where grammar requires subject who is usually dubbed hypercorrection. Another common pronoun change.

15. An all-purpose preposition would be useful, though unlikely. But of does seem to be gaining ground.

Particularly if the teachers you are working with are preparing students for public exams, they need to make the students aware of older, more "correct" usages while keeping their eyes and ears open for current changes.

Just for Interest

Working on the principle that it is often when you stop working on a problem and go for a walk that the solution to the problem comes to mind, or that it is precisely when you are reading something outside your field that a good idea for work strikes you, this new column will give space to texts that are either amusing or interesting to read or both, and that were definitely NOT written with modern language teacher trainers in mind! The copyright of the piece below is held by John Perry who is a Professor of Philosophy at Stanford University. More of his essays can be found at:

http://www-cali.stanford.edu./users/john/

How to procrastinate and still get things done, by John Perry, USA.

I have been intending to write this essay for months. Why am I finally doing it? Because I finally found some uncommitted time? Wrong. I have papers to grade, a grant proposal to review, drafts of dissertations to read. I am working on this essay as a way of NOT doing all of those things. This is the essence of what I call structured procrastination, an amazing strategy I have discovered that converts procrastinators into effective human beings, respected and admired for all that they can accomplish and the good use they make of time.

All procrastinators put off things they have to do. Structured procrastination is the art of making this bad trait work for you. The key idea is that procrastination does not mean doing absolutely nothing. Procrastinators seldom do absolutely nothing; they do marginally useful things, such as gardening and sharpening pencils or making a diagram of how they will reorganise their files when they find the time. Why does the procrastinator do these things? Because accomplishing these tasks is a way of not doing something more important.

If all the procrastinator had left to do was sharpen some pencils, no force on earth could get him to do it. However the procrastinator can be motivated to do difficult, timely and important tasks, as long as these tasks are a way of not doing something more important.

To make structured procrastination work for you, begin by establishing a hierarchy of the tasks you have to do in order of importance from the most important to the least important. Even though the most important tasks are on the top, you have worthwhile tasks to perform lower on the list.

Doing those tasks becomes a way of not doing the things higher on the list. With this sort of appropriate task structure, you can become a useful citizen. Indeed the procrastinator can even acquire, as I have, a reputation for getting a lot done.

The most perfect situation for structured procrastination that I have ever encountered happened when my wife and I served as resident fellows in Soto House, a Stanford University dormitory. In the evening, faced with papers to grade, lectures to prepare and Committee work to do, I would leave our cottage next to the dorm and go over to the lounge and play Ping-Pong with the residents or talk things over with them in their rooms or just sit in the lounge and read the paper. I got a reputation for being a terrific resident fellow, one of the rare profs on the campus who spent time with the undergraduates and got to know them. What a set-up: Play Ping-Pong as a way of not doing more important things and get a reputation as Mr. Chips.

Procrastinators often follow exactly the wrong tack. They try to minimize their commitments, assuming that if they only have a few things to do, they will quit procrastinating and get them done. But this approach ignores the basic nature of the procrastinator and destroys his most important source of motivation. The few tasks on his list will be by definition, the most important. And the only way to avoid doing them will be to do nothing. This is the way to become a couch potato, not an effective human being.

At this point you may be asking," How about the important tasks at the top of the list? Admittedly they pose a potential problem. The second step in the art of structured procrastination is to pick the right sorts of projects for the top of the list. The ideal projects have two sorts of characteristics_ they seem to have clear deadlines (but really don't), and they seem really important (but really aren't). Luckily life abounds with such projects. At universities, the vast majority of tasks fall into those two categories, and I'm sure the same is true for most other institutions. Take for example, the item at the top of my list right now_ finishing an article for a volume on the philosophy of language. It was supposed to be done 11 months ago. I have accomplished an enormous number of important things as a way of not working on it. A couple of months ago, nagged by guilt, I wrote a letter to the editor saying how sorry I was to be so late and expressing my good intentions to get to work. Writing the letter was, of course, a way of not working on the article. It turned out that I wasn't much further behind schedule than anyone else. And how important is this article anyway? Not so important that at some point something that I view as more important won't come along. Then I'll get to work on it.

Let me describe how I handled a familiar situation last summer. The book order forms for a class scheduled for fall were overdue by early June. By July it was easy to consider this an important task with a pressing deadline. (For procrastinators deadlines start to press a week or two after they pass.) I got almost daily reminders from the department secretary: students sometimes asked me what we would be reading; and the unfilled order form sat right in the middle of my desk for weeks. This task was near the top of my list; it bothered me and motivated me to do other useful, but superficially less important things. In fact, I knew that the bookstore was already plenty busy with forms filed by non-procrastinators. I knew that I could submit mine in midsummer and things would be fine. I just needed to order popular books from efficient publishers. I accepted another, apparently more important, task in early August, and my psyche finally felt comfortable about filling out the order form as a way of not doing this new task.

At this point the observant reader may feel that structured procrastination requires a certain amount of self-deception, since one is in effect constantly perpertrating a pyramid scheme on oneself. Exactly. One needs to be able to recognise and commit oneself to tasks with inflated importance and unreal deadlines, while making oneself feel that they are important and urgent. This clears the way to accomplish several apparently less urgent, but eminently achievable, tasks. And virtually all procrastinators also have excellent powers of self-deception_ so what could be more noble than using one character flaw to offset the effects of another?

Video Review

by Seth Lindstromberg, UK.

Looking at Language Classrooms. 1997. Cambridge University Press. 4 video cassettes plus "Trainer's Guide" (121 pp of text & 33 pp of transcripts) written by Diana Lubelska and Margaret Matthews. ISBN 0-521-58873-1.

I will discuss first the video material and then the Guide.

1 The Video Material

The four cassettes each provide about an hour of viewing, the bulk of which is of teachers and learners at work in their classrooms. Each cassette begins with a look at a single lesson that has been edited down to from 25 to 40 or so minutes of viewing. Following this, comes a few minutes of the teacher talking about the lesson retrospectively. The remainder of each cassette is then devoted to shorter viewings of other lessons, each followed by some teacher retrospection. The fourth cassette finishes with a few minutes of a dozen or so students each saying something very brief (in their mother tongue + subtitles) about their experience as a learner. This material is included to exemplify the kind of student "reflection" one might solicit in order to guide one's development as a teacher.

By my count, we see parts of 11 different lessons, with one teacher appearing in lessons with two different groups of students. Most of the teachers are non-native speakers working in their home country. Two segments show native speaker teachers at work with multilingual groups in the UK. Two segments show native speakers teaching small monolingual groups of adults in France (though one of these teachers may be a bilingual non-native speaker.)

We see groups (mostly homogeneous in age) ranging from pre-teen to adult/middle-age, with the weighting (by time) being towards groups of teenagers in state schools. All these state schools are in Romance language countries, though at least a couple of the 'Spanish' groups are in the Basque country.

The quality of the videos is generally very good and the teachers are clearly audible. Audibility of students varies from extract to extract but one is almost always able to get an idea of the kind of thing that students are saying. Camera work too is adequate or better and the editing is good. The Guide gives the time code (e.g., 27:48) for the beginning of each segment on each cassette. Additionally, sequence codes are displayed on the screen to help you to find your place.

2 The Trainer's Guide

Authors' description and statement of aims

From the introduction (two A4 pages of text) the user learns that:

(a) The lessons are not meant to be used as demonstration lessons. (Perhaps more could usefully have been said about just what a demonstration lesson is and what reservations the authors have about them.)

(b) The material is for pre- and in-service groups, but "Trainers working with very experienced teachers would probably want to exploit the videos in their own ways."

(c) We see "learners in their own language classrooms carrying out their normal activities with their regular teachers".

(d) The package as a whole has the aim of "expos[ing] teachers to a variety of settings, methods, materials and classes".

(e) A further aim is to "provide a flexible video resource for trainers, with print support that can be used as it is or as a frame to be adapted according to specific needs".

(f) Another aim is "to provide teacher education materials based on clearly defined principles of teaching, learning and training". (These principles are not further spoken about in the Introduction. Their outlines are presumably meant to become visible to users as they work through the material.)

(g) The materials are based "on a broadly reflective approach". (The authors, without elaboration, refer us to Schön 1983 and Wallace 1991.)

(h) The list of topics explicitly covered in the Guide is not meant to be exhaustive and is not meant to form a training course.

(i) On p. 2 the authors mention that the package could be used to develop participants' observation skills. On p. 110, different lessons are indexed to specific sections in Wajnryb (1992) where users might find additional observation tasks relating to 8 main topics (e.g., 'attending to the learner').

The Introduction, though exceedingly brief, gives a largely accurate picture of the Guide as a whole. Perhaps point 'b' (see above) might be extended a bit. That is, the video material too looks likely to contain relatively little that is new to many experienced in-service teachers, the range of methods and aims exemplified being less wide than might be easily fit into so much viewing time. Specifically, most of the work has a distinctly mainstream look about it and is, therefore, not as rich as it might be in suggesting options to what I would imagine to be the current practice of many participants on in-service teacher training courses or of in-service participants in many teacher development groups. (The authors have little to say about how groups of teachers might use the material without a trainer, but no doubt they are right in crediting TD users with sufficient ingenuity to find ways of their own.)

Contents and organisation

The units in the Guide are organised roughly as follows. For each excerpt, that is, for each different lesson shown

continued →

on video, the Guide provides one or more sequences of 'Before viewing', 'While viewing' and 'After viewing' tasks. The task sheets are photocopiable.

Each set of tasks (except for some of the 'After viewing' tasks) is accompanied by 'trainer's notes' on a facing page. For some excerpts the Guide also gives photocopiable supplementary material (for which there are no trainer's notes). 'Participant' pages and 'Trainer's notes' pages have separate lists of suggested further reading, though such lists are not given for every topic.

The written material associated with each lesson is presented under one or, in one case, two topic headings. Thus, lesson 1B is dealt with under the topic 'Monitoring learner performance'. There is no explicit provision for discussion of other aspects of that lesson. Other topics are: 'Fluency and accuracy', 'Integrating skills', 'Control in the classroom' [i.e., control of discourse], 'Lesson planning', 'Mixed proficiency classes', 'Providing a structure', 'Using a class reader', 'Learning vocabulary', 'Presenting structures', 'Teacher roles', '[Giving learners] feedback', 'Managing learning activities: the use of L1'. There is, as well, a unit on 'Motivation' which is not listed in the table of contents.

In some cases, e.g., in the case of 'Presenting structures', the match between the material and what you actually see on the video is obvious. In other cases, it is much less clear why an excerpt is approached in light of the topic given in the Guide. This is sometimes due to over-brief unit titles. Thus, the (excerpted) lesson treated under the heading 'Control in the classroom' seems especially relevant to this topic only if control is understood to mean continuous teacher control, as opposed to encouraging learner autonomy. (From the title, I was expecting to see an exemplification of how to maintain discipline.) The lesson dealt with in terms of 'Lesson planning' is not obviously more relevant to that topic than other lessons shown, and the same is true of the match between other lessons and the material in the Guide. Potential users might like to see, for each unit of material, the authors' rationale for their choice of topic.

A few important topics such as 'giving instructions' crop up within tasks but are not mentioned in the table of contents. A few others are either very much under-focused on or missing altogether, e.g. 'Elements of rapport', 'Wait time' (see Woodward and Lindstromberg 1995, p.129), 'Teacher echoing' (ibid: 128-9), 'How the situations and strategies of native and non-native speaker teachers differ', 'Non-native speakers teaching through the target language' and 'Teaching pronunciation'.

Something else that is almost entirely missing is discussion of teacher styles. This seems a shame since if there is anything that video can excel a book at showing, it is this. Of course since the teachers we see have been good enough, and brave enough, to allow themselves to be put on more or less eternal display, one can to some extent understand why there is virtually nothing in the Guide on teacher style. However, what we see, by and large, are teachers who are very good at what they do. A great deal could be said that would be of wholly positive character. The first teacher, for example, who is shown working with a group of teenagers, impressed me very greatly by her presence — in particular, by the striking way she uses her eyes in maintaining contact with different corners of the class. (To me, teacher presence is one of the most interesting topics.) Thanks to Stevick (1986; see also Maingay 1987 and Woodward 1992:10-15, 127-8), we all know by now that even things which one might do differently can be discussed in terms of options. That is, one can first identify what it is that a teacher does and then come up with a list of other possibilities whose consequences can then be explored relatively objectively — all without saying "She/He shouldn't have..."

Three minor points. (1) There is no index, but one would be helpful. Thus, if I want to find something on 'instructions', I won't find it mentioned in the table of contents and will have to skim through the book. (2) There are some errors in the trainer's key on p 75, nr 2. (3) The lesson plan shown on p. 50 omits statement of pronunciation aims regarding the target structures (used to/didn't use to) as well as other points one typically tries to get trainees to think about. The omissions are not signalled in the accompanying trainer's notes. More generally, I can imagine that many users might appreciate trainer's notes that more often included mention of options additional to those actually captured on the cassette.

The lists of recommended reading

Many units include short lists of recommended reading — one list for participants and one list for the trainer. Typically, the authors very helpfully refer to specific chapters or page runs. This being the case, a few more key books could be cited without recommending too burdensome an amount of extra reading. Naturally, different users may wish to alter or extend this or that list, partly because the authors have left off something useful, partly in order to take account of more recent publications.

As to recent publications, the vocabulary reading list for trainers (if not participants) would surely need to include Laufer's (1997) fascinating resume of difficulties faced by learners wishing to acquire new vocabulary as well as one or two of the other articles in Coady and Huckins (1997) relating to the role of reading in vocabulary acquisition — this in connection with the unit 'Using a class reader'.

As to less recent publications, one omission is any reference to alternatives to the classic PPP model for teaching grammar — somewhat surprising given the massive airing of this issue in recent years. Some excerpting from or reference to, at least some of the following seem to me to be essential (and this is a short list): Krashen (1977), Stevick (1980), Prabhu (1987), Grundy (1989), Scrivener (1994 and 1996), Skehan (1996), Willis (1996), J and D Willis (1996).

In general, trainers might well wish to extend the list of readings for other topics as well, if not for participants, then for themselves. To give just a few more examples, to the participants' list for 'Lesson planning' I would add (if I do say so myself) Woodward and Lindstromberg (1995: 1-15). To the list for trainers on 'Lesson planning' I would

add Woodward (1991: 192-98 and 1992:90-104). The latter book, among other things, is also a good but uncited source of ideas regarding observation of lessons (pp. 105-26). Regarding the excerpts from state school lessons generally, I would add Puchta and Schratz (1992) to the recommended reading.

Who could find the video package useful?

I realise that, thus far, I have said rather a lot about what potential users might have to add for themselves. Looking at Language Classrooms is, however, going to be very useful to certain people in certain situations.

- The tasks are sound in aim and design. In their tenor and straightforwardness they greatly resemble those to be found in Martin Parrot's book in the same series (1993). Like the tasks in that book, these seem, to me at least, to be especially suitable for use by trainerless teacher development groups even given the organization of the book into participant and trainer sections.
- My experience suggests that teachers of French and other foreign languages working outside their own countries, both in the schools and in adult education, could — by and large — learn a lot by using these materials owing not least to the high percentage of teacher talk in the target language.
- Trainers who are just beginning to work with an unfamiliar group of teachers (especially non-native speakers based in their home countries) could show a lesson whose institutional setting the trainer presumes resembles that of a majority of the participants. After viewing, participants could say what is different and what is similar for them. In this way, everyone concerned could learn a lot about fellow participants.
- University students going abroad to work as teaching assistants are bound to find the state school lessons interesting.
- I'm not sure how much trainers and participants on an intensive course (e.g., a full-time Cambridge/RSA CELTA) could take advantage of the materials, given the time pressures and many hours of viewing and task work provided by this package. Naturally, less intensive pre- and in-service courses would offer much greater opportunity for use.
- As the authors suggest, one would need to add to these materials, most especially before using them with very experienced teachers.

Conclusion

All such qualifications aside, this set of materials addresses a need sorely felt by teachers and trainers in many institutions which have, for whatever reasons, not managed to produce good materials of their own. Moreover, even institutions that have produced their own video and task materials would usually lack materials pertaining to kinds of course which they themselves never run and settings which they cannot reproduce. Thus, a prime strength of this package is its inclusion of material showing English taught: as a local language, as a non-local language, to young learners, to adults, to monolingual groups, to multilingual groups, in exam settings, in (presumably) non-exam settings, by native speakers and by non-native speakers. And, as the authors suggest, one can always adapt their tasks or make one's own.

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Woodward, T and S Lindstromberg 1995 Planning from Lesson to Lesson Pilgrims Longman

J and D Willis, eds. 1996 Challenge and Change in Language Teaching Heinemann

PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED

Of special relevance or interest to teacher trainers are:

Teaching about teaching: purpose, passion and pedagogy in teacher education. J.Loughran & T.Russell, eds. (1997) Falmer Press ISBN 0-7507-0622-8. 14 chapters by pre-service teacher educators talking about their work. All of them are in the "reflectivist " family. They discuss their aspiraations for the teachers they train, their methods, successes, failures in an informal, personal, practical way. An easy, interesting read.

Understanding teacher education, case studies in the professional development of beginning teachers by James Calderhead & Susan Shorrock (1997) Falmer Press ISBN 0-7507-0399-7. A report of a 2 year study on the experience of 20 pre-service primary teachers, ten of whom were institution based (PGCE), and ten school-based. Discussion of questions such as what background do student teachers have, how does it affect their training, what do they acquire in training and how, what processes affect their learning and what implications do all these have on design, organisation and assessment of pre-service training.

Teacher education for ESP Ron Howard & Gillian Brown eds (1997) Multilingual Matters. ISBN 1-85359-363-X. Part one describes the teaching of languages for specific purposes in the US and UK. Part two discusses essential components of ESP teacher education courses e.g. needs analyses, autonomy, technology. Part three contains case studies for around the world. The book is based on papers from the 1994 Edinburgh University symposium.

Readings in teacher development by Katie Head & Pauline Taylor (1997) Heinemann ISBN 0-435-240552. Eight chapters on subjects such as defining TD, learning about ourselves as teachers, ways of working with groups, managing your own change. Each unit is divided up into dip-in-able chunks with activities, quotes and reading extracts arranged jigsaw- like rather than in a straight, logical line. The affect is rather like chatting with friends or being in an exception -ally communicative staffroom. Recommended.

Running an effective training session by Patrick Forsyth (1992) Gower ISBN 0-566-07619-5. A practical review, for beginner or inconfident trainers, of the fundamentals of establishing a basis, planning a session, preparing course materials, presentation and participation techniques and follow-up. The author is in marketing consultancy and training and the training style is talk- based. But very practical, peppered with funny quotes and stories and would be useful to read before, say, a conference presentation.

Planning professional training days by Bob Gough & Dave James (1990) Open Universty Press ISBN 0-335-09412-0. UK secondary schools are expected to run 5 days of professional training a year for their staff, This slim, practical booklet is to help head teachers to do this. Sections on methods and techniques, planning and evaluation as well as case studies. Useful reminders throughout.

Adults learning (3rd edition) by Jenny Rogers (1977) Open University Press ISBN 0-335-09215-2. Addressed to people starting to teach adults whether they are in business, industry or leisure classes. Small book, small print but practical tips on understanding learners and groups, teaching mixed ability groups, using case studies and role play. Still selling well after 25 years.

Riding the waves of culture by Fons Trompenaars (1993) Nicholas Brearley pubs ISBN 1-85788-033-1. Written for international business managers, based on research involving 15,000 employees in 50 countries, this book claims that 5 key factors affect how we all deal with each other. The factors are universalism vs particularism, individualism vs collectivism, neutral vs emotional, specific vs diffuse, achievement vs ascription. Together with other cultural differences such as attitudes to time and the environment, these create four types of corporate culture. The conceptual frameworks are thought provoking and merit discussion.

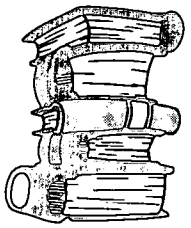
Psychology for language teachers, a social constructivist approach by Marion Williams & Robert Burden (1997) CUP ISBN 0-521-49880-5.

Early chapters give an overview of educational psychology discussing how different approaches have influenced language teaching methodology. So here you can look up "Behaviourism" or "Vygotsky" to remind yourself of who or what they are. Next, recent psychological developments in the area of the learner, the teacher, the task and the learning context are discussed. There is a full reference section and good index. You don't have to know anything about psychology to read the book. Useful. (See Authors' Corner P.19)

About language by Scott Thornbury (1997) CUP ISBN 0-521-42720-7. A range of tasks aims to develop pre- and in-service TESOL teachers' awareness of English and some of its underlying systems from phoneme, through words, phrases and sentences onto complete texts. The discrete item, verb- phrase weighted content of the tasks matches the content areas of many current EFL coursebooks and grammars. Task types include identification, categorisation, matching, explanation, interpretation, evaluation and applicatiaon. There is a key to all the tasks.

How we feel, an insight into the emotional world of teeenagers Jacki Gordon & Gillian Grant eds (1997) Jessica Kingsley pubs ISBN 1-85302-439-2. 2,000 teenagers anonymously completed a questionaire on how they felt about themselves, friends, family, teachers and life in general. Verbatim extracts have been included in chapters on peers, romance, school etc. Professionals who work with teenagers e.g. doctors, chldline workers, say what they have learned from the experience.

Motivating high level learners by David Cranmer (1997) Longman ISBN 0582-209765. A recipe book designed to encourage human skills such as establishing good learning habits and using creativity in relation to poetry, the visual arts and music as well as to develop language skills in upper intermediate and advanced learners.



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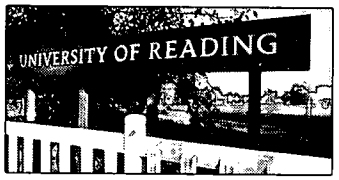

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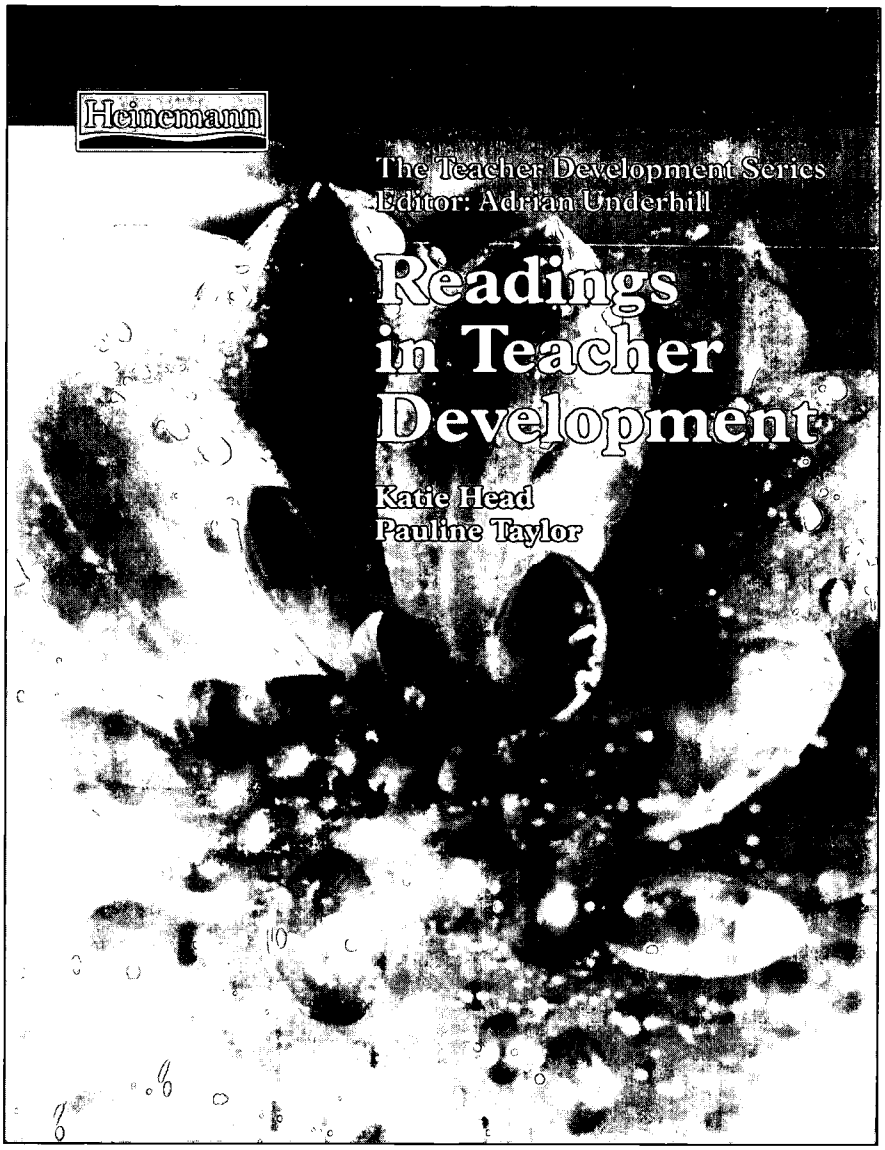

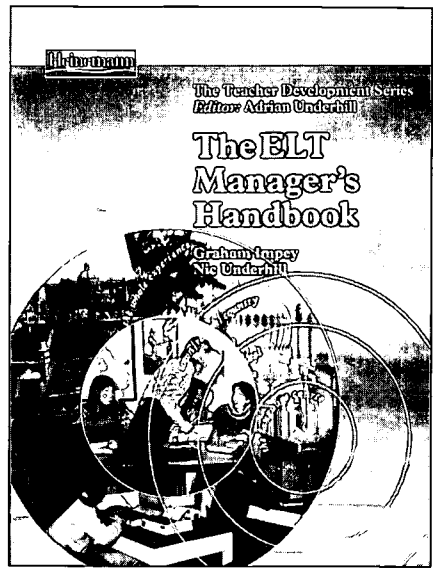

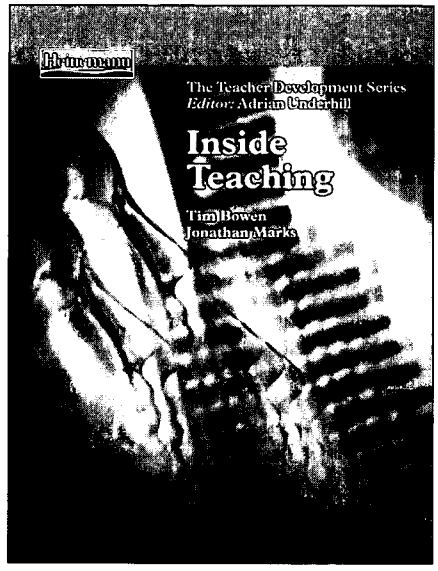

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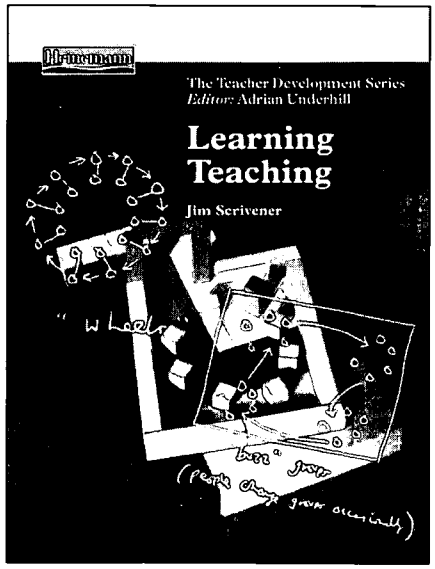

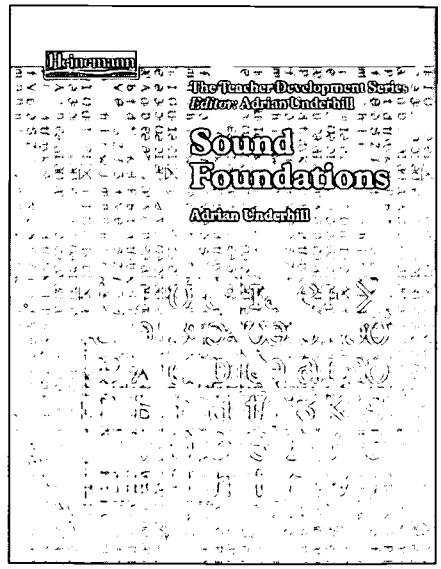

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