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EDITORIAL

This issue is the first to be produced by the new editorial team of Richard Cauldwell and Charles Wordell. We would like to thank our predecessors, Richard Berwick and Andrew Wright, whose term as editors started with the second issue of Volume 6, and ended with the second issue of Volume 8. Their five issues comprise a total of 548 pages and twenty-four articles, and include the efforts of distinguished writers on language education and applied linguistics as well as the work of younger scholars, both in Japan and overseas.

Three of their innovations we count as of special value: book reviews; conference proceedings; and the provision of abstracts in Japanese. We apologize for the lack of Japanese abstracts in this issue. Their absence will be remedied in future issues. As far as the other innovations are concerned, we are very glad that Jim Swan is continuing as Book Reviews Editor; and we intend to encourage presenters at the forthcoming JALT conference at Waseda University in Tokyo to submit versions of their presentations to the *Journal* either as fully-fledged articles or as short summaries of about 2000 words.

The outgoing editors have ended their tenure because of increasing commitments in other areas of their professional lives. We wish them all the best and once again extend our thanks for the work they have done; and particularly the time that Andrew Wright spent on the preliminary work for this issue, and in the transfer of editorial responsibilities. We are pleased that they have both agreed to stay on as advisors. Any errors that remain in this issue are entirely our responsibility.

The *Journal* requires more than an editorial team to survive and flourish. It requires articles. If you have something to contribute, please submit it to us – see the **Information for Contributors** at the back of this issue for the submission procedure – and we will immediately set the review process in

motion. The policy of the *Journal* is to have every article reviewed blind by at least two reviewers. Articles which are accepted have thus been judged and recommended by experienced professionals. Even when articles are rejected we pass on to contributors, if they wish, the comments of the reviewers (who remain anonymous). Please let us pressure you to submit!

In this Issue

Peter Skehan of the Institute of Education, London University, reports on a large-scale follow-up study of the subjects of Professor Gordon Wells's research into first language acquisition. Professor Wells's project established that certain types of parent-child interaction were more likely to promote faster language development in the early years. Peter Skehan reports on the provisional findings of his follow-up study, which seems to indicate that there is a further link between this style of parent-child interaction and the ability of the child to learn a foreign language at secondary school. He argues that the consequences of these findings include the reassessment of the importance of *memory, input* and *interaction*. He concludes by saying that the modern move towards more communicative methodology is bringing the learning of second and foreign languages in classrooms closer to the conditions of first language learning.

Yoko Fukushi and George Yule present us with a short but revealing study into the differing attitudes that short-stay and long-stay Japanese students have towards the U.S. They found that the short-stay students felt it was easy to make friends with Americans, but they themselves would not change as a result of their stay. The longer-term students had more complex reactions to the question of making friends but felt they had changed as a result of their stay. The authors explain each step of their procedure, the problems of each step, and

how they sought to overcome these problems. The authors end by pointing out that it is important for students who go overseas to be prepared to encounter a different cultural environment which may change them as individuals.

Kazuko Matsumoto, in her overview of diary studies argues (amongst other things) that they are a valuable prerequisite for larger-scale studies of the variables of language learning. They help identify variables which the researcher – as an outsider – may not have thought worth examining. She provides a useful review of diary studies and also advocates the diary study as being particularly useful in the examination of language classrooms in Japan.

In the review section, **Robert Ingram** discusses a book for teaching business and **Gary Buck** evaluates a language test.

We hope you will enjoy reading this issue, and that you will find it useful. If you do, and even if you do not, we should be very grateful to hear from you if you wish to contribute articles, or suggestions on how we might improve the *Journal*. Your written comments are always welcome. Also we invite you to meet with us informally at the 1987 conference session "*JALT Journal* Roundtable" where you can come and air your views. If you cannot come to the conference, we should be glad to receive letters from you. The address to write to is given in the **Information for Contributors** at the back of this issue.

Richard Cauldwell
Charles Wordell
Co-editors

It is with great regret that we announce the death in the United States of Patrick Buckheister, a former editor of the *Journal*. An appreciation will appear in the next issue.

INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES, INPUT, AND INTERACTION: A COMPARISON OF FIRST AND FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNING

Peter Skehan

Abstract

This paper discusses the problems of relating the findings of First Language Acquisition (FLA) research to the findings of Second Language Acquisition (SLA) research and about relating both sets of findings to teaching. It is argued that the findings of acquisition order studies in FLA are not replicated in SLA studies; that other factors, such as L1 transfer, general language competence and memory capacity have more explanatory power in explaining variations in the process of acquiring a second language. The paper then describes a link which has been found between FLA and SLA in a study which followed the subjects of Gordon Wells' FLA research as they encountered Foreign Language Education in Secondary School. The paper then considers the implications of two findings of the original Wells project, INPUT and INTERACTION. The author argues that comprehensible input may be good for comprehension but not for acquisition of the language system; and that a transmission model of teaching precludes the learner from engaging in the type of interactions which Wells showed to be predictive of effective FLA.

Peter Skehan is a lecturer at the University of London Institute of Education. He previously worked at the University of Birmingham. He obtained his Ph.D. at Birkbeck College, London.

Introduction

Language teachers are often reminded of an embarrassing paradox. This is that children acquiring their first language do so without the benefit of a teacher who takes on the role of guiding their language development. Yet such children invariably succeed in learning their native language to high levels (i.e. native speaker levels!) by a remarkably young age. The lack of teaching, in other words, is associated with guaranteed success – in fact the prevailing view for foreign language learners in schools is that many of them are wasting their time, and will leave language study without having achieved any functional competence in the foreign language they have been studying.

This paradox – that learning seems more likely to be successful when trained teachers are *not* present – has led many researchers to re-examine the conditions for first language acquisition in the hope that such research will provide insights that will lead to foreign language learning becoming more efficient. A clearer view of what is happening in first language acquisition, it is hoped, will allow *teachers* to reproduce the conditions that seem to guarantee first language acquisition success. Indeed, the explosive growth of first language acquisition research since the mid '60s has been very influential in the birth and development of second language acquisition research, since this latter field often looks for inspiration to its first language counterpart.

This article is going to examine some of the more recent research on first langauge acquisition (FLA), particularly that from the Bristol Language Project in Britain. The Bristol Project, directed by Professor Gordon Wells, is important because it is the largest scale study of first language acquisition ever undertaken. It looked at the first language development of 125 children over a period spanning nearly five years. The present article will examine its implications for

the foreign language learning field. It will consider the Bristol Project's findings on the issues of the invariant course of language development in first language acquisition; of the marked individual differences in *rate* of development; of the importance for such development of the opportunities for interaction that the child has available; of the quality of such interaction; and finally of the advantages that would come if such exposure to rich and varied interaction could be guaranteed in school.

Acquisition Orders

First of all, the Bristol research has demonstrated, very, very clearly, and in great detail, that children acquiring English as their first language follow remarkably similar developmental paths. Different systems of language, for example the pronoun system, are each clearly ordered within themselves; and, to a considerable degree, different systems are ordered with respect to one another (Wells 1985). Thus the order of acquisition of the systems is generally fairly fixed. However the rate of progress through the systems is not fixed, and the implication of this variability in rate is that the child brings a great deal of autonomy to the task of language learning.

Second language acquisition researchers have frequently turned to first language research for inspiration, and the original studies by Roger Brown (Brown, 1973) which suggested a developmental sequence in FLA have stimulated a large number of SLA studies. Basically, I would argue that despite the many claims that have been made that SLA developmental sequences too are invariant, there are good reasons to believe that while some consistencies exist, there is much less convincing evidence that the sequences are as invariant as in FLA. There are three main reasons for this claim.

First, SLA studies have been beset by a number of data

collection problems: for example, they rely heavily on techniques like the Bilingual Syntax Measure (Dulay and Burt 1974), which is known to bias results in favour of a particular order (Porter 1977): similarly there are problems with the categorisation of error – for example they regard an incorrect morpheme as an error, but disregard superfluous morphemes (Andersen, 1977); they are also based on cross-sectional rather than longitudinal studies (Rosansky 1976).

Secondly, SLA acquisition sequences are usually based on group studies and produce group accuracy orders. When these orders are applied to individuals, they do not very often hold up (Andersen 1977, 1978), i.e. relatively few individuals actually behave as the group orders would lead us to believe.

Thirdly, one often finds differences in SLA developmental sequences in different environmental conditions (Larsen-Freeman 1976; Ellis, 1984), and these inconsistencies cannot be related to different conditions of language use simply by appeal to different capacity to "monitor" as Gregg (1984) points out. Variability in performance seems to be of fundamental importance, and will have to be explained by any worthwhile theory of second language acquisition, rather than defined as trivial.

In sum, the powerfully and widely established natural sequences in first language acquisition are not replicated in second language acquisition. What we have had, rather, is SLA researchers looking to FLA work for inspiration and methods, and demonstrating a reluctance to accept that in SLA, while some consistency has been found, it is nothing like as much as in FLA. Certainly the most we can speak of is the existence of a certain degree of consistency in *accuracy* ordering, rather than *acquisition* systems as with FLA (Andersen 1977).

Acquisition Orders and Teaching

The consequences of an invariant SLA order being confirmed would have been very great. It would have implied that powerful inbuilt structures and processes have a determining role in second and foreign language development. In turn, this would have suggested a very limited role for the teacher in structuring learning, and would have suggested that teachers would be most effective as providers of a rich and varied corpus of language material which learners would use as fodder for inbuilt processing mechanisms to operate upon. Now while teachers behaving in such a way at least some of the time would not be a bad thing at all, the failure to establish a universal SLA order does suggest some differences in orientation. It suggests firstly that teachers need not see themselves as required to follow a particular naturalistically determined order and secondly that there is some scope for believing again in the once non-controversial claim that learners can learn what they are taught.

First Language Transfer

Connected with the demise of natural sequences (and the natural processes supposed to underlie them) is a resurgence of interest in some earlier aspects of interlanguage research which may have some explanatory power in accounting for the route of language development. L1 transfer, for example, denied in importance except in the early stages of learning by Dulay, Burt, and Krashen (1982) is now reasserting itself as a potent factor in L2 performance at a variety of levels. Thus we see work such as Roger Andersen's (1979) on the importance of transfer for Spanish learners of English which indicates that although such interference may sometimes be difficult to isolate experimentally, and although errors may seem to have more than one potential cause, L1 transfer is often a very strong candidate explana-

tion. Similarly, Harley and Swain (1985) have recently shown that English learners of French in immersion classes manifest very clear L1 interference, as with, for example, the word order of utterances like "je toujours prend l'auto" and sometimes more subtle interference and avoidance as with "j'etais donné beaucoup de medication" to avoid the use of an impersonal form.

General Knowledge of Language

Other areas have also reasserted themselves. For example, Felix (1978) has shown how second or foreign language learners draw upon some level of knowledge of grammar as part of their developing competence in the target language, reflecting the frequently made claim that learning a second language cannot be the same as learning a first. Such learners are able to draw upon pronominal forms which they manipulate effectively to achieve communication knowing that such generalized forms can be made to stand for other (missing) items of the target language which will be correctly interpreted by their interlocutors. Hence learners know they will be able to "get away with" utterances of some metalinguistic sophistication, such as "You that there" since they can expect that the correct interpretation will be made.

Memory

Attention has also been given to another of the cognitive abilities of the second language learner – his (or her) greater memory capacity. Investigators have shown that the language learner may often rely on memorized, unanalysed chunks of language which are used as self-contained units (Wong-Fillmore 1979; Peters 1983). The greater memory of the second language learner, even the *child* second language learner, allows this to happen, so that quite a wide repertoire

of such memorized "prefabricated" utterances may be available. These can then be the basis for a slow and painstaking analysis on the part of the learner as he or she arrives at a more productive, analytical competence with the language. This also connects with developments in language aptitude research, which suggest that there are grounds for identifying learner "types," (Skehan 1986), one of whom is the learner who achieves success by dint of impressive memory abilities which need *not* be linked to very great analytic power with language.

A Link between FLA and SLA

So far the discussion has been concerned with *processes* in language acquisition and the case has been argued that while there are similarities between first and second language acquisition, there are also important differences. These differences suggest that the fact that a second language learner is older, more cognitively mature, and comes to the second language through the medium of the first, makes the two types of acquisition far from identical. However, mention of language aptitude leads to a focus, next, on a point of contact between first and foreign language learning – that of the role of individual differences, as reflected in differences in *rate* of first language development, as well as amount of foreign language aptitude and achievement.

The children whose first language development was studied in the Bristol Project are now aged between thirteen and fifteen years. The large majority of them are in secondary schools in the Bristol area, and this fact suggested the possibility of the sort of longitudinal study often called for but rarely conducted in second language acquisition. In this case one would aim at relating the first language development of the children (where it has already been shown that there are wide individual differences) to the children's current

foreign language aptitude as well as their current foreign language achievement.

A research project long these lines was funded for one year from September, 1984 by Britain's Economic Social Research Council (ESRC). Although only a limited proportion of the results from the study have been analyzed, some of them are well worth commenting upon. (Further details are provided in Skehan in press, a; in press, b). Several of the indices of first language development, reflecting as they do the wide individual differences in first language ability, correlate significantly with several of the foreign language aptitude measures. Although none of these correlations is greater than 0.60, the prevailing impression is that a clear, if moderate, level of relationship is involved. When one considers that there is a time interval of something like ten to twelve years between the data sources, such a level of relationship is remarkable. It suggests that children who are more rapid developers in their first language tend to have more foreign language aptitude.

Of course, the existence of correlations of the order of 0.4 to 0.5 between various first language and various language aptitude indices raises the question of the determinants of foreign language aptitude, and whether there are inbuilt differences which account for some of the common features of language ability. The data that is currently available cannot yet provide any definite answers.

One of the first language measures that was included in the analysis was an index of the amount of talk addressed to the child, since Wells' work (Barnes, Satterly, Gutfreund, and Wells 1983) had indicated important sources of variation in this area. And the highest general level of correlation that was found with the aptitude measures was with the index of the amount of talk addressed to the child. In other words, the greater the amount of talk addressed to the child in early life, the greater is the tendency for the child to have higher foreign language aptitude. On the one hand, this might

suggest that the influence of the early environment in terms of amount of speech addressed to the child is enduring and pervasive, and that the quantity of speech has a causal role. On the other hand, the amount of speech addressed to the child might be a function of the linguistic development and personality of each child, with more advanced children generating different quantities and also different qualities of input, so that language addressed to the child might be a reflection of, rather than an explanation for, the rate of language development. Such a suggestion would relate to Seliger's (1983) proposal that there are students who are high and low input generators in language teaching classrooms, and that such input generation capacities are linked to the subsequent progress that such language learners make.

For the moment then, we have results which link first language development and foreign language aptitude. Possibly further research will allow the competing explanations to be evaluated, and provide a more complete picture of the nature of language aptitude and the extent to which it is malleable. Skehan (in press a,b) provides more extensive coverage of this longitudinal data.

The Role of Input

The Original Bristol Project also addressed the role of input in language learning. Here again first language studies have exerted considerable influence on second language investigators, and the first language emphasis during the 1970's on "motherese" has been followed by a current preoccupation in second language work with "comprehensible input." Theorists such as Krashen (1985) have proposed that the provision of syntactically simplified input which is "tuned" either roughly or finely to the learners' developmental level and which has a "here-and-now" emphasis will facilitate the process of acquisition. Indeed Krashen draws

even more on a first language influence when he advocates a "silent period" approach to foreign language instruction which he claims is based on the comprehension-production lag characteristic of children's native language development.

It is interesting to note that this emphasis on comprehensible input is beginning to receive its share of criticism. Wells (1985) has described how, in a first language context, simplification of input, or tuning, is *not* predictive of the subsequent rate of development. Rather it is the interactive types of parental response which foreshadow more rapid development – these include a concern to establish that the child's intended meaning has been understood, and, most importantly, attempts to extend and respond to the topics nominated by the child.

One may speculate therefore that comprehensible or "tuned" input is excellent for promoting comprehension (which is obviously no bad thing) but less effective at promoting *acquisition* and the continuing *development and growth* of a language system. In a similar way, others have argued that comprehensible or simplified input may do the first language learner a disservice since it provides him with a restricted corpus on which to base his learning (Wexler 1982).

Another point to make about the role of input in language learning is that there is growing evidence, particularly from immersion programs in Canada, that providing learners with extensive exposure to meaningful language comrehension is not enough to guarantee that they will produce language correctly, even after an appreciable time-lag (Swain 1985). It would appear that the productive skill is one which requires explicit teaching and fostering, and that although one might want to provide proportionately more comprehension work than production, it may be important to engage learners in the skills of speaking and interaction from very early stages.

The Role of Interaction

I have mentioned that the types of first language input that are most predictive of rate of development are those which draw the child into interaction with the adult on a topic chosen by the child. Development in first language (as well as learning about the world) comes more quickly via parents who respond to the interests of the child. In this way interaction can be seen as a system of checks and fail-safe devices which ensures that the sensitive parent can be guided in such a way that s/he, in turn, can guide the child.

If we apply such a view of the relationship between interaction and language learning to the second or foreign language field, the situation is rather worrying. The constraints of numbers in language teaching classrooms usually mean that there is little opportunity for learners to influence the nature of input that they receive. As a result, the nature of language use departs from that typical of native speaker conversations. The research of Long (1981) and Long and Sato (1983) has shown, for example, the striking differences between the use of question forms by language teachers, where display questions are common, and ordinary language users, where it is typical to ask a question because one does not know the answer, and because one supposes that one's interlocutor does. Other aspects of classroom language are likely to be similarly distinguishable from natural language use.

Of course, this reliance on teacher-centered approaches can be justified, to a certain extent, on the grounds that it ensures the most effective organization of the time available, and that it is for the teacher to structure the learning environment in the optimal manner. However, there are costs involved. Principally, such an approach *disengages* the language learner from initiative in influencing the interaction that takes place. The result is to deprive him of the sort of opportunity

of interaction that Wells has spoken of in relation to the first language field. Consequently, while the choices made by the teacher may have a lot to commend them, there is no easy route for the participation of the learner in the language class. The checks and balances built into effective first language interaction have been removed. And most importantly of all, the learner is put into the position of having to defer the usefulness of what he is being taught until he can participate in conversational interaction himself at some later stage, and probably outside the classroom. It is likely that some learners will be much less effective at doing this than others.

Conclusion

It is unfortunate but true that a rather bleak picture has been painted in this comparison of first and second language learning. However, language teaching practices are changing, and the current growth in importance of communicative language teaching may go some considerable way to reducing the chasm between native and foreign language learning. We are moving, hopefully, to a situation where the static transmission model of teaching that has been alluded to here no longer applies in many language teaching classrooms, and where many teachers are now building into their classes a greater degree of communicative activity, of interactive language use, and of communication strategy teaching (Long and Porter 1985). To the extent that this is done, we may see a greater cross-fertilization between first and second language acquisition research, on the one hand, and classroom procedures, on the other. Such an attempt to investigate and hopefully substantiate classroom procedures in terms of natural language learning processes would be an excellent way to avoid the degree of failure that confronts many contemporary foreign language learners.

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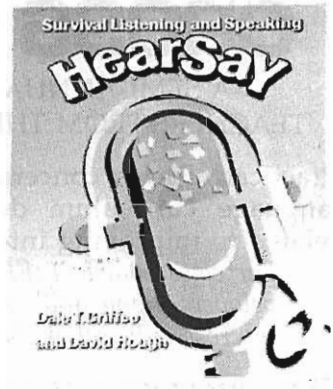

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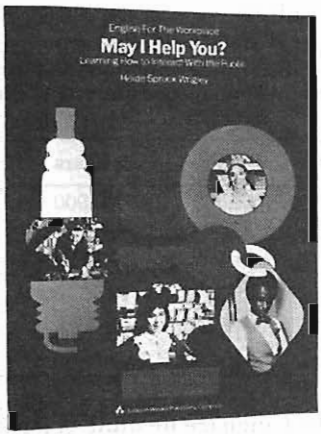

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DIARY STUDIES OF SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION: A CRITICAL OVERVIEW

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Abstract

This overview of diary studies of second language acquisition[1] (SLA) begins with a brief discussion of the recent application of qualitative research methodology to the study of classroom language learning and teaching, and then offers a review of research findings of several previously conducted diary studies. It is argued that the major strength of second language diary research lies in its holistic, hypothesis-generating, and naturalistic characteristics, and that conducting diary studies for the investigation of second language learning and teaching in a formal instructional setting would be especially beneficial in Japan.

Introduction

One of the noticeable recent developments in SLA research has been the application of qualitative research methods to the study of language learning and teaching in classroom settings. Introspective and retrospective techniques have traditionally and extensively been used by researchers in such fields as sociology and anthropology. Influenced largely by the wide-

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spread successful use and acceptance of such research methods in those fields, SLA researchers have recently come to employ qualitative techniques, especially in second language classroom process research and classroom-centered research.[2] In this field of SLA studies, diary-keeping has been used as an introspective technique over the past ten years, with the aim of exploring various aspects of classroom language learning and teaching for which traditional quantitative or empirical research does not permit accurate investigation.

The purpose of this paper is to present a brief critical overview of diary studies of second language learning or acquisition. First, the application of both quantitative and qualitative approaches to SLA research, together with the strengths of qualitative approaches to second language classroom research, are considered. Then, an explanation is given of how diary studies are usually conducted, and some of the major findings of previous diary studies are reviewed. Finally, the strengths of the diary study, especially the advantages of applying the diary study to the investigation of classroom foreign language learning in Japan are considered, and some suggestions are made for future diary research.

Quantitative and Qualitative Approaches to SLA Research

The question of whether to employ quantitative as opposed to qualitative methods[3] is currently a controversial issue in the field of SLA research. In recent years, there has been a marked trend toward greater use of quantitative methodology.[4] Very few researchers seem to be willing to conduct other non-experimental, qualitative SLA studies. Ochsner (1979), discussing two research traditions, nomothetic (i.e., experimental) and hermeneutic (i.e., non-experimental) approaches to science, strongly criticizes this situation. He argues that SLA researchers need both of these traditions and therefore should "alternate between two kinds of equal research, one for objective, physical data and one for subjective, unobservable facts" (pp.

60-61). Cohen & Rosenfeld (1981) also emphasize the importance of using mentalistic techniques such as thinking aloud and self-observation in SLA studies, concluding that the combined use of both empirical and mentalistic research methods will lead us to a more complete understanding of the processes underlying SLA. A similar position is also taken by Long (1980), who proposes that future research on classroom language learning should use a combined approach so that the limitation of each research method will be successfully counterbalanced. Long argues that "a combination of methods plus some modifications in commonly used research designs is necessary if the field is to achieve its ultimate goal of testing a theory of second language acquisition with the aid of formal instruction" (p. 32).

Gaies (1983) suggests that there are three major advantages of qualitative second language classroom research. First, qualitative research allows for sufficient investigation of the learning processes of second language learners who participate little in verbal classroom interaction. Second, qualitative studies enable classroom researchers to explore and obtain important insights into learners' mental states or thought processes involved in classroom language learning experience. Third, the hypothesis-generating, not hypothesis-testing, characteristic of qualitative approaches perfectly fills the needs of second language classroom-centered research at the present stage, in which many significant variables remain to be discovered.

Discussing different research approaches to the study of everyday speech behavior, Wolfson (1986) recommends a two-pronged approach toward data collection and analysis in which systematic observation and controlled elicitation will be used as necessary complements to one another. Wolfson especially emphasizes the hypothesis-generating potential of qualitative observation in research on speech behavior:

> Because the design of an experiment or an elicitation instrument forces the researcher to decide in advance what variables will be tested and because native-speaker intuitions about the factors which condition speech behavior are so unreliable, it is safer to begin by systematic observation and to allow hypotheses to emerge from the data themselves. Then, an elicitation instrument can be developed which is sensitive to what has been found to occur in actuality, and the hypotheses which have emerged can be tested for generalizability and validity. (p. 697)

Together with the authors cited above, I am convinced that both quantitative and qualitative approaches must be used in a complementary manner – "a continued program of qualitative refinement and quantitative testing" (Chaudron, 1986, p. 714) is necessary, if we are to arrive at valid analyses and better understanding of SLA processes. In my view, the current application of qualitative approaches to second language classroom-centered research such as the use of diary-keeping for the investigation of classroom language learning processes is a most desirable trend.

Diary Studies: A Definition

A diary study in second language learning or teaching is "an account of a second language experience as recorded in a first-person journal" (Bailey & Ochsner, 1983, p. 189). The diarist, who keeps a personal record of classroom events, including feelings about and reactions to his or her own language experience, may be a language learner or teacher, but may not be the researcher himself or herself (several early diary studies, however, violate this last requirement). The diaries may be written during the classroom language lesson or after the class. They may be kept in the diarists' native language or second, target language. Thus, the diary studies of classroom second language learning or teaching may differ

from one another in three major ways: (1) who the diarist is, (2) when the diary is written, and (3) what the language of the diary is – L1 or L2.

The process of conducting a diary study generally involves five main activities (Bailey, 1983, pp. 72-73):[5]

1. The diarist provides an account of his or her personal language learning (or teaching) history.
2. The diarist systematically records events, details, and feelings about the current language learning (or teaching) experience in a confidential and candid diary.
3. The journal entries are revised for public perusal. Names are changed and information damaging to others or extremely embarrassing to the learner is deleted.
4. The researcher studies the journal entries as data, looking for "significant" patterns and events. (An event is usually considered significant if it occurs frequently or with great salience.)
5. The factors identified as important to the language learning (or teaching) experience are interpreted and discussed in the finished diary study, either with or without illustrative data.

Diary Studies: A Brief Survey

The diary study of SLA is a relatively new field of research, and not many language learning or teaching diary studies have been published to date. Usually the papers are very long, especially when they include journal excerpts, and the research method, which is unfamiliar to many SLA researchers, needs to be more refined (cf. p. 29 below for some suggestions). Each of the diary studies, however, contains unique and noteworthy information which contributes to our understanding of the processes underlying second language learning and teaching in a formal classroom setting.

Schumann and Schumann (1977), the first diarist-researchers who published their results, examined their own second

language learning experiences in three different situations (i.e., studying Arabic as beginners in Tunisia with both exposure and formal instruction; studying Persian in an intermediate language class at UCLA; and studying Persian as intermediate learners in Iran without formal instruction). Analysis of the intensive journals kept by both authors revealed that for each individual there exist personal variables which can either promote or inhibit the process of second language learning. They identified six such personal variables affecting SLA: these were nesting patterns, desire to maintain one's own language learning agenda, reactions to dissatisfaction with teaching methods, motivation for choice of materials, eavesdropping vs. speaking as a language learning strategy, and transition anxiety. This study suggested strongly that no two persons will acquire a second language in precisely the same way. In a further examination of the journals kept in Tunisia and Iran, Schumann (1980) identified four additional personal factors which had important effects on her language learning in the target language country: these were competition vs. cooperation, the disadvantages of being an English-speaking second language learner, the role of the expatriate community in hindering a newcomer's second language learning, and being a woman language learner in Iran.

Jones (1977) also investigated her own second language learning through the diaries she kept during an 11-week intensive program of Indonesian in the target culture. Her study, which focuses on social and psychological factors, provides us with a detailed description of how such factors as language shock, culture shock, culture stress, and social distance, interacting with one another, influenced an individual learner's second language learning in the target language community. Although she experienced both positive factors (e.g., friendly attitudes towards her by her Indonesian host family) and negative factors (e.g., rejection of the teaching method and the competitive Indonesian program), she progressed quite rapidly in

the target language. In the concluding section she notes that the positive factors outweighed the negative factors and allowed acquisition to take place during the 11-week span of her language learning experience.

Bailey (1980) kept a diary of her language learning experience in a ten-week French reading course at UCLA. In her introspective analysis of the journal entries, she found that such factors as the language learning environment, teaching style, and feedback from the teacher were influential in her second language learning experiences. First, the journal reveals that the social environment as well as the physical environment (e.g., seating arrangement) affected her classroom language learning – that her attitude toward learning French improved as the social climate in the class improved. Second, the journal indicates that the teacher's democratic teaching style, especially her openness and willingness to treat the students as her social equals, positively influenced her language learning and contributed to her increasing enthusiasm for studying French. Third, the journal includes many references to her success with the language, her discomfort with perceived failure, and how much she was influenced and encouraged by the teacher's positive feedback to her and to her classmates. The journal also indicates that her success and positive feedback received from the teacher increased her enthusiasm for learning the target language.

In a later study, Bailey (1983) discusses the relationship between two affective factors, competitiveness and anxiety, manifested in her language learning diary of the university French class discussed above. She found that she was both highly competitive and highly anxious at the beginning, but her anxiety decreased as she became more proficient than her classmates; she indicates that the manifestations of competitiveness frequently coincided with comments about anxiety in the French classroom. After comparing and discussing ten similar diary studies in terms of the issues of competitiveness

and anxiety, she proposed the hypothesis that language classroom anxiety can be caused and/or aggravated by the learner's competitiveness when he/she perceives himself/herself as less proficient than the object of comparison. In addition, a case study conducted by Schmidt and Frota (1986), which investigated the development of conversational ability in Portuguese by one of the researchers during a five-month stay in Brazil, also includes an introspective diary study.

Unlike the diary studies summarized above in which the diarist-researcher examined his or her own second language learning experiences, Brown (1983, 1985b) analyzed the diaries kept by 36 English-speaking older and younger adult language learners who took an eight-week intensive Spanish course at a missionary training center in the U.S. The primary purpose of this diary study was to see if older adults differ from younger adults in their perceptions of important language learning factors. A close examination of the subjects' journals resulted in the identification of 76 factors,[6] and then these factors were listed for each subject group according to frequency of mention in the diaries. Statistical analyses revealed that while the overall language learning experience was perceived similarly by both age groups, the most important factors in the language learning process were perceived quite differently.

Five Strengths and Three Limitations of Diary Studies

As a qualitative approach to second language classroom-centered research, the diary study has a number of noteworthy advantages. One crucial advantage of the second language diary study is that it provides a detailed description of "all" aspects of language learning or teaching experience. While product-oriented experimental studies allow for investigating only one or a few pre-selected aspects of the second language learning experience at one time, process-oriented ethnographic studies such as the diary study enable researchers to investigate all

aspects of the classroom language experience over a period of time. That is, a holistic investigation of classroom language learning or teaching is made possible in second language diary research.

Another important advantage of the diary study is that it is exploratory and creative in the sense that it not only generates new hypotheses concerning SLA but discovers new variables playing important roles in classroom language learning or teaching. Thus it paves the way for further experimental investigation. Many of the supporters of diary research (e.g., Bailey & Ochsner, 1983) have recognized its significance as an investigation preliminary to more controlled, experimental research studies. In discussing the strengths of ethnographic research, Long (1980) points out its creative characteristics as follows:

> Ethnographic field work is primarily a hypothesis-generating, not hypothesis-testing, undertaking. When applied to a field, such as classroom language learning, about which little is already known, it benefits from its eschewal of the "blinkers". . . . The potentially limitless scope of ethnographic enquiry means that, in theory at least, it has the potential for (re)discovering these or other facts which appear to be important, rather than simply taking over variables identified in other (albeit related) fields, and for describing their perceived relevance in concrete settings and from the perspectives of the participants instead of that of an outsider. (p. 27)

The third strength of second language diary research is that it deals with "natural" classroom data. The diary study, when journal-keeping is not concurrent with classroom observation, especially by a non-participant, is probably the SLA study most directly tied to the natural classroom setting (although the journals of the learners in Brown's [1985a] study have shown that the learning situation can be changed to some

extent by the diary-keeping itself). The diary study's chief virtue in this regard is that it requires little research intrusion; thus it does not strongly affect the teaching process it observes.

The fourth stength of the diary study lies in the fact that it sheds light on otherwise unobservable aspects of second language learning or teaching experience, particularly on hidden psychological variables in SLA such as affective factors (e.g., motivation), cognitive style, language learning strategies, decision making, self-esteem, and sources of enthusiasm. Also the diary study is one of the best methods for focusing on the individual learner, for discovering individual learer variables or personal variables which affect the process of second language learning.[7] The excerpts taken from the journals kept on the same second language class by seven different learners (Brown, 1985a, pp. 128-129), for example, show that perceptions of the language learning experience are completely personal and individual. In fact, the central value of the diary study, its advocates claim, has been to "give teachers and researchers insights on the incredible diversity of students to be found even within a homogeneous language classrroom" (Bailey, 1983, p. 98).

Finally, the diary study is not only a research tool, but may also be used for other practical purposes such as self-awareness, self-evaluation, self-improvement, and orientation for other learners – it can be of immediate use for diarist-learners or an aid to their second language learning. For example, Bailey (1983) claims that the act of diary-keeping itself can be therapeutic for language learners, leading them to identify and overcome factors which have harmful effects on their classroom second language learning. Many journal excerpts of previously conducted diary studies (e.g., Brown, 1983; Schmidt & Frota, 1986) also provide evidence of the learners being aware of, and considering how to solve, their own problems.

Five major advantages of the second language diary study

have been discussed above, but diary research is, of course, not without limitations. One obvious limitation of the diary study is that, like other case studies, its findings lack generalizability unless the obtained data is quantified as in the case of Brown's (1983, 1983b) diary research on second language learning in the Spanish classroom. Usually the diary study deals with an individual's language acquisition taking place in a unique environment, which makes it impossible to generalize findings to other learners and other learning environments – results may be totally idiosyncratic. However, the ungeneralizability issue, it does seem, is of little concern to most of the advocates of the diary study (e.g., Bailey, 1983). Though admitting this is the primary weakness of diary research, they claim that to attempt to generalize from the results may not even be desirable. These researchers feel that the most significant contribution of such diary studies is what they can uncover concerning personal variables involved in second language learning, acquisition, or teaching. Another limitation of the introspective diary study is concerned with the burden placed on the diarist-researcher. As Long (1980) puts it,

> "Participant" diary studies of this kind involve the researcher in two related but separate tasks, keeping a diary and learning (or teaching) a second language. This is obviously a "plus" as far as their potential for revealing insights into language learning is concerned, but the divided attention resulting from the dual activity could constitute a considerable obstacle to the study of classroom processes. (p. 30)

In order to solve this problem, he suggests that the diarist-researcher enroll in a lower-level second language class so that diary-keeping will not become too heavy a burden on his/her second language learning. Moreover, the diary study also has the disadvantage of being relatively time-consuming. In comparison with product-oriented quantitative research studies,

the diary study, which is concerned with the process of SLA, requires considerable time in gathering the data and analyzing it. However, it usually takes less time in the data collection process than participant observation, another representative qualitative approach to second language classroom research.

Even with these limitations, the diary study enables SLA researchers and teachers not only to realize the complex nature of the classroom language learning process but to recognize various factors which facilitate or hinder second language learning in the classroom. Thus, language learning diaries have a great many instructive implications for language teaching; they serve to inform teachers of how to help second language learners learn more efficiently and effectively in a classroom environment.

Three Reasons for Diary Research in Japan

Applying diary research to the investigation of foreign language learning is beneficial in Japan on three major grounds. First, the acquisition of English as a foreign language (EFL) in Japan takes place almost entirely in formal instructional settings – that is, the exposure to EFL is almost entirely confined to the controlled classroom situation; in light of this fact, we can say that studies focusing on the classroom language learning process such as diary research are meaningful and worth conducting in Japan. The second reason is concerned with the present state of SLA research in Japan – very little investigation has been done thus far concerning second language learning, acquisition, or teaching both in and out of the classroom, so much still remains unknown. Given this situation, it seems highly desirable that exploratory studies such as the diary study be conducted somewhat prior to hypothesis-testing experimentation in order to discover variables and patterns affecting or governing the language learning process as well as to generate new hypotheses concerning SLA. Third, the investigation into classroom second language learning in

Japan greatly benefits from the method of the diary study. Japanese learners of EFL tend not to be good at taking an active part in classroom activities verbally, compared to learners of other nationalities such as Spanish-speaking students. As Gaies (1983) has pointed out, the diary study, not dealing with the students' verbal participation in the classroom, allows for investigating the learning process of even such "quiet" learners who seem to constitute the majority of EFL students in Japan. For these reasons, the diary study appears to be the very kind of SLA research that is needed in Japan today.

Suggestions for Future Diary Research

It is encouraging to see that the current employment of qualitative methodology in second language classroom research has noticeably involved such ethnographic techniques as diary-keeping. As has already been stated above, the diary study is a fairly young field of SLA research, and its methodology remains to be further refined. It is expected that with the gradual refinement of the method, interesting and enlightening findings which contribute to deeper understanding of the SLA process in a classroom situation will be presented in the future. For those who are interested in conducting second language diary research, I would like to suggest the following in terms of the important issues of generalizability, reliability, and validity.

The first point to note is concerned with the above-mentioned generalizability issue. It seems highly desirable, in my opinion, that the number of diarists should not be just one but several or many – that the researcher should investigate the language learning process of multiple subjects rather than doing a self-observational study of his/her own second language learning so that the idiosyncracy of the findings would be avoided as much as possible. This does not mean, however, that I deny the enormous value and significance of introspec-

tive diary research, which provides us with fairly valid self-report data obtained through particularly keen observation which is supplemented by introspection. Further, it is also desirable that the journal data obtained from the subjects should be somehow quantified as was previously done in Brown's (1983, 1985b) research, so as to make the results more generalizable to other populations of second language learners.

The second point to be taken into account is the problem of reliability. To analyze the journal entries is usually time-consuming, and can be too subjective if done by one person; moreover, "significant" patterns and factors in second language learning experience, the finding of which is the primary purpose of the diary study, do not seem to be easily decided on, especially when the researchers analyzes other subjects' journals instead of his/her own. In order to avoid subjective judgments as much as possible or to make results more reliable, analysis of the journals should be done by at least two or three researchers. It is also important that the analysis should be done indpendently, and if disagreement occurs between the examiners on some point, they should consult with each other to arrive at a final agreement.

The final point concerns the problem of validity. It is related to the problem of precise description and measurement of psychological variables in second language learning, which has been a problematical issue in past SLA studies. It seems that introspective diary studies pose few problems with respect to the validity issue, in view of the fact that the diarist-researcher who observes classroom activities analyzes his/her own record of personal thoughts and feelings. It is appropriate to assume in this case that the psychological domain in classroom second language learning would be precisely described and accurately assessed. In non-introspective diary studies, on the other hand, in order for the affective dimension of language learning experience to be precisely described, it is essential and neces-

sary for each subject-diarist to write his/her comments and feelings openly and honestly. As it is a frequent occurrence that the subject-diarists, being conscious of the researcher's judgments of what they have written, will write only those things desirable or not detrimental to the teacher, institution, classmates, etc., the researcher must see to it that the journals reflect the subjects' honest and sincere expression of classroom events, comments, and feelings. To accomplish this, the researcher or teacher should try to create a non-threatening learning environment. Another effective way of obtaining valid self-report data from the subject-diarists is to make the journals confidential. In non-introspective diary research, which inevitably involves inference by the researcher, it is also necessary, in order for the psychological aspect of SLA to be precisely assessed, that the researchers' analysis of the subjects' journals should be supplemented by other qualitative techniques like questionnaires and personal interviews to gain more accurate information concerning the subjects' actual process of classroom second language learning. This process takes more time, but is surely needed in order to obtain more valid data and analysis of classroom language learning experiences.

Most of the diary studies that have been conducted to date are introspective, self-observational studies of second language learning experienced by the researcher himself or herself. Diary research with valid self-report data has made an important contribution to clearer understanding of the classroom SLA process over the past decade, especially in the area of personal or individual learner variables. This will continue. Also, I expect that more and more non-introspective diary studies involving multiple subjects, data quantification, and therefore generalizable findings will be conducted for a further exploration of the affective, psychological dimension of classroom second language learning.

Conclusion

Although there almost inevitably remains the problem of subjectivity or ungeneralizability, the diary study, as one of the qualitative approaches to second language classroom-centered research, has enormous advantages. As has been discussed above, they include its holistic, hypothesis-generating, and naturalistic characteristics, its focus on personal variables in second language learning, and its immediate use for diarist-learners. It would probably be best to consider, as Bailey (1983) and Bailey & Ochsner (1983) claim, that ethnographic research such as the diary study differs in kind from traditional empirical research, thus providing us with a different kind of information.

This creative, hypothesis-generating study of classroom language learning processes is worth conducting in Japan, where foreign language learning takes place almost entirely in formal instructional situations. Moreover, little is known about the actual process of SLA and about factors influencing classroom language learning or teaching in the context of various schools in Japan. It is strongly suggested that future second language classroom research focuses more on qualitative studies to explore unobservable, psychological aspects of language learning or teaching, and most importantly, to allow new hypotheses to emerge for further experimental investigation.

Notes

[1] In this paper the terms *acquisition* and *learning* are used interchangeably, as are *second language* and *foreign language*.

[2] Second language classroom research may be defined as "research on second language learning and teaching all or part of whose data are derived from the observation or measurement of the classroom performance of teachers and students" (Long, 1980, p. 3).

[3] Quantitative research may be defined as "the kind of research that involves the tallying, manipulation, or systematic aggregation of quantities of data," while qualitative research is "any attempt to cite authorities

or report observations, introspections, or descriptions of language or its use without in some sense quantifying the results" (Henning, 1986, p. 702). Quantitative research is also known by such names as scientific, nomothetic, experimental, empirical, and objective, while qualitative research is also known by such names as anthropological, ethnographic, ideographic, hermeneutic, mentalistic, naturalistic, non-experimental, humanistic, rational, and subjective.

[4]Henning's (1986) analysis of articles published in *TESOL Quarterly* and *Language Learning* shows that the percentage of quantitative research has increased from 12% (1970) to 61% (1985), and from 24% (1970) to 92% (1985), respectively.

[5]See Bailey & Ochsner (1983) for methodological guidelines for second language diarists (e.g., what kind of information should an acceptable diary study provide) and analytical standards for readers.

[6]Among the identified factors are time, success, materials, tests, anxiety, motivation, health, environment, memory, other learners, research intrusions, assignments, feedback, learning strategies, culture, empathy, and teacher attitudes. The factor that was most frequently mentioned by both groups was the time factor.

[7]Schumann (1978) provides a taxonomy of factors influencing SLA, which includes social, affective, personality, cognitive, biological, aptitude, personal, input, and instructional factors.

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"HERE THERE IS NO SUCH KIND OF STRING" THE CROSS-CULTURAL PERCEPTIONS OF RECENTLY-ARRIVED VERSUS LONGER-TERM JAPANESE STUDENTS IN THE U.S.

Yoko Fukushi and George Yule

Abstract

On the basis of interviews with some recently-arrived and some longer-term Japanese students in the U.S., we found some similarities and some major differences between the perceptions of the groups on a number of questions concerning their experiences in the U.S. While perceived social constraints ("invisible string") were felt to be much less, by both groups, and their absence considered a good thing; a corollary sense of isolation or distance between people was also reported, by the longer-term group, as a negative factor. While the newly-arrived group felt that they would not change as a result of living in America, the longer-term group almost unanimously pointed to ways in which they had changed and the problems they might have in readjusting to life in Japan. The casual friendliness of Americans led the newly-arrived to believe that it was easy to make good friends with Americans, despite some encounters with prejudice, while the longer-term group had developed more complex perspectives. The study represents an explora-

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tion of cross-cultural issues, not as objective differences between cultural environments, but in terms of the subjective and variable experiences of individuals.

Introduction

Traditionally, the investigation of how Japanese students cope with the use of English as a second language is fairly narrowly focused on cross-linguistic issues related to problems in pronunciation, grammar and vocabulary. More recently, we have seen an increased awareness of cross-cultural issues (e.g. Krasnick, 1985; Mizuno, 1984) and the problems associated with coping, not only with a second language, but also with a second culture. Quite often, however, the focus of larger cross-cultural studies (e.g. Barnlund, 1975; Goldstein & Tamura, 1975) tends to be on the salient, broadly-defined differences which make two countries like Japan and America such distinct cultural environments. While these objective studies provide a number of insights into the potential difficulties which Japanese students might encounter when they go to study in the United States, they do not capture many of the highly subjective and frequently variable perceptions which individual students have of the cross-cultural experience.

In the course of informal discussions with Japanese students, we had noted a wide range of different opinions about the experience of being a Japanese student at an American university. In an attempt to document some of these divergent perceptions, and also to identify what might be the major factors causing the perceived differences, we conducted a series of face-to-face interviews, using exactly the same questions each time, with a number of Japanese students studying at Louisiana State University. The most obvious differentiating factor within this group turned out to be length of stay in the U.S. We found no major differences between the perspectives of males versus females or, quite surprisingly, between

those who had spent many versus few years studying English in Japan. Also, in terms of motivation, we found that all individuals expressed what Gardner & Lambert (1972) defined as instrumental motivation, that is, the perception of acquiring the second language for purposes such as getting a better job (in Japan), to meet new requirements for a currently held job (in Japan), or for travelling to more places because "English is a useful language". None of those interviewed gave any indication of having Gardner & Lambert's integrative motivation, that is, the desire to acquire the second language as a means of becoming a member of American society or adopting American ways and values. Consequently, to present our findings, we shall divide our population into those who were relatively recent arrivals in the U.S., whose average length of stay was 5 weeks (Group A), and those who had been in the U.S. for more than one year, with an average stay of 2½ years (Group B).

The Survey

We conducted the survey by asking, in individual face-to-face interviews, in English, a set of twelve questions. All interviews were taperecorded. The initial questions were factual, followed by questions which attempted to elicit the students' opinions. To organize our report, we summarize responses to the factual questions in Table 1 and then present each of the other questions individually, with examples of responses and some discussion.

There are, of course, some well-known difficulties associated with surveys of this type. For example, those individuals who feel that their spoken English is rather limited may choose simply to respond with something they *can* say, rather than with something they actually *want* to say. We should also remain aware of the fact, pointed out by Oller (1981), that some individuals may respond in an interview by giving answers they think the interviewer wants to hear rather

than expressing their own personal views. To help minimize these effects, we took the set of interview questions, translated them into Japanese, and asked all interviewees (some time after the oral interview) to provide written answers, in Japanese, to the written questions. Interestingly, the written responses were always much shorter than the spoken responses. While there is still no guarantee that the written responses provide totally reliable versions of what these individuals' views really were, we feel that, by only taking those spoken responses which were confirmed via the written responses, we have gone some way toward ensuring that we have, at least, consistency of expressed views.

Results

The interview began with some basic questions on length of stay, number of years spent studying English in Japan, whether they were currently attending English classes and whether they enjoyed being in America. This information is summarized in Table 1.

Table 1

	Time in U.S. (Average)	Time Studying English in Japan (Average)	Attending English Classes Now?	Enjoy Being in America?	Male	Female	Total Number
Group A	5 weeks	7.5 years	Yes (all)	Yes (all)	3	3	6
Group B	2½ years	7.6 years	No (all)	Yes (all)	5	3	8

The remaining questions were introduced by a Yes/No question, immediately followed by a Wh- question designed to elicit an explanation of the 'yes' or 'no' answer. So, for example, we first asked: *Do you enjoy being in America?* which inevitably elicited a 'yes' or 'of course' answer, and we followed up with the next two questions.

What do you like about America?

Individuals in group A responded to this question by mentioning that the country was very big, the university was

big, and that there were good opportunities for sports. Individuals in group B also mentioned sports, a casual lifestyle and the fact that they felt places were not crowded. However, the majority of answers to this question from both groups contained references to freedom. For group A, this was expressed in terms of having a lot of *free time, American student very freedom* and *free mind*. For group B, this question elicited quite extended accounts of different perceptions of the freedom they experienced while being in America. For one student, this freedom was described in the following way:

(S12) I don't have to worry what other people think of me – that's the best thing – I can do whatever I want to do.

Three other students explicitly referred to the concept of not being tied and one of them eloquently elaborated on this perception, as follows:

(S9) Compared with Japan em – the relationship between people and people are not so tight – and – ah this is my opinion – ah among the Japanese people there is a – just suppose there is a string – invisible string – some are very strong some are very weak or some are very thick or some are very thin and from our experience we can recognize what kind of string – ah – there among among people and em – understanding those kind of string we have to ah – do our – what we want to do – what we want in Japanese society – but here there is no such kind of string – for me it seems to be – so – here do things positively.

Thus, while some students comment on physical differences, the majority talk of their experience in America as one in which certain perceived constraints are missing. Interestingly, the responses to the following question show that these students are also aware of other repercussions of this 'freedom'.

What don't you like about America?

For those in group A, the most common response to this question concerned problems with the language, with understanding others, and the fact that *American people speak rapidly*. One individual focused on transportation problems: *I don't have car – everyday walking walking – I'm very tired every day*, while two students recounted experiences with prejudice, one saying: *some Americans not polite for foreign students*, and the other reporting that, at a party, someone had said to her: *Japanese girl is not good.*

The responses of group B were really different. Two individuals said they really didn't like the food, but the majority commented on a perceived lack of caring and the distance between people. This was expressed as *people too casual – don't care* and as *people don't care about other people very much – people are more independent*. One student commented on the connection between the good side, that he didn't feel so tied by others' opinions, and the bad side, that others didn't care about him, noting that *students here just push and push and don't think of other people*. This awareness of the two aspects of the one experience, freedom yet isolation, was only expressed by members of the long-term group and provides some clue to the different perspectives elicited from groups A and B when responding to a later question concerning making friends with Americans.

Do you like America more than Japan?

This was the next question and it elicited an overwhelming negative response, except for one individual from group B who preferred to say: *you can't really compare*. The follow-up question here was:

Why? What is the difference?

This question more than any other elicited a variety of

highly personal reactions among those in group A. There were individual mentions of the fact that the dormitory toilets had no doors, that baths were never deep enough, that one couldn't get good rice at all, that American students didn't study and that lifestyle differences – wearing shoes inside the house, for example – were difficult to get used to. Among group B, there were more uniform reactions, concentrating on customs in general (*more comfortable among Japanese*) and on food (*food is a major thing – I miss Japanese food*).

This question elicited very favorable comments on Japan and Japanese ways, with only one exception and that came from the individual who had spent the longest time (4½ years) in the U.S. She noted that, in some ways, it had been better for her personally in America because there was *not as much social pressure* and, being able to talk to anyone, she had become less nervous and shy. This type of personal response presaged our next question.

Do you think that living in America will change you?

Responses to this question were sharply different between the two groups. All of group A answered in the negative, and a clue to why these short-term residents held this perspective may be found in the response of the only member of group B who did not answer this question strongly in the affirmative. This one student said there would be *a little bit change* because of her experiences in America and because *I didn't have much information when I was in Japan*. It may be that the recently arrived Japanese students simply do not yet have any sense of the impact that living for an extended period in a different culture will have on them personally and that, having been focused, in Japan, on learning the language in isolation from its everyday contexts of use, they may continue to view the process of learning to use the language in America as an activity which is somehow limited in its repercussions.

The longer-term residents in group B have a quite different

perspective. They almost all answered with a strong 'Yes' to the question above and were then asked:

In what ways have you changed?

The most general response was that they had become much more independent, less shy, more open-minded, and that they would be different, or would have to readjust, when they returned to Japan. In one student's perspective:

(S11) I've become more individualistic – and well – if you get a degree in America people in Japan respect you – you know – and I am regarded as outside Japanese custom – except for my parents maybe – I am always a kid in front of my parents' eyes.

Another student emphasized his personal expectation that he would have to make a large readjustment to life in Japan and it would be a problem because, in his words, *Japanese society is still stubborn.*

Our final pair of questions also elicited generally different perspectives from the two groups.

Do you think it's easy to make good friends with Americans? Why do you think that is?

For the majority of group A, it was perceived as easy and the reasons given were all connected with the general friendliness of Americans. Some examples:

(S1) American people not shy – all the time hello hello – nice to meet you.

(S3) All American people speak – but Japanese people doesn't speak – only look.

The one member of group A who did not say it was easy said that it was easier to make friends with foreign students from other countries because those were the people she had met in her English language classes. This is an interesting observation

and one which we had heard informally on other occasions. It is worth remembering that, for many ESL students entering study programs in the U.S., the first sustained encounters and possible friendships will involve other non-native English speakers in language classes rather than American students.

For the majority of those in group B, the answer to this question was in the negative and the reasons given included the following:

(S9) Usually Americans are not interested in foreign people – not all Americans are so friendly – it's not easy.

(S7) Different custom I think – for example in the morning when I wake up I try to do very quietly but my American roommate doesn't care about that – very noisy – even at 6 o'clock in the morning – dry her hair – and em – just little things very very different – little by little big problem.

The three members of group B who gave a more positive answer to this question were those who had been in the U.S. the longest. Their responses indicated an awareness of a difference between casual friendliness and strong friendship.

(S12) It's easy to talk to American people but – in Japan that's not very easy – for example in the cafeteria – but in terms of the very good friends it's difficult.

(S14) Sometimes easier – in Japan I get more nervous when I talk to someone who is just older than me but here I don't have to feel that way – talk to anybody.

(S10) Easier than Japan because casual – easy to talk to strangers – I don't know – depends on the people – some people yes – but not because of nationality.

Conclusion

As we stated in the introduction, this investigation was conducted in order to get some insight into the subjective experiences of individual Japanese students coping with life in

the U.S. Like many such studies, it raises as many questions as it answers. For example, if there is a shift in perspective from the recently-arrived period to the later period, exactly when does that shift occur and what might trigger it? Should we try to inform students better about the kind of interpersonal encounters they may experience in the U.S. prior to leaving Japan? Or, are possible encounters with prejudice and the double-edged sword of greater freedom yet greater isolation unlikely to be really understood until personally experienced? Although we cannot answer these questions, we hope that, by presenting our data and our discussion, we have provided some insight into how some Japanese students in the U.S. personally perceive their cross-cultural experiences.

In the language teaching profession, we are typically concerned with fostering our students' ability to cope with aspects of the second language and often encourage them to develop their skills by going on to study in the U.S. While doing so, we may neglect to prepare them for the different cultural environment they will experience and for the fact that there will be socio-cultural effects which may change them as individuals. We hope that this relatively informal study of some Japanese students' personal perspectives will make a small, but worthwhile contribution to our understanding of, and greater sensitivity to, the experiences of our students as they try to cope with not only two different languages, but the effects of two different cultures.

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BOOK REVIEWS

COMMUNICATING IN BUSINESS. Joseph Buschini and Richard R. Reynolds. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1986. 340 pp. (Instructor's Manual with Tests, 217 pp.; Transparencies.)

Despite the respectable credentials of its authors and consultants (including four from Japan), *Communicating in Business* strikes this reviewer as having been rather hastily thrown together. I do not mean to say that this is a bad book. On the contrary, it contains much useful material. It would, however, have been a much better book had it been prepared a little more carefully.

The content deals with real business situations. The ten chapters cover letters of application, routine correspondence, inter-office communications, customer relations, sales letters and related material, credit inquiries, collection letters, reports, world trade communications, and presentations.

The authors claim that the book represents "a first course in Business English" (ix), but they must have assumed that students will have already attained a rather advanced level of general English ability before starting to use this text.

Buschini and Reynolds also claim that "the text systematically involves students in the communication process by asking them to improve, write, revise, or respond to problems, questions, and practice exercises" (*ibid.*). Each chapter contains at least two lessons, which are arranged as follows: a list of objectives, a model document, a description of "the purpose, strategy and method of composing the communication," two revision exercises, a checklist of main points, a writing assignment, an explanation of some stylistic or structural point, practice exercises, vocabulary exercises, and a grammar/punctuation review. The authors point out that the material does not have to be covered in this order, and, in fact, I found it more effective to cover the revision and writing exercises after all the other material had been completed.

Now, what did I mean when I said that the text seems to have been put together hastily? I will cite as examples the structure of the vocabulary exercises, the sequencing of material in the "Style and Structure" sections, the authors' failure to follow principles of good writing in their own discourse, and the general lack of proofreading and quality control.

The vocabulary exercises are of two types. The first consists of about 10 isolated sentences, each with one or two words missing. Students must fill in the blanks with one of four choices provided. In the second exercise, students must match five words with short definitions. In other words, the authors take a very traditional approach to the teaching of vocabulary. Are they unaware that the current trend is toward more context-sensitive methods?

I also found that the vocabulary exercises did not always conform to the points of the lesson just covered. For example, in Chapter Four, the authors advise students to avoid unnecessary words. "You can generally avoid wordiness," they suggest, "by following these three rules:

1. Never use two words when one will do.
2. Never use a long word when a short word will do.
3. If it is possible to eliminate a word, eliminate it." (p. 99)

In their own vocabulary exercises, however, the authors seem to have forgotten their own rules. On page 101, we find the following sentences:

(i) I must _____ you that the ventilation system installed by your employees does not meet the standards specified in our contract.

(ii) The electronic alarm system you installed didn't operate properly. As a _____, we had to hire a security guard.

Of course, there is nothing actually wrong with these sentences, but if the authors had followed their own advice

about conciseness, they would have eliminated the phrase "I must (inform) you that" and changed "As a (result)" to "So." These changes would eliminate the vocabulary items being tested (i.e., *inform* and *result*), but surely the authors could have found another way to review this vocabulary without contradicting one of the main points of the lesson.

Two other sentences in the vocabulary exercise for Chapter Four contain passive verbs, while one of the main points of Chapter Three is that students should avoid passive verbs in business communications.

In other words, the vocabulary exercises seem to have been added to the lessons almost as an afterthought. At the very least, they are not well integrated into the text as a whole.

On page 79, we read these two sentences: "If the material is being sent to another person in the same company, the transmittal write [sic] in the memo form. Use the standard business letter format is used [sic] when you are sending something outside the company." These sentences are probably the result of bad editing rather than poor writing, but they illustrate another problem with the text. Typographical errors and misprints abound, reinforcing the impression that the book was hastily prepared.

Finally, I wish to say a few words about the authors' handling of gender. Buschini and Reynolds advise students to "avoid using the pronoun he to refer to both sexes" (p. 155). They suggest using the plural form of the noun:

AVOID: If an *employee* is late, ask *him* to explain his tardiness.

BETTER: Ask *employees* to explain *their* tardiness.

or, when appropriate, repeating the noun:

AVOID: When a *programmer* comes up with a solution, ask *her* to write the steps on the chalkboard.

BETTER: When a *programmer* comes up with a solution,

ask *him* or *her* to write the steps on the chalkboard.

BEST: When a *programmer* comes up with a solution, ask *that programmer* to write the steps on the chalkboard.

These alternatives are certainly preferable to the use of "*they*" as a singular neuter pronoun, and I certainly would not criticize Buschini and Reynolds for including them in their text. I do, however, think it is a mistake to imply that the traditional use of "*he*" as a neutral pronoun is no longer acceptable, especially when the trend in many American universities seems to be back toward this style. To be sure, grammatical gender is still a controversial topic, but students should be aware that there is more than one perspective on the issue. Buschini and Reynolds give the impression that they have the definitive solution, and that, I think, is unfair to their readers.

In summary, this book has many useful features, but the material must be used with care. I look forward to the publication of the second edition in the hope that I will be able to use it more comfortably than I have used the first edition.

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A COMPREHENSIVE ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEST FOR LEARNERS OF ENGLISH. David P. Harris and Leslie A. Palmer. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1986. Price of complete set of Forms A and B, with question books, tapes, answer sheets, scoring keys, and technical manual, for 50 students: ¥70,700.

General Introduction

The Comprehensive English Language Test for Learners of English (CELT), originally developed in the 1960s, is a typical multiple-choice descrete-point English proficiency test. The 1986 edition is virtually the same as previous editions; it has been re-issued with a new date largely to make it look more modern. The CELT test looks very much like the TOEFL, and is a product of the same theoretical approach to test making. Like the TOEFL, it has all the strengths and weaknesses of that approach; unlike the TOEFL you can take it home and do whatever you want with it.

An evaluation of any test must obviously be based on the purpose for which the test will be used. As it is impossible to do more than simply guess the various purposes of the readers of this journal, probably the most expedient way to proceed is to adopt what Popham (1981, p. 45) calls "the six most essential evaluative criteria," and then consider any remaining issues at the end.

Description of Measured Behavior

The technical manual states that CELT is a test for "measuring the English language proficiency of non-native speakers . . . at the intermediate and advanced levels." No attempt is made to explain exactly what is meant by "English language proficiency;" I certainly don't know, and I suspect the authors aren't very clear about it either. A Japanese leaflet put out by the publisher begs even more questions when it claims that CELT "objectively evaluates English ability," a claim

which is sufficiently vague to be almost meaningless. The manual, however, becomes more specific when describing the behaviors measured in each of the three sub-sections of the test. It describes them as follows:

1. **Listening**: a measure of the ability to comprehend short statements, questions, and dialogues as spoken by native speakers of English.
2. **Structure**: a measure of the ability to manipulate[1] the grammatical structures occurring in spoken English.
3. **Vocabulary**: a measure of the understanding of the kinds of lexical items which occur in advanced reading of English.

So now we know what it is supposed to measure: three important sub-skills of comprehension, but no speaking, no writing, no discourse skills, and no sociolinguistic competence.

Items per Measured Behaviour

The number of items required on a test depends largely on the seriousness of the decisions to be made; the more serious the decision, the more items should be included. Popham (1981, p. 55) suggests a minimum of at least twenty items for each measured behavior if "reasonably important educational decisions" are involved.

CELT measures three behaviors, listening, structure and vocabulary. The listening section has 50 items and takes about 40 minutes. Structure has 75 items and takes 45 minutes; vocabulary also has 75 items and takes 35 minutes. It therefore probably contains quite enough items for serious decision making, but far too many for general classroom use.

Scope of Measurement

A construct such as English language proficiency is of much too broad a scope to be measured in a two-hour test such as this, and the authors sensibly restrict themselves to

measuring three sub-skills: listening, structure and vocabulary. Knowledge of structure can surely be well sampled in a 45-minute test of this nature. The vocabulary section measures knowledge of words falling from the four thousandth to the eight thousandth frequency ranking in Thorndike and Lorge (1944). Probably too difficult for most Japanese students, but nevertheless it supplies a sensible and measurable target.

The only section I have any doubts about is the listening section. Listening is such a complex process, which involves so many sub-skills, that I feel it is probably not possible to measure it adequately with 50 short multiple-choice items. However, this is not only a problem with the CELT test, but also with most other tests of listening.[2]

A look at some of the items used on the test might give a clearer indication of what the test measures. However, with a test such as CELT it is important to preserve test security, and so it is not really fair to review items actually used on the test. What does seem reasonable, though, is to present some of the sample items from the instructions. It should be noted, however, that because they are used as examples, they tend to be easier than the items used on the test itself.

There are three types of listening items. In each case testees listen to a recording, select a written response and mark their answer sheets for the appropriate choice.

Listening Item One – responding to a question.

Testees hear: "When are you going to New York?"

They read: (A) To visit my brother
(B) By plane
(C) Next Friday
(D) Yes, I am.

Listening Item Two – choosing the statement closest in meaning.

Testees hear: "George has just returned home from his

vacation."

They read: (A) George is spending his vacation at home.
(B) George has just finished his vacation.
(C) George is just about to begin his vacation.
(D) George has decided not to take a vacation.

Listening Item Three – answering questions on a dialogue.

Testees hear:

(man) "Are you planning to leave for New York next Monday?"

(woman) "I'm afraid not. My husband just found out he'll be in a meeting until late that afternoon, so we won't be able to get started until the following morning."

(3rd voice) On what day does the woman expect to leave for New York?

They read: (A) Sunday
(B) Monday
(C) Tuesday
(D) Wednesday

There is only one item type used to test knowledge of structure. This consists of a statement or question, followed by a response. There is a blank in the response, and testees have to choose the option which best fills the blank.

Structure Item – filling in the blank.

"Have you finished the report for Mr. Jones?"
"Yes, I _____ this morning."
(A) it to him gave
(B) gave it to him
(C) to him gave it
(D) gave to him it

There are two item types used to test knowledge of vocabulary. The first gives a sentence in which there is a blank. Students select which of four written options best completes

the sentence. In the second item type students are given a phrase and have to choose which of four written options has the nearest meaning to the phrase.

Vocabulary Item One – filling in the blank.

It must be getting warmer, for the snow is beginning to _____.
(A) strain
(B) melt
(C) burst
(D) shine

Vocabulary Item Two – matching a definition and a word.

to show the way
(A) greet
(B) guide
(C) guard
(D) gaze

Reliability

As one would expect, reliability on the CELT, as measured by internal consistency, is extremely high. When tested on second language learners in the USA, reliability for the three sections varied from a low of .82 to a high of .97, and twelve of the fifteen coefficients given are over .90. Of course, this is a different population from that found in Japan, but even if reliability were somewhat lower with Japanese students, it could still be quite high.

As for equivalent-form reliability, the technical manual claims both forms have almost equal difficulty, but the correlation between the two forms of the test is conspicuously absent. This is especially strange when you consider that both forms of the test were given to the same group of students when form B was made. It is inconceivable that the correlation between forms A and B was not calculated. One can only conclude that its absence from the technical manual indicates

that it was unacceptably low, and that forms A and B may not be equivalent forms of the same test. Let the user beware!

Validity

The CELT correlated reasonably closely with similar discrete-point proficiency tests; at .79 with TOEFL and .81 with the Michigan Test of English Language Proficiency. No other criteria are given against which the CELT has been validated. The technical manual makes no other attempt to show empirically what it is that CELT actually measures.

It should be noted, though, that the theoretical basis for such tests as this, that language can be cut up into little bits which can then be tested separately, is no longer accepted by the majority of Applied Linguists.[3] There is considerable evidence that language is far more complex than this. The problem for the test developer is that it is much easier to make a test composed of a few dozen items, each one testing just one small discrete point of language, than it is to make a test that reliably measures such a complex activity as language in use. And even more to the point, it is far easier for the teacher to administer and score, especially when large numbers of testees are involved.

One thing we can say with certainty is that the CELT is not a test of communicative competence; at best it is a test of linguistic competence, and even then, only certain aspects of linguistic competence. However, it does test certain fundamental sub-skills and it would not be at all strange if those skills correlated quite closely with other important sub-skills not measured; that, though, is pure speculation.

Comparative Data

The technical manual gives quite a lot of comparative data for a commercial English language test. This was collected entirely on second language students in North America who have been accepted for, or who are studying toward, university

entry. This is probably of no value at all to the user in Japan. There is a need for the publishers to provide data collected in Japan, which would be more meaningful than that provided.

Looking at the comparative data provided, the students on whom the test was normed were obviously of a much higher level of English ability than most EFL students in Japan. It therefore seems likely that the CELT will be far too difficult to be of much use to the average teacher here.

Other Considerations

The CELT is reasonably easy to administer, and can be marked quickly with the marking key, and even quicker with a machine card reader.

One disadvantage is that all instructions are in English, and not such simple English either; care should be taken that the instructions are not too difficult for the students taking the test. The publisher should seriously consider issuing a form of the test with Japanese instructions.

Teachers who think that listening materials should be "authentic" will be disappointed with the tape, which is slower than normal speed, lacks many of the phonetic changes characteristic of normal spoken English, and has that monotonous, sanitized quality only heard on teaching materials. However, others may consider this an advantage.

The test is in re-usable booklet form, and so can be used lots of times. Answer sheets are cheap, but test booklets are not. Tests such as the CELT take a lot of time and money to develop, and so, although the US price is not cheap, it is probably fair. Why, though, does it have to cost twice as much in Japan as it does in the USA?

Conclusion

The CELT test was designed originally as a placement test for ESL students entering American universities. As such it is probably almost as good as the TOEFL, and for

the institutional user far more convenient and much cheaper. In a sense CELT is a poor man's TOEFL. It is well made, easy to use, reliable, and probably reasonably valid. However, it is almost certainly much too difficult for most EFL students in Japan. If there are institutions or teachers here that have need for such an instrument as this, surely they could use it with confidence, but somehow, I think, there is little demand for a test such as this in Japan.

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Notes

[1]The structure section claims to measure the ability to "manipulate" grammatical structures, but in fact all the items are multiple choice fill-in-the-blank items which only require the student to recognize the correct form.

[2]Cognitive psychologists and psycholinguists have not as yet provided us with a satisfactory explanation of what listening comprehension is, yet many serious and professionally-made tests try to measure it; perhaps rightly so. However, I can't help wondering how they can accurately measure something when they don't know what it is.

[3]See Oller (1979:150) for a scathing attack on discrete-point tests.

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INFORMATION FOR CONTRIBUTORS

Editorial Policy

The *JALT Journal* welcomes submission of articles which contribute to the field of foreign language teaching and learning in both the theoretical and practical domains, especially in the following areas:

1) curriculum, methods and techniques
2) classroom observation
3) teacher education and training
4) cross-cultural studies
5) language learning and language acquisition
6) overviews of research and practice in related fields

In particular, the editors encourage submissions which examine issues of research and practice within the Japanese context, although articles of interest to an international audience are always appreciated. The editors also invite the contribution of short articles, book reviews of an extended nature, as well as commentary on material that has appeared in previous issues of the *Journal*.

The *Journal* would prefer all articles that are submitted to be written with a general, language, education, audience in mind. So if you have used certain statistical techniques, or generally unfamiliar terms, please devote more space to explaining the techniques and terms than you would need to when writing for a more technical publication.

Information for Authors

Manuscripts should be no longer than 30 pages, typed on A4 paper and double-spaced. The *Journal* conforms to the style of *The Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (third edition) which can be obtained from the Order Department, American Psychological Association, 1200 Seventeenth Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036. The following may be considered a general guide. Reference cita-

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Submit three copies of the manuscript, an abstract of less than 200 words, a running head title of about 5 words, and a biographical sketch of not more than 50 words. Wherever possible, the editors would be pleased to receive Japanese translations of the abstracts.

Papers submitted to the *Journal* should not have been published previously, neither should they be under consideration for publication elsewhere. We regret that manuscripts cannot be returned.

Apart from book reviews, all manuscripts and inquiries should be directed to Richard Cauldwell, *JALT Journal*, 18-2-302 Sumiyoshidai, Higashi Nada-ku, Kobe 658; (078) 842-5175.

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