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CONTENTS

Editorial ........................................................................................................ 4

Articles
English Language Teaching in the 1990s: How Will the Teacher Fit in?
Stephen Gaies .......................................................... 7
The Paradox of Comprehensible Input: Hesitation Phenomena in L2 Teacher-Talk
Roger Griffiths ............................................................ 23
Why Languages Do not Shape Cognition: Psycho- and Neurolinguistic Evidence
Thomas Scovel ............................................................. 43
Cooperative Small Group Discussion
Keiko Hirose and Hiroe Kobayashi .................................................. 57

Book Reviews
Language and Ethnicity in Minority Sociolinguistic Perspective (Joshua A. Fishman)
Reviewed by Harry Krasnick .................................................. 73
Second Language Research Methods (Herbert W. Seliger and Elana Shohamy)
Reviewed by Sandra S. Ishikawa ................................................ 79
Language Distribution Issues in Bilingual Schooling
(Rodolpho Jacobson and Christian Faltis, eds.)
Reviewed by William Corr ............................................... 83
Language Planning and Education in Australasia and the South Pacific (Richard Baldauf, Jr., and Allan Luke, eds.)
Reviewed by Antony Cominos ........................................... 89

Information for Contributors ............................................. 94
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Editorial

The beginning of a new decade is always a good time to pause and look around at developments in one’s field. Stephen Gaies does this for EFL teachers in “English Language Teaching in the 1990s: How Will the Teacher Fit in?” He notes a shift in perception: while the teacher has been viewed, for some time, as a technician (and little else), teachers are now expected to make decisions constantly, at every stage from planning to evaluation. Teachers also must be prepared to see the classroom as a unique society—to make an ethnographic analysis of that society and customize instruction to suit it.

In a study using Arabic-speaking students, Roger Griffiths examines hesitation phenomena in spontaneous speech. He shows that the everyday sounds represented by “uh” and “er” are a source of confusion to the non-native listener, whose ability to decode them correctly may be limited. The findings, reported in “The Paradox of Comprehensible Input: Hesitation Phenomena in L2 Teacher-Talk,” will be of interest to researchers engaged in utterance production and comprehension, as well as classroom teachers who wonder what goes on when students listen to them.

Thomas Scovel challenges one of the most commonly held assumptions of linguistic study in his article “Why Languages Do not Shape Cognition: Psycho- and Neurolinguistic Evidence.” Language relativity, the concept which follows from one interpretation of the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, has not stood the test of time and experimentation. Scovel also calls attention to the work of Tsunoda, who very much believes that a unique language is at the heart of the uniqueness of the Japanese brain.

While the basic techniques of group work are part of every language teacher's training, for a variety of sociolinguistic and practical reasons there may be a reluctance to employ them in the Japanese classroom. In their paper, Keiko Hirose and Hiroe Kobayashi offer a very much expanded model of group discussion. Building on a theoretical base involving Krashen and Swain, they create an
elaborate rationale for group discussion, into which they then incorporate Cooperative Learning principles. A practical account of how this activity may be organized in the classroom is given, followed by evaluative comments from both students and teachers. While not necessarily applicable to the whole range of language teaching in Japan, the paper, “Cooperative Small Group Discussion,” is of potential interest to college-level instructors, and indeed offers challenging ideas to all who feel the need to experiment with new classroom formats.

Corrections

Roger Griffiths’ article, “Pausology and Listening Comprehension: Theory, Research, and Practice,” in the May 1990 issue (Vol. 12, No. 1) contained two errors. On page 102, line 15, the word “no” was left out. The sentence should read, “that there is no point in drawing distinctions. . . .” The second error is on page 115, line next to the bottom. It should read, “McLaughlin’s conclusion (arrived at in a related context) that “We. . . .” The JALT Journal regrets these mistakes.
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English Language Teaching in the 1990s: How Will Teachers Fit in?

Stephen Gaies

This article proposes that the directions that English language teaching will take in the 1990s can be discerned from trends that are now firmly in place. The growth of English language teaching as an international enterprise and the efforts that have been made to professionalize our work offer important lessons for the next decade. Progress in language teaching results from the search for what is universal about classroom language teaching and learning, and from an appreciation of the distinctive features of particular teaching and learning settings. Like cultural anthropologists, we need to adopt an ethnographic view of classroom teaching and learning. Beyond that, we must encourage the trend in our field to redefine the nature of authority and expertise and to encourage those who work in a particular setting to determine what they wish to value in English language teaching methodology, materials, and goals.

教師の位置

本稿は英語教育が1990年代にとる方向が、現在位置づけられた傾向とは異ったものになることを提案する。英語教育は国際的進取まで伸張し、専門化しようと努力し、次の10年間になすべき課題を提示する。語学教育の進歩は学校英語教育と学習においての不適性への探究や個々の語学教育・学習背景に見られる特徴を認めるに起因する。文化人類学者のように、教師は教室での教育と学習について民族学的観点を探求する必要がある。それ以後は、我々の専門分野における流れを育成する中に権威や専門知識の本質を再度明確にし、教師は各々の立場で教授法、教材、目的の中で、何を評価すべきか認識するように努めねばならない。

JALT's theme for its most recent conference—"Directions for the '90s"—is the kind that invites us to look back, to look around, and to look forward. It is an appropriate theme, certainly, one that has been the staple of professional meetings in our field at the beginning of each decade. Each new decade offers us an artificial but
useful vantage point from which to take stock of ourselves, individually and collectively—to allow ourselves to take a panoramic view of our field, one that we must sometimes ignore as we sense the need to focus narrowly on our daily work and research demands.

If we look back, we can identify two paradoxes in our thinking about the challenges of language teaching and learning. One of these is the result of our increased knowledge about these processes. The spread of English, the unprecedented demand for English language instruction, and the professionalization of English language teaching over the past decades have increased our knowledge enormously. There can hardly be any doubt that, in a purely quantitative sense, we know much more about language teaching and learning than we did a generation ago. For many reasons, however, this accumulated knowledge has led, not to bold confidence about how to teach English, not to stronger and stronger faith in the wisdom of how we go about our work, but rather to what to outsiders is a surprising professional modesty. English language teaching specialists cringe whenever and wherever they see unreasonable claims made about the speed and ease with which one or another language teaching enterprise claims to be able to teach English. Or they may ask, What do these people know that we've been missing all this time? But those moments of doubt soon dissipate, once we remind ourselves that all our accumulated knowledge, impressive as it is in itself, does not translate easily—and sometimes not at all—into more effective teaching and into more effective and satisfying learning on the part of our students. Indeed, many people who skim our professional literature for the first time might well think along these lines from E.M. Forster: "Oh, yes, you have learned men, who collect... facts, and facts, and empires of facts. But which of them will rekindle the light within?" (1910).

This paradox seems to be in the process of being at least partially resolved. We are coming to recognize that the formulation of theories and models of second language development is a valuable activity, whether or not it has much to say about classroom teaching and learning. And the knowledge we have gained about language teaching and
learning from efforts to develop and test theory offers enormous raw material that has already informed language teaching and that will undoubtedly continue to do so. Even now, there appears to be increasing recognition that an assumption widely held a decade ago—the assumption that applied linguistic research should justify itself in terms of the potential insights it might offer to language teachers and program designers—is on the wane. The resolution of the paradox, then, is not so much in terms of the type and focus of inquiry that is taking place in applied linguistics, but rather in terms of the expectations that the language teaching field feels justified in making about that inquiry.

Now, for the second paradox—the one that seems further from being resolved than the first. It is this: Our focus on learners and on how learners’ native abilities and learning characteristics can be given room to operate fully in the classroom has until recently not been matched by a similar interest in the teacher. The literature of the last few decades has been largely colored by the assumption that given free rein, teachers will muck things up. They’ll talk too much, they’ll stress accuracy-based practice over opportunities, they’ll even ask students questions to which they, the teachers, already know the answers: all in all, they’ll generally get in the way and get things wrong.

Indeed, for most of the last two decades, we have looked at language classrooms primarily in terms of methods or of the learner. Although the teacher has not been altogether absent from such discussions, the role assigned to the teacher in methods-driven views or learner-driven views of classroom language learning has been a secondary one. Very often, the teacher, if discussed at all, has been seen as a potential contaminating variable: a participant whose most likely contribution would be to mess things up.

We’ve found many ways to minimize the damage a teacher can do: examination systems that force teachers to stick to the official syllabus and textbooks; pacing schedules that program classroom time down to the last second; form-focused drills that restrict the teacher’s role to that of a
language calisthenics leader. Teachers are technicians: press the right buttons, and don’t do anything else.

In many respects, the pendulum is starting to swing back. Many of the premises of the 1970s and 1980s are undergoing critical evaluation. For example, we have been made aware that what we view as “natural” and not natural about language development depends to a large degree on the metaphors and meanings in which we choose to cast our arguments (e.g., Bourne, 1988). We sometimes get so entangled in our conceptualizations that we produce oxymoronic and other terminological contortions such as “real reality” (Montgomery & Eisenstein, 1985; Taylor, 1982) and “artificial authenticity” (Fried-Booth, 1982). In short, we seem at times to have lost our bearings.

Is it more natural for language learners to approach members of the target-language community to practice language than it is for the same learners to do so with a teacher in a classroom? If classrooms are so much at odds with “reality,” whatever that may mean, why do learners continue, without a moment’s hesitation, to seek formal instruction at whatever point they decide that they wish to develop ability in a foreign language?

In contrast to the view that has predominated for many years that the best thing teachers can do is to get out of the way and let learners’ natural language acquisition capacity operate—a view entirely in harmony with Newmark’s (1966) frequently cited injunctions about how not to interfere with language learning—we are coming back to the view (one which, quite happily, teachers themselves never abandoned) that classrooms should do more than to contort themselves into imitations of the world outside the classroom walls or into rarefied laboratory environments. But if we are returning to an earlier view, the perspective is not the same. Teaching is no longer being discussed primarily as the execution of technical expertise—in terms of dispensing grammatical information or of orchestrating practice—but rather in management terms (e.g., White, 1988). Teaching, we have come to recognize again, is decision making (e.g., Richards, 1990), and it cannot be reduced to something less than that.
What does it mean to view teaching as decision making? It means, among other things, that methods do not cause learning to take place. Nor do materials, nor does educational technology. Nor are learners’ latent abilities sufficient, not if we are talking about classroom learning on the scale on which it is being practiced today. Every one of these can be counted as an important ingredient. But so too can the teacher. Methods don’t work by themselves: teachers make them work. Teachers can bring to life the most stilted materials, as well as cause even the most exciting materials to seem lifeless. Teachers can create an atmosphere conducive to even the most reticent learner, just as they can inadvertently or consciously cause the magic of language learning to dissipate in their classrooms. Qualities such as rapport—dismissed by many as difficult to measure and hence not relevant—turn out, so it seems, to be very relevant, more so perhaps than many of the behaviors that teachers are trained to perform. Nevertheless, we cannot restore the teacher to a central position in the language classroom by fiat. We need to go beyond this; we need to explore the implications of the view of teachers as decision makers. In particular, we must ask how this view shapes the way we look at classrooms and how it affects our understanding of what we see.

If we look around, we see the emergence, integral to the view of the teacher as a central player in the classroom, of a fundamentally different view of the basis of knowledge, expertise, and decision making in language teaching. I propose that we are coming to recognize the importance of an interpretive view of language teaching. In other words, we are asserting not only that teachers make a difference, but that to understand better how teachers shape the classroom experience of their students, we (and teachers themselves) need to come as close as we can to teachers’ own perspectives on their work.

Here are some of the building blocks, the beginnings of an ethnographic view of teachers and teaching:

1. The adoption of a more sophisticated sense of relativism toward language teaching and language decision making.
We must go beyond the uncontroversial statement that teaching and learning settings differ, and that teaching and learning are shaped by the context in which they take place. Obviously they do, sometimes enormously, at least to judge by superficial appearances. Indeed, we have yet to understand fully what differences among settings are truly distinctive—this, by the way, is one of the many practical ways in which theory-building and testing can contribute to language teaching; but there is clearly enough evidence to alert us to the dangers of generalizations about language teaching and learning.

What we need to do is go beneath the surface, to strive to understand classrooms from the perspective of the participants. We want to understand, not just how what is done in one setting or by one teacher differs from what is done in another setting or by another teacher, but why. What are the formative influences, the values, and the constraints that cause different teachers to respond so differently? Let me give some examples, the first of which comes from Robert O'Neill's (1982) defense of published textbooks.

O'Neill describes his experience, in the 1970s, as a teacher of English in a German shipyard, in a program in which a group of Iranians were being trained to maintain and repair submarines—a program in which instruction was to be done in English. At the end of his 3-week stint, O'Neill oriented his replacement to what he, O'Neill, had done. The new teacher was appalled to learn that O'Neill had been using a published textbook, rather than creating materials expressly for this training program.

As O'Neill explains, one can only understand the reaction of this teacher if one recognizes that locally-produced materials were assumed, almost as a matter of faith, to be inherently better than any published materials. Further, to understand this teacher's views regarding materials, it would be necessary to recognize that this was no idiosyncratic preference on the part of a single individual, but the result of what the teacher had been trained to value.
To an outsider unwilling to understand the context from which this teacher's decision making would spring, this aspect of the teacher's professionalism might be difficult to deal with. Is this any less understandable, is it any less objectionable, than the persistence with which other teachers in other places might reject any innovation that they perceived as challenging their authority?

Similar examples can be found in any teaching setting. I have observed teachers so committed to the idea of groupwork that in the absence of any small-group activity in their lesson plan, they will have students arrange themselves in groups of three prior to doing individual work. One such teacher, when asked about the necessity of doing this, admitted candidly that she just felt better knowing that for part of a classroom lesson, students were physically in small groups, whether or not they were actually functioning as a group.

An ethnographic perspective aims at understanding, not at change. But the necessary first step for anyone interested in promoting change in teaching is understanding—from the insider's perspective. In the last few years, we have become keenly sensitive to the problems that arise when those who wish to affect teachers' practices fail to take account of the context in which particular teachers work, when they fail to recognize the insider's view. Some (e.g., Burnaby & Sun, 1988) point out the futility—and in some cases the counterproductive nature—of efforts made in crosscultural exchanges to prescribe what teachers should and should not do that are not based on an adequate understanding of the distinctive features of a setting, without an awareness of how those particular features are valued by those who work in that setting. Others (e.g., Pennycook, 1989; Sampson, 1984) stress the value-laden nature of educational theory. To promote particular practices on the basis of their presumed instructional value, without careful consideration of their effect on the social ecology of a particular setting, leads to charges of academic and/or cultural imperialism.
2. We must recognize the need to understand better how teachers themselves perceive what they do. How do teachers construct a meaning for the abstractions that we call methods, materials exploitation, and interaction?

Two of the most fruitful by-products of our long interest in methods as keys to understanding language teaching and learning may well be the discovery, first of all, that traditional descriptions of language teaching methods might have little relation to what goes on in language classrooms; and second, that by continuing to portray methods as if each has an exclusively objective reality, the nature of the process by which decisions in language teaching occur are obscured. In teacher reference texts and in other discussions of classroom language teaching and learning, the basic working vocabulary of our field—methods, activities, syllabus, and so on—is typically portrayed as if the concepts to which these terms refer have an objective reality that we all perceive similarly. Change in language classrooms, then, is traditionally assumed to involve teachers’ altering their repertoire of behaviors much in the way we change our wardrobe; that is, by acquiring new items and putting others into storage or in some cases by throwing them out altogether.

Recent discussions, however, have emphasized the point that classroom methods, activities, techniques, and even aims and goals, whatever their abstract, objective reality, manifest themselves in classrooms in accordance with the way in which teachers (together with learners) construct meanings for them. What we see, when we observe teachers and learners in action, is not the mechanical application of methods and techniques, but rather a reflection of how teachers have interpreted these things. For example, Swaffar, Arens, and Morgan (1982) point out that for teachers, “it is not the characteristic activities per se that discriminate between methodologies, but the ways in which those characteristic activities reinforce each other in the foreign language learning process” (p. 32).
In many cases, the significance of a methodological innovation for a teacher, or for a group of teachers, may have less to do with any presumed value as a set of instructional strategies and techniques, and far more to do with its ability to cause the teacher(s) to reflect differently and perhaps more deeply about the classroom, to adopt a reflective attitude toward his or her teaching. As Prabhu (1990) notes:

a distinction between “real” and mechanical teaching is more significant for pedagogy than any distinction between good and bad methods. The enemy of good teaching is not a bad method, but overroutinisation. (p. 174)

3. We can nurture the many ways in which the traditional view of “expertise” in language teaching is being constructively challenged.

Teacher educators and teachers themselves are raising questions about the value of the outsider’s perspective and about who is best placed to set the agenda for research and development in language teaching. “Top-down,” “center-periphery,” “prescriptive,” and “input” models of change—to use only some of the most typical characterizations—are being increasingly challenged (e.g., Pennycook, 1989; Ramani, 1987). What is equally important, however, is that alternative models for critical inquiry and systematic change are being produced.

The view of the teacher as the source of meaningful change in language teaching is being reflected more and more in materials aimed at teacher self-development. Viewing “critical enquiry as the basis for effective action” (p. x), Candlin and Widdowson (1987) introduce their Language Teaching: A Scheme for Teacher Education series by asserting that advances in language teaching stem from the independent efforts of teachers in their own classrooms. This independence is not brought about by imposing fixed ideas and promoting fashionable formulas. It can only occur where teachers, individually or collectively, explore principles and experiment with techniques.
Interesting developments along these lines are taking place in the area of supervision. In recent years, teachers, in small groups, sometimes with the overt support of their institution, are designing alternatives to the traditional (and long criticized) authoritarian, evaluation-oriented model of supervision. Instead, teachers are developing collegial, challenge, and peer coaching models, with an emphasis on mutual development, recognition of the importance of the contextual factors that shape teachers' actions and perceptions, and recognition of the importance of the process by which change is managed—in particular, a definition of development as a long-term, rather than a single-dose, proposition.

In other cases, the use of "outside experts," long a point of contention among many teachers, is being recast into a more collaborative form of professional interaction. One such arrangement involves presentation of an innovation by an expert, followed by a period of time during which the expert demonstrates, in the teachers' own classrooms, or observes the teachers themselves introduce the innovation in their own classrooms. This stage serves as the bridge to collaborative efforts by the outside expert and the teaching staff to discover how the innovation can be best implemented in that particular context. Must the innovation be adapted? Is it in fact desirable and feasible?

The teacher-researcher movement, which seeks to legitimize research conducted by teachers and to formulate standards for such research, is another case in point. Such research seems to respond to the view of Stenhouse (1975, p. 165) that education will be significantly improved only when a research tradition that is accessible to teachers is created. The increasing frequency with which reports of action research appear in professional journals serving both the research and teaching communities; discussions of the ways in which researchers and teachers can collaborate effectively and equitably; the general trend to legitimize the teacher's perspective and to move that perspective from the periphery to center stage; these are all promising signals of a trend toward legitimizing, toward recognizing the authority of teachers' perceptions—about what problems merit attention, about how those problems
can best be explored, and about how to assess and act upon the insights that are gained. Indeed, the very notion of action, or problem-driven (as opposed to theory-driven) research is interpretive in character: participants make meaning of their own situations, and the end point of such inquiry is labeled a “solution” only when and if it is perceived as such by those who have undertaken the inquiry and who stand to benefit from viewing it as such.

4. We can make it a professional priority to explore the process by which teachers adopt and adapt innovations. What are the factors that encourage individual teachers and groups of teachers to accept innovations? What are the factors that lead them to reject particular innovations out of hand?

If we are receptive to problem-driven inquiry, we must ask whether the outcomes of such inquiry can be understood as conforming to any particular set of principles or patterns that govern the process of innovation. Here, as elsewhere, we can only hope that before we try to reinvent the wheel, we continue to explore how diffusion research—that is, research on the nature and spread of innovations—might provide insight into our own work (e.g., Markee, 1989; White, 1988). Among the many aspects of the production and spread of innovations, diffusion research has documented the conflict that often exists between research and development agencies, which often seek to reduce the possibility that a particular innovation can be adapted to local needs and preferences (thereby, in their view, maintaining quality control), and the desire of those who adopt an innovation to customize it for local conditions. Research on this issue suggests the importance, for educational settings, of the opportunity for adaptation (reinvention) of an innovation. One national survey in the U.S. found that when an educational innovation was reinvented by a school, its adoption was more, rather than less, likely to be continued.

Rogers (1983) suggests a number of reasons why reinvention, or modification of an innovation, is likely to occur: the complexity of the innovation itself; lack of knowledge about the
innovation; the nonspecific nature of an innovation; the need to solve a wide range of problems with the same innovation; and the desire to claim local pride of ownership of the innovation. This last reason, by the way, may be related to the feeling voiced by the teacher described by O'Neil (1982).

However we encourage the move to understand the classroom teacher as the critical ingredient in change, it is important to be sure about the meaning of change that shapes our perceptions. In particular, we need to avoid the error of equating critical reflection with change. Language teaching has been plagued for much of the last few decades by the fashion-industry mentality (or what by others has been labeled a positivist bias). We view change as inherently desirable, as clear evidence of a desire on the part of teachers to improve their classroom performance.

It may well be that the product of critical reflection by a teacher will be a stronger commitment to continue previous practice. This decision may stem from any number of reasons. It may well be that an innovation is rejected, not because it is an innovation, but because the cost of implementing it is judged to be greater than the instructional benefits it is likely to provide. Alternatively, a teacher may decide that the innovation is incompatible with his or her teaching style. Still another possibility is the perception by a teacher that his or her adoption of an innovation will be perceived, not as an attempt to improve classroom performance, but as an attempt to distinguish himself or herself from colleagues, and will threaten professional equilibrium. Furthermore, change may be taking place even when we see no visible effects. Change, then, can take place not simply by doing things differently, but in a number of other ways: adopting a new perspective, becoming open to future possibilities for change, developing an incipient sense of unease about the rightness of what one has been doing day after day.

What is true in other arenas is true in language teaching as well: we cannot nurture self-determination on the part of teachers—nor can we nurture decision making initiative, or criti-
ELT IN THE 1990s

cal reflection, or problem-posing, or any of the other things bound up in this trend—if we are only willing to accept the changes that we ourselves would like to see them make. This points to a new balancing act that those who are responsible in one way or another for teacher development will have to perform: to nurture decision-making by teachers without abandoning altogether their role as supervisors, applied linguists, and teaching specialists. Perhaps we will need to define our role differently: instead of causing change to take place, to aim rather at activating what Prabhu (1990) calls the teacher’s “sense of plausibility.” There are many factors that work to paralyze a teacher’s sense of plausibility, and it is these factors—an examination system, limited classroom contact time, pressure to conform to tradition—that are often the beginning and end points of discussions of teachers and teaching.

I would argue that this need not be the case. Without ignoring the reality of these factors, without minimizing the constraints they impose, we can nevertheless find room, in any setting, for a teacher’s sense of plausibility to expand. There are many ways to look forward. To identify trends that are already evident to many others and to predict that these trends will continue is an activity that involves little risk. On the other hand, to identify various threads in the fabric of our professional concerns and to demonstrate that these are the signs of a trend that has yet to emerge fully is obviously a more difficult activity, one in which there is a strong possibility of being wrong.

However, there is a further problem: how do we distinguish between the act of prediction—that is, foreseeing what is likely to engage the attention or animate the thinking of our field as whole—and prescription. In other words, how do we indicate our professional agenda for the years to come? How do we recognize a trend in the making from one that we simply wish to create? Are developments such as those I have mentioned as deep as they appear to be wide-ranging?

Is the increased attention to the teacher, not (as was the case in the past) as the only key player in the classroom, but as the most promising agent of change in language teaching, a direction
for the 1990s? How do we know if we are looking at a trend, or only at a current fashion? As Naisbitt (1984) has argued, a trend is fundamentally different from a fad. Fads are top-down phenomena; they are highly visible and easily identified with highly visible individuals and institutions. They must be easy to package, and they aim at creating the illusion that everyone benefits by following the lead and that no one really wants to be left behind. Fads, then, must create their own momentum. A trend, on the other hand, can only be discerned after it has already gained some momentum, since a trend is a grassroots movement; its momentum comes from horizontal spread, from teacher to teacher, from institution to institution.

In looking back, and around, and forward, more and more ELT professionals view it as both desirable and possible for teachers to re-establish and to extend, in a fundamental way, the primacy of their perceptions and expertise in instructional decision making. The authority of any teacher, or of any group of teachers, is of course not without limits. But within those limits, teachers, in whatever setting they work, seem to have within their reach the "historic moment": the opportunity to acknowledge the legitimacy of their perceptions; to abandon the role of passive consumer of the expertise of others—indeed, to question, as perhaps they have never had confidence to do before, the very model on which notions of "expertise" are based; and to keep their sense of plausibility (to use Prabhu's phrase again) as alive as possible. Should this happen, the 1990s will be an exciting and fruitful decade for all of us.

This is a revised and retitled version of a paper presented at the 1990 Jalt Convention in Omiya.

Stephen Gaies, of the University of Northern Iowa, is a visiting professor in the TESOL Program, Temple University Japan. He was editor of the TESOL Quarterly from 1984 to 1989.
References


Considerable research has gone on in recent years into what exactly happens in the language classroom. This research covers issues such as what and how learners learn, what teachers actually do, and what kind of events take place. Sometimes the findings of this research show that what in fact happens is not always what is thought will happen when lessons are being prepared and taught.

Up until now, descriptions of classroom-centred research have largely been confined to articles in professional journals. In this book, Allwright and Bailey set out to define the aims, principles and objectives of this work, to describe the findings and relate these to teaching practice. This is the first time that this field has been surveyed in an easily assimilable form for practising teachers and teachers in training.

Contents include:
- Classroom research: what it is and why it is important
- Classroom research: principles and procedures
- The treatment of oral errors in language classrooms
- Input and interaction in language classrooms
- Receptivity in language classrooms.

For more information please contact:
Steven Maginn,
United Publishers Services Ltd.,
Kenkyu-sha Bldg., 9 Kanda Surugadai 2-chome,
Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 101
or Tel: (03) 3295-5875.
The Paradox of Comprehensible Input: Hesitation Phenomena in L2 Teacher-Talk

Roger Griffiths

Hesitation phenomena (HP) have previously been shown to be sources of perceptual error for NNSs. Difficulties of decoding HP, especially filled pauses, are revealed when NNSs are asked to transcribe recorded texts. This procedure was employed in the first of two studies reported in this paper. Results of an analysis of HP-generated errors in the transcripts showed a high proportion of filled pauses (in the region of 20%) to be misperceived. The second study was, therefore, undertaken to investigate the occurrence of filled pauses in segments from 30 lessons given by 10 EFL teachers. A significant reduction in the frequency of filled pauses was observed in the classroom deliveries when compared to NS-NS baseline frequencies. This is presumed to indicate a recognition of the difficulty experienced by NNSs in decoding filled pauses, and a (probably unconscious) monitoring of HP in input by EFL teachers.

1. Background

Despite the difficulties involved in direct investigation of the role of the hearer in communication, a number of L2 input studies (e.g., see Gass & Madden, 1985) have attempted to assess the effect
of the NNS hearer on NS delivery, and more attention is currently being paid to related issues in L1 (e.g., McGregor, 1986). A particularly pertinent question to L2 researchers centres on what exactly the hearer misunderstands. This is, of course, an empirical question, the investigation of which might be expected to result in findings with applied relevance. However, as McGregor (1986, p. 155) points out, the analyst faces considerable difficulty in stating "with even a fair degree of certainty" what a speaker means by some utterance, and how it is interpreted by the hearer.

In this particular study, the question, represented by McGregor (1986, p. 156) as "the asymmetry between utterance production and utterance comprehension," has been investigated within a framework derived from studies of hesitation phenomena (HP). HP, such as filled pauses (normally represented in written form as *uh, er*, etc.), repeats, and false starts, can be thought of (linguistically rather than psychologically) as meaningless utterances; certainly they should be interpreted as such by hearers. However an earlier study (Voss, 1979) indicated that HP can be sources of perceptual error to NNSs, who often ascribe semantic significance to them. Spontaneous speech, which is the most common genre in teacher-talk, is replete with HP and as such might cause particular problems for NNSs. It has, in fact, been suggested that the performance dimensions that most distinguish spontaneous speech from prepared speech are the proportion of HP and lack of grammatical pausing (Miller, 1982, p. 156). According to Duez (1982, p. 20), an absence of HP and the grammatical use of pauses (found, for example, in reading or prepared speeches), leads to better decoding by the listener. Likewise, Goldman-Eisler (1968, pp. 24-25) describes this type of controlled delivery in terms of speakers cooperating with listeners and approaching ideal communication.

In prepared speeches and written passages, therefore, the struggle to make the text comprehensible can be seen as already fought, and mostly, if not always, won. As Kowal and O'Connell (1985, p. 94) see it, such delivery can be regarded as pre-planned and formulated. In most spontaneous
HESITATION PHENOMENA IN TEACHER-TALK

ous speech (and, therefore, most teacher-talk) no such preparation can occur (by definition)—the battle must be fought in vivo, and it will often result in HP being introduced into the discourse. For the NS this seldom causes problems in comprehension. For example, Deese (1978) writes:

There is good reason to believe that the speaker's sacrifice of local coherence, at the level of the sentence or the phrase, in the interests of planning discourse as well as possible, given the dynamic nature of planning, is helpful to the listener as well as the speaker. (p. 321)

As with prepared discourse, in spontaneous speech the speaker's chief goal is to ensure that the message is comprehensible. This point is made by Chafe (1980, p. 170), who notes that in formulating the message, the speaker (in NS-NS interaction) is unlikely to consider, or need to consider, the grammaticality of the utterance. Damaging criticism would be that the message was incomprehensible, not that it was ungrammatical. Chafe, in agreement with Deese, also considers that, in spontaneous NS-NS discourse, HP facilitate comprehension rather than hinder it. He suggests that in studying HP it may be found that "they not only enable the speaker to express his ideas more effectively, but also enable the hearer to assimilate them too" (p. 170).

However, not all researchers agree on this issue. Clemmer et al. (1979), for example, in their review of the literature on silent pauses and HP, conclude "silent pauses within constituent boundaries and vocal hesitations . . . are thought to distract the listener and disrupt coding and understanding" (p. 397).

Pauses accompanied by hesitation are, it seems, seldom consciously registered by the NS (Duez, 1985, p. 388) and HP are generally idealized out of the message (Deese, 1978, p. 321; Laver, 1970, p. 73). These idealization processes are so common in L1 that Voss (1979, p. 130) has described them as similar to that of reducing speech to writing; he proposes (controversially) that, as NSs, we hear as we would expect to read.
HESITATION PHENOMENA IN TEACHER-TALK

Idealization, however, is a process which can only occur effectively when the hearer is competent in a language. The little L2 evidence there is on this issue suggests that the language learner, particularly at lower proficiency levels, is unlikely to be fully capable of it. However, the NS untrained and inexperienced in NS-NNS interaction, will probably be unaware of this, and the modifications made in attempting to make the message comprehensible will often include those engaged in natural NS-NS interaction.

Consequently, in attempting to make sure that the message is understood, the untrained NS may introduce elements (such as HP) into the input which render it less, rather than more, comprehensible to the NNS; this can be thought of as the paradox of comprehensible input.

The research reported in this paper was undertaken to discover how far the paradox might apply in NS-NNS classroom interaction. Because the scale of the problem which HP might cause can only be seen in relation to their rate of occurrence, the phenomena were investigated on two levels:

1. The extent to which HP in two segments of an NS-NNS content lecture resulted in perceptual error for NNSs of different levels of proficiency (referred to from here on as the Error Study).

2. The frequency of occurrence of filled pauses in segments of teacher-talk from 30 English language lessons delivered to NNSs of differing proficiency levels (referred to from here on as the Occurrence Study).

Findings from both investigations are, however, preceded by a description of what appears to be the only previous L2 study in the first of the above areas. Unfortunately, there appear to be no specific studies of the frequency of occurrence of HP in L2 teacher-talk.

2. A Previous Study of HP as Sources of Perceptual Error for NNSs: Voss (1979)

The idea of HP being sources of perceptual error for NNSs has
HESITATION PHENOMENA IN TEACHER-TALK

been investigated by Voss (1979), who observed at that time that there seemed little or no interest in the question of whether NSs and NNSs use similar perception strategies or not. He also noted that most previous studies of HP had been concerned with encoding, and the few decoding studies which had been undertaken had been investigations with NNSs. His study is, therefore, the first to reveal the difficulties that HP can pose for the NNS. Using the model of speech perception described by Fry (1970, pp. 48-49) in which the perception of speech is seen as a process of matching the listener's (re)construction with the incoming acoustic information, Voss supposes that this is

a task which although usually no problem for the native speaker is typically more difficult for the non-native speaker. If the perception of speech is determined by the three variables of content information, linguistic information and acoustic information... then the non-native speaker because of his imperfect command of the language (i.e., deficient generative system [= linguistic information]) is less likely to make accurate linguistic predictions in his reconstruction attempts. He will therefore have to depend more heavily on the acoustic information. This, however, is problematic in that some hesitation phenomena such as filled pauses or repetitions are acoustically identical with, or at least similar to, unstressed forms or parts of words. The non-native speaker will find it difficult to know in each case whether a given stretch of acoustic information is part of the speaker's performance that can be disregarded, or whether, if the reconstruction is to be correct, it needs to be accounted for. (p. 130)

In order to investigate the influence of HP in normal spontaneous speech on the perception process of NNSs, 22 Ss (of high intermediate proficiency) were asked to transcribe a stretch of recorded speech. The transcript was done in a language laboratory, where the Ss were free to manipulate the tapes at will, and listen to the passage as many times as they wished. Having postulated that a study of errors would permit insights into the perception process or strategy of the individual and the group (without suggesting, however, that such errors reflect global comprehension), Voss analysed the transcripts in terms of: (a) repeats (covering all
semantically non-significant repetitions); (b) false starts (covering incomplete or self-interrupted utterances which can either be corrected or not); (c) filled pauses; (d) silent pauses of "unusual length" and "non-phonemic lengthening of phonemes" (p. 132).

From a detailed analysis of the data, Voss reported empirical support for "some kind of matching process between the listener's projection and the incoming acoustic information" (p. 138), and he discovered that the perceptual errors of the NNSs followed patterns similar to those observed with NSs. Specifically, he found that nearly one third of the errors were connected with HP, with misunderstandings being due to their being misinterpreted as parts of words, or to parts of words being misinterpreted as HP not to be transcribed. He concluded that the high number of perceptual errors connected with HP suggested that they "present a major perceptual difficulty for the non-native speaker confronted with spontaneous speech" (p. 138).

The present study sought to provide more evidence on this issue, but, as neither Voss's text nor his method of analysis are employed, and as the Ss involved are of different levels of proficiency, it is not a strict replication. However, an identical procedure is adopted, and the notion that errors in the transcriptions indicate perceptual difficulties is also assumed. This is, in fact, one of the few occasions when the analyst can be relatively certain about what a speaker means by an utterance and how it is interpreted by the hearer (cf. McGregor, 1986, p. 157).

3. Error Study: Methodology

Two short excerpts (208 and 152 syllables in length) from the video recording of a science lecture delivered to low-proficiency NNS first-year Omani university students by an English chemistry professor, were recorded onto audio cassettes. The lecture itself was a representative sample of classroom input to such groups (the students were, therefore, familiar with the content of the lecture), and the passages were selected as they included a number of features found to
cause perceptual difficulties for both NSs and NNSs in the study by Voss.

The passages, which were recorded with only a 3 second break between them, are reproduced in the Appendix. From this it can be seen that Passage 1 includes 3 filled pauses (at positions 1, 64, and 129), 4 false starts (at positions 28, 62, 98, and 122) and 2 repetitions at positions 40 and 93, as defined by Voss above. Passage 2 includes 4 false starts (at positions 6, 12, 66 and 105), 8 filled pauses (at positions 7, 13, 46, 67, 78, 86, 106, and 114), and 1 repetition (at position 8). Passage 1 was 74 seconds long and Passage 2 was 57 seconds long; they were, therefore, delivered at speech rates of 2.82 syllables per second (sps) and 2.66 sps respectively. (As the task in this investigation was to transcribe the passages, the rates are only relevant insofar as they indicate a slow original delivery; during transcription, of course, long pauses are placed in that delivery.)

Ss were told that there were 2 short excerpts from a science lecture on the tape, and instructed to "write down, as accurately as possible, everything the lecturer says." Following Voss (1979, p. 132), they were given no specific instructions on how to deal with HP, punctuation, contractions, and so forth.

**Subjects**

Three groups of Ss were asked to transcribe the recording:

1. The first group consisted of 19 NNS first-year university science students of elementary language proficiency. They performed the task in a language laboratory where they could manipulate the tape at will and listen to the recording as many times as they chose. (Mean transcription time = 45 minutes)

2. A second group of 10 intermediate proficiency NNS Ss were given the recordings and asked to transcribe the tapes in the
same way but on an individual basis, where and when they pleased, with the specification that it should be done in quiet and be uninterrupted. It was not possible for this group to do the transcriptions in the language laboratory but this was not considered significant as performance on the task is not observed to be influenced by location. (Mean reported transcription time = 20 minutes)

3. The third group consisted of 10 NS EFL university teachers who also transcribed the tapes individually. Data collected from this group provides NS validation. Although this group cannot be thought of as linguistically naive, there is little reason to suppose that other educated NSs would produce significantly different transcripts. (Mean reported transcription time = 12.5 minutes)

4. Error Study: Analysis and Results

As the error classification used by Voss was inadequate to cope with the degree of error observed in the low-proficiency group scripts, Voss's method of analysis could not be strictly followed. However, as the focus of the investigation was on HP-generated error, it was decided that analysis of all 39 scripts would take the form of identifying the frequency of errors in the transcripts at points where HP occurred (with one possible error being possible for each HP). The non-transcription of HP was not regarded as error (specific attention would not, after all, be given to HP), nor, therefore, was the misinterpretation of words as HP. The latter, although investigated by Voss, did not appear susceptible to reliable identification. This was also the case with unusual lengthening of silent pauses, which, consequently, was not investigated. Errors other than those arising from HP were not calculated, as this study was concerned only to show the incidence of specifically identifiable misperception. Other errors, however interesting they may have been, were not amenable to such accurate classification. The number of errors observed at each HP location is shown in Table 1.
HESITATION PHENOMENA IN TEACHER-TALK

Table 1.
Number of Transcription Errors Due to Misperceptions of Hesitation Phenomena

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Elem. NNS (n = 19)</th>
<th>Inter. NNS (n = 10)</th>
<th>NS (n = 10)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Passage 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FP1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FS1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FS2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FP2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FS3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FS4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FP3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Passage 2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FS1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FP1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FS2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FP2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FP3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FS3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FP4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FPS</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FP6</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FS4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FP7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FP8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(FP = Filled Pause; FS = False Start; R = Repeat)

As can be seen from Table 1, the vast majority of HP-generated errors were induced by filled pauses (59/65 = 91%), with all other HP accounting for only a very small proportion of such errors. The following errors were observed: filled pauses were written as “a,” “is,” “am,” “that,” “at,” “and,” “the,” “are,” “I’m,” and “now,” and words or morphemes were added to the conclusion of false starts. No errors resulted from repeats. Actual frequency of errors, possible frequency of errors (Error sources [22] x n), and percentages of the former in terms of the latter, are given in Table 2.
HESITATION PHENOMENA IN TEACHER-TALK

Table 2.
Total Number of Errors Generated by All HP Calculated in Relation to the Possible Number of Errors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Poss Errors</th>
<th>Actual Errors</th>
<th>Act/Poss Error Ratio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Elem NNSs</td>
<td>418</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>10.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inter NNSs</td>
<td>220</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>9.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSs</td>
<td>220</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.009</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Poss = Possible; Act = Actual; Elem = Elementary-level; Inter = Intermediate-level)

While the actual/possible error ratios for the NNS groups may not, from these figures, appear too alarming (although they differ considerably from the NS group), the picture is radically altered if only filled pause-generated error is considered. Figures for this are shown in Table 3.

Table 3.
Total Number of Errors Generated by Filled Pauses Calculated in Relation to the Possible Number of Such Errors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Poss Errors</th>
<th>Actual Errors</th>
<th>Act/Poss Error Ratio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Elem NNSs</td>
<td>190</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>18.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inter NNSs</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>22.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSs</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Poss = Possible; Act = Actual; Elem = Elementary-level; Inter = Intermediate-level)

These figures indicate that a substantial proportion of filled pauses are misinterpreted by the NNS groups. This being the case, the high frequency of such perceptual errors might be expected to result in their being less frequently emitted in EFL teacher-talk than in NS-NS interaction. This hypothesis was consequently investigated by looking at their occurrence in segments from teacher-talk in 30 English language lessons and comparing the resulting figures to those obtained in NS-NS baseline sessions. The findings from this investigation are reported in the following section.

5. Occurrence Study: Subjects and Data Sources

Data for this study were derived from thirty audio-taped English language lessons delivered to elementary- to intermediate-
proficiency students at Sultan Qaboos University, Oman. Each teacher recorded one lesson (delivered to a particular group) during the first, fifth, and tenth week of a semester. Very occasional delays in recordings where lessons were postponed, for example, due to health reasons, were not considered of significance. In order to sample language to NNS students of different proficiency levels, recordings were made in first, second and third year classes.

Four male teachers, three American and one English, each recorded three language lessons with first year science students in their first semester at university. Testing of this group on CELT indicated them to be largely of elementary proficiency, although a minority of students were at intermediate levels. Three British teachers, two female and one male, each recorded three language lessons delivered to second-year agriculture students whose general proficiency level is best described as upper elementary. Three other teachers, two female and one male, and two English and one Irish, recorded language lessons delivered to third-year students of intermediate proficiency in the Faculty of Medicine.

NS-NS baselines were obtained as the teachers presented a body of information in a short lecture to groups of NSs in a formal setting (classroom or office). Despite duplicating the formality of the setting and despite the language of the lessons and short lectures being cognitively comparable, it has to be acknowledged that genre may not be exactly identical. However, no more satisfactory comparison can be drawn—total equivalence is clearly impossible.

6. Occurrence Study: Analysis and Results

As a detailed analysis of temporal variables was to be undertaken from the data, the first two distinct 30-second segments of teacher-talk (in which the teacher spoke continuously without interruption of any kind, and in which no pause was equal to or less than 3 secs; see Griffiths, 1990, March, p. 8, for rationale for this procedure) were transcribed, and the rates were summed to allow comparison with baseline data derived from the first 60 seconds of the NS-NS presentations. Table 4 indicates the number of filled pauses identified in these segments.
Table 4.
Frequency of Filled Pauses in 30 2x30-second Segments in 30 EFL Lessons and 10 60-second Segments of Short NS-NS Lectures Obtained to Give Baseline Data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Level</th>
<th>Teacher</th>
<th>Time 1</th>
<th>Time 2</th>
<th>Time 3</th>
<th>NS-NS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Elementary- proficiency</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot; &quot;</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot; &quot;</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot; &quot;</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upper- elementary proficiency</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot; &quot;</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot; &quot;</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intermediate- proficiency</td>
<td>H</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot; &quot;</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot; &quot;</td>
<td>J</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As is clear from an initial consideration of the figures in Table 4, there is a radical difference in the frequency of filled pauses between the two situations. In NS-NS interaction, filled pauses are used with extreme frequency (on average 8.3 times a minute), while in English language lessons their use is relatively rare (on average 1.93 times a minute). There is absolute consistency of this pattern over all time periods and at all levels; not one of the ten teachers comes close to equalling her or his NS-NS filled pause totals while addressing the NNSs. For almost all teachers the fall in frequency is truly remarkable and represents a control of delivery on a scale which might not have been expected.

Impressions suggested by the raw data were confirmed by the findings of a one-tailed Matched Pairs t-Test conducted on the means for the NS-NNS data and the NS-NS data. This showed the difference to be significant at the .005 level (t [9] = 5.446, p < .005). Reasons for this and the Error Study findings are suggested in the next section.

7. Discussion and Conclusion

The finding that HP are "overheard" and, therefore, become sources of perceptual error for NNSs was predicted from previous investigation. However, the scale of the difficulty
which filled pauses give rise to is unexpected. HP are, almost axiomatically, meaningless utterances, but many of them were not regarded as irrelevant by the NNSs in this study. The seriousness of the resulting errors cannot be judged from these data; from a NS viewpoint they do not seem too serious but that may not be the situation for the NNS. The frequency of the errors must, in any case, give rise to concern, for, as Deese points out (1980, p. 80), even for NSs, unusually dense disfluency frequencies are likely to interfere with processing by the hearer.

The second of the two studies reported here indicates that this concern over HP frequency is perceived by EFL teachers (although perhaps not on a conscious level). All of the teachers involved in this study will have been aware of the need to speak clearly to language learners, but it is highly unlikely that they will ever have thought specifically about the incidence of filled pauses in their speech. The scale on which they adapt their deliveries to NNSs, and the consistency of the pattern in which this is done, is, therefore, unexpected.

There are, in fact, few previous studies of the occurrence of NS performance modifications in teacher-talk in which the results have been so unequivocal and, in a sense, so positive. In a word, filled pauses give rise to misperception so their employment is severely curtailed. This finding is particularly surprising as no significant modification was observed on another temporal variable investigated in this research programme—that of speech rate (Griffiths, 1990, March). Language teachers are, however, clearly mindful of HP and self-monitor its use; they compensate for NNSs not possessing the skills necessary to idealize HP out of the message.

In agreement with Good and Butterworth (1980, p. 152), findings from the Occurrence Study therefore demonstrate that an individual's hesitancy is determined by interactional goals as well as cognitive processing demands. The fundamental reason for hesitating may, as Chafe (1980, p. 170) states, be due to speech production being "an act of creation." However, control over disfluency seems to result from this creativity not occurring in a vacuum,
HESITATION PHENOMENA IN TEACHER-TALK

but rather in response to audience comprehension-capacity.

In general, this finding is in agreement with much of the input-studies literature (e.g., see Gass & Madden, 1985) which demonstrates the high degree of modification made by NSs, notably language teachers, in addressing NNSs. It does, however, lend no support to the notion that "authenticity" is the natural strategy when faced with NNS incomprehension. On the contrary, it reflects an acknowledgement that production modification is an appropriate comprehension facilitating strategy at least where hearers are of elementary levels of proficiency.

It is obvious that this view is incompatible with the currently received wisdom on the issue of L2 listening comprehension, whether of teacher-talk or of materials. In regard to the latter, as stated in an earlier paper:

"evidence from temporal variable research leads to the recommendation that authentic materials should be approached gradually rather than be instantly confronted. This does not mean that the ultimate aim embodied in such an approach is anything other than the comprehension of authentic spontaneous speech. This must, of course, be the goal. It is, however, considered that materials must incorporate a programmed move towards authenticity rather than beginning with it. . . . (Griffiths, 1990a, p. 60)

Also in that paper it was recommended that HP should be avoided in beginner-level materials; the results of the Occurrence study show that this recommendation anticipates the natural modification already made by language teachers when addressing NNSs.

A general implication which might be drawn from the findings in these studies (and others on temporal variables in this series of studies, e.g., Griffiths, 1990b) is that the present emphasis on "authenticity" in discussions of listening comprehension might usefully be substituted for, or at least complemented by, one in which "modification" is accorded greater significance. In regard to HP, at least, teachers themselves clearly recognise a learner need and largely satisfy it. Listening comprehension materials might be expected to do no less, but clearly "authenticity" in production
HESITATION PHENOMENA IN TEACHER-TALK

(insofar as that is taken to mean unmodified NS-NS discourse) cannot even be guaranteed to be low in the very HP shown here to be frequently misperceived by language learners.

At a more local level in terms of language learner perception/misperception of teacher-talk, it can be seen that the methodology used here (transcription) proved effective in demonstrating where HP generated error. Over and above this, however, other major sources of error were apparent in the scripts (notably those caused by contractions), and the possibility of further using transcription to identify points of perceptual difficulty clearly recommends itself for language classroom use. Transcripts can, in fact, not only be used to provide feedback on perceptual problems for language teachers (and students), but they can also be employed to bring these difficulties to the awareness of content lecturers teaching NNSs (an application of this being described in Griffiths, 1989, November), or to other NSs unfamiliar with the level of difficulty occasioned to NNS hearers by unmodified NS speech. In this respect, as Humphreys-Jones (1986) notes:

It is to be hoped that by turning increasingly more attention to what hearers do, and to what they have to do in order to understand correctly, we shall become more aware of the immense difficulties a hearer can face in endeavouring to understand what a speaker is endeavouring to communicate. (p. 124)

Her work on the "states of realization" (1986, p. 110) of discourse participants brings the speaker into the picture and is particularly relevant to language teaching where the question of assessing hearer comprehension must be a constant consideration. The studies reported here demonstrate, on this particular dimension, the acuteness of the state of realization achieved by EFL teachers. The paradox of comprehensible input is, it seems, both recognized and reacted to.

I am very grateful for comments on this paper by Alan Beretta, Ros Mitchell, John Flowerdew, and Vance Stevens. I would also like to thank the many teachers at Sultan
Qaboos University, Oman, who participated in the study.

Roger Griffiths is Associate Professor of English at Nagoya University of Commerce. He is also a Chartered Psychologist and Associate Fellow of The British Psychological Society. He has a Ph.D. from Southampton University on the role of temporal variables in L2 learning.

References


HESITATION PHENOMENA IN TEACHER-TALK


**Appendix**

**Passage 1**

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<tr>
<td>uh you think it comes bigger d'you / well the answer is that the</td>
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<td>effects of lone pairs / an' double bonds and triple bonds/ is</td>
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**FS1**

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<tr>
<td>absolutely nothing / now that / you didn't expect that did you I</td>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>but there are / there are / some problems/let's see if I can</td>
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<tr>
<td>give you an example/so we've looked now at all the com-at uh</td>
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<tr>
<td>a group of examples of these elements that form these compounds/</td>
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<td>and in each case all the electrons that we talk about are bonding</td>
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**R2**

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<td>electrons / all right / these / these / electron pairs all refer</td>
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<th>107</th>
<th>108</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>to/ all mean /that they are bonding pairs / what happens when</td>
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HESITATION PHENOMENA IN TEACHER-TALK

109 110 111 112 113 114 115 116 117
we've got some non-bonding or lone pairs/well
FS4
118 119 120 121 122 123 124 125 126 127
let's take a g-/ an example that we've
FP3
128 129 130 131 132 133 134 135 136
been uh using a lot lately an' that is
137 138 139 140 141 142 143 144 145 146 147 148 149
water / let's take a look at water/ now water is formed between
150 152 152 153 154 155 156 157 158 159 160
two atoms of hydrogen and one atom of oxygen / so what
161 162 163 164 165 166 167
group is oxygen in the periodic table /

Passage 2

<table>
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<th>FP1</th>
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</tbody>
</table>
so let's go on to/ uhm let's go on to uh an' mercuric-chloride

16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26
would be exactly the same / mercury occurs in group two / two

27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35
valence electrons forms mercuric-chloride h - g - c - l - two/

FP3

36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49
but I gave you beryllium because I think that is uh an atom that

50 51 52 53 54 55 56 57 58 59 60 61
you already know something about / let's go on to the next

FS3 FP4

62 63 64 65 66 67 68 69 70 71 72 73 74
example and we'll t-/uh there's another example there by the

FP5

75 76 77 78 79 80 81 82 83 84 85
way of silver uh diamine that's called / that's silver-diamine/
HESITATION PHENOMENA IN TEACHER-TALK

FP6
86 87 88 89 90 91 92 94 95 96 97 98
uhm cation an' that is also linear / let's go on to

FS4 FP7
99 100 101 102 103 104 105 106 107 108 109 110
the three and we'll take w- / uh another compound that you

FP8
111 112 113 114 115 116 117 118
already know / another uhm atom which is boron /
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HEINEMANN PUBLISHING FOR THE 1990s
Why Languages Do not Shape Cognition: 
Psycho- and Neurolinguistic Evidence

Thomas Scovel

It is popularly believed by language learners and teachers that languages differ in the way they influence thought and perception. For example because Japanese employs different linguistic structures from English, speakers of Japanese will sometimes differ from speakers of English in their world view. This notion, called language relativity or the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, has been subject to empirical scrutiny over the past forty years, and contrary to popular belief, there has been little evidence in support of linguistic relativity. This paper reviews the prerequisites necessary for empirical investigation of the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, then summarizes several of the experiments that have been undertaken to validate its possible effects, and finally concludes with some observations about what this lack of supporting evidence might mean to the process of learning and teaching a second language.

言語が認知力を形成しない理由—心理・神経言語学的立証—

語学教師や学習者は一般に、人の思考や知覚に影響するという点で言語間には差異があると信じている。例えば日本語と英語とは違った言語構造を持つ故に、日本人は英語国民とは異質の世界観を抱くという考えである。言語相対論又はサピア・ウォーフの仮説と呼ばれるこの概念は過去40年以上も経験学的精査を受けてきたが、予測に反して言語相対論を支持する証拠は殆どなかった。本稿はサピア・ウォーフ仮説の経験学研究に必要な前提条件を考察し、起り得る結果を確認するためになされた幾つかの実験を要約し、最後にこの確証の欠如が第二語学習得・教授の課程で何を意味するかという観察をのべて結論とする。

One of the most persistent and popular perceptions that is harbored and nurtured by different peoples all over the globe is that their individual languages reflect certain world views that are not found in any other world language. Most commonly, lexical examples are cited to support this perception, especially words that
WHY LANGUAGES DO NOT SHAPE COGNITION

are difficult to translate directly into another language: Gemütlichkeit in German; guanxi in Chinese; riaproi in Thai; home in English; or haragei in Japanese. So pervasive is this Whorfian perception that it is difficult to debate the topic or to subject it to scientific scrutiny, because it has become accepted as conventional wisdom by almost everyone. In fact, one compelling argument in support of the notion that our native tongues differ in the way they shape the way we think is the fact that almost everyone believes this to be the case. Near universality of belief is not, however, a sufficient criterion for scientific proof. In this paper, I would like to review the prerequisites necessary for a scientific investigation of the Whorfian hypothesis, summarize some of the experiments on the topic which have been conducted during the last four decades, including those which deal with possible neurolinguistic implications, and conclude with a few reflections on what this means for second language acquisition.

One fundamental problem in investigating the idea that language influences cognition is that this general claim is often looked at simultaneously in two different, and somewhat contradictory ways. Slobin (1979) draws the useful distinction between language determinism and language relativity. Language determinism is the belief that language in general somehow aids, constrains, or shapes thought and perception in general. One simple example of this belief is the premise that long or complicated linguistic expressions constrain cognitive processing, whereas short, simple expressions enhance cognitive or perceptual processing. Obviously this claim would hold true for all languages. One would not expect Japanese and English (or any two languages) to differ in this regard. For example, it would be quite preposterous to maintain that double or triple negatives would impede understanding in English but would enhance comprehension in Japanese. Language determinism is the basis of psycholinguistics and the psychology of language. By and large, it has been experimentally proven in numerous and diverse experiments (e.g., Aitchison, 1989;
WHY LANGUAGES DO NOT SHAPE COGNITION

Clark & Clark, 1977; Foss & Hakes, 1978). I have no quarrel, therefore, with the idea that human language—the natural system of human communication comprised of linguistic universals, both formal and substantive (Chomsky, 1967)—determines cognition to some degree. The evidence is strong and incontrovertible and is the foundation of most of the major cognitive models of the psychology of language (e.g., those of Vygotsky, Piaget, and Chomsky).

But another way we can look at language and thought is called language relativity, which, unfortunately, is quite often confused with language determinism. Language relativity is frequently called the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis (or more simply, the Whorfian hypothesis) after the names of the two American linguists who were the most popular proponents of this notion. Linguistic relativity presupposes the idea that human language in general influences cognition, but it goes further to claim that what we think, perceive, or remember differs relative to our individual language. This means that the Japanese language will, to some extent, create a Japanese Weltanschauung which will differ from the world view created by the English language which, in turn, is different from one shaped by Chinese, and so forth. Note the importance of distinguishing between language determinism and language relativity: the former argues that human language has some influence on human thought; the latter goes one step beyond and contends that since human language is comprised of different languages, linguistic differences among the world’s languages will affect how users of these languages think. This popular notion is illustrated by a recent book by Matsumoto (1989), to cite a Japanese example. Writing for a non-Japanese, English-speaking audience, Matsumoto emphasizes the difficulty of explaining the concept of haragei to those who do not speak Japanese and who are unacquainted with Japanese culture. For the rest of this paper, I will be concerned solely with language relativity. My basic premise will be that, contrary to conventional wisdom, there seems to be little or no evidence to suggest that languages differ in the way they shape cognition.

In a little known but significant article published before most of the experimental work on the Sapir-Whorf hypothe-
WHY LANGUAGES DO NOT SHAPE COGNITION

sis, Lenneberg (1953) stressed the importance of establishing experimental guidelines in order to investigate language relativity in a rigorous fashion. Based on Lenneberg's early work and on my own reading of the relevant psycholinguistic literature, I believe that there are several issues that must be considered before experimentation is undertaken.

1. Strong vs. Weak Versions of Relativity: The strong version assumes that irrespective of conditions, linguistic structures will affect cognitive processing without exception. The weak version admits to the intervening effects of non-linguistic variables and claims that language will or can affect cognitive processing in certain, but certainly not all, conditions. Sapir, who ordinarily was a careful and articulate writer, seems to espouse both versions in his most quoted paragraph about relativity:

Human beings do not live in the objective world alone, nor alone in the world of social activity as ordinarily understood, but are very much at the mercy of the particular language which has become the medium of expression for society... We see and hear and otherwise experience very largely as we do because the language habits of our community predispose certain choices of interpretation. (my emphases) (Sapir, 1929, p. 209)

"Being at the mercy" of one's mother tongue, or being "predisposed toward certain choices" by one's native language is essentially the choice between the strong and weak versions of the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis. Although it remains unclear as to which version Sapir himself was committed, most people accept the possibility of exceptions and intervening variables and thus reject the idea that we are at the mercy of our language.

2. Quantifying Language: Language is such a broad term that it can refer to literature, speech, nonverbal communication, as well as to grammar and accent, so obviously it is instructive to define what aspects of language are expected to exert an influence over cognitive processing. The typical
linguistic categories of phonology, lexicon, and syntax are the three which have been considered for quantification in Whorfian experiments, with the majority of studies focusing on lexical differences and their possible influence on cognition and perception. Except for some highly speculative observations drawn by a few psycholinguists (see McNeill, 1987), most investigators have assumed that phonological differences among languages have no influence on thought. Lexical differences have been the richest source of evidence for experimentation, partly because words are easy to quantify, and partly because vocabulary seems to be the linguistic system most obviously linked to cognition and perception. There have also been a few studies which have examined the potential influence of syntactic differences between languages.

3. Quantifying Cognition: A much more daunting problem for researchers is to come up with a quantifiable measure of differences in how people think. Neither Sapir nor Whorf attempted to explain in their writings how differences in cross-cultural cognition could be identified or measured. Whorf never attempted to quantify how “thinking” in Native American languages like Chippewa, Kwakiutl, and Nootka differed from “thinking” in what he called “Standard Average European”—his unique and quite extraordinary way of conglomerating all European tongues together into one linguistic amalgamation. Both Whorf and Sapir failed to provide any quantifiable evidence that Europeans and Native Americans had different world views; they simply assumed there were cognitive differences between these two groups of cultures because the linguistic differences were so salient.

4. Causality: One fallacy of unsystematic research is to assume that once you find a correlation between A and B, you have proven that A caused B. Steinberg (1982), in his chapter which lists problems with the notion of language relativity, cites examples using English and Japanese. English demands that noun phrases be quantified according to number and that certain verbs and noun quantifiers agree
WHY LANGUAGES DO NOT SHAPE COGNITION

with the number of the noun phrase ("Much rice is consumed by many Asians."). a linguistic feature that does not exist in Japanese. Assuming this feature of English would be an advantage in mathematical cognition, and also assuming that math grades on standardized tests would be one accurate measure of mathematical thinking, then based on the notion of linguistic relativity, one would assume that English speaking children would have a cognitive advantage in math over Japanese speaking children. No one would dispute the linguistic facts nor the logic of this example, but the results obtained for such an experiment would probably be the reverse of those predicted. Even if English speaking children did score consistently higher on math tests, it is not at all clear that language would have anything to do with the results. It is much more likely that differences in educational systems, social attitudes about the importance of scholastic testing, and so forth were the causal variables, and not the linguistic differences in how noun phrases are marked. This simple example demonstrates the inherent difficulty of weeding out the influence of culture and environment from the potential influence of language. Remember that language relativity claims that differences in language, not distinctions in culture or environment, create differences in the way people think or perceive.

5. Phenotypical and Cryptotypical Evidence: As Clarke et al (1981) have pointed out, in several of his essays and letters, Whorf distinguished between traditional morphological and grammatical classes which he called "phenotypes" and more "elusive, hidden, but functionally more important meanings" called "cryptotypes" (Whorf, 1956, p. 105). An example of the former would be the difference just cited between a language like English, that distinguishes between singular and plural nouns, and a language like Japanese, that makes no such distinction. Although Whorf was never specific about cryptotypical differences, it appears to me that they are somewhat similar to Chomsky's early notion of "deep structure." So a possible cryptotypical distinction between English and Japanese is that English marks nouns syntactically (e.g., noun modifiers tend to
WHY LANGUAGES DO NOT SHAPE COGNITION

differ in syntactic number but not in syntactic category: “much rice” vs. “many bowls of rice”), whereas Japanese marks nouns semantically but not syntactically (e.g., nimai, nihon, nisatsu differ not in number but in the semantic classes of nouns they categorize). Because cryptotypical differences are difficult to define and almost impossible to quantify, investigators have focussed exclusively on the phenotypical differences between languages.

Although Whorf never provided clear examples or a precise definition of cryptotypes, some contemporary linguists have looked at differences among languages in a manner that I would consider cryptotypical. Two examples of this modern form of relativity are the notion by Lakoff and Johnson (1980) that language is highly metaphorical, and the idea presented recently by Wang (1989) that each language is packaged with unique “prefabs.” Although both notions are insightful reflections on the more “cryptotypical” nature of languages, they cannot meet the criterion of quantifiability and therefore be considered amenable to experimental verification.

Many anthropologists and psycholinguists have attempted to investigate language relativity experimentally. The most famous, but ultimately among the least convincing set of experiments undertaken to verify the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, are the studies made almost forty years ago which correlated the differential effect of color terminology on the perception and classification of colors. Lenneberg and Roberts (1953), for example, investigated differences in color classification tasks between speakers of Zuni, who have no simple term for “orange,” and speakers of English. Although this classic study, like other similar investigations of the effects of color terminology, appeared to provide quantifiable verification of language relativity, later work by Berlin and Kay (1969) revealed that color classification is based on a universally predictable hierarchy of terms which is determined by the perceptual properties of human vision. Furthermore, some linguistic differences in color terminology appear to be influenced by geographical dissimilarities in sunlight. Born-
stein's 1973 survey of over 100 different languages indicates that groups who live on or close to the equator tend to have one word for blue and green, possibly due to the fact that the prolonged exposure to ultraviolet radiation damages the eye's ability to perceive differences in the shorter wavelengths (Taylor, 1976, p. 300).

Representative of the several experiments which have been conducted on syntactic differences between languages and their potential Whorfian influence is Bloom's 1981 study of counterfactual clauses in Chinese and English. In the following examples, note that Chinese has no changes in the verb phrase for "if" clauses, whereas English frequently does.

Chinese: ruguo ta shi wode pengyou, wo jiu bu ma ta
if he be my friend, I then not curse him

English: If he were my friend, I wouldn't curse him.
or: Were he my friend, I wouldn't curse him.

Bloom conducted a series of experiments involving the ability of Chinese and English subjects to answer comprehension questions about texts they had read in their native languages. Bloom hypothesized that English subjects would do a better job of remembering the truth and falsity of counterfactual clauses in the English text because the inflection of English verbs, as illustrated above, would help English speakers to remember that they were counterfactuals. Chinese readers did not have such linguistic help, however, and so they might not do as well in remembering which information was factual and which was not. The results supported Bloom's hypothesis. In almost every case, English speakers did a significantly better job than the Chinese speakers in distinguishing between the factual and counterfactual statements. Bloom concluded from his research that languages do indeed differ in the way they shape thought.

Like the color experiments which at first blush seemed to confirm the existence of language relativity, at least at the lexical level, but then proved to be disconfirming, subsequent research on this syntactic contrast between
Chinese and English has demonstrated that Bloom's experiments are misleading. One major problem is that Bloom's Chinese texts were imperfect translations of English passages, and so it appears that the Chinese subjects had trouble answering questions about the veracity of what they had read, not because Chinese does not mark counterfactuals in the verb phrase, but because it is difficult to be tested on material that is poorly written. Probably due to this problem with translation, two researchers who replicated Bloom's study with Chinese texts which were as comprehensible as the English ones found that Chinese readers showed no comparative deficit in understanding counterfactuals (Au, 1983; Liu, 1985).

There have been, of course, a large number of experiments undertaken to prove the existence of linguistic relativity. The few examples cited above serve merely as an introduction to this important body of psycholinguistic literature, but the examples are also illustrative of the experimental results. Time and again, the experiments show that linguistic differences alone between two languages do not seem to exert a significant impact on the way speakers of the two languages conceive or perceive. And when the results initially appear to support language relativity, successive experimentation reveals non-linguistic factors accounting for the original results. The experimental evidence is abundantly clear—differences among linguistic structures apparently do not affect the cognitive and perceptual processing of speakers of the different languages under investigation.

So much for a summary of the psycholinguistic research, but what about recent studies in neurolinguistics? Does a person's mother tongue influence the preference for a peculiar way of using the brain—for "left" vs. "right" hemispheric processing, to cite a popular dichotomy in learning styles (Brown, 1989)? A neurolinguistic approach to language relativity is especially relevant for teachers of English to speakers of Japanese because of the current popularity of the work of Tsunoda (1978, 1985).
Tsunoda's complicated experimental protocol will not be described here, but suffice it to say that through a combination of the traditional neurolinguistic technique of dichotic listening (Kimura, 1961) and a finger tapping task in rhythm to acoustic stimuli of varying amplitudes, Tsunoda has reputedly demonstrated that speakers of Japanese process most sounds very differently from speakers of almost all other languages. His essential claim is that Japanese speakers rely almost exclusively on their left hemisphere in the way they perceive sounds neurologically, and this contrasts sharply with the way in which speakers of other languages tend to balance acoustic processing in the brain. Normally, the left hemisphere is used for linguistic information and the right hemisphere for non-linguistic noises (e.g., music, sounds of crickets chirping, etc.). Tsunoda believes that the asymmetrical reliance on the left hemisphere for the bulk of auditory processing by Japanese speakers is conditioned by the Japanese language. This is because, again according to Tsunoda, Japanese relies on vowel sounds more exclusively than any other language, and this influences Japanese speakers to depend almost entirely on the left hemisphere for most auditory processing.

Like the psycholinguistic study by Bloom, a major criticism of Tsunoda's neurolinguistic work is replicability. Uyehara and Cooper (1980) and Hatta and Diamond (1981) have replicated Tsunoda's experiments and have found no differences in the way Japanese and non-Japanese speakers process sounds in their cerebral hemispheres. In other words, using Tsunoda's own methods, these neurolinguists have discovered that Japanese speakers appear to process non-linguistic sounds the same way Korean, Chinese, and English speakers do. Other questions and criticisms arise—about the way Tsunoda establishes his experimental protocol, about the manner in which he seeks confirming and disconfirming evidence, about his understanding of the linguistic facts of how Japanese differs from other world languages, and finally, about his willingness to consider the neurolinguistic influence of such unusual factors as the
smell of perfume and cigarette smoke.

Although Tsunoda promotes the notion that Japanese brains are neurolinguistically unique, an attractive theme to consider in contemporary Japanese society, there seems to be no scientific evidence to support his Whorfian hypothesis that the Japanese language creates a left hemisphere mind set.

It may seem unusual to draw conclusions from evidence which has been largely negative; nevertheless, I think that there are several valuable implications for second language acquisition which can be drawn from the research I have reviewed which suggests that languages do not differ in the way they shape human conception or perception.

1. Learners of a new language and/or new culture frequently begin their educational quest with the assumption that there are upper limits constraining their ability to become completely successful second language learners. In my own research (Scovel, 1988), except for the trivial ability to sound exactly like a native speaker, I have found in my review of the literature that there are absolutely no upper bounds on the ability to gain native or even supranative abilities in vocabulary, syntax, reading and writing ability, and so on in a second language. Given the lack of evidence in support of language relativity, it is obvious that every Japanese learner of English has the potential to become as fluent in English as almost any native English speaker. There are no psycholinguistic or neurolinguistic constraints, except for the aforementioned limit on native sounding accent. I do not mean to trivialize the difficulty of becoming a fluent bilingual, but foreign languages can be learned extremely well, and I see no proof that there is an underlying "soul" or "genius" to English, Japanese, or any other language that remains hidden from all who were not raised as native speakers.

2. A second and perhaps more controversial conclusion I draw from the review of language relativity is that there may be no cognitive benefit to learning a second language.
WHY LANGUAGES DO NOT SHAPE COGNITION

Foreign language teachers sometimes argue that one of the advantages of learning a new tongue is that it helps to broaden a student's cognitive horizons. However, if there is no evidence that different languages influence different patterns of cognition or perception, then it is probable that learning a new language does not automatically endow a learner with new thoughts or new perceptions. Despite this disclaimer, I still believe that learning another tongue is extremely valuable. Aside from the economic, academic, and professional benefits of bi- or multilingualism, there are important social and personal advantages as well.

3. Folk beliefs about the potential effect of linguistic differences on the way people think can be dangerous when they foster the possibility of ethnonilingualic stereotypes. A disturbing consequence of Tsunoda's neurolinguistic model of the Japanese people is that it can be used to reinforce the unverified notion that Japanese are more analytic, calculating, and meticulous than speakers of other world languages. It also reinforces an idea—which I hold to be an unvalidated form of self-stereotyping in Japan—that Japanese people are uniquely different from all other cultures. This claim is true only in the superficial sense that Japanese, like Albanians or Zunis, represent a culture that is identifiably distinct from all the other cultures on earth, but it is not true in the more insidious sense of the word "unique" implied in Tsunoda's claim that the Japanese brain is uniquely different from the brains of all other groups of homo sapiens.

In conclusion, I think that language relativity (the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis) needs to be challenged and not simply presupposed. When it is examined in the light of experimental research, the evidence appears to be lacking. Therefore, I believe we can do a more effective job as second language teachers and researchers if we see ourselves as owners, and not prisoners, of the languages we speak.

Thomas Scovel teaches applied linguistics at San Francisco State University. He is interested in adult second
language acquisition and in EFL methodology and is a frequent contributor to conferences in Japan and other Asian nations. Having been born and raised in China, he has a personal involvement with language relativity.

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WHY LANGUAGES DO NOT SHAPE COGNITION

214.
Cooperative Small Group Discussion

Keiko Hirose and Hiroe Kobayashi

Although small group discussion is a familiar activity used in ESL/EFL classrooms, it has limitations resulting from its control-free nature. This activity has been made more structured by incorporating the three basic principles of Cooperative Learning, a teaching methodology based on the belief that learning increases as cooperation among learners develops. This article first provides theoretical background for the use of group work and then describes how those three principles can be applied to the activity. Finally, students' reactions to Cooperative Small Group Discussion are discussed, and suggestions as to the use of this activity are offered.

1. Introduction

As the learning of language focuses on "use," a great number of teaching materials and methods have been designed to enable learners to communicate with each other. In this communicative language teaching, activities using pair or group work have gained a prominent place in ESL/EFL classrooms; learners are encouraged to interact with each other, most often through the exchange of ideas.

Theoretical arguments for the use of group work have been corroborated by recent research in second language acquisition. Research findings indicate, for example, that group work allows for
a greater amount of, and richer variety of, language practice than teacher-fronted classes, and also that it enhances opportunity for the negotiation of meaning (see Long & Porter, 1985, for a review of the literature). In fact, this negotiation has been observed to take place more frequently in learner-learner interaction than in learner-native speaker interaction.

In this paper, we review theoretical and empirical arguments for the use of learner-learner interaction in foreign/second language learning, and then advocate "Cooperative Small Group Discussion," which we have developed to assist low intermediate/advanced learners to improve their oral skills. We will also include students' reactions to this activity, based on experimentation in a college English course over one semester.

2. Theoretical Background Underlying the Use of Learner-Learner Interaction

Recent studies on second language acquisition have been given impetus by Krashen's input hypothesis and Swain's claim regarding "comprehensible output" (1985). Krashen (1982) asserts that exposure to "comprehensible input" (i.e., the language that is directed to and understood by learners) is a necessary condition for language learning. Input slightly beyond the learner's current level can be made comprehensible through negotiations with the interlocutor, such as clarification requests, confirmation checks, or comprehension checks (see the first example in Figure 1, where the learner's clarification request triggers comprehensible input from the native speaker interlocutor). The input created through these negotiations (or conversational adjustments) is believed to assist learners in acquiring the target language.

The role of comprehensible input, however, is a controversial issue. Whereas Long (1983), among others, takes a view similar to Krashen's input hypothesis, some doubt has been cast on its significance. Ellis (1990), for example, points out that the hypothesis has not yet been empirically validated. Although he admits that such negotiations can enhance learners' understanding of input, he doubts that they actually result in new learning. Cameron and Epling
(1989) argue, more specifically, against the significance of the role of negotiations in the input theory. According to them, the learner does not necessarily try to negotiate because “the listener frequently did not indicate lack of understanding: rather, he or she simply agreed, maintained silence, or changed the subject” (p. 403). In such cases, the learner perhaps often employs Fillmore's “feigning understanding” (Aston, 1986, p. 133): the learner pretends to understand what is said by the interlocutor without giving a signal for further negotiation. Even if the learner attempts such negotiation, however, there is no guarantee that he/she will make the input understandable to the interlocutor. Low proficiency level learners, in particular, often encounter difficulty in creating comprehensible input because of their limited language ability. Thus, Aston (1986) suggests that it is necessary to examine how much substantial understanding, not feigned understanding, is achieved through negotiations (p. 134). In short, whether comprehensible input actually promotes language learning or not still remains an issue.

Figure 1.
Examples of “Comprehensible Input” and “Comprehensible Output”

1. Comprehensible Input

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learner (NNS English)</th>
<th>Interlocutor (NS English)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>no no I—what? what you say? (clarification request)</td>
<td>did you come here by yourself or did you come here with friends?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>no, alone—from Toronto.</td>
<td>did you come to the States with friends or did you come alone?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Comprehensible Output

| and they have the chwach there | the what? (clarification request) |
| the chwach—I know someone that— | what does it mean? (clarification request) |
| like um like American people they always go there every Sunday | yes? |
| you know—every morning that there pr—that—the American people get dressed up to go to um chwach | oh to church—I see |

(From Pica, 1987, pp. 5-6)
From a different perspective, Swain (1985) argues that "comprehensible input" is not sufficient, but "comprehensible output" (the language that learners themselves make comprehensible to the interlocutor in communicating their intended meaning) is also crucial in language acquisition (see the second example in Figure 1, where the learner is given the chance to clarify his/her meaning so as to make the language comprehensible to the native speaker interlocutor). Swain's claim results from evidence that French immersion students, in spite of seven years' exposure to comprehensible input, did not achieve native-like linguistic performance. She attributes this failure to their limited use of the target language.

Swain's position seems more relevant than Krashen's, especially for improving oral skills. Krashen puts comprehension over production, whereas Swain reverses that order. She emphasizes the importance of output by articulating its functions as follows. First, output provides learners with opportunities for meaningful use of the target language as well as for hypothesis-testing. Second, the learners, making use of such opportunities, may be pushed more to produce their desired meaning, especially when a communication breakdown occurs. Finally, by using the target language, they are likely forced to move from semantic processing to syntactic processing. All these functions are considered important for the development of oral skills (Swain, 1985, pp. 248-9).

The two claims made by Krashen and Swain, respectively, have generated much research on second language acquisition, particularly on learner-native and learner-learner interaction. Research findings indicate that native speakers of English make their input comprehensible to learners by linguistic and conversational adjustments (i.e., simplifying their speech, requesting clarification, and numerous other means). Further, it has been shown that, given similar interaction times, learners talk more and negotiate more with other learners than they do with native speakers of English (Porter, 1986; Varonis & Gass, 1985).
Perhaps because of pedagogical concerns, learner-learner interaction has received much attention in recent investigations. Assuming that increased speech and interaction will facilitate learning a language, factors that influence learner talk have been sought. The factors verified include learner-external factors such as task type (e.g., one-way vs. two-way information exchange task: Doughty & Pica, 1986; Gass & Varonis, 1985; Long, 1983), group size (Doughty & Pica, 1986); also learner-internal factors such as sex difference (Gass & Varonis, 1986), first language background (Duff, 1986; Gass & Varonis, 1985), proficiency level (Hirose & Kobayashi, 1990; Porter, 1986; Ross, 1988), and interaction style (Cameron & Epling, 1989).

If we accept the premise that increased amounts of speech and interaction are a prerequisite for language learning, especially for improving oral skills, then learner-learner interaction through group work should play a significant role in foreign language classrooms. This role is even more important in an EFL situation such as Japan, where conversation with native speakers of English may not often occur outside the classroom. Given this, one major task for the teacher to perform is to set up group work that ensures learners' active participation in making their output comprehensible to the interlocutors.

3. Cooperative Group Discussion: Why?

Language teachers have devised many activities to get learners to talk freely for communication practice, including information gap and problem solving, to name just two. Of these activities, group discussion, by which we mean “topic-centered” discussion, is not particularly new. In fact, this activity seems to win much favor from teachers for several reasons. First, although complex preparation in terms of reading materials and the use of elaborate aids may make discussion more successful, it can be “simple to prepare” (Ur, 1987, p. 14), as compared, for example, with the amount of preparation required for information-gap tasks. Second, because it is a control-free activity, it can promote learners' individual initiative. Learners can exchange
ideas freely. In short, group discussion is a practical communicative activity.

In addition to pedagogical advantages, recent research on learner interaction (Hirose & Kobayashi, 1990) shows that group members, when participating in discussion, offered each other challenging opportunities for "comprehensible output" on both cognitive and linguistic levels. Some learners, stimulated by others' utterances, made serious efforts to convey their intended meanings. In these attempts, they utilized linguistic input offered by other members, which facilitated their syntactic processing of ideas in the target language. This finding supports the use of group discussion for fostering learners' speaking abilities.

Despite these merits, group discussion has several inherent problems. One such is its control-free nature, which leaves members' participation to their own discretion. Their participation is likely to be affected by individual traits and oral proficiency levels. For example, some learners who are more outspoken or linguistically more competent than others may dominate the discussion, leaving the rest in the position of passive listeners. While this problem can be corrected to some degree through proper preparation and feedback (for example, by the teacher providing topic-related vocabulary or various interactional functions in advance, and then monitoring learners' participation), a lack of control over learner participation is likely to cause unbalanced turn-taking among group members.

Another problem is that group discussion lacks "the purpose of genuine discourse" (Ur, 1987, p. 6) because learners often speak simply for the sake of practice. Nevertheless, if topics are stimulating enough, they can facilitate real exchange of ideas among learners. However, such topic effects seem to vary among individuals. Because of having different interests, some learners find a given topic more stimulating than others, which in turn is likely to influence members' exchange of ideas (see the later discussion on topics). Consequently, what is needed is a group goal
COOPERATIVE SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

(i.e., the creation of a consensus or position) towards which members work in discussing a topic. Although such a goal still remains artificial, it can be effective in terms of getting members involved in intra-group negotiation.

At this point, in order to overcome the problems mentioned above, we would like to introduce Cooperative Learning techniques. These techniques do not provide all the answers, but our experience tells that they work well.

4. Basic Principles of Cooperative Group Discussion

Our group discussion activity incorporates the basic principles of Cooperative Learning developed by Johnson and Johnson (1975). Cooperative Learning is a teaching methodology which aims at maximizing learning by fostering cooperation among learners. It makes use of small group work, but unlike typical group work, it is characterized by having three basic principles: (a) positive interdependence, (b) individual accountability, and (c) collaborative skills related to small group interaction. These principles can be easily adapted to ESL/EFL classes at various levels, not to mention many other subject areas (see Jacobs, 1988, for use in EFL writing, and Ringdahl et al., 1986, for use with lower level ESL classes).

4.1 Positive interdependence

For positive interdependence to occur in a group, learners must perceive that they “sink or swim together” (Johnson, Johnson, & Holubec, 1986, p. 8). This can be achieved by having members share tasks through setting up a mutual goal, assigning roles, dividing materials or resources among members, and giving joint rewards. These techniques make group work structured enough to ensure group collaboration.

In our group discussion, each team of four has the goal of producing a summary sheet of the given discussion, together with the group’s chosen position and supporting reasons. Then roles are assigned to members: a facilitator who presides over
COOPERATIVE SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

discussion, ensuring an equal chance for members' participation; a
writer (or recorder) who fills out the summary sheet; a reporter who
presents the group's position to the whole class; and an observer
who observes how discussion goes or how each group member par­ticipates in the discussion. Regarding evaluation, each member
receives the same score as the group does.

4.2 Individual accountability
The basic tenet of Cooperative Learning is that learners are
responsible for their own learning. Cooperative Learning provides
a situation in which learners can maximize their achievements.
This requires the teacher's frequent monitoring of the learners' participation and progress on a given task so as to ensure their involvement and achievement. To show one's responsibility, every member of a group signs the summary sheet (see Appendix A for an example). The signature indicates that individuals agree with what is written and are able to explain the group's position. The teacher then picks any member and asks him/her to verify the position or to supply more detailed ideas. When a member is unable to do this, the teacher may ask other members to explain it to him/her. This encourages group members to assist each other.

4.3 Collaborative skills
Cooperative Learning also requires that learners develop social skills, and use them effectively for successful collaboration. These skills, which need to be taught, include encouraging reticent group members, requesting clarification, expressing disagreement, and persuading others to change their ideas. Thus, "Cooperative Learning provides an excellent context for social language" (Ringdahl et al., 1986, p. 26).

In our group discussion, the teacher introduces language functions which are socially appropriate (i.e., greeting, thanking, disagreeing, and encouraging) and also those more directly relevant to the negotiation of meaning (i.e., requesting clarification, checking for confirmation). In each lesson, time is allowed for the practice of the collaborative skills, and learners are encouraged to utilize them in the actual discussion. Initially they may find them artificial, but will soon adapt
various collaborative skills into their own speech.

5. Sample Discussion Lesson: “Should Women Stay Home?”

In this section we shall describe the way the lesson is conducted in a 90-minute college freshman class. The lesson consists of several parts. Although time allocation is flexible, the discussion (including summary writing as a group) constitutes the central part, requiring nearly half of the class time. The pre- and post-discussion activities (see below) each require approximately a quarter of the class time.

5.1 Collaborative skills

The language functions to be presented are clarifying and encouraging. These functions are used to encourage linguistically weak students, who often remain reticent, to talk or to ask for clarification. The teacher first elicits students' expressions by presenting situations where they might use the functions. Then the teacher introduces phrases such as “Try it,” “Don’t worry about mistakes,” and “Go on,” and also shows strategies for clarifying, through expressions such as “What do you mean?” “Pardon?” and the partial repetition of the previous speaker’s utterance with rising intonation. Students repeat these expressions after the teacher.

5.2 Topic presentation

Although this is a warm-up for the activity, it can greatly affect the way the subsequent discussion will proceed. In the previous class, students are given reading assignments (i.e., newspaper articles about the conditions of working mothers) to gain some relevant knowledge about the topic. On the day of discussion, the teacher tries to raise the level of student interest in the topic, first by doing a class survey on whether their mothers work or not, then by comparing the results with the available statistics on Japanese working mothers, and finally by directing their attention to a specific question, “Why has the number of working mothers increased in Japan recently?”
5.3 *Grouping*

Although there are several ways of grouping (e.g., learner's proficiency level, familiarity, lottery), this lesson adopts a mechanical one, which usually results in heterogeneous grouping. In the case of a class of twenty, all students are given a number from one to five randomly and those with the same number constitute a group of four. New groups are formed once every three or four weeks.

5.4 *Discussion*

The goal of the discussion is to achieve a group consensus; in other words, each group decides to take either a "Yes" or "No" position and comes up with supporting reasons for it. Some Japanese students may find this difficult; others may find it challenging. During this activity, the teacher monitors each group, provides language support if requested, and encourages students to speak in English. (This type of teacher monitoring is possible with a class of up to 40 highly-motivated students, but it is difficult to manage larger classes, particularly at a low intermediate level.) After the given topic has been discussed for twenty-five minutes, the teacher distributes a summary sheet to each group. While a designated writer takes charge of the actual writing, all four members collaborate on the content and language. Upon completion of the writing, they read the sheet and sign it to indicate that they agree with what is written. Thus, the summary sheet should reflect all the members' opinions.

5.5 *Processing*

The teacher spends some time collecting students' feedback on their group collaboration. Designated observers in each group are asked to report orally to the class on how students worked together in their groups or how they treated the day's topic.

5.6 *Sharing.*

In sharing, designated reporters are called on to present their group's position to the whole class. The teacher
COOPERATIVE SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

clarifies their position or confirms some of the given reasons by asking other group members (individual accountability). Because the same position and reasons are often restated by many other groups, for the most efficient use of time the teacher may focus only on differences among groups. In the end, the teacher summarizes the whole discussion and gives comments on it. If time permits, class discussion can be extended to related issues, to promote further exchange of opinions among groups.

6. Students’ Reactions to Cooperative Group Discussion

Students’ reactions were collected through questionnaires and a group discussion conducted on the topic, “What do you think of group discussion? Do you like it or not?” We have been using this activity since 1987. Every year we elicit feedback from students on the activity. Students’ reactions indicate almost the same tendency, and here we report those of 1988.

A majority of the 42 students (79%) reported that they liked the activity, with strong preference for its discussion part (74%). Apparently they enjoyed the exchange of ideas with other group members, and also listening to other students’ opinions on various topics (14%).

The benefits students received from participating in the ten consecutive group discussions were seen in their increased confidence in speaking English: nearly 40% of the students felt that their confidence had increased considerably or a great deal, compared with the first time they discussed in a group, and almost 50% of them felt it had increased at least some. Naturally, many students (53%) felt more comfortable speaking English by the end of the semester. In spite of these positive feelings, however, only one fifth of the students (22%) perceived their speaking abilities to have improved to a great degree; in fact, many students still reported that it was a great struggle for them to express themselves in English. Perhaps because of this difficulty, they became more aware of inadequacies in their speaking ability, which resulted in increased motivation for improvement in this area (54%).
Among the given factors that presumably helped students' participation, "friendly atmosphere within a group" was reported the most facilitating (69%), "topics" (43%) was next, and the rest was reported as follows: "peer assistance" (38%), "assigned roles" (19%), and "speaking ability" (12%). The students' perceptions support what the literature says about successful group work (Long & Porter, 1985): creating a warm friendly atmosphere contributes a great deal to active learner interaction; students feel comfortable asking for peer assistance in their word-searches or, in return, offering help when others are in trouble, such as being unable to complete their utterances.

What is interesting about the facilitating factor of "topics," however, is that students found the same factor to be a hindrance to their participation as well. Compared with the 43% who had a positive view of "topics," 57% reported the opposite. This same tendency was also found with many of the topics used (see Appendix B). For example, regarding the topic "Should Children Take Care of Aging Parents?" 12 students liked it, but 13 viewed it as boring. This points out how difficult it is for teachers to choose a topic appropriate for all students.

7. Conclusion

In Japan learners often find it difficult to improve their oral skills due to limited opportunity for language practice outside the classroom. It is therefore urgent for teachers to provide classroom opportunities for the production of comprehensible output. In response to this need, many communicative activities using pair or group work have been devised and implemented so far. We have taken up one activity, group discussion, and attempted to improve it by incorporating Cooperative Learning principles.

Unlike typical small group work, our Cooperative Group Discussion facilitates group collaboration through the following factors: (a) every group has a goal; (b) every member has a role; (c) every member is encouraged to use social/functional language.
In short, the activity is structured so that cooperation is ensured among group members. As described in this paper, the incorporation of the three basic principles of Cooperative Learning can help ESL/EFL teachers to improve the effectiveness of group work.

The students generally showed a positive attitude toward Cooperative Group Discussion; they liked to exchange ideas with other students in the target language. Regarding the effects of its use, the activity appears to increase students' confidence in speaking and also their motivation for further improvement of oral skills; however, its use does not seem to lead immediately to great improvement of oral skills.

Several suggestions can be made which will make the activity more effective. As holds true with any group work, it is important for teachers to create a warm, friendly atmosphere in the class. Greetings and small talk should be incorporated into the beginning of discussion, and games should sometimes be played for fun and relaxation. Further, teachers should allow students to choose what topics they want to discuss and to present their choices to the class. However, if students are not ready to take the initiative, giving too much responsibility is not recommended. Finally, intra-group organization also requires the teachers' attention. Learners' interactional style and language proficiency level are found to influence interaction among group members, as is familiarity with the other learners. Considering these factors, teachers should strive to find ways of grouping which allow for greater learner participation.

In conclusion, Cooperative Small Group Discussion can provide learners with significant intellectual and linguistic challenges. If planned well, it can create a great deal of opportunity for producing comprehensible output, not to mention understanding comprehensible input.

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Keiko Hirose is an associate professor at Aichi Prefectural University. She has studied in the University of Essex and received an M.Ed. from Hiroshima University.

Hiroe Kobayashi is an associate professor at Hiroshima University. She holds an Ed.D. in TESOL from Teachers College, Columbia University.

References


COOPERATIVE SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION


**Appendix A**

A sample summary sheet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date: 7/6/1988</th>
<th>Group No.: 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**GROUP DISCUSSION**

Topic: "What do you think of group discussion? Do you like it or not?"

**PRESENTATION**

Position: **YES**

Reasons: We can feel relaxed, for we don't have to speak in front of many people. It is useful to develop our ability to think logically. We can have many opportunities to speak English. It's fun to speak with friends, even in English.

**SIGNATURE:**

Facilitator: **Rie Nakamichi**

Writer: **Mio Arita**

Reportor: **Keiko Aoki**

Observer: **Mari Sano**
Appendix B
A List of the Topics Used in the Small Group Discussion

1. What do you think of your university? Do you like it or not?
2. What do you think of English classes in the university compared with those in senior high school? Which do you like better?
3. Should we study hard at college?
4. Are you “for” or “against” school uniforms?
5. Do we have to go abroad to improve English?
6. Should children take care of aging parents?
7. Do students need money from their parents?
8. Should women stay home?
9. What do you think of international marriage? Are you “for” or “against” it?
10. What do you think of group discussion? Do you like it or not?
BOOK REVIEWS


This collection of the writings of Joshua Fishman covers approximately two decades. Fishman is to the sociology of language what James Brown is to soul music: the godfather, the one who defined an area of activity and set the standards by which others will be measured. More than just a sociologist, Fishman is a scholar in the traditional meaning of the term, possessed of a breadth of interests that ranges across centuries and continents and civilizations. The sweep of his vision and the depth of his analyses reveal him to be someone who may rightfully be called a master in his field.

Inasmuch as his field is language, EFL professionals may properly hope to gain some insight and direction from Language and Ethnicity. In this respect, Fishman does not disappoint, yet what can be gleaned from his writings does not necessarily agree with how TEFL is often conducted: Fishman’s writings suggest that the practice of TEFL has been impoverished by its relative lack of concern with social factors in second language acquisition.

Fishman takes as his professional mission the achievement of a closer connection between the fields of sociolinguistics and the sociology of knowledge. His own values are pluralistic and supportive of minority ethnolinguistic goals. Where others have seen ethnicity as a divisive, disruptive force in the development of modern societies, Fishman views ethnicity as a highly desirable, perhaps even necessary, aspect of life which gives meaning to human existence. His work is inspiring in that it demonstrates that scientific concerns and social concerns can be combined.

Included in the volume are papers dealing with language
REVIEWS

maintenance, language planning, language spread, diglossia, and bilingual education: all standard topics in sociolinguistics and the sociology of language. Fishman's special contribution is in the areas of ethnicity and nationalism, and the role of language therein. His analysis weaves together a mixture of history, political science, sociology, and sociolinguistics. (American readers will be particularly interested in his treatment of the "rise and fall of the 'ethnic revival' in the U.S.A.") The volume contains countless thought-provoking insights for the EFL professional interested in the role of language in life on a broader scale (there is nothing in the way of micro-analysis of behavior). But nowhere does Fishman speak more convincingly to those connected with TEFL in Japan than in a paper entitled "Language and Ethnicity," first published in 1977.

To be sure, the concept of culture is now found in virtually every EFL program in one form or another, yet the culture of the students themselves and its influence on instruction is given comparatively little attention (for an exception, see Coleman, 1991). Fishman's analysis shows that the concepts of ethnicity and ethnic identity should occupy a central place in our understanding of EFL students' educational experience. In seeking to explicate the central core of ethnicity, Fishman uses the term "paternity," which refers here to

the recognition of putative biological origins and, therefore . . . the hereditary or descent-related "blood," "bones," "essence," "mentality," "genius," "sensitivity," "proclivity" derived from the original putative ancestors of a collectivity and passed on from generation to generation in a bio-kinship sense. "Outside" observers may quibble as to whether the assumed bio-kinship of ethnicity is real, mythical (i.e., mixture of history and elaborate legend) or fictive, but "inside" participants often react to this dimension as a mystery of transcendental proportions. (p. 25)

In Japan, where we find the notion that those who are not racially Japanese can never be true Japanese, that is, the belief that race and ethnicity are essentially one, Fishman's explication rings true indeed.
Many foreign EFL instructors in Japan comment on the bewildering difficulty experienced by some learners in acquiring English. Fishman offers an explanation of this type of phenomenon, not in linguistic terms, but in terms of cross-cultural communication barriers based on ethnic boundaries:

Although communication may be a simple and effortless matter under conditions of quiescent ethnicity, it may be experienced as a palpable, physical difficulty, as an effort and as a burden, when ethnicity is mobilized and manipulated. Inter-ethnic communication under the latter circumstances is often reported to be painful, to be revolting, to be physically obnoxious or unnatural, rather than merely to be difficult. Bridging the unbridgeable and crossing putatively natural discontinuities is obviously more difficult than one would imagine on the basis of “linguistic difference.” (p. 27, emphasis added).

This observation suggests that there cannot be a real solution to this type of problem in teaching English in Japan until ethnicity’s role in TEFL is addressed. The status of culture in TEFL has to be seen not as that of mere complement or addition, but as the foundation element.

Attitudes toward English expressed by Japanese learners also receive frequent comment. That Japanese youth are in the midst of a “love affair” with American culture and that English is the most useful language for business as well as for travel outside Japan are well known, yet the underlying basis of the motivation to acquire English seems to fall short of what many foreign EFL instructors in Japan would like to see. Fishman’s view of patrimony as one of the fundamental aspects of ethnicity offers a bit of clarification:

Inter-ethnic communication often raises questions of propriety, decency, of loyalty, of “crossing-over.” Faithfulness to patrimony is often viewed as being opposed to frequent inter-ethnic communication . . . since “true sons and daughters” do not “cross-over.” (p. 29)

The problems faced by Japanese returnees fall into place at the same time:
REVIEWS

Similarly, intra-group communications that reveal linguistic traces of inter-ethnic communication are similarly liable to criticism for lack of purity, for inauthenticity, for the moral and ethical lapses that such traces are taken to betray. (p. 29)

It is difficult to believe that Fishman is not writing specifically about Japan, so telling is his description of the relationship between ethnicity and communicating with foreigners. It is equally difficult to believe that the practice of TEFL in Japan can afford to relegate ethnicity to an insignificant or even nonexistent role.

None of the topics mentioned above are new to English teachers in Japan, of course, but the fact that Fishman's portrait, perhaps the most penetrating of any, is a sociological description ought to call into question the wisdom of treating TEFL as if it were simply a "language" enterprise (for a suggestion that this is related to the fact that so many EFL instructors themselves have backgrounds in literature or linguistics, see Krasnick, 1985). From Fishman's work, we begin to understand what it really means to say that language is part of culture, not the other way around; that social factors are not merely part of the setting of TEFL—they are the setting.

Fishman's remarks are equally enlightening in the case of the much discussed new internationalism in Japan. Here, too, the concept of ethnicity is central. Not only can the diffidence with which some Japanese learners approach English be attributed in part to a feeling of alienness, but such insularity is often said to be linked to ethnocentrism. Fishman's comment is that ethnicity itself, taken to a certain point, can give rise to ethnocentrism and racism (pp. 17-20). As an antidote to this, he offers "cross-ethnic knowledge and experience," which implies a possible role for TEFL. Fishman envisions what he calls "postmodern ethnicity" as a viable way for ethnicity to continue to play a valuable part in post-industrial society—"the stance of simultaneously transcending ethnicity as a complete, self-contained system, but of retaining it as a selectively preferred, evolving participatory system" (p. 18). The character of Japanese ethnic-
ity itself, then, may have much to do with the new Japanese internationalism, and hence with learners’ attitudes toward the native languages of other peoples.

If Fishman is correct in all of this, ethnicity should have a place on our TEFL research agenda. Such research might begin by examining the ways that ethnicity is presented in teaching materials currently in use. It is no exaggeration to say that ESL/EFL textbooks have not, as a rule, dealt with the issue of ethnicity in a conscious, intentional way. The same must be said of the view of language that finds expression in such textbooks. What, after all, is the real value of changing textbook characters’ names to Japanese names, or showing the characters explaining American holidays or ancient Japanese customs to each other? Such approaches may satisfy some aspect of learners’ curiosity about the foreign culture, and may even serve to lessen slightly some learners’ feelings of alienation, but it seems highly unlikely that the deep meanings that ethnicity carries for the individual, described so clearly by Fishman, will be addressed, not to say dealt with, in any significant way. Indeed, it is just as likely that a superficial approach to culture and ethnicity will serve to trivialize the challenge involved in overcoming the forces of ethnicity which are mobilized in studying a foreign language.

If ethnicity does have the significance attributed to it by Fishman, perhaps we should take a page from the sociologists’ book and begin to concern ourselves more seriously with culture in general and with ethnicity in particular. Language and Ethnicity does not seek to specify what form this should take, but the conclusion that it needs to be done is inescapable.

Reviewed by Harry Krasnick, Canada-Indonesia Predeparture Program, Yogyakarta, Indonesia

References

Discourse Analysis for Language Teachers
Michael McCarthy

This book begins by answering the question 'What is discourse analysis?' and examines how discourse analysts approach spoken and written language. Different models of analysis are outlined and evaluated in terms of their usefulness to language teachers. This is followed by chapters on discourse-oriented approaches to grammar, vocabulary and phonology. The final section of the book looks at spoken and written language in the light of native-speaker and learner data and considers examples of teaching approaches based on the insights of discourse analysis.

Discourse Analysis for Language Teachers has a very practical orientation, and the text is interspersed with reader activities with guidance on appropriate responses at the end of the book. Each chapter contains a further reading section and there is a comprehensive list of references at the end of the book.

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None of the recent books on second language research has addressed the problem of how a beginner can design and carry out a research project. Seliger and Shohamy have written a how-to book, but they have done much more than that. They offer theory integrated with practice "for graduate and undergraduate students in courses in research methods and designs."

While this book is intended to guide the student through the research process, the authors state clearly that they "have not provided recipes for carrying out research." The book is not about statistics, either. The book aims to teach principles. It does this, but it is also extremely concrete. Nine pages of text tell where and how to get information for the literature review, including computer searches and the underground press. Two more pages list the major journals in this and related fields. It is this kind of attention to practical concerns as well as theory that makes the book so useful for students, or for anyone else who would like to know how to do research.

The book differs from others in its focus on the preparatory stages of research. The authors state: "It has been our experience both as active researchers in second language and as members of thesis and dissertation committees, that the first stages of exploring the ideas for research and developing the structure of the actual study are, without doubt, the most important." Thus Chapter 3, for example, begins with an introduction linking the principles set out in Chapter 2 with the upcoming section, "Where do research questions come from?" Following this is a detailed one-page diagram showing the components of the preparatory phases and how they are related. Then each phase is dealt with in a separate section: Phase 1: The general question; Phase 2: Focusing the question; Phase 3: Deciding on an objective or purpose; Phase 4: Formulating the research
plan or the hypothesis. As one who has wandered lost and alone through this particular grove of academe, I consider this emphasis on the early stages extremely valuable.

There are ten chapters. The first discusses what research is; the second gives a research paradigm with four parameters for research approaches, objectives, context, data, and data collection. Chapter 3 discusses research questions, while Chapter 4 presents the literature review. Research planning and types of research, data, variables, and validity appear in Chapter 5. There are two chapters on research design. Chapter 6 presents qualitative and descriptive research. Chapter 7 is devoted to experimental research. Chapter 8 covers data and data collection, and Chapter 9 covers data analysis. Chapter 10 is on interpreting and writing up the results.

Each chapter has an introductory section and a summary, from two to seven activities, and a list of references. Most of the references are papers which exemplify research types, methods, and/or principles.

The authors say that research and the organization of their book are both cyclical. Concepts introduced and defined at one stage are reintroduced at relevant points throughout the text. This helps the reader understand what the concrete applications of these concepts are, and how they affect specific cases. The many examples, both from published and invented research, also demonstrate this. Research types, methods, data, and the differing uses and problems of each are compared, enabling the reader to determine which are most suitable for his/her own interests. It is possible to select a type of research and trace it through its various steps by using the index, which is excellent. To give an example, the main entry for descriptive research is followed by listings for comparison with qualitative research, data analysis, data collection, examples, function, procedures, and uses.

The only questionable point about this book is the mention in several places of the need to follow “current
theories.” For example, “in order to measure the variable language proficiency,” the researcher must ask, “in accordance with current theories about language proficiency or language knowledge, what does a proficient language learner know?” A list of communicative competences follows. It continues, “In the 1960s such behaviors may have included aspects such as the use of accurate structures and vocabulary, and native-like pronunciation, aspects which are likely to get less attention nowadays.” Such advice ignores two points. Old theories can be very tenacious: these 1960s criteria are being re-examined. Furthermore, there are times when new theories must be developed, as the authors themselves point out. A student/researcher should be aware of current theories, but should not be limited by them.

In addition to Second Language Research Methods, the beginning researcher will still need a statistics book (15 are listed) and perhaps a guide to writing up research. But for an understanding of the integration of theory and practice, this book is unique. It is well-organized and clearly written, and will probably become the standard textbook for research design in this field.

Reviewed by Sandra S. Ishikawa
The RELC Journal: A Journal of Language Teaching and Research in Southeast Asia is one of the professional publications of the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization (SEAMEO) Regional Language Centre (RELC) which is located in Singapore. The main purpose of the journal is to disseminate information and ideas on theories, research, methods and materials related to language learning and teaching. Articles covering a wide range of topics in applied linguistics appear in its pages semiannually in June and December. Special features include information on current research projects in Southeast Asia, book reviews and review articles on topics related to language teaching. In its thirteen years of publication, the journal has reached a wide audience in eighty countries and has been rated as one of the leading journals in applied linguistics throughout the world. Scholars of recognized stature have used it as a means of presenting their findings and obtaining feedback on important issues in language and linguistics.

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This book is primarily of interest to the reader based in, or likely to return to, the United States and interested in the specific problems encountered there by administrators and educators actively involved in bilingual education. Relatively few schools in Japan, other than expensive private institutions catering to the children of prosperous expatriates, have anything resembling bilingual educational programs, and very few public schools welcome non-Japanese children. However, Language Distribution Issues in Bilingual Schooling, because of the contrast it affords, may be of interest to many secondary teachers in Japan, a country in which "returnee" children are put in a separate and distinct category as exotic, disturbingly detribalized creatures.

The list of contributors includes such respected authorities as Rodolfo Jacobson, Judith Walker de Felix, Robert D. Milk, Christian Faltis, and Eugene E. Garcia, writing on such diverse aspect of the issue of bilingualism as "Interactive Decision Making and Code-Switching in Beginning Foreign Language Teaching." It is impossible for a single review to address all the issue raised, but all the contributions are of high quality and merit detailed consideration, except where a reasoned argument deteriorates into shrill polemic. The quality of the writing is uneven; all too much of the material written on bilingualism reads as though it had been composed by a computer rather than by a human being.

The section by Gerald S. Giauque and Christopher M. Ely, on "Code-Switching in Beginning Foreign Language Teaching," is of special interest to readers in Japan. The purpose of using code-switching (CS) is to enable teachers to conduct their classes largely in the target language even at the earliest stages of the learning process, thus addressing a problem familiar to all teachers of languages: the tension
inevitably existing between the desire of the teacher to use the target language as much as possible, and the desire of the student to understand as much as possible of what is being taught. Additionally, the intent of code-switching is to motivate students to use as much of the target language as they can as soon as it is practically possible.

The basic principle of code-switching in teaching foreign languages is for the teacher to speak the target language using many cognate words and to rely on CS (i.e., code-switches into the students' mother-tongue) to communicate those words which are not cognates in the language being taught. As a result, students learn that it is possible to understand a great deal of the target language at a very early stage. They are thus taught from the outset to listen for cognate words; the teacher's use of the mother-tongue when cognates do not exist in the target language provides additional contextual clues for understanding. The best of both worlds is supposedly achieved: students comprehend a large amount while, at the same time, the teacher uses the students' mother-tongue sparingly.

Giauque and Ely describe the use of CS in teaching French to American university students, though it is debatable whether CS would be as successful in the Japanese context, even were one to ignore the issue of class size, unless one were to depend upon katakana loanwords as cognates. Despite the absence of the genuine cognates which exist between such languages as English and French or between German and Dutch, however, the teacher's use of CS in a Japanese teaching situation might make it relatively easy for the students themselves to begin using CS from the earliest stages. In the CS procedure the students learn a little language at a time as they try to use the target language, starting from the first day. Since total use of the language being studied is impossible for beginning students, the only way to achieve actual and "full" communication in class is by code-switching.
"Language Distribution Issues in Bilingual Schooling" contains much that the researcher will find of interest. Rodolfo Jacobson proposes a basic typology of bilingual methodology in his study on the allocation of two languages as a key feature of a bilingual methodology. The categories and subcategories suggested allow Jacobson to identify ten options from which bilingual or ESL teachers can select when teaching students whose first language differs from that of the school.

J. David Ramirez and Barbara Merino, in "Classroom Talk in English Immersion, Early-Exit and Late-Exit Transitional Bilingual Education Programs," report on observations conducted throughout the United States in 103 first- and second-grade bilingual and immersion classrooms. Working from the premise that little is known about how instructional programs designed for "Limited English Proficient" (LEP) students actually function within the classroom, the authors sought the answers to two important questions:

1. How is language used in the classroom for instruction?
2. What are effective teaching behaviours in second language programs?

The authors also consider the various ways researchers have investigated language use patterns and effective teaching behaviours, giving examples of process, process/context, process/product, and process/process research designs.

Eugene Garcia takes a different approach to classroom interaction research in that he focuses exclusively on successful classroom performance as a means to explore what makes the discourse occurring in these classrooms work so well. Garcia stresses the point that a primary issue in the language classroom is, simply, understanding instructional interaction. Bilingual education is often considered a "failure"; a judgment which ignores the very real successes achieved by a significant minority of students, not all of whom can be considered well-motivated or gifted.
Raymond Padilla’s article is on the use of bilingual interactive video as a tool for encouraging the student to switch languages and thus gain confidence in his or her own ability to cope with effective bilingualism in the real world with ease. Padilla emphasizes that interactive video systems (IVS) offer a dramatically engaging way to implement concurrent (non-translation) language use as an instructional strategy. An important feature of IVS is that it puts the student in control of the language of instruction, meaning that the learner controls both the language of input and the language of response. The IVS used in Padilla’s study was designed to allow students to select monolingual instruction in L1 or L2 or bilingual instruction. The only switching constraint for the bilingual instruction option was that the students were allowed to switch between languages only at the end of each unit or between lessons, both of which were relatively short in duration. The results of Padilla’s study indicate that students respond favorably to virtually all aspects of bilingual interaction video instruction. Padilla found that students selected roughly equally between L1 and L2 to initiate instruction.

Robert DeVillar examines how computer-assisted instruction (CAI) combined with innovative instructional practices can facilitate talk in English between speakers with differing levels of English language proficiency. His study concerns language use within and between dyads of sixth-grade students in a computer-assisted setting who were engaged in an information gap task, a study readers in Japan will find appreciate in the light of growing interest in CAI learning.

The approach of Language Distribution Issues in Bilingual Schooling, a theoretical rather than an anecdotal work, differs sharply from that adopted in Gail L. Nemetz Robinson’s Crosscultural Understanding, being more readily comparable with John Gibbon’s Code-Mixing and Code Choice: A Hong Kong Case Study. The issues covered represent an excellent cross-section of contemporary informed think-
REVIEWS

ing on a variety of aspects of bilingual education which will be of interest to many outside the field.

Reviewed by William Corr, Himeji Gakuin Women's Junior College

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The last decade has been an exciting one for language planners. A growing recognition by governments of the complexity of many of the social problems which continue to plague multicultural societies throughout the world and, more importantly, the powerful and long-standing linguistic influences on these problems have promoted increased government activity in the spheres of language planning and language education. While often in disagreement with particular government responses to such problems, language teachers have welcomed this general development as a far more attractive alternative to the previous tendency for governments to ignore or refuse to recognize any need for linguistic input to social policy making.

While a great deal of debate has been generated by the increased opportunities for linguists to inform and participate in the formulation of government policy, most scholarly reviews of this work have focused on the North American, European and African contexts. The papers presented in this volume represent an attempt to shift the geographical focus of the debate by introducing and surveying the particular language planning and language education issues in Australia, the South Pacific and Southeast Asia. Although writing about a number of very different societies, the twenty contributors highlight a number of common problems facing government officials, language planners and consultants, and educational administrators. The book is organized around the following questions: What languages should be taught and used? How should language be used and to what ends? Who should be involved in decision making processes relating to language and education? How can language education policies and practices enhance economic development, while maintaining cultural and linguistic diversity?
The book's twenty chapters are divided into four parts. Part One, "An Overview on Language Planning Issues and Change," provides the theoretical framework for the following case studies and a general introduction to the methodological issues involved. The remaining three parts are categorized by region and each consists of a number of individual studies. Each part concludes with a useful annotated bibliography. Part Two, "Language Planning and Use in Australia," consists of four papers concerning Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island contexts, and a chapter on the making of Australia's national language policy. Part Three, "Melanesia and Polynesia," consists of seven chapters focussing on the Solomon Islands, Papua New Guinea, Vanuatu, and the Samoas. Part Four, "Southeast Asia," includes case studies on Malaysia, the Philippines, and Negara Brunei Darussalam, as well as a concluding chapter by the editors.

Like many books of this type, this volume arose out of a conference: the "Language and Identity" panel of the Australian and New Zealand Association for the Advancement of Science (ANZAAS) Conference held at James Cook University, Townsville (northern Australia), in August 1987. Only four papers were solicited from outside the conference. In revising the book for publication, the editors have aimed at an audience of researchers, language planners and educational administrators, postgraduate students, and advanced undergraduates studying educational policy and sociolinguistics. The editors also hope, with good reason I might add, that it may be of interest to readers with a more general interest in the politics, languages and cultures of the regions under study.

In his introduction to the book Robert Kaplan begins by reviewing the development of our thinking about language planning. Despite a number of conceptual changes over the years, he suggests that language planning can best be considered as:

an attempt by some organized body (most commonly some level of government) to introduce systematic language change for some
more or less clearly articulated purpose (commonly stated in altruistic terms but often not based on altruistic interests). (p. 4)

Despite the current upsurge in government interest, the situation confronting contemporary language planners in the region is complex and confusing. Perhaps the most significant feature of this book is its contribution to our understanding of the enormous damage inflicted by the largely ad hoc and misguided policies of the past, the effects of which have become deeply ingrained in the societies under study. Time and time again throughout the book we are presented with evidence of "language planning" which has sought either to marginalize indigenous or migrant languages from political, social and cultural domains; to support the notion of the identity between the nation and some single language, most notably English but sometimes also the indigenous language of the most powerful social group; or more recently, to minimize the effectiveness of language dissemination by underfunding language teaching operations.

Unfortunately, the extraordinarily sensitive task of formulating policies which take into account not only the immediate linguistic and inter-ethnic questions of "whose language" and "for whom," "by whom," and "by what," but also larger issues of self-determination, regional identity, class structures, and post-colonial politics (see: Luke, McHoul, & Mey, Chapter Two) is not the only obstacle to healthy language development in these multi-cultural societies. Even where policies have been developed, problems remain. For new policies to enjoy long term success within the conditions which exist at present, they must be monitored closely and altered where necessary. This, we are told, is only rarely done. Worse still, we learn that in Melanesia and Polynesia and, until very recently, Australia, language planning agencies have not even been established. Language planning issues are still left to Departments of Education, individuals from universities, missionary and other pressure groups interested in language issues. Sadly, the general picture which emerges from this book is that the absence
REVIEWS

of formal language planning bodies and the often idiosyncratic nature of planning devices are still major forces behind language change in a given region.

This is an important book not only for the issues it raises and the insights it provides into the problems confronted by a diverse range of societies largely ignored by mainstream education research, but also because of the rigor with which the contributors have undertaken their research. Our understanding of these issues is further enhanced by the editors' decision to include papers written from a variety of perspectives—from that of conventional empirically-based field research to more critical studies which question the most basic premises from which much empirically-based language planning now begins. On a more practical level the annotated bibliographies provide very useful suggestions for further reading, while the editors' concluding chapter points us in the direction of particular theoretical areas in need of rethinking.

Not surprisingly there are a few points which could be improved. No reasons are provided for not including chapters on either New Zealand or Indonesia, despite the very fluid language situations in both countries. In his study of the Samoas, Baldauf quotes figures from a 1973 survey (p. 262) to support his argument that "Samoan is still the dominant language in the Islands." The first bibliography would have been even more useful if subtitles had been used to categorize the items thematically.

However, these are minor points. This book is a very important contribution to the growing literature on language planning. I recommend it to anyone with an interest in developments in the region.

Reviewed by Antony Cominos, Sannohe Board of Education.
Anthony S. Mollica
Editor

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