



NEWSLETTER

KANSAI ASSOCIATION OF LANGUAGE TEACHERS

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An Introduction to Community Language Learning

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[At the August 1976 Japan TEFL Convention, Father Paul La Forge of Nanzan University in Nagoya gave a presentation on Community Language Learning (CLL). The format of the presentation was a short demonstration of CLL in practice with the audience as students along with an explanation by Father La Forge. Then the audience broke up into small groups to discuss the presentation and formulate questions, after which the audience reconvened for Fr. La Forge to answer the questions. Due to a lack of time, however, all the questions could not be answered; therefore Fr. La Forge has answered, in writing, 15 of what he considers to be the most pertinent questions. They appear on page 3 of this newsletter.]

Community Language Learning has been called one of the new trends for applied linguistics and foreign language teaching in the United States (Diller, 1975). The method originated with C. A. Curran, who was experimenting with psychological and social affects on foreign language learning as far back as 1961. La Forge stated that Curran observed that the poorer the language ability, in other words the greater the need to receive help from an expert in the foreign language, the greater the resistance to receive such help. In order to reduce this initial hostility-anxiety conflict, the expert was removed from the teacher role. Instead the expert played the role of counselor, or consultant, to the group. The distinction between the roles of counselor and teacher is that, with the expert as counselor, the students controlled the group activity, and the counselor gave help only when asked. As La Forge has stated, "The presupposition is that people belonging to such a group are motivated to acquire a second language (La Forge, 1971)."

La Forge sees the learning process which takes place in this group situation as a double experience: the "direct experience," an actual involvement with the group; and the "reflex experience." The reflex experience consists of two parts: first, a period of silence where each member thinks 'about the previous direct experience; and second, a group session, where the group reflects on its experience as a group. Thus, a period of silence, often seen as unproductive, wasted time, becomes an integral part of the learning experience.

Since coming to Japan, Fr. La Forge has been adapting CLL to the Japanese situation. As anyone who has taught in Japan knows, students at the university level and above have "learned" in high school approximately 5,000 words and all the essential grammar patterns (as well as some we might consider nonessential), yet for the most part the students can hardly produce even the most simple sentences when in a real-life situation. There are an intricate number of factors, too many to go into, but one large sociological factor is the traditional dominance of the teacher in the Japanese

social hierarchy, which almost precludes the possibility of the student conversing with the teacher in any but the most abject terms.

foreign language classroom. La Forge, then, seem to be trying to reduce the anxiety-hostility conflict by making use of what he calls "Japanese cultural learning mechanisms." (see pp. 3-4 of his newsletter) Intrinsic aspects of Japanese culture, such as "The Age Hierarchy," "The Club-Gasshuku," "The Face-to-Face Group," "The Interview," etc., are utilized both in group structure and subject matter for the direct experience. For example, the direct experience which La Forge chose for his presentation at the 1976 Japan TEFL Convention was the self-introduction, followed by the period of silence for reflection and group discussion of the experience. Fr. La Forge has spoken of how his female students at Nanzan Junior College love working on the kamishibai (picture story). La Forge mentions delegating responsibility to the older members in the group as a solution to the hierarchical problem. And through the reflex experience, the students keep themselves aware of their performance, enabling them to see their own progress in overcoming their shyness (La Forge. 1973).

Some subjective thoughts: La Forge himself has mentioned the linguistic/psychological/bilingual/counseling abilities necessary to use the CLL method. The lack of such a composite background by the average language teacher may prevent this method from gaining widespread acceptance. There is also a question as to whether a lack of all the necessary qualifications would nullify the effectiveness of CLL.

Another question that can be brought up is whether Japanese students do, in fact, have an "immense cognitive reservoir of English knowledge." Certainly they have been exposed to a great deal, and most have a certain amount of competence, but whether the students really learned the elements they were initially exposed to is a topic of debate by teachers currently *teaching adults in Japan*. And if this immense cognitive knowledge indeed exists, can it be completely brought out, dredged up from the reservoir, as it were, by dealing exclusively with affective factors in the classroom?

On the other hand, perhaps in the usual classroom there is too much emphasis placed on the linguistic rather than the social aspect of language learning. What the teacher may attribute to lack of motivation in speaking English could actually be attributed to a lack of knowledge of discussion techniques employed in the English-speaking countries. A deeper understanding of the socio-psychological differences which exist between countries may lead to a clearer knowledge of whether a social orientation or a linguistic orientation, or what balance between the two, will be most effective in the classroom.

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Japanese Cultural Learning Mechanisms
and Community Language Learning

Father Faul G. La Forge

The purpose of this talk is to explain cultural learning mechanisms and CLL.

explain: I am using this word in a slightly different sense. I will explain not by talking for one hour and a half, but by giving an experience and a chance to reflect upon the experience.

The experience is self-introduction. Self-introduction is a Japanese cultural learning mechanism.

Cultural Learning Mechanisms are group learning experiences which are bounded by a psychological contract.

Contract: A human agreement to engage in some form of learning activity for the purpose of achieving some goal. (The social contract is a Japanese cultural mechanism.) Since the contract is a human agreement, there are social dimensions to the contract. (In its application to education - Dore, 1965)

- vertical: 1. Primary - between the teacher and the whole group.
2. Secondary - between the teacher and each individual in the class.

horizontal: among the students themselves.

Community Language Learning is a student-centered language learning contract which is enacted in supportive group experience and reflection.

A student-centered contract: The teacher-student relationship is different. According to Curran (1972), there exists a distance between the learner and the knower called "Learner Space." By free agreement, the student makes his space available to the teacher, but only so that he, the student, can grow into that space. A student-centered contract limits the learner space so that the function of the teacher is not impaired. The students bring discipline into the learning experience.

The contract is enacted in supportive group experience: Hirschmeier and Yui (1975) have proposed a social value model with four dimensions. They used this model to analyze the history of Japanese business from 1600 to 1973. The four dimensions are horizontal, vertical, in depth (time continuity), and the "ethics of functional role expectation." The fourth aspect is the pressure exerted by Japanese society on the indi-

vidual to conform to the group (CLL group), because as the learners be in to grow and fill up the learner space, they grow according to the Japanese cultural model. Learning experiences characteristic of Japanese society can be classified on the dimensions of the value model:

- vertical: primary: (1) The Age Hierarchy. This forms the social structure for the group (Nakane 1970)
- (2) The club-gasshuku
- secondary: (3) The Face-to-face group (from Judo)
- (4) The Interview (Mensetsu)
- (5) Self-Introduction
- (6) The picture story (Kamishibai)

The contract is enacted in supportive group reflection: Reflection (itself a Japanese cultural mechanism) is most important because it centers and unifies the group over a period of time. The attention of the group is fixed on the goal. The learning process develops around Japanese values.

A language learning contract: Language learning is a growth process from childhood to adulthood. There are five stages of growth which reflect the psychological experience of the student as he advances:

- I. Embryonic Stage, II. Self-Assertion Stage, III. Independent Stage, IV. Reversal Stage, V. Adult Stage.

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FIFTEEN QUESTIONS ABOUT COMMUNITY LANGUAGE LEARNING

Paul G. La Forge

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First of all, I want to express my appreciation to the members of the Kansai Association of Language Teachers for two and a half hours of involvement with CLL. I found the question session especially challenging because the content of the questions had a relationship to three areas: Psychology, Linguistics, and Language Teaching. I found myself hopping back and forth into each of these areas. I have made not an attempt to classify the questions, but will provide an answer as best I can to each. The answers may not be entirely satisfactory, but I am sure they will provide food for thought and further discussion. If they lead to an improvement in classroom procedures and effective teaching, so much the better. To date, September 2, 1976, there were fifteen questions handed in, so here goes:

1. What in fact does the "Community" in Community Language Learning refer to? Does it mean only the assembled group or does it imply a larger context?

One of the results of the conference was a new understanding of the term "Community." On Friday night in a private discussion with Danny Steinberg, the same difficulty was brought up. Curran, a Roman Catholic priest, derived CLL from his psychology which is based on Catholic philosophy and theology. Consequently, he uses terms with a theological meaning. This will turn people off, as Stevick mentioned in his review of Curran in Language Learning, vol. 23 (December 1973). Curran uses the term community to express a relationship to the beyond. Whenever a group of people get together, they express a meaning beyond their immediate involvement. This is my own understanding of the term. In order to exemplify this, I appealed to my own research methodology and how it is conditioned by the contract in my own CLL classes. (This is not part of CLL as other people would use it.) I explained to the students how our involvement here in this classroom at Nanzan would affect English education in Japan. This was an experimental situation. However, since the modern student is sensitive to being used, I had to put some limits on the experimental procedures. First, I was interested in developing principles, not in using individuals as examples. Sometimes I would have to appeal to individual examples, but in that case, condition two, I would reveal not names. Condition three: we would have guests in the classroom from time to time. However, no pure observer would be allowed. The guests have to participate in the conversations and contribute something to the class activities. The effect on the students was to change the attitude toward the class: "We are doing something important here;" "I am a scientist;" "Everybody in this class is a scientist." The experimental dimension of the class is something beyond the immediate moment of the class activity. It appeals to the student to look beyond the four walls to the world of English education. This is another dimension of CLL learning besides the three (two vertical and one horizontal) which I passed out on the two-page handout. So I have to revise my thinking about the meaning of "community" as a result of the conference. I am aware that I have to write a paper on research methodology with CLL. I am now aware that I will have to do some exploration with the students on the meaning of community.

2. Question 2 has two parts:

- A. Is the contract consciously established and/or oriented at the outset?
- B. Do group goals change?

A. The conditions of the contract should be as clearly explained as possible to the students and they should be allowed to quit the course if they do not agree. With an elective course, this is an easy task. With a required course, the student should be asked why he is in school. The clear and honest approach by the teacher is the best way to appeal to the motivation of the students. I usually sit down before the course and list all the items of major and minor importance that I can think of. I give them a sample of the large group, small group, and conversation in pairs. As much of the type of experience as possible, along with the marking system, the number of papers and reports, "etc." - all this should be explained within the context of the contract as the basis of learning. Two questions are necessary in the first reflection period: 1) What did you think of the class activity? 2) Do you think you can learn in this way? You will probably have trouble in the first class, but clear the air. I usually have trouble until I announce that there will be no examinations. The students usually cheer.

B. Do group goals change? This is a very important question which I had no time to treat of in more detail. There are five kinds of goals to a contract group, according to Egan. This is more thoroughly explained in "CLL: The Japanese Case." this is an article in the book Language in Japanese Society: Current Issues in Sociolinguistics, by Fred C. C. Peng. (It is available in Japan--Tokyo University Press, 1975. See the bibliography in the handout, p. 4.) I rely heavily on authorities like Egan. However, Egan's books have already received favorable reviews in the handbook for T-Group trainers. So instead of being critical, I am interested in being creative. Leave the criticism to others. You will find a detailed explanation of the dynamics of the Japanese Gasshuku in terms of modern group dynamics in the article above

3. What is the relationship between the reflection period and the Japanese "hanseikai"? The latter seems self-critical and negatively oriented. Does the reflection period reflect that bias?

I have used the term "reflection period" here in Japan because it fits into the Japanese cultural pattern. In American situations, I would use the term "evaluation period." I do render "reflection period" into Japanese by the term "hanseikai." Even though the Japanese version is somewhat negative, the teacher can prevent it from becoming so by his reaction to the student reports. For instance, if many students report difficulties with anxiety or silence, the teacher can urge a common attack on the two problems as a class project. Oftentimes, the mere sharing of the anxiety is enough to dissipate its effects. I have written a special article on the reflection period for The English Language Teaching Journal. It was accepted in the spring of 1976, but there is a two year publication lag for that journal. The reports of Japanese students tend to follow the following five-stage pattern: 1) Report of performance: what the student did during the experience; 2) Evaluation of performance: was it good or bad from the viewpoint of the goal, progress in English; 3) Resolution for future performance: "Next time I have to try harder;" 4) Comment on the group performance: these are great. I usually keep my temper capped during the experience period. When a student mentions a messy situation which occurred during the experience period, I usually take off and blow my stack at the class. I have one ally (usually several students bring

up the same event) and the focus of my anger is not the individual, but the whole community. 5) Suggestions for modifications in the class activities. These can be valuable. The students themselves were the original source of the cultural learning mechanisms, especially the interview and the picture story. The teacher has to be sensitive enough to listen carefully to the suggestions of the students.

4. What precisely is done after the three elements (silence, self-introductions, reflection) are introduced? What other experiences are part of classroom work?

Experience and reflection are the main components of CLL. The silence will characterize different types of group experience, especially those characterized by participation of the teacher. I have suggested various types of small group experiences on the two-page handout--such as the Picture story. Small group reading sessions can also be set up. Large group activities can also be set up in the classroom. An example is a ten-minute English conversation period. A class of forty can be divided into groups of ten students. The teacher and one group of ten can be seated in a circle of chairs in the middle of the classroom. The teacher simply announces the time and waits for the response of the students. The teacher should not initiate the conversation, ask any questions, or stimulate conversation or force the students to respond by calling on them. If the students ask, then the teacher can freely answer and respond, but let the students carry the conversation. If the whole time passes in silence, let the group go once the time limit is up. Don't scold. Call the next group in and explain that those in waiting should listen to the conversation, because listening is also important in a conversation. Do this with four groups and forty minutes have passed. Then call for the reflection period. I usually bring order back to the chaotic situation of my classroom (where near riot conditions generally prevail) by asking the students to rearrange the classroom. The change in the physical makeup of the room brings home a different kind of learning situation such as the reflection period. The students will invariably refer to the silence because it touches their performance and motivation in learning English. Silence in the language learning situation is the subject of a paper in preparation.

5. How do you handle mistakes produced by the activities and experiences?

If I make the mistake, then I tell the students: "I'm sorry, I made a mistake." I think the question refers to the repeated grammatical mistakes which the students make during the course of their activities. I do very little correcting in the beginning. After a perfectly disastrous large group experience, as was outlined above in question 4, I usually shift to small group activities and attempt to establish confidence in speaking. The students love the small group activity and demand it class after class after class. I let them have their rope, but pull it in a little bit during the reflection periods. This happens when the students begin to criticize their own performance: nobody corrects our mistakes, we repeat the same mistakes over and over, it is difficult to learn new expressions, a lot of Japanese is used. The conviction finally dawns on the student that the connection with the teacher is necessary for progress in English. Then the teacher can shift back to the large group activity with a whole new spirit in the class. At that point

the teacher can correct the mistakes of the students publicly, without interrupting the flow of the conversation.

6. How does your course fit into the general curriculum of the school? Is there cooperation among staff members to create a unified and harmonious English program?

There is an attempt to give the Nanzan Junior College student (female) the best that can be given under the circumstances of English education in Nagoya. There are two departments at Nanzan Junior College: the English Department and the Department of Human Relations. For the students of the Human Relations Department, who are not English majors and are less motivated to master English, foreign language was part of a two-credit requirement among the general education courses.⁷ worked out much of my initial research in this situation--nonmotivated students. The English requirement has been dropped and the number of applicants to a nonrequired English course has dropped by about a third. Because of an increase in my teaching load in other areas, these English courses have been dropped.

When I first began to teach at Nansan Junior College in April, 1973, I had several courses in the regular oral English program of the English Department--about 40 students per class. The CLL learning process was well received and moved forward at a rapid pace. The staff members grasped the importance of my work with CLL and encouraged my writing and publication work. There was no interference from the administration at any point. When my work load continued to increase, I had to give up the regular oral English courses. The English Department begged me to continue with at least one course for advanced students. So as of April 1976, I have two courses in advanced oral English which, with the full approval and backing of the English Department, are billed as seminars in Community Language Learning.

7. How successful has this approach been?

How do you measure success? Well, when I agreed to take on the advanced oral English class (1 credit) as outlined in question 6, the English Department took a poll to see if the students were interested. Since there were 68 applicants, I suggested splitting the number in half with 34 students in both courses. Well, when April came around about fifty students showed up for both classes. So how do you measure success. The kids want the learning activities which are presented in the CLL class.

Besides, others have tried out my exercises and they seem to work. Sean Sweeney of the International Institute of Training and Studies, Fuji-nomiya, tried them out for six months last year. In December 1975, he applied to the TESOL organization to speak at their convention in March 1976. They approved his proposal, so Sean's presentation was very well received in New York. Others are reporting similar results.

8. How do you deal with people with different backgrounds or with the hierarchical problem you find in Japanese society?

The hierarchical problem can be solved by delegating responsibility to the older members for the learning of the whole group. This is further explained in the club-gasshuku activity--see question 2B. Also, watch for the Fall issue of Cross Currents: LIOJ Bulletin. There will be an article of mine there.

As for people of different backgrounds, the more different the better. The CLL discussion is enriched if the people are of different backgrounds.

Differences of ability are another problem. I believe that dividing people into different levels of ability by testing is defeating in the Japanese case. I feel that it is much more effective to treat the Japanese community as a single unit and encourage mutual help. The Japanese respond to this kind of appeal because it has been the key to their survival as a nation. The better ones advance more rapidly because they are forced to take the responsibility for those less advanced. Those less advanced are assisted by this help and encouraged not to fall off the boat.

9. What is your basic focus? Is it group dynamics or is it language learning or is it something else?

The basic focus of CLL is on the cognitive experience of learning. Affective factors will pop up in the process, but they are kept subservient. The reason I stress them is that they have been ignored in the English teaching world. It is also necessary to make English teachers aware that affective factors can help or hinder cognitive learning. I bring up and explain group dynamics in order to help English teachers to deal with groups and with the problems which might crop up during a CLL course. I am beginning to see that English teachers are quite capable of *handling groups and situations which arise in their classroom.*

10. Could you please expand on the statement that language learners have problems similar to what people have who were trying to recover from problems.

This question was answered in my book--Research Profiles with Community Language Learning (see the Reference list on the handout), pp. 31-34. Here in Japan, the problem of anxiety is a good example. I have found it necessary to deal with the problem for a whole semester before the students finally become relaxed as speakers of English. This was the basis of my paper "The Problem of Shyness in Speaking English," Cross Currents: LIOJ Journal (Spring, 1976). The gain in confidence, often mentioned as an effect of CLL activity, is an effect of CLL counseling activity.

11. You are using Japanese learning mechanisms to teach a western language. Do you find any contradictions there?

"Western," "Eastern," "Northern," and "Southern" are directions imposed on reality in order to give us some orientation. Such terms can hinder us from a proper understanding of our task in teaching foreign language. Luckily, CLL is open enough to encompass any kind of foreign language or other learning task within its scope. When applied to the Japanese situation, the Japanese respond within the dictates of their cultural milieu, e.g. as Japanese. Consequently, their social learning ways are adaptable to CLL. Luckily, the Japanese cultural mechanisms, which have been overlooked as valuable forms of learning, are open to a variety of learning tasks, including foreign language. So I fail to see any contradictions. If any appear, the Japanese students usually see them before I do and point them out. Then we work out the contradiction in mutual discussion, which takes place in English.

12. Question 12 has four parts: A. How can you keep classes from drifting into free conversation clubs?

My focus is oral English. As long as the students are progressing in that area, who cares whether the class becomes like a club? After all there is nothing like a pleasant atmosphere to promote learning. At least, I enjoy a pleasant conversation. The reflection period is a fine check on the learning activity. If the experience deviates, the students will mention and correct the situation.

- B. What is necessary in student preparation?

This question troubles me. However, I place the whole responsibility for class preparation on the students. I use no text book in class. However, I praise all the thousands of them on the market and invite the student to please choose. I find that most Japanese students have a fine background in grammar and reading, when they come to my class, we talk together.

- C. What is necessary in class preparation by the teacher?

Presupposing a class in oral English, I would say a wide interest in current events is the best preparation for a teacher. A wide variety of hobbies is helpful. It always pays to see the latest movie playing in town. If you don't like Mr. Donuts, then forget it!

- D. What is necessary in new teacher training?

This is a very important question. I would say, if you are interested in CLL, then don't change the activities you are now engaged in. Just introduce a reflection period and feel your way along from there. Listen carefully to what your students are saying and your effectiveness will improve by itself. Be ready to adopt the suggestions of your students. It may be that you will find different kinds of activities which you like. The students will certainly learn to like them also. Keep tuned to the meetings of the Kansai Association of Language Teachers. Perhaps some kind of workshop can be worked out if enough members are interested.

13. What is the major difference between CLL, and, for example, College ESS group discussions or self-introduction?

ESS discussions and self-introduction are informal ways of learning which motivated college students to practice in order to learn English. CLL is meant for formal learning inside the classroom. As has been pointed out many times, all that the students are doing in the clubhouse is usable inside the classroom. Earlier this summer, I was at an English-speaking workshop with a number of students. I found them engaging in the following English exercise which would adapt wonderfully to the classroom. It is called "Guide Practice." The group is divided up into triads: one person takes the part of a Japanese, who speaks only Japanese; a second person takes the part of a foreigner, who speaks only English; a third person takes the part of an interpreter, who speaks both languages. The task: the Japanese has to guide the foreigner to some famous place in Japan with the help of the interpreter. The Japanese has to answer all the questions of the foreigner whose questions are interpreted. The roles are changed for a new round. This can be done three times in order to give each person practice in the three roles. It can be followed by a reflection period.

14. In the group conversation, Japanese students are not hearing native speaker's English, so will there be a weak point in hearing English among the Japanese students?

I am becoming more convinced that one reason why Japanese are not becoming better at speaking with foreigners is because they do not speak English among themselves. Horizontal learning is very important for the Japanese. They can begin to practice in the controlled situation of the CLL small group. Once they become used to hearing and speaking among themselves, they can understand and speak with foreigners with greater ease. Contact with a foreign teacher will help them better if they are willing to speak among themselves. It is true that some anxiety will always accompany speaking with a native person, but this anxiety is characteristic of conversation itself. My students tell me that what they learn in the CLL class is to handle an English speaking relationship in a variety of situations. This helps them greatly when they meet foreigners outside the classroom.

15. The method seems wonderful in the stage of production, in terms of taking away the fear and some other elements, but how does it work out in acquiring English ability?

I am not sure if I understand this question. It seems to me that production and the acquiring of new abilities are the same thing. Much of our task as English teachers is to handle the affective factors that hinder learning. The Japanese teachers of senior high school have done such a marvelous job of establishing an immense cognitive reservoir of English knowledge that when the affective problems are settled, the cognitive English comes out beautifully. This has been my experience in dealing with Japanese students in Junior College.

To date, September 3, these are all the questions which I have received. Certainly there will be much more fruitful discussion in the future.

NOTICES

Cross Currents, a journal concerned with language teaching and learning, is now offering its most recent issue for sale (148 pages, Y1200, postage included). This issue includes articles written by four KALT members--Gwen Thurston Joy, William Harshbarger, Thomas N. Robb, and Father Paul G. La Forge.

The two feature articles for this issue, on Community Language Learning and the Silent Way, were derived from the TEFL Conference, co-sponsored by KALT last summer.

The journal is now soliciting manuscripts to consider for publication in 1977. Details on submitting articles and subscription information can be obtained by writing to Cross Currents, c/o The Language Institute of Japan, 4-14-1 Shiroyama, Odawara 250.

KALT members may receive a 15% discount on Prentice-Hall publications and a 20% discount on Newbury House publications, if ordered through KALT (this discount is off the Japan retail price). For catalogs, orders, or further information, contact Nancy Nakanishi, c/o Nagoya College of Foreign Languages, 1-7 Miyanishi-cho, Chikusa-ku 464.

BOOK REVIEWS

[Editor's note: As you all know, the market is flooded with English-language texts, some of the best of which are not even available in the usual foreign bookstore sections in Japan. In order to pass the news about good texts which are available, you are invited to send in reviews of books, journals, etc., that you consider to be worthwhile.]

Intimate Relationships: Marriage, Family, and Lifestyles through Literature, edited by Rose M. Somerville, Prentice-Hall, 1975, 404 pages.

Nancy Nakanishi
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Picture the situation--you're teaching literature at the university or the junior college level at an all-women's college, and your class doesn't seem to be interested in the world situation or "good" literature either. You have the choice of trying to expand their horizons, and risk a majority of them tuning out, or you can feed them limited subject matter that they can relate to.

If you find yourself in this situation, Intimate Relationships may be able to provide some material, that, while relevant to the concerns of most people at that age, provides enough food for thought to possibly encourage a little growth as well.

The book is divided into five sections: choosing, parenting, extending, losing, and innovating. The selections are mainly, although not completely, American short stories and excerpts from larger works, and range from two pages to 34. A majority of the writings were written within the last ten years, and most were not written more than 20 years ago, although there are a few selections which are older.

The selections are not light and romantic: they are thought-provoking. Somerville's choices often seem to include conflicts between attitudes of rich and poor, probably at least partly due to the fact that the writings focus on a great number of different ethnic groups in the U.S. In addition, Somerville seems to have chosen excerpts with women who seem concerned with their lifestyles or the position in which society has placed them. The selections are therefore extremely relevant for women today. Some of the more well-known writers included are James Baldwin, Edna Ferber, Sinclair Lewis, Joyce Carol Oates, and John Updike.

The readings are not easy, if for no other reason than the fact that they are literature and they are in the original; however, some selections use rather simple language as a literary device. For example, the selection "Normal Love," by Joyce Carol Oates, depicts a middle-aged housewife whom we follow around the house, and in doing so we see how unfulfilling is feeling her life to be. And at the same time, parts of American culture are shown through Oates' descriptions of the house, the trips through the sections of the supermarket, and the beauty shop gossip.

This book was not designed with ESL students in mind, and therefore would most likely be unsuitable as a textbook; however, in the right situation, it would be of value as a teacher's source book.

Education is the ability- listen to
almost anything without losing your
temper or your self-confidence.

--Robert Frost

Selections for Developing English Language Skills, revised edition, by Wary Finocchiaro and Violet Hock Lavenda, Regents Publishing Company, Inc., 1973, 230 pages.

Charles Edwin Adamson, Jr.
Nagoya College of Foreign Languages

In spite of the unappealing title, this book has great potential as a text for a basic level listening and/or reading comprehension class. We are presently using it as a text for an individualized reading comprehension course for second semester students in an intensive course. This course requires minimal teacher preparation, allows the students to work at their own rates, and--best of all--receives the enthusiastic support of the students.

The book consists of two main sections plus an introduction and word list. Although the authors have titled the main sections "Developing Listening Comprehension" and "Developing Reading Comprehension," the only real difference between the sections is that the reading section has longer passages. The materials within each section are graded, but each lesson is an independent unit which consists of a short passage with six to eight exercises. There is a wide variety of exercises that includes comprehension questions; giving synonyms, antonyms, words from the same family, etc.; substitution, transformation, and manipulation drills; dialog completion; etc. The book ends with a vocabulary list of "words chosen for special study." The list provides the number of the lesson in which the word first appears and a space for the student to write the definition in his/her own words. Although I have been unable to find evidence of any systematic presentation of material, the vocabulary from the list at the back of the book and the various types of exercises are periodically reused.

Now, how did the authors envision the book's use? In the introduction the authors suggest the following: "Listening (Aural) Comprehension with Oral Response," "Listening (Aural) Comprehension with Written Response," "Reading Comprehension (Silent Reading)," and "Dictation." The authors' instructions stress oral production by the student and a large amount of speech by the teacher--reading, modeling, questioning, etc. In fact, the word oral/ly is often in italics in the instructions. The authors also give a twenty item list for the student without a teacher, which contains a 'Sampling of Related Activities for Intensive Practice.' The activities on this list, including oral and written composition, should provide many ideas for the teacher no matter what methodology is being employed.

We are using this book for a two hour a week reading comprehension course which is an elective for the least proficient of our students. They had been scheduled to use Encounters by Pimsleur and Berger, but it proved to be too difficult for them. Selections has been found to be at the exact level needed for this class. The students work at their own pace and after reading each selection, complete the exercises in writing. The exercises are then corrected by the teacher in the classroom while the student waits. The only markings that are used are 'O' for correct, 'X' for incorrect, and 'G' for a grammatical error. The papers are immediately returned to the student who must correct all of the answers before going on to the next lesson. The students have been working at the rate of two to three lessons per hour. The students have been very enthusiastic about this text. Attendance has increased and the students now seem to be well motivated.

If you are having trouble finding a suitable reading text for low proficiency students, this book may be the answer to your problems.

KALT REORGANIZES: OPENS TOKYO OFFICE

Tom Pendergast

Executive Secretary

Early members of KALT may recall our humble, nomadic existence and metaphysical wranglings, including the well-known controversy over our beloved KALT masthead. The "K" of course, posed the problem, to wit: KANSAI or KINKI?, and that was the question. Several of our more delicate members waxed anxious over the likelihood that a KINKI ASSOCIATION OF LANGUAGE TEACHERS might be misinterpreted in certain circles. And so, ignoring assorted hootings and catcalls from the grosser side of the membership, we decided to become the KANSAI ASSOCIATION OF LANGUAGE TEACHERS.

Now, however, we find that interest in our doings has spread well beyond the Kansai, and we have decided to take a more catholic approach. There are at least two aspects of this reorganization which we feel members will want to know about.

Even in the early days, when we were talking of goals and policies, there was always general agreement on one thing, namely that, once we were a viable group, we should affiliate with the American TESOL (Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages) organization. We will run an article in the next newsletter to acquaint our readers with TESOL and with the advantages of affiliation.

The question, then, was not whether but how. Should KALT affiliate as a Kansai chapter, or (somewhat presumptuously) claim to represent all of Japan, or even all of Greater East Asia, or what? One consideration was that we did not want to trespass on others' territory. On the other hand, we wanted to be able to include all interested persons residing in Japan, and so categorically limiting our scope to the Kansai seemed to be self-defeating. A good deal of discussion has brought us to the conclusion that there is either: 1) no other organization in Japan which knows about TESOL, or 2) there may be groups which know but are not interested. We have, therefore, decided on the following restructuring.

For the purpose of affiliation with TESOL, we will posit an umbrella organization, JALT (Japan Association of Language Teachers), under which local chapters may affiliate. KALT will, therefore, remain unchanged, but JALT will provide the opportunity for KALT2 (Kanto) or even NALT (Nagoya) or HALT (Hiroshima) to spring up in a welter of proliferation.

Another feature of the restructuring which members will appreciate is that JALT will take responsibility for coordinating and restaging the most successful of the workshops held by any one local chapter. In other words it will no longer be necessary to come to Osaka for a given workshop if the local organization can drum up enough support to break even on the financial arrangements. And, in certain cases, JALT will be able to provide assistance in this regard for fledgling groups.

Doug Tomlinson, Director of the Mobil Sekiyu English Program in Tokyo, and David Bycina, former Corresponding Secretary of KALT, have kindly agreed to serve as the nucleus of the new Kanto chapter. They may be contacted at Mobil: (03) 244-4251.

The first workshop of this kind will be the presentation offered by Nobuo and Carol Akiyama on successive weekends in Osaka and Tokyo. Members should have already received specifics, but we will repeat the details for the Tokyo conference just to make sure (too late for the Osaka conference):

TWO-DAY SPECIAL WORKSHOP

dates: February 5 & 6, 1977(Sat. 6 Sun.)

Time: 9:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Place: Matsushita A.V. Foundation, Shuu Onarimon Bldg. 6-1-1 Shinbashi

Topics: The Silent Way (Sat.) & Community language learning (Sun.)

Speakers: Nobuo & Carol Akiyama

Tuition: KALT Members, ¥5000 Non-Members, ¥8000

The Akiyamas are a husband and wife team who have been travelling as language teaching consultants for the U.S. Peace Corps for the past five years. They are currently on their way back to Washington, D.C., having presented workshops in Samoa, the Philippines, Thailand and Korea.

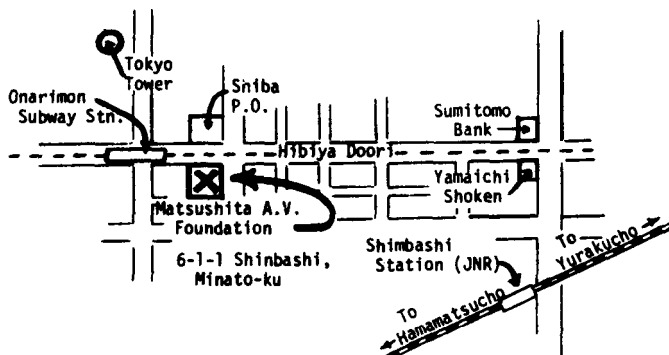
Carol and Nobuo are recognized as close associates of Fr. Charles Curran (Community Language Learning) of Loyola University of Chicago and Dr. Caleb Gattegno (The Silent Way), president of Educational Solutions, Inc. of New York.

Both Presentations will include brief language learning "experiences" but the focus will be on technique and theory.

Light refreshments will be served, but please bring your own lunch; food facilities in the vicinity are rather limited.

Space is limited to 70 people. Please reserve your place by calling David Bycina or Doug Tomlinson at Mobil Oil (03)-244-4250.

For those who find the date inconvenient, an identical workshop will be held in Osaka on January 29-30. Please contact Tom Pendergast at (06)-345-1272 for further details.



Regents and Oxford publishers have indicated their support for KALT by becoming institutional members. Watch for their book displays at KALT workshops and conventions.

JOB OPENING

NAGOYA COLLEGE OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES has positions for full-time instructors beginning in April, 1977. At least one year of teaching experience and proper visa necessary. Degree in TESOL preferred. Furnished housing available for single people. Please send vita to Nagoya College of Foreign Languages, 1-7 Miyanishi-cho, Chikusa-ku, Nagoya 464.

KALT Newsletter

Kansai Association of Language Teachers

Contributions to the newsletter are welcome and should be sent to Nancy Nakanishi, Editor, KALT Newsletter, Nagoya College of Foreign Languages, 1-7 Miyanishi-cho, Chikusa-ku, Nagoya 464. Book reviews, interesting teaching techniques, news about items or events of interest to language teachers, are all welcome.

The Newsletter is published four times a year in January, April, July, and October. Deadlines for articles or advertising submitted for publication are the 30th of the month preceding publication.

Advertising should be solicited through Thomas M. Pendergast, Jr., Awaza Central Heights, No. 812, 30 Enokojima Higashinomachi, Nishi-ku, Osaka 550, tel. (06) 345-1272. Notices of job openings are free of charge and will be inserted according to available space. Contact Nancy Nakanishi.