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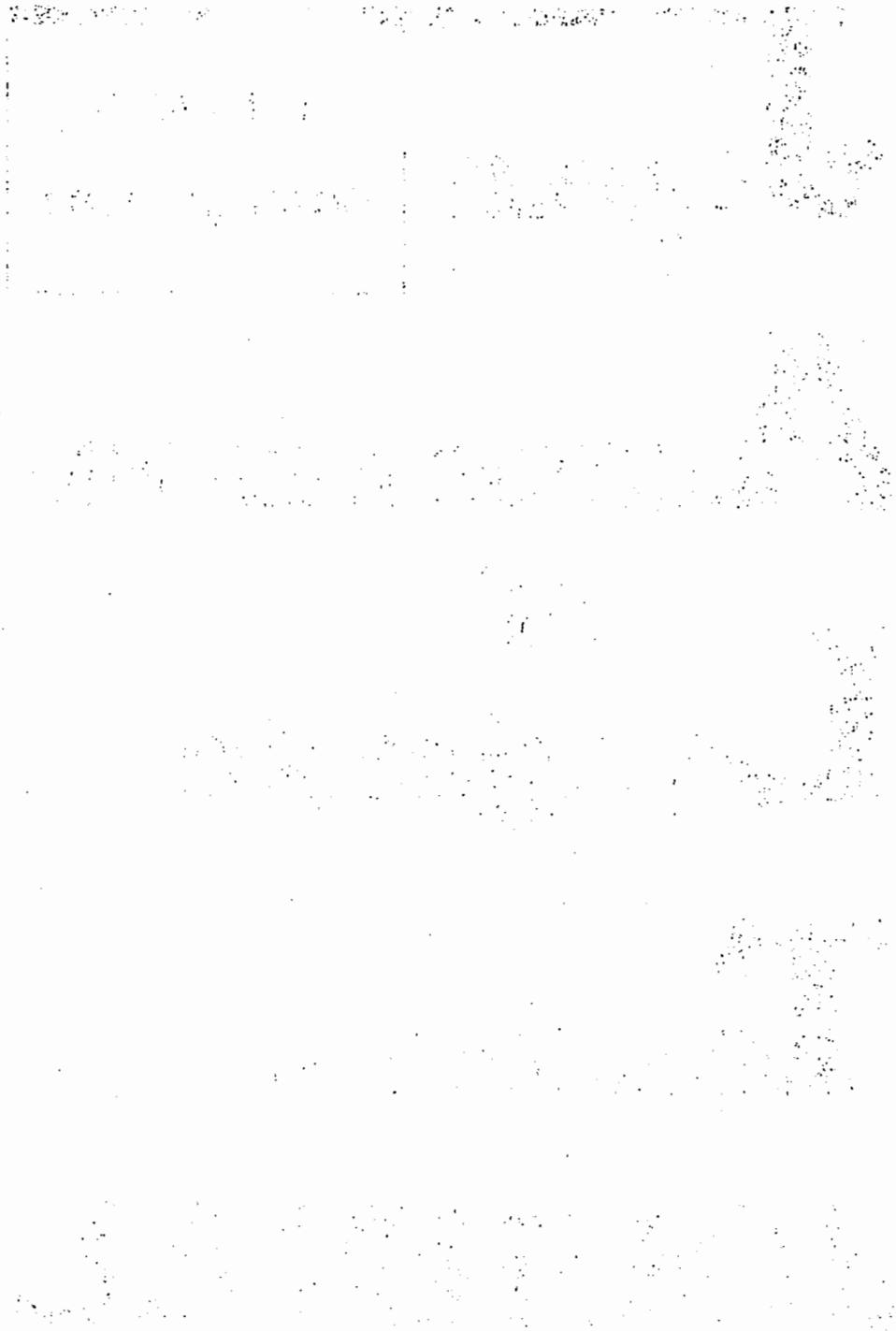

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RHETORICAL PATTERNS EXTANT IN THE ENGLISH COMPOSITIONS OF JAPANESE STUDENTS

Machiko Achiba
Yasuaki Kuromiya

Abstract

According to Robert Kaplan (1972), the expository writing of native English speakers is characterized by a linear approach and a deductive development, while writing by Orientals is characterized by a circular (indirect) approach and an inductive development. Kaplan's term "oriental" specifically refers to Chinese and Korean but not to Japanese. It is the purpose of this paper to investigate whether or not there may be any rhetorical patterns unique to native speakers of Japanese. For this purpose, 130 English compositions written by Japanese students of English as a second language were examined. Analysis of the data shows that the Japanese rhetorical pattern has both linear and circular approaches. In addition, some other compositions are presented and discussed.

INTRODUCTION

Robert Kaplan says that "rhetorical and stylistic preferences are culturally conditioned and vary from language to language" (1972: 10). According to Kaplan, in the writing of native English speakers, the flow of ideas can be characterized by a deductive development, while Oriental writing is

characterized by a circular (indirect) approach and an inductive development. He states:

> The thought pattern which speakers and readers of English appear to expect as an integral part of their communication is a sequence that is dominantly linear in its development. An English expository paragraph usually begins with a topic statement, and then by a series of subdivisions of that topic statement, each supported by examples and illustrations, proceeds to develop that central idea and relate that idea to all the other ideas in the whole essay, and to employ that idea in its proper relationship with other ideas, to prove something, or perhaps to argue something. (p.3)
>
> [Oriental writing] may be said to be "turning and turning in a widening gyre." The circles or gyres turn around the subject and show it from a variety of tangential views, but the subject is never looked at directly. Things are developed in terms of what they are not, rather than in terms of what they are. (p.10)

He further states that in Oriental writing "the kind of logic considered so significant in Western analytic writing" is eliminated. (1971:53)

Although Kaplan has dealt with the Oriental rhetorical pattern, his study is limited to Chinese and Korean students; Japanese are not included, in spite of the long cultural influence on Japan by both China and Korea. Therefore, we have attempted here to explore the rhetorical patterns

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The authors graduated from Southern Illinois University in 1981. Ms. Achiba received an M.A. in TESL and Mr. Kuromiya received an M.A. in TESL and Linguistics. Ms. Achiba teaches in the Junior College division of Tokyo Woman's Christian University and Mr. Kuromiya teaches at Kyoto Sangyo Daigaku.

and the interference problems shown in English compositions by Japanese students.

DATA AND ANALYSIS

The subjects of our study were adult intermediate and advanced Japanese students of English as a second language enrolled in the intensive English programs at the language schools of Southern Illinois University and Western Illinois University and Japanese undergraduates at Southern Illinois University. These students had received from six to ten years of formal English instruction in Japan, however, the main part of that instruction was focused on grammar, while English writing had been for the most part neglected.

First, 178 English compositions written by these subjects for their English classes were collected. Of these, 48 were not amenable to rhetorical pattern analysis as they contained too many syntactic problems. Those compositions written as personal introductions or letters were also discarded. Only those compositions which could be classified as expository prose were analyzed. Therefore, our study is based on the analysis and categorization of 130 compositions according to the five different rhetorical patterns discerned in those compositions. The five organizational patterns are defined as follows:

Category 1: Compositions showing characteristics of English expository writing; that is, linear development in which each subtopic is united to the main topic in a proper way. (Kaplan's category)

Category 2: Compositions showing a linear development in the beginning, but with weak endings; that is, topic sentences with very little substantiation.

Category 3: Compositions showing no explicit topic sentences; or, if there are any, they are preceded by superfluous introductory remarks.

Category 4: Compositions showing characteristics of Oriental writing; a circular (indirect) approach and inductive development. (Kaplan's category)

Category 5: Compositions which are tantamount to unrelated collections of sentences; the sentences may be grammatically correct, but the overall effect is one of confusion.

To avoid influencing each other's judgment, we first allocated the 130 compositions to one or other of the five categories independently and then compared our results. We found that in 120 cases we agreed; agreement was reached on the remaining ten after some discussion.

Table 1. Percentage for each category of rhetorical patterns found in the Japanese students' English composition.

Category 1		34%
Category 2		19%
Category 3		6%
Category 4		27%
Category 5		14%

Table 1 indicates the percentage for each category of rhetorical patterns found in the 130 English compositions written by the Japanese students. Interestingly, the highest percentage is found for the linear approach (34%) and the second highest for the circular (or indirect) approach (27%), although there wasn't any significant difference between

them. According to Kaplan, the linear approach characterizes English analytic writing, which is direct, logical and unified; while a circular approach marks Oriental writing, which is lacking in logic, unity and coherence.

Haruhiko Kindaichi states one of the characteristics of the Japanese language:

> [The Japanese] dislikes the sentence that ends so distinctly, for it looks stiff, formal, and brusque – or, in modern terms, dry. (1978:212)

The Japanese language is said to be oblique, and it is hard for non-Japanese readers to grasp the main idea. Kindaichi states one of the reasons:

> When one writes a long Japanese sentence, the predicate verb comes far behind the subject, which appears in the beginning. The many tiny clauses in between give listeners and readers a difficult time understanding the principal idea. (1978: 222)

From Kindaichi's perspective, Japanese students' compositions should show a high degree of the circular approach and a very small degree of the linear approach. However, the students' English compositions in the present study show that both linear and circular approaches are prominent. This suggests two possible explanations. First, it has to be taken into consideration that all of these students had had formal English instruction in Japan, and at the time of this study they were receiving intensive English instruction in the United States. Thus, in their compositions both Oriental and Western patterns are to be expected. But it is also possible that the Japanese rhetorical pattern has both linear and circular aspects.

Category 2, in which there is a topic sentence but very little substantiation, may be in evidence as a result of the Japanese tendency to avoid terse, perspicuous endings; that is, they expect the reader to infer the conclusion.

Category 5, which shows the second lowest percentage, has neither topic sentence, body, nor conclusion. Sentences are unrelated to each other. This could be due to a lack of English competence and/or writing ability.

The lowest percentage is represented by Category 3, in which there is no explicit topic sentence or, if there is one, it is preceded by an unnecessary introductory remark. This kind of essay always starts with something indirect. The following two paragraphs are the introductory part of a student's composition on "The National Character of the Japanese".

> Japan is a homogeneous country compared with other countries. Japan is surrounded by sea, and she closed her door for a long time in the Edo period.
>
> One of the Japanese strong national character is moderation and shyness . . . .

Here, the student states the topic in the second paragraph instead of in the first. In the first paragraph he gives background information. Although this rhetorical pattern shows the lowest percentage of occurrence in our sample, it is interesting in that this long indirect beginning reflects the influence of *Ki*, an opening part of the traditional Japanese organizational pattern called *Ki* (opening) – *Shoo* (development) – *Ten* (turn or twist) – *Ketsu* (conclusion). In the *Ki-Shoo-Ten-Ketsu* organization, the topic of the initial unit is not the author's main topic. It is simply a subtopic that will lead into the main topic of the essay. This unit is called *Ki*. The second unit called *Shoo* develops the initial topic, setting the stage for the third unit, where the main topic is finally introduced and developed. This third unit is called *Ten*. Then the fourth unit called *Ketsu* brings together all these three units. Older generations of Japanese learned this organizational pattern at school. The present generation

no longer learns it, although the terms themselves are familiar since high school students encounter them in the course of their schooling.

In order to see if there are actually both the linear and circular approaches in the Japanese thetorical pattern, as found in students' English compositions, we examined students' Japanese compositions. Our samples are limited to twenty-four compositions and only seven of the Japanese compositions were written by the same students who wrote the English compositions.

Table 2. Percentage for each rhetorical pattern found in students' Japanese compositions as contrasted with those of students' English composition.

	Japanese composition	English composition
Category 1 ↓	29%	34%
Category 2 	0%	19%
Category 3 	8%	6%
Category 4	46%	27%
Category 5 	17%	14%

As shown in Table 2, the rhetorical pattern defined in category 2 is not extant in the students' Japanese compositions. Categories 3 and 5 in Japanese composition don't show a substantial percentage difference from categories 3 and 5 in English composition. Both categories 1 and 4 show relatively high percentages; the linear and circular approaches are the dominant ones, as is seen in the English compositions. This would confirm the possibility that the Japanese rhetorical pattern has both linear and circular approaches. However, in the English compositions a higher

percentage is found for the linear approach than for the circular approach, while this is reversed for the Japanese compositions. This may have to do with the reader to whom the student was writing. English compositions were going to be read, corrected and graded by a native English teacher who was not familiar with the Japanese way of thinking. Therefore, writing had to be explicit and to the point. On the other hand, Japanese compositions were going to be read by Japanese natives who had the same background. Thus, the writer expected the reader to "read between lines" and to infer what had not been stated. A Japanese girl would never write in a letter to her Japanese lover, "I love you". He would assume that she loves him from other things she says in the letter which don't have any direct connection to her love for him. However, it is very possible that the same girl would write "I love you" to an American lover. Thus, the same person could use both linear and circular approaches, depending on the audience.

There were only seven cases of English and Japanese compositions written by the same student. This small number makes generalization impossible, but it is to be noted that in every case the rhetorical pattern of the English and Japanese compositions by the same writer was the same.

Analysis of the students' twenty-four Japanese compositions shows that both linear and circular approaches and the same person may use both approaches depending on the audience; while it is also possible that a person uses only one approach all the time. However, due to the small sample of English compositions, this needs further study.

Our study shows that 15% of the 130 English compositions by Japanese students were, in Kaplan's term, inductive (see page 2). Although the percentage is not high, this seems to be a very interesting characteristic of Japanese rhetoric, considering the claims by Kaplan (1972) and also by Christensen (1965) that almost all the English expository

writings are deductive.

The following example is entitled *Why I chose my field of study.*

> It is not clear for me about when I met first animals. I think it maybe at the time when I was very small boy. I usually went outside with a elder boy. He almost knew everything about small animals around our town. So he was excellent teacher for me. I really don't remember how many times we went together and how many animals we got together. Our talking was about how to get a large shining beetle, where some boy found a nice looking snake. Unfortunately I was too small and young to remember everything, but I'm sure it was my first meeting with animals.
>
> Then, second impressive meeting came to me. It was when I was eighteen years old right after I graduated high school. I met seals. It was one of great exciting moments in my life. Since it was first time I saw large wild mammals in nature, they looked like another organisms in that from outer space. They were beautiful lovely animals. Since this meeting, my life was orientated to my way that I'm taking now.
>
> I'm taking zoology because of my love for them.

In the first paragraph, the student brings up his encounter with little animals and in the second paragraph, with large wild mammals; but he doesn't mention what his field is until the last paragraph. Thus the first paragraph introduces the topic to some extent inductively, and the second paragraph introduces it in a larger degree, again inductively; and, finally, in the last paragraph the main point is stated.

Our study also shows that 16% of the English compositions had some kind of didactic remark at the end. The following example concerns the purpose of education. After the student states in the first paragraph the difference be-

tween training and education, the second paragraph goes as follows:

> Sometimes we need some special knowledge to get a job, such as physical, or psychological knowledge. But it depends on the job. If you want to lead to good positions, you should get good education and you shouldn't forget to make efforts towards jobs everyday. Train yourself everyday.

The underlined sentences are a kind of didactic remark. At the end of the English compositions by Japanese students, "should," "ought to" and imperatives as in the above example, are often seen.

Other characteristics seen in Japanese students' compositions are frequent use of "as you know" and "I think." "As you know" is commonly used at the beginning of the compositions. For example, a student's composition entitled *Japanese national character* starts with the sentence, "*As you know,* Japanese society is a homogeneous society which consists of only one race and this gives us an advantage." For the writer, it is not important whether or not the audience knows the Japanese society is homogeneous. He uses "as you know" just to avoid an abrupt beginning. In Japanese writings and speeches in front of an audience, this use of "as you know" is very common. This may be a problem of interference from the Japanese language.

Frequent use of "I think" in students' compositions may also be a problem of interference. The following example is a passage from a student's English composition on historical stories:

> And after revolutions a lot of heirs often failed to govern. So they had a sad end. These stories are more interesting than novels, *I think.* And *I think* the most important point is that these stories are true.

In the above example, use of "I think" twice in a row sounds

awkward; but when it is translated into Japanese it sounds natural.

Our final attempt to explore transfer from Japanese was to examine "because" and "although" as subordinated conjunctions and "when" as an indefinite relative adverb. We examined all 130 compositions to find whether adverbial clauses introduced by these words come before or after the main clause. We found that 76% of adverbial clauses introduced by "although," 73% of those introduced by "when" and 35% of those introduced by "because" came before the main clause. The study demonstrated that Japanese students appear to employ adverbial clauses including "although" and "when" more frequently before the main clauses than after. The explanation of this is probably that in Japanese the subordinate clauses including these words seldom come after the main clauses. On the other hand, Japanese subordinate clauses including "because" can be placed either before or after the main clause. It is interesting to note, however, that 14% of the usage of "because" is in independent sentences as defined, often incorrectly, by the students:

> If it is raining outside. I like to spend my free time reading comic books. *Because* reading makes me relax.

In the above example, the student uses a period instead of a comma and he starts an independent sentence with "because." Although this isn't correct in English, it is perfectly all right in Japanese. Again this may be as a result of interference from the Japanese language.

In this paper, we have discussed the rhetorical patterns found in compositions by Japanese students and also the problem of interference from the Japanese language. But how do the students themselves look at rhetoric? The following is a student's frank remark on learning to write English compositions:

The Japanese way of writing and the American one differ very much. Struggling! Struggling! Struggling! I have constantly been struggling to break with the Japanese way of writing and to get used to the American style of writing. The Japanese tend to write with feeling; the American seems write with cool and logical head. It was just pain for me to have done with the Japanese style of writing for the first time. However after six weeks of studying at CESL, I am beginning to feel that style of writing is not strict rules that are imposed on us but very useful rules that help us a lot.

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THE ENIGMA OF READING COMPREHENSION

Yeghia Aslanian

Abstract

Reading is a dynamic and multifaceted process and comprehension of print is an outcome of an interaction between reader variables such as background knowledge, proficiency level, cognitive ability, motivation and purpose, and text variables such as sentence structure, vocabulary intensity, and the difficulty and novelty of the subject-matter. This paper, which falls into four parts, attempts to highlight the relative importance of these variables. In the first part, three major models of reading are discussed and contrasted: the bottom-up or text-based model, the constructivist or reader-based model, and the interactive or transactional model. In the second part, a number of empirical studies are reviewed which shed light on the nature of the reading process and instructional techniques. The studies deal with such topics as: the role of inference, context, prior knowledge, proper use of comprehension questions, and student questioning. The third section touches on what research in ESL reading has to offer the teacher. The point is made that ESL reading is different from L1 reading and a

Yeghia Aslanian is a certified doctoral student at Teachers College, Columbia University, specializing in TESOL. His major research interest is in reading problems of ESL students. He has been teaching English as a second/foreign language for fifteen years and currently teaches at the City University of New York.

major difference is cultural in nature. The fourth and last section pulls together a number of implications and suggests some alternatives which might prove helpful to the ESL reading teacher.

INTRODUCTION

Reading is a complex and dynamic process – complex because it involves innumerable factors including vision, memory, cognition, prior knowledge and experience and cultural background; dynamic because it depends on who is reading what for what purpose, at what stage of proficiency and under what psychological circumstances. Whether it procedes from text to the reader's mind, or from the reader's mind to the text, or in both directions, is basically a function of the reader's knowledge of the language and the subject matter. It is clear that as the learner improves his knowledge of the language and the world, he reads better. In other words, the reader uses his visual information (the printed cues) minimally and reconstructs the message of the text on the basis of his theory of the world. Therefore, it would be only logical to say that reading is not an either/or process; rather, it is a function of an interaction (or transaction) between the reader, the text, level of proficiency, as well as psychological and sociological conditions.

This paper will include a) some models of reading and theoretical speculations about reading comprehension; b) a number of experiments related to reading comprehension; c) what research in L1 and L2 has to say in regard to teaching reading comprehension to ESL students; and d) certain implications that the reviewed research might have for the ESL of EFL teachers.

SOME MODELS AND THEORIES

What is reading? Is it decoding letters to sounds or word recognition? Is it reasoning, thinking and problem solving, or processing information? Is it extracting meaning from text or bringing meaning to text? Is it a psycholinguistic guessing game? Or is it all of these and even more?

A wide variety of answers have been attempted by theorists, reading specialists, psychologists, and recently psycholinguists. The definitions range on a continuum between the stimulus-response theory and the cognitive theory. Three major camps with respect to the nature and process of reading are:

a) Those who think that reading is a bottom-up, stimulus-bound, text-based, interpretive process in which the reader has a very minor role to play. According to this view, reading is a verbal response to printed (graphic) stimuli and the act of reading comprises skills and subskills. The reader progresses from letter features, to letters, to letter clusters, to morphemes, to words, and finally to sentences. This definition is linear and seldom concerns itself with discourse chunks bigger than sentences. Bloomfield (1942) and Fries (1963), for example, advocated the symbol-sound view and emphasized that teaching beginners to read should concern itself with helping them to decode the print into sound and from sound into meaning. They regarded written language as a secondary abstraction of speech (which was thought to be the "real" language). This point of view totally neglected semantic and syntactic systems as well as the role of reading as communication and information processing. This camp primarily views reading as an interpretive act, that is, a process of finding the meaning which inheres in the structure of the sentences and is independent of the comprehender (Blachowicz, 1977-1978).

b) Those who believe that reading is a top-down, reader-

bound, knowledge-based, constructive, and dialectic process in which the print or the visual stimuli have a minor role to play and that in the task of reading the reader brings to bear his schemata (cognitive structure), prior knowledge, experience, expectations, and his theory of the world. This is the constructivist view of reading and reading comprehension. Thorndike (1917), Goodman (1970, 1973, 1975, 1977), Smith (1975, 1978) and Page (1979-1980), to name just a few, belong in this camp. An example of this point of view is Thorndike's now classic article which was published as early as 1917. In this article we read: "The mind is assailed as it were by every word in the paragraph. It must select, repress, soften, emphasize, correlate and organize, all under the influence of the right mental set or purpose or demand." (p.431).

Although Thorndike arrived at these conclusions by observing elementary school children, the proficient reader is far from being under the pressure of the printed page (since he selects according to his purpose, schemata, and perspective), yet what Thorndike says seems to be particularly true in the case of ESL students who come to the task of reading with a totally different frame of mind (both linguistically and culturally) and therefore feel the constant pressure of the printed page.

Another advocate of this second (constructivist) point of view is Kenneth Goodman, who contends that reading instruction should not begin with linguistic parts but with whole, complete, and real language. In emphasizing his point, Goodman (1975) states with humor that:

> Language is indivisible: it ain't no salami that you can slice as thin as you want and still have all the pieces look like the whole salami. Language is . . . learned from whole to part, from general to specific. (pp.628-630)

c) Those (especially in the literary camp) who believe that reading is neither totally text-bound nor completely

reader-bound, but somewhere in between. These theorists argue that the reading process has two components – the text and the reader – and comprehension is the outcome of an interaction or transaction between the two. According to this viewpoint, the reader must be willing to be open to the text as much as he wishes to impose himself on the text. These people also strongly contend that a story, for example, does not have a meaning, but meanings and that every reader assembles his own meaning from the open-ended text, depending on his background. Their argument is based on the notion that the whole is more than the sum total of its parts – and this whole is created by the reader. According to them, there is no right or wrong meaning and the use of objective instruments such as multiple choice tests for measuring something as subjective as comprehension seems to be inappropriate. Maxine Greene (1975) has put this literary view succinctly:

> The reader who encounters the work must recreate it in terms of his consciousness. In order to penetrate it, to experience it existentially and empathetically, he must try to place himself within the "interior spaces" of the writer's mind as it is slowly revealed in the course of his work (emphasis in the original). (pp.300-301)

In her discussion of reading models, Williams (1978) aptly concludes: "It may be that different models are appropriate at different stages of reading proficiency" (p.17); or, as Newman (1978-1979) says, these models differ from each other in the differential emphasis they place on the visual versus the cognitive aspects of reading.

As far as reading instruction is concerned, no single model should be adhered to at the expense of the other models since each model answers different pedagogical questions and emphazises different aspects of reading.

EMPIRICAL STUDIES RELATED TO READING COMPREHENSION

Having discussed certain theoretical issues concerning reading and three contrasting models of reading, this paper now examines some of the empirical research and experiments that have been done regarding reading comprehension. These experiments deal with certain aspects of comprehension such as the phenomenon of inference, the importance of context, the role of schemata in understanding the printed page, and issues related to comprehension questions.

One of the most basic skills that a reader needs to utilize is the ability to make inferences. Making inferences is bridging the gap between two propositions or chunks of discourse in a text which are not explicitly connected by the author. Kintsch (1974), Frederiksen (1975) and others have demonstrated that reading even the simplest prose requires a great deal of inferential processing. Thus, comprehension depends to a great extent not on what is explicitly stated in a passage, but on the inferences of the reader (see Blachowicz, 1977-1978).

There are several factors that are involved in the phenomenon of inference. First, inference takes time. Haviland and Clark (1974) studied the phenomenon that inference even at sentence level takes time and the more implicit the message, the slower the process of reading. They found that, for example, the pair "Ed was given an alligator for his birthday. The alligator was his favorite present." was understood faster than the pair "Ed was given lots of things for his birthday. The alligator was his favorite present." The reason for this is that in the first pair the grammatical subject in sentence 2 has a direct antecedent in sentence 1, while in the seond pair the antecedent of "the alligator" is indirect (i.e., is not mentioned in the context sentence).

Second, inference is a function of context. A study concerning the relationship between inference and context was done by Thorndyke (1976), who investigated the role of inference on larger chunks of connected discourse than sentences. The researcher concludes that when a subject reads a piece of written discourse, he establishes a frame of reference or a context and thus sets up certain expectations which become criteria for the subsquent incoming information. When there is consistency between the two, no problem arises and meaningful reading continues, but when there is inconsistency, backward search begins. This finding is more or less similar to Goodman's (1970) conclusion that what the reader does is to test hypotheses created by his expectations. Even unfamiliar words are better understood and processed in familiar and meaningful contexts (Wittrock, Marks, & Doctorow, 1975). (One can easily see how important well-constructed titles and headings are as a general context or frame of reference for the reader.) Why is it important for the student to develop the ability to make inferences? One of the reasons is that inferred or derived information is retained longer than explicit or reproduced information; also when there is no context or no specific task, the reader seems to process information haphazardly. (Frederiksen, 1975).

Meyer (1975) has looked at the problem of text comprehension from another angle. In her discourse analysis she has postulated that the text consists of superordinate information (which is high in the hierarchy of discourse structure, roughly corresponding to the "main idea") and subordinate information (which is low in the discourse "tree," roughly corresponding to "details"). In an experiment she found that readers tend to retain and recall superordinate information better than subordinate information. If this is true, she argues, then the text writers should place important information high in the content structure in order

to secure better learning and retention.

A very important factor without which comprehension of text cannot take place is relevant prior knowledge (or shcemata). Schemats are a person's abstract and hierarchical knowledge structure which consist of the person's life history – his prior knowledge, experience, beliefs, attitudes, etc. In the act of reading, a reader tries to interpret the text according to what he already knows and, depending on his perspective and purpose, processes the text information differently. Some of the researchers who have done considerable work in this connection are Richard Anderson and his associates. These people's interesting conclusion is that while reading, a person "sees" the message in a certain way and sometimes he does not even consider other alternatives. What their studies imply, pedagogically, is that if there are problems in students' reading comprehension (e.g., slow reading and over-reliance on the text), they are attributable to deficiencies in students' background knowledge rather than to their linguistic skills.

Let us now turn to the ubiquitous problem of comprehension questions – what kind of questions to ask, when to ask them, how often to ask them, and whether measuring comprehension must be carried out by means of objective tests, cloze procedures, or subjective and essay type tests.

With respect to this problem research is inconclusive. Some researchers, however, have come up with certain tentative solutions as to what type of questions should be asked of the reading students. Doake (1974), for example, makes a distinction between literal or explicit questions (beginning with **who, what, where**, etc.) and reasoning or inferential questions (beginning with **why, how**, etc.) and as a result of an experiment he concluded that pre and post adjunct questions appear to be a useful strategy for promoting comprehension, but with certain restrictions: post-literal adjunct questions seem to be superior to pre-literal; and

pre-reasoning adjunct questions appear to be superior to post reasoning. The truth of this conclusion may partially lie in the notion that giving the student specific inferential tasks before reading the text activates relevant schemata which in turn make learning meaningful and easy. Of course, both the literal and the inferential type of questions are necessary; however, in order for the student to get engaged in a productive interaction with the text, he should be trained in answering questions in higher cognitive levels which deal with reasoning and problem solving as well as exploring the intention of the writer.

A crucial point which is often neglected in constructing comprehension tests is the fact that in a classroom situation the type of questioning affects the manner in which students process text information. In a study, Marton and Saljo (1976) found that students did adapt their strategies of learning to their conception of what was required of them. In other words, the subjects who expected factual questions mostly attended to explicit details, while those expecting inferential questions attended to higher level of processing text information. The researchers then concluded that expecting an objective test leads to a more superficial level of processing, while expecting an essay or oral test leads to the focussing of attention on "general principles and main points," thus suggesting deeper processing.

Comprehension has generally been measured by teacher questioning, but an extremely important indicator of text comprehension is the type of questions that students ask. Research in student questioning is indeed meagre and warrants serious attention. Miyake and Norman (1979) have touched on this point through empirical research. In a study they tested the notion that a prerequisite for asking questions about new topic matter is some appropriate level of knowledge. To test their hypothesis, they tested learners with two levels of background knowledge using learning material

with two levels of difficulty. The learners were instructed to say aloud their questions and thoughts while learning from printed text. With easier material, beginners asked more questions than the trained learners; with the more difficult material, trained learners asked more questions than novice learners. The results seem to indicate that the students' asking questions is a function of their level of knowledge – when the material is too easy or too difficult, students do not ask questions.

RESEARCH IN ESL READING

Is learning to read in L1 similar to learning to read in L2? There are, certainly, similarities in the sense that reading is a universal act and the reader who is proficient in his native language, once past the preliminary stages of the acquisition of graphophonemic correspondences and mastery of certain subskills in L2, can transfer his L1 reading strategies. The differences, however, seem to overshadow the similarities. The ESL student's problems are twofold – cultural and linguistic.

As discussed earlier, prior knowledge and life history directly affect the comprehension and retention of written discourse. This issue gains tremendous importance especially in the case of the ESL student who finds himself in a new culture and environment. To write a text, the writer draws upon his history and experiences; to decode the message, the reader should do likewise. And if the writer and the reader are of diverse backgrounds, then the gap must be bridged if communication is to take place. Psychological, sociological, and cultural factors, therefore, are the most important determinants of one's education. This is a point that Eskey (1973) and Kaplan (1966), too, have emphasized in their research concerning reading and writing problems of non-native speakers of English. It is apt to quote at this point

Kaplan's (1966) viewpoint, which, in limbo for a decade or so, is now gaining some credibility:

> The teaching of reading and composition to foreign students does differ from the teaching of reading and composition to American students, and cultural differences in the nature of rhetoric supply the key to the difference in teaching approach. (p. 1)

Every language has, according to Kaplan (1966), a rhetoric and logical system of its own and what an ESL student brings to the task of reading English print is an entirely different frame of reference and schemata based on his social and educational background.

Despite the fact that not much empirical research has been done in the area of reading comprehension in ESL and minority situations, there is some evidence which indicates that non-native speakers of English or minority children do have problems in adjusting to the new cultural as well as linguistic environment. Hill (1977), for example, makes the point that minority children's reading comprehension is often a function of their socioeconomic status and past experiences. This point of view is in full agreement with the insights that psycholinguistics has produced; namely, that while reading, the reader plays an active role and that he takes the text to mean what his background dictates him. "Reading," argues Hill (1977), is "not simply. . .a pragmatic activity that human beings engage in so that they may obtain particular bodies of information, but rather. . .an activity that engages the imaginative faculties of the whole person" (p. 52). Labov and Robins (1969), too, have a similar point to make – "that the major problem responsible for reading failure is a cultural conflict" (p. 402).

In her investigations of the effects of the reader's attitudes on responding to prose, McKillop (1951), similarly, emphasizes the point that the reader learns more easily and retains better the material which is in harmony with his attitude

than the material which is contrary to his attitude.

Aside from the cultural and personal conflicts, the ESL student comes to the task of reading with serious linguistic problems. Even students who are well-read and fluent readers in their native language seem to suffer from slow reading in L2 because not all reading skills can be transferred to L2 situations (Clarke, 1979), and also because L2 readers process information at a slower rate than L1 readers (Oller & Tullius, 1973).

To comprehend a text in English, the ESL student needs to understand, among other things, the denotative and the connotative meanings of the vocabulary items, idiomatic expressions and cultural references, the case relationships within complex sentences, the cohesive elements and devices of meaning relationships in connected written discourse, and finally, the use of context while making inferences. Some of his other problems (especially at the earlier stages) with respect to comprehending the print include: lack of adequate oral language competence, inability to follow the logical sequence and mood of the text, insufficient knowledge of the hierarchical structures of written discourse, and lastly, inability to go beyond the text in order to extract alternate meanings.

These problems may vary from individual to individual and from level to level, but some of them seem to persist and pose hindrances even to very advanced stages of reading English as a second language.

SOME IMPLICATIONS FOR THE ESL READING TEACHER

Theory, research, and teaching experience in both L1 and L2 go hand in hand and constitute an invaluable asset for the reading teacher, therefore, a concerned teacher needs to keep

abreast of the current developments in both theory and research. More than anything else, he needs to draw upon conclusions that are based on observations (and self-observations, for that matter) in the classroom as well as outside the classroom. At this point, it may be worth looking at some conclusions that I have arrived at after the review of theory and research related to certain aspects of reading and reading comprehension. These are by no means definitive directives, but can be ruminated over and tried as alternatives. Alternatives are what we ESL teachers desperately need to keep ourselves and our students lively in the classroom and to enhance the desire to learn. Briefly, these conclusions are as follows:

- Reading programs in which the teacher is the sole authority in selecting materials exert a negative effect on the students. (Smith, 1978)
- The teacher's role is to activate, encourage and help students to learn to read. To do this teachers must make reading meaningful, which means seeing how it looks from the child's point. (Smith, 1978: 164)
- Setting purposeful tasks (e.g., reading a film commentary to decide whether or not one should go to see the movie) for the students before reading the text enhances their comprehension and retention and adds relevance to the reading activity.
- Silent reading should be encouraged as much as possible since comprehension is better and reading faster when meaning is obtained directly from print. Besides, oral reading can at times be extremely embarrassing, particularly for non-native speakers.
- Inferential, evaluative and value-judgment questions are preferable to "What was the Marlup poving" type questions since they make students integrate the text information and arrive at solutions. In other words, open-ended, divergent questions are more conducive to

reasoning and learning than closed-ended, convergent questions.

- Talking about what has been read (and this is what normally happens in real-life situations) can help the student to organize what he has read and to integrate it with his previous knowledge (Rigg, 1976; Page 1979-1980).
- Individual interpretations of the text based on the student's background must be encouraged rather than suppressed.
- To acquire pleasant and meaningful experience from the act of reading, students should sometimes be allowed to choose materials of their interest.
- In oral reading excessive attention to accuracy in pronunciation disrupts the meaning and communication.
- In selecting reading materials for non-native speakers, relevance is a more important criterion than text difficulty, and classroom activities should parallel the "real world" as closely as possible (Clarke, 1977).
- Some learn better through listening and some through reading. To ensure more learning and better comprehension, it would be more fruitful to expose the students to both modalities.
- Teach the students how to comprehend not what to comprehend. That is to say, teach strategies that can be useful in decoding the written message – where to look for main idea or details, when to pay attention to transitional words or phrases, how to track down the writer's viewpoint by looking at recurring themes and key-words, how to use syntactic rules, etc., etc.
- Last but not least, reading is a serious personal and social activity and should be treated as such. It should

not be taught merely for the purpose of "consolidating" what has been listened to and spoken; on the contrary, the ESL student (particularly at college level) must be exposed to speech in order to make sense of what he reads. In other words, reading is a goal in its own right – and a means of survival.

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TIME AND SPACE WITH COMMUNITY LANGUAGE LEARNING

Paul G. La Forge

Abstract

The use of time and space in ESL/FL classrooms is of critical importance. The first purpose of this paper is to explain Community Language Learning as a time-learning configuration. Part one does this by defining CLL with special attention to time within the learning process. The second purpose of this paper is to explain the use of CLL as a time-configuration within classroom space. Part two illustrates this time/space relationship by examining the use of four CLL contracts, or learning exercises, within the spatial configuration of the classroom.

INTRODUCTION

Our biggest problem as English teachers is how to use the time and space available for the utmost possible learning. The first purpose of this paper is to explain Community Language Learning (CLL) by the late Charles A. Curran (1972; 1976). CLL will be introduced in part one as a time-learning

Paul G. La Forge is a Professor of Nanzan Junior College. He holds Master's degrees in Counseling and TESOL. He has published in *Language Learning, TESOL Quarterly, Cross Currents, ELT Journal*, and *English Teaching Forum*, and is the author of *Counseling and Culture in Second Language Acquisition* (Oxford: Pergamon, 1983). In 1980 he was Coordinator of JALT Tokai and served as Chairman for the 1980 JALT Conference.

configuration. The second purpose is to show how CLL works in the classroom, which is a space configuration. Much classroom learning takes place today in a space configuration characterized by rows of desks rooted to the floor. At the front is a podium from which learning descends in a single direction from the teacher to the students. By way of contrast to the space configuration of the row, the CLL teacher works with circles of students, as will be shown in part two. The circle, as a space configuration, can be much more supportive of basic communication than the row. The exercises used to illustrate the potential of the circle in part two are also arranged to show to some extent the way that developmental stages of CLL, the time structure, can be integrated with allocation of classroom space.

A BRIEF DEFINITION OF CLL

CLL is a supportive language learning contract which consists of group experience and reflection. There are five elements of this definition which deserve particular attention: First, CLL is a *learning contract*; second, CLL is *group experience*; third, CLL is *group reflection*; fourth, CLL is a *supportive contract*; fifth, CLL is *language learning*. The rest of this part will be devoted to an explanation of each element of the CLL definition.

First, CLL is a *learning contract*. In general, a contract is a basic agreement made by a number of people to work together toward a common goal, a learning goal such as the improvement of English speaking ability. A contract fills three important functions: First, it is a way of using time; second, of deploying energy; third, of defining roles. First, a contract contains time provisions, so the CLL contract consists of time-limited group experiences in learning. The time limit clarifies the experience and sets it in a frame which is easier for the students to accept. Students generally find that a

10-minute speaking experience is easier to accept than one which lasts for 20 minutes or one without any time specifications at all. Second, energy is deployed by describing a set of conditions in which a group works. The size of the group makes demands on the energy of the participants. For example, students seem to use more energy when they speak English with a large number than if there are only a few students or one other person in the group. Thirdly, a contract defines roles. The roles of the teacher and students are clarified by the contract. Under the terms of the contract, a teacher may adopt an active role, or in a flexible manner, a more passive role. The roles of the students change as they gradually alter their positions in the community from "non-speakers" to "speakers" of English. The demands on time, energy, and the roles of the group members are defined by the contract. The existence of a contract differentiates CLL from mere group activity. Over a period of time, the "Community" emerges from a variety of group activities. Each learning experience is reviewed as part of the learning contract. Group reflection, to be explained later, is an essential part of the CLL time-learning configuration. One CLL contract, therefore, is a group learning experience together with its reflection period.

Second, CLL is *group experience*. There are three kinds of group learning which are chracteristic of CLL. In common with the classroom as we know it, learning takes place with the whole or larger numbers of students, 10 or 15 to a group. The teacher participates in the large group activity. The second kind takes place in smaller units composed of five or six students. The teacher does not participate in the small group activity. The third type takes place in pair or triad groups. The teacher's participation is optional. These three kinds of group experience, which are basically space configurations, are used by the CLL teacher according to the needs of the students. CLL classrooms are characterized by

circles of students rather than rows of students. The flexible use of three kinds of space configuration will be further demonstrated in part two.

Third, CLL is *group reflection*. In the time sequence, a period of review, evaluation, and reflection is held after each group experience. The reflection period gives the students and the teacher a chance to review the events of the experience part of the class. What proves valuable to learning is separated from what is of less value. But more important, the students begin to compare their gains from a number of group experiences and place a self-evaluation on the events of the course. The CLL reflection period consists of a short period of silent reflection on the past events of the class. During this time, the students are asked to compose a brief English report about the class. After the reports are written, they are read to the class and shared by all the members. Valuable suggestions for future classes are made during this part of the reflection period. If the teacher adopts these, they become a force in learning. Students are more powerfully motivated to learn by a teacher who listens and accepts suggestions.

Fourth, CLL is a *supportive contract*. Besides classroom space, another dimension of space lies between the teacher and students called "Learner Space" by Curran (1972: 91). This space is essential if one person is to learn from another. If the teacher fills the space, then the students are deprived of a chance to grow and fill the space. If the teacher allows the students to expand and grow, learning increases at a rapid rate. Supportive use of learner space is related to the time dimension of progress in English speaking. The teacher operates on a time scale from activity to silence. There is a time when his activity with the whole or larger groups of students is necessary for the supportive communication of knowledge. There is also a time for the teacher's supportive silence when the students are allowed to exercise the knowl-

edge which they have acquired in small group activity. In a supportive way, the teacher may employ a CLL contract which calls for partial silence. He is silent toward the whole, but active in speaking with individuals in the class during pair group activity. Unfortunately, a fuller explanation of how partial silence works is impossible within the scope of this short article.

Fifth, CLL is *language learning*. According to Curran (1972: 128-135), language learning is a process of growth which occurs in five stages. The five stages parallel the life of a human person from birth (Stage I) through childhood (Stage II), adolescence (Stages III & IV), into adulthood (Stage V). In the next part, these stages will be further explained as they occur in the English speaking classroom. They will be exemplified by four group learning experiences.

SPACE CONFIGURATIONS WITH CLL

The purpose of part two is to focus on the space configurations of the CLL class. The following four CLL contracts will be explained: (1) "*The Shape I'm In*"; (2) "*The Clock Line Up*"; (3) "*52 Questions for the Teacher*"; (4) "*A Personal Interview.*" These four exercises were chosen because they can be easily implemented in any classroom. As will be explained later, the roles can be redefined or the exercise can be reversed for more effective learning at later CLL stages. During the course of the group experience, the space configuration changes from the whole to small, or even pair groups. If the teacher learns to use circles of different sizes, the flexible use of space will contribute to communication and learning.

Stage I: The Introduction. Stage I is called the "Embryonic" or "Birth" Stage. At this point learners on the college level in Japan have a six-year background of English study,

but lack experience with English as a means of communication with others. They have had minimal contact with native speakers of English. Their conduct is characterized by anxiety and lack of confidence in themselves as English speakers. Self-introduction in supportive small groups seems to be the best remedy for the situation. The students are seated in groups of five and instructed to help each other prepare a brief speech about themselves, their hobbies, interests, and motives for studying English. They are given time to discuss and prepare their speeches together. After the preparation time, each student rises to present the self-introduction to the whole class.

Reflection on this activity reveals several interesting points which the teacher should stress. First of all, the problem of anxiety in speaking English is a common problem which can be solved if mutual help is available to each individual in the class. Second, the mutual assistance characteristic of the CLL class is pointed out in contrast to classes based on other methods. Students appreciate the friendly relationships which they find in the small groups. Third, the small group space configuration greatly supports learning. The learner at this stage is told what to say and, therefore, is not completely independent of the small group. As a space configuration, the small group functions as a protective embryo out of which the English speaker gradually emerges.

Stage II: The Shape I'm In. After the student has discovered his existence during Stage I, his next task is to clarify his identity as an English speaker. Stage II, called the "Self-assertion" Stage, is characterized by a strong drive toward self-expression and the need for contact with other speakers of English. The learner picks up many new English expressions, even though he may be able to use these only in a semi-grammatical way. The teacher should encourage the interaction and not interrupt the communication to correct mistakes.

An exercise which greatly facilitates communication during Stage II is called "*The Shape I'm In.*" It was taken from Moskowitz (1978: 62) and can be done with the whole group together. A triangle, a circle, a square, a hexagon, and an irregular wavy line are drawn on the board. As a first step, the students are asked to choose the figure which best expresses the way they feel on that day. More important, they are also asked to write down the reason why they feel that way. After the students are given time to make their choices, individuals are asked, as a second step, if they would care to report their choice and share the reason for the choice with the class. At this point, it becomes clear that one figure can be interpreted in a variety of ways. As a third step, groups are formed of those who chose the triangle, the circle, the square, and so on. If the number is too large for a single figure, several groups can be formed. The students are left free to discuss their choices for about 15 minutes.

The reflection period after this exercise revealed several important aspects about communication in the class. First, it was difficult to talk about feelings directly, but easy to identify with a figure and discuss differences of feelings. Second, a communication barrier existed in the class. As teacher, I was totally unaware of the problem. The students were taking employment examinations at this time. Because of this situation, the class was divided roughly into three groups, A, B, and C. Group A was composed of those who had family businesses and, therefore, were not concerned with the employment examinations. Group B was made up of students who had passed their examinations successfully and had their future employment settled. They were extremely elated at their success but were prevented from communicating for fear of offending those who might not have passed. Group C consisted of those who had failed their first employment examinations and were feeling depressed. They were not anxious to talk about their failures.

Identifying with the figures helped the students to overcome their communication difficulties, especially when they realized they had common problems. The circle in Japan represents good condition. Those who had passed ended up in the group with others who had chosen the circle. Thus, they could communicate their good luck in finding suitable employment. Those who failed found themselves with others who had chosen the irregular wavy line (all out of shape). Great relief was expressed by this group when individuals discovered others with similar problems.

Stage III: The Clock Line Up. Stage III is the "Separate Existence" Stage. By this time, the students have built up enough confidence through the use of English to function independently of the teacher. Their English is still characterized by its semi-grammatical quality. At this point, the center of the students' attention is on themselves and their functioning as English speakers. When they become convinced that they can really speak English, their self-confidence tends to exclude the assistance of the teacher. The action of the teacher is still necessary if the students hope to improve the grammatical quality of their English. Therefore, a crisis arises during Stage III. If they hope to speak better English, the students have to make the teacher part of the Community again.

The best way to assist the students through the crisis is to promote self-understanding (Implication: How am I excluding the teacher) and the understanding of others (For example: the teacher). This can be done with an exercise reported by Moskowitz (1978: 63). The numbers of a clock are positioned at equal points around the classroom walls from one to 12. The students are asked to go to the time of day which they like best. They are requested to write down the reason for their choice also. After using this exercise, called the "*Clock Line Up*," on several occasions, I found that mini-groups tend to cluster around the

morning hours. Others take shape around the afternoon or evening hours. Modern culture has perhaps divided the human race into either "Early Birds" or "Night Owls." These mini-groups can be combined or divided in order to promote communication. The students are allowed about 15 minutes to discuss their choices.

Reflection on the exercise greatly promoted self-understanding. The students came to the realization on their own inner time-clock. Some people function best in the morning; others, in the evening. People make the same choices for a wide variety of reasons. The students came away from the exercise with a more vivid sense of time and its importance in living. Suggestions for variations of the exercise included using the months of the year, or the days of the week.

Stage IV: Reverse Process and Role Reversal. During the first three CLL Stages, the teacher has exercised an understanding role of assisting the students. At Stage IV, the students begin to perform in a role of understanding the ideas which the teacher wishes to present. Self-understanding gradually increases during Stage III and leads to a better understanding and acceptance of the teacher. Learning can be enhanced through "Reverse Process" and "Role Reversal" during Stage IV. For the "*Clock Line Up*," the students were asked to choose the hour which they liked best. During the CLL reflection period, the students suggested that the process be reversed. They were to repeat the exercise, but choose the hour of the day which they liked least. This is an example of reverse process learning. Many other exercises can be reversed in this way for greater learning effect.

An example of role reversal occurred in the case of the interview. After the students had performed interviews composed by the teacher (Stage III), they were allowed to construct an interview with the teacher acting as interviewee. The whole class functioned as interviewer. This is an example of role reversal. Preparation for the exercise was done to-

gether with the students. The students were asked to compose a series of questions to be asked of the teacher. These were collected and put in order, according to life history. The students were allowed to ask about the childhood, adolescence, and university life of the teacher. Repetitive questions were discarded and new ones were composed to fill the gaps. The students formed a large semicircle around the teacher. Each student was allowed to ask two questions of the teacher. Since I could think of no other appropriate title, the exercise was named: "*52 Questions For The Teacher.*"

Stage V: A Personal Interview. Stage V is the "Adult Stage." After a 45-minute experience with the teacher as interviewee, the roles were reversed again as the students were assigned the task, in groups of five, of conducting interviews among themselves. By this time, they were able to function in the foreign language in an independent way. The exercise, patterned after Hopper and Whitehead (1979: 223-252), was called "*A Personal Interview.*" The purpose of the interview was to help the interviewee establish a better self-understanding and to make progress in speaking English. The exercise was divided into three parts: preparation, conducting, and evaluating the interview. The group of five students prepared a single set of questions covering the personal history of an individual. The preparation for the interview with the teacher, the previous exercise, became the model for composing the questions for this interview. The same set of questions was used as a guide when each student took the role of interviewer. One student was interviewed, one acted as time-keeper, and the other two were observers. At the end of each interview, the roles were changed and the interview was repeated. With repetition of the interviews, the students gradually departed from the prepared set of questions. They were able to introduce new topics or ask spontaneous questions as the need arose.

SUMMARY

The first purpose of this article was to explain CLL as a time-learning configuration. The second purpose was to show CLL works in the classroom, which is a space configuration. A definition of CLL was presented in part one. The following four CLL contracts were explained in part two: (1) "*The Shape I'm In*"; (2) "*The Clock Line Up*"; (3) "*52 Questions For The Teacher*"; and (4) "*A Personal Interview*". By way of conclusion, I would like to appeal to English teachers to become more aware of how the following four items are used in their classrooms: First, time configurations; second, space configurations; third, reverse process; fourth, role reversal. If time and space configurations can be used to promote communication, more effective learning will be the result.

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MACRO-ANALYSIS: A TECHNIQUE FOR HELPING JAPANESE STUDENTS OF ENGLISH TO COPE WITH THE CULTURE BARRIER

Kathryn Taylor Mizuno

Abstract

One of the main causes of the difficulty experienced by many Japanese in expressing their ideas and opinions effectively in an English speaking situation is the great difference in attitudes in Japanese and Western cultures toward the nature and function of discussion. Comparative studies of Japanese and American culture show that while in the U.S.A. discussion and debate play a vital and dynamic role in the social, academic and political spheres, in Japan the spoken word has a much less prominent function. This writer has used macro-analysis techniques in several intermediate and advanced oral English classes as a means of providing Japanese students with experience in planning and carrying out their own democratic goal-oriented discussions in English. Macro-analysis techniques are a useful means to this end because they encourage an equal distribution of leadership among the members of the group and encourage a democratic atmosphere in which the group can seek to synthesize the ideas of its members into a conclusion.

The writer is a graduate of Bryn Mawr College with an M.A.T. from Yale University. Since coming to Japan in 1967 she has taught English to students of all ages, and has been at Tsuda College since 1973, where she is a lecturer.

INTRODUCTION

This is a report of this writer's use of macro-analysis techniques in teaching groups of intermediate and advanced college students of English how to express their ideas articulately and constructively in a democratic group discussion. The paper first presents the aims of such a procedure and then briefly analyzes the cultural gap between Japanese and English-speaking people with regard to their attitudes toward the nature and function of discussion. Then, after explaining briefly what macro-analysis is, it reports how these techniques have been adapted and applied in the college English classroom, and finally evaluates the procedure and makes recommendations for improvement and further development.

AIMS

The teacher of a foreign language must prepare students to overcome culture barriers as well as language barriers. Basic differences in thought and behavior patterns probably create a more insurmountable barrier to intercultural communication than language differences do. A pioneer in the new field of intercultural communication, John Condon, lists four areas that must be studied as sources of misunderstanding in communication across cultural boundaries: (1) the area of language, (2) the non-verbal area, (3) the area of values and (4) the area of reasoning and rhetoric (Condon, 1972: 45-46). As he lists these problem areas in ascending order of difficulty to overcome, the language barrier seems to be a relatively minor obstacle to communication in comparison to the other three areas. This writer sees macro-analysis techniques as a useful way to help students of English overcome not only this language barrier, but also

the barriers caused by deeper basic cultural differences in the other three categories, particularly differences in values and thought patterns included in areas 3 and 4. It is certainly true for Japanese, as it is for people of any culture, that these basic differences between their culture and other cultures create barriers to meaningful communication. Nakane Chie,[1] the cultural anthropologist points out one source of difficulty for Japanese in communicating with non-Japanese. She notes that a basic rule for social interaction for the Japanese is that there are three basic groups of people; those within one's own group, those whose background is fairly well known and those whose background is unknown. Non-Japanese people fall in the third category. Nakane concludes: "If the Japanese had some general code of manners for dealing with people which did not differentiate [these three categories of people] they might have an easier time approaching or interacting with foreigners" (Nakane, 1974: 131). Macro-analysis techniques might provide a model for the kind of general code of manners that is called for here, giving Japanese speakers of English a new kind of experience in participating in a democratic discussion.

The differing views held by Japanese and English-speaking people as to the nature and function of discussion are at the root of the difficulty many Japanese seem to face in effectively presenting their ideas and opinions in an English-speaking situation. There are several aspects to a meaningful discussion in English which must be understood in order to participate effectively in one. First, it should be a constructive, open sharing of opinions and ideas, with the goal of reaching some kind of conclusion. Second, it requires active participation of all members, which includes both careful listening and straightforward articulation of opinions and ideas. Third, it is based on the premise that the opinions of all the participants have value, and therefore some influence on the outcome.

There seem to be certain social conventions in Japanese culture that make this kind of discussion difficult. First, interpersonal communication in Japan is based on a hierarchical social structure in which there is a highly developed consciousness of relative rank and status. Second, the Japanese make clear distinctions as to what kind of behavior is appropriate to a given situation. Therefore, the way a Japanese speaks and what he says are largely determined by the situation and his status relative to the people to whom he is speaking. He is more likely to express himself openly and honestly when speaking to people of equal status in an informal situation than when addressing social superiors or inferiors in a formal one. Third, Japanese tend to be reluctant to stand out in a group as being different, so that even in an informal gathering of social peers, individuals may hesitate to express views that might not be shared by the whole group.

If these generalisations about Japanese behavior are true, it would seem to be extremely difficult for a Japanese to adapt himself to function effectively in the English-speaking world, where the social structure is more democratic than hierarchical, where there is less change in behavior demanded to suit different situations and where there is less pressure to conform to the group. It is the hypothesis of this writer, though, that language is to some extent a determining factor in reinforcing these habits and attitudes, and that when a Japanese shifts from his native language to English he may free himself from some of the cultural limitations that would restrict him if he were speaking Japanese.

Although the purpose of teaching a foreign language is clearly not to have students learn to merely imitate the manners and customs of its native speakers, it is important for anyone who wants to learn to communicate with those native speakers to understand something of the differences between his own culture and theirs. Only on that basis will

he be able to communicate effectively with them. For these reasons it seems important for the Japanese speaker of English to know how to present his ideas articulately in an English-speaking group situation.

It was with the aim of providing this kind of training that this writer began a few years ago to introduce macro-analysis techniques in several intermediate and advanced level college oral English expression classes. It was hoped that this approach would 1) encourage students to participate actively in planning and carrying out their own discussions, 2) encourage a democratic atmosphere in which no one, including the teacher, was regarded as the "discussion leader", and 3) help give discussions direction and purpose. This report summarises how macro-analysis techniques have been used in this way in advanced and intermediate college oral English expression classes of 10 to 20 students each.

THE CULTURE GAP

A comparison of American and Japanese social conventions and attitudes toward verbal communication will show very clearly the great cultural barrier which the Japanese must overcome in order to function effectively in the English-speaking world.[2] Dean Barnlund, a leader in the field of intercultural communication, presents the culture gap between the two countries very succinctly: "If one were forced to choose a few words to capture the ethos of these societies they might be these: homogeneity, hierarchy, collectivity and harmony for Japan; heterogeneity, equality, individualism and change for the United States" (Barnlund, 1975: 161). In contrast to the emphasis on social hierarchy and group harmony in Japanese society, the principles of equality and individualism on which American society is

based allow relatively free and uninhibited expression of opinion in a group, regardless of the relative rank and status of the group members. Open exchange of varying opinions is not only tolerated in American society, it is positively encouraged. "We [Americans] like to disagree; we enjoy being challenged; we find it interesting or even necessary to play the devil's advocate to create disagreements even if we really do not disagree" (Condon, 1972: 52). In contrast to this the Japanese place emphasis on preserving the appearance of harmonious unanimous agreement in a group (Doi, 1974: 22) and thus seek to avoid disagreement or contradiction of one another.

Japanese and Americans have rather different concepts of what a discussion is, and have different expectations of one. The Japanese tends to view discussion as somewhat of a formality, being prepared and planned to some extent ahead of time, so that the outcome is to some degree determined before the discussion itself actually begins. To the American, on the other hand, a discussion is a dynamic process of exchanging various ideas and opinions with the goal of synthesising them constructively into a conclusion. The very definition of a discussion of this sort precludes the possibility of predetermined outcome. Dean Barnlund sees this kind of attitude toward discussion as basic to the American social structure: "The American social structure rests upon deep commitment to discussion as the primary mode of inquiry, of learning, of negotiation and of decision making" (Barnlund, 1975: 89). He notes that while it is an "indispensable social skill" for the American to be able to articulate his views in discussions aimed at problem solving, the Japanese tend to consider articulate persons to be "foolish or even dangerous" (Barnlund, 1975: 89).

There seems to be trend in the United States today toward recognising more and more the value of discussion as a tool in dealing with conflict in a constructive effort to effect

positive social change. This trend is reflected by Jones, Barnlund and Haiman in their analysis of the function of discussion in the United States, *The Dynamics of Discussion*, in which they state their aim as follows: "We advocate that people join with others in discussion as a way of bringing about change by democratic means" (Jones, et al., 1980: 16-17). Barnlund elaborates on this as follows: "In [the American] social system enounter is essential. The validity of change, cultural or personal, must be tested through dialogue. Discussion and debate, the most prominent communicative forms in western cultures, involve proposals and counterproposals, assertions and refutations, leading to agreement on critical principles or actions" (Barnlund, 1975: 166). Macro-analysis is based on this principle. While its purpose in the English language classroom is not to plan social action projects, it is, in the opinion of this writer, an effective way to teach students to analyse and discuss issues of vital importance to them in a constructive way, rather than simply discussing or debating in a vacuum.

A number of scholars in various disciplines who have made comparative studies of Japanese and English-speaking people have reached conclusions that suggest it is difficult or even impossible to carry out in Japanese society the kind of discussion described above. Nakamura Hajime, in his study of the philosophical roots of Asian cultures, notes that "Japanese are often lacking in the radical spirit of confrontation and criticism" (Nakamura, 1964: 402) which is essential to meaningful discussion. John Condon points out that there is social pressure in Japanese groups to "work for and through the group. One must follow form and do the expected. One must avoid embarrassment. These are not the qualities which make for great debates" (Condon and Yousef, 1975: 238). He goes on to say that Japanese seek to reach consensus not in open public discussion, but behind the scenes, and notes that public statements are usually just

formal announcements of what is already generally known to have been decided beforehand. He concludes that because "the clash of ideas" is abhorrent in their society "many Japanese have said that it is impossible to debate in Japanese" (p. 238). This aversion to expressing different opinions in open discussion is probably a primary reason why the range of topics considered acceptable for discussion tends to be narrower in Japanese than in English-speaking cultures. On the basis of a comparative study on how and to whom Americans and Japanese express their ideas and feelings in words, Barnlund reaches the conclusion that "In Japan people rarely discuss in more than a superficial way any subject beyond their taste in food, television programs, films, music or reading. This, apparently, is the deepest communication they experience with anyone in their lives, even those closest to them," (1975: 157). Whether or not Barnlund's single study justifies such a categorical conclusion, it clearly indicates a difference between Japanese and Americans with regard to the kinds of topics that are discussed in their respective cultures. Nakane notes that the direction and content of a Japanese conversation is determined by the interpersonal relations of those speaking. She describes Japanese conversation as follows: "In most cases a conversation is either a one-sided sermon, the 'I agree completely' style of communication, which does not allow for the statement of opposite views; or parties to a conversation follow parallel lines winding in circles and ending exactly where they started. Much of a conversation is taken up by long descriptive accounts, the narration of personal experiences or the statement of an attitude toward a person or an event in definitive and subjective terms unlikely to invite, or reach, a compromise" (Nakane, 1970: 34-35). She goes on to state that there are "three basic steps of reasoning" in a meaningful discussion, based on thesis and anti-thesis, "party and confrontation on an equal footing

which will develop into or permit the possibility of synthesis" (Nakane, 1970: 35). She concludes that because Japanese groups tend to be intolerant of the expression of opposing opinions, "In Japan it is extremely difficult to engage in a truly democratic discussion (of the type I know from experience is common in India, or for instance, in Italy, England or America) in the course of which statements of opposition are taken by the other party and then form an important element of the development of the discussion" (Nakane, 1970: 147).

This writer's use of macro-analysis techniques in teaching English to Japanese college students in based on the premise that while it may be difficult or even impossible, as the evidence cited above would indicate, to have a truly democratic exchange of ideas in Japanese, through using these techniques as a framework in which to conduct English discussions Japanese students may be able to discover and experience aspects of the kind of democratic interaction that would be useful and perhaps even essential for them to function effectively in an English-speaking society.

WHAT IS MACRO-ANALYSIS?

During the last decade macro-analysis seminars have become more and more common, particularly in England and the United States. They have provided a way for small groups of ordinary citizens to study large-scale (hence "macro") issues in an organized, manageable and action-oriented way. Although these seminars have been used primarily for studying socio-economic issues with a view toward social change, they can be used in any kind of small group to deal with any topic, and the techniques they employ are in a constant state of development. A manual for organising macro-analysis seminars describes them as follows:

"Macro-analysis seminars are *democratically run* study groups that attempt to increase the participants' awareness of the economic and social forces that are shaping our global society. *They are distinctive in their concern for the needs and feelings of all group participants, and in the procedures being developed to assist the group to focus their discussions* and to derive from them valuable practical suggestions for social change action." (Jacobs, et al., 1975: 4; italics mine). In adapting these techniques to the teaching of English as a second language, emphasis has been placed on the process without losing sight of the goal for participants to "try to apply what they learn [in the seminars] to their attempts to change society and their own way of life" (Jacobs, et al., 1975: 2). The primary aim is to give students experience in holding discussions about topics of vital importance to them in a democratic atmosphere.

Following is a brief description of the group process basic to macro-analysis seminars.[3]

The agenda or plan for each session of a macro-analysis seminar is made by the whole group on the basis of consensus. There are three specifically defined roles in the group: the convenor, facilitator and assistant facilitator. It is significant that no one plays the role of "leader," "chairperson," "secretary" or "president." The teacher acts as convenor, and takes over-all responsibility for organising the group, providing necessary materials, and acting as facilitator for the first few sessions to orient the group to macro-analysis. The responsibility for conducting each session is assumed by two group members taking the roles of facilitator and assistant facilitator, but they are not discussion leaders in the conventional sense. The term facilitator has been coined in order to make clear that this person's role is to facilitate or aid the smooth functioning of the group toward achieving its goals. It is the task of the facilitator to see that the agreed-upon agenda is followed, and that the dis-

cussion does not wander from the topic at hand. She[4] must also be aware of the feelings of the members of the group, and see that they are understanding each other and that everyone is actively participating. In order for the assistant facilitator to help the facilitator with these tasks the two meet together before each session to decide how best to proceed. The assistant also acts as a timekeeper, to see that the agenda is followed, and as the recorder, whose job it is to write down on a wall chart items mentioned in discussion to which the group may want to refer again. Writing with a felt pen on big sheets of paper such as *mozoshi* is better than using blackboards for this purpose because these sheets can be kept and referred to in subsequent sessions. It is essential that the roles of facilitator and assistant facilitator be rotated, so that at each session a new assistant for the following session is chosen, and the assistant for one session becomes the facilitator for the next. In this way there is a different pair facilitating each meeting. Ideally everyone in the group should have a chance to play both roles.

USING THESE TECHNIQUES IN THE CLASSROOM

In classes in which macro-analysis techniques are to be used the teacher, acting as *convenor*, comes to the first class with an agenda like the one below, written on a big piece of paper so that everyone can see it easily when it is put up on the wall.

Agenda

1. Convenor's self-introduction, and introduction of macro-analysis	3 minutes
2. Agenda review	2
3. Pair introductions	15

4. Explanation of macro-analysis and group questions	5
5. Brainstorming on expectations and goals	5
6. Planning the next session	5
7. Convenor's comments	5
Total:	40 minutes

Beginning with the first item on the agenda, the convenor introduces herself briefly and then explains that this class will be an experiment in using macro-analysis techniques to help the class have meaningful discussions. After reading quickly through the agenda, the convenor has everyone sit by a partner whom she does not know very well. They are then given three minutes to ask questions to each other in pairs, after which each member introduces her partner to the group. It is often helpful if the convenor suggests a few questions for everyone to ask each other, and has them think of others on their own. It is also useful to give a signal after a minute and a half so that partners can switch, to let each have equal time for asking questions. The convenor also pairs up with someone for this exercise. These introductions are designed to be an ice breaker to help members get acquainted and to relax using English together. The convenor then goes on to explain macro-analysis, giving everyone a copy of some introductory information from the handbook mentioned above to be read carefully at home (Jacobs, et al., 1975: 8-13). Emphasis is placed on the importance of sharing opinions on the topics discussed in a democratic way, and it is stressed that each member of the group has a big responsibility for making the class a success. After explaining that brainstorming is a way of gathering many ideas from the whole group as quickly as possible without discussion of each idea, the convenor goes on to item 5 on the agenda. Emphasising that in brainstorming no idea is

unacceptable, no matter how trivial, impractical or even foolish it may seem, the convenor asks students to share their ideas about their expectations and goals for this class, and makes a list of the things mentioned on a wall chart. She then proposes that the next session focus on a sharing of the main issues and problems that each of us faces today. The assignment might read as follows: 1. Read the reprinted explanation of macro-analysis and be prepared to ask questions about it. 2. Make a list of at least three of the biggest problems or issues that you face today in each of three areas: a) your personal and family life, b) your school life and c) the society in which we live. 3. Bring a background material in English, such as a newspaper or magazine article, tape recording, etc., for at least one of these problems or issues which may be used as a basis for future class discussions. Time is reserved at the end of the session for the convenor's comments. This time is useful for correcting English mistakes, awkward usage, poor choices of words and the like that students have made during the course of the session that it would not have been appropriate to interrupt the discussion to correct earlier. This time may also be used to make comments about the general conduct of the class, or about the topic at hand.

The following is a sample agenda for the second session:

Agenda

1. Excitement sharing	5 minutes
2. Agenda review	1
3. Choosing an assistant facilitator for this, and another for the next session	1
4. Explanation and questions on macro-analysis	5

5. Brainstorming on the issues and problems we face today	15
6. Planning the next session	5
7. Convenor's comments	8
Total:	40 minutes

Items 1, 2 and 3 on this agenda will be repeated at each subsequent session. The few minutes of excitement sharing, in which a few members of the group are encouraged to tell about something interesting that has happened to them recently, helps everyone to relax and builds a good group atmosphere. The agenda review allows for changes to be made at the suggestion of someone in the group if it seems advisable. It is useful to choose the next assistant facilitator early in the session so that she can observe the group process carefully in order to be an effective facilitator in the next one. In the second session only, two assistants must be chosen, one for this session and one for the next. After these preliminaries, the convenor, acting as facilitator, goes on to items 4 and makes further explanation of the purpose and process of macro-analysis in this class, and answers students' questions. The group is then ready to go on to the main focus of the day's agenda and begin a brainstorming session on the problems and issues of major concern to its members, with the recorder writing the ideas in note form on three separate wall charts, one labelled PERSONAL AND FAMILY ISSUES, another SCHOOL ISSUES and the third SOCIAL ISSUES. Then on the basis of this the convenor goes on to help the group plan a discussion topic for the following week based on one of these issues, and select a background reading or other material to be studied by everyone before the next session. It is advisable, unless the group is extremely competent in English and experienced in this kind of discussion, to choose topics from areas of personal

and family issues and school issues for the first few weeks. As topics in these areas are closer to students' daily lives they will find it relatively easy to express their ideas and opinions about them, whereas broader social issues are topics which they may not be accustomed to discussing even in their own language.[5] Because it is not always possible between one session and the next to find suitable background materials on which to base discussions, students should be required to bring to each session at least one background material that might be used in future sessions so that a collection of these materials is always available to draw upon.

Subsequent sessions will go on to focus on various ones of these issues the group has listed, as well as others they may choose later, with the aim of reaching some kind of group consensus at each session. The same basic procedures described above will be used in each session, with the students taking the roles of facilitator and assistant facilitator, leaving the teacher free to correct English mistakes, use the blackboard to provide necessary expressions and vocabulary, and make comments and suggestions as a member of the group rather than as a discussion leader.

Below is the agenda for one session which two advanced classes held on the problems of working women in Japanese society:

Agenda

1. Excitement sharing	5 minutes
2. Agenda review	1
3. Choosing the assistant facilitator for the next week	1
4. Discussion: Working women in Japan – the problems they face	20

5. Planning the next session	5
6. Convenor's comments	8
Total:	40 minutes

The groundwork for this session had been laid the week before by holding a brainstorming session on the aspects of the issue of women working in Japan. Those aspects that the group wanted to pursue were noted by the recorder for use in the subsequent session. The following are the notes from those preparatory brainstorming sessions, taken from the two separate classes:

Class A: **Women Working in Japan**

- Why do women quit work when they marry?
- What kind of jobs can women have?
- Which is the best way for the child, for the mother to be always with him or not?
- What kind of jobs are good for married women (for the job itself and for the woman herself)?
- Why do companies make women quit?
- Why don't Japanese men help their wives?
- Why is there any difference between men and women in the speed of promotion in a company?

Class B: **Working Women**

- What should the husband do to help?
- How do you bring up children and have a job?
- How to choose a job that you can do all your life.
- What does this society demand of working women?
- What should you do to do your job and your

housework smoothly?
- Which is more important, having a job or being married?
- Inequality between men and women in professions.

During the discussion time of the next class session (noted on the "Agenda" above), the notes taken in the preparatory session were pursued and a new set of notes taken, which are shown below:

Class A: Why do few women have equal status with men in the business, professional and political worlds of Japan?
- Not so many women have careers because of tradition. Marriage.
- The traditional work at home is important.
- Women want to have careers outside the home.
- The problem becomes a conflict of feelings.
- Many girls study literature, music, and art at college. Literature (or music or art) is for girls (emotional).
- Not so many women have leadership at work.
- Women do not have equal opportunities at work: wages, time of retirement (prejudice).
- Companies (men) do not employ women.
- Women should not give up their jobs in spite of the problems.

Class B: 1. The basic differences between men and women
a. psychological differences
b. Women bear children.
c. Women have delicate sensibilities.
d. physical strength

e. physical attractiveness
f. awareness of details (women)
g. (men) think roughly

2. What efforts do women have to make to overcome these differences?
   a. Women have to have an understanding with their husbands.
   b. We women have to use our strong points in our jobs (such as awareness of details, delicate sensibilities).
   c. We women need not conceal our weak points, and we need not overwork.
   d. Women must not put on an air of ignorance, which has been believed to be a virtue.
   e. We must change family relationships.
   f. Education can change men's and women's psychology.
3. If something happens in the family, what does she do?
   a. All the members of her family must make an effort to overcome the problem.
   b. cooperation with men
   c. All the members of the family have to understand the essence of the problem.
   d. Community helps them financially.
   e. Try to make a comfortable life.

These rough notes give only a very general picture of what was actually discussed in these two classes, and represent only a sample of the structure that sessions may take and the topics that can be undertaken.

In conclusion, the benefits of group evaluation should be mentioned. Although it is too time-consuming to have a

group evaluation at the end of each session as is recommended (Jacobs, et al., 1975), this writer has found that holding evaluations from time to time improves the quality of sessions. The last session at the end of each semester has been devoted to evaluation of all sessions and to evaluation of the use of macro-analysis. These evaluations have provided information and suggestions which have been useful in planning subsequent seminars. The following conclusions are based on these evaluation sessions and on this writer's observations.

EVALUATION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Although further experimentation with the process of using macro-analysis techniques in teaching English is needed, a tentative conclusion may be drawn that this application of these techniques not only presents students with a new model *for* and valuable experience *in* participating in a democratic discussion in English, but that it also builds on elements already present in Japanese culture, giving the process some positive outcomes that might not occur in a similar seminar made up of non-Japanese members. This writer is fully aware of the limitations in using the classroom as a place to train homogeneous groups of Japanese students to participate effectively in the kind of democratic discussion which is a basic and integral part of the culture of native English speakers. Nevertheless, she believes that classes based on macro-analysis techniques provide students with a valuable first step in developing their English communication skills in this direction.

Macro-analysis techniques provide students with an opportunity to discuss issues of interest to them in an open and democratic way that seldom seems provided on any level of the Japanese educational system. In evaluating the process,

students who have been in groups composed of more than one grade level have said they found it a satisfying experience to talk together without having to be conscious of their relative grade levels as they are when they speak Japanese. For this reason there seems to be a more stimulating atmosphere in classes of mixed grade levels than in leveled classes.

It is certainly not easy to develop good facilitator role skills, but Japanese students often display some valuable abilities in this area that more individualistic native speakers of English tend to lack. A good facilitator must know how to encourage the expression of various opinions in a group and help to synthesise these views into a conclusion which is acceptable to the group. Japanese tend to have a highly developed sensitivity toward the thoughts and feelings of others and are well trained in cooperating and working together in a group. These qualities are useful skills for a facilitator because they help her to know when and to whom to direct certain questions in order to further advance the discussion, and to incorporate the various views expressed into a group consensus. The other side of this coin is, of course, that Japanese tend to rely too much on a leader. It is difficult for them to develop the habit of volunteering their opinions when it seems appropriate. There is also a tendency toward expressing a false consensus that is not really an expression of the ideas of the whole group. The teacher, as convenor, must strike a delicate balance between providing too much leadership, which students tend to readily relinquish to a teacher, and not enough. The convenor has a vital role to play not only in helping students to improve their ability to express themselves in English, in such ways as correcting mistakes and providing useful words and expressions, but also in other areas, such as helping plan future class sessions, helping to focus topics suggested by students, and providing relevant reading and other background materials. In addition, the convenor can greatly enrich discussions

by expressing opinions from her own viewpoint as someone older whose experience is different from that of students, and if she is not Japanese, as someone with a different cultural perspective.

Experience has shown that macro-analysis works best in classes of about 10 to 15, and certainly not more than 20 students. This would no doubt be true for a group of any cultural background, but an observation by Nakane throws some interesting light on why this is true in a group of Japanese. She notes that Japanese groups seem to function most smoothly if they are made of about 10 members with no significant differences in economic and social status (Nakane, 1970: 144). This probably helps to account for the success found in teaching small homogeneous groups. Interestingly, though, as noted above, students have frequently pointed out in evaluation sessions that they have found it valuable to have students of different grade levels in the same group, and have commented that their discussions would have been more lively and interesting if the groups were more homogeneous. For this reason it would be desirable to have students from various college departments in each group if possible. The next step beyond this is for students to transfer their newly acquired discussion skills outside the classroom to broader-based groups made up of a wider variety of participants of different ages, sexes and academic and cultural backgrounds. Based on her experience in teaching Japanese students and being a participant in English discussion groups in which Japanese take part, this writer believes that without the experience of participating discussions in this kind of broad-based group a Japanese will find it difficult if not impossible to develop the kind of skills necessary to bridge the culture gap outlined in the beginning of this paper, and learn to participate constructively in a truly democratic discussion.

Finally, an evaluation should be made of the use of the

procedures unique to macro-analysis in the English classroom.

1. Excitement sharing at the beginning of each session seems useful in creating a relaxed mood and a positive atmosphere in the group. Again, Nakane's observation on the importance of "relaxed and informal talk" (Nakane, 1970: 144) at the beginning of a group meeting of Japanese would indicate that this technique is not a foreign import to Japan, and therefore it is a practice that students should be able to accept easily and carry out. The only difficulty found here has been getting students to share something voluntarily, rather than waiting to be asked.

2. Posting an agenda where everyone can see it, and reviewing it quickly at the beginning of each session is a good way of giving everyone a clear idea of how the session will be spent.

3. Brainstorming is a useful way of getting an idea of the range of ideas or opinions on one issue in a short time. It is particularly useful to keep the notes taken in brainstorming sessions to be referred to in later sessions.

4. Taking notes on wall charts is a way of ensuring that everyone can follow the thread of the discussion. It helps students in remembering new words and phrases they have heard. Care should be taken that attention be focused primarily on the discussion itself, rather than on the note-taking, and that the process of note-taking does not slow down the discussion. Students often have difficulty in capturing the main points of the discussion in a few brief notes, and are often worried about making embarrassing mistakes in grammar or spelling. The convenor should stress that the notes are intended to serve as a guide in discussion, and in planning future session, and that the ideas themselves are more important than the way in which they are written. She should also keep a felt pen handy to quickly and unobtrusively correct grammar and spelling mistakes.

5. Macro-analysis seminars are usually designed to depend on a very demanding reading list. In the English class it is often difficult to prepare good reading materials ahead of time, since the topics tend to be varied, and there is usually little time after a topic has been selected to search for and distribute appropriate readings. It is advisable to select topics far enough in advance so that at least one good basic background reading on the topic can be provided for everyone to read as homework before each session. Ideally there should also be other readings that could be assigned to one or two reporters before each session, but this is often difficult, and in a 40-minute session there is often not adequate time for a reporter to report and still have a good group discussion.

6. Macro-analysis seminars are usually planned for three-hour sessions. Most English classes are not that long, so the sessions must be telescoped into a shorter time. There is often just not enough time to have good reports on background material, good discussion that leads to some conclusions, and then enough time for adequate comments from the teacher. The challenge is to strike a balance so that none of these things is consistently sacrificed for lack of time.

CONCLUSION

Adapting macro-analysis techniques to the teaching of oral English expression to intermediate and advanced students makes it possible not only to teach basic language but also to give students valuable experience in participating constructively in a goal-oriented discussion in English. While students' progress in these areas is difficult to measure, this writer believes that in teaching by the method described in this paper she achieves some measure of success in several areas. First, students' ability to express themselves in English

improves. Not only do they learn to avoid using certain ungrammatical or awkward constructions, and learn new vocabulary and expressions related to areas of their own interest, but they also improve in their ability to formulate their ideas and express their opinions articulately to the group. Learning new information about topics of interest through the medium of English in this way provides valuable training in thinking in English, and should lead to discovery of new ways to formualte and express ideas, and to analyse problems. Lastly, it is hoped that this method of teaching provides students with the incentive to follow up on issues discussed and other new ones through further reading, study and discussion.

There is much that remains to be investigated and experimented with in the area of teaching people how to overcome the barriers to communication caused by cultural differences. It is hoped that the kind of training described in this paper can be improved upon in the future in such ways as alloting more time for each session, providing a greater variety of background materials on a wide range of topics to be used as a basis for discussion, and having more heterogeneous groups. It is hoped that this report might serve as a starting point for further investigation and experimentation in the field of intercultural communication.

NOTES

1. Japanese names are cited with the family name first.

2. While these conventions and attitudes may vary to some extent in different part of the English-speaking world, this paper will confine itself to a consideration of the American society with which the writer is most familiar.

3. For more detail see Jacobs, et al., 1975, pp. 6-13.

4. In this paper the feminine pronoun is used, since the classes described were composed entirely of women.

5. Discussion of such things as social and political issues, which is not only acceptable but the norm among English-speaking people, is much less common among Japanese, particularly when the topic is controversial and the group a heterogeneous one. (See p.51)

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SENTENCE COMBINING AND THE TEACHING OF WRITING IN THE ESL/FL CLASSROOM: THEORY, RESEARCH AND PRACTICE*

Ian Shortreed
Curtis Hart Kelly

Abstract

Over the past ten years, sentence combining has become a standard fixture in native speaker high school and university writing programs. Its popularity is evidenced by the enormous number of research studies, scholarly articles in academic journals and classroom textbooks specifically devoted to its use. This paper provides an overview of the theory, research and practice of sentence combining and its application to college level writing programs for ESL/FL students.

THEORETICAL CONSIDERATIONS

In the early 60's, as more and more studies began questioning the pedagogical value of teaching formal and structural grammar in relation to writing, educators sought alternate methods for teaching grammar in the composition classroom

Ian Shortreed and Curtis Kelly are co-ordinators of the EFL writing program at the Kansai University of Foreign Studies. Mr. Shortreed has a B.A. in Sanskrit and Oriental Linguistics from the University of Toronto and is at present working toward his M.A. in ESL at the University of British Columbia. Mr. Kelly has a B.A. from Ohio State University and an M.A. in ESL Education from Vanderbuilt University.

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(see, e.g., Braddock et al. 1963 and Zamel 1976). With the advent of the "Chomskian Revolution" in linguistics, a number of research studies appeared claiming that transformational grammar had been successfully used as a method of instruction in elementary school writing programs (Bateman and Zidonis 1966; Mellon 1969). A further refinement of these earlier studies came when O'Hare (1973) discovered that greater overall syntactic proficiency could be achieved by dispensing with the formal instruction of transformational grammar and instead employing cued or signalled pattern drills in conjunction with sentences that had been reduced to their 'kernel' or deep structure form:

A. SOMETHING is illogical.
   Man believes SOMETHING. (IT-FOR-TO)
   Only this tiny earth possesses the conditions. (THAT)
   The conditions have made life possible. (WHICH/THAT)
B. It is illogical for man to believe that only this tiny earth possesses the conditions which have made life possible (p. 86).[1]

The theoretical rationale behind sentence combining is that it allows a student the opportunity to manipulate syntax without having to contend with some of the other creative aspects involved in the composing process. In other words, the cognitive load is being decreased in order to emphasise one specific skill essential to learning how to write in either a first or second language. Some proponents of sentence combining argue that this can facilitate the production of sentences to such an extent that it frees up mental energy for other aspects of the composing process. Stotsky (1975), in her comprehensive review of the literature on sentence combining, suggests then when she writes:

> . . . .the practice of playing mentally and operationally with syntactic structures leads to a kind of automatization of syntactic skills such that mental energy is freed in a Brunnerian sense to concentrate on greater elaboration

of intention and meaning. (p. 37)

A further attraction of sentence combining that both O'Hare (1973) and Ney (1981) have pointed out is that it necessitates the actual 'chunking' of language. As a student learns to embed an increasing number of kernel sentences, the ability to recall and decode more complex information grows correspondingly. This ability to chunk information is also extremely important when a second language learner is developing both reading and listening skills. A number of recent studies have reported that sentence combining practice helped improve these two related language skills in addition to developing greater syntactic maturity in writing (Straw and Schreiner 1982). Other researchers have accounted for this by making an even bolder claim that sentence combining may actually accelerate cognitive growth and thus have a positive effect on all areas of language learning (Hunt 1970/1977; Suhor 1978; Ney 1980b).

One of the most important theoretical assumptions underlying sentence combining is that a student can "test his answers against his own sense of grammaticality" (O'Hare 1973). For a native speaker, of course, this is possible; however, for a non-native speaker of English, sentence combining practice must be gaged to the students' level of competence. As Vivian Zamel (1980) has observed, an ESL/FL student may not possess the linguistic repertoire or "key concepts relating to the grammar of the sentence" to benefit from sentence combining practice. She goes on to advocate the use of traditional grammar instruction so as to provide a conceptual framework within which students may analyze and discuss the different sentences they create when doing these exercises. While this may be necessary for lower level learners (see, e.g., Terdy 1980), intermediate and advanced ESL/FL students usually enter college level writing classes with many years of formal grammar instruction already behind them. Examination of the extent of grammar instruc-

tion in foreign countries where English is taught as a second language and related scores on standard ESL proficiency tests indicate that the vast majority of these students do not need to learn more 'back-to-basics' grammatical nomenclature, but rather how to intuitively employ the grammar they have previously studied when faced with the task of writing in a second language (Farhady 1982). And this is why sentence combining can be such a productive method of instruction in an ESL/FL writing program.

RESEARCH ON SENTENCE COMBINING IN ESL/FL INSTRUCTION

Although there is still substantial debate over whether sentence combining improves overall writing quality and in turn, how this can be quantitatively evaluated, there is now at least some agreement among researchers and teachers that sentence combining does have a positive effect on students' writing. Numerous studies, including those by Mellon (1969), O'Hare (1973), Combs (1976), and Daiker, Morenburg and Kerek (1978), have provided a sound theoretical basis for the application of sentence combining practice in the composition classroom. In contrast with these studies which specifically dealt with native English speakers, the research on the use of sentence combining in the ESL/FL classroom is surprisingly limited. With the exception of earlier studies by Crymes (1971), Akin (1975), Cooper (1976), Klassen (1976), and Monroe (1968) which all reported positive results from sentence combining practice in ESL/FL high school and college writing courses, there are only two major studies which have explored the effects of sentence combining on the writing of ESL or foreign language students.[2]

The first of these by Cooper, Morain and Kalivoda (1978/

1980), reported on an experimental sentence combining program involving 325 American foreign language students studying French, German and Spanish at the University of Georgia. The experimental groups in all three language classes used sentence combining exercises in addition to the regular course work while the control groups engaged in a variety of activities designed to develop all four language skills. The experimental groups which practiced sentence combining showed "significantly higher increases" than the control groups in all three syntactic maturity factors of *Words per Clause, Clauses per T-Unit*, and *Words per T-Unit* when the pre-test and post-test writing samples were compared across all three language courses.[3] The researchers also reported that the post-test scores for each language group remained constant, although students studying German showed slightly higher increases for all three syntactic maturity factors when compared with the scores from the other language classes (French and Spanish).

In an attempt to assess the overall quality of compositions from both the experimental and control groups studying German, nine instructors were asked to evaluate a selection of compositions written on identical themes. An overall mark out of 100 was assigned on the basis of 25% for grammatical and syntactic proficiency and 75% for style which included sentence structure, organization, imagination and word choice. On the basis of these indices of evaluation, 81% of the experimental groups' compositions were chosen as being qualitatively superior to the control groups' compositions. However, no correlation was made between the syntactic maturity scores and the rater preferences. Moreover, compositions from the French and German classes were not subject to this kind of evaluation. Thus, as the researchers themselves concluded, "the relationship between qualitative and quantitative aspects of student writing was investigated

to a limited degree" (Cooper 1981:162).

One of the most interesting findings of this study was that a correlation between increased syntactic maturity in writing and speaking was observed in the experimental groups across all three languages studied, whereas the control groups showed much less improvement when oral pre-test and post-test samples were compared (taped LL exercises were used as a basis for evaluation). As was pointed out earlier, other studies have found a similar correlation between greater syntactic maturity in writing and improved reading and listening skills as a result of sentence combining practice. Although there is obviously a transfer of such inter-related skills, regardless of what method of instruction is used in the classroom, it would seem that sentence combining may facilitate an even greater transfer of both productive and receptive skills. However, much more research is required in this area before any definitive conclusions can be drawn.

A second major study by Ney and Fillerup (1980) partially confirmed Cooper's et al. results, but differed in a number of its findings. The experimental and control groups consisted of 24 ESL students in an 8-week freshman English course at Arizona State University. The experimental group was given sentence combining exercises in addition to the regular course work covered by the control group. The control group's syllabus consisted of a wide variety of activities including free writing, the study of English paragraph structure and formal analysis of rhetorical devices. Even though the experimental group practiced sentence combining for only 10 hours out of the total classroom time (homework assignments were included), Ney and Fillerup found a "statistically significant improvement in their writing" compared to the control group, which showed a decrement in their scores in all three factors of syntactic maturity. In contrast to Ney's (1976) earlier study of an experimental sentence combining program with native speaker college freshmen

where he found that sentence combining had a negligible effect, this study suggested that the age/grade/ syntactic competence hypothesis contested by Daiker, Morenburg and Kerek (1978) was in fact confirmed. Daiker et al. argued that Ney had devoted insufficient classroom time for sentence combining practice to expect significant results while Ney contended that the failure of the study could be accounted for by the higher syntactic competence of the experimental and control groups:

> . . . .the most plausible explanation for the difference in the results of the two studies is that the subjects in the 1976 study were native speakers of English and hence, had a higher level of syntactic competence at the outset and did not progress from this level while the subjects in this study had a relatively low level of competence in English and hence progressed quite considerably in their command of English structures. (1980:20)

Unlike Cooper's et al. study, however, Ney and Fillerup reported that when compositions written on identical themes by both the experimental and control groups were evaluated by three different instructors, the control group's compositions were found to be of better overall quality on the basis of the organization, content and the variety of rhetorical devices used. This finding supports the position taken by numerous sentence combining critics such as Christensen (1968), Moffett (1968), Marzano (1976), Zamel (1980), and Crowhurst (1982), that sentence combining may be beneficial if accompanied by instruction on other aspects of the composing process. This seems to be especially true in relation to teaching composition in the ESL/FL classroom where students not only face the difficult task of mastering the syntax of a second language but also the equally difficult challenge of writing under the constraints of culturally determined patterns of discourse and rhetorical organization which may differ radically from their native languages

(Kaplan 1972).[4] Thus, the ESL/FL teacher must employ sentence combining as part of an overall curriculum where various methods of instruction are used. William Strong (1976) has also argued for a similar kind of eclectic approach and puts this debate in its proper perspective when he writes:

> The most appropriate context for sentence combining is as a skill-building adjunct to regular composition work. In no sense, then, is sentence combining a comprehensive writing program in and of itself. It can be a part of a well-articulated program, but common sense suggests that it can't be the one and only instructional strategy. . . . The strategy is not an end in itself. It's a means to an end. And the end is increased linguistic flexibility and increased independence in free writing. (p. 61)

In comparing these two studies, a number of methodological questions arise which pertain to the research on sentence combining in general. Cooper's et al. findings seem much more acceptable simply because of the comparative size of the study and the greater number of writing samples that were evaluated. Furthermore, the teacher variable in Cooper's et al. study was much more closely monitored since more instructors were involved and each taught a control and experimental class. Differences in teaching styles and lack of consistency in evaluation are two variables that have to be taken into consideration when conducting and analyzing research on sentence combining. The latter is especially important when judging overall writing quality. This is the main reason why T-Unit analysis, despite its inherent drawbacks, remains as one of the criteria for evaluating writing.[5]

PRACTICAL APPLICATION IN THE ESL/FL CLASSROOM

Sentence combining exercises should progress from simpler signalled drills to more open exercises without signalling.

These signalled drills, or what Kameen (1978) has called 'mechanical exercises,' can be used in the first few classes to introduce students to the general procedure of sentence combining. In these introductory exercises it is advisable to restrict the possible combinations of kernel sentences to a single answer:

COMBINE THE FOLLOWING SENTENCES INTO ONE SENTENCE:
1. Mary always makes herself a delicious dinner. (AND)
2. She finishes it with a tasty coffee. (BUT)
3. She never cooks anything for her husband.

A. _____

_____

These simple exercises are designed to build up student confidence and prepare them for more difficult exercises. This second type of exercise should be less controlled, have fewer signals and allow for a greater variety of combinations. In order to ensure that students understand the rhetorical options available for expressing a specific idea, they should be encouraged to discover as many combinations as possible rather than seeking out only one correct answer. To facilitate this process, students can work in small groups with individuals orally reading their answers and then, discussing the various ways to combine the sentences to achieve different stylistic effects (first or second language may be used depending on the teaching environment and level of the students). For most ESL/FL students, the selection of one possible combination over another is an extremely difficult task, at least at the initial stages of doing sentence combining. However, as students begin to employ a greater number of grammatical structures, they will also increasingly rely on their intuitive rather than conscious decision-making abilities. As most writers will testify, it is this latter element that is so

important to the kind of internal dialogue that eventually transpires during the actual composing process. A greater number of kernel sentences can be presented at this point to demonstrate the importance of context as a criterion for selecting an appropriate sentence:

COMBINE THE FOLLOWING SENTENCES IN AS MANY DIFFERENT WAYS AS POSSIBLE:

1. The ferry pushed on.
2. It went towards the island.
3. The name of the island is Hornby.
4. It went through the waters.
5. The waters were rough.
6. The boat did SOMETHING.
7. It went up and down.
8. It went up and down again.
9. It did this as it moved.
10. The moving was across the waters.

A. The ferry pushed on through the rough waters . . . .
B. Pushing on through the rough waters, the ferry went. . .
C. The ferry, pushing on through the rough waters, went. .

Once students have learned to manipulate a variety of grammatical structures, longer passages of whole discourse can be introduced. These exercises present the student with even greater options for combining or even writing out entire paragraphs. At this stage, students should be working well beyond the sentence level by recombining, reorganizing and revising the sentences into a finished paragraph or composition without the aid of signals. Well-known literary works (see, e.g., Stulls [1983] new textbook), magazine articles or even student compositions can either be reduced to kernel sentences or students can do this themselves by breaking down and analyzing a piece of writing. Once again, students

may discuss the possible ways they can organize, combine or even delete sentences to achieve the best stylistic effect.[6] With students working in groups, the teacher can circulate around the classroom counselling groups on questions they may have with their assignments. To ensure the maximum use of classroom time, students should be assigned exercises for homework prior to the next class meeting.

The actual amount of time devoted to sentence combining practice in the classroom should be left to the instructor's own discretion. Usually with these longer and more complex exercises, one exercise is more than enough material for one class meeting. By the time students have discussed their answers and perhaps even written them on the blackboard (overhead projector can also be used), 20 to 30 minutes will have expired. Both Daiker's et al. (1982) and William Strong's (1973) sentence combining textbooks primarily employ these kinds of exercises:

COMBINE AND ORGANIZE THE FOLLOWING INTO A SHORT STORY:

1. The singer was young.
2. He stepped into the spotlight.
3. The singer was swarthy.
4. The spotlight was red.
5. His shirt was unbuttoned.
6. The unbuttoning barred his chest.
7. Sounds ballooned around him.
8. The sounds were of guitars.
9. The sounds were of drums.
10. The sounds were of girls.
11. The girls were screaming.
12. . . . . etc. (Strong 1973:40)

VARIATION A: The swarthy young singer stepped into the red spotlight with his unbuttoned shirt barring his chest. The sounds of guitars, drums and screaming girls ballooned around him. ..... etc.

VARIATION B: Stepping into the red spotlight, the swarthy young singer ..... etc.

VARIATION C: As the sounds of guitars, drums and screaming girls ballooned around him, the swarthy young singer ..... etc.

CLASSROOM MATERIALS: DESIGNING SENTENCE COMBINING EXERCISES FOR THE ESL/FL CLASSROOM

Because of the complexity of the vocabulary and dense cultural content found in many of the currently available sentence combining textbooks, an instructor must either simplify these native speaker materials (Strong; Daiker et al.; Stull; op. cit.) by providing a lower level of vocabulary, or write entirely new sentence combining exercises that assume a level of competence appropriate for ESL/FL students. Another option, of course, would be to use one of the three ESL/FL sentence combining textbooks (Gallingane and Byrd 1977/1979; Pack and Henrichsen 1980; Bander 1982). However, assuming that instructors may want to design their own materials, an important question arises on the most effective way of sequencing grammatical structures for a sentence combining program.

Cooper (1973), Davidson (1977), Kleen (1980), Smith (1981) and Lawlor (1981) have provided specifications for sequencing sentence combining exercises on the basis of developmental and child language acquisition studies (see,

e.g., Hunt 1965; O'Donnell 1967; Brown 1975). The overall rationale for sequencing grammatical instruction has been based on the assumption that syntactic maturity may be accelerated if sentence combining exercises were patterned to follow the natural sequence in which grammatical structures are acquired by a native speaker. Since recent studies on second language acquisition have pointed out that first and second language learners resort to similar strategies when acquiring a language, this rationale for sequencing sentence combining exercises seems to be theoretically sound (Ervin-Tripp 1974; Dulay, Burt and Krashen 1982). However, the practical application of this to the ESL/FL classroom is somewhat more difficult because of the varying levels of student competence in one class/group. Krashen (1981), for example, has opposed the adoption of a grammatically sequenced syllabi for just this reason. Instead, he suggests that second language learners need to be challenged by the materials they study in order for 'acquisition' to occur as opposed to passive 'learning.' Krashen's model of i+l sequencing (previously acquired [i] and additional structure/content [+l]) would mean that a grammatical structure could be introduced even though a learner may not have the requisite competence to immediately identify the rules that generated a new surface structure. In the case of a sentence combining problem where the relative pronoun is deleted, according to Krashen's model of sequencing, a student should be able to infer the deletion rule through sentence combining problems involving the same transformation (signalling may be used to generate a more complex grammatical form which might otherwise be ignored, e.g., *Hint: Don't use who/which*).

A second criterion which Lawlor (1981) has used for sequencing sentence combining exercises is the derivational complexity (DTC) of a grammatical structure. In generative grammar (TG), a grammatical structure is derived from an

underlying or deep structure by a series of transformations. The relative clause is derivationally simpler than a prenominal adjective because the latter is in fact derived from the former (two additional transformations are required to arrive at the surface structure of a prenominal adjective from a relative construction). In TG theory, an acquisition hierarchy can be determined by comparing the derivational complexity of all grammatical structures within any given language (e.g., the greater the number of transformations involved in arriving at a specific grammatical form, the more difficult the acquisition process). However, by adopting a grammatical syllabus on the basis of DTC, grammatical structures that have been reported in both first and second language acquisition studies as being acquired comparatively late would be introduced prior to structures that have been reported to be mastered relatively early in the acquisition process. Lawlor, for example, introduces the relative clause in his sentence combining materials long before the prenominal adjective, but on the basis of acquisition studies, the prenominal adjective is mastered much sooner than the relative clause (Bowerman 1979). The validity of sequencing a grammatical syllabus solely on the basis of DTC seems to be highly doubtful in light of these findings (see, e.g., Fodor, Beaver and Garrett 1974).

A more practical alternative for sequencing sentence combining exercises is perhaps best arrived at by working from both Davidson's (1976) index of the most frequently used grammatical structures in college level compositions and an approximate order of sequencing based on the language acquisition literature. To these two criteria we add a third: our own experience of writing and using sentence combining exercises in the ESL/FL classroom, while also having observed the difficulties students have with specific structures. A suggested order of sequencing sentence combining exercises, commencing from simpler to progressively more com-

plex structures, is given below:

Group 1
a) Coordinating Connectives (and, but, so, for, or, etc.)
b) Prenominal Adjectives (the red car; the rich creamy coffee)
c) Adverbs (the man slowly ran to. . .; the man ran slowly to . . ., etc.)

Group 2
a) Prepositional Phrases (with, in, on, at, over, etc.)
b) Relative Clauses (that, which, when, where, who, whom)
c) Subordinate Clauses (if, when, while, because, although, since, as, etc.)

Group 3
a) Participial Phrases (Walking out of the restaurant, Peter left a half-eaten hamburger on the table.)
b) Appositives and Adjective Phrases (John, a good friend of mine, . . . etc.)
c) Absolute Phrases (I sat motionless, looking around the room, . . . etc.)

Group 4
a) Infinitive Phrases (The emperor's dream was to build a wall . . . etc.)
b) Gerund Phrases (Studying for exams is never enjoyable . . . etc.)
c) Noun Clauses (What made our decision difficult was the . . . etc.)

When writing sentence combining exercises, usually three or four grammatical structures can be covered in one unit. Grammatical explanations should be brief and the exercises should move well beyond combining two or three sentences as soon as possible. If sentence combining exercises remain

only as highly controlled grammar drills where a student is not forced to develop other important composing skills such as revision, deletion and manipulation of entire paragraphs, then its pedagogical value is diminished. In fact, what distinguishes sentence combining from most other forms of grammar instruction, whether they be sentence imitation, cloze exercises or error correction, is that when longer passages of discourse are used, sentence combining practice at least partially replicates (by no means completely) the actual use of grammar during the composing process. With the current interest in the composing process of both native speaker and second language students (see, e.g., Zamel 1982), sentence combining is being increasingly employed as one of the many methods for teaching process skills (W. Smith 1981).

Unfortunately, the currently available sentence combining textbooks for ESL/FL instruction are much too controlled, while also lacking imaginative content. Bander's (1982) new text offers only a few unsignalled exercises and these are restricted to 10 or 12 kernel sentences at the most. The majority of the text is filled with very short combining exercises and accompanied by elaborate grammatical explanations, many of which seem to fill space rather than clarify the grammatical rules being discussed. Pack and Henrichsen's (1980) textbook can be recommended for the variety of exercises presented, however, the content is often dry, providing little incentive for the students to do the exercises. A smaller two-part text (Books 1 & 2) by Gallingane and Byrd (1977, 1979) is perhaps the most interesting from the point of view of providing meaningful content, although the exercises are not developed beyond the paragraph level. William Strong's (1973) text still remains the 'sumum bonum' of sentence combining materials. Since it was written for a native speaker audience, it is difficult to use except with more advanced students, but there are some exercises that can be adapted for intermediate level students if a

vocabulary list is provided by the instructor (see Davidson [1977] for suggestions on using this text).

Prior to beginning a course using sentence combining exercises, a short pre-test should be given to establish what grammatical structures require more study. The pre-test can consist of a short story that has been reduced to kernel sentences. Students should be asked to rewrite the story by combining as many kernels as possible. An alternate method would be to assign a short composition in class and then identify problem areas that require special concentration (see Angelis [1975] for more details on this method). Similarly, at the end of the course, a post-test should be given and the results compared with the pre-test in order to ascertain the syntactic proficiency that has been achieved.

NOTES

1. Paradoxically, sentence combining has only recently been introduced into the foreign language classroom even though the actual concept of using cued or signalled grammatical exercises was originally borrowed from audio-lingual methods commonly used in foreign language instruction during the 60's and 70's. See O'Hare (1973) and Ney (1966/1980b) for an historical account of sentence combining.

2. Other studies by Perron (1974), Hunt (1978) and Kaike (1978) have not been included because these studies were more concerned with developmental acquisition of grammatical structures rather than the effects of sentence combining on writing quality.

3. The minimal terminable unit (T-Unit) was first used by Hunt (1965) to diachronically measure the developmental progression in which children acquire specific grammatical structures. A T-Unit is defined as one main clause *plus* any subordinate clause or non-clausal structure attached to or embeddded in a main clause. Other measures that have been used to analyze syntactic complexity are: sentence

length, clause length, ratio of subordinate clauses to total number of words, etc. The three measures of *Words per Clause, Clauses per T-Unit*, and *Words per T-Unit* are the three primary indices used to objectively evaluate writing quality. The following writing sample, taken from Cooper's et al. (1980) study, illustrates the method of calculating syntactic complexity on the basis of the above mentioned indices. Slashes indicate T-Units and underlined portions indicate clauses:

> Even an American may be confused by the number of knives, forks, and spoons beside his plate *when he sits down to a formal dinner*. / It is simple, however: / one should use the utensils in the order *in which they lie*, beginning from the outside; / or one can watch the hostess and do *what she does*. /

This paragraph contains 56 words, 2 sentences, 4 T-Units and 3 subordinate clauses. The three factors of syntactic maturity can be calculated in the following way:

1. *Words per Clause*: total number of words ÷ by total number of clauses, both subordinate and main (56 ÷ 7 = 8.00 wd./cl.).
2. *Clauses per T-Unit*: total number of clauses, both subordinate and main ÷ number of T-Units (7 ÷ 4 = 1.75 cl./T-Unit).
3. *Words per T-Unit*: Words in writing sample (composition) ÷ T-Units in a writing sample (composition) (56 ÷ 4 = 14.00 wd./T-Unit).

When using T-Unit analysis for evaluating the writing quality of ESL/FL compositions, garbles/errors must be accounted for in each of the three indices above. Errors/garbles are considered to be important only when they are communicative, that is, they hinder comprehension to such an extent that the overall meaning of a sentence is not comprehensible (see Ney and Fillerup 1980). Perkins (1980) found that in evaluating compositions written by advanced ESL students only those syntactic maturity factors that could account for errors/garbles were accurate predictors of overall writing quality. On the basis of Perkin's study, the following syntactic maturity factors appear to be accurate indices for predicting overall writing quality in ESL/FL compositions: *Error-free T-Units, Words in error-free T-Units, Errors per T-Unit*, and a cumulative score of

all three of these indices. Ney (1966) has argued that *Length of error-free T-Units* is also an accurate predictor of overall writing quality. For further discussion of T-Unit analysis see Gaies (1980) and Larsen-Freeman (1978).

4. Kaplan's classification of discourse patterns according to ethnic background and nationality has been criticized as being highly ethnocentric and lacking analytic precision. Recently, however, a number of contrastive discourse studies have appeared which deserve the attention of ESL/FL writing instructors. Hind's (1980) excellent study of Japanese discourse structures reveals that Kaplan's classifications may provide a basis for more detailed research in this area.

5. The mixed findings of Ney's and Cooper's studies raise the controversial question as to whether syntactic complexity as measured by T-Unit length and clause length is an accurate predictor of composition quality. In reviewing a number of studies that reported mixed findings such as Ney's and Cooper's, Crowhurst (1982) has pointed out that syntactic complexity also depends upon the mode of discourse. In her study of sixth, 10th and 12th graders she found that at grades 10 and 12, "argumentative writing of high syntactic complexity received significantly higher quality scores than argumentative writing of low syntactic complexity, but that narratives of high syntactic complexity did not receive higher quality scores than narratives of low complexity" (p. 13). Since narrative writing is usually stressed more than other modes of writing in ESL/FL composition courses, Crowhurst's findings seem to have particular significance.

6. Kinneavy (1979) has suggested that these kinds of exercises, which usually lead to discussions on a wide variety of topics related to the composing process, may account for the relative success that sentence combining has had in college level writing classes, particularly in Daiker, Morenburg and Kerek's sentence combining program. Similarly, in the ESL/FL classroom, sentence combining can be used as a medium for teaching rhetoric and exploring other aspects of the composing process.

APPENDIX

When writing sentence combining exercises, the following steps may be helpful:

1. Topics, places and people should be 'culturally relevent'.
2. Write out the exercises as if it were a standard piece of writing (e.g., paragraph structure, etc.).
3. Break down the sentences into kernels.
4. Review the grammatical structures included in the exercise.
5. Provide signalling where necessary, especially in introductory and semi-controlled exercises.
6. Make sure the vocabulary level allows for complete semantic understanding (vocabulary list may be included with each exercise).

Introductory Exercises (Controlled): Three or four grammatical structures can be covered in one unit (see, e.g., sequencing order on p. 85).

Adjectives

example: Henry lives in a house.
The house is newly-built.
The house is Japanese. ⟶ *Henry lives in newly-built Japanese house.*

(Hint: do not use "and")

1) I like cake best.
The cake is chocolate.
_____
_____

2) My friend works in a company.
My friend is an American.
The company makes steel.
_____
_____

3) Students get jobs after graduating.
The jobs are high paying.
_____
_____

Adverbs

example: I sat down in the hot bath water.
I did it slowly.
It was painful. ⟶ *I slowly and painfully sat down in the hot bath water.*

(Hint: do not use "and")

1) She wrote her name on the paper.
She did it quickly.
_____
_____

2) John can sing.
His singing is good.
John can dance.
His dancing is bad.
(but)

3) You should do these exercises.
They should be done quickly.
But they should also be done correctly.

Intermediate Exercises (Semi-Controlled): Review all grammatical structures taught in one unit.

"The Invader" game, recently popular in Japan, is really a lot older than you might think . . .

THE INVADER

1) There was a room. (Hint: Try "as he")
It was dark.
It was quiet.
It was empty of people.
He looked in.

2) He decided something.
Now was his best chance to sneak in.

3) He jumped out. (Hint: Try using the "and" in different ways)
He did it from behind the curtain.
It was done bravely.
He rushed towards the table.
It was done silently.
He was hoping the heavy darkness would hide him.

4) He suddenly stopped. (Hint: Try using "and" one time
He was under the chair. and "–ing –and" one time)
He looked around nervously.
He decided it was safe to continue.

5) He climbed.
It was to the top of the table.
He bit hard.
It was into a cake.

to sneak in – 忍び込む

6) He took two nervous bites. (Hint: Try using "but after"
He heard a low voice. one time)

7) He took one more mouthful.
He quickly ran back somewhere.
It was his hiding place.
He chewed quietly as he went.

8) He smiled. (Hint: as, how hard)
It was done at the same time that he thought to himself.
It was about the life of a cockroach.
It is a hard life.

to chew – かみくだす

Advanced Exercises (Open): There should be no signalling in these exercises.

Read and then rewrite this story into a better form. You may change the sentences any way you wish, but try to keep the meaning the same. When you're done you'll know the terrors of . . .

THE 'DEPILATOR'

1) I stood.
2) I didn't move.
3) The door was behind me.
4) It was closed.
5) The walls were on both sides.
6) They were solid and they were silent.
7) He was in front of me.
8) He was looking into my face.
9) His eyes were empty.
10) His eyes grew a smile.
11) The smile came as he realized something.
12) What he realized was that he would soon have all the money I had.
13) I had it in my wallet.
14) I looked at his hands.
15) It was downwards.
16) I saw him take something out.
17) It was a silvery object.

18) It was also sharp.
19) Then he said something.
20) It was "Come over here."
21) His voice was soft and low.
22) I felt three things.
23) One was a feeling of wetness.
24) It was collecting on my forehead.
25) Another was a collapsing feeling.
26) It was my stomach.
27) It felt like a balloon losing air.
28) Another was a shiver of fear.
29) It was in my legs.
30) I knew I couldn't escape.
31) It was impossible by now.
32) I stumbled over to his side.
33) I fell into the chair.
34) I knew that he would soon cut me.
35) But I said something despite my knowledge.
36) I raised my courage.
37) I raised it until it was enough to say something.
38) I said "A little off the sides around my ears."
39) I also said "And shorten the top."
40) Then it began.
41) It was torture.

'depilator' – read the story and figure it out
solid – 固い collapsing – くじける
shiver – 寒け
to stumble – よろめき歩く
torture – 責め苦

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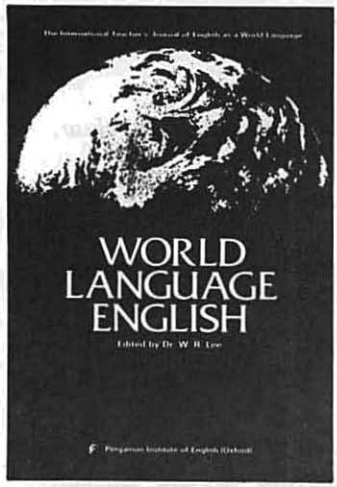

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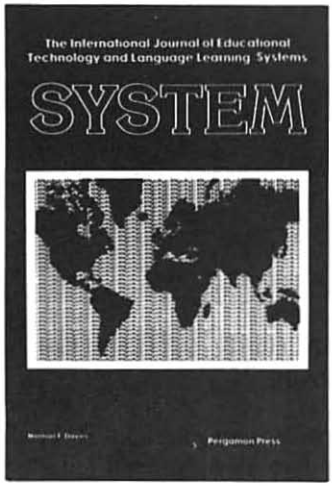

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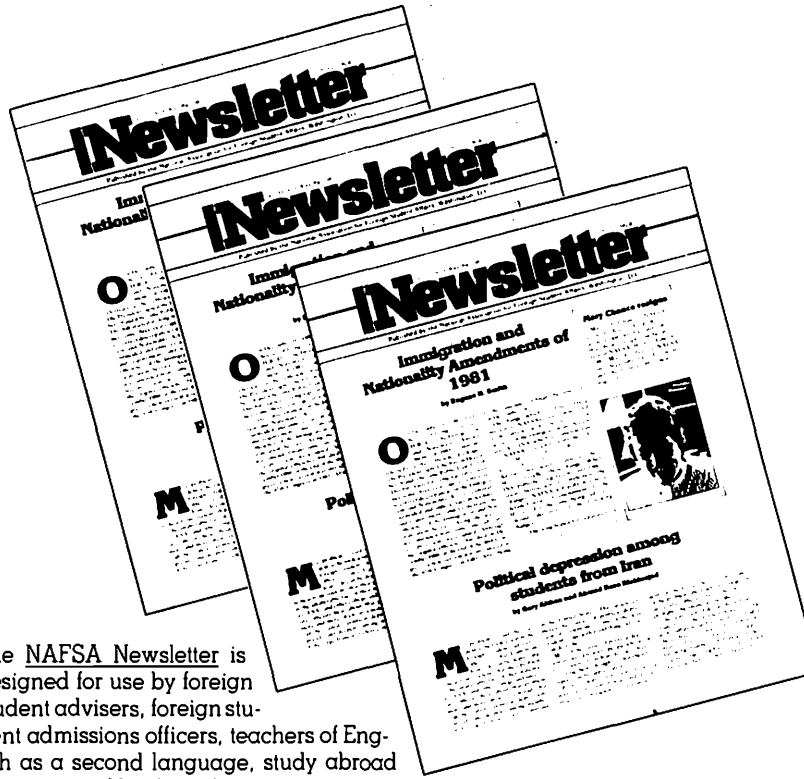

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