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**Listening: An Alternative Approach**James R. Nord  
Michigan State University

Most people act upon their "beliefs" or "assumptions" or "theories." When men believed the world was flat, sailors could not sail out far for fear of falling off the edge. When man "believed" the world was round, they sailed around it. For many years now, people teaching foreign languages have "believed" that languages were primarily "talk." Many experts have developed a method called the audio-lingual approach based on this belief. This method is based upon the belief that a child learns a language by talking and being praised by parents for correct speech or corrected by parents for incorrect speech. These people believe that learning a language is the same as learning to talk. The best method therefore is practicing to talk. The audio-lingual method believed that people should practice speaking from the first day.

Recently there has been a questioning of this belief, of this assumption, of this theory. Some people now believe that learning a language is not just learning to talk, but rather that learning a language is building a map of meaning in the mind. These people believe that talking may indicate that the language was learned, but these people do not believe that practice in talking is the best way to build up this "cognitive" map in the mind. These people believe that the best way to learn a language, to build up this "cognitive map" in the mind, is to practice meaningful listening.

This alternative belief leads to alternative practices in language learning exercises. Therefore an alternative methodology is now being developed around the belief that the best way to learn a language is to learn to listen and comprehend that language. How does this apply to learning English in Japan?

**Understanding Spoken English**

Understanding spoken English is believed to be an important skill. But it must be learned. It is not a skill which one learns by speaking. One does not, however, learn to understand spoken English just by casual listening to the radio or television. One can learn to understand spoken English rapidly by attentive listening to carefully graded exercises designed to insure correct understanding every step along the way. Once

listening fluency is achieved, speaking, reading, and writing fluency are achieved rapidly and easily. But listening fluency is not a single, simple skill.

Listening fluency involves at least three progressive stages or skills. First there is a basic decoding skill. In this stage a person hears a spoken word or sentence and it releases an associated meaning in his mind. For example, on hearing "The cat is on the table," the hearer can picture this situation. There are several sub-skills which are necessary to achieve this skill, but simple understanding is not listening fluency. The second skill, or listening stage, involves listening ahead or anticipating the next word or phrase. For example, on hearing "The cow is in..." the listener should expect a function word "the" or "a" followed by a noun, probably barn or pasture. The third and final phase of listening skill is error recognition. In this phase the listener can detect when a statement heard contains an error. The error could be phonetic, such as a foreign accent, it could be grammatical such as "the boy are home," or the error could be semantic such as "The train drank his coffee with a fork." Most students can easily master the other skills after achieving listening fluency by progressing through all three stages.

After achieving listening fluency by progressing through the three stages of development, it is believed that a rather complete "cognitive map" has been developed. The learner can then quickly achieve fluency in other skills. The speaking skills come very rapidly without instruction because the trained listening ear acts as a self-monitoring teacher who is always available. Reading is very similar to listening and simple reading skill can be achieved with only minimal additional training in the relationship of the written form to the sound form. Writing takes some additional training, but follows rapidly after refinement of the "cognitive map."

Listening fluency can be taught and learned through a relatively simple technique. Once this technique is understood, most teachers can begin some training in listening immediately. A basic understanding of the principles should allow teachers to use existing instructional materials to teach listening fluency.

## **JALT NEWSLETTER**

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The basic principles emphasized in a listening or cognitive approach are:

- a. The listening should be meaningful--the student should be encouraged to guess at the direct meaning (not translation into the native language) and be informed immediately whether his guess was correct or not.
- b. The listening should precede from simple meaningful wholes to more complex meaningful wholes--the student can learn simple vocabulary items in the beginning since these are whole units with meaning. Simple sentences such as "This is a \_\_\_\_\_" or "The \_\_\_\_\_ is \_\_\_\_\_" are also meaningful wholes and should be learned early. More complex grammatical structures should be introduced and exercised using the meaningful vocabulary already learned. For example, after a student learns "The boy hit the car," he can learn that "the boy was hit by the car" is a grammatical structure which gives quite different meaning to the familiar words.
- c. The discrimination of the spoken message into its meaningful parts and its basic structure is a primary focus of the learning task.

Therefore any teaching of language according to the cognitive listening theory is basically discrimination learning. The conditions which will increase the probability of discrimination on the part of the student, and the exercises which will allow the student to successfully practice this discrimination will increase the effectiveness and the efficiency of the language learning process.

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## inter·views

**Nord: The Primacy of Listening**

[Dr. James R. Nord is an Associate Professor in the Learning and Evaluation Service of Michigan State University. He did his undergraduate work at the U.S. Naval Academy and then received his Master's Degree and his Doctor's Degree from Michigan State. He also studied Linguistics and Psychology at the University of Paris. Dr. Nord's primary interests are in educational media and technology. He is the inventor of some immediate feedback technologies and is a strong advocate of the "listening approach" to language learning. After his recent presentation for the Kansai Chapter, Professor Nord was interviewed by Tom Robb.]



\* \* \* \* \*

*I believe that you are an educational technologist rather than a linguist or ESL instructor. Could you tell us how you got interested in language learning?*

My original interest in language learning probably came from my first attempt to learn Spanish many, many years ago when I first was in college. It wasn't exactly the most successful experience, and it was perhaps the frustration of not learning it easily or well that first triggered my interest in language learning.

I first became involved in developing a foreign language program while I was a member of Teaching Research, a special research unit for the state-wide system of higher education in Oregon. In 1970, I was asked to develop a bilingual program for a rather unique community. One third of the population was composed of Russian immigrants with Russian as their first language. A second third was made up of Spanish migrant workers, who very often came from a home in which Spanish was the first language. The third group was a sort of blue collar group, which worked in Portland but lived in this community. They had a native English-speaking background. One of the methodologies being thought about at that time was what William Mackey of Laval University in Quebec, Canada, called "receptive bilingualism." It's a type of "immersion" program. I talked with him on the phone and considered him as one of our consultants. I also talked with Jim Asher (*originator of Total Physical Response*) at that time. I had done a search of the literature on language teaching and bilingualism, and I came across Asher's name at that time.

At the same time I was working on the bilingual program, I was also developing a program for teaching listening comprehension to native English-speaking students at the junior college in Eugene, Oregon. The results of that particular experience perhaps biased me towards the listening approach.

However, a more recent experience was when I was asked, as a learning consultant for the Learning and Evaluation Services of Michigan State University, to assist the Russian language program in planning their program. This was in 1972..When the Russian language instructors at Michigan State asked me for help, I was able to draw on my background experience in discussing the matter with them. They brought my attention to (*Valerian*) Postovsky's work, which blended well with my own experiences in Oregon. A year was spent

in discussing the theoretical and practical applications of Asher's work and Postovsky's work, and, as a consequence, the instructors and I became quite unified in our approach to the language process. However, the details were not worked out at the time. After the first year, the instructors said, "We can understand; we can work it out, and we can deal with it ." But then they had the uncomfortable experience of walking into their classroom and spending 3 to 5 minutes telling their students to "stand up, walk to the window, sit down, raise your right hand..." Within 5 minutes, they were back to the audio-lingual practice of 'repeat after me.' Their established patterns of teaching were so ingrained that they found it difficult to shift. One of the complaints was that they did not have enough structure. They did not have enough instructional materials to supplement the listening approach, to help them to shift over to this new mode of teaching. We then developed a number of materials and gradually created the theoretical framework which I now call the Sens-it-Cell approach. All this was being worked out through discussions, through interactions, through practical experience and through the development of materials.

At about this time, Jim Asher wrote me and asked me how my materials were related to the work of Winitz and Reeds. I had not had any acquaintance with Winitz and Reeds at that time. I immediately started to look into their studies and found them to be very similar in concept (*to my own*).

Also at about this time, I received a letter from a man by the name of Landis, George B. Landis from Canada, who is a retired military officer. He had been a Russian instructor,... and he was a very strong advocate of what he called "alternative lingual communication." In Canada that would mean English-speaking people speaking English but also comprehending French; French people speaking French but also comprehending English. He was and is in correspondence with a very large number of people, including Asher, myself, Winitz, Belasco, Postovsky, a fellow by the name of Gautier, who tried using a receptive bilingual listening program called "Tangau" in Canada in the early 60's. Landis was a sort of networking catalyst. He sort of put all of us together. He read all of our ideas, and he interchanged letters with all of us and got many of the people who were interested in the listening comprehension approach acquainted with each other.

As the Russian program at M.S.U. developed and we started to publish the findings in various journals and at conferences, I became personally acquainted with Harris Winitz and Val Postovsky. I visited Postovsky in California just before his death, and I visited Asher. In fact, Asher, Postovsky, Judy Gary (another listening advocate), and I all had an informal day together at Jim's house near San Jose, California in the spring of 1976. This helped us all jell our ideas together. In the spring of 1977, I met Simon Belasco, a French instructor at Penn State. He has been trying to convince the "establishment" that listening is important since the early 50's--with not much success, I might say...

The point I want to make is that the network of people who became involved with encouraging listening comprehension, so to speak, seems to have grown very rapidly in the latter part of the 70's. I am now in personal correspondence with almost a hundred of them now. Most of us probably began with a sense of personal conviction that the audio-lingual method left a lot to be desired. I learned French in France in the early 60's by the St. Cloud Method, which is basically audio-lingual with pictures. I talked with the people at St. Cloud; I discussed the whole concept of listening with them at the time, and much of it was expressed as a kind of intuitive groping. I felt uncomfortable with the insistence upon repeating things that I did not understand. The work I did later in Oregon tended to help me coalesce

my thoughts a little bit, and the work with the Russian program at M.S.U. gave me the most direct impetus to develop a theoretical framework.

*Could you please tell us how your approach differs from that of Winitz and Reeds or from that of James Asker?*

I guess that the best way to characterize it is that I consider my approach to be a more global, overall theoretical position in which their two approaches are subsets or subparts. My concern is much broader. My concern is not just with foreign language teaching. Because I am in educational technology, I have an interest in learning in general and particularly in symbolic learning. When I talk about symbolic learning, I'm talking about the learning of any "language," such as mathematics, art, or music. Even chemistry or physics is really a kind of symbolic language covering a specific part of the universe. And so my concern is a bit broader than the others. My concern is in trying to develop a general model, a general concept that may be applicable to all of these "languages." My hope, in fact, in the future, is that, after enough people understand the listening approach the comprehension approach in foreign language teaching, I may move on to use the general principle which I call the Sens-it-Cell system in the teaching of mathematics...

So, the relationship as I see it, is basically that Winitz is teaching primarily what I call the "semantic decoding phase" of listening comprehension and a little bit of the "anticipatory phase," and he is teaching it through pictures. I see Asher's approach as being again part of what I call the Sens-it-Cell, but utilizing enactive responses rather than a pictorial selection response. His technique also involves primarily the semantic decoding phase and some of the anticipatory response phase of learning. Neither of the two approaches really get into the third phase which I call "error detection." And both of them tend to narrowly focus on one way of responding; Asher, through Total Physical Response and Winitz, through his pictures.

Another way that we may differ slightly now is the concept of choice selection. Originally, Winitz did use alternative pictures, and people had to actively select the appropriate one. He has since moved away from that, using basic language redundancy as the primary means for insuring that people make correct selections. I haven't studied that change enough to really want to make a comment on it yet. Certainly in the finer points of structure, certainly in the finer points of phonology, I think that active selection and feedback are necessary. It may not be as necessary in the initial lexical or vocabulary build-up. I think that that really covers the differences.



## English Reader

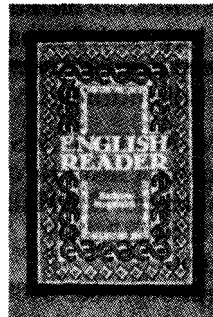
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fea·ture

# Towards a Theory of English Conversation

Thomas N. Robb

Although considerable time, money and effort are being spent on "English Conversation" these days, there seems to be a general ignorance of what "conversation" really is. It does not merely mean to string words together verbally into grammatical sentences, but rather to use these sentences for interpersonal communication. There is a system of "rules" for how this is accomplished just as there are phonological or syntactic rules for a language. They only differ in that they have not yet been described to the extent that we can actively apply them to our teaching.

Though work is being done in this field, a coherent theory relevant to the language teacher has yet to be developed. Below, I will briefly sketch some of the areas that I feel a description of conversation must encompass, using the following conversation as an illustration of how the principles are often ignored in our teaching:

- 1 Susie: What will you do next Sunday?
- 2 Bob: I will play baseball with my friends.
- 3 S: Where do you play baseball?-
- 4 B: We play at the city playground.
- 5 S: What time will the game start?
- 6 B: At ten in the morning. We will play the Spiders.
- 7 S: What do you call your team?
- 8 B: We call our team the Tigers.
- 9 S: Tigers and Spiders? Then, the Tigers will surely win.
- 10 B: No, the Spiders are very strong. Our name sounds strong,  
but the Spiders have many good players.
- 11 S: That's too bad. What position will you play?
- 12 B: I will be the catcher.
- 13 S: And who is going to pitch?
- 14 B: Tom is. He is a good pitcher. The Spiders will not be  
able to get many hits.
- 15 S: Well, you will win. Good luck to you.
- 16 B: Thank you.

(From NHK "Koko Eigo A-1, 1978 p. 40)

## 1) TOPIC FLOW AND COHERENCE PHENOMENA

People usually say things for a reason, yet the reason is often hard to find, or even imagine, in the conversations we find in our texts. For example, in line 1 above, why is Susie asking about Bob's Sunday' plans? We never find out. Notice that our conversation is basically question-answer, question-answer, yet studies of actual conversations indicate that this is not the predominant pattern of real conversations at all.

One would also believe, from looking at textbook conversations, that once one embarks on a certain topic, that it is pursued until all relevant sub-topics have been exhausted, as is the case with our conversation. Rather, it is my experience that the topic generally shifts in a gradual fashion, each utterance linked to the previous one, but often with a much looser connection to the one previous to that, except by virtue of the intervening sentence. Notice in our conversation, that it wouldn't have made too much difference if either line 5 or 7 came after line 2; these sentences do not spring from the previous utterance.

The pioneering work of the English discourse analysts such as Coulthard and Sinclair has classified the types of utterances one finds in discourse according to their function, and has attempted to set up a system which can predict which types can follow which. Much more research remains to be done in this area.

Ritual sequences, such as greetings and leave-takings should also be brought up at this point. To terminate a conversation, for example, one does not merely stop talking and walk away. Nor does one say "Good-bye," and take one's leave. Certain other preparatory "moves" must be made, for which I have yet to see a cogent description or systematization. Some of these moves might include eye aversion, looking at one's watch, making an explicit excuse for why one must leave, summarizing the gist of the conversation ("Well, glad you had a good time."), giving appreciation for past or future favors, etc. Note that in our conversation, the closing sequence somehow seems to be incomplete. An adequate theory could tell us why.

## 2) TURN CONTROL PHENOMENA

Writers of textbook conversations tend to restrict themselves to the main message or "meat" of the conversation, yet there is a large quantity of secondary information being conveyed, as well, in order to control the mechanics of the conversation. One such type of secondary information is used to control the turn-taking process. Signals exist for participants to indicate that they want a turn to speak, want to maintain the floor while thinking, or want to yield the floor to a particular person, to name a few of the functions. Naturally these phenomena do not come into play in a question-answer type conversation such as ours.

## 3) FEEDBACK PHENOMENA

Other secondary information is transmitted during the conversation so that the listener can convey his interest, comprehension and agreement to the speaker. This information has been described by Yngve as the "back channel" since here information is often being transmitted simultaneously with the main information, but in the opposite direction. Rarely, however, do two people speak at the same time in text conversations. I cannot recall ever seeing a textbook conversation containing the word "uh-huh" which is frequently used by the listener in conversations, and is, in fact, an absolute "must" when speaking over the telephone.

## 4) INTERJECTIONS AND BODY LANGUAGE

These are two of the principle means by which the turn control and feedback phenomena mentioned above are conveyed. Interjections, thus, are not merely for conveying emotions as the typical dictionary definition would lead one to believe. Words like "uh," "Well," "Gee," "Huh?" and phrases like "you know" and "by the way" have specific discourse-related functions. With the exception of a sole "Well," however, none are contained in our conversation.

Kinesics, the study of body movement, has a great deal to teach the linguist and the language teacher. The meaning of various body movements varies considerably from culture to culture and language to language. We must see to it that our students learn the culturally appropriate signals, lest they be misunderstood.

## 5) THE SYNTAX OF CONNECTED UTTERANCE

Most of the grammar in our texts is "sentence grammar"--the sentence being the largest unit studied. Yet, there are many phenomena which occur across sentences, such as article selection, pronominal co-reference, and deletion phenomena which have not been adequately described. Partial sentences, for example, are rather common in real conversation, yet they rarely find their way into our texts.

Sentences which are completely grammatical in isolation can quickly become unacceptable in the wrong context. The use of "will" in lines 1 and 2 is an excellent example of this. An accurate description of the differences in usage of "will" and "going to" has yet to be written, yet there are contexts when one or the other is strikingly out of place. In line 1 above, "going to" would be better, but actually "What are you doing.. ." or "What are you planning to do.. ." might be more frequent choices if native speakers were asked to choose among them.

## 6) CONVERSATIONAL SKILLS

Klopf (1978) mentions some techniques to keep a conversation going and put oneself on better terms with the other conversant: a) Free information, by which he means to give the other party more information than his questions require in order to display your willingness to converse and to carry the conversation forward; b) Self-disclosure, which is the act of supplying personal information about oneself to indicate your friendliness and openness; and c) Open-ended questions which permit the other participant to give a rather free and lengthy reply. "Why" questions often fall into this category. Students must learn these techniques if they are ever to be able to carry on conversations in social, non-business situations. In our conversation, Bob does supply some free information in lines 6 and 14, but the other two techniques are not applied. Susie is the principal person who carries the conversation forward.

Space does not permit a line-by-line discussion of why our conversation is unnatural, but I believe enough has been said to make my point. While one might say that this conversation is somewhat exceptional, I do not believe that this is so; conversations written by native speakers found in many popular text series fall down here as well.

Part of this problem may be due to the fact that people generally believe that conversations are easy to write. They are indeed. Unfortunately though, the products of such writing often bear little resemblance to authentic discourse. In particular, the efforts of text writers to put as many instances as possible of the pattern under study (as was "will" and "going to" in our conversation) produces strange dialogs. An increased awareness of what conversation really is could go a long way toward ameliorating this problem.

Finally, I would like to state why I feel that naturalness is important. Few will disagree with the statement that the processes outlined in this article are necessary for normal verbal communication. But how are our students to learn their use? Even if it were wise to present this information as a series of rules, in the same manner that we present English grammar, it could not be presently done since we have nothing approximating an accurate description of these phenomena upon which we could base our lessons. The only alternative is to expose our students to sufficient examples of real discourse so that they may infer these rules for themselves. They will not be able to do this as long as we continue to strip our textbook conversations of this important information.

*[Reprinted from the JACET Newsletter #33, Feb. '79, pp.2-4.]*

## books

## 25 Centuries of Language Teaching

by L.G. Kelly, Newbury House Publishers, 1969.

John Maher

Beyond general histories of education, the history of language teaching has generally been ignored. Focusing upon those countries whose intellectual traditions derive from Athens and Rome, Dr. Kelly has written a modern introduction to the history of language teaching, in the sense that he assumes a reader far more interested in 1980 than 1180. He takes it for granted that anyone who reads Comenius' seminal work, *Orbis Sensualium Pictus* (1648), today does so with flashcards and filmstrips in mind. This is excellent for no other reason than that it removes the most incorrigible defects of any general 'introduction,' i.e. aimless wandering. The book's format uses the schema of Mackey's *Language Teaching Analysis* in "classifying the ideas which govern the teacher's professional behaviour." Included are chapters on: writing, reading, teaching pronunciation, mechanical media, written and printed media, psychology and language teaching, the public and language teaching. We might say of the subject matter, dispersed over seventeen chapters and four hundred and eight pages, that the author included anything of interest to himself in the conviction that it must therefore be of interest to his readers and that in large measure he was right.

Like a detective rummaging in the waste paper basket, Dr. Kelly has found meaning in material which clearly seemed rubbish, and his discoveries relate to present day thought and pedagogy. Pattern practice, for instance,, first appeared in the early 1500's the most systematic example being that of Gilles Duwes' *Introductorie for to Lerne French* (circa1534), while the hoary old substitution drill found its greatest exponent in Samuel Hoadly's *The Natural Method of Teaching* (1683), which distinguishes ten types of structure based on the simple sentence. Stepping back one hundred and fifty years, Erasmus Colloquia, or what we moderns would call "dialogues," drilled Renaissance pupils in the forms of social intercourse not excepting the insult :

- V. Good day, you traveller's nightmare.
- R. An good day to you, you glutton, epitome of greed.
- V. My deepest respects, you enemy of all virtue.
- R. Pleased to meet you, you shining example of uprightness.
- V. Good morning, you fifteen-year-old hag.
- R. Delighted you eighty-year-old schoolgirl.

After such superb excesses, the dialogue, Dr. Kelly adds, "soon fell under suspicion. "

It would be presumptions to tangle with such erudition as the author displays, but if the book has serious defects, they arise from the nature of the subject than from any limitation in Dr. Kelly's sensibility. The description of music and songs as teaching devices in the Middle Ages is perfunctory with brief references to St. Jerome's emphasis upon sacred music as essential to Latin teaching. Mention might have been made to the emergence of the polyglot drinking song of 14th century monastery novitiates or the chanting of the 13th century Massoretic texts illustrating the Pentateuch for the learning of Hebrew. There is the impression that the author has not given himself time or space in which to probe interesting questions such as the role of language education for military expedition, pilgrimage and com-

merce. In the sixteenth century, Italian became the service language of the Ottoman navy, so successful were the Genoese methods of specialized instruction--including role-play at dry dock and a text of technical vocabulary. (Three hundred years later, the Hapsburg navy adopted this method during its Italian wars.)

If this is nitpicking, however, a more serious omission is that of speech communication. The Sophistic Movement during the latter part of the fifth century not only introduced speech communication as an aid to political leadership (as the *History* of Thucydides relates) but also in the learning of a second language. Oratory received particular attention in Sicily, whose Eritrean intelligentsia recognised that progress lay in mastery of Greek. This was accomplished primarily in "schools of speechmaking" which ultimately transformed the Sophists into professional providers of wisdom, lecturing throughout Greece. For Dr. Kelly, another day's work perhaps.

Turning to the bibliography, it contains, like a vast two-columned bill of fare, appetizing but formidable, almost 1,400 entries covering history, psychology, computer technology, the development of speech therapy, etc.,--from St. Augustine's *De Grammatica* to B. Belyayer's *The Psychology of Teaching Foreign Languages* (1959).

There is something refreshing in the breadth and flexibility of Dr. Kelly's interest. It provides a timely lesson in tolerance for those held fast in the embrace of a single method.

This book is a piece of research which, with its wealth of annotation, is directed primarily (though not wholly) at the student and teacher. Although founded on scrupulous research, its visible apparatus is slighter. Substantial space is occupied by quotation from primary sources. This is a sensible device. Ideas cannot simply be summarised without altering their character. With this attention, and a sympathy for his subject, the author extends the main lines of his observations to familiar points of focus, so that it is possible to form some overall idea of the integral flow of language teaching history.

## po·si·tions

Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, one of the major U.S. publishers, is seeking a part-time or full-time consultant/sales representative for their ESL programs, *New Horizons in English* and *YES! English for Children*. The consultant/sales representative will be responsible for the market throughout Japan. The ESL consultant should have experience in teaching English in Japan. Someone who knows *New Horizons in English* well is preferred. Send personal history with photo to Addison-Wesley Publishing Co., Tokyo Office, IPO Box 5015.

Athenee Francais has an opening for an experienced and qualified ESL instructor from April to June of this year. This is a temporary, full-time position of 30 hours. The salary will be approximately ¥425,000. A teacher will also be needed from September to November on a half-time basis. The salary for that will be approximately ¥212,000. These positions are in the morning program. If interested, please contact Larry Cisar, Director of EFL, Athenee Francais, 2-11 Kanda Surugadai, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 101; tel: 03-295-4707, from 1:30-3:30 p.m.

The *JALT Newsletter* still needs volunteers to help with writing, typing, proofing, and layout. If you are interested in contributing some of your time, contact David Bycina c/o Pegasus Language Services, Box 862, Tokyo 100-91, or call 03-244-4251 or 03-363-2588 (at night).

# let·ters

## BUSINESS MEETING POORLY CONDUCTED

To the Editor:

I feel the 1979 annual JALT business meeting and amending of the JALT constitution and bylaws were conducted poorly.

By scheduling the '79 business meeting during the Saturday lunch break of LTIJ '79, the Executive Committee inadvertantly (conspiratorily?) limited both attendance at the meeting and the time available for discussion of the proposed amendments. And although the *JALT Newsletter* performed a commendable service by printing the reasons for the constitutional changes that were eventually enacted, the *Newsletter* and the Executive Committee did do a "mis-service" by not printing or presenting any opposing viewpoints.

Points of argument, such as those presented at the meeting by Graham Page (Shikoku Chapter) and Larry Cisar (Kanto Chapter) should have had fuller opportunity for amplification and consideration.

At the business meeting, I introduced a motion to pass all the amendments--without debate--by a "white ballot" or acclamation. This may seem contradictory to my expressed desire for a more open debate, but my feeling is if you're going to ramrod proposals through--ramrod them. To legitimize such tactics by staging "quickie" discussions and votes only slanders the democratic process.

I was particularly irked by one Executive Committee member explaining the new JALT policy of giving local chapters grants for speakers by saying an explanation had appeared in the February or March *Newsletter*. This is evading the point--a point that was relevant to the changes proposed--and a point that wasn't listed with the other "pro" arguments presented in the *Newsletter* before the meeting.

Instead of evading the point, it should have been delved into--but then again, perhaps that wouldn't serve the objects of the Executive Committee. And forgive my saying so, we members are human. We do forget. And a point made in February may be forgotten in November, especially if the practical application or need of that point is not presented clearly,--to say nothing of new members who joined JALT after "explanations" have been made.

Please do not misunderstand me. I am greatly appreciative of the hard work and efforts made by all of the Executive Committee members. It's just that the '79 business meeting did not give the general membership a solid opportunity to analyze the Executive Committee's proposals and vote on them in an unhurried and more rational, thoughtful manner.

To prevent this situation from occuring again, I would suggest the following steps be taken:

- 1) a definite agenda for the meeting be compiled and sent to the membership. Any proposals--complete with "pro" **and** "con" arguments--be presented two months before the meeting.
- 2) that after reading said proposals, the membership at large be allowed to submit counter-proposals or additional (i.e., new) pro/con arguments, and that these new proposals/arguments be published in the *Newsletter* one month before the business meeting.
- 3) that the LTIJ program be re-arranged (e.g., by starting the afternoon program later or having the meeting before the keynote address) to allow more time for discussion.

If these steps were followed, perhaps the business meetings could be conducted more thoughtfully, more efficiently, and more democratically.

David Weiner, Osaka

## PAY FOR NEWSLETTER STAFF

To the Editor:

I was interested (and saddened) to hear of the (possible) impending demise of the *JALT Newsletter*. I too have found it worthwhile and informative reading and would like to compliment and thank both you and Sanae Matsumoto for the charitable work you have been doing in putting it together.

However, although I would like to see it continue, I too work at least 37 1/2 hours a week at my regular jobs and would find it difficult to help out with a donation of my time.

Nevertheless, it seems to me unreasonable and unfair for the 1,000 or so JALT members to benefit from the selfless efforts of a few people who put together the *Newsletter*. But I also do not think it would be unfair to ask each of the members of JALT to "contribute" Y500 or Y1,000 each year (which is equivalent to what one can make teaching in ten or twenty minutes in Japan) to keep the *Newsletter* on its feet financially.

This money could be added to the JALT membership fees and could be used to pay the staff of the *Newsletter* a fair amount considering the time they put in.

However, perhaps other JALT members feel the JALT membership fees are already high enough, or would like to have the *Newsletter* put on a subscription basis, or would like to let the *Newsletter* die a respectful death.

What do the members of JALT want? Why not ask them in the next *Newsletter* in the form of a readers' poll?

Richard Showstack, Tokyo

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## re·port

# Neural Linguistic Programming

Larry Cisar

This rather long, exotic name is really something that we are all familiar with. It simply means getting people to respond the way that we want them to. Neural Linguistic Programming (NLP) does this by promoting a positive attitude toward desired change. Modern psychology is used to convince a person that this change is an improvement that he really wants in his life. NLP is the creation of Steven Lankton of Matrix Communication & Learning Systems.

In itself, NLP is not a method of language teaching, but it can be applied to language instruction according to its originator. Basically, what it attempts to do is to make it easier for the "receiver" (counselee) to accept new information or a new way of doing things from the counselor. Although much of the same terminology that is used in CLL is also used in NLP, do not think of the results as being the same. In NLP, the counselor is trying to get the receiver to change or adjust his or her behavior in line with the counselor's wishes. Change is important, not understanding the self.

There are many tools available to the counselor which make it easier for him/her to exercise control over the receiver. First, to make the receiver receptive, the counselor needs to make him/her feel comfortable. One way to do this is by "Body Analog Matching." This is the very simple technique of adopting a body posture similar to that of the receiver. However, it should not be an outright attempt to mimic the receiver. That would merely make him/her feel uncomfortable. It needs to be a subtle attempt to be similar. This strategy seems to be based on the idea that the receiver takes the position that s/he thinks is most appropriate to the situation. A different position assumed by the counselor sends out the message to the receiver that s/he is wrong. The counselor, obviously, does not want to create this negative impression.

According to NLP, people operate in visual, auditory, or kinesthetic modes. The counselor will want to respond to the mode that the receiver is in. To do this, he first needs to be aware of the mode the receiver is functioning in. Clues to this can be found in the eye movement of the receiver as he talks and listens. If the receiver's eyes are up to the right or to the left, or if they are unfocused, then the receiver is probably in a visual mode. If they are down to the left, straight right or left, the mode is probably auditory. Eyes that are down to the right indicate a kinesthetic mode. It is important to note that these indications are based on American behavior patterns and may vary with other cultures.

In the linguistic area too, the counselor will try to match his behavior to the mode of the receiver. If the person is on the auditory track, the counselor will also want to be on the auditory track. So, for example, when asking the receiver to explain something, the counselor might say, "Could you amplify on that?" rather than "Could you clarify that?" "Clarify" is a "visual" word, while "amplify" is an "auditory" word. Hearing the former, the receiver will naturally feel comfortable because the question meets him/her on the plane that s/he is on.

How does the NLP counselor approach the receiver? First and foremost, he must be positive. The counselor will never want to say that something is

wrong or that the person did something wrong because that destroys the rapport that is necessary to change the receiver's behavior. The target should be presented as a better way of doing something. It is not something that corrects, but something that builds up from the existing base.

The next step is to isolate the area of desired change in the person from the other areas. The counselor needs to show that the problem or area for improvement is only one small part of the person and that the whole person is something good.

To accomplish this goal, the receiver has to be in a receptive mood. If the receiver refuses to listen, the counselor needs to stop. For the counselor to continue in such a case would not lead to a resolution of the problem. If the counselor comes back to it at another time, however, there is a good chance that it can be worked out.

How can this be applied to language teaching? There are several different areas where it might be helpful. The first area is class discipline. Solving chronic problems using this method should produce more satisfying results than shouting at students. The end product should be better feelings which lead to better learning. Another area is study habits. Helping a student adjust his/her study habits will be easier with this type of approach. The student will see the change as coming out of him/herself. A third area would be in class morale. With proper ego building, even weak students may develop the classroom confidence that they need to be successful.

Basically, I have presented the good points of NLP, but there are many weaknesses that make it only an experimental tool at this time. The first is that it assumes that all people will approach things intellectually. It does not seem to make allowances for a person who is wrapped up in normal, everyday concerns. This idealism limits its ability to accomplish the goals that the counselor has set.

The second problem is that it is time-consuming. Counseling takes more time than most teachers have. Furthermore, it would be difficult to use in class because of the sheer number of students that a teacher has to deal with.

The third problem is that it is potentially dangerous. NLP is really a type of brain washing. You are trying to get people to think what you want and to do what you want and still be happy about it. The question is: "Do teachers have the right to do this to their pupils?" Hopefully, there will be no long-lasting negative results, but there very easily could be. Teaching alters behavior. What are the limits of permissible changes? A well-trained counselor will realize the limits, but the language teacher has not had training that a good psychologist has. In my opinion, tools like NLP are just too dangerous for anybody to use. While NLP could be used for good, to help students solve their problems, there is a tremendous potential for abuse.

## ***LTIJ '78 Review Now Available***

*This collection of over 50 reviews and reports on the presentations given at LTIJ '78 will be of lasting usefulness to language teachers everywhere. JALT members can buy copies through local chapter officers or by writing David Byeina e/o Pegasus Language Services, C.P.O. Box 862, Tokyo 100-91. Price: ¥1,000; postage: ¥160.*

## pro·files

## THE SCHOOL OF INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

Chariotte Kennedy-Takahashi

The School of International Studies (S.I.S.), located in Yotsuya, Tokyo, is fairly new. It opened in the spring of 1973 and since that time has grown steadily. The school started with 16 students in two classes, studying current international issues and international business. They attended classes three nights a week. At present, there are 349 attendees in 36 classes.

Not only has there been growth in the number of students, but there has also been serious development of the curriculum. In developing this curriculum, careful consideration was given to the students' needs and wants. Based on this analysis of needs, the school has defined three major goals to assist the students in developing their international careers. The first one is to help the students to understand the important political, governmental, and cultural influences that operate in the areas of the world that they are interested in. The second is to help them perform proficiently and with confidence in international business situations. The third is to help the students to use English well in international dealings. President Itabashi, Board Chairman of the International Education Center and the initiator of the S.I.S. program, has said that the school is intended to help students "to become international persons and not mere English-speaking machines or animals."

The school's program is designed to attract more advanced students of English. It is geared especially for students from corporate language training programs who want and need more international studies. The School of International Studies aims particularly to augment and elevate the level of the students' international abilities. The school sends brochures to a wide range of corporations, describing its objectives and the classes that are offered. As a result, a large proportion of the students are practicing businessmen of all ages. There are also students who are presently at college or are graduates of language schools. Students from countries other than Japan also attend. They bring with them their own cultural experiences and make the classroom environment an international one. Sometimes students find that attending S.I.S. helps to prepare them for graduate studies in business abroad.

The curriculum has progressed from a few random courses to an integrated course of study. At present, there are two parts of the curriculum which augment and supplement each other. The first involves International Business Administration. It includes such classes as American Business Correspondence, American Salesmanship, International Marketing, Money in the World Today: Banking, Finance and Oil, Basic Career Development, Cross-cultural Business Communication, Product Marketing Strategy in Multinational Corporation, Basic Accounting, and a Seminar in Current Business Issues. There are, in fact, many more courses that the students can choose from.

It is believed that an international person needs not only the above training in international business but also supporting cultural knowledge and communication skills to do business and develop his own career in an international setting. The second part of the curriculum, General International Studies, supplies these needs. Courses offered in this area focus on Inter-cultural Communication, The Logic of American Discussion, Modern Literary Diaries, New Women's Literature, Asian Area Studies: Japan and the South, European Studies: France, International Politics, Chinese Religions, Effective

Speaking and Communication, etc.

It is the mix of these two areas that the School of International Studies is proud of. The IBA courses give the student a broader understanding of his chosen profession and allow him to contact other professionals with similar interests. The GIS courses attempt to explain the cultural variables operative in doing business with people of other cultures.

In the future, as the curriculum expands, the GIS courses will be divided into two parts. One will become International Communication in English, and the other will be International and Area Studies. Students will be expected to take a balanced program of study from all three areas, just as now they are expected to take courses from each of the two existing areas. Within each part, there will be a further breakdown. For example, the IBA area will be divided into marketing, finance, etc.

The faculty of the school is unique in that its members come from various walks of life. Usually during the day they work in banks, in multinational corporations, in law offices, in universities and schools. Then at night, they appear at S.I.S. They bring their wide and varied knowledge and skills to share with their students. Teachers are expected not only to have practical working experience but good academic backgrounds. Many teachers are alumni of American graduate schools of business or have graduate degrees in the areas they teach. Other teachers have degrees from Australian and European universities. This variety of nationalities contributes to a truly international environment.

Since the teachers are active in the working world, the teaching approach emphasizes practical training. In the business courses, the case-study method is often used. This approach allows the student to look at a problem in a given international business situation and then develop his own course of action to solve the problem. In other courses, the student is constantly performing, giving speeches, debating, discussing, and writing. Some courses are more academic in their approach, but there is always an attempt to apply the concepts to the student's life and career.

S.I.S. is now seeking affiliation with institutions abroad that share its goals and interests. It is hoped that this development will strengthen the school's curriculum and broaden its resources.



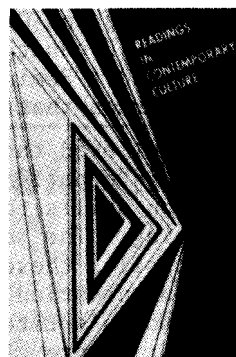
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## chapter notes

## KANSAI SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP

Since its organization with only a few members last May, the TEIS (Teaching English in Schools) special interest group has had a full schedule of presentations which have been more of a sharing of ideas rather than formal talks. This has stimulated lively questioning and discussion, as the membership represents a wide variety of backgrounds and teaching experience.

Perhaps this variety in its membership has made Kyoto TEIS meetings especially interesting. There is almost an equal number of native speakers, Japanese teachers of varying ages, and, encouragingly, several student participants.

TEIS meetings began on June 19 with a demonstration of teaching articles the Silent Way. Tom Robb of Doshisha University showed that this often difficult task could be done both simply and effectively as a kind of game. In July, Kyoto Sangyo University's Leslie Sackett introduced *A First Book in Comprehension, Precis and Composition* by L.G. Alexander, which he has used in his classes. He said that this text gives students ample writing practice with good control of errors.

After a vacation break in August, on September 15, Hideo Miyamoto of Doshisha University reported on English teaching for foreign students in the United States and also commented on teacher training opportunities there. In October, Seifu Gakuin's Barbara Fujiwara led a discussion about 'unconventional' language teaching methods. It was brought out that the distinction between "conventional" and "unconventional" was sometimes merely a matter of re-labeling old concepts. Barbara also told something about her combining of textbook material with the Silent Way in her classes. On November 13, Yukinobu Oda of Doshisha Women's College gave an entertaining presentation of "Mapping," his technique for checking comprehension of English by using student-produced pictures and diagrams. Finally, on December 11, Mr. Duane Engholm of International Educational Materials Co. showed his way of teaching pronunciation using a simplified vowel chart. He also vividly demonstrated his very personal way of relating to each student face-to-face in order to encourage them and break down their reserve.

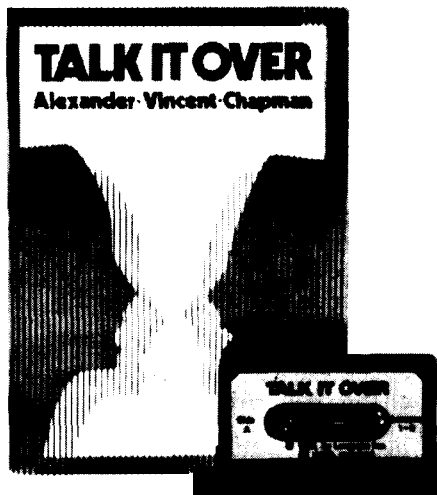
In TEIS meetings, emphasis is on informal exchange of ideas and information rather than a completely one-way "lecture." Doubts and difficulties as well as "bright ideas" are shared. Attendance at monthly meetings has been increasing slowly and more members are welcome. If you are in the Kyoto area, your attendance, participation, and presentations will be appreciated. Meetings are held monthly at Doshisha University. For information, check the list of meetings in the JALT Newsletter or call Mr. Leslie Sackett, (075) 721-8759, or Mr. Kenji Kitao, (075) 611-7449.

## SILENT WAY WORKSHOP

Going to TESOL '80? Why not take the opportunity to get better acquainted with the Silent Way? Dr. Caleb Gattegno will be presenting a 20-hour workshop from February 29 to March 2, before the start of the San Francisco Convention. Fee: \$100. To pre-register, send \$50 to Educational Solutions, Inc., 80 Fifth Ave., New York, N.Y., USA, 10011.

# CONTEMPORARY DISCUSSION MATERIALS FROM LONGMAN

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L.G. Alexander, Monica C. Vincent  
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## TAKE A STAND

L.G. Alexander, Roy Kingsbury  
and John Chapman

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## TAKE A STAND

Alexander Kingsbury Chapman



For more information contact

# LONGMAN AMERICAN ENGLISH

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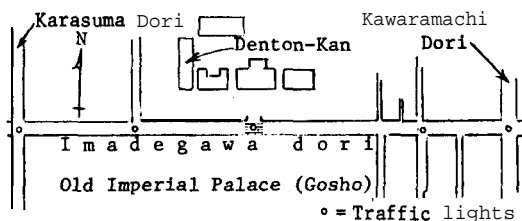
Yamaguchi Bldg., 2-12-9 Kanda Jimbocho, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 101



## meetings

### KANSAI

Topic: Notional Syllabuses: An Actual Text  
 Speaker: Graham Page  
 Date: Sunday, February 17  
 Time: 1:00-4:30 p.m.  
 Place: Doshisha Women's College, Denton-kan, Rm 205,  
 075-251-4151  
 Fee: Free to members; ¥1,000 for nonmembers  
 Info: Kenji Kitao, Doshisha University;  
 075-431-6146 or 075-611-7449



Directions to Doshisha Women's College: Take a city bus, No. 2, 4, 36, 203, 204, 205, or 206 from Shijo-Karasuma, or No. 2, 36, 203, or 204 from Kyoto Station, and get off at Karasuma-Imadegawa. Walk east for five minutes. Doshisha Women's College is on the left side of the street.

Notional-functional ideas have caused great changes in the way syllabuses can be organized and have virtually made obsolete all grammar-centered and situational-reinforcement approaches. Notional-functional syllabus organization allows considerable flexibility in designing courses to suit students' needs and the time available, whether ten hours or a hundred. The purpose of this talk to show ways of producing text material so that students can gain a minimum competency in the essential functions in thirty-five hours. The presentation will be done with a counseling approach and will be suitable for anyone who must prepare materials, and for teachers seeking more flexibility with their texts.

Graham Page received a B.A. in Educational Psychology from the University of Waikato, New Zealand, in 1970 and came immediately to Japan on contract with Berlitz. In 1977 he left Berlitz to start his own school, Language House, in Takamatsu, Shikoku. He was writing all the texts for his school on structuralist lines when, following LTIJ '78, he "saw the light" and was converted to notional-functional syllabus design.

NOTICE: The first business meeting of JALT, Kyoto Chapter follows the meeting.

\*       \*       \*       \*       \*

### Special Interest Group Meeting

Topic: The Quest for the Ideal English Teacher  
 (What Type of English Teacher Do Students Like?)  
 Speakers: Kumiko Hata, Ritsuko Kawai, and Hisako Hasegawa  
 Date: Tuesday, February 26  
 Time: 6:00-8:00 p.m.  
 Place: Doshisha University, Koen-kan (basement)  
 (Get off the bus at Doshisha Mae on Imadegawa St.  
 or Karasuma Imadegawa and follow the JALT signs.)  
 Fee: Free  
 Info: Yukinobu Oda, Department of English, Doshisha Women's College, 075-251-4151

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## TOKAI

Topic: Teaching Techniques:  
         Introduction to Using Story Squares  
         Te Everson  
         A System for Teaching Sounds to Spellings  
         Henryk Marcinkiewicz  
         Useful Listening Comprehension Techniques  
         Steve Tripp  
         Listening Comprehension Exercises for Japanese  
         Junko Yamanaka  
 Date: Sunday, February 24  
 Time: 1:00-5:00 p.m.  
 Place: Kinro Kaikan (near Tsurumai Station, Nagoya)  
 Info: Ray Donahue; 0561-84-5424

NOTICE: A special BOOK FAIR will be held in conjunction with this meeting. As a service to the Tokai members, School Book Service, along with Oxford and Longman publishers, will display the latest texts and books on methodology. Purchases and/or orders can be made. (Our friends are coming all the way from Tokyo, so please give them your consideration.)

March Meeting: A C-L/CLL Workshop will be presented by Fr. Paul G. La Forge and Ray Donahue on March 15/16. In contrast to rather theoretical presentations of C-L/CLL at JALT conventions, the emphasis in this workshop will be on practical applications in the classroom. Look for details of the workshop in the March issue of the Newsletter.

## NISHINIPPON

Topic: Recent Trends in Applied Linguistics and EFL:  
         Communicative Competence and Error Analysis  
 Speaker: Hideo Oka  
 Date: Sunday, February 24  
 Time: 2:00-4:00 p.m.  
 Place: Fukuoka YMCA, 3F, 1-12-8 Daimyo, Chuo-ku  
         (near the Grand Hotel)  
 Fee: Y500 for members; Y1,000 for day members;  
       Y250 for students  
 Info: Dick Dusek, 092-561-1844

Professor Oka's presentation will deal with two areas of particular concern to Applied Linguistics today. "Communicative competence" may be defined as the ability to function in a communicative setting with sensitivity to relevant social and psychological factors. "Error analysis" involves the study of intra-lingual and developmental errors rather than errors resulting from language interference.

Hideo Oka is currently an Associate Professor at the College of General Education, Kyushu University. He received his doctorate in English Language Education at Hiroshima University and Studied Applied Linguistics at the University of Reading, England, 1978-79. He has written several articles on methods, testing, etc., and is co-author of *A Guide to Research in English Language Education*, published by Taishukan last year.

NOTICES: Beginning in February, the regular monthly meetings will be at Open Space (English Conversation Club), 3-7 Tenjin 2-chome, Chuo-ku, Fukuoka on the first Sunday of the month at 6:00 p.m...Anyone interested in joining a reading circle to meet once every two months should contact Nancy Lee at 092-771-4161 (ext.412) or 092-863-6760.

## KANTO

Topic : The Functional Approach: An Introduction  
 Speaker: David Bycina  
 Date : Sunday, February 24  
 Time : 12:30-5:00 p.m.  
 Place : Athenée Francais  
 Fee : Free  
 Info : Larry Cisar; 03-295-4707

The limitations of the audio-lingual method of language teaching have long been apparent. This structurally-graded approach with its repetitious, often meaningless drills produced students who were able to create grammatically correct sentences but were unable to perform the simplest communicative tasks. Responding to the inadequacies of this methodology, the Council of Europe assembled a team of scholars in the early 1970's to devise a new approach to language instruction. The result was the notional-functional syllabus. The functional approach endeavors to provide students with knowledge not only of a language's grammatical rules but also of its "rules of use;" that is, the forms by which it expresses inquiries, suggestions, apologies, and so on. In short, its primary goal is to teach the learners how to use appropriately the language being studied. In rejecting the traditional structural grading, the notional-functional approach is perhaps the most radical of the alternatives to the audio-lingual method thus far proposed.

In this lecture-demonstration the speaker will contrast the aims, methods, and techniques of the two approaches, introduce some of the newly produced functional teaching materials, and involve the audience in a functional learning experience, using German as the target language.

### Ready to serve you in Japan

It was a privilege to attend the Conference, "Language Teaching in Japan '79," at Doshisha. Our enthusiasm for contributing to the JALT goal of improving the teaching of English in Japan is reflected in the appointment of our new Education Consultant:

Richard L. Carpenter  
 1-10-9 Naka-Magome  
 Ota-Ku, Tokyo, Japan 143  
 Phone: 03-777-6630

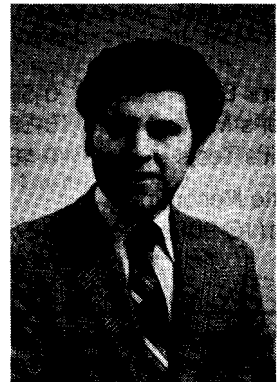
Mr. Carpenter, a member of JALT and an experienced English teacher, will be pleased to receive your inquiries.

John T. Holmes, International Vice-President



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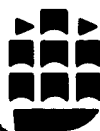
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