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JALT THE JAPAN ASSOCIATION OF LANGUAGE TEACHERS

NEWSLETTER

Vol. V No. 6 ¥200 June I,1981

L.G.Alexander: Living In A Materials World

An interview with Louis Alexander is like riding a roller coaster; this mild-mannered man takes you far and often fast so that you come out at the other end limp but definitely stimulated. This is the man who, as author of English and foreign language textbooks, has a bibliography to rival the most logorrheic novelist and who is cited in the Guinness Book of Records for selling 4.5 million volumes plus in one year. Since 1958 he has probably written more language text material than any other author; not just main courses, but a full spectrum of supplementary materials for such skills as composition, conversation and reading, not to mention volumes on grammar and syllabus design.

Shifting into high gear around the mid 60's, he produced First Things First *for Longman, a bright, revolutionary audio-visual text that peaked at sales of a half-million copies a year. However, some six years later, Alexander underwent, if not a religious-type conversion, then at least a radical reorientation when, along with many colleagues in the language field, he moved toward redefining language as a means of social communication rather than as inventories of vocabulary and structure. That trend resulted in the Council of Europe's development of the notional/functional syllabus and the definition of a Threshold Level of language acquisition. Alexander was soon in the thick of it, serving on the Council's language commission and,. at the same time, producing another course of his own,* Mainline Beginners. *In a radical departure from traditional syllabuses,* Mainline Beginners *threw out such traditional textbook staples as the introductory dialog and divided the units into a series of short frames.*

More recently Alexander has come up with course materials for a massive multimedia English course, Follow Me, *(based on the Council of Europe's Waystage specifications), and a fascinating multilingual phrasebook series,* Survive. *He has also pioneered a home computer language course for Atari, the California-based producers of Space Invaders.*

Despite his busy schedule Alexander recently took time out for a month's lecturing in China at the invitation of the Ministry of Education there. It was on his way back to England that he

LOUIS G. ALEXANDER

stopped over in Japan for a working visit jointly sponsored by Longman and International Language Centre, the world-wide English teaching organization that uses Follow Me *for some of its courses.*

From a man with twenty years worth of formidable achievements under his belt one would understand and even expect a weariness, a reining-in and a savoring of past glories. Not so! Here is a man in his prime who sent out sparks of enthusiasm as he eagerly spoke at length and in detail about past, present and future. Working his fascinating answers into manageable form was a challenge. But Alexander's enthusiasm and obvious love for his work are infectious. It was a ride we were glad we hadn't missed.

Julian Bamford and David Bycina

On First Things First (Adult English Course,

Looking back on it now, it was the first systematic audio-visual methodology, situationali-

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Call for Participation

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JALT NEWSLETTER

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zing the structures. It got rid of 'this is a book' and 'what's your name' stuff in the first lesson, going straight into situation activation - - and it's still very effective. It came out in the right place at the right time and carried the market with it. When it was first published. the publishers were so apprehensive that they actually printed twelve and a half thousand conies of it. thinking that it might by lying around for the next five years. It proved to be one of the best selling books in languages that was ever published (and) it began to peak at around a half million copies a year... It has since fallen off, but it's still very substantial. It has a great market appeal.

On Look. Listen, and Learn (Children's English course, 1968)

(It has) terrific imaginative content. That's why ***Look, Listen, and Learn*** has been and still is very popular as a course. Book I still sells over 100,000 copies a year. It is amazing (considering) the pressure it has come under and the competition it's been faced with. No one has bettered it in the sense they haven't put enough work into the things that they have marketed. Thev think. well. write a children's course, we'll give them a few' play activities, you know, but teachers teaching young children want to build them up as relentlessly as they would adults.

On language as communication

The trouble was that Chomskv got us off the rails in looking at acceptable versus unacceptable utterances. that sort of thing, and we were forgetting the social use of language. All the behavioristic concentration in the U. S.. which influenced us in Britain as well, was looking at correctness, grammatical acceptability rather than communicativeness. I think we got back on the rails when we were all sharply reminded that language cannot exist without a social context. I think the idea had been around and the (David) Wilkins paper really triggered it off in a big way. ("The Linguistic and Situational Content of the Common Core in a Unit/Credit System." 1973)

On **his involvement with the** Council **of Europe project.**

I knew about all the developments and I had been reading the papers, but I hadn't been directly involved myself. In the beginning of 1973, I met John Trim at a cocktail party at the BBC, and I was telling him how interested I was and how much work I'd been doing in that area because I'd already begun the major development of ***Mainline Beginners.*** He got very interested and said that the trouble with the outfit he had in the Council of Europe was that it was just too weighted towards the academics and not the practicing course writers and teachers. A short time later I was formally invited to join...

I got involved with Jan Van Ek in the whole Threshold Level development and I was commissioned to do the grammatical component for the Threshold Level...Then I was asked to do the

methodological essay on the implications of this approach. Bv this time. I had completed *Mainline Beginners* so I'd already a fair idea of the implications.

On the Threshold Level

(It is) the lowest possible level for social communication The analogy I use is of a husband carrying his bride over the threshold. That is, it is either the end or the beginning depending on which way you look at it. If you regard it as the end then you should have enough language to socially interact with your peers in a variety of situations. Then you can go on acquiring – a process I call random accretion, just picking up. Or if you wish (you can) continue formalized study....

On **Mainline Beginners** (First two books of the six-book ***Mainline*** English course. 1978. 1979)

I wrote ***Mainline*** Beginners four times, totally wrote it and ditched it each time because I had a major problem of my own then. Having been the author of one of the most successful English language courses..., I wanted to stay in business as an author, and I knew I had to develop. I couldn't go on writing ***First Things First*** forever; I had to develop as an individual. That's why I was very interested in all the (new ideas about) syllabus development because I saw this as a way in which I could develop personally. But then I went through real agony developing an entirely different kind of approach and a different kind of syllabus. Inevitably the first version of ***Mainline Beginners*** just looked like ***First Things First.*** I used... (a) model which I rejected: first the structure, then the function. As I began to complete the course I saw it was a good old structural syllabus again and me inventing ever more elaborate fancy functional definitions for what I was doing. I chucked the whole thing away and started again...

For me, ***Mainline Beginners*** still remains the shortest distance between zero and learning to communicate in a language, though it has not proved to be a commercially successful course in the way that other courses of mine have been...

Mainline Beginners rejected everything; it even rejected the lesson. I said even carving things into lessons is a lie because we don't know anything about pace so how can we divide things into lessons. Why not divide it into frames, and-the teacher then becomes responsible for drawing the cut off line. But the teachers all said no, we want you to tell us what to do in a lesson. So there are many, many things that ***Mainline Beginners*** did in a very radical way, which were proved to be too radical for the mass market, but not too radical for the more advanced thinkers in English language teaching. So where it is being used it's being used with immense enthusiasm, or not at all...

There's another thing in ***Mainline Beginners,*** which is fundamental, which I abandoned in ***Follow Me. Mainline Beginners*** (A and B) has (15) 90-minute cassettes. In other words, its emphasis on gist-listening and active-listening is monumental. It says the key to language acquisition must begin with listening comprehension because if you don't understand what's going on you might as well go home. I mean, what's the sense of being able to produce utterances if you cannot understand...

(The teacher's book is large) because it's got so much in it. It's got the most massive indexing of any course. It's got all those listening texts and all the phonological pronounciation texts; it's the only course which actually has a complete course in phonology built into it. It's got sixty pages on the functional/notional approaches... I just went the whole way at that time. I don't know the *Macbeth* quotation, but 'steeped in blood thus far, it were as tedious to go back as go o'er...' – I mean, you might as well just go on. In fact, even my tolerant, ever suffering publishers modestly suggested I cut about five pages from that introduction... I reckon I'll be able to live off it for another twenty years because it's given me a lease of life as an author which I would never have had if I hadn't really put myself through that hoop. So I think having develoned ***Mainline Beginners*** there's a lot I can do with it in many different directions...

I revised ***Mainline Progress*** (books 3 and 4 of the course) because that was written pre- the functional/notional development, and I brought it into line with the rest of ***Mainline. Mainline*** is now coming out in new covers as a total course. It took me a decade; so that is complete now.

On Follow Me (Adult English course, 1980)

It's a multimedia course. One of the dreams of the Council of Europe was to utilize what John Trim alwavs refers to as educational technology, the use of the mass media...

The video (component) would be stimulating, motivating, giving you the general area you would be covering. But (it would) not be used as a video course... But you (can) call it a video course in that it can bring that element of entertainment and above all the paralinguistic models into the classroom in a way no book can do...

When I was asked to produce the syllabus for ***Follow Me*** in ten days flat, that's all I was given by the way, I had it all ready. I knew exactly what I was going to do because I had worked out the ***Mainline Beginners*** syllabus in excruciating detail. I had then realized what I was going to do for ***Follow Me:*** that I was going to reinterpret the syllabus as a six-stage, cyclical progression. I was very excited to investigate this as a possibility because my researches into structural syllabuses had always suggested you could never turn a linear thing into a cycle at the beginners stage. You could at the post-beginners (stage). So the idea of producing cycles at the beginners stage greatly thrilled me. I knew that was the one model left of all the models I had been working on in developing ***Mainline Beginners*** that I hadn't been able to investigate...

I'm interested in the way ***Follow Me*** will be received because ***Follow Me*** has backpedaled slightly... I set it all out in lessons again. The dialog, which I had previously rejected as a

(continued from pg. 3)

means for introducing a new lesson, reasserts itself. So there are many traditional features in ***Follow Me*** which don't alienate the teacher quite so much. But it's a longer way round than ***Mainline Beginners.***

(With) ***Follow Me*** we had commercial publishing constraints. The publisher said, 'Look, no seven tapes here, got it? Two, max.' Now, if you say two max and you (look at) how many minutes (you) have got on a tape, you find you've got two minutes per lesson which is ludicrous from the point of view of true acquisition.

On Survive (Phrase book series, 1980)

I'll tell you how it started... 1 was being shown how Pakistani women are taught English in London. They were being taught in the old structural approach... I thought, this is ludicrous; these women can't go shopping yet they're being trained to say 'the big doll is on the left and the small doll is on the right.' It suddenly struck me that if they'd just learned one phrase in English like 'Can I have —' and had a huge lexicon at least they'd be able to get their shopping done. They wouldn't really need to understand... The surefire proof that you've communicated is when the other person is doing what you requested and produces the right goods. I put (the idea) up to Longman immediately. (So) it all began with just watching people who desperately had to survive in an alien environment, being taught totally irrelevant language...

Linguists consider phrase books beyond the pale and the province of the travel industry, and that it is somehow getting your hands dirty to dabble in tourist language, and the study of language is the study of literature, etc., etc. But... we're talking about language as mass communication. mass learning, and no longer the province of an elite. We want people to be communicating with each other. The more we understand about syllabus, the more the area of phrase books becomes relevant to the linguist. It ceases to be the province of the travel industry because they know a lot about travel but they don't know about organizing language teaching...

The four major weaknesses of the conventional phrase book are (first) the lack of any kind of retrieval so that when you really want to say something on the spot you can't find it; (second) the totally arbitrary nature of the choices because they're just based on someone scratching their head in the travel industry, the fact that they are based on what I call topic areas – shopping, the bank... and so on...; (third) you find an enormous amount of reduplication so that something like making a request... might appear under twenty different headings... and (fourth). the failure to define what a phrase book is for: that it is not for any kind of communication... A phrase book must be a means of survival... basically food, shelter, money, and of course polite language. So that if you've got a small amount of polite language and then you have a number of utterances which can be used in a wide variety of contexts, and you can carry the memory (load) in your pocket, you have the basis for a new type of phrase book...

(In the phrase book) the first area of all is very basic survival so, if you only want to spend two or three hours, you just learn very basic survival... (There are) slot and filler utterances utterances with holes in them: 'I'd like —. ' The lexicon is chosen to fit into the slot and filler utterances you learned by heart before setting out with the aid of the tape. It's not tonic-defined but function-defined. The lexicon has a 7,000 word range – enormous for a phrase book. (In) a very carefully worked out system, we use your own language as a pronunciation guide, with symbols for things which are utterly different from your own language. We are developing a pronunciation code which shifts from language to language, which utilizes common features but gets away from the crude codes you (usually) find in phrase books...

(There is also) a cooking methods section, a menu section – not just a translation but a description... (There is a section on) public signs, a car section, and a mini-grammar for the whole language, if you are rather keen, and finally there are letters you may write when you get home. like thank you letters, either formal or informal. (There isj a culture section (which tells you what to do) when you visit a country... So you've got a real survival kit. That is just one development of a functional/notional syllabus, looking at an area hitherto neglected by the linguist.

On writing

I do it all myself.

I only work-office hours; I don't work round the clock. I start work about 8:30 or 9:00 in the morning, and I work an assignment, I don't work a (set) number of hours. When I start a book I work out what would be a reasonable amount of work to do, because you get tired. You can produce bad work if you try and squeeze too much out of yourself. I just stick to it like hell – fight for the time. I'm up against the problem of fighting for writing time because I'm constantly being invited to talk, pressured to travel, constantly this and that, all of which is not writing. I don't feel happy; I don't feel I'm doing any work unless I'm writing. All the other things are just fun really, though they're hard work while you're doing it. Real work is writing. I sometimes finish quite early, by 2:00 if the day's gone particularly well. If the day's gone badly I will make myself complete the assignment even if it means continuing into the night, but that is very rare. It's just a discipline really.

The fact that you've been working like that since 1958, that's when I started writing, and you see all that work you've ever done piled up in front of you; it looks one hell of a lot. Of course, I'm fascinated by what I'm doing. That is the self-motivating thing really.

(Parts of this interview first appeared in The **Daily Yomiuri.)**

Chapter Reviews

KANTO

ALEXANDER: A NOTIONAL HISTORY

At the meeting of the Kanto Chapter on April 26th, we were honored to have as a speaker L.C. Alexander, the author of some of the most widely used EFL texts and a pioneer in materials development. In a double lecture, he traced the history of modern language learning methodologies and contrasted the traditional, structural approach with the notional/functional approach.

Until relatively recently, language teaching has been concerned with what should be taught, with little emphasis on how the teaching and learning should take place. One of the earliest developments was the recognition of the division between 'structural' words, which express grammatical relationships, and 'lexical' words, the names of things, actions, attributes, etc. By 1943, I.A. Richards had published ***Basic English and its Usage*** based on the syllabus of C.K. Ogden, which was thus turned into a system for language learning. The whole Ogden syllabus is quite remarkable in stating that everything you need to know about English is expressed in Basic English. It is a collection of 100 operations, which means it only contains a) prepositions, b) a few structural words like pronouns and linking words, and c) 16 verbs (come, get, put .) and through combinations of these words we can say anything. This is followed by the names of 400 things, 200 picture things, and 150 qualities or adjectives.

But it didn't last. By the beginning of the 1950s this approach was dying, if not dead. There are two-major reasons:

1. The users of Basic English can communicate only with other users of Basic English, not with speakers of standard English.
2. How can one possibly communicate with only 16 verbs?

At this point, Prof. Alexander gave us an illustration from the funniest textbook he has encountered, a lesson on prepositions based on Basic English.

Between my body and your body is a table.
This is my seat and that is your seat.
The front of my body is opposite the table.
My right leg is bent at the knee.
My left hand is at the back of my head.
In my right hand is a pencil.
The pencil is between my finger and my thumb.
Your neck is bent.
A part of your left arm is on the table.
Your chin is on your left hand.
A bent finger of your hand is in your mouth, and the straight finger is at the side of your nose.
A toe of your right foot is on the seat.

By the early '5Os, Basic English was already becoming a rarity, and other developments appeared, notably the works of Hornby who /published ***Guide to Patterns and Usage*** in 1954, and ***Teaching Structural Words*** in 1959. While compiling his great dictionary, he hit upon the idea of 'verb patterns' and this led to further developments, culminating in Hornby's 'Master Svllabus'. It was the first svllabus in the English language which was structurally organized, paying special attention to structural words:

My		Paul
Your	name is	John
Her		Mary

This idea was applied to his ***Progressive Course.*** Although the language was beginning to be controlled, the main idea was the step-by-step presentation of structures. Lacking in Hornby's work as in the 1935 ***Central English*** was any idea of system or method beyond the structural content. Textbooks were still being seen as a means for communicating information rather than as a means of developing skills.

In 1955. Chomsky published ***Syntactic Structures,*** which began to have an impact – oarticularlv in the U.S. through the work of Lado and Fries – on language learning and teaching methodology which is still being felt. Chomsky was particularly concerned with innate grammar, that is, the idea that we are born with a grammatical capacity; from this concept he went on to develop the idea of Transformational Grammar.

At about this time, Skinner published ***Verbal Behavior.*** His view of learning was that it was all habit formation, and he claimed to be able to alter anyone's behavior through a system of rewards and punishments. Chomsky bitterly attacked this, saying that, "Whatever a language might be, it is certainly not a habit structure." William Rutherford's ***Transformational Approach*** was a textbook which embodied Chomsky's ideas.

In the early '60s Halliday's ***Linguistic Sciences and Language Teaching*** went right back to structural words and lexical words, formalizing them as a system. It was really this work that gave us the basis of a whole idea of structural grading which became dominant right through the '60s. This whole approach to grading began to be formalized. but it was not until 1975 that it was turned into a total system in ***English Grammatical Structure*** which attempts to grade the structure into 6 levels. The first level begins with comparatively easy sentences such as "My name is Tom" and proceeds to more complex sentences at higher levels. The sentence patterns from which ***English Grammatical Structure*** was generated can be reduced to about 15, which are truly kernel sentences. The idea that we do not just-teach patterns, but teach them through some kind of method was bednnina to take hold, but right through the '60s we were always concerned about what to teach, while how we taught was not very important.

The first audio-visual course, 'Voices and Images', was produced in France. This attempted to present situations through highly formalized pictures. Combining this with structural control, presentation through situations was "situation-. alized structure" which became the dominant

approach in textbook construction until the early '70s. With many of these newer books, the idea of structural progression and method developed to the point that the texts began to look more like means of communicating skills than vehicles for communicating knowledge.

In the second half of the lecture, Prof. Alexander spoke about the development-of thk functional/notional syllabus and the implications for. materials design- in the 1980s. He spoke about how the syllabus came into being, compared it with traditional structural syllabuses, presented four course design models, and surveyed the implications of the new syllabus for methodology.

The functional/notional approach is concerned with the things we do through language and not just the means we use to do them. In the early '70s what we should teach began to be questioned in a way that it had not been previously. The Council of Europe sponsored a convention in 1971 with the goal of organizing modern language teaching and learning on a Unit Credit system in order to allow an approach based on individual motivation and the capacity of the learner taking into account what it is that people are trying to achieve.

David Wilkins' paper 'The Linguistic and Situational Content of the Common Core in a Unit/Credit System' appeared at about the same time. In 1975 the first syllabus based on this new approach was published under the title of ***The Threshold Level.*** This was followed by syllabuses for French, Spanish (1979), German (1980) and Italian (possiblv 198 1). The English syllabus was further modified with a first year objective called Waystage. These are all what Alexander calls proto-syllabuses which have to be interpreted by the textbook writer.

The conventional syllabus contains two inventories! a list of structures and a list of words, which are married to create situations, and even the four skills are by-products of the syllabus rather than the main objectives. On the contrary, the notional/functional syllabus sets out to teach communication first, with grammar and vocabulary as by-products of teaching communication. What then is communication? Reacting, describing, persuading, refusing, denying, apologizing, accepting, sympathizing, etc. ... these are language functions. And we can itemize at least 10 factors which are present simultaneously at the very moment of communication:

1. Function
2. General Notion
3. Specific Notion

"Can you tell me where the nearest bank is?"
inquiring – function
about location – general notion
of the nearest bank – specific notion

"Have you got any fresh fruit today?"
inquiring – function
about the availability – general notion
of fruit – specific notion

'Function' is the thing you're doing, 'general notion' relates to something abstract, often grammatical, and 'specific notion' is the item referred to, the vocabulary item

4. Setting – where communication takes place
   a) concrete setting, leading to a predictable series of acts or transactions
   b) where the setting does not influence the choice of language we have interactions – exchange of information, discussion and argument
5. Social. sexual and psychological roles
6. The way or style in which we speak
   Grammar
7. Vocabulary
8. The elements above are all expressed through grammar and vocabulary.
9. Stress and intonation, which constantly reveal our psychological attitudes
10. Paralinguistic features, which may amount to more than 50% of communication but are not yet readily codifiable and teachable

Prof. Alexander stressed that he was not trying to say that the functional/notional approach is better than structural approaches. The functional/notional approach is concerned not only with grammatical correctness, but with social appropriateness as well, with the appropriate language being taught for the appropriate situation.

There are, however, weaknesses in the traditional auuroach:

1. The idea of grading from easy to difficult could be deficient, since grading is quite arbitrary.
2. It tends to compartmentalize the four skills.
3. It tends to illustrate structures with classroom objects and actions, which can be highly unmotivating.
4. A lot of the English which we use in the classroom is based on the language of reporting, not talking about oneself.
5. Many of the texts present characters who are native speakers.
6. A lot of the materials lack context, i.e. substitution drills and abstract forms. They have very little to do with communication.

We have somehow ignored social appropriateness for the sake of grammatical correctness which has become the be-all and end-all of language acquisition.

Prof. Alexander outlined four major course designs for the functional/notional approach:

1. Purely functional organization: this leads to a reorgnization of phrase books – requesting, asking for information, etc. This approach is suitable for phrase books but not for the classroom.
2. First the structure, then its function: this is suitable for beginners' courses but tends to become structurally oriented. ***Strategies*** follows this organization.

Ex. 1 This is a spoon. – structural approach
This is John, and this is Mary. (an introduction takes place) – functional approach

Ex. 2 What is this? This is a spoon. – structural approach

A-NOTIONAL-HISTORY

What is this in English? It's a spoon.
What is this? I think it's fish. or It looks like meat, but it could be anything.

In the functional approach, the "What is this?" type of question can be used to show something we cannot recognize, or to identify technical terms.

3. First the function, then the structure: which is suitable for advanced studens, cf. ***Mainline Skills, Advanced Writing Skills.*** or ***Advanced Speaking Skills.***

Ex. 1 Apologizing:
I'm sorry for disturbing you.
for having disturbed you.
to disturb you.
to have disturbed you.
that I disturb you.

4. Semantic area model: where we take a large semantic area like location, time, direction, people, persuasion, etc. Examples of this kind of text are ***Follow Me, Mainline Beginners A & B, Encounters,*** and ***Getaway.***

The heart of the functionally based approach is improvisation, putting students into situations you want them to cope with.

Finally, three misconceptions concerning the functional/notional approach were explained.

1. The functional/notional approach is not a method, it merely has methodological implications. It doesn't have a formalized progression of tasks, as it embraces all methodology.
2. It is not a phrasebook approach to teaching because it emphasizes grammar even more than the audio-visual system.
3. It is not just a utilitarian approach.

Thanks to this exhaustive lecture, I think we all have a general, if not highly precise, idea of what the functional/notional approach is concerned with. Privately, I wholeheartedly agree with his arguments, as I have always felt the awkwardness of the grammatical material in the grammar books, with which we are supposed to teach students in their late teens.

Reviewed by Keiko Shibasaki,
Kanto Chapter

HAVE YOU RECEIVED VOL. 2 OF THE JALT *JOURNAL?*

In a move to cut mailing costs, volume 2 of the JALT ***Journal*** was handed out to the participants at JALT '80 in Nagoya last November, and subsequently distributed to the chapters to be given out to members at regular meetings. All chapters were requested in April to mail out any journals which had not yet been picked up. If you were a paid-up member for any portion of 1980, you should already have received your copy. If not, then please contact your local chapter head. Volume 3 of the JALT ***Journal*** will available at ***JALT*** '81 this November in Tokyo.

CHUGOKU

A Demonstration Workshop on Learner-Centered Education

The Chugoku Area Chapter's first speaker for this spring was Barbara Fujiwara, an instructor at Osaka Seifu Gakuin and a 7-year veteran of secondary school instruction in the Kansai area, who spoke on "A Learner-Centered Approach to Education". Giving initial credit to Earl Stevick and his several works and commentaries dealing with recent teaching innovations such as CLL, Silent Way and Suggestopedia, she first raised the point that one unifying feature of these teaching methods is their central focus on the learner. Offering her colleagues' (Katsuko Nagaivoshi and Harumi Nakaiima) painstaking assistance in a video taping of lessons they gave in an Osaka Junior High School, Ms. Fujiwara opened the eyes of many attending the meeting as to the vast potential of using Silent Way at the beginning or early intermediate level of language instruction.

Prior to playing a tape of a first-year junior high class, we were briefed by our speaker on what she felt constituted learner-centered instruction. A diagram depicting the learning process as a revolvable, inter-connected chain of interactions was distributed and the overall question of how students can be helped to internalize the target language was posed. Criteria from both the students' and teacher's domain were touched upon briefly, including Montessori's claim that activating the student sufficiently can bring a "perfect dose of security" into the classroom setting.

Five basic tenets forwarded in connection with the 2 revolving domains view of the English language classroom were:

1) The desirability of knowing the students' personal interests (e.g. club activities), the general attitude toward foreign languages and their instructors, and basic strengths in the language class (i.e., pronunciation vs. reading).

2) The desirability of creating an English speaker's "world" using such visual stimuli as would appeal to the student's imagination (teachers tending to limit themselves to that area of the brain concerned with memory).

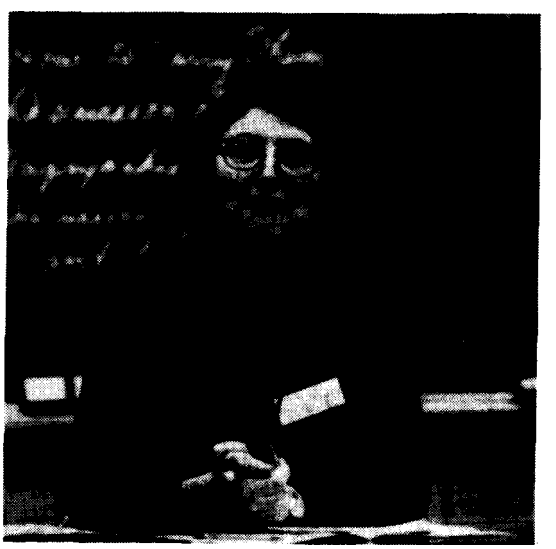
3) The need to provide learning previews and regular feedback on progress to sustain interest and flow of communication (given the quite limited amount of time most students spend in contact with the language per week).

4) The need to promote student-initiated activities and to allow for choice as much as possible in class. Ms. Nakajima, for example, opted for regular speech delivery and prepared dialogues on a number of topics in her junior high classes, which, judging by the video-tape, allowed for some measure of self-expression.

5) The advantages of group-centered activities (or those done in pairs) over teacher-to-student types of activities as students often relate to each other better than to an authority figure. The foreign instructor, as Ms. Fujiwara has herself found, tends to be labeled as being outside the formal circle of authority in certain school settings and is thus confronted with the additional problem of apathy in the classroom.

Before a second viewing of a second-year junior high class was shown, the members were divided into 5 or 6 groups according to the type of teaching situation they were most familiar with. The groups were then urged to choose 3 points (1 from each of the domains as a minimum) and to evaluate the video from the criteria offered. Each group was of course looking for different things: for example the potential application to reai-life situations or amount of self-generated language permitted, and these were, in turn, discussed before the group as a whole.

After a break, separating the demonstration portion of the meeting from the workshop portion, a sample lesson from a representative early level text was distributed and the audience assessed it for potential use in our own classroom situations. Grammar points, cultural factors, idiomatic usage and general topical content were parameters chosen, and then we broke up into four groups (adult level, elementary and secondary school level plus "others") to discuss what



BARBARA FUJIWARA

sort of learner-centered activities we could devise for at least two of these parameters. Most people, somewhat surprisingly, seized on the idiomatic expression "I like (A) better than (B)" (vs. the grammatical point "comparatives") and came up with rather similar application activities such as comparing pictures of celebrities, samplings of fruit or sandwiches, etc. to bring out individual likes and dislikes. This preference toward direct student involvement apparently showed that in the classroom, as well as in real life, seeing and tasting is believing.

The final portion of Ms. Fujiwara's workshop-demonstration was devoted to questions, and many of these centered around the applicability of "Silent Way" in various teaching situations. One question on many people's mind was the extent to which beginners could in fact initiate language use at all and how much "decontrol" could be allowed for in the early stages of language instruction. While pointers could tap out typical intonation contours for students, it

remained a question for some as to how to "silently" approach pronunciation problems. Despite the large classes and regimentation common in public school situations such as the one shown in the video, the taped presentation seemed to impress most of those attending that young learners ***do*** have much they want to share, and given a role as part of a learning group, can make individual progress.

In closing, Ms. Fujiwara invited members of the Chugoku Chapter to attend an all-day workshop/presentation on May 24th sponsored by the West Kansai Chapter (details forthcoming). Deborah Foreman-Takano was announced as being our next featured speaker at the June 7th meeting (no May meeting was planned).

Bill Teweles
Recording Secretary, Chugoku

HOKKAIDO

LISTENING COMPREHENSION AND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

In a workshop held on March 8, Michael Rost, of Athenee Francais and author of a number of listening comprehension textbooks, provided an outline of models of language acquisition as well as with practical applications of listening comprehension in the classroom.

In the first half of the program, Rost stressed that we all have internal models of how we think language learning takes place and of what we do in the classroom as learners of a language. These models influence our teaching and learning behavior and by exploring them we may gain insight into why we teach the way we do, why we try to learn the way we do, and why we expect people to learn according to our methods.

Rost stressed that the models of language acquisition which he was describing were metaphors for learning and that they had no validity in and of themselves, that is, if a model works we should accept it, if not, then it should be dropped.

In introducing practical activities in listening comprehension for the classroom, it was emphasized that an activity only makes sense if it is part of an approach that is consistent with a valid model of language learning. Each of the activities which Rost described focused on one aspect of a memory-processing model which he had given his audience earlier. This model consisted of three stages – attention, encoding, and retrieving. In each activity, focus is placed on one of these aspects, but all three aspects are dealt with. From Rost's experience, language acquisition through listening has proved more effective through this method of focusing.

Rost provided his audience with two approaches for activities on the attention level of memory processing – the acting, of a directive

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and visualization. The former involves the following of directions which can move from the simple ("Stand up!") to the more complex ("Choose the can of juice you like best, and then turn around and give it to the person sitting behind you.") Visualization is another monitoring activity in which the whole body does not necessarily need to be used. The activity which Rost suggested involved the playing of a tape giving directions on how to get somewhere. The class would be required to make a map based upon those directions. This activity would not only involve listening comprehension but also the use of the spoken language in comparing information between students to create a complete man.

MICHAEL ROST

On the encoding level, Rost suggested an activity he calls "contextualization". This activity involves the student in generating lanuage and places less stress on the student since there is no one correct answer. A tape is played or a dialog is read by the teacher and students are questioned concerning where the conversation took place, what the people are like who are heard, and what took place before the conversation began.

Among the activities suggested by Rost for work on the retrieval level was paraphrasing, that is, the stating of the content of what is heard in one's own words. For such an activity the listening unit must be at least 20 to 30 seconds – shorter units lead simply to repetition. He emphasized that this activity could be done with even beginning students if the level of input was adjusted – that is, if the complexity of the material and the redundancy provided in the material were adjusted.

In closing, Rost suggested that it is wise when employing such listening comprehension activities to provide the class with only one presentation of the content, be it a dialog or a short descriptive essay. In an actual listening situation the same words, the same conversation, will not be repeated twice. Also, if the student is aware that he may hear the content again, he tends to pay less attention during the first presentation.

David H. Waterbury
Executive Secretary, Hokkaido

TOKA I

TRANSFER AND OVERGENERALIZATION IN JAPANESE LEARNERS

What kinds of mistakes do students make when learning a foreign language? They can usually be divided into two groups: "overgeneralization errors", which result from the wrong application of a rule of the target language, and "transfer errors", where the native language interferes. Although there is some controversy about the value of a transfer-based theory of errors, most writers seem to agree that transfer errors are more likely to occur when languages are similar, (see Susan Gass's article in *Language Learning, 1979*), and that more mistakes of overgeneralization are made when the learner's proficiency level is high. (See especially B. Taylor, *Language Learning, 1975).*

In her talk at the Tokai Chapter meeting on April 26th, Ms. Machiko Achiba discussed these hypotheses by reviewing the results of her research on Japanese students studying English at the Universitv of Southern Illinois in 1980. She gave her fifteen subjects (ranging in age from 21 to 36 and at three different levels) fifty-five Japanese sentences to translate into English, and then processed the mistakes by dividing them into the two categories of "overgeneralization" and "transfer".

Among the syntactic items tested, articles, plural markers, subject-verb agreement, the use of the present perfect progressive and word order in WH- clauses proved the most vulnerable, at all levels. Some of the mistakes made in these areas were transfer-based: e.g. "They believed earth was flat", where the Japanese has no article, or the wrong use of the present perfect progressive" . ..has been living...where Japanese normally uses the present tense. Other errors were of the overgeneralization type, as in the incorrect use of "a" for "an" in such a sentence as "My father has been watching T.V. for a hour."

Although most of these mistakes could easily be accounted for individually, a surprising result emerged when the total tally was made: students at the two lower levels made more transfer errors than errors of overgeneralization, and the highest level students had an equal number of errors in the two categories. These findings seemed to contradict the usual statements about transfer errors, and Ms. Achiba questioned why the percentage of such errors among her subjects was so high. It certainly has nothing to do with the closeness of the two languages; possibly the fact that the students had been in America for a fixed period and that they had been subjected to teaching by the direct method may have influenced the results. A similar experiment carried out among students of English in Japan might work out quite differently.

Ms. Achiba emphasized that her research is still at a tentative stage, but she supports the con-

cept of a transfer-based theory of errors and thinks that further analyses of errors made by learners whose native tongue is far removed from English (e.g. Arabic, Polish, Japanese) are bound to prove fruitful. Her talk ended with an interesting exchange of ideas among the group members on the present situation regarding error anylysis, and on possible future developments.

Reviewed by Michael Horne,
Secretary, Tokai

KANTO

THE NOTIONAL-FUNCTIONAL APPROACH: METHODS AND TECHNIQUES

At the March meeting of the Kanto Chapter, David Bycina gave a comprehensive introduction to the practical aspects of using the notional-functional approach in teaching. While it was long (6 hours) and demanding of both speaker and audience., the informaton made available did give a good idea of the approach and what has been done with it in terms of textbook and syllabus design. The pack accompanying the presentation included a detailed booklist of published course and supplementary materials, and publisher and distributor representatives were on hand to give more information.

When considering what we do with the language we cannot ignore the importance of register, role and attitude. Overwhelmingly, our choice of language depends on the setting, the topic and our own feelings towards these. One defect of the grammar-translation and structural methods is that a student with grammatical competence does not necessarily have communicative competence. Language takes place in context, and students have to be made aware of this to perform appropriately.

The impetus to this approach came from the Council of Europe in 1971 because of concern that structuralist-based courses were not meeting the needs of adult learners. D.A. Wilkins (University of Reading) was asked to devise' a'new curriculum, and in 1974 published a set of notional categories (categories of meaning) that was expanded by Jan van Ek (Utrecht) into a proto-syllabus aimed at adult learners with occasional need to use the language, in which he considered social and psychological roles as well as settings. The result was the 200-hour *Threshold Level* which was later divided in half (*Waystage*) by covering all the functions of the original, while cutting down on the exponents.

The first teaching syllabus to emerge from theoretical realms was *Strategies* (Abbs, Longman), an intermediate course-book. The ideas inherent here were later clarified in the projected 4-level series by the same authors, of which *Starting, Building and Develoving Strategies* have been published. These 'were markedly different from audio-lingual materials. in that they incorporate real language used in realistic situations, not tailoring it to the extent that the language becomes unnatural. The teacher must distinguish between active and passive requirements of the student and free himself of the urge to protect the student from the unknown. In notional-functional based courses, the learner is thrown right into actual language. This demands considerable adjustment for teachers who have been trained in structuralist methods and is also perhaps frightening at first to the non-native teacher.

Authentic material is emphasized. Listening exercises are often unscripted passages of natural speech, incorporating all the features of spoken language that are often edited out in the so-called "slow colloquial" model. Rather than using listening to practice a grammar point, the teacher trams students in listening both for gist and specific information and in note-taking – all practical skills. Reading is likewise taught with authentic material, and-the letter, menu, timetable, advertisement format is extensively used in all N-F materials.

The reason that we talk is because there is some kind of information gap. The teacher should try to create this in the classroom. Role plays incorporating blocks are one way; the use of jigsaw listening and reading, where various students or groups have different information and need to pool it to solve a problem, is another. Immediate personalization is another aspect of this, in that it is the exchange of real information. Personalization and role play are very important techniques in the approach.

For teachers who have to use a more traditional text, and yet would like to incorporate some of these ideas into his course, there is a wealth of supplementary material available. David Bycina, through a workshop format, introduced some of these:

Speaking: "The Modern English Teacher" (magazine), Teaching Techniques for Communicative English (McMillan), What do you think (Longman), and books of. role plays including Newsflash, Act English and Play your Part.
Listening: Listening to Maggie, Variations on a Theme, Listening Links (for jigsaw listening).
Reading: Reasons for Reading, Authentic English for Reading, Looking for Information, Practical Information, Reading and Thinking in English.
Writing: Advanced Writing Skills, Think and Link, Functional English, Writing for Effect.

The meeting concluded with Bycina considering the problems of testing. Obviously, a

(continued on pg. 16)

JALT'81 Call for Participation

Dear JALT Members and Friends:

JALT'81 is the Japan Association of Language Teachers' 7th Annual International Conference on Language Teaching and Learning. This year the Conference will be held in Tokyo at the Bunka Institute of Language in Shunjuku during the three-day 'weekend' of November 21, 22, 23. It will feature papers, workshops, seminars, material displays and demonstrations varying in length from thirty minutes to nine hours.

We hope you will give one of these demonstrations.

We expect well over 600 visitors., participants and friends from all over Japan and abroad. They will bring, as we hope you will too, a variety of backgrounds, interests, experiences and needs which they will be eager to share as fully as possible in these three short days.

By the time you see this, you will already have been thinking hard about your presentation. Why not submit a proposal now? Procedures are outlined below and, although they may seem complex, are designed to make sure that every proposal, no matter who or where it's from, is treated entirely on its merits. As in the past, all Entry Fees to the Conference will be waived for those making presentations.

Please complete your proposal according to the directions given below and return it by August 1 to:

JALT'8 1 Conference Committee
c/o Bunka Institute of Language
22-1 Yoyogi 3-chome
Shibuya-ku
TOKYO 151

Date Due: August 1st 1981

LeRoy Willoughby	Kohei Takubo	James Duke
Conference Chairperson	Secretary	Program Co-ordinator

PROCEDURES

1.- Write a title for your abstract. Limit the title to 9 words. Indicate the time required and the type of presentation.

2.- Compose a 200-word, typed abstract of your presentation. The summary should include central theme or idea, issue or purpose; precise details of procedures, evidence or argument; summary, conclusions, applications or implications.

3.- Immediately below the abstract and on the same page, indicate the prime area and audience for whom you have intended your presentation. From each list below select one main descriptive item:

A (Areas) a) Teaching University & College students in Japan; b) Teaching High School/ Secondary School students in Japan; c) Language Schools in Japan; d) English for Business; e) ESL/EFL in Bilingual Education; f) Teaching Children; g) Teacher Training; h) Applied Linguistics; i) Language and Culture; j) Classroom Activities; k) Literature; 1) Humanistic Approaches; m) Drama/Music in Teaching; n) Publishing and Authorship; o) Use of Hardware; p) Other and specify.

B (Audience) a) Classroom Teachers; b) Japanese Teachers of English; c) Administrators; d) Teachers/ Students in Training; e) Teacher/Program Supervisors; f) Teacher Educators; i) Other (specify).

C (Experience) Presentation intended for those a) new to the field or b) experienced in the field.

4.- Next to your audience write one of the following to identify the content of your presentation: the teaching/learning of a) grammar; b) reading; c) writing; d) speaking; e) listening; f) pronunciation; g) vocabulary; h) teacher education; i) research in second language acquisition; j) classroom centered research; k) testing; 1) program evaluation; m) curriculum materials development; n) English for Specific Purposes; o) Functional/Notional Approaches; p) Administration; q) Other and specify.

5.- Photocopy 2 copies of your abstract, one with your name OFF and one with your name ON.

6.- Include 2 conies of a seuarate sheet which contains:

a) a 25-word bio-data statement. Prepare this exactly as you want it to appear in the Conference Program.

b) the following information (items i and ii only as you wish it to appear in the program):
   i) your name
   ii) your affiliation
   iii) your mailing address
   iv) your contact phone number (work and home)

c) a 50-word precis of the abstract which will accompany the title of your presentation in the convention program.

d) a list of all the equipment that you require – excluding normal classroom furniture but including details of the type of equipment you might need. The word 'microphone' for example is not enough.

e) if a special seating arrangement is needed, please specify.

f) if this is a commercial presentation, please specify also.

Giving a Presentation at a Conference

By Dale Griffee

This article is written for those who are considering giving a presentation at ***JALT 81*** in Tokyo. For the purposes of this article, I will divide all language teachers into three types. Type one will never give a presentation, at least not this year. Type two has already decided to give one. Type three has never given one but is considering it. This article is for type threes. At the very least I hope you will find some issues to consider, a way of helping you think about what you are doing. At the most maybe this will be a kind of checklist. I will begin with the idea for a presentation and some of the implications of the decision. I will continue with the organization and the presentation. Last will be the rehearsal and the follow-up.

Where does one get an idea for a presentation? Usually from the work you are doing in your classroom. For a few people, who are really type twos, the desire to give a presentation comes first. They ask themselves, what am I doing that is interesting to me and would also be interesting to others. But most people simply find themselves doing something and being uncommonly excited about it. This is a sure sign that you have the possibility of a presentation. Either approach is fine. If YOU are lookina for an idea you can usually find one. If you are excited about what you are doing, probably others will be too.

The decision is actually the hardest part for many teachers. Both type one and two have already made their decision. The decision to give a presentation means crossing a line. It means taking direct responsibility for the direction of language teaching in Japan. There are two blocks people have in making a decision to give a presentation. One is, 'who am I to tell others?' and the second is, 'do I want to do the work?' The first is shyness which is a form of pride, the second is selfishness.

Can I risk the embarrassment? What if people laugh at me? But it is the same with all decisions. Any decision is risk. All decisions are quantitatively the same. Shall I speak in a foreign language? Shall I give a presentation? Shall I talk to a stranger?

So the issue finally boils down to 'can I give as well as take?' and 'do I have something worth giving?' To the first there is no answer. Your action will be the answer. To the second you have to assume your insights are valid. If what you did in your classroom was helpful to you and your students. then it will also be helpful to other teachers and'other students.

If the decision to stand before your colleagues and be judged by them is difficult, organization is difficult, too. But it is the single most important activity for your presentation. Before going into details let me say a few things in general. People are interested in your opinions and ideas. They are also interested in seeing and experiencing things. They are not interested in listening to you talk for a long time, listening to you read, recite facts and figures, or state the obvious. Objective facts are more helpful at the beginning of your presentation than at the end. In the beginning of your presentation people want and need to know what you did, why you did it and how you did it. Stating this same information at the end of your presentation is what I mean by stating the obvious. At the conclusion people want your opinions, insights and next steps.

One way to begin your organization is to make a list of presentations that you have attended. Try to remember what was helpful and not so helpful about them. Use these two lists as guides. Also keep in mind why you yourself come to language conferences and what you are looking for. Finally, your worst enemy is boredom. It is the only unforgivable fault.

Do you want to have confidence? Good organization is what gives confidence. Nothing more – nothing less. If you want to have confidence, organize very well.

What follows is a technique I learned while on the staff of the Institute of Cultural Affairs in Chicago, Illinois. It's a visual image of written or organized material. This is how you can chart your presentation.

On a piece of paper jot down everything you can think of about your presentation. Write every step, every piece of information. Turn another piece of paper lengthwise and draw a line across the paper about one-third of the way down. Be sure to use a pencil and have a good eraser handy. Writing from left to right, arrange in columns the items from your list in time sequence. Then draw lines- to separate the columns. Work with these columns. adding and subtracting, until your have an idea 'of what you want to do and in what order. To go one step further, you can group the columns and give them titles. Put content titles at the top and function titles at the bottom. This is for your help only as it brings many things together. I wrote this article from such a chart.

Last, list the points you want to make in your conclusion and introduction. These two areas are the most important. From your classroom work you are most familiar with the body of material you want to present. You are least familiar with giving this material as a presentation. The introduction and conclusion will be the most awkward for you. Decide what pictures, charts, handouts, lists and props you will need. As a final but important step, at the top of your chart, put the amount of time in minutes that you estimate each part of your presentation will take.

Now you are ready for a dress rehearsal. Find a group that is interested in your topic and arrange to do it. It can be a teachers' meeting in your school, a JALT chapter meeting or another group. If you tape yourself when you give this initial presentation it will help you evaluate. Your friends also might help you, but probably you will know what went well and-what-needs to be charmed. When I was preparing a Total Physical Response workshop for JALT-80 I included a long TPR demonstration in German. After doing the workshop at the Tohoku chapter meeting, I

decided it was too long and not necessary.

Now comes the great day. You have arrived at the conference, and it is almost time for your presentation. What if no one attends? Or what if too many attend and crowd the room? Before we worry about that let us consider some additional factors. First, did you write out your introduction on a separate piece of paper in large letters that you can read easily while standing? I mean the exact words you want to say. Did you do the same for the conclusion? Whether or not you actually say these words is not important. What is important is that you have them and can use them if you want to. This will give you confidence.

Confidence comes from organization and preparation. It is not a psychological state of mind. Standing in front of a mirror repeating "I am confident" ten times will not help you. But having a clear introduction and conclusion written out on a separate piece of paper will. Good organization does not bind **you** in chains. In fact, it frees you.

(continued on pg. 16)

GIVING A PRESENTATION AT A CONFERENCE

	Thinking About It		Acting On It		Living With It		
3 Types 1	The Idea 2	The Decision 3	The Organization 4	The Rehearsal 5	The Presentation 6	The Follow-Up 7	Old & New 8
1. never	1. classroom	1. hardest	1. what people are/aren't interested in	1. your school	1. confidence & organization	let down	common knowledge
2. already	2. excited	2. blocks	2. list	2. your chapter	2. visual aids	evaluation	
3. maybe	3. look for idea	3. giving & receiving	3. charting	3. other group	3. introduction		
			4. confidence		4. clothes		
			5. props		5. the room		
	GET READY		GET SET		GO		

Giving a Presentation

(continued from pg. 15)

Don't worry about whether or not your personality is suitable for presenting. Everybody has a personality. If you organize well, your personality will take care of itself.

Generally speaking, a practical presentation is more helpful than a theoretical one. Even though any presentation consists of both, emphasize the practical. My advice for new presenters is to simply state the theoretical background to orient your audience. If you found any books or articles helpful, you could list them. This would make a good handout; it would also be a good way to conclude the presentation.

Have you brought any visual aids with you?. It will make your presentation more interesting. People like to see things other than a speaker and a blackboard. Set them in a convenient place in the exact order you will use them. Perhaps you can draw a graph, chart or picture on the board. Do it before the presentation. Use colored chalk to brighten it up. If you are going to use a tape recorder, make sure it works and that the tape is pre-set. Now, on a large section of the board draw your timeline. A timeline is the top of your chart. It shows when the presentation will begin, the main sections and titles and how long you estimate each section will take. One way to introduce your presentation is to explain your timeline. It gives you something to say to get your voice going and indicates you know what you are going to do. Another way to begin is to read something pertinent to your presentation. But make sure you practice your reading several times before the actual presentation.

Now you are almost ready. But what are you wearing? When I give a presentation, I have a few rules about what I wear. These same rules also apply when I teach. (1) Do you like what you are wearing and feel comfortable? (2) I don't like to 'wear new clothes; I think about them too much. (3) I try to think about what my audience is likely to wear and then dress just slightly better. (4) I try to create a mood by what I wear. I want my audience to feel (but not think about) that they can trust this person. (5) 1 avoid bright clothes. I want my audience to see through me, so to speak, to my presenta-'tion. These are mv rules. but remember that every rule has its exception.'

Always get to your room before your audience. Walk around the room. Go to the back and sit down. Try to imagine how your audience will see you. Walk to the board and then to the left and then to the right. Get a "feel" of the room. When you are in the midst of a presentation, where you stand can affect the mood. If you stand in one place, a sort of monotony develops. If you walk toward your audience, the mood usually intensifies. If you want to lower this intensity, walk to a far corner.

Consider your audience. Think'about the people in the back of the room. Can they see and hear? If you ask for questions from the audience, repeat the questions. If your voice is weak, ask the person asking the question to stand, face the group and repeat the question.

Well, it's time to begin. You have your timeline on the board, your chart and notes are in front of you. You know exactly how you will begin and end. Are you nervous? Of course. I always am. But it is a nervousness filled with energy rather than confusion. Now take a deep breath and go.

The presentation is over. You probably won't feel normal for at least 24 hours. Doing a self-evaluation might help. List the things which you felt went right and the things you felt awkward about. Then list ways to improve the presentation if you do it again. Always write these things down and file them for reference.

Some of the above is common sense for teachers, but it is still important. Some things might be new to you, however. Take what you can use and file the rest. A language teacher goes to a presentation wide awake and with the assurance that he is helping the people who attend the presentation become better teachers.

Dale Griffee has been teaching in Sendai since 1976. He previously taught for The Institute of Cultural Affairs (U.S.) in the United States and in the Far East.

Notional-Functional Methods & Techniques

(continued from pg. I I)

student trained in the N-F approach cannot be expected to perform in traditional tests which stress form rather than function. Continual testing of the student could be done in the classrooms by having him react to situations. Only one published exam is on N-F lines – the Are1 Certificate of Examination.

It was hard to emerge unconvinced that the notional-functional approach was the obvious way in which to train a lecturer. However, the practical problems for the majority of teachers in the Japanese secondary and tertiary systems who wish to use it seem rather great. One is the problem of language. I think it would be verv useful for them to have a Japanese language introduction to the approach and guidance in how a non-native speaker copes. But the second, the problem of regimented curriculum, is much more difficult to overcome. One can only hope that Japan will emerge from the depths of the grammar translation method into a communicative syllabus without the intermediate stage (in evolutionary terms) of structuralism.

Reviewed by Gaynor Sekimori,
Publicity Chairperson, Kanto

SHIKOKU

THE IMPORTANCE OF ERROR IN LANGUAGE LEARNING AND TEACHING

The bulk of our April 19th meeting was a videotape presentation of a lecture given by Dr. Arthur Spicer, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Essex, England and professor of applied linguistics. His lecture was titled "The Importance of Error in Language Learning and Trainine" and was given at Kagawa University on Wednesday, April l5th.

In his lecture, Prof. Spicer recommended the importance of experimenting with the language to be learned, a process which entails making mistakes. He contrasted an "experimentative" approach with that in which the student is inhibited from making any utterances which are less than perfect. Dr. Spicer stressed that everyone, including native speakers, makes errors when he speaks, and that the goal of teacher should not be so much to suppress mistakes as to enable the student to learn from them. In advocating this "experimentative" approach to language learning, Dr. Spicer made a distinction between a "fossilized" mistake, from which one cannot learn, and a "developmental" mistake, which he feels is a necessary part of the learning experience.

In order for a student to benefit from such a "developmental" error, the teacher must be able to understand and explain it to the student in such a way that it does not become a "fossilized" or habitual mistake. According to Dr. Spicer, beginning students well often make what he called a "transfer" of error from the native language to the language that is being learned. As the student progresses he will gradually reach a point at which his errors will be mistakes made from within the framework of the language he is learning. Such errors could result from numerous factors, among which Dr. Spicer mentioned overgeneralization of grammatical rules to cases where they do not apply, and over-simplification of speech to avoid difficult points.

At this noint. Dr. Spicer stressed his feeling that the way to fluency-in a classroom is not by accuracy, but rather the other way around. Organizing one's classroom so as to avoid all errors could be the kiss of death for one's students, as a knowledge of grammatical rules in no way implies an ability to communicate one's ideas.

In short, if the cardinal goal in the language classroom is communication, one must not discourage errors, but encourage "experimentation" or use of the target language, and be able to cope with errors in a constructive fashion when they occur.

After watching the tape, the members broke up into small groups where we discussed those errors most commonly made in our classroom, and constructive steps to deal with them. This part of the program lasted as long as the lecture itself, and was interesting for the disagreements among the native English speakers on correct usage, which served to highlight Dr. Spicer's point that there is no set definition of what is an error and what is correct usage.

Reviewed by Darrell Jenks,
Secretary, Shikoku

JACK C. RICHARDS

KANTO

INTRODUCING THE PROGRESSIVE

On April 21, the recently established Aoyama Language Academy of Shibuya hosted a special JALT program. The speaker was Jack C. Richards of Chinese University, Hong Kong, who spoke on "Introducing the Progressive".

Dr. Richards began by stating that language consists of a form/meaning relationship. This means that to every grammatical form in the language there is assigned by some means a corresponding meaning. With the verb system this meaning takes on two areas of meaning, i.e. actions and conditions. Actions are either incomplete, in which case the verb is in the simple form, or incomplete, in which case the progressive form is used. If the event described by the verb is a condition, the verb used will be either progressive (a temporary condition) or simple (a stative or permanent meaning).

According to Dr. Richards, the present progressive has been misnamed by many as a tense when actually the present tense is combined with aspect. The purpose of the progressive is to depict how the actions or conditions unfold or are carried out. Dr. Richards provided a handout with over eighty examples of the different ways in which the progressive is used in English.

The presentation was videotaped and copies of the handouts are available. Those wishing to arrange for a showing of the tape should contact Michael MacFarlane who is the Oxford Publishing Company's representative in Tokyo (tel:03-942-0101).

Reviewed by William Patterson,
Program Chairman, Kanto

Bulletin Board

KYUSHU PUBLICITY HELP NEEDED

The Kyushu Chapter Coordinating Committee is in need of members who will volunteer to assist on a Publicity Distribution Task Force Committee. Duties involve making mailing lists of the prospective program audience, stuffing envelopes, and mailing prepared advertising to this audience. All expenses incurred are paid by the chapter. It's hard work, but definitely a satisfying job. And it's for a good cause – to help other teachers take advantage of the benefits JALT is offering. Join up now for the future of JALT. Call or write Dick Dusek at: Hinosato 9-30-l. Munakata-shi. Fukuoka-ken 81l-34 (tel. 09403-6-0395 evenings or 093-87l-l93l x527 on Wed. through Fri. daytime).

TORO METHOD IN KYUSHU

Kyushu received more than fifty participants for the Kitamuras' afternoon workshop for the TORO method of teaching children. Those interested in a more comprehensive seminar in how to use the techniques and curriculum organized by Elizabeth and Toyotaro Kitamura were given the opportunity to register for a two-day seminar to be held in Fukuoka during Mav. The exact time and place was to be decided after six persons signed up, which is the limit for each seminar. It's too late to join this May training session, but for those interested in encouraging the Kitamuras to return to Kyushu, please leave your name, address, and phone number with Etsuko Suzuki, 10-4 Izaki, Chuo-ku, Fukuoka 810 (te1.713-8717). Further information will be provided upon request.

Positions

(SHIKOKU) Beginning in June, the Nichibei Gakuin in Takamatsu needs a full-time English teacher to teach adults and children. Twenty five hrs./week maximum, one year contract, with sponsorship. Mail resume to Mr. Yoshiki Miyazaki, c/o The Nichibei School, 1 O-20 Marunouchi, Takamatsu-shi, Kagawa 760 (tel. 0878-21-3382).

(TOKYO) The Tokyo Center for Language and Culture (Tokvo Gaikokuao Center) has Dart-time and full-time openings at company classes for qualified English teachers in Tokyo, Osaka, Nagoya, Kita-Kyushu and various rural areas. For further details please contact Mr. M.E. Hess, Manager of the Foreign Staff, 7-9, Uguisudani-machi, Shibuya-ku, Tokyo 150 (tel. 03-463-7861).

MEMBERSHIP POSTCARD CORRECTION

Some regular chapter members have accidentally been sent dues acknowledgment postcards which deny that they have the right to attend meetings for free. It is current JALT policy that the members of any chapter may attend the meetings of any chapter throughout the country for free, or at the same rate charged to the local members. This privilege does not apply to members-at-large, overseas, or institutional members. The membership committee regrets any inconveniences that this error might have caused.

JALT SUMMER WORKSHOP

Plan on being free August 21-23 for the JALT Summer Workshop to be held at Nagoya Universitv of Commerce. Richard Via and Larry Smith, research associates at the East-West Center in Hawaii, will be special speakers, as well as Sharon Bode. Housing and meal services will be provided with a minimum charge. More news in the next Newsletter.....

Outside

JALT

THE FIRST INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON FOREIGN LANGUAGE EDUCATION AND TECHNOLOGY

An international conference of language teachers and language laboratory directors will be held in Tokyo from August 18-21 attracting names such as Peter Strevens, Wilga Rivers, and Norman Davies. There will also be a two-day video festival, as well as symposia on language education technology in the present and the future.

Co-sponsored by the Language Laboratory Association of Japan and the National Association of Learning Laboratory Directors (U.S.A.), this first conference will focus on intensive discussions on international cooperation for foreign/second language education and technology. The video festival will be of particular interest to teachers interested in audio-visual materials and approaches. Papers to be presented will cover a wide range of topics, from teaching methodologies to the technical aspects of the language laboratory.

Teachers interested in more information should contact the FLEAT head office, c/o Foreign Language Institute. Meiii Gakuin University, T-2-37 Shirokanedai, Minato-ku Tokyo 108, and look for information in future NLs.

Meetings

SHIKOKU

Topic: Workshop on CL-CLL (Counseling Learning-Community Language Learning)
Speaker: Kathleen Graves
Date: Sunday, June 14th
Time: 1:00 p.m.-4:00 p.m.
Place: Conference Room #4, Education Department, Kagawa University, Saiwai-cho, Takamatsu
Fee: Members: free; Non-members: Yl,000
Info: Peggy Slocum (0878) 34-3322

Kathleen Graves is a member of JALT-West Kansai and is teaching ESL and Chinese in Osaka. Last year she taught ESL at the Language Institute of Japan in Odawara.

CHUGOKU – JUNE

Topic: Reading for Meaning and Mistakes
Speaker: Deborah Foreman-Takano
Date: Sunday, June 7th
Time: 1:00 p.m.-4:00 p.m.
Place: Hiroshima Y.M.C.A., Hatchobori, Hiroshima-shi
Info: Marie Tsuruda (0822) 28-2266

Ms. Foreman-Takano will explain how to use a cookbook for Japanese food in order to teach American culture, If time permits, this presentation will also include an overview of the current thinking as what constitutes a mistake and how student evaluation has evolved over the last few years.

CHUGOKU – JULY

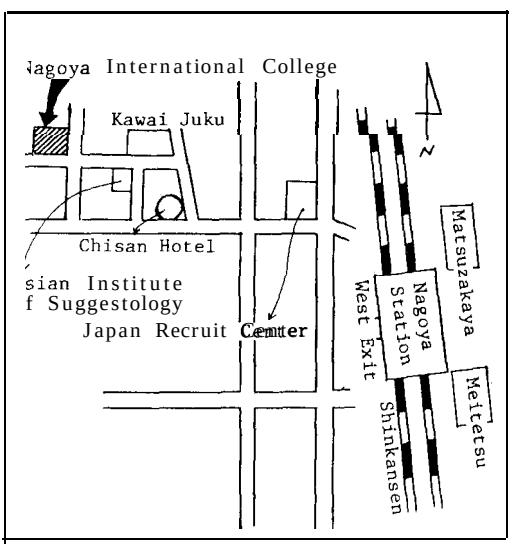
Topic: Mutual Understanding of Different Cultures
Speaker: Reiko Naotsuka
Date: Sunday, July 5th
Time: 1:00 p.m.-4:00 p.m.
Place: Hiroshima Y.M.C.A., Hatchobori, Hiroshima-shi
Info: Marie Tsuruda (0822) 28-2266

The aim of this presentation is to make English teachers aware of major, and often unconscious, problem areas in communication between Japanese and non-Japanese. These problem areas were discovered during a survey of intercultural attitudes, in which questionnaires were distributed to foreigners living in Japan and to Japanese who had lived abroad. The questionnaires presented Japanese communication patterns in concrete situations so that the respondents could react to them spontaneously, without being obsessed by stereotyped opinions. The unconscious cultural assumptions underlying the reactons of both Japanese and non-Japanese will be analyzed and discussed.

TOKAI

Topic: A Demonstration and Workshop in Total and Physical Response
Speaker: Aleda Krause
Dates: Saturday, June 27th, 1:30 p.m.-4:30 p.m.; Sunday, June 28th, 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. and 1:30 p.m.-4:30 p.m.
Place: Nagoya International College (Kawai Juku), Meieki School (tel. 452-7581)
Fee: Members, Y500, Non-members, Yl,000 Saturday afternoon. Sunday fees: Members, Y1,000; Non-members, Y2,000.
Info: Satoshi Ito (0562-97-0437, home; 0562-97-l 306, office)

Ms. Krause earned her M.A. degree in TESL and Linguistics from the University of Michigan. She taught German in the U.S. for five years. She has been living in Japan for four years and now works for Sumitomo Metal, teaching English and German.



EAST KANSAI

Topic: English Education and the New Curriculum
Panel: Mr. Shozo Kyogoku and Ms. Karla Merritt, Kyoto Prefectural Board of Education; Mr. Shoichiro Sakane, Miyazu Senior High School; Ms. Yoko Hamada, Otokoyama Third Junior High School
Moderator: Yukinobu Oda, Doshisha Women's College
Date: Sunday, June 14th
Time: 1:00 p.m.-4:30 p.m.
Place: Doshisha Women's College, Dentonkan, Rm. 205
Fee: Members:free; Non-members:Y1,000
Info: YukinobuOda(075) 251-4156/4151

KANT0

Topic: Discourse Analysis – classroom applications with an update on fieldwork
Speaker: Virginia LoCastro
Date: Sunday, June 28th
Time: 1:00 p.m.-5:00 p.m.
Place: Bunka Gakuen (near Shinjuku Station) (tel. 03-379-4027)
Fee: Members:Y500; Non-members:Y1,500
Info: Bill Patterson (0463) 34-2557 or Gaynor Sekimori (03) 89 l-8469

The purpose of Ms. LoCastro's presentation is to share her observations and findings in the area of discourse analysis and its application to language teaching. It is a non-technical presentation and presupposes no specific knowledge of discourse analysis. The presentation will be different from her other (JALT 80 and TESOL 80) presentations. It will consist of background information, lecture and audience participation. There will also be a question and answer period following.

Virginia LoCastro is currently Academic Supervisor at the Language Institute of Japan (LIOJ) in Odawara. Before teaching in Japan, Ms. LoCastro was at Columbia University and Teachers' College where she taught English as a Foreign Language and was also involved in the teacher training program there. She has given presentations at JALT 80 and TESOL 80.

A business meeting will follow the presentation. The main issue to be discussed is programming. Members who have not yet picked up their journals, please do so at this time.

KYUSHU JUNE

Topics: Materials Development for the Language Laboratory in Japan: A Notional-Functional Text, Tapes, and Videotapes; and
Motivation in Language Laboratory Learning: Results of a Statistical Survey
Speakers: Marilyn A. Kalan, Chubu Institute of Technology
Professor Kuniomi Oka, Kurume University
Date: Sunday, June 2 1 st
Time: 1:00 p.m.-4:00 p.m.
Place: The Fukuoka Y.M.C.A., I-12-8 Daimyo, Chuo-ku, Fukuoka City (tel. 092-781-7410)
Fee: Members:Y500; Non-members:Y1,500
Info: Jay Kilpatrick (092) 841-3194 or Etsuko Suzuki (092) 7 13-87 18

For the past two years Marilyn Kalan, who holds an M.A. in Linguistics from Ohio University, has been working at Chubu Institute of Technology in Kasugai designing and teaching that school's English conversation course. During this time she also coauthored a notional-functional L.L. text entitled *It's Up to You, Conversations at C.I. T.* and wrote, directed, and edited

the videotapes and cassette tapes which accompany it. Her presentation will consist of a discussion of things to consider when designing materials for the L.L. in Japan followed by a presentation of her text and a sample videotape.

Professor Oka has collected a vast amount of data on motivation in L.L. learning from teachers and students in 15 schools (4 junior high schools, 4 senior high schools, 4 colleges, and 3 universities) in Fukuoka Prefecture. His presentation will consist of a short discussion in both English and Japanese, on the results of this research.

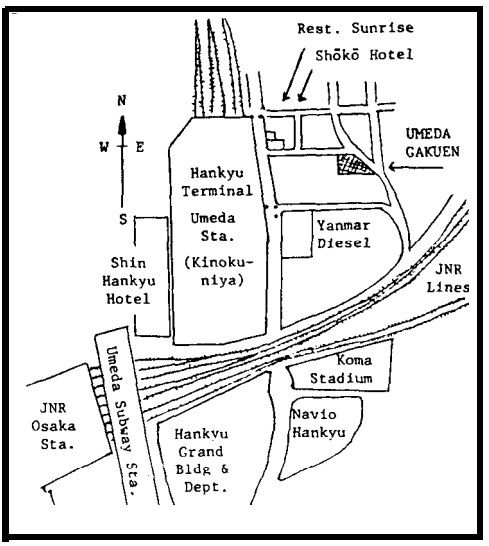
KYUSHU – JULY

Topic:	University Level Composition
Speakers:	Steve Sabotta, Chief Instructor, Fukuoka Y.M.C.A.: "Using Logic and Sentence Combining to Teach Composition" Wayne Skipper, Fukuoka Women's University: "Guided Composition"
Date:	Sunday, July 19th
Time:	1:00 p.m.-4:00 p.m.
Place:	The Fukuoka Y.M.C.A., l-12-8 Daimyo. Chuo-ku. Fukuoka Citv (092-781-7410)
Fee:	Members: free; Non-members: Y1,000
Info:	Jay Kilpatrick (092) 841-3194 or Etsuko Suzuki (092) 7 13-8718

Often in Japan at both the high school and university levels, courses entitled "English Composition" actually teach translation of isolated sentences and short passages, not real composition, in which the student must logically organize and develop his ideas at length. Consequently, after graduation, when the former student is presented with a task requiring English writing ability, such as preparing a business letter or a report, it is often painfully difficult for him. In this program Steve and Wayne will discuss the ways they have approached the teaching of English composition. The content of the program will be mainly of interest to those teaching in universities, but high school teachers also may find it usefu1.

First Steve, who holds a B.A. in English from West Chester State College in Pennsylvania, will give a 90-minute presentation in which he will explain his method and then provide an opportunity for the participants to try some writing exercises. Next Wayne, who holds a B.A. in Japanese History from the University of Victoria, will talk for about 30 minutes about his experience using guided composition in his university classes. Again, members of the audience will be able to try some writing exercises.

After Wayne's presentation, the floor will be opened to questions and comments from the audience. All will be encouraged to share their ideas about teaching composition in general, and specifically, how the ideas presented by Steve and Wayne might be put into practice in their classes.



WEST KANSAI

Topic:	An Overview of Second Language Acquisition for the Language Teacher
Speakers:	Pam and Chip Harman, Nanzan Junior College
Date:	Sunday, June 28th
Time:	1:00 p.m.-4:30 p.m.
Place:	Umeda Gakuen (St. Paul's Church)
Fee:	Members, Y500; Non-members: Y1000
Info:	Kathleen Graves (075-932-8284); Jim White (0723-66-1250); Kimiko Nakamura (06-952-1093).

Special Interest Groups:

Teaching English in Schools: Wednesday, June 24, 6:30-8:00 p.m. at the Center for Language and Intercultural Learning. Contact Keiji Murahashi, 06-328-5650 (day).

Children's Interest Group: Umeda Gakuen, Sunday, June 28, 11:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m., board games. Contact Sister Wright, 06-699-8733.

Japanese: Thursday, June 25, l:00-3:00 p.m., Center for Language and Intercultural Learning. Contact Fusako Allard, 06-315-0848.

The Harmans will present a slightly updated version of the JALT 80 presentation, in which the most important issues relating to language acquisition are outlined and discussed,. with evidence from studies in neurolinguistrcs, child second language acquisition and adult second language acquisition. Some of the issues they will discuss are the Critical Period for language acquisition; the question of age (do younger children learn/acquire faster than older children?) in language learning; and the learning/acquisition distinction. These issues will be presented in such a way that the classroom teacher should have .a better understanding of what can be expected from language students psycholinguistically.