JALT
THE JAPAN ASSOCIATION OF LANGUAGE TEACHERS
NEWSLETTER
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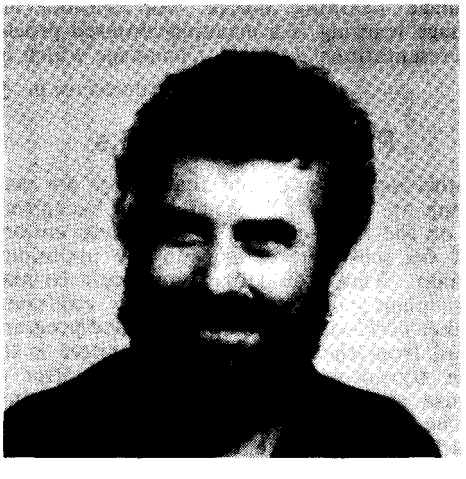
JALT '81 Preview:

Schedule, Main Guests

With all the preparations that are being made for JALT '8 1, you should be making your plans to attend. The conference, to be held at the Bunka Institute of Language in Shinjuku, November 21-23, will have some very important people attending, including you. More than 50 presentations will be scheduled. The main guests planned for now are: Alan Maley, Jack Richards, and Richard Young.



Alan Maley

At JALT '81 Mr. Maley will give a presentation and a workshop. The one-hour presentation will be 'Realism and Surrealism in FL Teaching: The Art of the Possible and the Improbable'. This presentation will look at what are supposed to be reational and realistic procedures. The three-hour workshop titled 'Ways to Fluency: Some Practical Considerations', will offer practical techniques designed to develop fluency. The techniques he will demonstrate include: warming up/relaxation exercises, games, the use of pictoral and sound stimuli, writing through random stimuli, and drama techniques.

Alan Maley's experiences in teaching for the British Council (Yugoslavia, Ghana, Italy, France, and presently China) certainly give him the authority to command an audience, but his background goes beyond teaching. The books he has authored or co-authored for teachers and students could fill a good-sized bookshelf. Some of these books include: *Guided English Conversations, Between You and Me* (both with R. S. Newberry; Nelson); *Quartet I* (with F. Grellet and W. Welsing; Oxford University Press); and perhaps the most well known of his books in Japan, *Drama Techniques in Language Learning* (with A. Duff, Cambridge University Press).

JACK RICHARDS

Jack C. Richards is a senior lecturer at the Chinese University in Hong Kong. His areas of specialization include TEFL and applied linguistics.

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Koen Meigi Received

JALT's International Conference on Language Learning and Teaching, JALT '8 1, Nov. 21-23, has received endorsement in the form of *koen meigi* from the Tokyo Board of Education, enabling junior and senior high school teachers to apply for official leave, *Koen meigi* will assure teachers of permission to attend; it will not guarantee that teachers will be granted funds to attend the conference, but financial assistance is possible. Teachers who wish to take advantage of the endorsement should see their school principal as soon as possible.

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Jack Richards

Dr. Richards has a long list of publications, including some 65 articles and books. His articles have appeared in *Language Learning, TESOL Quarterly, Applied Linguistics,* and *English Language Teaching Journal.* Some of his textbooks published by Oxford University Press include the *Breakthrough* Series (co-authored with Michael Long), *Words In Action,* and *Conversation In Action.* He is now preparing the *Longman Dictionary of Applied Linguistics* .

Dr. Richards' presentation entitled 'The Language Learning Matrix' will consider how language learning is a meaning-centered process, a representational system of language which is a

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From the Editors

In this issue, you'll find that things are really shaping up JALT '81. There's the background info on the front cover, the *koen meigi* endorsement for school teachers, and the preliminary program. This should help you begin to make your plans for the November conference October's ***NL*** will have a more detailed program.

Word from the Conference Committee is that Donn Byrne won't able to attend after all, because of publishing commitments. We hope he'll be able to come to Japan sometime. Better news from James Duke, Program Coordinator for the conference, is that the keynote speaker will be the president of an internationally minded company from Tokyo. More information was not available as we went to press, but look in the October and November ***NL*** tor many more details.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Something which we haven't intentionally neglected is the letters column. We haven't had a letters to the editor column because there haven't been any letters. If there's something you'd like to say to us, or to the membership at large, then we invite your letters. Get them to us before the 5th, typed, not insulting to the editors, and we'll probably print it.

Alan Maley on Developing Fluency

Eds. Note: ***The following is excerpted from a previously published article*** 'Developing Fluency in Language Teaching Programs', ***published in Recherches et Echanges, 1980. We have chosen the section following some of the background Maley gives on the distinctions of Learning/ Acquisition, Accuracy/Fluency, Left-hemisphere/Right hemisphere, Teacher/Learner Centered Systems, Tension/Relaxation, Competition/Cooperation, and Grading/ Authenticity. We hope that by shortening this article we have made available an article that would otherwise be difficult to find in Japan. Mr. Maley will be a Main Guest at*** JALT '8 1.

We can extrapolate a number of principles which may govern fluency-centred work:

a) Activities should be *task*-centred rather than *language*-centred. That is, some non-linguistic objective (building something, completing something, solving a problem, etc.) should predominate.

b) As a corollary to this, it is the activities which should be graded; not the language.

c) *Information* should be *exchanged.* This may be done by splitting up the information necessary to the solution of a problem, or by comparing divergent solutions to an identical problem.

d) The *unexpected* should be sought. This can be done by creating an information gap, or by exploiting the ambiguity principle or the random principle (see below).

Some Examples

It would seem that there are at least five ways of incorporating the above ideas and principles into language learning activities:

1. Through games.
2. Through freer improvisation activities (drama techniques, creative writing, etc.).
3. Through projects for learners (where they produce a newspaper, radio interview, etc.).
4. Through the so-called 'humanistic' approaches (e.g. Community Language Learning).
5. Through using the students' own lives and interests as the raw material of the programme. Some teachers (and learners) will recoil from this idea, but when consensus is reached, it works extremely well.

In this short article I will confine myself to a few examples of activities under 2. and 4. above.

Let me tell you something about X

The class walks about the room, mixing freely. When the word is given, everyone finds out ***one*** piece of personal information from the person nearest to them, and then moves on to: another person to whom they tell the piece of information. The process goes on continuously until the leader calls a halt.

Remarks

A good way of mixing people up initially and to get them to exchange a little personal information. Also good for reporting language (Brenda told me she likes doughnuts. John said he was tired, etc.). Care must-be taken to stop people from getting into long conversations, and to keep them on the move.

If there is time sit everyone down for a feedback session when people try to remember together what they have learned about each other.

Directed Group Fantasies

Students lie (or sit) with eyes closed. The teacher then begins to relate a highly visual, atmospheric story – in a calm, slow voice. For example, 'It is just a small country railroad station, with a ticket collector fast asleep under his newspaper, a fly buzzing on the window, roses and hollyhocks growing sweet in the flower beds. You walk out into the midday sun. There is no village to be seen, only a long winding dusty road disappearing into a wood. Time seems to have stopped. You walk slowly up the road and into the delicious cool of the shade. In the distance the road seems to come to an end with a pair of high wrought iron gates. As you come nearer you see there are two large stone lions on each side of the gate, the kind you remember vaguely seeing in photographs of the East. Through the gate you can make out a further gatehouse, massive, its walls windowless and only one low archway. The walls are painted dark blood red, and under the arch it is black.

There is a small gate to the side of the larger gates and you go in and walk towards the menace of the gate-house, which you now notice has a Chinese curving roof. As you walk into the pitch darkness of the arch your blood freezes. . . .'

The teacher goes on up to a point where he feels the group can take over. He then stops and any student can take the story a stage further by. adding one or more sentences.

Remarks

It is important to give the students long enough to get into the story before leaving it to them. And not to hurry them, as it usually takes a minute or two before anyone speaks. Do not worry about the silence – it is productive silence. And do not let the activity go on for too long. You will soon tell if it starts to flag. Clearly this activity can be followed up in writing or dramatisation.

One-word dialogues

Prepare a number of dialogues made up of one-word utterances. For example:

A. Good	A. Food	A. Liver	A. Speak Up
B. Good?	B. Food	B. Kidney	B. Hush!
A. Good	A. Drink	A. Liver!	A. Hush?
B. Well...	B. Drink	B. Kidney!	B. Yes...
			A. Cigarette
			B. No

These are given out to students working in pairs- one dialogue for each pair. (It does not matter if several pairs have the same dialogue.) Their first task is to decide who is talking, where they are, what they are talking about.

Pairs then join to form groups of four (with pairs which have the same dialogue themselves). They then compare their interpretations. Once agreed on one interpretation they expand the dialogue by lengthening the utterances, and by continuing the dialogue if possible. Groups then perform their dialogue for another group.

Remarks

Apart from the opportunity this gives for interaction, the activity has value in highlighting the polyvalence of words, and the importance of total context in interpreting them. Care should be taken to encourage pairs (and groups) to seek out a number of possible interpretations, and not to go for the easiest option.

Group story

Students work in groups of four. Each is given three words at an-appropriate level (taken from the Cambridge English Lexicon). Each student should have one noun, one verb and one adjective or adverb. The words should be chosen and distributed at random.

Each group then shares its words, helping each other out over meanings if necessary. The group's words should then be built into a coherent story line. The story is then told to another group. Alternatively the group works out a story line, then acts out the stroy to another group. This can be done in mime, in which case the other group has to try to decide the original words.

Group Poem

Students work in groups of six. You give each group one word (e.g. snow, red, cats, pain, etc.). Each person in the group writes one sentence which the word suggests to him (without consulting his neighbours!). The sentences may or may not contain the word. The slips of paper from each group are then collected and exchanged with another group (i.e. Group A gets Group D's sentences, Group D gets Group C's, Group C gets Group B's, Group B gets Group A's). Each group now has six sentences to work on, all relating to a single theme. The task of each group is to arrange these sentences in the best possible order to form a poem. They are allowed to discard one sentence if they wish, and/or to write one new sentence. Minor changes to grammar are also allowed to help the cohesion of the fragments. Groups then present their poems to other groups.

A very good exercise to aid understanding of the importance of cohesion and coherence in texts.

Making computer poems

How many sentences can be made by re-arranging the words of this sentence?

'Nothing is ever for ever'

Put the sentences in order so as to make a poem.

Conclusion

It must be clear from the foregoing that I favour learning situations which promote acquisition, through fluency work, offering the possibility of developing right-hemisphere function; such as creativity, in a relaxed, co-operative, learner-centred mode, working with authentic language in genuine interactions. It this being realistic – or surrealistic? This would be a suitably enigmatic and thought-provoking question with which to end this article. I shall not however succumb to this temptation, but instead attempt a rambling sort of answer.

First of all, let us recognize that Learning/ Accuracy activities are an essential part of any language learning programme. And that left-hemisphere functions clearly do have a part to play. Indeed one must recognise that once learners are given responsibility for their own learning, they will also want to do analytical, rational, 'non-creative' things. They will also have certain expectations about what should go on in classrooms (e.g. that mistakes will be corrected, etc.). What I have been concerned with in this paper is with trying to redress the balance between the two poles of realism and surrealism. I would contend that many apparently 'real' or 'realistic' forms of activity lead to what is in effect unrealistic or surrealistic behaviour. (For example using an authentic radio broadcast as a corpse on which multiple-choice questions feed.) Contrariwise many types of activity which look very odd, even if not totally surreal, do in fact give rise to 'real', in the sense of 'genuine' interaction between learners (e.g., a drama exercise involving students in making a machine using their own bodies). What is real to the learner, seen from inside, may seem odd observed from without, and vice versa. It would be an interesting exercise to draw up a taxonomy of activities on a scale or realism/ surrealism of input and the degree of authenticity of output produced. But this could perhaps be the subject of another article.

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Chapter Reviews

Eds. Note: ***Sharon Bode, in Japan to give presentations to chapters and to the Summer Institute in Nagoya, gave a presentation to both the West Kansai and the Kanto chapters. Both were reviewed by chapter members, but with enough differences between them to make them worth printing side-by-side, which we have done below.***

West Kansai

LISTENING CREATIVELY

Reviewed by Vince Broderick, West Kansai Liaison

On Sunday, August 2nd, JALT co-founder Sharon Bode came to the West Kansai Chapter's 'early August' meeting to give a presentation on listening comprehension.

First, Sharon played a tape recording of some light classical music. After we listened for a while, she asked for some comments on what sort of feelings listening to the music called up. The responses ranged from a childhood memory of listening to classical music at home with the adults in the family, to running barefoot through the grass in springtime.

Sharon explained that she liked to start with listening to music because the music is a help in getting everyone to make the shift 'into' the class; also, the wide range of responses serves to make a point about the meaning of things we hear. Everyone heard the same music, but it did not make the same impression on any two people. Everyone brought his own meaning to what was heard. Sharon pointed out that, as teachers, we must pay attention to the fact that people *make* meanings. Listening comprehension, then, was not just a matter of getting the meaning from the words, but of getting the meanings from the people, through classroom interaction.

Next, we took part in a centering exercise, involving recall of a very happy moment in our lives. We were to try to elicit an image of that moment, then talk to the person next to us about it. As with the music, we were not asked to talk about what was on the tape, but about how we felt. Instead of trying to pack 'comprehension' into the student's head, the exercise seeks to draw out a 'self-investment' from the student.

We had a further chance to see how listening can be used to create a 'community of involvement' when we listened to a story in a language no one understood and then discussed what we thought it meant, in groups of three. After that, several people told all the participants what had been discussed in their groups. The responses were quite definite and detailed, and many people seemed to feel that, where their versions differed from the version in English that we later listened to, it was not so much a question of being 'wrong' as it was of having composed 'another version'.

Sharon said that the point of that exercise was to show how much is lost if one approaches listening merely from the point of view of content; compared with what can be accomplished with student-invested 'materials', the 'objective' approach is the least interesting way to work with listening. If we get too entranced

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speaker-oriented system. Language learning is also socially oriented, with interaction the purpose of learning a target language. With the effects of language learning as a representational and interactional system, Dr. Richards will then focus on the conditions where language learning is likely to be successful.

His three hour workshop will be: 'Teaching English as a Foreign Language: An orientation for New Teachers' (although this will also be of interest to more experienced teachers). This workshop will introduce teachers to the principles of teaching English, by focussing particularly on key issues and resources.

RICHARD YOUNG

Richard Young has taught ESL, trained teachers and written materials in Italy, England, Hong Kong and China. A graduate of the Universities of Oxford and Reading, he is at present working with the British Council in Hong Kong, training teachers and writing materials for use in schools.

Recent approaches to syllabus design have been based on a functional view of language as a tool of communication. This has led many writers to undervalue the formal side of language. Mr. Young's presentation will try to show how form and function can be reconciled in the area of syllabuses and materials for young children.

Richard Young

with meaning, we forget that language is more than that. For instance. in a dictation. the usual procedure is to make the meaning more easily accessible? by speaking more slowly than usual conversational speed. Sharon said she prefers to keep the language as authentic as possible, and instead change what the teacher and students do with it, using other facets of language to get away from the 'only one answer' syndrome that comes with an overemphasis on finding the meaning 'in' the language.

The second half of the presentation started with Sharon asking us to make a notation of what was especially worth remembering about the first part. Reiko Horiguchi said she would remember not to take things for granted, and Michiko Inoue pointed out how the lack of concern for more than 'meaning in translation' in English education could cripple language learning.

Sharon said she thought a neglected aspect of listening comprehension was having the teacher listen to the students. In a 90-minute class, she uses 20-30 different teaching strategies. The one sure way to know if they worked is to ask.

The next thing we did was to list all the listening comprehension texts we knew. Bernie Susser's list led with 19 entries. Sharon said that 10 years ago there would have been only one or two texts on that list. Audio-lingual texts had accompanying tapes, but they were for repetition of structural drills. The English was realistic, but it was not authentic spoken English, since it was scrinted material that was read.

Subsequent listening comprehension texts sought to have the students confront English 'as it is', learn from it and be comfortable-with it. Instead of changing the language of the text, it was decided to let the exercises, the classroom interaction, accomodate the language. Even elementary learners could, be given real language and elementary exercises, instead of language so artificially simple it's merely an example of a grammatical point.

To reassure those afraid to expose their students to authentic language, Sharon pointed out that authentic language is the way we learn our first language, that we learn from the very complexity of authentic language. Neurological research seems to support the idea that the brain needs complexity, and not simplicity, of input.

Sharon also said the complexity of authentic language can be an enriching factor. If one just listens for the message of an English text, listening stops before the full impact comes. She recommended listening 50-60 times, because a complex, personal talk has a lot of depth that can be used in the classroom.

Sharon continued the presentation by asking for a show of hands indicating 'That's like me' or 'That's not like me' responses to a number of statements she made about parties. Then we listened to several different comments, each about 8 seconds long, about parties. Sharon asked us whether or not various things on the tape had been among the questions we had 'voted' on. The purpose of the 'vote' was to make the students feel more at home with the listening exercise, by giving them vocabulary and by eliciting their own feelings about the topic to be heard. The listening passages are short monologues, with 4 or 5 on the same topic, and a good deal of overlapping is in the vocabulary and the structures.

We then were asked to draw a picture of ourself at the kind of party we like. There were some interesting visual renditions, followed by equally interesting descriptions, Sharon said she had seen her teaching evolve into a belief that the more you can integrate in the classroom, the better the learning. She has come to rely on other kinds of exercises than those using language She felt this was very different from her-old way of teaching, when she used to beat the language-related exercises into the ground.

We prepared for a listening exercise on moving away from home by another centering practice in which we remembered some change in our life. We heard the selections on the tape and were asked what feeling each one suggested, and the particular word or words that made us have this feeling. We all quickly realized that the words which had called up that feeling had, for the most part, absolutely nothing to do with the dictionary meaning of the emotion, yet they had served to call it up.

Listening to the tape selections on moving away also served as a cross-cultural exercise, since we were able to offer different situations for each comment, depending on whether the speaker was 'identified' as Japanese or not.

Sharon reminded us that every teacher knows something else can happen, no matter how precise the teacher's directions to the students are. Similarly, when you listen, what you hear is what you are ready to. This has a lot to do with intention, awareness and motivation, and some of it is out of our consciousness. So, Sharon tries to get the students to listen often and repeatedly, with lots of exercises, and each one giving access to a part of what is happening.

Since a listening comprehension text can be used independently, when it is used in a classroom it really does not make sense for the teacher just to do the exercises mechanically. The teacher must elicit creative investments on the part of the students. Because the meaning isn't in the language, it's in the people.

Kanto

LISTENING COMPREHENSION – WHAT'S SO SPECIAL?

Reviewed by Catherine Clark, ELEC Evening Program Supervisor

Sharon Bode, currently teaching at the University of Southern California and formerly of the Kyoto YMCA is back in Japan after an absence of 5 vears. The focal points of her presentation were her views of the changes in the teaching of listening comprehension over the past 15 years, and various techniques she has found

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useful in helping her students to develop the skill of listening comprehension.

Sharon first asked us to relax and listen to some taped music. After a few minutes of this, we discussed what happened inside of our heads as we listened. Some people said they were beginning to doze off, others felt like humming along. The images evoked ranged in variety from a countryside to a cathedral to a classroom. Sharon told us that for her the music was a useful way of bringing her to a quiet place. She said she uses this technique with her students to relax them and get them talking about their feelings.

Our next task was to listen to a woman speaking a language unknown to any of us. We were not given any instructions. The section was repeated 4 times, to the point where many of us actually began to recognize phrases as repetitions of what we had heard before. We then discussed what we had 'heard' in groups of three. We found ourselves enthusiastically talking about what the woman was feeling and what she was probably saying. (We also tried to figure out what the language was.) We used such words as 'pensive,' 'narrative,' 'unemotional' in discussing this passage of meaningless words. As it turned out the woman on the tape was relating in Tagalog an experience from her childhood after having been asked to tell about the happiest moment in her life. The enthusiasm of the immediate 'happiness' that had occured years before wasn't there, but we felt that we had understood more of her current mood and speaking style by just listening and feeling her mood than we could have if we had only listened to the words she was saying. For classroom application if we have our students listen to passages they can't possibly understand, they will be able to talk about what they have heard. As native speakers of a language, we all 'hear' the feelings and attitudes that exist in addition to the actual words, although even between native speakers misunderstandings sometimes occur when these cues are ignored or misread. As teachers of listening comprehension, however, we often tend to emphasize the verbal content and forget that the other factors are equally important in getting the meaning in a total sense. We need to find ways of removing the word barrier, at least once in a while. If we do interesting things with passages that the students cannot understand, we can help them to develop a sense of the underlying meanings;

At this point, we all received a list of prominent listening texts published within the last ten years, and we shared advice about the merits and demerits of a few. We talked about Joan Morley's *Improving Aural Comprehension* (Michigan Press, 1972), Rost and Stratton's *Listening in the Real World* (Lingual House, 1978) and other Lingual House publications co-authored by Michael Rost, Plaister's *Developing Listening Comprehension for ESL Students* (Prentice Hall, 1976), Crymes, James, Smith, and Taylor's *Developing Fluency in English* (Prentice Hall, 1974) and Sharon Bode, Gary James, & Charles G. Whitley's *Listening In and Speaking Out* (Longman, *Intermediate* 1980, *Advanced* (being published).

Next Sharon read us a list of statements and asked us to decide which of them were 'very much like me' and which were 'not at all like me.' The statements concerned parties:

I like going to parties.
I like big parties.
I like parties in restaurants.
I like cleaning up after parties.
I like meeting strangers at parties, etc.

After this we heard four taped mini-monologues of people expressing their feelings about parties, using vocabulary and structures from the statements. With this technique, the students are given the necessary vocabulary in a much more meaningful way than in a simple, objective gloss. They are asked to personalize the vocabulary by relating the statements to their own feelings before being asked to understand the tape of other people expressing their opinions about the same topics.

Next we heard two short talks concerned with leaving home. We then discussed such extra-contextual factors as how old the speakers might be and where they might be going.

All of the taued material we heard at this presentation was natural English, 'real' English – friends sitting around talking about various topics with no apparent awareness of a tape recorder in the room. The language on these tapes is not 'brought to the students' as is most often the case with taued ESL material where the speakers speak unnaturally slowly and clearly, and where any interruptions, unfinished sentences, awkward or 'incorrect' grammatical structures are edited out. When students are taught with this type of unnaturally clear material, the usual result is that they can understand what goes on in the classroom pretty well, but they cannot deal at all with what they hear outside in real life. So, instead of tailoring the language artificially, the students are 'brought to the language' using this method. By means of repeated listenings and workbook exercises, the students get set for what they will hear in the main body of the tape.

Sharon quoted Gillian Brown who said, "Listening is the only skill where we give up after the first time." Picture the often recurring case where the teacher sees the frustrated, defeated, lost look on the students' faces after the first hearing of a passage, says 'Oh, is it that difficult? Well, then, this is what you heard . . . . ' and proceeds to spoonfeed the main ideas of the *context* to the students who learn that it pays to stop trying. So we must never give up or let our students give up after one try. We must persevere even though it may take more time to complete lessons when these techniques are first adopted, and even though our students may initially view them as a new form of torture. The ultimate results of the development of the skill of listening comprehension will be well worth the efforts of the teachers and the students.

FLUENCY AND STORY SQUARES

Reviewed by Walter Carroll, Kanto Liaison

In traditional pattern drilling, students are required to respond to cues given by the teacher, often without clues as to the context, sometimes responding automatically without real comprehension. At the July 25 Kanto meeting, Ruth Sasaki of LIOJ demonstrated a different and apparently effective approach to teaching structure and fluency.

Developed at LIOJ for Japanese businessmen and used successfully at the University of California at Berkeley for students of all types and countries, Fluency Squares are simple but easily recognizable drawings which can be used to cue student utterances. The simplest one Ms. Sasaki showed us was divided into four squares. Drawings at the left showed that the upper squares were for a woman named Betty, and the lower ones for a frog named Buddy. The left column, marked (+), showed a bowl of rice for Betty and insects for Buddy. The right column, marked (-), had the insects for Betty, the rice for Buddy. Using a pointer to indicate the subject and the positive or negative column, Ms. Sasaki elicited sentences such as 'Betty doesn't like lice.' When the possibilities had been explored, she added the word 'who' to the board, getting such questions as 'Who doesn't like rice?' She eventually added 'what', 'yes-no?' and 'tag?', asking 'students' to formulate questions like 'Buddy likes lice, doesn't he?' and getting appropriate responses.

The general procedure for Fluency Squares is for the teacher to elicit – or give if necessary – the basic information, and to direct some initial statements, then prompt undirected questions and answers from students. Pair work, written 'reinforcement and other exercises to recycle this work form later stages in the lesson. In our brief practice with the Betty/Buddy square, we covered pronunciation, structure (simple present), question formation, listening comprehension, intonation and short answers, and did not even get to the more challenging structures such as preference questions which could also be practiced with this square.

According to several people at the meeting who were experienced with the squares, students concentrate intently on these exercises, and after some practice tend to use their imagination to experiment with new forms, a development which should be encouraged. The students asking questions get immediate feedback from their peers about grammar and pronunciation, since mispronounced words may bring the 'wrong' answer. This also affords them the opportunity to practice gambits of clarification. And it shows one of the advantages of the squares – that they promote self-monitoring among the students with the teacher acting as a facilitator. If pronunciation problems persist, they can be dealt with conventionally.

The Fluency Squares are comparatively simple, designed to focus on a few problems of pronunciation, structure or concept. Ms. Sasaki gave us a quick introduction to squares designed to contrast various tenses, introduce time elements, modals, or active/passive contrasts. The squares are very flexible, and can be adapted to any level, while new ones can easily be designed to fit special needs.

On a more complex level, Story Squares give students a chance to integrate what they have learned and teachers a chance to see where further work might be needed. Illustrations in these squares represent a story which students must discover by asking the teacher yes-no questions. Correctly formed questions get answers, incorrect ones get a request to try again – sometimes with an indication of what to correct. Long silences can be used to summarize what is already known, which usually gets the questioning back on track. When the story has been discovered, the squares can be used to practice new structures, or to make inferences from the information given.

The visual presentation of the squares means that language practice takes place in a meaningful context. Squares can be used to focus on specific problems, but since they are so flexible, can be recycled again and again, allowing students to fit new structures into familiar contexts, thus aiding their memory.

Ms. Sasaki used charts which had been copied from the book *Story Squares: Fluency in English as a Second Language,* (Winthrop Publishers, Cambridge, Mass.), using an overhead projector, so that they were suitable for viewing by the whole class.

East Kansai

ENGLISH EDUCATION AND THE NEW CURRICULUM

Reviewed by Connie Kimos and Chiyo Nishizawa, East Kansai

At the June meeting of the East Kansai chapter, opinions concerning English education

Ms. Merritt, Ms. Donahue, Mr. Oda, Mr. Kyogoku, Mrs. Sakane

and the New Curriculum were given by four teachers involved in various aspects of English education: Mr. Shozo Kyogoku, English consultant for the Kyoto Prefectural Board of Education; Ms. Karla Merritt, Foreign Advisor for the same: Mr. Shoichiro Sakane of Mivazu Senior High School; Ms. Yoko Hamada of Otokoyama Third Junior High School.

Ms. Hamada said that the reduction from four hours of English instruction a week to three creates many problems: if you have three hours in the curriculum, in reality you have only two and a half hours per week, much too little to cover all the material; and though apparently only 430 new words are required (600 previously), the way of counting a 'new word' is different, so that the actual number of words and patterns has not changed much; the average junior high school teacher has twenty class hours a week, so instead of five classes four hours a week, now seven classes three times a week have to be met. With 45 in a class. that means meeting about 300 students a week and grading 300 papers and notebooks within a few days. The teacher cannot pay attention to individuals, and with students who disturb classes on the increase, many English teachers are giving up teaching. As for private schools, they give five or six hours a week to English, and their students have an advantage over public school students in' entering high school. Ms. Hamada therefore considers four hours the absolute minimum.

Mr. Sakane then gave his views of the curriculum change, remarking that when the *Mombusho* revises the course of study every nine years or so, it seems to be because of irritation at teachers, to give them a shock. But, he asks, can we expect a drastic change in the course of study? No. Because most teachers are very reluctant to change their methods, fearing to experiment because of parental worries over their children's entrance exams, and because of the PTA's censure for any failure; and, they are reluctant to go against the time-honored grammar-translations methods instituted in the Meiji period. About the curriculum itself, he said it was formerly divided into English. A, B, Conversation. and Basic. The new divisions are English I, IIA, IIB, C. He interprets English I as teaching in a very comprehensive way; i.e., no division into grammar, reading, composition, but the final goal is seen as communicative competence through English. Therefore English I seems to place greater emphasis on listening comprehension.

He feels, that, to adapt to the new curriculum, teachers will have to use more English in class, not minding if students laugh at their mistakes – teachers are human too. More teachers will also have to attend in-service training seminars. And, there will have to be closer collaboration between junior and senior high teachers, The English course ought not be separated into two unrelated units of three years each, but ought to be considered perhaps as a 'preparatory' three years and a 'finishing' three years.

Mr. Kyogoku then took his turn, relating some surprising 'inside' information. Up until this year, English was technically 'optional' (though 99% of students chose it). But now, English is required. And, whereas the new curriculum stipulates 105 hours of English instruction a year as the standard, teachers want three hours a week as the standard. Mr. Kyogoku also believes that handwriting should, be de-emphasized, since block printing is perfectly acceptable both on tests and in real life; the time could be better spent allowing students to express their own ideas and feelings. He described how teachers generally teach: ask a student to read in English, put it into Japanese, and then the teacher explains it in Japanese. With new methods, it is not necessary to teach too many items in limited time. But what is needed is for students to learn how to *learn what they need to know*. Students have lost interest even in coming to school because they do not have to think for themselves. Teachers explain everything. It is important to let students explain or speak. He believes that both junior and senior high students should not be taught everything. It is important to let students explain or speak. He believes that both junior and senior high students should not be taught about English, but encouraged to use simple, basic English itself through language activities.

Ms. Merritt then concluded the individual remarks by observing that it is not any course of study itself which is good or bad, but how the teachers carry it out that makes it succeed or fail: Although the new course of study aims to stimulate student interest, enable freer use of English, and help students think in English and be more comfortable in it, this new course is not necessarily accepted by all teachers, and there are not enough guidelines on how to implement it. So many teachers lament, 'How can I motivate my students to want to study English?' But Ms. Merritt wonders how you can *make* someone *want* to study English. She suggests: don't get tied down to the textbook, use other materials, more conversation, 'living English.' She notices a radical change in students as they progress from eager 7th graders able to guess the meaning of a sentence, to wary and hesitant high schoolers who worry over every single word. All in all, she feels that the criteria for the success of the new course of study are: acceptance and cooperation of teachers, coordination of junior and senior high school materials, realistic standards of achievement, and, with the realization that old methods may not be effective, more invention and experimentation.

A general exchange of questions, answers, and opinions produced these conclusions: three hours a week is indeed too little time for language learning; concentrate on English for communication; cover less material; teachers should spend more time planning.

At the end the questions was asked: What can JALT do to help? It was proposed that JALT gather college professors from public and private universities, someone from the *Mombusho*, and representatives of companies that require English for employment. It seems likely that such a discussion could take place sometime in the fall.

Chugoku

MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING OF DIFFERENT CULTURES

Reviewed by Bill Teweles, Hiroshima Jogakuin College

Our first Japanese national to speak at a JALT meeting this year at the Hiroshima YMCA was Reiko Naotsuka, author of *Obeijin ga Chinmoku suru Toki* ("When Westerners Remain Silent"). Hailing from the Osaka area where she has been a researcher at the Educational Science Institute for the past ten years, Ms. Naotsuka's presentation centered around the cultural assumptions underlying language use and classroom behavior in Japan and in the U.S., where she previously attended college.

At this time, I need to acknowledge Connie Kimos' excellent and informative review of a previous talk given by Ms. Naotsuka on the same topic at an East Kansai Chapter meeting, which appeared in the January issue of the JALT *Newsletter*. With that article in mind, I will attempt to focus on some of the areas she only briefly touched upon at that meeting and comment on some of the main themes of her research to date.

Initially recounting various incidents in which foreigners failed to understand the intentions of their Japanese employers or associates, Ms. Naotsuka emphasized that Westerners tend to value and expect free and direct exchange of ideas and a precise review and clarification of working terms rather than to rely on the good intentions of the employing party. The indignant reaction of a guest lecturer to the news that his contract at a local college did not allow for a trip abroad during his first year of employment in Japan was said to reflect a cultural misunderstanding which centered around the boss' assumption that contract conditions need not be spelled out at the outset and that ongoing changes could be accommodated as the need arose. The American instructor's assumption that his working hours as well as his vacation time both be taken into account clearly added to the confusion in this case.

Classroom dynamics (or the lack of them) is also an area that is greatly affected by intercultural communication differences. The tendency among Japanese students, for example, to consult one another before expressing an opinion often baffles foreign instructors in this country. Our speaker emphasized that this shows the importance of group consensus in Japan. Requests, appeals for further clarification or opinions might be left unanswered (or in the eyes of some foreigners, *ignored)* if elicited abruptly or without attempting to involve a class spokesperson or 'leader'. Surveys conducted by our guest speaker tended to bear out the expectedly negative reactions on the part of many Westerners to 'opinion withholding' on the part of Japanese students, whom they felt to be lacking in intellectual maturity. For the

students, however, the importance of the speaker's relationship to the party being spoken to is ever kept in mind, and certain displays of deference or 'reassurance gestures' are often necessary to accomplish the communicative task at hand. Just as certain *aisatsu* are used in Japan to establish rapport between persons engaged in conversation, some form of preparatory conditioning is often desirable to establish rapport in the classroom. A foreigner who merely sees *aisatsu* or other such formalized expressions of good will as being a means of avoiding getting to the point is contributing to his or her own non-acceptance in the classroom.

Given these basic differences in expressing ourselves, how can foreign instructors provide an atmosphere conducive to dialogue in the classroom (short of undergoing plastic surgery?) One suggestion our speaker made was to place less emphasis on words and seek greater emphasis on understanding (tacit or otherwise). She also added that most students are not encouraged to draw general conclusions in their earlier English language training and should not be expected to relate easily to inductive-type questions. A self-effacing approach is sometimes helpful and reassuring; if the teacher shows his or her own proclivity to make mistakes or plays down his/her knowledge of the student's language, it might help to increase class solidarity. More important, a mutual kind of emotional investment between instructor and student is more along the lines of the traditional types of social relationships (i.e., *senpai/kohai* that are so highly valued by Japanese.

A question that this albeit well-intended attitude of conciliation inevitably raises is whether the foreigner, in being a representative of an entirely different speech community, should, in fact, encourage an approach to English that is not in keeping with the way it is used or spoken abroad. Should we continually allow for sustained silence or non-usage of hands, for example, when students do-not comprehend what is being said or taught? While our speaker astutely notes the value of non-direct response and the need to look for meaning in hints and gestures as well as in words, is there something inherently threatening about raising one's hand or any shame in asking when one does not know or cannot understand a particular point? Acknowledging the "two-way street" of nature of most human dialogue, should we forever let them opt for the side route and consult one of their neighbors before making any attempt at responding for themselves? In some ways, what we are talking about is perhaps not so much a breakdown of cultural understanding in the classroom but about basic abuses of the educational process.

As our speaker suggests, it is clearly in the interests of instructors to place certain restrictions on question-asking; those of the "What do you think about/How do you feel about?" genre being clearly inappropriate for students unaccustomed to formulating their thoughts in like manner in their own language. Nevertheless, it is difficult to take seriously students who make little effort to familiarize themselves with the material being taught or who do not try to form at least an idea of HOW they can participate or WHAT they might be able to contribute to a class discussion. Even when operating out of one's own cultural sphere (as when the speaker was criticized for her silence in a class debate at an American college), the basic merit of making a sincere effort (or giving it the proverbial college "try") can hardly be faulted. An investment of time and forethought is, along with good feelings, vastly important in promoting cross-cultural dialogue. While we foreign instructors clearly have our work cut out for us then, the students' own share of the learning/participatory task should not be ignored either.

Hokkaido

STUDENT-CENTERED LEARNING IN THE LANGUAGE CLASS

Reviewed by Masae Suita, Sapporo College of Commerce

Mr. Thomas Robb, president of JALT, was our guest speaker on July 12 at the Hokkaido chapter meeting.

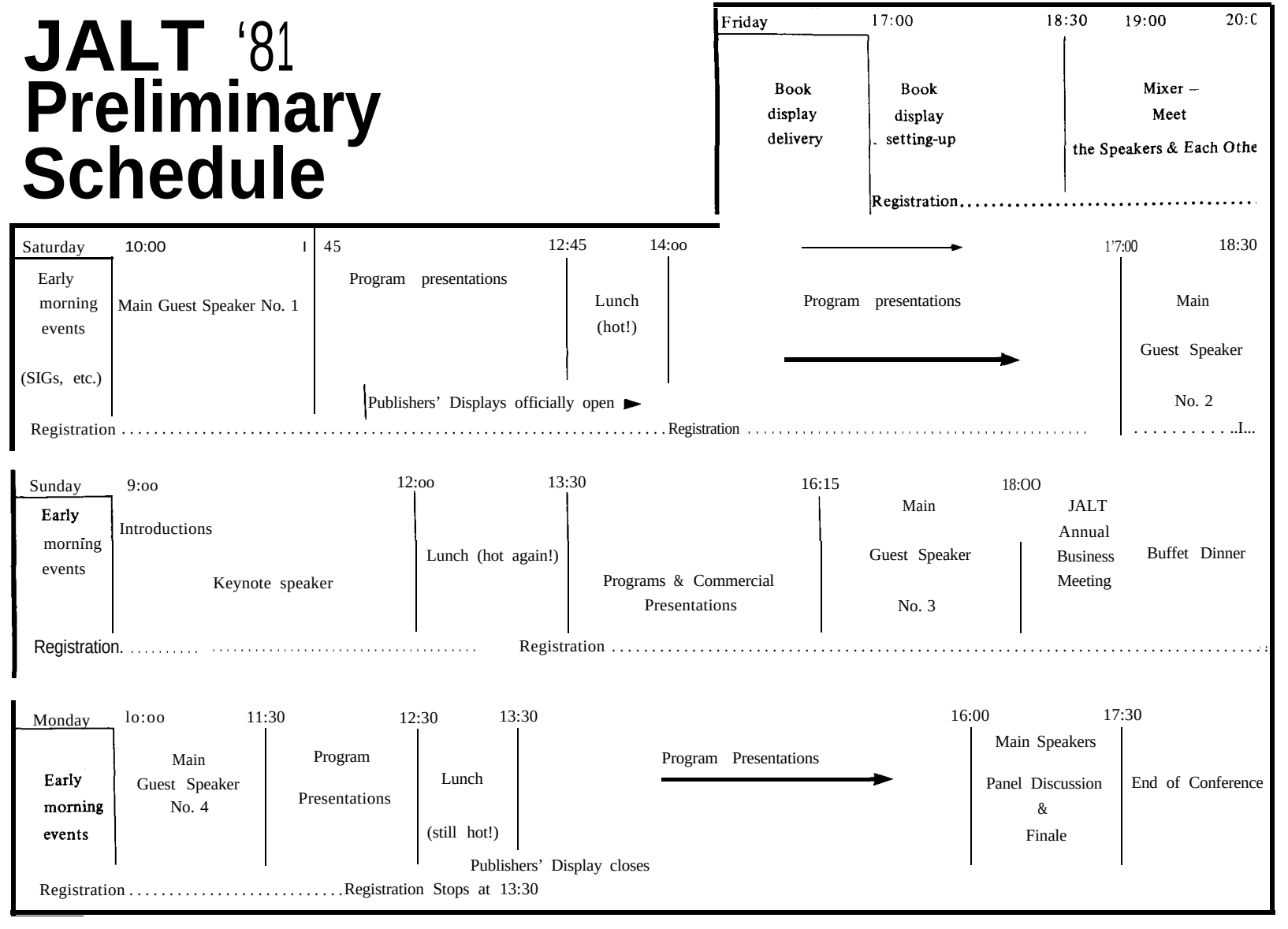
In his introduction, Mr. Robb mentioned that in most classes conducted by Japanese teachers, the students merely repeat after the teacher. The teacher only comments, 'That's right' or 'Yes'. In many lessons, grammar drills are emphasized to the point that there is no real communication between the student and the teacher.

In student-centered learning, teachers are not always necessary. Mr. Robb said teachers should no longer be the focus of the classroom; rather, attention should be focussed on communication activities instead.

Mr. Robb compared learning English to playing tennis: like a tennis player, a student shouldn't care if he makes mistakes while practicing. He should have the freedom to make mistakes, because by making those mistakes, he will learn. Task-oriented language activities thus help stimulate the student mind as well as encourage student team work.

In summarizing, Mr. Robb demonstrated the advantages of using various small group activities in an English class. Later we were able to try some of the activities ourselves. By working in small groups, students can ask each other questions and in the course of discussion, students can learn how language can help them get the answer they need. Sometimes group activities are noisy, and the teacher may find it hard to correct mistakes; however, making mistakes is natural and necessary in language learning, as even native speakers do so. If teachers would place less emphasis on error correction, perhaps students would be encouraged to focus on communication.

JALT '81 Preliminary Schedule



Shikoku

CREATING THE ACTIVE STUDENT

Reviewed by Peggy Slocum, Shikoku

From his work as English language instructor for the Mitsui Engineering and Shipbuilding Company, Don Maybin has come to believe that the greatest single handicap his students face in English conversation is a lack of confidence. Students tend to sit back passively,, though they have a large vocabulary even in job-related discussions, and a solid grasp of grammar. It is because they have no control over the conversation they are supposedly participating in. They instead seem to nod their head in agreement with the other speaker, while they have no idea of what is being said.

Therefore Don had devised a 'control process' involving a systematized series of techniques and materials for use in the EFL classroom. so that the students can learn to take some control of the conversation.

In this lively, fast-paced workshop participants were taken through the learning of this control process. First he underlined the three basic steps: How to *stop* the speaker, how to *understand* or ask for repetition, slower delivery, or clarification; and how to *check* or confirm a partly understood meaning. Next these steps were applied over and over again in a series of activities following the six categories given below:

a) Team vs. instructor
b) Team vs. team
c) Student vs. student
d) Team vs. speaker
e) Student vs. team
f) Student vs. speaker

Each of the categories represents a gradual moving from greater to lesser dependence on the group until the student develops the confidence to use the control techniques more on his own. The activities reflect an understanding of student needs: both affective and linguistic; their content provides a wealth of materials offering situations and functions of very real value.

In a) Team vs. instructor, the students all stand around the teacher and control him as he speaks on a prepared topic. As each student 'controls', he is allowed to take his seat. In this activity, Don picks up on a student's use of a particular 'control' expression and uses it for choral practice so that everybody gets a chance to practice mastering the control vocabulary. The more active students, of course, are 'eliminated' first, leaving the more reluctant ones somewhat less pressured to try on their own. This activity, Don maintains, should be repeated frequently, at the beginning of the class perhaps, but be kept short – 5 to 10 minutes at a time.

In b), Team vs. team, the class is divided into two groups, A and B, both of which listen to a different half of a taped story, complete a close version of the story, and study the material. Steps in the study of the material include working on new vocabulary that may cause comprehension problems, listening to the tape and repeating the sentences, then pair practice in retelling the story in summary form. Finally, the two groups, A and B, join forces again and tell each other their half of the single story. Each listening group uses the control vocabulary to *stop, understand, check* so as to be sure they know the other team's part of the story. The retelling can be done in a chain or with less structure, helping each teller among the team members.

In c), Student 1 vs. Student 2, students have to transmit a series of items of information over the telephone. They are arranged in the classroom, separated and back to back. thus being deprived of visual and non-verbal cues. The noise-level in this exercise is not unlike that in a busy office where such telephone conversations do take place!

In d), Student vs. team, a set of idioms is taught using a variation of strip story technique to construct a story from a series of sentences each of which contains one of the idioms. In the process of putting the story together, students have to 'control' each spokesman in order to get his part of the story.

In e). Team vs. speaker, a guest speaker is interviewed. Preparation for this interview is supplied ahead of time by the instructor, both as to content and control devices, assigning of roles among class members, so that an effective interview can be conducted.

The final category, f), Student v. speaker, is of course the final goal of the entire process It is when the student himself is faced, outside of the classroom, outside of the company, with a real communication situation in which he must 'control' or lose the chance to participate.

This workshop involved the active participation of all members and guests present. From their eager response it was obvious that it had been a stimulating and enjoyable experience for them all.

Special Theme Issues Planned For NL

Beginning with the January 1982 issue of the JALT Newsletter, some of the issues, possibly 4 or 5 a year, will be issues based around a central theme. We would like possible contributors to a theme issue to consider writing articles of up to 1200 words, typed, spaced, unedited. We will not guarantee that anything will be published, so it may be best to contact us about your ideas first.

The first issue (Januarv 1982) will be centered on Teaching' Children. The topic is intentionally general, and we hope this will attract a greater variety of articles – theoretical to methods to teaching tips – anything will be worthwhile in this area that needs greater attention.

Other themes we are considering for possible issues are: listening approaches, syllabus planning, testing, and learner-centered materials. If you have any suggestions for other themes, we are certainly open to suggestions, and welcome them. Just write to the address given under the table of contents.

Bulletin Board

ALEXANDER TAPES

When Louis Alexander was in Japan in April (see the June issue), he gave several lectures which are available through the generosity of Longman-Penguin Japan. The lectures available on audio cassettes are:

Guided Conversation (given at the British Council, Tokyo, April 21, 1981).

On the Design and Use of 'Follow Me', a Course for Beginning Adults (given at Mobil Sekyu, Pegasus Language Services, April 27, 1981).

Psychological Factors in Course Construction (given to members of the Japan English Language Education Society, April 28, 198 1).

Longman-Penguin will also lend a 2-hour, Beta-format videotape of the lecture given to the Kanto Chapter of JALT entitled 'Syllabus Design: Issues For the 80's.'

Anyone who would like to make a request for a copy of one of the cassette recordings should send the request on letterhead stationery, along with a blank 90-minute cassette. A request for borrowing the videotape only requires a letter on the proper school or company stationery.

Send requests to:

George Farina
Longman-Penguin Japan Co., Ltd.
Yamaguchi Bldg.
2-l 2-9 Kanda Jimbocho
Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 101

THE FIRST SEMINAR FOR LANGUAGE DIRECTORS AND ADMINISTRATORS

JALT will offer a two-day seminar for language directors and administrators at the Bunka Institute of Language in Tokyo on October 10-l 1. The program is aimed at the exchange of ideas and the discussion of the problems of the language schools such as *juku, senmon gakko,* and commercial schools. The following topics will be offered:

1. The Use of Bilingual Multiplex Broadcasting: Teruaki Manabe (NHK senior office;)
2. Developing Teaching Materials from a Listening Base: Michael Rost (Athenee Francais)
3. Problems Related To English Pronunciation
   Part one: What Should Your Teachers Know About Pronunciation in the Teaching of English?
   Part two: How Should Your Teachers Apply this knowledge in the Classroom?: David A. Hough (President of Teacher Training Seminar)
4. Problems of Material Development Michael Macfarlane (Oxford University Press)
5. Consideration of Overall Program Design (topic not confirmed): George Pifer (Japan-American Conversation School)

Registration can be 'done by mail or at the door. By registering and forwarding payment-in-full prior to September 20, 198 1 applicants can take advantage of lower seminar fees:

Registration before September 20, 198 1

	1 Day	2 Days
JALT Members.	Y5,000	Y10,000
Non members.	Y8,000	Y12,000

Registration after September 20, 1981

	1 Day	2 Days
JALT Members.	Y7,000	Yl2,000
Non members.	Y10,000	Y14,000

For more detailed information and application form, contact:

Kazunori Nazawa
JALT Program Chairperson
l-l 5-2, Komatsu-cho, Chikusa-ku,
Nagoya 464
Tel. 052-73 l-0127 (evenings)

CALL FOR ABSTRACTS OF A JALT-SPONSORED PRESENTATION

JALT has been requested to recommend one or more presentations to the TESOL '82 Program Committee as 'Affiliate Sponsored Presentation(s)'. Unlike last year, the recommended presentations will go through the normal screening process, but with the JALT recommendation carrying some additional weight. Those who would like their abstract considered are requested to submit the particulars listed below to Kenji Kitao, JALT Vice-President, by September 30. Those who have already submitted a proposal to TESOL '82 may submit *one* copy of the abstract only. Papers and demonstrations this year are limited to 45 minutes. The abstracts received will be reviewed independently by at least 3 members of the screening committee, and all applicants will be notified of the committee's decision soon after October 15 . Please note that JALT will not give any financial assistance to the presenter(s). This is, nevertheless. an excellent opportunity to make your ideas known at the largest annual international meeting of EFL/ESL teachers.

Please submit:

A: A 250-word abstract for use by the convention committee.
B: A l00-word summary of your presentation for use in the convention handbook.
C: A 25-50 word bio-statement.
D: A statement of the type of presentation and the target audience.

Applications should be sent to:

Dr. Kenji Kitao
Dept. of English, Doshisha University
Karasuma Imadegawa-Agaru
Kamikyo-ku, Kyoto 602

TRAINING IN SUGGESTOPAEDIA

Alison Miller, a licensed Suggestopaedia instructor, will be returning to Tokyo this November. She will conduct an intensive teacher training course from November 9 through December 12. For details and registration information call Justine Moriarty, (03)724-5336.

Positions

(KUMAMOTO) Kumamoto Women's University is seeking a full-time native speaker as teacher of Conversational English, English Composition, British or American Culture, beginning April 1, 1982. Must have an M.A. in English or American literature, linguistics, humanities, or its equivalent, and be under 33 years of age. Teaching up to 14 hours (7 classes) a week, Salary varies with age and qualifications; for example, a 25-year old with an M.A. and 1 year's experience could make Y3.3 million. Deadline is September 30, 1981. Applications should include curriculum vitae and a 50-word synopsis of each relevant publication and be sent to: Ryujoh Yatsubichi, Dean of Faculty of Literature, Kumamoto Women's University, 2432 Kengun Mizu-arai, Kumamoto 862. Tel. (0963) 83-2929.

(TOKYO) The American School in Japan is seeking experienced, professional teachers of English for part-time positions in a modern, innovative EFL program. Fall term evening classes commence- September 28. Salary range is Y4,000-Y5,500 per 70-minute period, based on training and experience. Native speaker with proper visa. For further information and interview appointment, call Ms. Laura Martin at (0422) 3 l-653 1, from 1 to 4 p.m.

(TOKYO) The Institute for Educational Development, located in Meguro. will have an opening for' Director of the ESL Program beginning in October. The programa at IED is intensive and prepares Japanese students for study at an American university leading to a professional degree. Applicants may either be American or Japanese and must have a Master's Degree in TESL or an equivalent degree. They must be reasonably fluent in their non-native language (either Japanese or English) because the position requires close communication with both English speaking and Japanese speaking staff. The salary is Y450.000 per month with a one year contract. Sponsorship is available. Send resume and at least two recommendations to Ms. Thalia Alberts. Institute of Educational Development, Fujita Building, 2-13-2 Kamiosaki, Shinagawa-ku, Tokyo 141. For further information call (03)440-074 1.

(NARA) Nara Y. M. C. A. has the following openings: one full-time native English teacher and two Japanese female part-time teachers wanted beginning in October. Teaching experience and college degree required. Send resume to: Nara Y. M. C. A., 2 Saidaiji Kunimi-cho. Nara 631.

(NAGOYA) Nanzan University has an opening for a qualified and experienced full-time teacher of English beginning April, 1982. He/She should be a native speaker of English preferably under forty years of age and have at least an M. A. in TEFL. The term of contract will be for two years, with the possibility of renewal. Rank and salary will depend of qualifications and experience. Curriculum vitae and three letters of recommendation should be sent to Chairman, Department of British and American English; Nanzan Universitv. 18 Yamazato-cho. Showa-ku. Nagoya 466. The deadline for application is November 30.

(KITAKYUSHU) A once-a-week English conversation position is available from October for one or two small classes of eager students and business people. Either an American or Japanese teacher is being sought, who lives near the Wakamatsu-ku, Kitakyushu City area and radiates enthusiasm for teaching. Schooling and experience is secondary to the enthusiasm for the teaching/learning task. Contact: Mr. Kawamura at Wakarnatsu Bunka Center evenings (093) 751. 305 1 or R. L. Dusek (09403)6-0395.

(SENDAI) New Day School in Sendai (Tohoku) has an opening for a full-time teacher. For further details please write to: Thomas Mandeville, Director, New Day School, Company Building 5F, 15-16, 2-chome, Kokubuncho, Sendai 980.

Teaching Tips

SHOW AND TELL

Tell each student to bring in some object or moment to share with the class-a scrapbook, an art object, a trophy, etc. First have the students discuss their objects in groups of three or four. After ten to twenty minutes, have the students rotate to new groups. The final ten to fifteen minutes may either be spent in new groups or in a situation where the teacher directs the discussion. In the latter case, the teacher may, a) ask for volunteers to share their objects with the entire class, b) invite those students whose objects seemed particularly fascinating as he observed the class, or c) draw names of students from a paper bag to share their objects with the entire class.

CHARADES

Groups should be pitted against each other, and there should be an even number of groups. The instructor selects categories within the vocabulary range of the class. Each groups should then write items from the categories designated on separate pieces of paper. Groups take turns acting out the items given to them by the opposing groups. The object is to guess whatever is written on the slip of paper in the least amount of time.

from I 01+ Ways to Stimulate Conversation in a Foreign Language, by G. Ronald Freeman

Guided Conversation Techniques

Reported by Catherine Clark, ELEC Evening Program Supervisor

The following was based on a speech given by L. G. Alexander on April 27, 1981 at the British Council in Tokyo. Recordings of this talk are available through Longman's. See page 15 ***for details,***

This technique is a practical approach which is universally applicable. It can even be incorporated into a typical Japanese junior or senior high school English class using the textbook stories as a basis for conversation.

Usually there is a decision somewhere in every English program to 'teach' conversation. And the idea of teaching conversation to a group of 40-50 students sitting in rows is very daunting indeed. Often the ways of going about this task are very ineffective. It is unstructured conversation and it fails. For example, a teacher thinks up a good topic on the way to class, such as the topic-of 'the energy crisis', and he says to the class, 'Well, I've given a good deal of thought to this topic.', says a few introductory things about the shortage of oil of the world, and then asks who would like to begin talking about the topic. Typical reactions:

a) The students respond with stoney silence. When the silence becomes unbearable, the teacher decides to give a few more comments, and it eventually turns into a teacher monologue.

b) Three or four students respond. They are the same ones who usually respond, not because they are the best at speaking English (they are usually among the worst in the class) but because they are the least inhibited, and they dominate the class all the time.

c) Sometimes if the topic is interesting, the students start to discuss it, and then realize that it's ridiculous to try to discuss such a topic in English, and they have a great discussion that often goes on after the bell has rung, conducted completely in Japanese.

This kind of approach is a failure. If the teacher thinks back on what is being accomplished, there is a realization that conversational skill is not being develoued at all. This unstructured conversation lesson fails because students are being asked to perform skills which they are incapable of performing.

There are three basic types of conversation:' transaction, interaction, and argument. *Transac-, tion is* not really 'conversation'; it involves doing business, like ordering a meal, buying tickets, etc.. *Interaction* is concerned with exchanging information. If we listen to average people talking while they're having a meal, for example, interaction is very common. 'I do this. .' 'Oh, really? Well, I don't do that, I do this. .' etc. *Argument* involves stating one's opinion or giving one's view on a particular subject: 'I think. '.' 'I don't agree with you. . .' etc.

Instead of having a conversation lesson, we can have a *guided conversation* lesson in which we train our students in four skills: understanding, asking and answering questions, and making statements.

Text

Instead of 'a topic', take 'a text'. The text can be anything: an article from a newspaper, a short essay, a moralistic story from a textbook, etc. Having a text allows anyone to comment regardless of level of English or educational background; however, there are several conditions the text must meet.

a) It must be the right level for the class.
b) It must be short and self-contained so it can be communicated rapidly. It should be about 100-200 words, depending on the level of the class.
c) It must be interesting and motivating. It must not be a dreary text, full of non-events. It could be a human interest story, item from the news, etc.
d) The form is variable, for example, a dialogue,, paragraph, prose, page from the comics, an advertisement.
e) If the lesson is to be given as a part of a language course, the texts could be graded, geared to the grammatical feature being taught. This is not a necessary prerequisite, but it's as a part of the course.

Presentation: A List of Don'ts

These may be valid techniques, but they should be avoided if your purpose is to teach

(continued on p. 20)

(continued from p. I8)

understanding. Listening comprehension must be taught. It can't be left to chance. Students will not acquire the skill if these three techniques are employed.

a) Read the text in front of the class and translate it into the language of the learners. This explains the meaning of the text. but it doesn't help them to learn the skill of understanding.

b) Assign the text ahead of time and tell students to go home and prepare the text for the next lesson. This technique is terrible. The student who reads words he doesn't know and decides for himself what the pronunciation should be, does irreparable damage to his language learning. As far as possible, new words should be presented by the teacher. Preparation preconditions pronunciation. The initial pronunciation invented incorrectly by the students is very hard to get rid of later.

c) Tell the students that you are gomg to read something to them, but that you know they will have difficulty with some of the words so you will write them on the board ahead of time. This technique destroys communication. It takes away the value of context in understanding new words.

TRAINING TO UNDERSTAND

First you should introduce the text. Say something like, 'We're going to read a text about habits, good habits and bad habits.'

Then give the students background information so they don't have to spend the first half of the listening time trying to understand what the text is about. Teachers often waste time by making a student guess at what they want him to do . The teacher should always be explicit when telling the students what they're expected to do.

Next, pose a listening objective since this stimulates active listening. Say something like 'I'll read (or play a recording) about good and bad habits, and then 1'11 ask you which is the worst habit of all.'

After reading the text, ask one or two general questions to determine understanding at a global level. Don't'allow someone to shout an answer. If we allow lax discipline, if one student shouts out the answer, the text is destroyed for the rest of the class. Say, 'Don't tell me. I'll ask .a certain person.' If this rule is not followed, the weaker students don't get any concrete practice; thev will always be covered up. Ask 'Who thinks smoking is the-worst habit?'; 'Who thinks overeating is the worst?' You can tell by the number of hands how well the text was understood at the first reading. If you see about half the class with their hands up, then you could ask someone whose hand is not up what he thinks is the worst habit. You may think this is too difficult, that the particular vocabulary items are too hard in a reading, but the concern here is with the global meaning.

Get the meaning of the reading from the students. Don't spoonfeed the information to them. If the class is a beginning level class, use pictures. Remember that pictures are there to help the students, but the teacher is there to help the pictures. If yours is a class of post-beginners, get the meaning from them by asking pointed questions. This is the *corkscrew operation,* to pull the meaning out of them. This whole process should take only about 15 minutes. Focus only on new words. Treat phrases like 'used to' as vocabulary items rather than taking off on a whole grammar lesson. Don't use communication of meaning as an excuse for something else.

Now, read the text again; this time the students should understand completely If the students are beginners and if the material being used is spoken – a dialogue – have the students repeat it sentence by sentence. Reading aloud, may not seem necessary but it is the teacher's only way of seeing how the students are reading, as they are reading silently – to see what kinds. of stress, rhythm, pronunciation, etc. they are using. However, repetition for post-beginners is not necessary, and repetition of prose is unnatural.

Training to Answer:
The Bombardment Phase – Ask, Pause, Pounce

Ask questions around the class in this manner. To be assured of absolute participation, never indicate who is to answer the next question. Ask the question, pause to give the students time to understand the question, then indicate who should answer. As soon as an individual is indicated, the rest of the students sigh 'Oh, it's not me' and they may tune out. Sometimes trick the students by staring at one student while asking the question of another. Everyone must listen all the time. There should be a feeling of 'It might be me' all the time.

Vary the types of questions asked. If the students are good at asking each other questions, this section can be made more student-oriented by asking one student to ask another student a question, but if they are beginners and not skilled at asking questions, it wastes too much time.

Training to Ask:
The Double Question Technique

Ask a Yes/No question first, and then follow with a WH question.

T: Ask me if each period brings it own problems.

S: Does each. . . . . .
T: Ask 'Why. . .'
S: Why does., ...

When forming questions, students tend to follow the question-forming pattern of their own language. The above technique gives them constant practice with the regular past, manipulation of *do, does, did,* modal question forms, and auxiliary question form. If the skill of the students is low, be sure to work at keeping things rolling. It is not cost-effective to wait too long for responses., It wastes too much time.

Training To Say: Oral Composition

Write about six key words on the blackboard and ask students to tell the story, to relate what they've heard. Memorization is not required, but oftentimes students give whole phrases when doing this type of oral composition. Oral composition enables the student to make use of the vocabulary, phrases, and structures he has just learned.

Up to this point, the technique has all been mechanical. It is text-based and therefore artificial. Now we go to *transfer.* The students 'use the text as a basis to relate things from their own life.

From Text-based Exercises to Life-based Exercises

Ask 'How many of you think you have good habits?' Whenever a student comes up with a statement, ask related questions. For instance, a student says he jogs. Ask when, how long. how often, with whom, etc. Soon the teacher is actually having a conversation with the student. At this point the teacher must use imagination. Take cues from the students and follow up on them. It isn't something you can prepare ahead.

As the students get better and better on the mechanical phases of the technique, less and less time need be spent on them. As the conversational skill of the students increases, teachers can go more quickly or can go directly from text to transfer.

One lesson or one half lesson per week can be spent on the above type of activity. For the text, a story from the textbook can be the basis, for conversation. It lightens the study and gives the feeling that English is living.

Teaching Tip

RECIPES

One student acts as the chef. All the ingredients are shown to the class, and they are given copies of the recipe. They can either be asked to help prepare the dish, or the 'chef' may play dumb and only do the things told to him by the class. Other class members might be invited' to bring favorite dishes and demonstrate their preparation. Also, a discussion about food, favorite recipes, desserts, or culinary skills can be structured for use in small groups.

from 101+ Ways to Stimulate Conversation in a Foreign Language, by G. Ronald Freeman

Meetings

SHIKOKU

Topic: Where Does Language Begin and End?
Speaker: Professor Izuru Masuda, Kagawa University
Date: Sunday, September 27
Time: 2:00-4:00 p.m.
Place: Conference-Room 4, Education Department, Kagawa University, Saiwai-cho, Takamatsu
Fee: Members: free; Non-members: Y500
Info: Barbara Hayward

When we express ourselves in a foreign language, we tend to think that linguistic expressions are everything. But in fact, language plays only a part, however integral, in the whole process of communication. There are many other factors that influence our ability to communicate and express ourselves. In this presentation, Professor Masuda will talk about these non-verbal factors in connection with foreign language teaching and learning.

Professor Masuda is a member of the English Dept. at Kagawa University, and was formerly Head of Department for a number of years. He has spent a year in England, studying at the University of London. After his presentation you will have a chance to ask questions and discuss his ideas, especially in regard to classroom teaching.

TOHOKU

Topic: Introduction to Suggestology and Suggestopaedia
Speaker: Kazunori Nozawa, researcher at Asian Institute of Suggestology
Date: Saturday, September 5
Time: 4:00-7:00 p.m.
Place: Sendai Y.M.C.A.
Fee: Members: Y500; Nonmembers: Y1000
Info: Dale Griffee 47-80 16

The Lozanov Method, also known as Suggestopaedia, is a dynamic, stress-free learning technique which enables students to learn a great amount of material in a short period of time. Its success is due primarily to the elimination of barriers which inhibit the learning process. The Lozanov Method involves the students in role playing, music, art, games, and mental relaxation to stimulate his/her creativity. When the mind is freed from stress and engaged in a variety of enjoyable activities, a greater amount of information can be directly absorbed into the long-term memory with greater ease. As a result, learning is fast and effective, with memory retention as high as 95%. And, contrary to student performance under conventional teaching, the amount of material retained and used remains the same, and often increases, over long periods of time. The presentation will be an introduction to Suggestopaedia and consist of background information, lecture, and audience participation. There will be a question and answer period following.

Kazunori Nozawa (B.A., Utsunomiya University; M.A.-TESL, Kansas University) is an instructor at the Nagoya International College, where he teaches English courses as well as methodological research. He is the National Program Chairperson of JALT and has taught in both Japan and the U.S.

TOKAI

Topic: Observing Teachers
Speaker: Donald Freeman
Date: Sunday, September 27
Time: 1:00-5:00 p.m.
Place: Aichi Kinro Kaikan, Tsurumai (phone) 052-0733-1141 (ext) 203-4
Info: Satoshi Ito, 0562-97-0437, or Steven Tripp, 052-833-8835

This workshop will examine the issues, skills and possible outcomes of successful teacher observation. We will consider the purpose and goals of observation, how they reflect particular demands in programming and/or curriculae, and how they incorporate aspects of training (short-term) and development (long-term). The workshop will include a demonstration, discussion, and presentation. Three approaches to observation will be presented and considered in the context of the participants' experience.

The workshop is intended for those who are presently involved in observing and training teachers and for those teachers and administrators who would like to develop teacher observation in their own programs.

Mr. Freeman is currently doing teacher training on a free-lance basis; he is also on the staff at Procter and Gamble Sunhome and is associated with the Centre for Language and Intercultural Research in Osaka. He was formerly Academic Supervisor at the Language Institute of Japan. He received his BA from Yale University and his MAT from the School for International Training. He has done teacher training and cross-cultural work for various groups both in Japan and the U.S.

EASTKANSAI

Topic: A Total Physical Response Workshop
Speaker: Aleda Krause
Date: Sundav. September 13
Time: 1:00-4:30 p.m.
Place: Doshisha Women's College, Denton-kan, Room 205
Fee: Members: free; Non-members: Y1,000
Info: Yukinobu Oda, (075) 251-4156/4151

Many teachers are looking for interesting and effective ways to practice listening comprehension in their classrooms. Total Physical, Response(TPR) is one way to do this. However, many of us wonder what to do after we've tried the activities we've seen demonstrated. The students can all stand up and sit down. They can open their books, but how can I teach my lesson? This workshop will explore ways of

developing TPR lessons based on objects, action chains, functions and dialogue material in required textbooks.

A very short explanation and demonstration will be included for those unfamiliar with TPR. However, for the most part, participants will work together and develop their own lessons in small groups, and then present them. (Participants may also wish to bring their own texts in order to bring out practical quesions and ideas.)

Aleda Krause has taught English and German using TPR. She is currently working as program advisor at Sumitomo Metal Industries. She has her M.A. in TEFL from the University of Michigan. She has taught classes using TPR and done teacher training in Japan.

WEST KANSAI

Topic: Practical Techniques for Obtaining Student-Generated Material
Speakers: Alice Hines and Bill Robbins
Date: Sunday, September 27
Time: 1:00-4:30 p.m.
Place: Umeda Gakuen
Fee: Members: free; Non-members: Y500
Info: Kathleen Graves 06-226-l 566 (day) 075-932-8284 (eve), Jim White 0723-65-0865 x293 (day), 0723-66-1250 (eve), Noriko Nishizawa 075-391-5252

Special Interest Groups:

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

Children's Interest Group: 'Discussing a Group Presentation for JALT '81', Umeda Gakuen. September 27. ll:00-12:30. Contact: Sr. Wright. 06-699-8733

In this workshop we intend to concentrate on various techniques designed to elicit material from our students, rather than the actual mechanics of using this material to create lessons.

This presentation is a workshop and those attending will be encouraged to participate. Time will be set aside for discussion and participants will be asked to contribute ideas which they have found successful in obtaining student-generated material in the classroom.

Certain teachers in the Kansai area who have been working with student-generated material have been asked to explain some of their work and present some of their material as a follow-up to the workshop.

Alice Hines has an MAT from the School for International Training and has taught ESL in Spain and the U.S. She is currently teaching at Proctor and Gamble Sunhome in Osaka.

Bill Robbins has had teaching experience in Vietnam and Thailand. Formerly an instructor at the Language Institute of Japan, he is currently teaching at Seifu High School and at the Center for Language and Intercultural Learning in Osaka.