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Editor's Note

This is the second of two special issues celebrating the 25th anniversary of the TESOL Quarterly. For this issue, I invited distinguished professionals to contribute historical and contemporary perspectives on specific aspects of language teaching. Each of these papers explores a unique set of links between theory and practice, documenting the diversity and integrity of our language teaching enterprise.

In this Issue

- William Grabe reviews current developments in second language reading research and its implications for the classroom. Grabe argues that the last 10 years have yielded insights that challenge previous views of first and second language reading and imply future avenues of research. Grabe’s review of the literature on interactive approaches to reading suggests that reading comprehension is a combination of both identification and interpretation skills. The paper provides guidelines for reading instruction extrapolated from current research.

- In her review of writing instruction for adult nonnative speakers, Ann Raimes uses the metaphor of the fairy tale to suggest the thickets and thorny problems encountered over the past quarter century. From a focus on linguistic and rhetorical form, Raimes documents a journey through “false trails” to emerging traditions that “reflect shared recognitions rather than provide new methodologies.” The paper focuses on five issues: the topics for writing, the issue of “real” writing, the nature of the academic discourse community, contrastive rhetoric, and responding to writing.

- Examining listening comprehension, Patricia Dunkel urges collaboration between researchers and practitioners to assure better preparation
of nonnative speakers “who must function effectively in a contempo-
rary society that appears to be shifting increasingly toward use of
English, and simultaneously to be shifting away from literacy toward
orality.” Dunkel’s article discusses curriculum development and
pedagogical activities in the context of research on first and second
language listening and models of the comprehension process.

• Marianne Celce-Murcia reminds us that for 2,500 years the teaching of
grammar was often synonymous with foreign language teaching. Her
paper addresses the question of when, and to what extent, one should
teach grammar to language learners. Celce-Murcia argues for a
decision-making strategy based on learner and instructional variables.
Using Canale and Swain’s model of communicative competence, she
stresses the nonautonomy of grammar as it interacts with meaning,
social function, and/or discourse. The paper concludes by surveying
options for integrating grammar instruction into the communicative
curriculum.

• Joan Morley documents a “renewed concern for and excitement about
the learning and teaching of pronunciation.” Morley surveys changing
perspectives on pronunciation teaching, presents instructional features
of a multidimensional pronunciation-teaching process, and looks
toward the future. The paper outlines six major instructional features:
program philosophy, learner goals, instructional objectives, the role of
the learner, the role of the teacher, and instructional planning.

• Pat Rigg’s paper presents key elements of a whole language
perspective, including principles of teaching and learning. She
underscores the goal of meaning-centered, student-centered instruc-
tion in which teachers and students are accorded respect and agency.
The paper focuses on examples of whole language principles in
elementary, secondary, and adult ESOL instructional settings. Rigg’s
discussion of whole language research is followed by her cautionary
though optimistic discussion of “whole language in the future.”

Sandra Silberstein
Current Developments in Second Language Reading Research

WILLIAM GRABE
Northern Arizona University

Both reading research and practice have undergone numerous changes in the 25 years since TESOL was first established. The last decade, in particular, has been a time of much first and second language research, resulting in many new insights for reading instruction. The purpose of this article is to bring together that research and its implications for the classroom. Current reading research follows from certain assumptions on the nature of the reading process; these assumptions are reviewed and general perspectives on the reading process are presented. Specific attention is then given to interactive approaches to reading, examining research which argues that reading comprehension is a combination of identification and interpretation skills. Reading research in second language contexts, however, must also take into account the many differences between L1 and L2 reading. From the differences reviewed here, it is evident that much more second language reading research is needed. Five important areas of current research which should remain prominent for this decade are reported: schema theory, language skills and automaticity, vocabulary development, comprehension strategy training, and reading-writing relations. Implications from this research for curriculum development are briefly noted.

Research on reading in a second language and efforts to improve second language reading instruction have grown remarkably in the past quarter century, particularly in the last 10 years. It has become difficult to synthesize the array of research and instructional literature in ESL/EFL academic reading, foreign language reading, and second language public school student reading, in addition to the relevant first language reading literature. The efforts to address the needs of many different learner groups has been one cause of this expansion. The recognition that reading is probably the most important skill for second language learners in academic contexts has also been a contributing cause (Carrell, 1989a; Lynch & Hudson,
Finally, the challenge to explore and understand basic comprehension processes has contributed significantly to implications for second language reading instruction. In this article, the primary goal will be to synthesize the reading research which impacts L2 academic reading instruction, recognizing that there are other significant areas of second language reading which require separate discussion (cf. Edelsky, 1986; Edelsky, Altwerger, & Flores, 1991; Gee, 1990; Gunderson, 1991; and Weber, 1991, for discussions of U.S. language-minority students; cf. Bell & Burnaby, 1984; Crandall, in press; and Mickulecky & Newman, 1988, for discussions of adult basic literacy).

A BRIEF HISTORY

Our understanding of reading, both in terms of theory and practice, has changed considerably in the 25 years that the TESOL organization has been in existence. These transitions and changes, both in theory and in practice, are best documented in Silberstein (1987). In the mid- to late 1960s, as Silberstein notes, reading was seen as little more than a reinforcement for oral language instruction. Under the influence of audiolingualism, most efforts to “teach” reading were centered on the use of reading to examine grammar and vocabulary, or to practice pronunciation (Silberstein, 1987). This view of reading was challenged by two major changes, one related to changing ESL institutional needs, the other related to the changing views of reading theory.

In the late 1960s, ESL student enrollment at U.S. and British tertiary institutions increased dramatically. One outcome of this demographic shift was the need to prepare a large number of ESL students with the advanced academic skills required for the university level. The audiolingual method, with its emphasis on oral language skills, was unable to address this need. On a practical level, then, ESL instruction changed in the early 1970s to emphasize advanced reading and writing instruction, albeit without a strong theoretical framework to guide practice (cf. Harris, 1966; Yorkey, 1970). Through the early to mid-1970s, a number of researchers and teacher trainers argued for the greater importance of reading (e.g., Eskey, 1973; Saville-Troike, 1973). By the mid- to late 1970s, many researchers began to argue for a theory of reading based on work by Goodman (1967, 1985) and Smith (1971, 1979, 1982).

The research and persuasive arguments of Goodman and Smith evolved into a “psycholinguistic model of reading.” Goodman’s research led him to propose that reading is not primarily a process
of picking up information from the page in a letter-by-letter, word-by-word manner. Rather, he argued that reading is a selective process. Since it did not seem likely that fluent readers had the time to look at all the words on a page and still read at a rapid rate, it made sense that good readers used knowledge they brought to the reading and then read by predicting information, sampling the text, and confirming the prediction. Smith concurred with Goodman’s arguments that reading was an imprecise, hypothesis-driven process. He further argued that sampling was effective because of the extensive redundancy built into natural language as well as the abilities of readers to make the necessary inferences from their background knowledge. In effect, for Smith (and others), the reader contributed more than did the visual symbols on the page.

Two efforts to translate this theory into ESL contexts have been extremely influential on ESL reading theory and instruction from the late 1970s to the present. Clarke and Silberstein (1977) outlined implications for instruction which could be drawn from a psycholinguistic model of reading. Reading was characterized as an active process of comprehending and students needed to be taught strategies to read more efficiently (e.g., guess from context, define expectations, make inferences about the text, skim ahead to fill in the context, etc.). For teachers, the goal of reading instruction was to provide students with a range of effective approaches to texts—including helping students define goals and strategies for reading, to use prereading activities to enhance conceptual readiness, and to provide students strategies to deal with difficult syntax, vocabulary, and organizational structure. It should be noted that many of these instructional implications still remain as important guidelines though no longer motivated by the psycholinguistic model explanation.

Coady (1979) reinterpreted Goodman’s psycholinguistic model into a model more specifically suited to second language learners. Coady argued that a conceptualization of the reading process requires three components: process strategies, background knowledge, and conceptual abilities. Beginning readers focus on process strategies (e.g., word identification), whereas more proficient readers shift attention to more abstract conceptual abilities and make better use of background knowledge, using only as much textual information as needed for confirming and predicting the information in the text. His implications for teaching are similar to those of Clarke and Silberstein (1977).

While the 1970s was a time of transition from one dominant view of reading to another, the 1980s was a decade in which much ESL reading theory and practice extended Goodman and Smith’s perspectives on reading (cf. Bernhardt, 1991). At the same time, second
language research began to look more closely at other first language reading research for the insights that it could offer. It is with the 1980s, also, that this article will take up the issue of reading theory in first language research.

READING AND THE READING PROCESS

Most of our current views of second language reading are shaped by research on first language learners. This is true in part because first language research has a longer history, first language student populations are much more stable, cognitive psychology has seen comprehension research as a major domain of their field, and considerable cognitive psychology and educational grant funding is available. For these reasons, first language reading research has made impressive progress in learning about the reading process. It makes good sense, then, for second language researchers and teachers to consider what first language research has to say about the nature of the fluent reading process and the development of reading abilities. A primary goal for ESL reading theory and instruction is to understand what fluent L1 readers do, then decide how best to move ESL students in that developmental direction. A reasonable starting point for this discussion is with definitions of reading.

It is well known that simple definitions typically misrepresent complex cognitive processes such as reading. Rather, descriptions of basic knowledge and processes required for fluent reading make a more appropriate starting point. A description of reading has to account for the notions that fluent reading is rapid, purposeful, interactive, comprehending, flexible, and gradually developing (cf. Anderson, Hiebert, Scott, & Wilkinson, 1985; Grabe, 1988b; Hall, White, & Guthrie, 1986; Smith, 1982).

Research has argued that fluent reading is rapid; the reader needs to maintain the flow of information at a sufficient rate to make connections and inferences vital to comprehension. Reading is purposeful; the reader has a purpose for reading, whether it is for entertainment, information, research, and so on. Reading for a purpose provides motivation—an important aspect of being a good reader. Reading is interactive; the reader makes use of information from his/her background knowledge as well as information from the printed page. Reading is also interactive in the sense that many skills work together simultaneously in the process. Reading is comprehending; the reader typically expects to understand what s/he is reading. Unlike many ESL students, the fluent reader does not begin to read wondering whether or not s/he will understand the text. Reading is flexible; the reader employs a range of strategies...
to read efficiently. These strategies include adjusting the reading speed, skimming ahead, considering titles, headings, pictures and text structure information, anticipating information to come, and so on. Finally, reading develops gradually; the reader does not become fluent suddenly, or immediately following a reading development course. Rather, fluent reading is the product of long-term effort and gradual improvement.

The preceding general description of fluent reading suggests that reading is very complex, that it takes considerable time and resources to develop, and that it cannot simply be taught in one or two courses. This perspective holds equally well for ESL students who are not already fluent readers in English but who need to be for their academic future.

COMPONENT SKILLS IN READING

Because reading is such a complex process, many researchers attempt to understand and explain the fluent reading process by analyzing the process into a set of component skills (e.g., Carpenter & Just, 1986; Carr & Levy, 1990; Haynes & Carr, 1990; Rayner & Pollatsek, 1989). The effort to subdivide into component skills has led researchers to propose at least six general component skills and knowledge areas:

1. Automatic recognition skills
2. Vocabulary and structural knowledge
3. Formal discourse structure knowledge
4. Content/world background knowledge
5. Synthesis and evaluation skills/strategies
6. Metacognitive knowledge and skills monitoring

The development of automatic perceptual/identification skills is only beginning to be recognized as important in second language reading (McLaughlin, 1990), but they are widely recognized by cognitive psychologists and educational psychologists as central processes in fluent reading (e.g., Adams, 1990; Carr & Levy, 1990; Rayner & Pollatsek, 1989; Rieben & Perfetti, 1991). In fact, many cognitive psychologists now see the development of automaticity in reading, particularly in word identification skills, as critical to fluent reading (Adams, 1990; Beck & McKeown, 1986; Gough & Juel, 1991; Perfetti, 1991; Stanovich, 1986, 1991).

Automaticity may be defined as occurring when the reader is unaware of the process, not consciously controlling the process, and
using little processing capacity (Adams, 1990; Just & Carpenter, 1987; Stanovich, 1990). The primary focus of automaticity research has been at the feature, letter, and word levels, playing a crucial role in descriptions of lexical access skills of fluent readers. Many researchers now believe that automatic lexical access is a necessary skill for fluent readers, and many less-skilled readers lack automaticity in lower-level processing. In fact, cognitive psychologists now argue that the lexical component of fluent readers becomes encapsulated; that is, the process of lexical access during reading does not make use of contextual resources (Stanovich, 1990). The question of whether syntactic structures fall within the notion of automatic recognition is currently being debated (e.g., Flores d’Arcais, 1990; Perfetti, 1990; Rayner & Pollatsek, 1989); Perfetti (1990) has argued that the syntactic parser creates an autonomously driven initial structure which is then open to semantic and discourse contextual effects.

Vocabulary and syntactic knowledge, on a very basic level, are obviously critical to reading. One needs only to pick up a newspaper in an unknown language to verify that background knowledge and predicting are severely constrained by the need to know vocabulary and structure. On a less obvious level, knowledge of structure has an important facilitative effect on reading (Carnham, 1985; Perfetti, 1989; Rayner, 1990; Tannenhaus, 1988). In second language contexts, the role of language structure in comprehension has also been supported (Barnett, 1986; Berman, 1984; Devine, 1988; Eskey, 1988; Swaffar, Arens, & Byrnes, 1991).

Vocabulary knowledge has similarly come to be recognized as a critical feature of reading ability (Koda, 1989; McKeown & Curtis, 1987; Nagy, 1988; Nation & Coady, 1988; Stanovich, 1986; Strother & Ulijn, 1987). In first language reading, researchers have estimated recognition vocabularies of fluent readers to range from 10,000 words to 100,000 words (Anderson & Freebody, 1981; Chall, 1987; Nagy & Herman, 1987). Vocabulary discussions in second language reading argue for far lower total numbers of words, often positing 2,000-7,000 words (Coady, 1983; Kyongho & Nation, 1989; Nation, 1990; Swaffar, 1988). The need to read fluently, in a manner similar to a good L1 reader, would seem to require a knowledge of vocabulary more in line with the larger estimates for first language readers (cf. Beck, McKeown, & Omanson, 1987; Goulden, Nation, & Read, 1990). The consequence of these arguments is that fluent readers need a sound knowledge of language structure and a large recognition vocabulary.

Readers need a good knowledge of formal discourse structure (formal schemata). There is considerable evidence that knowing
how a text is organized influences the comprehension of the text. For example, good readers appear to make better use of text organization than do poor readers, write better recalls by recognizing and using the same organizational structure as the text studied, and, generally, recall information better from certain types of text organization such as comparison-contrast (Nist & Mealey, 1991; Richgels, McGee, Lomax, & Sheard, 1987). Similar research in second language contexts has replicated the major findings while also revealing interesting specific differences. For example, Carrell (1984a) has shown that more specific logical patterns of organization, such as cause-effect, compare-contrast, and problem-solution, improve recall compared to texts organized loosely around a collection of facts.

Content and background knowledge (content schemata) also has a major influence on reading comprehension. A large body of literature has argued that prior knowledge of text-related information strongly affects reading comprehension (Anderson & Pearson, 1984; Bransford, Stein, & Shelton, 1984; Kintsch & van Dijk, 1978; Wilson & Anderson, 1986). Similarly, cultural knowledge has been shown to influence comprehension (Carrell, 1984b; Pritchard, 1990; Steffenson & Joag-Dev, 1984). Recent efforts to explore the interaction of formal and content knowledge as they influence comprehension has been studied by Roller (1990) and Carrell (1987). In both L1 and L2 contexts, formal and content knowledge play important if somewhat different roles in reading comprehension.

Fluent readers not only seek to comprehend a text when they read, they also evaluate the text information and compare/synthesize it with other sources of information/knowledge. Thus, synthesis and evaluation skills and strategies are critical components of reading abilities. It is also in this context that discussions of “predicting from the text” play a crucial role. Given the real-time constraints of the reading process, fluent readers typically do not use prediction to decide upcoming words in texts or to access words; rather, prediction helps readers anticipate later text development and the author’s perspective with respect to the information presented. In this way, predicting information allows us to evaluate the information; take a position with respect to the author’s intentions; and decide whether or not the information is useful. Little research actually exists on how readers evaluate texts; that is, how readers might find texts persuasive, interesting, boring, exciting, and so on, and how these evaluations relate to reading comprehension, recall, formal and content schemata, first language background, and readers’ prior expectations.
Metacognitive knowledge and skills monitoring is the final important component of fluent reading skills. Metacognitive knowledge may be defined as knowledge about cognition and the self-regulation of cognition (Baker & Brown, 1984; Brown, Armbruster, & Baker, 1986). Knowledge about cognition, including knowledge about language, involves recognizing patterns of structure and organization, and using appropriate strategies to achieve specific goals (e.g., comprehending texts, remembering information). As related to reading, this would include recognizing the more important information in a text; adjusting reading rate; using context to sort out a misunderstood segment; skimming portions of the text; previewing headings, pictures, and summaries; using search strategies for finding specific information; formulating questions about the information; using a dictionary using word-formation and affix information to guess word meanings; taking notes; underlining; summarizing information; and so on. Monitoring of cognition involves recognizing problems with information presented in texts or an inability to achieve expected goals (e.g., recognizing an illogical summary or awareness of noncomprehension). Self-regulation strategies would include planning ahead, testing self-comprehension, checking effectiveness of strategies being used, revising strategies being used, and so on. N. Anderson (1991), Barnett (1989), and Cohen (1990) have compiled large lists of reading strategies which combine cognitive strategy use and monitoring.

The ability to use metacognitive skills effectively is widely recognized as a critical component of skilled reading. In numerous studies it has been shown that good readers are more effective in using metacognitive skills than less fluent readers. (There is also a developmental factor involved, with older readers making better use of metacognitive skills than younger readers.) In the last 10 years, there has been considerable research on the role of metacognitive strategies in reading and the feasibility of improving these strategies through direct training and instruction (e.g., Lysynchuk, Pressley, & Vye, 1990; Nist & Mealey, 1991; Palincsar & Brown, 1984; Pressley, Johnson, Symons, McColdrick, & Kurita, 1989). Similarly, second language research has focused attention on the effectiveness of strategy training for improved reading comprehension (e.g., Barnett, 1989; Carrell, Pharis, & Liberto, 1989; Cohen, 1990; Kern, 1989; Swaffar, Arens, & Byrnes, 1991).

A “reading components” perspective is an appropriate research direction to the extent that such an approach leads to important insights into the reading process. In this respect, it is evident that a component skills approach, at least in the broad sense outlined here,
is indeed a useful approach. A second basic approach to understanding reading has been to interpret the reading process by means of simple controlling metaphors. The three popular metaphors to dominate reading refer generally to reading processes: bottom-up (primary emphasis on textual decoding), top-down (primary emphasis on reader interpretation and prior knowledge), and interactive processing. There have been a number of overviews of these three perspectives on reading (e.g., Barnett, 1989; Grabe, 1988a; Samuels & Kamil, 1984; Silberstein, 1987; Swaffar, Arens, & Byrnes, 1991). Given the extensive treatment accorded to these issues, this review will focus specifically on interactive approaches to reading—a perspective on reading which seems to generate almost as much confusion as it does insights.

INTERACTIVE APPROACHES TO READING

In general, the term interactive approaches can refer to two different conceptions. First, it can refer to the general interaction which takes place between the reader and the text. The basic concept is that the reader (reconstructs the text information based in part on the knowledge drawn from the text and in part from the prior knowledge available to the reader (Barnett, 1989; Carrell & Eisterhold, 1983). Second, the term interactive approaches refers to the interaction of many component skills potentially in simultaneous operation; the interaction of these cognitive skills leads to fluent reading comprehension. Simply stated, reading involves both an array of lower-level rapid, automatic identification skills and an array of higher-level comprehension/interpretation skills (Carrell, 1988b, 1989a; Eskey, 1986; Eskey & Grabe, 1988; Rayner & Pollatsek, 1989; Samuels & Kamil, 1984). The two perspectives are complementary, though discussions in the literature tend to stress one perspective over the other, or ignore one of the two perspectives altogether. In fact, most cognitive psychologists and education psychologists stress the interaction-of-skills arrays; in contrast, most second language researchers stress the interaction between the reader and the text. A major factor contributing to this division is the differing degrees of emphasis placed on defining how processes interact and how such processes can be studied through research.

In first language reading research, a major concern involves how to stipulate explicitly the relations among specific skills and how such relations can be examined. One result of this research direction has been to reemphasize explanations which are not explicitly testable or definable within a theory of reading. Thus, cognitive
psychologists and psycholinguists such as Adams (1990), Perfetti (1985), and Rayner and Pollatsek (1989) question the explanatory usefulness of top-down inferential and schema-driven explanations for reading ability. Schema theory is a theoretical metaphor for the reader’s prior knowledge. Others even question the role of schema theory itself as a research theory explaining memory organization (Garnham, 1985; Iran-Nejad, 1987; Kintsch, 1988; Schacter, 1989). Aside from the fact that we know we can call up prior knowledge from long-term memory, and that information seems to be integrated in efficient ways, it is difficult to know exactly how this prior knowledge is called up and used. The notion that our long-term memory is organized by stable schema structures does not appear to be strongly supported by current research. While no one doubts the need to account for the role of prior knowledge and inference making in reading comprehension, many researchers question theories which cannot be explicitly defined.

This critique of schema theory has not been a major concern of second language researchers, and the notion of schemata remains a useful metaphorical explanation for many experimental results (e.g., why prereading activities improve reading recall).

An interactive approach clearly has to account for the evidence that has accumulated in the last decade. Most current versions of interactive approaches to reading have taken a strong bottom-up orientation to the processing of lower-level linguistic structure (e.g., Gough, 1985; Perfetti, 1985, 1990; Rayner & Pollatsek, 1989; Stanovich, 1990). The reasons for this orientation follow from extensive research on eye movement as well as from observed minimal context effects on feature, letter, and word recognition, and initial syntactic parsing of sentences. This review will not pursue arguments for a modular approach to lexical access or sentence parsing (cf. Balota, Flores d’Arcais, & Rayner, 1990; A similar skepticism has been leveled at earlier cognitive psychology models which proposed massively interactive connections (e.g., Rumelhart, 1977); that is to say, potentially everything can connect with everything. However, these massively interactive models have continued to be influential due to the advent of computer modeling with recent versions of the interactive-activation model (a parallel distributed processing model) (McClelland, 1987; Taraban & McClelland, 1990). At present, the debate has centered around the notions of modularity of processing components (e.g., lexical access not using external context information) versus strongly interactive connections among processing components (e.g., information from every level assists all processes). Efforts to account for a wider range of the evidence has led to modified views on modularity and connectionism (e.g., Kintsch, 1988; Norris, 1990; Perfetti, 1990; Stanovich, 1990). One interesting extension to the connectionism versus modularity debate has been the current exchange over whether a process such as lexical access exists, or if the lexicon itself even exists as a set of symbolic-level entries (Seidenberg, 1990; Seidenberg & McClelland, 1989, 1990; cf. Besner, 1990; Besner, Twilley, McCann, & Seergobin, 1990; Neumann, 1990). The point of this digression into connectionism and modularity is to recognize that many notions commonly assumed in second language theory are currently being debated quite heatedly in cognitive psychology.
Perfetti & McCutchen, 1987; Stanovich, 1990). Instead, it is sufficient to review evidence which will argue that bottom-up processing contributes importantly to fluent reading.

Recent research on eye movements in reading has demonstrated that fluent readers read most words on a page. These studies show that some 80% of content words and 40% of function words are directly focused on in reading. The point is that we typically do not guess or sample texts, nor is reading an approximative skill. Rather, reading is a very precise and very rapid skill (Adams, 1990; Carpenter & Just, 1986; Rayner & Pollatsek, 1989). The reason readers are so fast is not because they guess well but because they can identify the vast majority of words automatically. As Stanovich (1991) notes,

> It is not that the good reader relies less on visual information, but that the visual analysis mechanisms of the good reader use less capacity. Good readers are efficient processors in every sense: They completely sample the visual array and use fewer resources to do so. (p. 21)

Eye movement research has also demonstrated that the visual span in reading is limited; that is, readers are capable of seeing no more than 3–4 letters to the left of fixation point and 10–12 letters to the right (Carpenter & Just, 1986; Mitchell, 1982; Rayner & Pollatsek, 1989). One consequence of this finding is that training notions such as reading broadly (taking in longer segments of text in a single fixation) may have limited usefulness. Learners who do not make use of their full foveal (directly focused) vision may be helped, but only up to the point of 15-16 letter spans. A second consequence of this research is that readers do not see very much beyond the focusing area; thus, readers’ eye movements tend to be limited by the need to take in information every 10-15 letter spaces. (This explanation is a simplification; see Rayner & Pollatsek, 1989, for a more accurate explanation.)

Eye movement research has been important in at least two other respects. First, it has shown that most words are recognized before higher-level (nonautomatic) context information can be used to influence lexical access (Just & Carpenter, 1987; Stanovich, 1980, 1981; van Dijk & Kintsch, 1983). Second, it has been shown that eye movement itself, from one fixation point to the next, tends to be automatically controlled in normal fluent reading rather than be under the direct control of some attentional strategy. The eye typically moves to the next longer word rather than sampling words selectively. (See Rayner & Pollatsek, 1989, for a more detailed and accurate explanation.)
Apart from eye movement studies, research on word recognition and lexical access has shown that readers take in letter features of short words simultaneously and that readers seem to recognize all the letters in a word. This conclusion suggests that readers are not only extremely rapid in their recognition skills but they are precise as well. The ability to recognize words rapidly and accurately has been seen as an important predictor of reading ability, particularly with young readers (Adams, 1990; Perfetti, 1985; Stanovich, 1986). While this ability has been characterized as a limited causal factor in reading ability, word recognition accounts for a good share of variance even in the reading abilities of college-level students (Cunningham, Stanovich, & Wilson, 1990; Gough & Tunmer, 1986; Perfetti, 1985).

A review of this research suggests that identification skills are extremely important for fluent readers. Thus, an interactive approach to reading is one that takes into account the critical contributions of both lower-level processing skills (identification) and higher-level comprehension and reasoning skills (interpretation). Exactly how these levels of skills interact is a question which is beyond the scope of this paper, though consistent evidence has been presented which suggests that word and subword identification processes become impervious to context information as these skills become automatized (Rayner & Pollatsek, 1989; Stanovich, 1990).

READING IN A SECOND LANGUAGE

Reading in a second language is influenced by factors which are normally not considered in L1 reading research. These factors may be divided into L2 acquisition and training background differences, language processing differences, and social context differences. L2 acquisition and training differences refer to the fact that second language students begin the L2 reading process with very different knowledge from L1 readers. First language learners have already learned somewhere on the order of 5,000 to 7,000 words before they formally begin reading instruction in schools (Singer, 1981). They also have a good intuitive sense of the grammar of the language. L2 learners typically have not already learned a large store of oral language vocabulary; nor do they have a fairly complete sense of the grammar of the language.

Second language students also have certain advantages. Since most academically oriented ESL learners are older than L1 learners, they have a more well-developed conceptual sense of the world; they have considerably more factual knowledge about the world;
and they can make elaborate logical inferences from the text. As a consequence, vocabulary becomes largely a matter of remembering a second label for a well-understood concept. Older ESL students will tend to make more use of metacognitive strategies in their learning as well, making them more efficient learners. ESL students also tend to be motivated by instrumental as well as integrative goals, which improves learning in formal classroom contexts.

Transfer effects from language processing differences can also cause difficulties for L2 students. On a very basic level, transfer effects caused by false cognates or near cognates can influence vocabulary recognition. Students’ L1 syntactic knowledge can also cause interference. Word order variation, relative clause formation, complex noun phrase structures, and other complex structural differences between languages can mislead the ESL reader, particularly at beginning stages.

Orthographic differences between a student’s L1 and English have often been cited as a likely cause of additional difficulties. While this may be true for beginning readers, it is less clear for advanced readers of English. It appears that direction-of-reading differences cause little difficulty, though it is not possible to set up definitive experiments that would isolate this factor (Rayner & Pollatsek, 1989). Punctuation and spacing of written forms also differ across languages but do not seem to disadvantage any linguistic group. Differences between languages with shallow and deep orthographic structure (very regular sound-letter correspondences versus many irregular sound-letter correspondences) have been discussed as a potential source of difficulty for some ESL students. Thus, students from a Spanish language background might have word recognition problems with English, which is less transparently phonemic. Some researchers have suggested that readers of shallow orthographic languages prefer to recode words into sounds before lexical access, arguing that direct lexical access from the orthography would be inefficient (Turvey, Feldman, & Lukatela, 1984). Other researchers have argued that even in languages with shallow orthographies, direct lexical access is an efficient strategy (Besner & Hildebrandt, 1987). Overall, orthographic transparency differences do not appear to lead to different fluent reading strategies (Just & Carpenter, 1987; Rayner & Pollatsek, 1989).

Orthographic influences in reading due to logographic, syllabic, or alphabetic writing systems have also been examined. Logographic writing systems do seem to favor lexical access through direct recognition of word forms, though phonological activation appears to play an important role in word recognition among fluent
L1 readers of Japanese and Chinese (Just & Carpenter, 1987; Rayner & Pollatsek, 1989; cf. discussion of L1 transfer influences in Koda, 1987, 1989). Syllabic systems, such as Hebrew (written without vowels), since they are also less phonetically transparent, tend to favor direct lexical access, though syllabic languages also access words through phonological recoding as well (Bentin, Bargai, & Katz, 1984). Rayner & Pollatsek (1989), summarizing the current research evidence, argue that orthographic differences in languages may have some effect on the preferred route for lexical access, but each language combines direct lexical access with phonological access to words, and fluent readers in all orthographically different languages appear to read texts equally rapidly. (See also Hung & Tzeng, 1981; Just & Carpenter, 1987.)

Linguistic differences at syntactic and discourse levels are more likely to have an influence on reader comprehension, though our ability to test this directly becomes more difficult as issues address higher-level reading processes. Research by Bernhardt (1987), using eye-movement studies of German readers, has found that German readers focus more attention on function words than do fluent readers in English. This may suggest that readers of German need to pay more attention to the syntactic information encoded into functional words. English readers, in contrast, seem to focus more attention on content words. Whether or not such differences would cause problems for ESL readers from a German background is an open question at present. Mitchell, Cuetos, & Zagar (1990) have argued that syntactic parsing strategies may vary according to different languages. They claim that certain strategies for reading will be language-specific rather than universal. (See also Flores d’Arcais, 1990.) It is not clear at present how their findings would affect the second language reader. On the discourse level, Carrell (1984a) found that students from different language backgrounds (Spanish, Asian, Arabic) were able to recall information better depending on different organizational structures of texts. She concludes that different cultures may prefer different ways of organizing information; thus, comprehension of texts may be culturally dependent according to the logical organization of the text.

Differences in reading abilities of ESL students may also be attributed to the social contexts of literacy use in students’ first languages. A first issue would be the extent of literacy skills students have in their first language. ESL research on reading seldom investigates whether or not students in research studies read equally well in their first languages. Since large differences in reading abilities can be found in contexts in which homogeneous population
are assumed, such as in composition courses in U.S. universities, it is
not unreasonable to raise this issue in ESL reading research.

Assuming that students have relatively similar reading skills in
their first languages, a further question can be posed: To what
extent do students use, interpret, or value reading material in their
first language? Students who come from cultures where written
material represents “truth” might tend not to challenge or
reinterpret texts in light of other texts, but will tend to memorize
“knowledge.” Students who have not had easy access to libraries
might be less likely to look for alternative sources of information or
question the relative strengths and weaknesses of the texts they
encounter. Students who come from communities with limited
literacy among the population may downplay the importance of
literacy skills and do little extensive reading (Smithies, 1983). In
contrast to all of these contexts, literacy in academic settings in
developed countries exists within the context of a massive amount
of print information. Students come to assume that any source of
information can be balanced against alternative sources, and come
to expect that challenging a text is a normal academic activity.
These students have a distinctly different set of expectations about
reading and how texts can be used than do students who have not
been socialized in this way. In sum, the social context of students’
uses of reading in their first languages, and their access to texts, may
have a profound effect on their abilities to develop academic
reading skills in English.

Given these differences in second language reading, findings
from research with first language students cannot always be applied
directly to L2 contexts. (See also Bernhardt, 1991.) Because ESL
students are distinct from L1 students (and from each other),
research on second language students is essential. In the section to
follow, five areas of important and current second language
research will be reviewed. Aside from the currency of the research,
each area provides important insights for ESL instruction; the
improvements in reading instruction resulting from this research
demonstrate the importance and vitality of second language
reading research.

RECENT RESEARCH IN SECOND LANGUAGE READING

Schema Theory

In spite of the fact that schema theory is not a well-defined
framework for the mental representation of knowledge (Garnham,
1985; Kintsch, 1988; Rayner & Pollatsek, 1989), it has been an
extremely useful notion for describing how prior knowledge is integrated in memory and used in higher-level comprehension processes (Anderson & Pearson, 1984). Further, implications of schema theory have proven to be very useful in improving reading instruction. This practical insight, along with the intuitive appeal of schema theory, has made it a major focus for research on ESL reading in the 1980s.

Carrell (1984b, 1987) and Carrell and Eisterhold, 1983, have investigated the usefulness of the notion of schema theory for second language reading. This research has found that activating content information plays a major role in students’ comprehension and recall of information from a text. Carrell (1987; cf. Barnett, 1989) has also investigated the importance of formal schemata—structures of knowledge about language and textual organization—and has found this to be a significant independent contributor to reading ability. Carrell (1988b) has also argued that a lack of schema activation is one major source of processing difficulty with second language readers. This has been verified not only through culture-specific text comparisons but also in discipline-specific comparisons of readers with familiar and less familiar background knowledge (Alderson & Urquhart, 1988; Strother & Ulijn, 1987).

Schema theory has provided a strong rationale for both prereading activities and comprehension strategy training (Carrell, 1985, 1988a; Floyd & Carrell, 1987). Other research on schema theory has argued that a high degree of background knowledge can overcome linguistic deficiencies (e.g., Hudson, 1982). The major implication to be drawn from this research is that students need to activate prior knowledge of a topic before they begin to read. If students do not have sufficient prior knowledge, they should be given at least minimal background knowledge from which to interpret the text (Barnett, 1989; Carrell, 1988a; Dubin & Bycina, 1991).

“Holding in the Bottom” and Automaticity

One reaction to the overemphasis on top-down models of reading in second language contexts has been a reconsideration of the importance of lower-level processes in reading (e.g., letter, feature, word, and syntactic processing). This view also examines research on reading in L1 contexts which has stressed the importance of lower-level processes in reading (Carpenter & Just, 1986; Perfetti, 1985; Stanovich, 1986).

Eskey (1988), McLaughlin (1990), and Segalowitz (1991) have all stressed the importance of automatic lower-level processing in
second language contexts. Less proficient readers often appear to be word-bound, and this phenomenon is often taken as evidence that students are “stuck” on words. Previous perspectives on this language problem argued, in keeping with the psycholinguistic model of reading, that students were not sampling rapidly enough and were afraid to make guesses, to take chances. More current views of this learner problem argue that students are word-bound precisely because they are not yet efficient in bottom-up processing. The problem is that students do not simply recognize the words rapidly and accurately but are consciously attending to the graphic form (and in many second language texts there are often far too many new forms for students to attend to efficiently). No amount of guessing, which many poorer students actually seem to be good at, will overcome this deficiency and lead to automatic word recognition. Thus, while all researchers can agree on the problem, the presumed cause of the problem—and what to do about it—has changed considerably in the last decade (Eskey & Grabe, 1988; Segalowitz, 1991; Stanovich, 1986).

Related to the automaticity issue is the recognition that syntactic and vocabulary knowledge are critical components of reading comprehension (Berman, 1984; Carrell, 1989a; Eskey, 1986; Koda, 1989; Swaffar, 1988). Many researchers refer to the L2 studies which posit a language threshold for second language reading abilities (Clarke, 1980; Devine, 1987; cf. Kern, 1989). From this perspective, below a language proficiency threshold, comprehension processes which are used in students’ L1 reading are not used as effectively in their L2 reading; thus, language is seen to play a critical role in second language reading abilities. One possible consequence of this view is to see reading fundamentally as a language process rather than primarily as a thinking process (e.g., Perfetti, 1985; cf. Alderson & Lukmani, 1989). Most second language researchers, however, prefer to propose a balance between language and reasoning processes (e.g., Carrell, 1989a, 1991; Devine, 1988; Eskey, 1986, 1988).

One instructional outcome of this research is the effort to develop automaticity skills in second language readers. Eskey and Grabe (1988) point out a number of instructional options to develop automaticity skills as does Segalowitz (1991; cf. Gatbonton & Segalowitz, 1988, for oral language automaticity development). Reading rate and rapid recognition exercises may improve automaticity (Stoller, 1986) as may repeated readings of texts (Herman, 1985; Samuels, 1979). Nagy and Herman (1987) argue that incidental contact with language through extensive reading is a prime source for automaticity development. Finally, options for teaching structural
aspects of texts which may improve automaticity is treated extensively in Grellet (1981). At present, the issue of developing automaticity in word recognition is in need of further research; it is also typically neglected in many current textbook rationales.

Reading and Vocabulary Acquisition

Virtually all second language reading researchers agree that vocabulary development is a critical component of reading comprehension. Barnett (1986) and Strother and Ulijn (1987) have demonstrated that vocabulary is an important predictor of reading ability. Since fluent L1 readers develop such large recognition vocabularies, researchers have asked how such vocabulary growth occurs and whether the same is possible for second language readers. (Note the discrepancy between L1 and L2 estimates of vocabulary development reported above—40,000 words estimated for L1 academic needs, 5,000 to 7,000 words considered adequate for ESL academic coursework.) The issue then becomes how to provide academically oriented second language students with a large recognition vocabulary.

It is important to recognize that the core vocabulary argument, that the 2,000 most frequent vocabulary items account for 80% of all words in texts, may be useful for basic reading instruction (e.g., Nation, 1990); however, it falls far short of the needs of academically oriented ESL students who, in fact, need to know many of the less frequent words (Carter, 1987). A second problematic assumption of the core vocabulary position is that each word form is counted as a single word, though in reality, each word form may represent a number of distinct meanings, some of which depend strongly on the reading context, and some of which are quite different from each other in meaning. The reader needs to know not just a single word form, but the various different meanings which the one word form might represent (cf. Goulden, Nation, & Read, 1990). On the assumption that different word meanings should count as different words, estimates of vocabulary knowledge would need to increase considerably and fall more in the ranges suggested by first language researchers.

Comprehension Strategy Instruction

Research on comprehension strategies took on greater importance in the 1980s. As noted earlier, younger and less proficient students use fewer strategies and use them less effectively in their reading comprehension (Garner, 1987; Nist & Mealey, 1991; Padron
& Waxman, 1988). In second language contexts, better readers have also been shown to be better strategy users (Carrell, 1989b; Devine, 1987). Students who monitor their reading comprehension, adjust their reading rates, consider their objectives, and so on, tend to be better readers.

In L1 contexts, training studies have improved comprehension abilities in students when they are taught to use comprehension strategies (Brown, Armbruster, & Baker, 1986; Caverly & Orlando, 1991; Nist & Mealey, 1991; Lysynchuk, Pressley, & Vye, 1990; Palincsar & Brown, 1984; Pressley, Johnson, et al., 1989). Thus, research has sought to understand better the specific contexts in which comprehension strategies improve comprehension, the specific training procedures which are most effective, and the student variables (e.g., age, need, proficiency, etc.) which influence strategy instruction. This line of research is particularly important because of the promise it holds for reading instruction.

Relatively few strategy training experiments have been done with second language students. Carrell (1985) demonstrated that training students to recognize the organizational structure of texts improved students’ abilities to recall information. In a later study, Carrell, Pharis, & Liberto (1989) showed that strategy training with semantic mapping and with the ETR (experience, text, relationship) method both improved reading comprehension scores. Barnett (1988a) reported improvement in reading comprehension from a year-long strategy training experiment in reading. In a related experiment over one semester (Barnett, 1988b), however, she did not see significant improvement in the training group. Kern (1989) reported significant improvement with FL readers of French over a semester of training with emphasis placed on word, sentence, and discourse analysis strategies.

A major problem with strategy training is that there are so many potential training strategies, interactions with student learning styles, and training contexts. Establishing consistent results in second language situations will be difficult until many more strategy training experiments are conducted. Caverly and Orlando (1991), for example, point out that a well-established strategy training

2 However, comprehension strategy instruction has actually proven to be somewhat more complex than indicated here. While many students have been trained to perform comprehension strategies successfully, many strategy training experiments have also been unsuccessful. It seems that duration of training, clarity of training procedures, and student responsibility all are important variables in strategy training. There is also a further question of strategy transfer to unrelated reading tasks. Often strategy training does not transfer well to other reading tasks, it seldom creates significant differences in general reading comprehension measures, and it tends not to persist over time. This suggests that optimistic forecasts need to be tempered with the clarification that effective strategy training is not a simple or easy matter (Pressley, Lysynchuk, D’ailly, Smith, & Cake, 1989).
procedure—SQ3R (survey, question, read, recite, review)—has not been shown to be effective in controlled strategy training experiments (for L1). They note, however, that long and intensive training with this procedure does seem to lead to improved performance.

The potential for reading comprehension improvement from comprehension strategy training is enormous. Second language researchers are just beginning to explore the issues in this area, and many research studies claiming success in L1 contexts need to be replicated in L2 contexts to see if such claims can be generalized to second language students. Given the enormous range of research studies that will be needed, this field should remain a major locus of second language reading research for the next decade.

Reading-Writing Relations

In the 1980s, many reading and writing researchers came to the conclusion that reading and writing form important relations with each other: as skills, as cognitive processes, as ways of learning. For some time, L1 researchers have pointed out the high correlation between good writers and good readers and have viewed reading and writing as mutually reinforcing interactive processes (Flood & Lapp, 1987; Kucer, 1987). Stotsky (1983) noted that better writers were better readers, better writers read more, better readers wrote more syntactically mature prose, and reading experiences improved writing more than grammar instruction or further writing exercises (cf. Carson Eisterhold, 1990). At the same time, many researchers have pointed out that reading and writing are not simply reciprocal processes. There are many differences between reading and writing processes (Carson Eisterhold, 1990; Flood & Lapp, 1987; Perfetti & McCutchen, 1987; Purves, 1987; Shanahan, 1984, 1987).

Carson Eisterhold (1990) examined the many arguments for assuming that reading influences writing, that writing influences reading, and that they interactively influence each other. She points out that reading and writing are likely to influence each other reciprocally but not as inverses of the same process. Rather, a bidirectional model states that the reading/writing relationship changes at different stages of language development and aspects of this relationship will be independent of each other (Shanahan, 1984, 1987). Carson, Carrell, Silberstein, Kroll, & Kuehn (1990) examined whether or not reading/writing relationships are closely related in first and second language contexts. Their complex results suggest that the interaction between reading and writing is complex, with certain aspects of each language skill being somewhat independent of the other. This finding supports Shanahan’s bidirection theory of
reading/writing relationships (cf. Shanahan & Lomax, 1988). Much more research is needed to understand reading/writing relationships, not only as theory but also for its implications for instructional issues.³

One implication of this line of research is that reading and writing be taught together in advanced academic preparation. Many cognitive skills are mutually reinforcing, and the integration of literacy skills develops strategic approaches to academic tasks (Tierney, Soter, Flahavan, & McGinley, 1989). It should also be noted that not all good readers are good writers, and not all good writers are good readers (Kucer, 1987; Loban, 1976). Thus, the relationships are anything but simple. While this line of research is new for second language contexts, its importance for improving both reading and writing abilities in ESL students cannot be overemphasized.

There are many other issues and research topics in second language reading which this review will not address (e.g., issues which are related to child second language literacy and adult basic second language literacy). The five research topics treated above are not only current, but also hold strong promise for improved reading instruction. Research is likely to continue in each of these five areas and influence reading curricula and instruction for the next decade.

GUIDELINES FOR READING INSTRUCTION

In a very important way, this article is incomplete. After having reviewed ESL reading research in a fairly comprehensive manner, the next logical step is to interpret this research into curriculum guidelines and effective teaching practices. While a careful treatment of these issues is not possible here, I would like to conclude with a general set of guidelines which can be extrapolated from current reading research as well as from related language teaching sources.

³ It is worth noting that Shanahan and Lomax (1988) found a directional writing-to-reading model of development to be as good a fit of their data as a bidirectional model for beginning learners. Older learners’ performances on reading and writing tasks were better explained by the bidirectional model. For these beginning learners, the direction of learning to read from learning to write was better than learning to write from learning to read. Thus, the role of beginning writing as a means to improving reading receives strong support (see also Chomsky, 1971; Feitelson, 1988; cf. Krashen, 1984; Smith, 1984). The essential point of early writing is that students learn to make sound-to-letter relations in a natural and motivating way, while they are making meaning. Language experience approaches (LEA) which get students to write their own first drafts of their stories are effective ways of letting students see writing as symbolic representation and learn phonemic-graphic correspondences (Feitelson, 1988).
First, it would seem appropriate that reading instruction be taught in the context of a content-centered, integrated skills curriculum. Content provides learner motivation and purposeful activities; the integration of skills reinforces learning. Second, a reading lab should be used to provide individualized instruction as well as to practice certain skills and strategies (e.g., recognition exercises, timed reading, vocabulary learning strategies) outside of the content-centered course. Third, sustained silent reading should be encouraged to build fluency (automaticity), confidence, and appreciation of reading. Fourth, reading lessons should be planned in a pre-, during, and postreading framework in order to build background knowledge, practice reading skills within the reading texts themselves, and engage in comprehension instruction. Fifth, specific skills and strategies should be given high priority and practiced consistently. The particular skills and strategies to be stressed depend on the educational contexts, student needs, and teaching objectives. Sixth, group work and cooperative learning should be used regularly to promote discussions of the readings and to work with information from the readings, exploring different solutions for complex activities. Seventh, and finally, students need to read extensively. Longer concentrated periods of silent reading build vocabulary and structural awareness, develop automaticity, enhance background knowledge, improve comprehension skills, and promote confidence and motivation. In short, students learn to read by reading.

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Out of the Woods: 
Emerging Traditions in the Teaching of Writing

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Twenty-five years ago, writing instruction was characterized by an approach that focused on linguistic and rhetorical form. Since then, we have gone into the woods in search of new approaches, focusing in turn on the writer and the writer’s processes, on academic content, and on the reader’s expectations. In our search for a new approach, we have come up against some thorny issues, five of which are described in detail: the topics for writing, the issue of “real” writing, the nature of the academic discourse community, contrastive rhetoric, and responding to writing. The difficulty of negotiating our way also makes us susceptible to false trails. The paper ends with a discussion of emerging traditions that reflect shared recognitions rather than provide new methodologies.

Most good fairy tales, at least the ones that delight us and make us or our children beg for more, begin with looking back to “once upon a time.” Since the TESOL organization has now reached its 25th anniversary, this seems a good way to begin looking at the story of how the teaching of writing to adult (secondary and higher education) nonnative speakers of English has developed since 1966; we can follow it up with an account of the thickets and thorny problems we face as we journey into the woods. Despite false trails, we might still, true to the best endings of fairy tales, be able to find a way out of the woods and live happily ever after. But that last is only speculation. Let’s begin by looking back at the trails we’ve followed up to now, keeping in mind that we might not all have met the same witches, wizards, wolves, or good fairies along the way. Readers should be aware that the author of this article has been teaching ESL for more than 25 years, and so her telling of the story is inevitably influenced by the paths she chose to follow.
This brief historical survey delineates four approaches to L2 writing instruction that have been evident in the last 25 years. Each approach, at least as it emerges in the literature, has a distinctive focus, highlighting in one case the rhetorical and linguistic form of the text itself; in another, the writer and the cognitive processes used in the act of writing; in another, the content for writing; and in the last, the demands made by the reader. The dates given mark the approximate time when each focus first appeared consistently in our literature; no final dates are given, since all the approaches are still, in varying degrees, subscribed to in theory and certainly in practice.

**Focus on Form, 1966–**

Once upon a time, when the TESOL organization first was founded in 1966, the audiolingual method was the dominant mode of instruction. The view that speech was primary meant that writing served a subservient role: to reinforce oral patterns of the language. So in language instruction, writing took the form of sentence drills—fill-ins, substitutions, transformations, and completions. The content was supplied. The writing reinforced or tested the accurate application of grammatical rules. In the 1970s, the use of sentence combining (O’Hare, 1973; Pack & Henrichsen, 1980), while still focusing on the manipulation of given sentences and thus, according to Zamel (1980), ignoring “the enormous complexity of writing” (p. 89), provided students with the opportunity to explore available syntactic options.

In the early 1970s, too, passages of connected discourse began to be used more often as classroom materials in the teaching of writing. Controlled composition tasks, still widely used today, provide the text and ask the student to manipulate linguistic forms within that text (see, for example, Byrd & Gallingane, 1990; Kunz, 1972; Paulston & Dykstra, 1973). However, the fact that students are using passages of connected discourse does not necessarily guarantee that the students view them as authentic. If the students are concentrating on a grammatical transformation, such as changing verbs from present to past, they “need pay no attention whatever to what the sentences mean or the manner in which they relate to each other” (Widdowson, 1978, p. 116).

It was not only grammatical form that was emphasized in the 1960s and early 1970s. Concern for rhetorical form was the impetus...
for Kaplan’s influential 1966 article that introduced the concept of contrastive rhetoric. His “doodles article,” as he calls it (Kaplan, 1987, p. 9), represents the “thought pattern” of English as “dominantly linear in its development” (Kaplan, 1966, p. 4) in contrast to the paragraph patterns of other languages and cultures. It has led to compensatory exercises that offer training in recognizing and using topic sentences, examples, and illustrations. These exercises often stress imitation of paragraph or essay form, using writing from an outline, paragraph completion, identification of topic and support, and scrambled paragraphs to reorder (see, for example, Kaplan & Shaw, 1983; Reid & Lindstrom, 1985).

Formal considerations are also the basis for a great deal of current L2 writing research. Textual features, such as the number of passives or the number of pronouns, are counted and compared for users of different cultures (Reid, 1990). Researchers examine the structure of such features as introductory paragraphs (Scarcella, 1984), the form of essays in various languages (Eggington, 1987; Hinds, 1987; Tsao, 1983), cohesion and coherence (Connor, 1984; Johns, 1984), and topical structure (Lautamatti, 1987). A large-scale study of written composition across 14 countries established to codify tasks and describe the state of writing instruction has provided a rich data base for cross-cultural discourse analyses (Purves, 1988). (For a summary of text-based research, see Connor, 1990.) A form-dominated approach has the largest body of research to inform and support it; it has been with us for a long time, and lends itself to empirical research design.

Focus on the Writer 1976–

The 1970s saw the development of more than sentence combining and controlled composition. Influenced by L1 writing research on composing processes (Emig, 1971; Zamel, 1976), teachers and researchers reacted against a form-dominated approach by developing an interest in what L2 writers actually do as they write. New concerns replaced the old. In place of “accuracy” and “patterns” came “process,” “making meaning,” “invention,” and “multiple drafts.” The attention to the writer as language learner and creator of text has led to a “process approach,” with a new range of classroom tasks characterized by the use of journals (Peyton, 1990; Spack & Sadow, 1983), invention (Spack, 1984), peer collaboration (Bruffee, 1984; Long & Porter, 1985), revision (Hall, 1990), and attention to content before form (Raines, 1983a; Zamel, 1976, 1982, 1983). Zamel (1983) has recommended that teachers not present instruction in the use of thesis sentences and outlines before
the students have begun to explore ideas. In response to theory and research on writers’ processes, teachers have begun to allow their students time and opportunity for selecting topics, generating ideas, writing drafts and revisions, and providing feedback. Where linguistic accuracy was formerly emphasized from the start, it is now often downplayed, at least at the beginning of the process, delayed until writers have grappled with ideas and organization. Some practitioners even entirely omit attention to grammar, as in ESL writing textbooks that contain no grammar reference or instructional component (e.g., Benesch & Rorschach, 1989; Cramer, 1985).

Research publications on L2 writing processes grew rapidly in the 1980s to inform and support the new trends in instruction (e.g., Cumming, 1989; Friedlander, 1990; Hall, 1990; Jones, 1982, 1985; Jones & Tetroe, 1987; Raimes, 1985, 1987; Zamel, 1982, 1983; for a summary, see Krapels, 1990). However, although we are beginning to discover much about the writing process, the small number of subjects in case study research limits generalizations, and we are rightly warned that the “lack of comparability across studies impedes the growth of knowledge in the field” (Krapels, 1990, p. 51).

Despite the rapid growth in research and classroom applications in this area, and despite the enthusiastic acceptance of a shift in our discipline to a view of language as communication and to an understanding of the process of learning, teachers did not all strike out along this new path. The radical changes that were called for in instructional approach seemed to provoke a swift reaction, a return to the safety of the well-worn trail where texts and teachers have priority.

Focus on Content 1986–

Some teachers and theorists, alienated by the enthusiasm with which a process approach was often adopted and promulgated (Horowitz, 1986a), interpreted the focus on the writer’s making of personal meaning as an “almost total obsession” (Horowitz, 1986c, p. 788) with “the cognitive relationship between the writer and the writer’s internal world” (Swales, 1987, p. 63). Those who perceived the new approach as an obsession inappropriate for academic demands and for the expectations of academic readers shifted their focus from the processes of the writer to content and to the demands of the academy. By 1986, a process approach was being included among “traditional” (Shih, 1986, p. 624) approaches and in its place was proposed what Mohan had already proposed in 1979—a content-based approach. In content-based instruction, an ESL
course might be attached to a content course in the adjunct model (Brinton, Snow, & Wesche, 1989; Snow & Brinton, 1988) or language courses might be grouped with courses in other disciplines (Benesch, 1988). With a content focus, learners are said to get help with “the language of the thinking processes and the structure or shape of content” (Mohan, 1986, p. 18). It is interesting to note here that the content specific to English courses—language, culture, and literature—is largely rejected (see Horowitz, 1990) in favor of the subject matter of the other fields the ESL students are studying.

The research studies that inform this approach include analysis of the rhetorical organization of technical writing (Selinker, Todd-Trimble, & Trimble, 1978; Weissberg, 1984), studies of student writing in content areas (Jenkins & Hinds, 1987; Seizer, 1983), and surveys of the content and tasks L2 students can expect to encounter in their academic careers (Bridgeman & Carlson, 1983; Canseco & Byrd, 1989; Horowitz, 1986b). While classroom methodology might take on some of the features of a writer-focused approach, such as prewriting tasks and the opportunity for revision, the main emphasis is on the instructor’s determination of what academic content is most appropriate, in order to build whole courses or modules of reading and writing tasks around that content.

This content-based approach has more repercussions on the shape of the curriculum than the two approaches previously described, for here the autonomous ESL class is often replaced by team teaching, linked courses, “topic-centered modules or mini-courses,” sheltered (i.e., “field specific”) instruction, and “composition or multiskill English for academic purposes (EAP) courses/tutorials as adjuncts to designated university content courses” (Shih, 1986, p. 632–633). With an autonomous ESL class, a teacher can—and indeed often does—move back and forth among approaches. With ESL attached in the curriculum to a content course, such flexibility is less likely. There is always the danger that institutional changes in course structure will lock us into an approach that we want to modify or abandon.

Focus on the Reader 1986–

Simultaneously with content-based approaches came another academically oriented approach, English for academic purposes, which focuses on the expectations of academic readers (Horowitz, 1986a, 1986b, 1986c; Reid, 1987, 1989). This approach, in which the ESL teacher runs a theme-based class, not necessarily linked to a content course, is also characterized by its strong opposition to a
position within a writer-dominated process approach that favors personal writing. A reader-dominated approach perceives language teaching “as socialization into the academic community—not as humanistic therapy” (Horowitz, 1986c, p. 789).

The audience-dominated approach, focusing on the expectations of readers outside the language classroom, is characterized by the use of terms like academic demands and academic discourse community. Attention to audience was, in fact, first brought to the fore as a feature of the process approach, but the focus was on known readers inside the language classroom, as peers and teachers responded to the ideas in a text. An English for academic purposes approach focuses on the reader, too—not as a specific individual but as the representative of a discourse community, for example, a specific discipline or academia in general. The reader is an initiated expert who represents a faculty audience. This reader, “particularly omniscient” and “all-powerful” (Johns, 1990a, p. 31), is likely to be an abstract representation, a generalized construct, one reified from an examination of academic assignments and texts.

Once the concept of a powerful outside reader is established, it is a short step to generalizing about the forms of writing that a reader will expect, and then an even shorter step to teaching those forms as prescriptive patterns. Recommendations such as the following: “Teachers must gather assignments from across the curriculum, assess the purposes and audience expectations in the assignments, and present them to the class” (Reid, 1987, p. 34) indicate a return to a form-dominated approach, the difference being that now rhetorical forms, rather than grammatical forms, are presented as paradigms.

A reader-dominated approach, like the other approaches, has generated its own body of research: mostly surveys of the expectations and reactions of faculty members (Johns, 1981; Santos, 1988), studies of the expectations of academic readers with regard to genres (Swales, 1990), and identifications of the basic skills of writing transferable across various disciplines (Johns, 1988).

These four approaches are all widely used and by no means discrete and sequential. Certainly the last three appear to operate more on a principle of critical reaction to a previous approach than on cumulative development. In all, our path through the woods of writing instruction is less clearly defined now in 1991 than it was in 1966. Then there was one approach, form-dominated, clearly defined, and relatively easy to follow in the classroom. Now teachers have to consider a variety of approaches, their underlying assumptions, and the practices that each philosophy generates.
Thus, leaving the security of what Clarke and Silberstein call the “explicitly mandated reality” (1988, p. 692) of one clear approach, we have gone in search of a new theoretical approach or approaches to L2 writing instruction.

INTO THE WOODS: THICKETS AND THORNY ISSUES

Once we have left the relative safety of a traditional form-dominated approach and set off into the woods in search of new theories, our progress is hampered by many thickets and thorny issues. These we have to confront and negotiate before we can continue our journey. Particularly thorny are five classroom-oriented issues that arise in our literature and in teachers’ discussions frequently enough to trouble L2 writing instructors, issues that in my more than 25 years of teaching have provided cause for reflection and uncertainty: the topics for writing; the issue of “real” writing; the nature of the academic discourse community; the role of contrastive rhetoric in the writing classroom; and ways of responding to writing. These areas, difficult to negotiate, will be described as discrete items, each posing its own set of problems. A word of caution is in order, though: Readers should not expect to find here miracle solutions or magic charms to lead the way past these thickets and out of the woods.

The Topics for Writing

One of the major problems teachers face is what students should write about. Topics for writing are an integral part of any writing course, and the four approaches outlined above lead to what can be a bewildering array of topics for teachers. In a form-dominated approach, topics are assigned by the teacher; since the interest is in how sentences and paragraphs are written rather than in what ideas are expressed, each piece of writing serves as a vehicle for practicing and displaying grammatical, syntactic, and rhetorical forms. For this purpose, almost any topic will serve. In a writer-dominated approach (usually called a process approach), the students themselves frequently choose the topics, using personal experience to write about what concerns them, or responding to a shared classroom experience, often a piece of expository writing or a work of literature (Spack, 1985). In a content-dominated approach, topics will be drawn from the subject matter of either a particular discipline or a particular course, supplied either by the content teacher when content and writing course are linked in the
adjunct model (Snow & Brinton, 1988) or by the language teacher in theme-based EAP courses. And in a reader-dominated approach, the model is one of the writing-across-the-curriculum movement, with language teachers examining what other disciplines assign and training students how to respond to those assignments by “reconstructing” (Johns, 1986a, p. 253) the essay prompt and by following a model of the appropriate form of academic writing.

The problem of whether to teach personal or academic writing has surfaced frequently in recent years (Mlynarczyk, in press) and has no easy solution. Approaches that focus on rhetorical form and on the reader’s expectations look to the larger community for guidance. ESL instruction is seen as a service “to prepare students to handle writing assignments in academic courses” (Shih, 1986, p. 617). For EFL students and for international students in the U. S., who will probably only write in English as part of their educational requirement and not at all thereafter, this might be suitable. However, the purposes are different for the many ESL immigrant and refugee nonnative speakers in secondary and college classrooms. This last group, a rapidly growing one, Leki (1990) equates with native speakers of English, who, she says, are “more likely to write for many different contexts in the course of their professional lives” (p. 14). For native speakers—and, by extension, certain large groups of ESL students—Hairston (1991) rejects the idea that writing courses should be “service courses” taught for the benefit of academic disciplines, since “writing courses taught by properly trained teachers do have important content: learning how to use language to express ideas effectively” (p. 81).

“Real” Writing

A great deal of the recent controversy about the teaching of writing has centered not only around the topics students write about but also around the dichotomy of process and product. Horowitz initiated lengthy debate (see Braine, 1988; Hamp-Lyons, 1986; Horowitz, 1986a, 1986b, 1986c; Liebman-Kleine, 1986; Lyons, 1986; Reid, 1984; Spack, 1988; Zamel, 1983) by questioning the effectiveness of the process approach with its focus on the writer. In particular, Horowitz (1986) criticized what he termed the “cavalier view” (p. 141) of a process proponent (this author) who said at the 1985 TESOL Convention that examination writing was not “real” (p. 141) writing. Horowitz is not alone in his complaint. Cited as a major flaw in a process approach is the fact that “the Process Approach fails to give students an accurate picture of university writing” (Johns, 1990b). The issue of what university writing is and
what kind of writing ESL students should be doing is a thorny one, and the use of the term real relates to this issue in practice as well as in theory.

In practice, I and many of my colleagues teach two types of writing in our classes: writing for learning (with prewriting, drafts, revisions, and editing) and writing for display (i.e., examination writing). Our students are aware of the different purposes and different strategies. They recognize that these are distinct. The use of the term real in this context was initiated by Searle (1969), who makes a clear distinction between real questions and exam questions. In real questions, the speaker wants to know the answer; in exam questions, the speaker wants to know if the hearer knows. Similar distinctions can be made with writing. In a writing class, students need to be taught both how to use the process to their advantage as language learners and writers, and also how to produce an acceptable product upon demand. A shortcoming of the debate around these issues is that process and product have been seen as either/or rather than both/and entities. However, while students certainly need to learn how to pass exams, they also need to perceive writing as a tool for learning, a tool that can be useful to them throughout their professional and personal lives.

As evidence of the difficulty of defining authentic writing, it is interesting to note that even Horowitz (1986b) has used the designation real to describe writing. He suggests ways to simulate “the essential characteristics of real university writing assignments” (p. 449) and discusses the context of “a real academic task” [italics added] (p. 459). Here, too, the use of the term real could be questioned. However, we should not assume that the implication is necessarily that the topics and tasks that come from ESL teachers’ own repertoire are somehow unreal; it is, rather, that Horowitz and others find them less appropriate in certain settings. In any case, the L2 debate provides a great deal of evidence for what Harris (1989) has observed in L1 writing: “One seems asked to defend either the power of the discourse community or the imagination of the individual writer” (p. 2). Obviously, the whole area of the types of writing students are expected to do and the types of writing we should teach is one surrounded by controversy.

The Nature of the Academic Discourse Community

Frequently cited as important in determining the nature of “real” writing and the topics we should assign are the demands of the “academic discourse community.” These demands provide a set of standards that readers of academic prose, teachers in academic
settings, expect. So some L2 writing teachers look to other disciplines to determine their course content, their readings, their models, and their instruction of rhetorical form. One thorny issue here is whether we should put our trust in this community, or whether we shouldn’t rather be attempting to influence and change the academic community for the benefit of our students, while teaching our students how to interpret the community values and transform them (for discussion of similar issues, see Auerbach, 1986, 1990; Peirce, 1989).

According to Johns (1990a), teachers who emphasize the conventions of the discourse community will begin with “the rules of discourse in the community” (p. 32), since academic faculty “insist that students learn to ‘talk like engineers’, for example, surrendering their own language and mode of thought to the requirements of the target community (p. 33). The language used here—“rules” and “surrender”—reveals perceptions regarding who exercises power in the community and the value of that power. In contrast, Patricia Bizzell (cited in Enos, 1987) sees the academic community as synonymous with “dominant social classes” and has recommended that we not direct our students towards assimilation but rather find ways to give them “critical distance” on academic cultural literacy, so that eventually “elements from students’ native discourse communities can be granted legitimacy in the academic community” (p. vi).

Another thorny problem is whether we view the academic discourse community as benign, open, and beneficial to our students or whether we see discourse communities as powerful and controlling, and, as Giroux (cited in Faigley, 1986) puts it, “often more concerned with ways of excluding new members than with ways of admitting them” (p. 537). These opposing views point to the validity of Berlin’s (1988) statement that every pedagogy implies "a set of tacit assumptions about what is real, what is good, what is possible, and how power ought to be distributed" (p. 492).

Teaching writing is inherently political, and how we perceive the purposes of writing vis-a-vis the academic community will reflect our political stance.

Reflecting our stance, too, is how we interpret the information that comes to us from members of the academic community. In a survey of 200 faculty members’ opinions in response to the question, “Which is more important for success in your classes, a general knowledge of English or a knowledge of English specific to the discipline?”, (Johns, 1981, p. 57) most faculty members ranked general English above specific purposes English. This result was interpreted in the following way:
There could be a number of reasons for the general English preferences, the most compelling of which is that most faculty do not understand the nature and breadth of ESP. They tend to think of it as an aspect of the discipline that has to do with vocabulary alone. (p. 54)

The mix of signals perhaps reflects a more generalized ambivalence of TESOL practitioners: Subject-area faculty are viewed as a valuable resource; however, when they do not support what ESL teachers and researchers expect, it is tempting to discount their perceptions.

A focus on the academic discourse community also raises issues as to whether academic writing is good writing, whether academic discourse “often masks a lack of genuine understanding” (Elbow, 1991, p. 137) of how a principle works, and indeed whether there is a fixed and stable construct of academic writing even in one discipline. Elbow goes so far as to say that we can’t teach academic discourse “because there’s no such thing to teach” (p. 138). This issue of the nature, requirements, even the existence of, an academic discourse community is a thicket in which we could be entangled for a long time.

Contrastive Rhetoric

Although it has been 25 years since contrastive rhetoric research was introduced (Kaplan, 1966, Leki, 1991) and the concept is frequently mentioned in discussions of theory and research, its applications to classroom instruction have not developed correspondingly. Published research informs teachers about the different ways in which the written products of other languages are structured (e.g., Eggington, 1987; Hinds, 1987; Tsao, 1983), but the nature of transfer in L2 writing remains under debate (see Mohan & Lo, 1985) and transfer has been found not to be significant in certain types of task, such as paraphrase (Connor & McCagg, 1983). The declared intention of contrastive rhetoric research is, however, “not to provide pedagogic method” but rather to provide teachers and students with knowledge about how the links between culture and writing are reflected in written products (Grabe & Kaplan, 1989, p. 271).

Rather than abstracting a principle of the “linear” development of English prose (Kaplan, 1966) as a pedagogic principle, contrastive rhetoric is more useful as a consciousness-raising device for students; teachers can discuss what they have observed about texts in different cultures and have students discover whether research findings hold true in their experience of their L1 texts.

The thicket that contrastive rhetoric presents for teachers as they wander into the woods of theory is the question of the value of
prescribing one form of text—English form—not just as an alternative, but as the one privileged form of text, presented as the most logical and desirable, with which other learned systems interfere. Land and Whitley (1989), in discussing how readers read and judge ESL students’ essays, found that nonnative speaker readers could “accommodate to more kinds of rhetorical patterns” (p. 287) than could native-speaker readers. If we are to move away from courses that are “as retributive as they are instructive” and away from “composition as colonization,” we need, they say, to “recognize, value, and foster the alternative rhetorics that the ESL student brings to our language” (p. 286), not treat them only as features that interfere with language learning. Land and Whitley fear that “in teaching Standard Written English rhetorical conventions, we are teaching students to reproduce in a mechanical fashion our preferred vehicle of understanding” (p. 285).

In the same way that multiple “literacies” (Street, 1984) are posed against the idea of one dominant cultural literacy (Hirsch, 1987), so a broad use of contrastive rhetoric as a classroom consciousness-raising tool can point to linguistic variety and rhetorical choices; a narrow use would emphasize only prescriptions aimed at countering L1 interference. An extensive research study (Cumming, 1989) of the factors of writing expertise and second-language proficiency of L2 writers revealed in the qualities of their texts and their writing behaviors warns against such a narrow use of contrastive rhetoric: “Pedagogical prescriptions about the interference of learners’ mother tongue in second-language performance—espoused in audiolingual methodologies and theories of linguistic transfer or contrastive rhetoric—appear misdirected” (pp. 127-128) since students’ L1 is shown to be an important resource rather than a hindrance in decision making in writing.

Responding to Writing

With a number of approaches to teaching writing to choose from, teachers are faced with a similar variety of ways to respond to students’ writing. Since a response on a student’s paper is potentially one of the most influential texts in a writing class (Raimes, 1988), teachers are always concerned about the best approach. Some of the options follow, illustrating the variety at our disposal. We can correct errors; code errors; locate errors; indicate the number of errors (see Robb, Ross, & Shortreed, 1986, for a discussion of these); comment on form; make generalized comments about content, e.g., “good description” or “add details” (Fathman & Whalley, 1990, p. 182); make text-specific comments, e.g., “I’m wondering here
what Carver tells the readers about the children”; ask questions; make suggestions; emote with comments like “Nice!” or “I’m bored” (Lees, 1979, p. 264); praise; ask students to comment on the source of the error (Raimes, 1990); or ask L1 peers to reformulate the students’ texts (Cohen, 1983). Given the range of choices, it’s hardly surprising that responding is a thorny issue. It is, in fact, so problematic that much of our written response to students’ texts is inconsistent, arbitrary, and often contradictory (Zamel, 1985).

In an effort to understand more about teachers’ responses, researchers are looking at students’ responses to feedback (Cohen, 1987; Cohen & Cavalcanti, 1990; Radecki & Swales, 1988), finding mainly that students simply “make a mental note” of a teacher’s response. The fact that little of the research examines activities that occur after the act of responding seems to get at the heart of the problem. If teachers see their response as the end of the interaction, then students will stop there. If, however, the response includes specific directions on what to do next, an “assignment” (Lees, 1979, p. 265), there is a chance for application of principles.

FALSE TRAILS

The five thorny issues just discussed are ones that trouble teachers and concern theorists and researchers. There are many others, too, rendering our journey into the woods exciting, even hazardous. As teachers read the theories and research and try to figure out what approach to adopt in a writing classroom, they will sometimes confront a false trail that seems to promise a quick way out of the woods, an easy solution. We have seen evidence of false trails in the rise and demise of various methods (Clarke, 1982, 1984; Richards, 1984). Similarly, prescriptions of one approach for our whole profession and all our students can be seen as false trails, too, since they actually lead back to another “explicitly mandated reality” (Clarke & Silberstein, 1988) to replace the mandate of form-focused instruction. Such a prescription in the teaching of writing appears in proposals for the widespread adoption of content-based language teaching as “the dominant approach to teaching ESL at all levels” (Celce-Murcia, 1989, p. 14).

I regard proposals like this as false trails because they perpetuate one of the errors that has been at the heart of many of our thorny problems about writing. That problem, alluded to earlier, is that we tend to discuss ESL/EFL students as if they are one or at the most two groups. Much of the dissension and controversy that has surfaced at conferences and in our literature would, I submit,
simply cease to exist if we defined our terms. Our field is too diverse for us to recommend ways of teaching ESL in general. There is no such thing as a generalized ESL student. Before making pedagogical recommendations, we need to determine the following: the type of institution (high school, two-year college, four-year college, research university?) and the ESL student (undergraduate or graduate? freshman or junior? international student [returning to country of origin] or immigrant/refugee? with writing expertise in L1 or not? with what level of language proficiency?) If we are to prescribe content, we need to ask, Whose content? For the nonnative-speaking first-year students in my university, to offer modules of marketing, accounting, and nursing is to depart from the very tradition of a liberal arts education. On the other hand, for very specialized international graduate students, a content approach might be the most appropriate. When Johns and Connor (1989, reported in Leki, 1990) maintain that no such thing as general English exists, they are referring to international students, but immigrant students need general English; that is, they need more than ways to adapt to course requirements for a few years. They need to be able to write in English for the rest of their working and earning lives. They need to learn not only what academia expects but how to forge their place in it, and how to change it. Indeed, on many campuses now, a diverse student body is urging the replacement of the male Eurocentric curriculum model with one emphasizing gender representation and cultural diversity. Adopting a content-based approach for all ESL students would be succumbing to what I have called “the butler’s stance” (Raimes, in press), one that overvalues service to other disciplines and prescribes content at the expense of writer, reader, and form.

Being lost in the woods might be uncomfortable, but we have to beware of taking an easy path that might, in fact, lead us back to where we started, to a reliance on form and prescription.

OUT OF THE WOODS: EMERGING TRADITIONS IN THE TEACHING OF WRITING

What is the story now after a 25-year journey, beset by thickets, thorns, and false trails? Are new traditions emerging?

I am reminded of an article I wrote for this journal 8 years ago (Raimes, 1983b), in which I argued that in spite of the thrust towards communicative competence, there had been no real revolution in our field. While there were then signs of some shifts in the assumptions about what we do, we were still enmeshed in tradition but were beginning to raise important questions. At that
time Kuhn’s (1970) description of a paradigm shift seemed apt for
the field of ESL/EFL in general: “the proliferation of competing
articulations, the willingness to try anything, the expression of
explicit discontent, the recourse to philosophy and to debate over
fundamentals” (p. 91). That description seems still to be apt for the
teaching of writing, where there is certainly evidence of
competition, discontent, and debate, and where now, given the
plurality of approaches, designs, and procedures, it seems more
appropriate to talk of traditions rather than of one tradition.

If any clear traditions are emerging, they have more to do with
recognition of where we are now rather than delineation of exactly
where we are going. I see five such emerging traditions of
recognition: recognition of the complexity of composing, of student
diversity, of learners’ processes, of the politics of pedagogy, and of
the value of practice as well as theory. I end with a brief discussion
of each.

Recognition of the Complexity of Composing

Despite all the false trails and some theorists’ desire to offer one
approach as the answer to our problems, what seems to be
emerging is a recognition that the complexity of the writing process
and the writing context means that when we teach writing we have
to balance the four elements of form, the writer, content, and the
reader. These are not discrete entities. Rather,

writers are readers as they read their own texts. Readers are writers as
they make responses on a written text. Content and subject matter do
not exist without language. The form of a text is determined by the
interaction of writer, reader, and content. Language inevitably reflects
subject matter, the writer, and the writer’s view of the reader’s
background knowledge and expectations. (Raimes, in press)

This complexity may mean that no one single theory of writing
can be developed (Johns, 1990a) or it may mean that a variety of
theories need to be developed to support and inform diverse
approaches (Silva, 1990). In either case, recognition of complexity is
a necessary basis for principled model building.

Recognition of Student Diversity

While there is still a tendency to discuss our field as if it were the
easily definable entity it was 25 years ago, there are signs that we are
beginning to recognize the diversity of our students and our
mission, and to realize that not all approaches and procedures might
apply to all ESL/EFL students. Reid (1984) notes this when she reminds Zamel of the differences between advanced students and novice writers, particularly with regard to cognitive development; Horowitz (1990) notes this when he lists the questions that we need to ask about our students before we decide to use literature or any other content. For heterogeneous classes, a “balanced” stance is recommended (Booth, 1963; Raimes, in press), one that presents a governing philosophy but pays attention within that philosophy to all four elements involved in writing: form, writer, content, and reader. The combination of complexity and diversity makes it imperative for us not to seek universal prescriptions, but instead to “strive to validate other, local forms of knowledge about language and teaching” (Pennycook, 1989, p. 613).

Recognition of Learners’ Processes

Amidst all the winding and intersecting paths and false trails, one trail seems to be consistently well marked and well traveled. While there is controversy about what a process approach to teaching writing actually comprises and to what extent it can take academic demands into account, there is widespread acceptance of the notion that language teachers need to know about and to take into account the process of how learners learn a language and how writers produce a written product. Such a notion of process underlies a great deal of current communicative, task-based, and collaborative instruction and curriculum development (Nunan, 1989a, 1989b). Even writing theorists who are identified with content-based and reader-based approaches frequently acknowledge the important role that the writer’s processes play in the writing class (Johns, 1986b; Shih, 1986; Swales, 1987). The process approach more than any other seems to be providing unifying theoretical and methodological principles.

Recognition of the Politics of Pedagogy

Along with the recognition of the complexity of composing and the diversity of our students and their processes has come a more explicitly political understanding. The approach we take to the academic discourse community and the culturally diverse students in our classrooms will inevitably reflect “interested knowledge,” which is likely to be “a positivist, progressivist, and patriarchal” view presented as “a method” (Pennycook, 1989, p. 589). All approaches should, therefore, be examined with a set of questions in mind: Who learns to do what? Why? Who benefits? (See
Auerbach, 1986, 1990). Recognizing the power of literacy, we need to ask “what kind of literacy we want to support: literacy to serve which purposes and on behalf of whose interests” (Lunsford, Moglen, & Slevin, 1990, p. 2) and to keep in mind that “to propose a pedagogy is to propose a political vision” (Simon, 1987, p. 371).

**Recognition of the Value of Practice**

Both in L1 and in L2 instruction, the power that theory, or method, has held over instruction is being challenged by what Shulman (1987) calls “the wisdom of practice” (p. 11). North (1987) argues that in L1 writing instruction we need to give credit to “practitioners’ lore” as well as to research; teachers need to use their knowledge “to argue for the value of what they know and how they come to know it” (p. 55). Before we heed our theorists and adopt their views, it will help us if we first discover how often they teach writing to ESL students, where they teach it, how they teach it, and who their students are. We need to establish a context. We need to know the environment in which they have developed what Prabhu (1990, p. 172) calls “a teacher’s sense of plausibility about teaching,” which is the development of a “concept (or theory, or in a more dormant state, pedagogic intuition), of how learning takes place and how teaching causes and supports it.” But better than putting the research into a teaching context is for teachers to become researchers themselves. Classroom-based research and action research is increasingly recommended to decrease teachers’ reliance on theorists and researchers (Richards & Nunan, 1990). Teachers can keep sight of the forest as well as the trees.

These recognitions characterize our position at the end of our 25-year journey from “once upon a time,” journeying into the woods, facing the tangle of thickets and thorny problems to trying to recognize—and avoid—false trails. Our own telling of the story might also include having taken some false trails or having met and vanquished a few big bad wolves in our travels. The fact that we are beginning to emerge from the woods with new recognitions but not a single new approach is perhaps the happiest 1991 ending that we can expect, given the diversity and complexity of our students and of learning and teaching writing. But by the turn of the century, we could well be reading (and writing) a different story.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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THE AUTHOR


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After reviewing research on native language (NL) listening, the article discusses (a) the importance of listening in second language acquisition, (b) factors that influence success or failure of comprehension of first or second language messages, (c) the role of listening in the L2 curriculum, (d) posited models of NL and L2 listening comprehension, and (e) proposed taxonomies of listening skills and pedagogical activities. The essay argues that researchers and practitioners working together can foster greater understanding of L2 listening comprehension; it is hoped that such collaborations will lead to better preparation of nonnative speakers of English who must function effectively in a contemporary industrialized society that appears to be shifting increasingly toward the use of English, and simultaneously to be shifting away from literacy toward orality.

LISTENING IN THE NATIVE LANGUAGE: PROBLEMS OF DEFINITION AND OPERATIONALIZATION

To make Words serviceable to the end of Communication, it is necessary . . . that they excite in the Hearer, exactly the same Idea, they stand for in the mind of the Speaker. Without this, Men fill one another’s Heads with noise and sounds; but convey not thereby their Thoughts, and lay not before one another their Ideas, which is the end of Discourse and Language (Locke, 1689/1988, p. 478).

John Locke’s conception of the nature of verbal communication and listening comprehension may seem both perceptive and contemporary to today’s second language acquisition (SLA) researchers and teachers, but such a view of human understanding was neither original to Locke nor novel to his time. As Taylor (1986) notes, the telementational conception of human understanding can be found “lurking in the linguistic reflections of Aristotle, St. Augustine, and the Modistae, the Port Royal grammarians,
Hobbes, and many others” (p. 17). Thus, the endeavor of today’s communication scholars and SLA researchers to penetrate and illuminate the mental processes involved in comprehending discourse spoken in one’s native language (NL) or second/foreign language (L2) is a quest that has engrossed philosophers since ancient times, has absorbed psychologists and speech communication scholars since the early part of the 20th century, and, more recently, has captured the attention of SLA researchers and practitioners of English as a second language as well as English as a foreign language. The study of listening comprehension has, in fact, become a polestar of second language acquisition theory building, research, and pedagogy (see Anderson & Lynch, 1988; Bernhardt & James, 1987; Brown, 1987; Byrnes, 1984; Dunkel, Chaudron & Henning, 1990; Galvin, 1985; Joiner, 1986; Krashen, 1977, 1981; Lund, 1990; Morley, 1991; Nagle & Sanders, 1986; Richards, 1983, 1985, 1990; Rost, 1990; Underwood, 1989; Ur, 1984).

Although epistemologists such as Locke and Aristotle long ago attempted to fathom the origin, modes, and scope of “human understanding,” conduct of empirical investigations of native-language listening processes by speech communication scholars, speech scientists, and psychologists began to burgeon in the latter half of the 20th century, and a number of bibliographies and reviews of NL listening research give evidence of an increasing interest in listening (see Carroll, 1971; Coakley & Wolvin, 1986; Devine, 1967, 1978; Duker, 1964, 1968, 1969; Keller, 1960; Wilkinson, 1970; Witkin, 1990).

In his synthesis of NL reading and listening comprehension research, Carroll (1971) noted the increase in the quantity of empirical research on native language listening during the 1950s and 1960s, although he found few of the investigations to be “sufficiently penetrating and analytical” (p. 130). He observed that much of the research conducted in the 1950s and 1960s seemed focused on establishing “listening ability as a valid objective for the educational program, without determining its nature and parameters in a precise manner” (p. 130) and bemoaned the fact that even in the seventh decade of the 20th century, “there did not seem to exist any comprehensive theory of listening behavior in relation to language behavior in general or to other modes of language reception” (e.g., reading comprehension) (p. 130).

Twenty years after Carroll presented his synthesis of the central foci and basic quality of the NL listening research conducted during the first seven decades of this century, Witkin (1990) examined the state of the art of NL listening theory and research and pronounced
it to be in a perilous state. According to Witkin, one of the chief problems facing the field of NL listening research is the lack of a generally agreed upon definition of listening. She notes that the vocabulary used to discuss NL listening is diffuse, with “some terms being on a highly abstract level, and some describing quite specific physiological or neurological processes” (p. 9). Wolvin and Coakley (1988) have also expressed their concern about the disaccord concerning definitions and operationalizations of the construct of listening comprehension in the native language.

In an extension of Wolvin and Coakley’s examination of the listening definitions given by 16 communication scholars between 1925 and 1985, Glenn (1989) analyzed an additional 34 definitions of listening appearing in speech communication scholarly books and instructional texts. She concurred that there indeed appears to be no universally accepted definition of the construct of native language listening. Glen contends that the problem of definition limits communication research in listening and lessens the chance of finding effective methods of training individuals to be effective listeners (and speakers) of their native language (English). It also highlights the difficulty of generating “a universal conceptual definition of listening from which operational guidelines may be established” (Glen, 1989, p. 29).

In addition to pointing out the “definition and operationalization” problem, Witkin (1990) identified several other problems endemic in theory building and research on NL listening comprehension: Most research on listening is not based on theory; the extant

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1 Barber and Fitch Hauser (cited in Witkin, 1990) identified 315 variables used in studying NL listening comprehension, some of which were defined in broad terms (e.g., listening, memory, perception, and attention); some in more precise terms (e.g., selectivity, channel, feedback, and decoding), and others in highly specific terms (e.g., electrochemical impulses, auditory discrimination, and dichotic/diotic listening).

2 Wolvin and Coakley (1988) found the following numerous and varied differences in the meaning of the term listening. Researchers perceive NL listening to involve the hearer’s “analyzing, concentrating, understanding, registering, converting meaning to the mind, engaging in further mental activity, responding, reacting, interpreting, relating to past experiences and future expectancies, assimilating, acting upon, selecting, receiving, apprehending, hearing, remembering, identifying, recognizing, comprehending, sensing, evaluating, emphasizing, and organizing” (p. 57). Many of the terms used by some researchers to describe listening are synonyms for expressions used by others. There is much verbal confusion and overlap of meaning as well as general disagreement concerning the psycholinguistic process of listening, according to Wolvin and Coakley.

3 A similar assertion could be made with respect to the construct of second/foreign language listening. Definitions range from the simple and reductive (e.g., “listening is the activity of paying attention to and trying to get meaning from something we hear” [Underwood, 1989, p. 1]), to the more expansive and encompassing notion that listening needs to be defined in terms of the various types of listening: critical, global, intensive, interfunctional, transactional, recreational, and selective listening (Rost, 1990).
research is often contradictory; and almost no studies have been done to replicate or verify previous research. The problematic state of research may partially be due to the fact that there exists “a serious question among scholars as to whether there is an ‘art’ to listening research, and whether indeed the processes can be observed and studied” (Witkin, 1990, p. 7). This perception needs to be altered if we are to increase the quantity and quality of the empirical research base on listening, as well as the quality of listening training.

Although there is a growing interest in and concern for NL listening research and training due to the central role listening plays in language development, human relations (as well as international relations), and academic and business success, there seems to be very little genuine agreement about what listening entails, and how it operates. It is remarkable that there is so little understanding of a process that is so vitally important for an individual’s survival and prosperity in interpersonal relationships, and in the academic and corporate environments.4

Even as NL communication scholars have begun to recognize the critical role listening skills play in the effective functioning of an individual in academic environments and business organizations, second language acquisition scholars have begun to apprehend the critical role listening plays in second language acquisition and learning. As a result, today’s SLA researchers and L2 classroom teachers are endeavoring to (a) understand the causative role participatory and nonparticipatory listening plays in second language acquisition and learning. As a result, today’s SLA researchers and L2 classroom teachers are endeavoring to (a) understand the causative role participatory and nonparticipatory listening plays in second language acquisition and learning. As a result, today’s SLA researchers and L2 classroom teachers are endeavoring to (a) understand the causative role participatory and nonparticipatory listening plays in second language acquisition and learning. 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curriculum, especially in the beginning stages of learning; (c) pinpoint the factors “inside and outside the head” that enhance or depress comprehension of L2 input; (d) identify the components (subskills) of listening and to deduce the dynamic process involved in L2 listening comprehension; and (e) deduce specific instructional tasks and classroom activities that enhance listening skill development for L2 learners. The remainder of this article discusses these five issues in the context of pedagogical theory, research, and instruction in both native language and L2 listening comprehension, and it raises issues that researchers and practitioners need to consider in the coming years when designing listening studies as well as instructional materials and classroom activities.

THE ROLE OF LISTENING IN SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION AND ITS PLACE IN THE L2 CURRICULUM: OF THE INFLUENCE OF RESEARCH ON PRACTICE

A major catalyst for the relatively recent and intense interest in listening comprehension research has been the realization and accumulating evidence that input plays a critical role in second language acquisition. M. Long (1985) points out that current theories of second language acquisition, such as the information processing model (McLaughlin, Rossman, & McLeod, 1983), monitor model (Krashen, 1977), the intake model (Chaudron, 1985), the interaction model (Hatch, 1983), all emphasize the key role listening plays in the development of a learner’s second/foreign language, particularly at the beginning stages of language development. Byrnes (1984) and Dunkel (1986) have also highlighted the valuable insights gained from studies of child language acquisition that suggest the pivotal role listening comprehension plays in native language development.

As a result of current theory that proposes and empirical research that indicates the importance of prespeaking in language development, it has become increasingly commonplace for L2 teachers to reemphasize speaking and to emphasize listening in the early stages of L2 instruction. Synthesizing findings of recent and not so recent research on second language acquisition and pedagogical theory that tend to support the beneficial aspects of providing beginning-level learners with a “silent” or “prespeaking” period of L2 instruction, Daniels, Pringle, and Wood (1986) articulate the theoretical rationale and obtained evidence for the benefits of delayed oral practice in early-stage learning:
(1) A tendency toward better all-round performance has been noted in learners who have experienced a silent period than in those who have not (Asher et al., 1974; Postovsky, 1974; Thiele and Scheibner-Herzig, 1983).

(2) Learners who are required at too early a stage to speak are likely to suffer from a phenomenon known as “task overload” which probably inhibits language acquisition and the exercise and development of discriminatory skills, creates anxiety and encourages interference from L1 (Ingram et al., 1975; Nord, 1975; Krakowian, 1981). Understanding or misunderstanding goes on in the intimacy of our own heads. If not called upon to perform, learners can come to grips with the new foreign language, under cover, without having to expose their sometimes vulnerable “language ego” to the censure of teachers or peers (Gary and Gary, 1981; Marton, 1983; Daniels and Wood, 1984).

(3) In natural circumstances both child and adult acquirers of foreign languages typically go through a “silent period (Hakuta, 1974; Huang and Hatch, 1978; Dulay et al., 1982, pp. 22-24).

(4) The audio-lingual approach has laid great emphasis on the importance of speaking as a foreign language learning goal, to the extent that many language learners are able to “vocalize” (which presumably does not have the same status or manifest the same complexity of creativeness as “speaking” while remaining, in the words of Belasco [1981] cited in Nord [1981]), “virtually incompetent in understanding the spoken language.” Understanding competence is very possibly of more use to most learners of foreign languages than is speaking competence. It would therefore seem logical, given the impossibility of doing everything at once, to give priority to training in listening comprehension (Nord, 1974; Davies, 1980). (pp. 47-48)

Gary and Gary (1981) stress the cognitive, affective, and utilitarian advantages of delaying oral exercise and increasing listening practice for L2 learning (a) The cognitive advantage: As Postovsky (1974; cited in Gary & Gary, 1981) argues, “requiring learners to produce material that they have not yet stored in their memory will lead to language interference and overload of short-term memory” (p. 4); (b) The affective advantage: Forcing learners to produce language before they are cognitively, emotionally, and linguistically ready is traumatic. “Both first and second language learners generally prefer not to speak a language which they only

6 In an experiment in which two fifth form classes of beginning level students of English as a foreign language were taught for 6 weeks with an emphasis on early or delayed oral production plus total physical response approaches, Thiele and Schöbner-Herzig (1983) found that those receiving training in listening comprehension combined with an initial delay of oral practice surpassed those taught by conventional methods both in their listening and their overall command of English. The delayed production method was also found to have a positive effect on subjects’ attitudes toward studying English, and it created a classroom atmosphere “devoid of anxiety” (p. 283).
imperfectly perceive (see, e.g., Ervin-Tripp, 1974; Sorensen, 1967; Asher, 1979)” (p. 5); and (c) The *utilitarian advantage*: Comprehension-oriented instruction uses classroom time more efficiently than production-oriented instruction since all the students can be listening and responding individually rather than in unison in choral drill. According to Gary and Gary (1981), “language learners who have been taught to capitalize on the advantages of a receptive approach to language learning are more likely to be inclined to continue their language study alone, independently of a particular language program. This can be carried out, for example, by their listening to the radio, watching TV, or going to foreign language films” (p. 6-7).

Although it has become generally accepted practice to provide beginning-level learners with a considerable amount of comprehensible input (Krashen, 1981), Rickerson (1984) stresses the need to provide foreign/second language students with opportunity to produce the language to enhance the motivation during language learning. He reports that when the Defense Language Institute, following Postovsky’s lead,

tried to become more cost-effective and efficient by limiting courses *solely* to learning listening comprehension, it was discovered that the absence of speaking was detrimental to learning to listen. Learner motivation was probably the reason. For instance, students wanted enough German to travel to the country, to order a *Bier* in a *Gasthaus*, and to converse with the population. Eliminating speaking was counterproductive. As a result, speaking has been reinstated as a part of all basic courses regardless of the student’s future assignment. It seems that for acquisition to take place fully, a balance in both skills is required. (p. 214)

Not only is listening comprehension important at the beginning stages of SLA, it appears to be crucially important for advanced-level learners (e.g., those with TOEFL scores > 500) as well (Powers, 1985). When asked to indicate the relative importance of listening, reading, speaking and writing for international students’ success in their academic departments, U.S. and Canadian professors of engineering, psychology, chemistry, computer science, English and business, for example, gave the receptive skills of listening and reading the highest ratings. (Reading comprehension was seen as the most important of the four abilities in all disciplines surveyed except English.) Listening was rated the second most important in four of the six disciplines (engineering, psychology, chemistry, and computer science).
Issues for L2 Researchers and Practitioners

Until the 1980s, much of the language teaching field took listening for granted, according to Morley (1991), who attributes the trivial treatment listening has received from L2 practitioners to the “elusiveness” (p. 82) of our listening awareness. As Weaver (cited in Morley, 1991) remarks, “after all, listening is neither so dramatic nor so noisy as talking. The talker is the center of attention for all listeners. His [sic] behavior is overt and vocal, and he hears and notices his own behavior, whereas listening activity often seems like merely being there—doing nothing” (p. 82). Morley (1991) maintains that we need to realize that listening is anything but a passive activity, and she urges practitioners not to dismiss listening in a cavalier manner. “The importance of listening cannot be underestimated; it is imperative that it not be treated trivially in second and foreign language curricula” (p. 82). Neither should it receive cavalier treatment from SLA researchers. Listening research should be fostered to advance the state of SLA theory building, and to expand the knowledge base about the process of L2 comprehension and the effective methods of teaching L2 listening comprehension to beginning-, intermediate-, and advanced-level learners. Some of the investigations should be directed toward probing the impact that specific factors, internal and external to the listener, have on the success or failure of L2 comprehension in order to provide guidance to L2 curriculum designers and classroom teachers as well as to L2 listening materials writers.

FACTORS AFFECTING NL AND L2 LISTENING COMPREHENSION: OF FUNDAMENTAL INFLUENCES “INSIDE AND OUTSIDE THE HEAD” OF THE LISTENER

NL researchers have sought to identify the factors “inside the head” and “outside the head” that influence comprehension of oral communication in positive and negative ways. Communication scholars Watson and Smeltzer (1984), for example, highlight several internal or “inside the head” (i.e., receiver) factors that can hinder NL listening comprehension: (a) personal internal distractions (e.g., hunger, headaches, emotional disturbance); (b) personal disinterest in the topic of the message; (c) inattentiveness (e.g., daydreaming); (d) positive and/or negative emotional responses toward the speakers, topic, or occasion; (e) detouring (what the speaker says makes you think of something else which is off the topic); (f) jumping to conclusions about what a person is going to say before it is said; (g) over-reacting to the language of the speaker (e.g., her/his
use of slang, cursing); (h) over-reacting to the message of the
speaker (reacting to the political implications of the message); (i)
tending toward rebuttal (developing a counter argument before the
speaker is finished); and (j) rehearsing a response (thinking about
what you have to say rather than what is being said). (It is
interesting to note that none of these learner traits has been
examined in an L2 empirical investigation, to my knowledge. Any
one would prove of interest, particularly to teachers of advanced-
level learners of ESL/EFL.)

Samuels (1984) discusses the impact of several additional factors
internal to NL listeners, two of which are intelligence and language
facility. Some questions to be considered with respect to these
factors are the following: (a) Intelligence: Does the listener have the
requisite intelligence to comprehend the discourse? and (b)
Language facility:

Is the listener accurate and automatic in the ability to segment and parse
the speech stream into morpheme and syntactic units? . . . Does the
listener have an extensive vocabulary? Does the listener know the
variety of ways in which a word can be used? . . . Can the listener take
embedded sentences and parse them into understandable units? . . . Can
the listener identify the referent for the anaphoric terms used? . . . Is the
listener able to make inferences necessary to comprehend the elliptical
sentences commonly used in casual conversation? (p. 184)

(While the questions raised are directed toward NL listeners, they
seem equally appropriate for L2 listeners as well.)

With respect to the inferential process, Rost (1990) claims that
“understanding spoken language is essentially an inferential process
based on a perception of cues rather than straightforward matching
of sound to meaning” (p. 33). Rost suggests that the L2 listener must
perform the following inferential processes while listening:

(1) estimating the sense of lexical references;
(2) constructing propositional meaning through supplying case-
relational links;
(3) assigning a “base (conceptual) meaning” in the discourse;
(4) assigning underlying links in the discourse;
(5) assuming a plausible intention for the speaker’s utterances. (pp. 62-
63)

Carroll (1977) has identified several affective and cognitive
variables that affect NL listening comprehension, including the
listener’s (a) degree of motivation to comprehend and learn the
information contained in the message and the amount of interest in
the topic of discussion; (b) ability to perceive relations among
elements of the discourse, and ability to focus attention on the discourse and ignore distractions in the environment. Goss (1982) posits that essentially NL listening comprehension is a function of the receiver’s basic information-processing ability and level of cognitive complexity, the latter being operationalized as an ability to hold in focus and compare alternative perceptions on an issue.

Not only do internal factors affect NL comprehension, external factors also influence the success or failure of the comprehension or learning process. Carroll (1977) relates the ability to learn from being told to factors external to the native language listener: the rate at which material is presented, and the conceptual difficulty and organization of the information presented. He notes that although research studies have shown that presentation rates may vary rather widely without seriously affecting comprehension (Fairbanks, Guttman, & Miron, 1957; Foulke, Amster, Nolan, & Bixler, 1962; Goldstein, 1940), the listening materials for these studies involved well-organized, readily understood materials. As soon as the materials become less well organized or conceptually more difficult, native language comprehension suffers.

Carroll also points out the inverse relationship between comprehension and length of the material; he claims that the presentation of a long series of sentences (even for native speakers) becomes somewhat analogous to the presentation of a long series of arbitrary associations:

To the extent that subject-predicate relations in sentences or various base structures contained in sentences can be regarded as arbitrary associations, the learning of a series of sentences becomes analogous to paired associate learning, and some of the same considerations that apply to paired associate learning might apply to this case. . . . For example, inter-sentence similarity might have the same effect as inter-pair similarity in paired associate learning of nonsense pairs. (p. 507-508)

Finally, Carroll (1977) suggests that learning from aurally received input is enhanced by repetition of the material heard (repetition on the part of both the speaker and the listener). To Carroll’s thinking, just as a list of arbitrary associations becomes better learned by presenting them over a series of trials, continuous discourse is better learned by rehearing, repeating, or rereading it.

Watson and Smeltzer (1984) cite three additional text, environmental, and speaker variables that can confound successful NL listening comprehension: (a) ambiguity of the message; (b) environmental distractions (e.g., phones ringing, other voices); and (c) distracting mannerisms of the speaker (e.g., stuttering, nervous or incomprehensible gestures).
Wolvin and Coakley (1988) mention the influence of culture and self-concept on the listener’s participation in the communication process. They note that a listener’s culture “essentially serves to define who he or she is and how he or she will communicate through his or her perceptual filter” (p. 121). In addition, they note that for most of us, even our native-language listening self-concept is not always a positive one, due in part to sensitivity developed as a result of parental commands and cajoles related to listening that were administered during childhood (e.g., a parent’s or teacher’s barb, “You’re not listening to me!”). L2 listeners can also suffer the effect of a negative listening self-concept if they feel inadequate to the task of understanding the English spoken by native speakers, and this lack of confidence may influence their listening comprehension in adverse ways. “The fear of misinterpreting, inadequately processing and/or not being able to adjust psychologically to messages sent by others” (Preiss & Wheeless, 1989, p. 72) plays a meaningful role in suppressing comprehension of a message delivered in the listener’s native language and in his or her second/foreign language as well.

For L2 listeners, all of the internal and external barriers mentioned above undoubtedly serve also to confound comprehension of L2 messages, and SLA researchers are beginning to theorize about and investigate many of these factors as well as a number of additional factors that serve either to detract from or to support a receiver’s L2 comprehension. Faerch and Kasper (1986), for example, discuss several inside-the-L2-head factors of a psycholinguistic/sociolinguistic and experiential nature that impact comprehension, including L2 listeners’ (a) knowledge of the L2 linguistic code; (b) degree of sociocultural competence (i.e., their degree of familiarity with the sociocultural content of the message conveyed by the speaker); (c) and strategic competence (i.e., their ability to guess meanings of unfamiliar terms heard and to use verbal and nonverbal strategies to compensate for gaps in their knowledge of the linguistic code).

Oxford (1990) also speculates about the importance of the L2 listener’s ability to employ cognitive strategies involving deductive reasoning and compensation strategies (e.g., guessing intelligently about the meaning of what is heard) as well as indirect strategies of a metacognitive nature (e.g., delaying speech production to focus on listening), of an affective type (e.g., getting the general meaning without knowing every word), and of a social character (e.g., asking for clarification or repetition of what was heard). Many of these contentions, however, remain empirical questions and call for research that will affirm or disconfirm the hypotheses put forth (as
well as all the hypotheses put forth concerning the interactive effect of the various factors internal to the listener).

In a survey of 30 Chinese teachers and 60 students, Boyle (1984) identified the factors perceived to be most salient influences on EFL listening comprehension, in terms of (a) speaker factors, such as the language ability of the speaker (native speaker vs. beginning-level speaker, etc), the quality of the speech signal (the degree of accent, speed, etc.), and the prestige and personality of the speaker (a consideration not typically mentioned in the NL listening literature); (b) factors in the oral text, such as the complexity of the lexis and syntax, the amount of cohesion and organization evident in the text; and (c) listener factors (e.g., intelligence; memory, gender, motivation, and background knowledge). In a discussion of the application of schema theory to L2 listening comprehension research and practice, D. Long (1989) highlights the critical role both the inside-the-head factor, background knowledge (content schemata) as well as the outside-the-head factor (textual schemata) play in L2 listening comprehension. She notes that Mueller (1980) determined that listeners more proficient in German needed less help from visual contextual cues to activate appropriate scripts (see Footnote 7), whereas the less proficient learners (who were not able to rely on linguistic cues to activate appropriate schemata) had greater need of verbal contextual organizers. Weissenreider’s (1987) research on listening to Spanish-language newscasts also demonstrates that knowledge about the newscast process (textual schemata) and the specific themes of the news reports (content schemata) augmented comprehension of the news information. In a study of the effect of speech modification, prior knowledge, and listening proficiency on the lecture learning of students of English as a foreign language, Chiang (1990) provides additional evidence that knowledge of the content schemata enhances the comprehension for EFL listeners. The supportive effect of prior knowledge has been well documented in the reading comprehension literature but rarely examined in the listening comprehension literature (see also Chiang & Dunkel, in press).

According to Anderson and his colleagues (cited in D. Long, 1989), textual schemata involves knowledge of the discourse-level conventions of text. “For example, when making an operator-assisted long distance telephone call, the caller expects to be asked for specific types of information such as type of assistance required, billing number, and name. Content schemata, on the other hand, are derived from the individual’s life experiences: checking out library books, purchasing license plates, going to the dentist’s office” (p. 33).

According to Schank and Abelson’s definition (cited in Long, 1989, p. 33), scripts are “predetermined, stereotyped sequences of action that define well-known situations”; scripts aid the listener to comprehend “input relating to commonplace situations.” Long notes, for example, the script for ordering at a drive-through window of a fast-food restaurant would aid comprehension of spoken discourse about this particular activity at a McDonald’s (or similar) restaurant.
Sheils (1988) also considers familiarity with the content schemata of a talk to be vitally important for listeners and highlights several additional factors that are thought to affect the difficulty of processing oral discourse (i.e., to make it easier or harder). They are related to the content, structural, and linguistic features of the oral text, and to the speaker’s style of delivery and speech: (a) the density and degree of predictability and explicitness of information contained in the speech; (b) the degree of linguistic complexity; (c) length and conceptual difficulty of the text; (d) amount of time allowed to process the text; (e) the speed of delivery and comprehensibility of the accent; (f) the transparency of the organization and the inclusion of evident discourse signals marking the structure and organization of the information. With regard to the precise functional effect of discourse markers on L2 listeners’ comprehension of academic discourse, Chaudron and Richards (1986) empirically demonstrated that a speaker’s use of discourse signals facilitates comprehension of lecture information. More specifically, they found that lecturers who included clearly signaled macromarkers (e.g., “What I’m going to talk about today; you probably know something about already”; This is how it came about” [p. 127]) made the task of understanding a lecture easier for the L2 listener. (Rather interestingly, they found that inclusion of micromarkers, for example, OK, all right, after this) did not aid the learners’ retention of the lecture content.)

Materials writers Anderson and Lynch (1988) illustrate the ease-difficulty continuum of L2 comprehension. They note that listening to a radio broadcast of a parliamentary debate is relatively demanding of the listener, whereas listening to a child read from a book of fairy tales is much less demanding. The factors influencing the ease or difficulty of these tasks for the L2 listener are a function of (a) the type of language heard; (b) the context in which listening occurs; and (c) the task or purpose of the listening. In Anderson and Lynch’s estimation, the parliamentary debate input may be hard to follow because of the unpredictability, complexity, and possible abstractness of the content, the crosstalk and overlap of voices, and the involved linguistic form and different accents. Anderson and Lynch do, however, point out that the effect of the complexity of input interacts with the listener’s purpose in listening. They note that if the listener

has switched on the radio simply to determine whether the parliamentary debate has finished or whether today’s instalment of our favorite radio serial has started yet, then the listening experience—despite that
long list of difficult input features—is not a demanding one. For some listeners, however, the broadcast debate from Westminster will involve a much more difficult task or set of tasks. A business executive, for example, will be paying close attention to what is said in the annual Budget debate because she needs to remember it, either to pass the information on to her colleagues straight away, or to use it at a later stage. (p. 46)

Anderson and Lynch make the point that what makes the executive’s task so difficult is the attempt to remember the details of the debate and the fact of trying to interpret what is implied in the debate rather than what is simply and clearly stated. The listener was, in other words, required to synthesize, interpret, and analyze the information heard.

It is clear that internal and external factors may interact in a variety of ways to make the L2 listener’s task easier or more complex, but what is not quite clear is exactly how each functions to affect the comprehension of listeners from various cultural backgrounds and of different levels of language proficiency and possessing different learner traits.

Issues for L2 Researchers and Practitioners

Since the 1950s, we have gained some important and potentially useful insights about the numerous factors inside and outside the head of the listener that impact comprehension of the message; however, the speculations concerning the influence of these factors have rarely been derived from empirical investigations. More often, they have sprung from logico-deductive speculation, fueled by professional intuition garnered as a result of years of classroom teaching. We are, as a result, in dire need of empirical investigations that assess the validity of our assumptions regarding the interactive effects certain factors have on L2 listening comprehension. Several L2 researchers have, indeed, conducted studies examining the effects of factors internal to the listener (see Call’s 1985 study on auditory short-term memory and listening comprehension, and Dunkel, Mishra, & Berliner’s 1989 study of the effects of memory and language proficiency on NL and L2 lecture learning), factors external to the listener (see Chaudron & Richards’s 1986 study of the effect of discourse markers on the comprehension of L2 lectures, and Pica, Doughty, & Young’s 1987 examination of the impact of communicative interaction on L2 comprehension), and listener strategies (see O’Malley, Chamot, & Kupper’s 1989 study of the mental processes L2 listeners use to comprehend L2 information and Benson’s 1989 case study of the note-taking habits of an EFL listener).
We need, however, to increase vastly the number of empirical studies that investigate the ways in which factors inside and outside the L2 head affect comprehension of L2 discourse for beginning-, intermediate- and advanced-level L2 listeners from various sociocultural backgrounds. We can look to the NL listening research literature for help in identifying some of the factors that seem to influence comprehension of L2 discourse, but we need to create our own expansive corpus of research on the subject. The L2 research base is still in its infancy. Instructors who teach L2 listening need to work hand in hand with researchers to ensure the quality, quantity and utility of experimental and ethnographic studies of L2 listening. Teachers can, for example, help frame research questions that need to be addressed by researchers. (Joiner, 1986, notes that “listening is a young field and, as such, one with not only many unanswered questions, but also many questions that have yet to be raised” [p. 68]). Teachers can also help the research effort by making their students available as subjects for experimental or ethnographic research, and by conducting action research in their classrooms. In addition, researchers who conduct empirical investigations of L2 listening have the responsibility of ensuring that their findings are made available and accessible to classroom listening teachers who may not necessarily be schooled in the interpretation of statistical analyses. Working hand in hand, teachers and researchers can expand the L2 research base and guarantee that research impacts on practice, and vice versa.

THE COMPONENTS AND DYNAMICS OF LISTENING COMPREHENSION AND PEDAGOGY: OF COMPREHENSION MODELS AND TAXONOMIES OF LISTENING SKILLS AND PEDAGOGICAL EXERCISES

As mentioned previously, communication scholars and second language acquisition researchers have attempted to capture the essence of the construct of listening comprehension in succinct definitions (although they have rarely succeeded in their attempts) as well as in simple-to-elaborate models of L1/L2 comprehension (Goss, 1982; Nagle & Sanders, 1986; Rost, 1990; Wolvin, 1990). Wolvin (cited in Witkin, 1990), for example, described 12 speech communication models of NL listening proposed between 1956 and 1986 that ranged from simple diagrams or hierarchical ordering of listening components to Barker’s 1971 complex model of listening in the context of the total communication process, including auditory and visual elements of
reception, perception, discrimination, and response, and both cognitive and affective elements; and Lundsteen’s (1979) flow chart model of the processes taken by an effective listeners, incorporating responding and organizing, getting meaning, and thinking beyond listening. (p. 11)

Faerch and Kasper (1986) make reference to the Jarvella and Nelson psycholinguistic model of NL comprehension which assumes that “language understanding is usually a product of several cognitive subsystems working together in a harmonious way” (p. 264). Faerch and Kasper contend that Jarvella and Nelson’s model compartmentalizes study of the comprehension of verbal input into speech perception,

investigating the intake, segmentation, and identification of strings of sounds (or letters); the understanding of individual sentences, with an emphasis on the parsing of syntactic structure, the construction of propositions or on elaborating implied (semantic and pragmatic) meaning; and finally the comprehension of spoken and written discourse, e.g., reconstructing the recipients’ “story grammars.” (p. 264)

The emphasis in this NL model of verbal comprehension is on “higher-level processes” of meaning construction, according to Faerch and Kasper. In Nagle and Sanders’ (1986) L2 comprehension model, comprehension and learning are viewed as interrelated, interdependent, but distinctive cognitive phenomena. They distinguish between automatic and controlled decoding processes that interact with and affect implicit and explicit linguistic knowledge as well as other types of nonlinguistic knowledge. The researchers posit that “comprehension becomes more efficient as knowledge increases, processes become automatic, and experience confirms the reliability of the learner’s decoding, inferring, and predicting” (p. 22).

Rost (1990) points out that “although some models of verbal understanding have been attempted, they are for the most part broad descriptions of linguistic and pragmatic competence or narrow descriptions of verbal processes” (p. 7).8 Model building, however, forms the foundation of theory development and should be vigorously pursued in the coming decades if we are to advance the knowledge base about the process of listening comprehension, in general, and L2 comprehension in particular.

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8 The central aspects of Dunkel, Chaudron, and Henning’s (1990) narrow model of L2 listening comprehension, which was designed with computer-adaptive testing purposes in mind, involve the specification of a range of listening processes and performances, or cognitive operations, referred to as “tasks,” which are coupled with a range of general “text types” and specific “text elements” as well as several dimensions of response formats, combinations of all of which lead to a large (open-ended) set of “test task frames.”
Not only have various models of NL and L2 listening comprehension been proposed, but researchers have also constructed a number of taxonomies delineating the microskills needed for effective listening and the various listener tasks and functions related to these microskills. In addition, manifold pedagogical exercises incorporating many of the identified microskills have been designed by materials writers for use by ESL/EFL classroom teachers. The taxonomies serve to highlight some of the abilities that listeners need to develop if they are to function as skillful listeners. Richards’s 1985 taxonomy, for example, lists 33 individual microskills of L2 participatory or conversational listening (e.g., the ability to recognize the communicative functions of utterances, according to situations, participants, and goals), and 18 specific microskills involved in nonparticipatory, academic listening (e.g., the ability to identify relationships among units within discourse, such as major ideas, generalizations, hypotheses, supporting ideas, examples).

Lund’s 1990 taxonomy of “real-world listening behaviors” (p. 106) identifies six listener functions that define the part(s) of the text that the listener will attend to and process (pp. 107-109): (a) identification of some “aspect of the linguistic code or content of the message” (e.g., at the lowest level of proficiency, discriminating between minimal phonemic pairs; or at the advanced level, writing down all the adjectives used in a radio commercial); (b) orientation, which involves “determining essential facts about the text, including the roles of the participants, the general topic and genre of the discourse” (e.g., “determining that one is hearing a news broadcast and that the news involves sports”); (c) main idea comprehension of the message (e.g., “understanding a lecture well enough to summarize the main points or complete a basic outline”); (d) detail comprehension (e.g., “getting the departure times and the platform numbers for several trains to a destination”); (e) full comprehension, which involves understanding the main idea plus the details (e.g., “understanding a lecture so that one can take detailed notes or make a detailed outline”).

Lund (1990) also distinguishes several overt listener responses that can be used to check that one of the six functions has been performed successfully: (a) doing (the listener responds physically to a command); (b) choosing (the listener selects from alternatives such as pictures, objects, texts); (c) transferring (the listener draws a picture of what is heard); (d) answering (the listener answers questions about the message); (e) condensing (the listener outlines or takes notes on a lecture); (f) extending (the listener provides the ending to a story heard); (g) duplicating (the listener translates the
messages into the native language or repeats it verbatim); (h) *modeling* (the listener orders a meal after listening to a model order); (i) *conversing* (the listener engages in a conversation or “‘talks back’ to a particularly silly or offensive ad on the radio” (p. 111).

Many of the activities suggested in Lund’s function-response matrix of listening activities build upon those identified by Ur (1984) in her pragmatic and useful work on teaching listening comprehension. Ur (1984) describes and illustrates the process of L2 listening in terms of focused and task-based activities in which L2 listeners participate (e.g., they listen to the news, weather, or sports; hear a speech or lecture; obtain professional advice from a doctor), and she categorizes listening into two types: (a) listening for perception (they hear and group sounds at the phoneme, word, and sentence levels), and (b) listening for comprehension in which listeners make no response (e.g., they follow a familiar text), a shorter response (e.g., they detect mistakes in an aural description), or a longer response (e.g., they paraphrase, translate, answer questions on a text, or summarize information heard).

In discussing the design of instructional materials and classroom activities, Richards (1990) exhorts materials and classroom teachers to incorporate (and model) the two main purposes of communication—to convey factual or propositional information (a transactional purpose) and to further social relationships and/or to express personal attitudes (an interfactional purpose)—as well as the two different types of information processes: “top-down” listening (learners read information about a topic, then listen to a minitalk on the topic and check whether or not the information was mentioned in the talk) and “bottom-up” listening (learners identify the referents of pronouns used in a conversation). Richards decries the fact that too often commercially produced materials set goals that are incompatible with the communicative intent of the message used as the stimulus, and he further also criticizes the fact that published listening texts require students to adopt a single approach to listening, one that often demands a detailed understanding of the content of a discourse and the recognition of every word and structure that occurred in a text. He emphasizes that students should not be required to respond to interfactional discourse as if it were being used for transactional purposes, nor should they be expected to use a bottom-up approach to an aural text if a top-down approach would be more appropriate. Richards also makes the case that “in developing classroom activities and materials for teaching listening comprehension, a clear understanding is needed of the nature of top-down and bottom-up approaches to listening and how
these processes relate to different kinds of listening purposes” (p. 65).

Peterson (1991) incorporates Richards’s notion of bottom-up and top-down processing into her proposals for various types of listening exercises specifically geared toward developing the L2 listening comprehension of beginning-, intermediate-, and advanced-level listeners. Examples of the exercise types include the following: (a) bottom-up processing for beginning-level listeners (they discriminate between intonation contours in a message), for intermediate-level listeners (they recognize unstressed function words in the speech stream), and for advanced-level listeners (they use the lecturer’s volume and stress to identify important information for note taking); top-down processing goals for beginning-level listeners (they identify the emotional state of the speaker), for intermediate-level listeners (they identify registers of speech as formal/informal, polite/impolite),” and for advanced-level listeners (they listen to a statement and indicate what further meaning can be inferred from the statement). Peterson also sets her exercise types within the framework of interfactional and transactional language (see Peterson, 1991).

Issues for L2 Researchers and Practitioners

The various models of listening comprehension, as well as the sundry taxonomies of listening skills and pedagogical activities, have largely been derived from insights gained as a result of classroom experience and perusal of the NL and L2 listening literature. Both the assumptions concerning the accuracy and utility of the models as well as claims of effectiveness for suggested pedagogical activities are legion; the empirical evidence supporting these contentions is scant, at best. It is, therefore, expedient that researchers and classroom teachers make every effort to ascertain to what degree psychological reality and instructional value are indeed embodied and reflected in the various theoretical models of listening comprehension (see, for example, Nagle & Sanders, 1986), the taxonomies of component subskills (see, for example, Richards, 1990), the dynamic processes involved in L2 listening comprehension (see, for example, Dunkel, 1986; Rost, 1990), the sundry

9 Anderson and Lynch (1988), Rost (1990), Underwood (1989), and Ur (1984) identify a plethora of task-based activities, listening goals, and types of texts that can be used to help learners develop L2 listening proficiency.

10 D. Long (1989) expressed concern that most of our current knowledge about comprehension has been borrowed from the NL cognitive psychological literature. “Some danger of ‘lack of fit’ always exists when applying borrowed theories to second language acquisition” (p. 33). Caution should be exercised when attempting to siphon NL-related findings into L2 practices.
enumerations of pedagogical activities and instructional approaches (see, for example, Lund, 1990; Peterson, 1991). We also need to determine which internal and external factors impact favorably or negatively on L2 listening comprehension (as well as to what degree, and in which ways) given certain levels of language proficiency and specific types of instructional environments (ESL vs. EFL settings, for example).

We need to achieve these research goals so that more valid and effective instructional approaches and listening materials can be devised and used. Let us hope that by the year 2000, a more expansive and higher quality base of research will be available to guide and enlighten second/foreign language teachers and second language acquisition researchers. These goals will not be achieved, however, unless L2 researchers aggressively search out sources of funding within their home institutions (e.g., from those interested in the retention of minority and international undergraduate and graduate students), and outside (e.g., from the United States Department of Education for U.S. researchers) that will allow them to conduct more empirical studies of the dynamic processes involved in L2 listening. A comprehensive understanding of L2 listening comprehension will prove elusive unless classroom teachers work hand in hand with researchers to promote research and to test the internal and external validity of researchers’ speculations and empirical findings about the construct of L2 listening comprehension.

THE IMPORTANCE OF LISTENING IN CONTEMPORARY POSTLITERATE SOCIETY

In reflecting on contemporary life, and orality and literacy from antiquity to the present, the renowned classicist Eric Havelock (1986) concluded that as a result of the proliferation of electronic media, the presence of orality has become an accepted fact in contemporary society. Electronic media may even have effected a shift from literacy to orality in modern life; speaking of the U. S., Freedman (1982) asserts that “we have slowly but emphatically shifted our means of communication from the printed word to images and sounds, from books to television, movies, radio, and recordings. Instead of reading today, most of us prefer to look and listen” (p. A-15). Wolvin and Coakley (1988) maintain that the

11 The shift toward a postliterate society may be having an especially profound impact on the younger generation in the industrialized world. Based on statistics published in a 1985 A. C. Nielsen Company survey, Wolvin and Coakley (1988) calculate that in the United States, young people, from ages two to eighteen, spend more than 20,000 hours before television sets, which is over 7,000 hours more than they spend in school from kindergarten through 12th grade.

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United States, like many other nations in the industrial world, has become a nation of listeners, and those coming to live, work, and study in the English-speaking industrial nations of the world will need to become highly proficient listeners of English.

As disturbing as the shift from literacy to orality in modern society may be to many, the electronic communication revolution has focused attention on the need to gain more detailed knowledge of what promotes and hinders the understanding of messages communicated in the native and second/foreign language. The challenge has been with us from, and before, the time of John Locke and will, no doubt, accompany us into the next century. In the coming years, it is likely that the use of computer-mediated technologies for foreign/second language instruction will become commonplace, especially in the industrialized nations of the world, and their use in the service of second/foreign language instruction will doubtlessly increase.

In a discussion of trends and issues involving use of technology in L2 learning and instruction, Garrett (1991) describes the kinds of technological resources that are available to support language learning in the closing decade of the 20th century (e.g., traditional audiotape/videotape materials) and the various approaches to using them. She also describes the emerging technologies that will become more available in the not-too-distant future as a result of advances in speech digitization and synthesis. In the coming century, the use of computer-generated speech promises to make the teaching of listening comprehension a more interactive, illustrative, and dynamic experience than it had been in the environment of the noninteractive, audiotape laboratory of the mid-to late 20th century (see Dunkel, 1991b for a discussion of the use of computerized educational simulations and games for L2 instruction). Garrett (1991), for example, notes that learners often experience a difficult transition from hearing pedagogical audio to understanding natural spoken language; the computer and interactive technologies will allow teachers to select materials of all kinds, support them as learners’ needs dictate, and use the visual options of screen presentation or the interactive capabilities of computer control to help students develop good . . . listening techniques. (p. 95)

The use of speech technology also holds promise for advancing the efficiency, reliability, and validity of assessing L2 listening comprehension proficiency (see Dunkel, 1991a, for a discussion of the advantages and prototype design of a computerized test of listening comprehension in English as a second language). For many, it may not be clear how technology will affect the teaching
of listening comprehension in the coming decades, but it is quite clear that it will play a greater role in the future as emerging technology becomes more available as well as less expensive and difficult to use. It is not just visionary, but wise, to remain appraised of developments in instructional technology as they relate to the teaching of listening comprehension to the generations of ESL/EFL students who will be born into the postliterate societies of the 21st century.

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Celebrating 25 years of B.C. TEAL, the Association of British Columbia Teachers of English as an Additional Language
To provide some perspective on current issues and challenges concerning the role of grammar in language teaching, the article reviews some methodological trends of the past 25 years. When, and to what extent, one should teach grammar to language learners is a controversial issue. The paper proposes a decision-making strategy for resolving this controversy, based on learner and instructional variables. Then taking Canale and Swain’s (1980) model of communicative competence, which views grammatical competence as one component of communicative competence, the paper argues that grammar instruction is part of language teaching. In this new role, grammar interacts with meaning, social function, or discourse—or a combination of these—rather than standing alone as an autonomous system to be learned for its own sake. After addressing feedback and correction in terms of research and pedagogical techniques, the article concludes with a survey of options for integrating grammar instruction into a communicative curriculum and with a reformulation of the role of grammar in language teaching.

When the TESOL Quarterly first began publication in 1967, the teaching of grammar (i.e., the teaching of morphological inflections, function words, and syntactic word order) was a central concern in English language teaching. In fact, as Rutherford (1987) points out, for 2,500 years the teaching of grammar had often been synonymous with foreign language teaching.

In 1967 the audiolingual approach had dominated language teaching in the U.S. for over two decades; its followers held that language learning occurred largely through habit formation. This view of language learning was about to be challenged by proponents of the cognitive code approach who, countering audiolingualism’s adherence to habit formation, argued that language learning was rule-governed behavior.
Prior to 1967 and for several years thereafter, however, no one challenged the centrality of grammar either as content for language teaching or as the organizing principle for curriculum or materials development. Such a challenge emerged in the mid-1970s, and in the section below, entitled “Integrating Grammar Into a Communicative Curriculum,” we shall consider the major changes that have taken place since 1967 in terms of content and curriculum in language teaching and the implications for teaching grammar.

Since the differences between the way we viewed grammar in 1967 and the way we view it today are yet to be fully appreciated, this article will begin with an historical overview followed by a discussion of relevant issues and research. This discussion will serve as background for a reformulation of the role of grammar in language teaching.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

During the past 2.5 years, the major methodological approaches to language teaching have differed regarding whether explicit grammar instruction has a role to play in the second or foreign language classroom. The four methodological approaches I shall survey are the (a) audiolingual approach, (b) cognitive code approach, (c) comprehension approach, and (d) communicative approach. (For a broader historical survey that treats several additional approaches, see Celce-Murcia, 1991.)

The audiolingual approach (e.g., Fries, 1945; Lado, 1964) represents the first attempt by U.S. structural linguists to influence the teaching of modern foreign languages. Grammatical structures were very carefully sequenced from basic to more complex (based on linguistic description), and vocabulary was strictly limited in the early stages of learning. Consonant with the then-current behavioral school of psychology, audiolingual proponents assumed that language learning was habit formation and overlearning; thus, mimicry of forms and memorization of certain sentence patterns were used extensively to present rules inductively. A variety of manipulative drill types was practiced with the objective of minimizing (or preventing altogether) learners’ errors, which were viewed as bad habits that would be hard to break if they became established. Errors were the result of interference from the first language. Teachers were told that they should correct all errors that they were not able to prevent. The focus of instruction rarely moved beyond the sentence level.

The cognitive code approach (Jakobovits, 1968, 1970), largely a reaction to the behaviorist features of audiolingualism, was
influenced by the work of linguists like Chomsky (1959) and psycholinguists like Miller (e.g., Miller & Buckhout, 1973). Language learning was viewed as hypothesis formation and rule acquisition, rather than habit formation. Grammar was considered important, and rules were presented either deductively or inductively depending on the preferences of the learners. Errors were viewed as inevitable by-products of language learning and as something that the teacher and learner could use constructively in the learning process. Error analysis and correction were seen as appropriate classroom activities, with the teacher facilitating peer and self-correction as much as possible. The source of errors was seen not only as transfer from the first language but also as normal language development (errors similar to early L1 errors) and/or the internal complexities of the target language. The focus was still largely sentence-oriented, and materials writers often drew on Chomsky’s early work in generative grammar (1957, 1965).

The comprehension approach (Winitz, 1981) represents attempts by many language methodologists working in the U.S. during the 1970s and 1980s to recreate the first language acquisition experience for the second/foreign language learner. The notion that comprehension is primary and that it should thus precede any production epitomizes this approach; a pedagogical offshoot is the view that comprehension can best be taught initially by delaying production in the target language while encouraging the learner to use meaningful nonverbal responses to demonstrate comprehension. Some practitioners of the comprehension approach carefully sequence grammatical structures and lexical items in their instructional programs (Asher, 1977; Winitz, no date); they thus present grammar inductively. Others propose that a semantically based syllabus be followed instead and that all grammar instruction be excluded from the classroom since they feel that it does not facilitate language acquisition; at best it merely helps learners to monitor or become aware of the forms they use (Krashen & Terrell, 1983). Proponents of this latter philosophy also believe that error correction is unnecessary, perhaps even counterproductive, since they feel that errors will gradually self-correct as learners are exposed to ever more complex, rich, and meaningful input in the target language.

The communicative approach, which came to the fore in the mid-1970s, originates in the work of anthropological linguists in the U.S. (Hymes, 1972) and functional linguists in Britain (Halliday, 1973), all of whom view language as an instrument of communication. Those who have applied this philosophy to language teaching (e.g., Widdowson, 1978; Wilkins, 1976), claim that communication is the goal of second or foreign language instruction and that the syllabus
of a language course should not be organized around grammar but around subject matter, tasks/projects, or semantic notions and/or pragmatic functions. In other words, language instruction should be content-based, meaningful, contextualized, and discourse-based (rather than sentence-based). The teacher’s role is primarily to facilitate language use and communication; it is only secondarily to provide feedback and correct learner errors. Among the proponents of this approach, there is currently some debate regarding the nature, extent, and type of grammar instruction or grammar awareness activities appropriate for second or foreign language as well as a certain ambivalence about issues such as whether, when, and how teachers should correct grammatical errors.

THE CURRENT CHALLENGE

Given the preceding historical survey, it is obvious that TESOL methodologists have not offered consistent advice to teachers about the role of grammar in language teaching over the past 25 years. Even today the situation is far from clear. Teachers who want to know what, if anything, they should do about their ESL/EFL students’ errors are understandably frustrated because of the many conflicting positions taken at professional conferences and in the methodological literature.

Existing research, while not conclusive, strongly suggests that some focus on form may well be necessary for many learners to achieve accuracy as well as fluency in their acquisition of a second or foreign language (see, for example, Long, 1983; Rutherford & Sharwood Smith, 1988). Indeed as Richards (1985) points out, there is no actual empirical evidence that proves “communicative” language classrooms—especially those that preclude any learner focus on form—produce better language learners than do more traditional classrooms. In spite of the intuitive appeal and the anecdotal evidence supporting proposals for exclusively communicative language teaching, there is equally appealing and convincing anecdotal evidence (Higgs & Clifford, 1982) that a grammarless approach—whether comprehension-based or communicative—can lead to the development of a broken, ungrammatical, pidginized form of the target language beyond which students rarely progress. Following Selinker (1972), such learners are often said to have “fossilized” (i.e., prematurely plateaued) in their acquisition of the target language.

Thus, while we await a more satisfactory conclusion to this debate regarding when and how to teach grammar, it is clear that no one should dismiss grammar instruction altogether, for there is at
present no convincing evidence that to do so would ultimately be beneficial to second or foreign language learners, especially those who need to achieve a high level of proficiency and accuracy.

A PEDAGOGICAL STRATEGY

A strategy proposed by Celce-Murcia (1985) provides guidelines to assist teachers in deciding to what degree they ought to deal with grammar in their own classes.

Learner Variables

An observant ESL/EFL teacher knows that individuals learn in different ways (Hartnett, 1985). Some learners, consciously or unconsciously, have an analytic style and learn best by formulating and testing hypotheses or “rules.” Other learners have a holistic style and learn best by experiencing, gathering, and restructuring relevant data but doing little or no apparent analysis.

Young children, for example, are by necessity more holistic in their approach to learning than adults. This suggests that age is an important learner variable in helping ESL/EFL teachers decide the extent to which they should focus on form. If the ESL learners concerned are young children, it is most likely that little explicit grammar instruction is needed. If the students are adolescents or adults, however, their learning may well be facilitated by some explicit focus on form.

Proficiency level is also a factor. If the ESL students are beginners (regardless of age), there is little justification in focusing on form, beyond presenting and practicing the obvious form-meaning correspondences in context. This is because when one is beginning to learn something completely new and different, one tends to initially approach the new “object” holistically for a time before feeling ready to do any meaningful analysis. However, if the learners are at the intermediate or advanced level, it may well be necessary for the teacher to provide some form-related feedback and correction in order for the learners to progress.

The educational background of the students is another learner variable. If students are preliterate with little formal education, then it is probably not very productive to focus extensively on form. Even this population (i.e., preliterate or semiliterate adults with little formal education) may demand some grammar because of cultural expectations regarding what constitutes language instruction. While they may not benefit linguistically from grammar instruction, the teacher who satisfies their cultural expectations with some...
grammars may then do other things that will be beneficial and which the students will accept. On the other hand, if the students are literate and well educated, they may become frustrated and annoyed if the teacher does not provide adequate opportunity for them to focus on the formal aspects of the target language, which would, of course, include correction of their errors and answers to their questions.

**Instructional Variables**

The need to focus on form also changes according to the educational objectives that the ESL teacher must address. When one is teaching a receptive skill such as listening or reading, it is distracting and irrelevant to emphasize grammar unduly since these receptive skills require competence primarily in the areas of word recognition and semantic processing. (Even listening and reading may involve some focus on form. For example, better understanding and awareness of logical connectors can enhance both reading and listening comprehension.) However, if the teacher is focusing on productive skills (i.e., speaking and, in particular, writing), then formal accuracy can become an important concern because rules of pedagogical grammar are essentially rules of production.

Furthermore, for the productive skills, register and medium are additional factors to consider. If the teacher is offering a conversation class, then accuracy of form is much less an issue than it is if the class is dealing with formal expository writing.

Finally, what does the learner need to be able to do in the target language? If the learner’s immediate goal is survival communication, formal accuracy is of marginal value; on the other hand, if the learner wants to function as an academic, a diplomat, or a business executive, then a high degree of formal accuracy is essential.

**Judging the Importance of Grammar for a Given Class**

Given the six variables discussed above, it is somewhat complicated but not impossible for ESL/EFL instructors to decide the degree to which it is appropriate to focus on form with a given group of students. I have found that a grid such as the following is a useful visual aid to help teachers arrive at a sound decision.

The more factors the teacher identifies on the left side of the grid, the less important it is to focus on form; the more factors the teacher identifies on the right, the more important the grammatical focus. Such a grid helps the teacher decide, for example, when teaching
Variables that Determine the Importance of Grammar


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learner variables</th>
<th>Less Important</th>
<th>Focus on Form</th>
<th>More Important</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>Children</td>
<td>Adolescents</td>
<td>Adults</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proficiency level</td>
<td>Beginning</td>
<td>Intermediate</td>
<td>Advanced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational background</td>
<td>Preliterate, no formal education</td>
<td>Semiliterate, some formal education</td>
<td>Literate, well educated</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instructional variables</th>
<th>Skill</th>
<th>Register</th>
<th>Need/use</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Listening, reading</td>
<td>Informal</td>
<td>Survival communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Speaking</td>
<td>Consultative</td>
<td>Vocational</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>Formal</td>
<td>Professional</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Joos (1962) defines the consultative register as the language we use with people we deal with frequently—perhaps every day—but with whom we are not close on a personal level. This register is between formal (the language for public lectures or academic articles) and informal (the language used among peers who know each other well). For purposes of this paper, I have ignored the two extreme registers described by Joos: frozen and intimate.

beginning-level adults who are preliterate and in need of survival communication skills, that focus on form is not a top priority. On the other hand, the grid suggests that when teaching literate young adults who are in college and at the high-intermediate proficiency level, some focus on form is essential if the teacher wants to help the students successfully complete their composition requirement.

The importance of a reasonable degree of grammatical accuracy in academic or professional writing cannot be overstated. McGirt (1984), for example, found that 40% of the university-level ESL writers in his study were judged to have produced fully acceptable writing after he corrected their essays for surface-level morphological and syntactic errors. Without McGirt’s grammatical corrections, the same essays were rated unacceptable (nonpassing) by experienced composition teachers. Of the remaining ESL writers in McGirt’s study, 20% produced essays that were judged acceptable even without the grammatical errors corrected (but this 20% committed only 3.1 errors per 100 words); 40% wrote essays that were rated unacceptable with or without the errors corrected. It should also be noted that the ESL writers in McGirt’s study committed an average of 7.2 grammatical errors per 100 words, which one can assume is too many errors for the context described.
Given that under certain circumstances grammar instruction is absolutely necessary and given that there are classes in which it is imperative that ESL teachers use effective techniques to remediate errors, the next two sections of this paper will deal with grammar instruction and error correction.

GRAMMAR INSTRUCTION

As a result of the communicative revolution in language teaching, it has become increasingly clear that grammar is a tool or resource to be used in the comprehension and creation of oral and written discourse rather than something to be learned as an end in itself. When learned as a decontextualized sentence-level system, grammar is not very useful to learners as they listen, read, speak, and write in their second or foreign language. Indeed, as Canale and Swain (1980) have posited, communicative competence consists of four components, only one of which—Item 3 below—involves grammar:

1. Sociolinguistic competence (i.e., appropriacy): The speaker/writer knows how to express the message in terms of the person being addressed and the overall circumstances and purpose of the communication.

2. Discourse competence: The selection, sequence, and arrangement of words and structures are clear and effective means of expressing the speaker/writer’s intended message.

3. Linguistic competence (i.e., accuracy): The forms, inflections, and sequences used to express the message are grammatically correct.

4. Strategic competence: The speaker/writer has effective and unobtrusive strategies to compensate for any weaknesses s/he has in the above three areas.

Certainly, in many person-to-person communications, sociolinguistic appropriacy and discourse competence are more important than grammatical accuracy, provided that the grammar used is not inaccurate to the point of miscommunicating the intended message; communication is the overriding concern. However, there are situations where a reasonable degree of accuracy is also critical, and this is our current focus.

In order for ESL/EFL teachers to consistently present grammar as serving some higher-order objective, Celce-Murcia and Hilles (1988) suggest that grammar should never be taught as an end in
itself but always with reference to meaning, social factors, or
discourse—or a combination of these factors. Larsen-Freeman’s
(1991) position is similar: She sees form, meaning, and function as
three interacting dimensions of language; the classroom teacher
must decide in which dimension the students are experiencing the
greatest learning challenge at any given moment and respond with
appropriate instruction.

Teaching Grammar as Meaning

As an example, teaching the different spatial meanings signaled
by the prepositions *in* and *on* is best viewed as grammar in the ser-
vice of meaning. If learners are presented with many fully illus-
trated and well-demonstrated examples such as the following and
then asked to describe other similar situations, they have a basis for
understanding and practicing the correct use of these two preposi-
tions:

1. Bob put the book *in* the box./The book *is in* the box.
   a. Bob put the book *on* the table./The book *is on* the table.
2. Ann threw the ball *in* the basket./The ball *is in* the basket.
   b. Ann threw the ball *on* the floor./The ball *is on* the floor.

A sufficient number of good, clear examples will be enough for
some learners; others will also find it useful to know quite explicitly
that *in* favors the placement of objects in three-dimensional
containers and *on* favors the placement of objects on two-
dimensional flat surfaces.

Teaching Grammar as Social Function

An example of grammar used in the service of socially
appropriate messages is the use of certain modal auxiliaries to
express politeness when one is requesting a favor. When they make
requests, ESL/EFL learners need to know that *would* is more polite
than *will* and that *could* is more polite than *can*:

3. *(Will/Would)* you open the door?
4. *(Can/Could)* I talk to you for a minute?

Learners must become aware of the possible consequences of
using the wrong modal form in a request: The addressee may
conclude that the nonnative speaker is being inappropriately
abrupt, familiar, or rude even when this is not at all the social
message intended. Sufficient practice with intended social messages in dialogues, role plays, and simulations (as well as careful observations of native-speaker behavior and/or elicitation of native-speaker preferences with reference to specific request situations) will help establish the link between grammar and socially appropriate behavior.

**Teaching Grammar as Discourse**

The link between grammar and discourse is especially crucial for ESL composition students. They will have to learn that definitions, for example, make heavy use of adjectival such as relative clauses:

5. A thermometer is an instrument that measures temperature.
6. A relative clause is an embedded sentence that modifies a noun.

In addition, students need to realize that such definitions can easily be reversed with the functional definition preceding the name of the device being defined:

7. An instrument that measures temperature is a thermometer.
8. An embedded sentence that modifies a noun is a relative clause.

Learners must also recognize that these structures are used for a variety of communicative purposes, for example:

1. Vocabulary elicitation

   *What do you call an instrument that measures temperature?*
   *A thermometer.*

2. Extended definition

   A relative clause is an embedded sentence that modifies a noun. It consists of a relative pronoun, a word that refers to the noun being modified, along with the other elements needed to complete the modifying proposition. For example, in the sentence *I read the article that John wrote,* *that John wrote* is the relative clause modifying the noun *article.* The relative pronoun *that* refers to the same thing as the noun *article.* In fact, we can paraphrase the relative clause with the sentence *John wrote the article.* A relative clause is thus a useful stylistic option that allows speakers and writers to combine into one sentence two propositions, both of which contain a noun referring to the same person or thing.

   Not only does the paragraph above define the notion of a relative clause, it also contains several relative clauses as well as some other
adjectivals that students can examine at the discourse level to appreciate not only how different types of relative clauses are formed but also how they are used. My colleagues and I have found that after comprehension and analysis of two or three similar example texts defining other objects or concepts, ESL composition students are better prepared to write their own extended definition on some object or concept that is familiar to them and useful in their major field of study.

Almost as important as developing a sense of when to use certain structures in discourse depending on topic or genre is the need to master the conventions of discourse that cross sentence boundaries and help the writer create text. Halliday and Hasan (1976) refer to these features of text structure as cohesion. According to them, cohesion involves the principled use of (a) referential forms (e.g., pronouns, demonstratives, the definite article); (b) substitute expressions such as one(s), do, and so; (c) ellipsis; (d) conjunction; and (e) lexical chaining to create texture in discourse.

FEEDBACK AND CORRECTION

Error Gravity

Burt and Kiparsky (1974), in an analysis of error gravity, noted that there are local errors produced by second language learners such as an omitted article or a superfluous preposition:

9.* Let us consider Stevenson’s invention of the steam engine as Ø starting point.
10. *It was dark as we approached to the house.

They claimed that such local errors do not usually cause problems with communication, and they contrasted such relatively innocuous local errors with global errors such as faulty word order (Example 11) or the use of the wrong logical connector (conjunction in Halliday and Hasan’s terms) (Example 12):

12. *I didn't question his decision yet [instead of because] I trusted him completely.

Burt and Kiparsky concluded that global errors contribute to miscommunication and thus require correction much more than local errors do, a hypothesis subsequently confirmed by Tomiyama’s (1990) research.

Virtually all the errors that Burt and Kiparsky cited—whether local or global—were discussed and exemplified at the sentence
level. Today, however, it is useful to reinterpret their notion of local errors as sentence-level errors and global errors as discourse-level errors. This leads us to conclude that discourse-level errors deserve our closest attention because they are more likely to be a source of miscommunication or confusion than sentence-level errors, a conclusion which has been confirmed by Frodesen’s (1991) study of unacceptable ESL compositions. Thus familiarity with the cohesive devices of English (i.e., the grammatical and lexical “glue” of discourse) and careful observation of how these and other discourse conventions are employed by effective writers will give nonnative learners of English tools for creating more accurate and coherent text. As Carrell (1982, 1987) reminds us, however, skill in using cohesive devices will not guarantee that ESL writers will produce effective and coherent prose since higher-order discourse principles such as content-schemata and formal-schemata also come into play.

Stages for Error Correction

There are times during an ESL lesson when the teacher may reasonably ask the students whether a sentence is grammatically correct and, if not, why. Chaudron (1983) cautions us, however, that learners become better at this type of exercise as they become more proficient and that beginners are typically weak at making grammaticality judgments in a second language. Chaudron’s review of the research also reminds us that while intermediate-level learners can begin to recognize and correct their own errors, more advanced learners are able to correct the errors of other learners as well.

Thus ESL teachers with low-intermediate learners may want to facilitate their students’ ability to recognize and locate errors, since these skills precede the ability to accurately correct an error. How can this be done? The teacher might begin by asking students to identify the incorrect—instead of the correct—sentences in sets of two or three sentences:

13a. *I enjoy to take photographs.
   b. I enjoy taking photographs.

14a. *The professor which wrote the book gave the lecture.
   b. *The professor wrote the book gave the lecture.
   c. The professor who wrote the book gave the lecture.

1 Word order is of course a notion that applies to both the syntactic level and the discourse level. Some word-order errors such as *The English language use many people are syntactic in that at the sentence-level one may say either Many people use the English language or The English language is used by many people but not *The English language use many people. At the discourse level, one of the two syntactically permitted strings will be more appropriate than the other depending on discourse factors such as topic continuity, speaker’s intention, and so on.
If students have difficulty with somewhat analytical discussions of grammaticality and correctness, the teacher may want to begin to raise their awareness of form more indirectly. For example, Sentences A and B below are on the board or visible via the overhead projector:

T: Okay, many of you say Sentence A, while I say Sentence B. What’s the difference?
A. We have done that exercise yesterday.
B. We did that exercise yesterday.

For a more complex and demanding activity, students at higher proficiency levels can be asked to judge each sentence in a connected series, and if judged ungrammatical, to correct it, as in Figure 2.

FIGURE 2
Error Detection and Correction Exercise

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sentence/Clause</th>
<th>Grammatical?</th>
<th>Correction if needed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>If I won the lottery,</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 would to buy a new car.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I’d buy my mother a house,</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and my sister some furnitures.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Teaching Exceptions to Rules

Teaching grammar normally involves helping learners internalize rules and patterns that they can then apply more generally in their language use; however, most rules or patterns have exceptions, a problem that requires a different type of learning. In an interesting study, Tomasello and Herron (1988) compared two methods for teaching grammatical exceptions to two groups of U.S. learners of French (the technique reported, however, is very likely also applicable to learners of ESL/EFL). In one method, students induced the rule after receiving several regular examples, and then the teacher stated the exceptions. In the other method, referred to as the garden path condition, the teacher presented regular examples to induce the rule, and then asked the class to apply the rule to an exception. This elicited an erroneous overgeneralization, which the teacher then immediately corrected. Eight structures with exceptions were targeted for treatment—four for each method (the two groups of students received the opposite treatment).
Subsequent formal testing revealed that students learned the exceptions better when the garden path condition had been the treatment. This advantage persisted for the entire semester. The researchers hypothesized that by inducing an overgeneralization and then immediately correcting it, the teacher helped the learners focus their attention on both the rule and the special features of a given item that marked it as an exception.

Holistic Correction Techniques

Most holistic error correction techniques involve getting students to work with their own texts. For example, if students tape-record a narrative about a frightening experience, they can then be instructed to transcribe the story exactly as they related it on tape. Later they can rewrite the narrative as written text, trying to avoid the grammatical errors they made when speaking as well as making other appropriate adjustments as they generate the written version. (Such adjustments would include getting rid of fragments, false starts, using fewer initial ands, etc.) With the tape recordings and the written versions in hand, the teacher can verify the accuracy of each transcription and the subsequent changes and corrections the learner made in the written text.

Another holistic correction technique is reformulation, which has been explored by Cohen (1983, 1985), among others. In reformulation the teacher or tutor takes a paragraph or short essay written by the learner and instead of correcting the learner’s mistakes, the teacher/tutor rewrites the passage on another sheet in his or her own words, which means that vocabulary and overall organization may change as well as grammar. The learner then compares the original with the reformulated version to see if the intended message is preserved and, in consultation with the teacher/tutor, the learner comes to understand why the changes were made. This process can be very useful but also time-consuming; fortunately, there are some less demanding adaptations such as the teacher’s attaching a sheet to the original with several reworded phrases and clauses that the learner might want to consider when s/he revises the paper.

For those intermediate learners interested primarily in correction of oral production, Wechsler (1987) developed and tested “interview analysis,” a holistic technique where spontaneous speech is elicited, recorded, and transcribed at intervals. The teacher/tutor reviews the transcripts with the learner and trains him/her to correct the transcript with a brightly colored pen. After several months of doing the interview analysis procedure with two intermediate-level French speakers, Wechsler was able to reduce
significantly the frequency of errors in their spontaneous English speech with regard to regular and irregular past-tense forms, plurals, possessives, and for-to purpose constructions. Errors in the use of the third-person singular, present tense, however, did not decrease significantly for Wechsler’s two learners.

**Correction in Written Work**

Returning to ESL writing, which is where much if not most error correction is done, there are many traditional feedback techniques that teachers have long used with a degree of success. These include underlining but not correcting errors, indicating error types on a checklist attached to the essay (Knapp, 1972), and indicating error type and frequency on a note returned with the essay (e.g., find three verbs that are missing the third-person singular, present inflection and correct them). Some teachers have used peer-correction activities with good success (Witbeck, 1976), while others prefer to prepare composite essays for class/group correction that illustrate common errors from several students’ written work in order to prevent the embarrassment students may experience when their peers publicly correct their written work. Finally, some teachers advocate the use of audiocassettes to correct ESL compositions (Bracy Farnsworth, 1974), claiming that it is more useful to the students than either checklists or written notes in the margin and that it is less time-consuming than individual conferences with students, which is yet another feedback technique that some teachers use.

**Intervention**

Sometimes feedback and correction must be accomplished quickly and spontaneously. Such a need arises in the course of an ESL/EFL lesson when it becomes clear that a particular aspect of grammar is troubling many students in the class. A fully professional ESL/EFL teacher should be able to intervene, and in a few minutes, get students to focus on the problem, to become aware of both the error and the correct form, and to practice the correct form briefly.

Celce-Murcia and Hines (1988) refer to such interventions as “minigrammar lessons” (p. 145) and illustrate this procedure for errors such as the following: *You should to speak louder.* In a minigrammar lesson the teacher presents relevant data to the class and without lecturing gets the students to detect and correct the targeted error. The teacher then helps the students generate a rule or paradigm and gives them a contextualized exercise so they can
immediately practice the problematic structure and produce the correct form.

After such an intervention, the class returns to the lesson at hand, and if necessary the teacher presents more elaborate follow-up practice in a subsequent lesson.

**Answering Questions**

Another form of feedback that many students seek is the teacher’s answers to questions they have about aspects of English that puzzle them. When a student asks “What’s a relative clause?” often an example sentence on the board with the relative clause underlined is faster and more effective than a definition. When a student asks why *ten dollars* is correct in *This book costs ten dollars* but incorrect in *This is a ten dollars book*, the teacher should be able to explain quickly and concisely that a measure phrase like *ten dollar(s)* consists of a cardinal number followed by a unit of measure; when the measure phrase does not precede and modify a noun, the unit word is plural if the number is greater than one:

15. The house has one bath.
16. The car has four doors.
17. The magazine costs one dollar.
18. The book costs ten dollars.

However, when the measure phrase functions as a modifier and occurs before a noun, then the measure word is never plural:

19. *This is a ten dollars book.
20. This is a ten dollar book.
21. *John has a two bedrooms house.
22. John has a two bedroom house.

The teacher might consider giving the student who asked the question follow-up exercises to ensure that the explanation has been understood.

**INTEGRATING GRAMMAR INSTRUCTION INTO A COMMUNICATIVE CURRICULUM**

Prior to the advent of communicative language teaching, the content of a language course typically consisted of the grammatical structures and words that would be covered in the course. At best, the structures and words were organized around situations or topics (e.g., the post office, going to the movies). Strongly influenced by
the English for specific purposes movement (see Johns, 1991; Johns & Dudley-Evans, 1991), communicative language teaching often starts with a determination of the purposes or objectives that the learner has. This is followed by an examination of the content the learner must understand and the tasks the learner will need to perform as well as the oral and/or written discourse the learner will be expected to comprehend and produce in the target language in the course of performing the tasks previously identified.

For any language learner with a definable learning purpose, the question of what grammar to teach does not become relevant until an adequate corpus of purposeful task-based discourse samples has been compiled. A discourse analysis can then be performed to identify discourse-level and sentence-level structures (as well as vocabulary items) that are especially useful and frequent for a given topic (i.e., content) and/or task or genre (e.g., writing a report). The language course ideally will be organized around the relevant content, or tasks, or both. And the discourse-level and sentence-level grammar, vocabulary, and other aspects of language form will be presented and practiced in the context of texts like the ones that were compiled and organized for the course.

For the general purpose language learner, the beginning-level course can develop a base by dealing first with grammar-meaning correspondences (e.g., in vs. on; present tense vs. present progressive, etc.) and then with grammar-function correspondences (e.g., could is more polite than can in requests; well at the beginning of a conversational response often signals that the speaker is about to express a disagreement, etc.). As soon as a basic threshold level (van Ek, 1976) has been established, the course must also begin to deal with discourse-level grammar (e.g., use of articles, use of active vs. passive voice, etc.).

A related issue is the kind of content and tasks that the language teacher can use to organize language courses. Many options exist for integrating form, meaning, and content. Brinton, Snow, and Wesche (1989) show how academic subject matter from areas such as psychology or history can be organized in various ways to complement and facilitate language instruction. Stern (1991), among others, shows how literature can be used as content for language instruction in ways that include but go far beyond traditional literary appreciation. Fried-Booth (1986) shows the teacher how projects of different scope and type can provide a focus for language development; and while Eyring (1991) adds insights about using project work with academic learners, she also suggests that the learners’ past and ongoing life experiences constitute appropriate content for more general language classes.
The greatest potential—and also the greatest challenge—in these new and innovative language curricula lies in integrating focus on form with content-based and/or task-based language teaching. Teachers and learners alike must come to appreciate that dealing with such content and tasks requires both top-down and bottom-up language skills. The top-down skills represent understanding the content and the tasks, specifically what the meaningful task components are and how they are organized and sequenced in relation to each other. The bottom-up skills involve accurately using the words and structures needed to accomplish the tasks in relation to the content. Thus grammar instruction comes in when bottom-up skills are inadequate. If learners do not have the words and structures needed to carry out the tasks or to understand the content, then relevant discourse samples must be presented. Language features must be practiced in the context of the content and tasks with the help of the language teacher, who in effect will be teaching the learners to do a type of discourse analysis which focuses on grammar and many other things as well.

Alternatively, if the learners are able to produce a rough approximation of the task, then the learners’ performance can be used as the starting point. A careful analysis of and presentation of appropriate and inappropriate—and correct and incorrect—performance features will raise learner awareness and set the stage for discourse-based remedial activities, some of which will include correction of faulty grammatical activities along the lines suggested above in the sections on grammar instruction and error correction.

CONCLUSION

During the past 25 years we have seen grammar move from a position of central importance in language teaching, to pariah status, and back to a position of renewed importance, but with some diminution when compared with the primacy it enjoyed 25 years ago and had enjoyed for so long before then. Grammar is now viewed as but one component in a model of communicative competence (Canale & Swain, 1980; Hymes, 1972), and thus it can no longer be viewed as a central, autonomous system to be taught and learned independent of meaning, social function, and discourse.

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2 Going well beyond the sentence level, discourse analysis is concerned with how language users produce and interpret language in context. It examines how lexicogrammar and discourse systematically vary across social situations and, at the same time, help to define those situations. Analysts attend to the form, meaning, and function of language whether they begin with discourse-level segments and work down to forms or begin with forms and work up to the discourse level.
structure. Nor can the grammar of adolescent and adult second and foreign language learners be viewed as a system that will simply emerge on its own given sufficient input and practice. Grammar, along with lexis—and also phonology for spoken discourse—are resources for creating meaning through text and for negotiating socially motivated communication. These resources need to be learned and sometimes they also need to be taught; however, when taught, they must be taught in a manner that is consonant with grammar’s new role. Finding effective ways to do this is the current challenge.

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GRAMMAR PEDAGOGY IN TESOL


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The Pronunciation Component in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages

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This paper reviews the nature of changing patterns in pronunciation teaching over the last 25 years. It then describes in detail six instructional features of a multidimensional teaching process: a dual-focus communicative program philosophy, learner goals, instructional objectives, the role of the learner, the role of the teacher, and a framework of three instructional practice modes.

Recent discussions of “pronunciation” teaching principles have examined a number of important rationale issues including: questions of whether pronunciation should (or can) be taught and, if so, what should be taught and how; expressions of the need for more controlled studies of changes in learner pronunciation patterns as the result of specific instructional procedures; views on whether and how research in second language phonology can inform classroom practices. These and many other pertinent concerns have been ably discussed in thorough and insightful state-of-the-art papers by Leather (1983) and Pennington and Richards (1986). When it comes to classroom practice, however, as Yule (1990) has observed, it may have appeared to novice teachers that the only classroom choice available is one between teaching pronunciation as articulatory phonetics or not teaching pronunciation at all. But could this limited choice of options be more apparent than real? Clearly, on the positive side of the picture, some creative and principled contributions to alternatives have come on the scene in recent years, with a small but steady movement toward some “new looks” in pronunciation teaching. This does not mean that there are not many remaining questions about a number of issues, and more

1 The focus of this discussion is pronunciation teaching and is not intended to include a review of research in areas of second language phonology.
2 The term pronunciation means different things to different people. In this paper, I refer to a range of pronunciation teaching practices.
than a few leaps of faith in mounting classroom practices without a clear theory of pronunciation teaching. Nonetheless, it does seem that there is reason for optimism.

It is the intent of this paper to approach the topic of pronunciation teaching with this spirit of optimism, devoting one section to a search for signs of changing patterns and agents of change over time, and a second section to summary descriptions of some of the major instructional strands found in many innovative programs, with a multidimensional look at the pronunciation teaching process. A final section considers some continuing needs. Specifically, Part 1 presents a short background introduction focused on the broad sweep of growth and development in TESOL, the profession. This is followed by a review of changing patterns of emphasis in the teaching of the pronunciation component in ESL/EFL, concluding with a look at two important catalysts of change: the urgent needs of adult (and near-adult) learners and the emergence of a number of shifts in instructional focus, ones that are formulated here as programming principles. Part 2 describes six important instructional features in detail. Part 3 considers some present/future needs.

PART 1: CHANGING PATTERNS

TESOL AT TWENTY-FIVE: EXTENSIVE GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

The first observation that must be made in any reflection on the ESL profession today is one that recognizes at the outset its extensive growth and development—in size, in diversity, in complexity of learner clientele and of professional substance.

In the last quarter century we have witnessed an enormous “population explosion” in student numbers the world over, and especially in adult and near-adult learner groups. Strevens (1988) reported that estimates of the number of people in the world who use English for some purpose range between 750 million and a billion and a half. But, and of special interest to us, only approximately 300 million of them are native speakers (NSs), leaving a staggering number of nonnative speakers (NNSs). With this turn of events has come new instructional demands in new situations and we have needed to turn our attention more and more to carefully focused assessments of specific student needs and subsequent design of effective instructional programs. This has

3 The designation “English as a second language” (ESL) is used throughout and is taken to include both “second” and “foreign” settings.
proved a special challenge for the planning of effective pronunciation programs.

As for professional substance, a second explosion, a veritable knowledge explosion in both our own field and in resource disciplines, presents changing perspectives on the nature of language, language learning, and language teaching and provides a multiplicity of options for setting our pedagogical, assessment, and research agenda. This last quarter century also has produced an instructional technology revolution, one that has been especially advantageous to pronunciation work, with a variety of audio, video, and computer capabilities applicable to classroom and learning center laboratories.

CHANGING PERSPECTIVES ON LANGUAGE AND LANGUAGE LEARNING

As perspectives on language learning and language teaching have changed, there has been a gradual shift from an emphasis on teaching and a teaching-centered classroom to an emphasis on learning and a learning-centered classroom, with special attention to the individual learner as well as the group of learners. At the same time, there has been a shift from a narrow focus on linguistic competencies to a broader focus on communicative competencies, within which linguistic competencies (i.e., grammar, pronunciation, etc.) remain an essential component albeit only one of several critical competencies (Canale & Swain, 1980).

The following significant changes in theoretical paradigms—in learning models, in linguistic models, in instructional models—inform much of the state-of-the-art work in the field today (including current directions in the principles and practices of pronunciation work).

1. From a language learning perspective of outside-in, to one of inside-out; that is, a changed concept of language acquisition that views the learner as the active prime mover in the learning process (Corder, 1967), and an emerging paradigm shift in which learners are seen as active creators, not as passive recipients, in a process which is cognitively driven.

2. Following from this altered conceptualization of the learning process, a movement from a focus on the group, to an increasing focus on individual learner differences and individual learning styles and strategies (Naiman, Fröhlich, Stern, Todesco, 1978; O’Malley & Chamot, 1989; Oxford, 1990; Rubin, 1975; Stern, 1975; Wenden & Rubin, 1987).

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3. From a focus on language as simply a formal system, to a focus on language as both a formal system and a functional system, one that exists to satisfy the communicative needs of its users (Halliday, 1970, 1973, 1978).

4. From linguistic preoccupation with sentence-level grammar to widening interest in semantics, pragmatics, discourse, and speech act theory (Austin, 1962; Searle, 1970).

5. From an instructional focus on linguistic form and correct usage to one on function and communicatively appropriate use (Widdowson, 1978, 1983).

6. From an orientation of linguistic competence to one of communicative competence (Hymes, 1972).

7. From a global competence concept to detailed competency specifications and the introduction of an especially useful model that brings together a number of viewpoints in one linguistically oriented and pedagogically useful framework: grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence, and strategic competence (Canale & Swain, 1980).

These developments and others have led to a wide variety of changes in virtually all aspects of ESL including the area of pronunciation teaching.

PRONUNCIATION TEACHING PAST AND PRESENT

The 1940s, 1950s, and into the 1960s

Not much question about it: In the 1940s, 1950s, and into the 1960s pronunciation was viewed as an important component of English language teaching curricula in both the audiolingual methodology developed in the U.S. and the British system of situational language teaching. In fact, along with correct grammar, accuracy of pronunciation was a high-priority goal in both systems.

Although these two schools of language teaching developed from different traditions, as Richards and Rodgers (1986) point out, they reflected quite similar views on the nature of both language and language learning. In general, language was viewed as consisting of hierarchies of structurally related items for encoding meaning. Language learning was viewed as mastering these forms, the building blocks of the language, along with the combining rules for phonemes, morphemes, words, phrases, sentences. The pronunciation class in this view was one that gave primary attention to phonemes and their meaningful contrasts, environmental allophonic variations, and combinatory phonotactic rules, along with...
structurally based attention to stress, rhythm, and intonation. Instruction featured articulatory explanations, imitation, and memorization of patterns through drills and dialogues, with extensive attention to correction. One text that was very widely used and served as a source of much imitation in the preparation of pronunciation teaching materials was an oral approach volume produced under the supervision of Robinett (Lado, Fries, & Robinett, 1954).

Actually, the use of the past tense here is misleading since both audiolingual and situational language teaching continue to flourish in programs throughout the world, and many make use of the traditional approach described above. The major change that has occurred today in many innovative programs is one that abandons the notion of an articulatory phonetics approach as the conceptual basis for teaching pronunciation, but integrates attention to the sound system into an expanded and more comprehensive framework, one that focuses on communicative interactions and functional language use.

The 1960s, 1970s, and into the 1980s

Beginning in the late 1960s and continuing through the 1970s and into the 1980s, and in quite sharp contrast to the previous period, a lot of questions were raised about pronunciation in the ESL curriculum. There were questions about the importance of pronunciation as an instructional focus, questions about whether or not it could be taught directly at all, questions about the assumption it could be learned at all under direct instruction. The effect was that more and more programs gave less and less time and explicit attention to pronunciation; many programs dropped it entirely. While the number of textbook and teacher reference publications in other segments of the ESL curriculum increased dramatically, very little new material on pronunciation appeared.

The elimination or reduction of the pronunciation component developed amid growing dissatisfaction with many of the principles and practices of the traditional approach to pronunciation. Factors involved included changing models of second language learning, changing foci in second language teaching, and changing models of linguistic description. The familiar ways and means of teaching pronunciation no longer seemed appropriate as new pedagogical sights were set on language functions, communicative competencies, task-based methodologies, and realism and authenticity in learning activities and materials. Moreover, both the process and
the product were seen as flawed. The process, viewed as meaningless noncommunicative drill-and-exercise gambits, lost its appeal; likewise, the product, that is the success ratio for the time and energy expended, was found wanting.

Through the decade of the 1970s, however, there were some indications of change. The agents of change were a number of ESL professionals who began to raise issues and suggest expansions and changes of emphasis in classroom practices. In retrospect, many of these perspectives foreshadowed things to come: Prator (1971) examined issues relating to phonetics versus phonemics in pronunciation teaching; Allen (1971) wrote on intonation, providing practice suggestions that continue to be cited today; Bowen (1972) focused on contextualizing practice in the classroom, with a classic format that is still recommended, for example, by Celce-Murcia and Goodwin (1991) who refer to it as “Bowen’s Technique”; Kriedler (1972), W. Dickerson (1975), and Dickerson and Finney (1978) stressed the importance of the spelling/pronunciation link for learners; Morley (1975) emphasized the need for learner-involvement and speech self-monitoring; Robinett (1975) suggested ways to present information in a manner that appeals to students’ cognitive involvement; Stevick (1975) turned attention to a view of the learner’s feelings and the importance of the affective dimension in learning; L. Dickerson (1975) and W. Dickerson (1976) looked at aspects of variability in L2 pronunciation performance; Cathcart and Olsen (1976) reported on teachers’ and students’ preferences for correction; Parrish (1977) and Stevick (1978) presented viewpoints on a practical philosophy of pronunciation with attention to issues involving linguistic, affective, social, and methodological considerations; G. Brown (1977, 1978) underscored the importance of focusing listening attention on prosodic patterning; Beebe (1978) provided some sociolinguistic perspectives on “teaching pronunciation, why we should be”; Smith and Rafiqzad (1979) investigated mutual intelligibility among speakers from different cultures.

These articles all addressed topics that were to be issues of continuing concern into the 1980s: (a) basic philosophical considerations for teaching pronunciation; (b) the importance of meaning and contextualized practice; (c) learner involvement, self-monitoring, and learners’ feelings; (d) learner cognitive involvement; (e) intelligibility issues; (f) variability issues; (g) correction issues; (h) increasing attention to stress, rhythm, intonation, reductions, assimilations, etc.; (i) expanded perspectives on listening/pronunciation focus; (j) attention to the sound-spelling link.
Through the 1980s and into the 1990s

Beginning in the mid-1980s and continuing into the 1990s there has been a growing interest in revisiting the pronunciation component of the ESL curriculum for adults and young adults. An important part of this movement has been pronunciation developments in several ESP areas: that is, programming for specific-purpose attention to pronunciation (i.e., academic, occupational, etc.).

The modest number of pronunciation-focused papers of the 1970s was followed in the 1980s by a significant increase in both journal articles and teacher resource books, clearly a reflection of renewed interest in pronunciation teaching principles and practices. First of all, a number of insightful review articles were published in the eighties, including: Leather in *Language Teaching* (1983), with a thorough state-of-the-art article on second language pronunciation learning and teaching, one that raised pertinent issues that a rationale for L2 pronunciation teaching ought to address, then reviewed the status of each; Pennington and Richards (1986), in the *TESOL Quarterly*, with a careful reexamination of the status of pronunciation in language teaching and a call for a broader focus on pronunciation within the context of discourse in both second language acquisition (SLA) research and ESL teaching von Schön (1987) in the 25th-anniversary edition of the *English Teaching Forum*, with a close look at pronunciation in the international context of English as a foreign language (EFL), and an examination of the roles of English and the issue of what models should be taught; Grant (1988) in *TESOL in Action*, a Georgia TESOL publication, with a discussion of the problems and the possibilities for innovative pronunciation planning for the adult learner; Anderson-Hsieh (1989) in *Cross Currents*, with a succinct history of approaches toward teaching pronunciation with special reference to Japan, but with useful applicability to other EFL contexts; Yule (1989) and Riggenbach (1990) in *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics (ARAL)* with reviews of a number of aspects of teaching the spoken language, including pronunciation.

A number of teacher resource books on teaching pronunciation and/or speaking skills appeared during the 1980s as well: Brown and Yule (1983), a broad “armoury of strategies and tools” (p. ix), with a concentration on the communicative use of language by speakers; Bygate (1987), a useful source of ideas on teaching speaking, with both practical and theoretical perspectives; Morley (1987) a variety of “current perspectives on pronunciation teaching; practices anchored in theory”; Kenworthy (1987), solid information on pronunciation teaching, including a section reviewing the main
problems experienced by speakers of nine selected languages; Avery and Ehrlich (1987) (a TESL Canada Talk volume), papers on classroom methodology and a section on problems of eight language groups; Wong (1987b), focus on English rhythm and intonation in pronunciation teaching Swan and Smith (1987), 24 contributors provide a comprehensive teachers’ guide to “learner English” in terms of typical interlanguages of speakers of several dozen different languages: A. Brown (1991), a collection of 29 papers published between 1956 and 1986; Celce-Murcia, Brinton, and Goodwin (in press), a reference book on English pronunciation for ESL/EFL teachers; Comrie (1987), linguists provide descriptions of “the world’s major languages,” including sections on phonology.

In addition, a number of excellent English language reference books were published during the 1980s: Wells (1982), three volumes that contain detailed descriptions of a wide variety of the English dialects found around the world; Ladefoged (1982), a course in phonetics with substantial information on English sounds, patterns, and suprasegmentals; Bauer, Dienhart, Hartvigson, and Jakobsen (1980), a careful description of “American English,” with very useful comparative notes on “British English” as well; Brazil, Coulthard, and Johns (1980), a British discourse intonation and language teaching text which stresses the “learnability” (p. 118) of four intonational categories and their associated meaning; Brown, Currie, and Kenworthy (1980), a challenge to previous assumptions and models of sentence-level intonation, using data from interactive discourse; Wolfram and Johnson (1982), a volume on phonological analysis, with a “focus on American English”; Kriedler (1989), a phonology course with comprehensive presentation of the pronunciation of English.

Taken together, the reviews and the teacher references reveal a number of important developments and many continuing questions. An especially significant trend is an increasing number of programs engaged in developing new looks in pronunciation teaching, ones that are concerned with an expanded pronunciation/speech/oral communication component of the ESL curriculum.

Overall, with today’s renewed professional commitment to empowering students to become effective, fully participating members of the English-speaking community in which they communicate, it is clear that there is a persistent, if small, groundswell of movement to write pronunciation back into the instructional equation but with a new look and a basic premise: Intelligible pronunciation is an essential component of communicative competence.
As Beebe (1978) observed, in this era of emphasis on meaningful communication, it is important for ESL professionals to take note of the fact that “pronunciation—like grammar, syntax, and discourse organization—communicates [italics added] . . . . the very act of pronouncing, not just the words we transmit, are an essential part of what we communicate about ourselves as people” (p. 121). She reported that NSs often label NNS pronunciation errors derisively, as sounding comical, cute, incompetent, not serious, childish, etc.

In this review, it becomes clear that the decades of the seventies and eighties were important periods of development. A number of changing views on pronunciation learning and teaching emerged. Coincidentally, some of the need to rethink both principles and practices came about as the result of the pressing urgency of student needs. In the following section, student needs and principles guiding changes in pronunciation learning/teaching practices will be discussed.

MAJOR INFLUENCES ON CHANGING PATTERNS OF PRONUNCIATION TEACHING

As noted earlier, changes in perspectives on second language learning and teaching over the past two and a half decades have impacted every facet of second language study. In the case of pronunciation, an early and rather wholesale movement in TESL toward eliminating or reducing attention to pronunciation instruction presently seems to be undergoing something of a trend reversal. Part of the reason for this may lie in the fact that it has become increasingly clear in recent years that ignoring students’ pronunciation needs is an abrogation of professional responsibility. In programs for adult (and near-adult) ESL learners in particular, it is imperative that students’ educational, occupational, and personal/social language needs, including reasonably intelligible pronunciation, be served with instruction that will give them communicative empowerment—effective language use that will help them not just to survive, but to succeed. Moreover, with an increasing focus on communication, has come a growing premium on oral comprehensibility, making it of critical importance to provide instruction that enables students to become, not “perfect pronouncers” of English (which, as we shall see later is neither reasonable or necessary), but intelligible, communicative, confident users of spoken English for whatever purposes they need.

Two developments have been catalysts in bringing about changes in pronunciation teaching in recent years. One is the increasing pressure of the urgent needs of special groups of ESL learners.
Second, there are a number of emerging principles that seem to reflect an underlying belief system shared by many new pronunciation programs.

Groups of Learners in Special Need of Attention to Pronunciation

Wong (1986), Morley (1987, 1988), Anderson-Hsieh (1989), Celce-Murcia (1991), and others have expressed concerns about particular groups whose pronunciation difficulties may place them at a professional or social disadvantage. In response to this need, a number of accent reduction programs have appeared, especially in the United States; some are run by solidly trained language professionals, some by less well-informed instructors. For all groups of learners profiled below, a broadly-constructed communicative approach to teaching pronunciation/speech is likely to be much more effective than a narrowly constructed articulatory phonetics approach.

In ESL Settings

1. Adult and teenage refugees in vocational and language training programs. For this clientele of ESL learners, not only the initial stage of developing survival language skills (including reasonably intelligible speech), but continuing oral communicative development is crucial for education and employment, for conducting personal business, and for personal/social interactions.

2. Immigrant residents who have been in an English-speaking country for 5 to 15 years. This refers to those residents who have passed through the educational system and graduated into the workplace, only to find that their spoken language, and particularly their intelligibility, prohibits them from taking advantage of employment opportunities or from advancing educationally. Helping these ESL learners work to modify their pronunciation/speech patterns toward increased intelligibility is especially challenging—for both student and teacher—for the patterns are likely to be well entrenched and resistant to change. As Wong (1986) observed “the long-term effects of neglecting pronunciation are most dramatically exemplified by the accountants, programmers, police officers, telephone operators, and engineers enrolled in accent improvement and effective communication courses” (pp. 232-233). She goes on to note that
these long-term residents who demonstrate so well that pronunciation is not simply picked up through interaction with English speakers have to pay a high price to untangle the linguistic morass that is strangling their ability to communicate at the level demanded by their jobs.

3. A growing population of nonnative speakers of English in technology, business, industry, and the professions in English-speaking countries. Each year increasing numbers of NNSs are employed by both large corporations and small companies in English-speaking settings. Indeed, the United States Congress in 1991 passed legislation that raised the immigration quota for skilled foreign professionals from 55,000 to 140,000 a year. And more and more, employers and employees in business and industry are finding that job-related oral use of English is a must, with a premium on intelligible speech and good communication skills.

4. College and university faculty members and research scholars in virtually every field of higher education. Along with skilled professionals in business and industry, there are growing numbers of NNSs among the ranks of college and university faculty members and research associates, not only in science and engineering fields but in the social sciences and humanities as well. Significant oral language demands (including requirements of reasonably intelligible pronunciation) are placed on NNS faculty members including possessing not only the requisite language skills for lectures, seminars, and interactions with students and colleagues, but also the speaking skills needed in public presentation contexts on campus and at national and international conferences.

5. Graduate and undergraduate students in higher education in English-speaking countries. These include international teaching assistants and NNSs who are pursuing a master’s degree in teaching English as a second language (MATESL). Achieving the proficiency score required for admission to an institution of higher education gains NNS students admission and may reflect sufficient command of English to enable them to survive, but growing college and university demands on both oral and written English skills may make it more and more difficult for many to really succeed without special English for academic purposes (EAP) attention to language skills. In addition, some of the NNS graduate students who become teaching assistants (TAs) may have difficulties due to significant language
In EFL Settings

1. International business personnel, scientists, technologists, and other professionals whose careers demand the use of both effective written and spoken English as a lingua franca. More and more today, in countries throughout the world, careers in commerce and trade, banking, science and technology, health care, transportation, industry, manufacturing, and many other fields place high English language demands on employees, both in their home country and in assignments around the world. In fact, these professionals may find that their families need to become English students as well, in the case of long-term overseas assignments. Many international companies have found it necessary to mount English language programs in both the home country and in the English-speaking country.

2. College and university professors and academic research scholars in many disciplines in higher education. The increasing role of English as the world’s international language of scholarship and research is well documented (Swales, 1991). In fact, English is today the dominant language of international conferences and of scholarly and research publications in a significant number of the major professional journals that circulate worldwide.

3. Students who ultimately wish to enter English-speaking colleges and universities to pursue undergraduate and/or graduate degrees. The better prepared NNS students are with effective written and oral skills (including reasonably intelligible speech) before they enter English-speaking colleges and universities, the better their chances not just for survival but for success. In particular NNSs whose career goals include teaching English as a second/foreign language need special attention paid to communicative skills in general and to pronunciation intelligibility in particular.

Programming Principles

A survey of the pronunciation literature of the past several years—teacher reference books, articles in journals and collections,
conference papers, student texts—reveals a number of shifts in instructional focus. Taken together, the themes found in new programs seem to reflect a shared underlying belief system. Some of the principles guiding current directions in pedagogy are the following. (See Morley, 1987, preface.)

1. A focus that views the proper place of pronunciation in the second language curriculum as an integral part of communication, not as an isolated drills-and-exercises component set aside from the mainstream; in short, a growing trend toward communicative approaches to teaching pronunciation.

2. A redirection of priorities within the sound system to a focus on the critical importance of suprasegmentals (i.e., stress, rhythm, intonation, etc.) and how they are used to communicate meaning in the context of discourse, as well as the importance of vowel and consonant sounds (segmental) and their combinations. (Yule, 1989, has observed that perhaps this direction is best described as the prosodic (or suprasegmental) approach, and that it has its intellectual roots in the intonation work of Bolinger, 1964, and the extensive treatment of paralinguistic features by G. Brown, 1977.)

3. A focus on an expanded concept of what constitutes the domain of pronunciation, one that incorporates not only attention to (a) segmental and (b) suprasegmentals, but also (c) voice quality features such as the phenomena referred to as voice-setting features by Pennington and Richards (1986); as voice quality settings by Laver (1980), Esling and Wong (1983) and Esling (1986); as paralinguistic features by G. Brown (1977) (as a rubric for certain vocal features); and as articulatory settings by Honikman (1964), and (d) elements of body language used in oral communication (e.g., facial expressions and gestures; eye contact; head, arm, and hand gestures; body stance, posturing, and use of space; and upper body movements, which Acton, 1984, discusses in detail in connection with teaching rhythm).

4. A focus on some revised expectations in both learner involvement and teacher involvement. Current perspectives on learner involvement in the pronunciation learning/teaching process include an emphasis on speech awareness and self-monitoring, while a revised characterization of teacher involvement is drawn along the lines of facilitator-coach and organizer of instructional activities.

   Learner involvement through overtly labeled self-monitoring is not a new focus in pronunciation (Acton, 1984; Morley, 1975,
Acton stresses giving constant attention to the individual's own resources and puts the responsibility for success in the course on the student. Wong (1986) notes that by giving students specific means to develop independently, the responsibility falls on those who have the actual power to make the necessary changes. Firth (1987) presents a variety of techniques for developing self-correcting and self-monitoring strategies as a way of dealing with the serious problem of "carry-over" (p. 48). Crawford (1987) examines a number of pronunciation learning/teaching issues including perspectives on monitoring. Kenworthy (1987) emphasizes sensitizing learners to their own potential as active participants in the process and describes the teacher's role as primarily supportive of the learner's own efforts. Yule, Hoffman, and Damico (1987) point out the need for patience and support of learners who, as they are engaged in developing their L2 pronunciation skills, may go through a period of deteriorating performance as they give up old ways and have not yet become fluent with new ways. W. Dickerson (1989) makes the case for a natural ability for self-monitoring of language and the importance of activating it systematically in pronunciation teaching. Riggenbach (1990), in a section on self-monitoring of speaking activities, reviews a number of techniques for self- and peer analysis.


6. A focus on the link between listening and pronouncing/speaking and a need to expand the nature and the range of pronunciation-oriented listening activities. Attention to pronunciation-oriented listening instruction was an important component of traditional pronunciation teaching with a primary focus on sound discrimination and identification exercises. Many of today's texts and teaching references continue to include this focus among a wider range of listening/teaching foci. Gilbert (1984), who stresses a
dual focus on pronunciation and listening comprehension apprises students that, “How you hear English is closely connected with how you speak English” (p. 3). Wong (1987a) focuses on ways to make a language-rich pronunciation classroom in which students hear a variety of speakers engaged in diverse real-world communicative events in order to develop active listening skills and a comfortable level of fluency. Mendelson-Burns (1987) advocates teaching pronunciation through listening and suggests a variety of activities.

7. A focus on a range of important sound/spelling relationships. Substantial attention to the utilization of spelling information in adult ESL pronunciation teaching was slow to appear in course books until relatively recently, although Kriedler (1972) and W. Dickerson (1975) had emphasized its importance, and some attention to spelling was included in student texts by Bowen (1975), Morley (1979), and Prator and Robinett (1985). More recently W. Dickerson (1989) presents an extensive treatment of English orthography as a key tool in teaching pronunciation, especially in stress and rhythm instruction, and a number of new texts have included a spelling section in lessons on segmental. Recent teacher reference materials on spelling include papers by Temperley (1983, 1987) and a chapter in Kenworthy (1987) on spelling, including how the morphological regularity of English spelling can be exploited for pronunciation purposes.

8. A focus on the uniqueness of each ESL learner. Each has created his or her own personal pattern of spoken English, which is unlike that of anyone else and the product of influences from both the L1 and the L2, the student’s personal learning and communicability strategies, as well as the impact of input and instruction. And Eckman (1991) has provided convincing evidence over the years to show that L2 pronunciation is going to be subject to universal forces quite distinct from rules of the L1 or the L2. This unique pattern now needs to be modified in some way(s) in order to reach goals of intelligibility, communicability, and self-confidence.

Flege (1980) noted that L2 learners produce sounds that are not typically found in either their native or the second language. Beebe (1984), reporting on a study of variability, noted that her results suggested that there is a high level of inherent variation in interlanguages, just as there is in native languages, as indeed was revealed in earlier variability work done by L. Dickerson (1975) and W. Dickerson (1976). And Prator (1971) suggested that the safest solution for teachers is to regard unintelligibility not as a result of phonemic substitution but as the cumulative effect of many little departures from the phonetic norms of the language.
PART 2: PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER: SOME INSTRUCTIONAL FEATURES OF A MULTIDIMENSIONAL PRONUNCIATION TEACHING PROCESS

This section will look at some of the intersecting strands of a process—the teaching of pronunciation—which often is rather narrowly regarded as one dimensional. As discussed in Part 1, current developments demonstrate the contrary, that in fact the pronunciation teaching process is a multifaceted domain. With urgent needs of learners and the principles summarized in Part 1 as key considerations, six features will be discussed. Information has been drawn from published accounts and from personal communications about current practices in a variety of developing programs.¹

A FOCUS ON PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY

The basis for planning in many new programs has been to take the pronunciation class out of isolation, conceptually speaking as well as practically speaking, where it often has been set aside out of the mainstream, and to reconstitute it in both learning/teaching form and function as an integral part of oral communication. A variety of communicative pronunciation teaching practices of a general nature are included in Celce-Murcia (1983, 1987), Pica (1984), Kenworthy (1987), Naiman (1987), English (1988), Celce-Murcia and Goodwin (1991), and Celce-Murcia, Brinton, and Goodwin (in press). In addition, publications available with an English for specific purposes (ESP) focus include international teaching assistant (ITA) and English for science and technology (EST) work. Byrd, Constantinides, and Pennington (1989) present five specialized chapters of ITA pronunciation teaching materials, and Schwabe (1988), Wennerstrom (1991, in press), Stevens (1989), and Anderson-Hsieh (1990) report on specialized pronunciation-focused ITA activities and methods. Huckin and Olsen (1983) include a special section on pronunciation in their EST handbook for nonnative speakers; Browne and Huckin (1987), and Browne (in press) discuss corporate-level communicative ESP pronunciation training for NNS scientists and engineers; Imber and Parker (1991) present a program framework and communicative teaching ideas for “milieu-specific” pronunciation teaching which can be applied to a wide variety of ESP situations.

¹ Portions of this section have appeared in Morley (1988)
Outlining a Dual-Focus Program:
Speech Production and Speech Performance

From a philosophy of pronunciation teaching as an integral part of communication it is possible to construct a dual-focus framework as shown in Figure 1. The dual framework combines a microlevel focus on speech production (i.e., a focus on discrete elements of pronunciation in a bottom-up sense) and a macrolevel focus on speech performance (i.e., a focus on general elements of communicability in a top-down sense). Either the microlevel or the macrolevel can be given priority attention at a given time, or they can share the classroom focus.

At the microlevel (or discrete level) the focus is on contextualized modification of vowel and consonant sounds (and their reductions,

**FIGURE 1**
Dual Focus Speech Production and Speech Performance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SPEECH PRODUCTION</th>
<th>[A focus on specific elements of pronunciation]</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Pronunciation:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Microfocus</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Clarity and precision in articulation of consonant and vowel sounds</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Consonant combinations both within and across word boundaries, elisions, assimilations, etc.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Neutral vowel use, reductions, contractions, etc.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Syllable structure and linking words across word boundaries, phrase groups, and pause points</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Features of stress, rhythm, and intonation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Features of rate, volume, and vocal qualities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SPEECH PERFORMANCE</th>
<th>[A focus on general elements of oral communicability]</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Oral Communication:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Macrofocus</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Overall clarity of speech, both segmentals and suprasegmentals</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Voice quality effectiveness for discourse-level communication</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Overall fluency and ongoing planning and structuring of speech, as it proceeds</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Speech intelligibility level</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● General communicative command of grammar</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● General communicative command of vocabulary words/phrases</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Overall use of appropriate and expressive nonverbal behaviors</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* A focus on discrete features of voice and articulation.

* A focus on global patterns of spoken English.

THE PRONUNCIATION COMPONENT IN TESOL
combinations, elisions and assimilations, etc.); on the specific
features subsumed under the rubric of stress, rhythm, and
intonation; and on features of rate, volume, and vocal qualities.
Within communicative activities, specific attention is given to
stabilizing a student’s emerging abilities to adjust vowel and
consonant pronunciation and to manipulate prosodic and vocal
features *at will* with ease and accuracy, to express intended
meaning, and to increase intelligibility.

At the macrolevel (or global level) the focus is on the synthesis of
many components of communicative oral discourse. This
encompasses a variety of elements including appropriate and
expressive nonverbal behaviors, increasingly facile communicative
command of grammar and appropriate vocabulary, enhanced
ability to sustain speech (i.e., for fluent ongoing structuring and
planning of speech as it proceeds), as well as developing aspects of
overall intelligibility, discourse-level vocal effectiveness, and
overall clarity of speech.

**A FOCUS ON LEARNER GOALS, STANDARDS,
AND OUTCOMES**

Traditional pronunciation goals, by and large, exhort ESL
students to strive for “perfect pronunciation,” and/or near-native
pronunciation, and/or mastery of pronunciation. While these
aspirations sound attractive to many students (and their teachers),
the path to these high levels of performance is a tortuous one, on
both sides. The truth is that they are virtually unattainable for the
vast majority of ESL learners. In fact, there is a widely held
consensus that few persons, especially those who learn to speak a
second language after the age of puberty, can ever achieve native-
like pronunciation in that second language; Scovel (1969) and others
believe *never*. The factors involved in answering the question of
why this is so are many and varied—neurological, psychomotor,
cognitive, affective—but clearly, the current consensus is that this is
the case for most learners. (But see Hill, 1970, and Neufeld, 1978).

At best, perfectionistic performance goals turn out to be unrealis-
tic; at worst, they can be devastating: They can defeat students who
feel that they cannot measure up, and they can frustrate teachers
who feel they have failed in their job. How fortunate it is that per-
fected or native-like pronunciation is *not* a necessary condition for
comprehensible communicative output. In fact, it may not always
even be desirable. As Leather (1983) observed, in some situations
learners who do well in acquiring a very good L2 accent may get
mixed responses from NSs. He reports Christophersen’s (1973)
description of one possible NS reaction to too-perfect pronunciation in an L2 speaker may be that of “a host who sees an uninvited guest making free with his possessions” (p. 199). In another dimension, perfect L2 pronunciation is not desired by some learners who wish—consciously or unconsciously—to retain accent features to mark their L1 identity and to insure that they are not perceived as betraying their loyalty to their L1 community.

Pushing perfection issues a bit further, in addition to the fact that it is not a realistic expectation, nor a necessary condition for effective NNS communication with NSs or other NNSs, nor necessarily a desirable goal for everyone, there is a further concern here. Notions of perfection and native-like pronunciation may be imposing and perpetuating false standards, standards difficult to define, let alone uphold, because these are slippery concepts with basic questions of, What is perfect? and Which native speaker are we talking about? since everyone speaks their language with an accent. This is particularly significant today with many serviceable and respected Englishes existing throughout the world. In fact, in a cross-cultural communication intelligibility study involving 1,383 people from 11 countries, Smith and Rafiqzad (1979) report that a most important result is that “the native speaker was always found to be among the least intelligible speakers” (p. 375). Nakayama (1982) reports that in the business sector in Japan, some language training programs actively seek and employ NNSs as well as NSs as instructors in order to help the students become accustomed to English dialects other than British and U.S.

What, then, are reasonable and desirable goals? In view of the preceding considerations, four learner goals have been formulated (see Figure 2).

Perhaps a few further notes on intelligibility are in order, as it is a key ingredient in goal setting in new programs and a bit of a shift from traditional views. Like perfection and native-like pronunciation, the notion of intelligibility is a slippery concept. Judgments about intelligibility are strongly influenced by the listener’s preconceived ideas about NNSs in general (including their accent) and the personality and accent of any individual NNS in particular. Moreover, it is undoubtedly the case that an individual listener’s norms for what makes attractive L1 speech also have a core involvement here. Indeed, intelligibility may be as much in the mind of the listener as in the mouth of the speaker.

Chastain (1980), in looking at the general concept of comprehension judgments of NNSs by NSs, made some interesting discoveries.
He found that depending upon NS factors such as the NS’s linguistic tolerance, insight, interest, and patience, student language errors will be viewed as (a) comprehensible and acceptable, (b) comprehensible but not acceptable, or (c) incomprehensible (in the case of failure to comprehend). Chastain noted that while these reactions will vary from person to person and situation to situation, this does not diminish the importance of the contribution made by the listener in the communicative process.

An example of this is found in elements of the so-called ITA problem, that is, teaching difficulties experienced by some international teaching assistants in colleges and universities. The reported “foreign accent” or “unintelligible speech” of the ITAs is often the first complaint of their students, but pronunciation per se may be a problem that is more apparent than real: Consider Chastain’s observations about the role of the listener as well as the subtle (and sometimes not so subtle) elements of prejudice and xenophobia (Hofer, 1990) known to impinge on the judgments of some of the NS undergraduate population. (Recall the derisive speech labels reported by Beebe, 1978.)

Looking carefully at assessments of the “ITA problem,” Hinofotis and Bailey (1980) reported that out of 12 subcategories of problems, pronunciation was ranked first by undergraduate student raters as...
well as by TESL and TA-training raters. The two latter groups also pointed out that there seemed to be a threshold of intelligibility in the subjects' pronunciation. That is, beyond a certain point, as yet undetermined, pronunciation ceases to be a factor, but up to a given speaking proficiency level, the faulty pronunciation of the NNS can severely impair the communication process. This work points directly to the need for serious study of the intelligibility factor. The Speech Intelligibility Index in Figure 3 is part of a project exploring ways to identify both discrete and global features that impinge positively/negatively on an individual learner's communicability, with an additional focus on the role of compensatory communication strategies that may raise the perceived intelligibility level.

A FOCUS ON LEARNING DIMENSIONS AND INSTRUCTIONAL OBJECTIVES

Within communicative approaches to pronunciation teaching it is important to focus on critical dimensions of learning and to formulate instructional objectives that include whole-person learner involvement. Three important dimensions of learning are an intellectual involvement, an affective involvement, and a physical or performative involvement.

Information Objectives: Serving the Intellectual Component of Learning

These objectives relate to an intellectual or cognitive component of learning. Adult and near-adult learners seem to be helped enormously by attention to intellectual frameworks. Information objectives are intended to contribute to the development of speech-awareness and study-awareness in order to engage the intellectual involvement of learners in their learning process.

Language Information

Short, carefully selected pronunciation/speech descriptions and explanations help learners develop speech awareness and focus on modifications of specific features of (a) pronunciation/speech production, (b) pronunciation/speech performance, (c) intelligibility, and (d) communicability. Pronunciation/spelling information and analysis tasks help learners unlock some of the mysteries of sound/spelling interpretations and help them reduce inaccurate spelling-pronunciation infelicities.
FIGURE 3
Speech Intelligibility Index Evaluation of Student Communicability

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Impact on Communication</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Speech is basically unintelligible; only an occasional word/phrase can be recognized.</td>
<td>Accent precludes functional oral communication.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Speech is largely unintelligible; great listener effort is required; constant repetitions and verifications are required.</td>
<td>Accent causes severe interference with oral communication.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Communicative Threshold A

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Impact on Communication</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Speech is reasonably intelligible, but significant listener effort is required due to speaker’s pronunciation/grammatical errors which impede communication and cause listener distraction; ongoing need for repetitions and verifications.</td>
<td>Accent causes frequent interference with communication through the combined effect of the individual features of mispronunciation and the global impact of the variant speech pattern.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Speech is largely intelligible; while sound and prosodic variances from NS norm are obvious, listeners can understand if they concentrate on the message.</td>
<td>Accent causes interference primarily at the distraction level; listener's attention is often diverted away from the content to focus instead on the novelty of the speech pattern.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Communicative Threshold B

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Impact on Communication</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Speech is fully intelligible; occasional sound and prosodic variances from NS norm are present but not seriously distracting to listener.</td>
<td>Accent causes little interference; speech is fully functional for effective communication.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Speech is &quot;near-native&quot;; only minimal features of divergence from NS can be detected; near-native sound and prosodic patterning.</td>
<td>Accent is virtually nonexistent.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes on speech evaluation:
1. Elicit a speech sample of several minutes. The sample should be sustained impromptu speech, not just answers to simple questions or rehearsed biographical comments. The sample should be spontaneous speech, perhaps on a topic such as: (a) What are your career plans in the next 5 years? (b) What makes your life interesting? (c) What makes a happy family?
2. Try to listen to the speech sample as if you were an untrained language listener. Err on the conservative side, with consideration of the "lay" listeners whom the student will meet.
3. In a few descriptor phrases summarize the student's strengths and weaknesses in three areas: (a) use of vowel and consonant sound segments, their combinations, and reductions, contractions, elisions, assimilations, etc.; (b) use of features of stress, rhythm, and intonation, and vocal quality features, rate, volume, etc.; (c) features of general "communicability." (Use Figure 1 as a reference.) Comment on how each of these factors impacts communicative intelligibility, and assign a Speech Intelligibility Level (SIL), using [+] and [-] notations as necessary. Monitor student progress through periodic SIL reevaluation.
**Procedural Information**

Explicit directions and goal-related participatory guidelines help students develop study awareness; they help students understand what they will do, how, and why.

Students can develop a useful degree of speech awareness and study awareness in a surprisingly short time. Even very young students profit from a little information which can be presented in brief descriptions and simple charts and diagrams. *Simplicity, selectivity, and moderation* are the keys to effective use of both language information and procedural information.

**Affective Objectives: Serving the Psychological Component of Learning**

These objectives relate to the powerful affective or psychological component of learning.

**Learner Self-Involvement**

Pronunciation/speech study is most profitable (and most pleasant) when students are actively involved in their own learning, not passively detached repeaters of drills. Research has shown that self-involvement is a primary characteristic of good language learners. However, learner self-involvement cannot be left to chance; it must be actively shaped, early and continually, throughout ESL course work. Teachers and materials can help students become involved in the following four areas.

1. Recognition of self-responsibility. Learners can be guided toward taking responsibility for their own work not just by exhorting them, but by providing ways and means: (a) clear directions and explicit participatory guidelines so that students know the what, the how, and the why of their work; (b) carefully defined tasks, outcomes, and responsibilities for class and small-group activities; (c) substantive and sharply focused cues for self-monitoring and pronunciation/speech modification.

2. Development of self-monitoring skills. Self-monitoring can begin as gentle consciousness-raising with the goal of helping students develop speech awareness, self-observation skills, and a positive attitude toward them: (a) by giving concrete suggestions for monitoring (i.e., observing) their own speech on one or two production or performance points at a time; (b) by helping them...
develop a simple self-rehearsal technique—talking to yourself and listening to yourself—as the way to self-monitor; (c) by helping them shift gradually from the dependent mode of teacher-monitoring (in imitative practice and guided self-practice) to the independent mode of self-monitoring (in independent rehearsed practice and extemporaneous speaking practice).

3. Development of speech modification skills. Negative feelings about correction as a bad thing, a punishment, need to be eliminated. (Actually, I like to substitute the word modification for correction). And, of course, it is the learner, not the teacher, who modifies (i.e., corrects) pronunciation. It is important to help learners develop a positive understanding of roles: the student role is to modify (i.e., adjust, alter, correct) a microlevel or macrolevel feature of speech/pronunciation; the teacher role is to give cues to help the student identify what, where, and how to modify and to give support, encouragement, and constructive feedback. From the first, it is useful for teachers to shift from repeated modeling to cueing for student modification.

4. Recognition of self-accomplishment. Improvement is a gradual process with much variability, neither an overnight phenomenon, nor an overall development, and it may be difficult for learners to perceive changes in speech patterns. It is important for learners to become aware of small successes in modifying features of pronunciation/speech in a given task. Many teachers use audio and/or video recording and guide students in recognizing speech changes in themselves and in their classmates. Assessment of achievements should be based on degrees of change, not absolutes. The emphasis should be on self-comparisons over time, not on student-to-student comparisons.

A Comfortable, Supportive Classroom Atmosphere

In pronunciation/speech work, perhaps more than any other part of language study, a comfortable classroom atmosphere is essential for maximum achievement. Classroom interactions need to be enjoyable and supportive with a focus on strengths as well as weaknesses. The learning climate needs to be one where even the most retiring (and the most unintelligible) students can lose their self-consciousness and embarrassment about “sounding funny” as
they work to modify pronunciation/speech features of their oral communication skill.

1. Supportive teacher/student interactions. (See the section below on teacher involvement.)

2. Supportive student/student interactions. The Speech Intelligibility Index can be very useful in helping students assess their own strengths and weaknesses and those of others. Pair and small-group work with audio- or videotape analysis of specified speech production and/or speech performance features can be very effective, but it is essential that critiquing be constructive, not destructive, with an emphasis on positive features as well as features that need modification.

**Practice Objectives: Serving the Physical or Performative Component of Learning**

These objectives relate to the *physical* or performative component of speech/pronunciation study.

**Pronunciation/Speech Practice**

For maximum effect, pronunciation/speech instruction must go far beyond imitation; it calls for a mix of practice activities. Three kinds of speech practice can be included from the very beginning: imitative practice, as needed (dependent practice); rehearsed practice (guided self-practice and independent self-practice); extemporaneous speaking practice (guided and independent self-practice). (See also the section below on instructional planning.)

**Pronunciation-Oriented Listening Practice**

Specialized speech-oriented listening tasks can help learners develop their auditory perception, their discriminative listening skills for dimensions of pronunciation/speech communicability, and their overall aural comprehension of English. Attention needs to be given to prosodic features and vocal features including the fast speech phenomena found in authentic speech patterns as well as vowel and consonant sounds and their combinations.

**Spelling-Oriented Pronunciation Practice**

It is essential that ESL students learn to relate spoken English and written English quickly and accurately if they are to become truly
literate in English. A variety of kinds of sound/spelling work can prepare them to do this. Learner awareness of spelling patterns as cues to stress/rhythm patterning can be tremendously useful. (See W. Dickerson, 1989 and elsewhere, for extensive work in this area.)

A FOCUS ON THE LEARNER AND LEARNING INVOLVEMENT

Research on learner strategies, that is those measures (either tutored or untutored) which a learner undertakes to facilitate his or her own language learning, has been reported by Stern (1975), Rubin (1975), Naiman et al. (1978), Wenden and Rubin (1987), O’Malley and Chamot (1989), and Oxford (1990). Among the strategies found to be most successful for learners is self-involvement in the learning process. How can a goal of learner self-involvement be reached in the pronunciation teaching process?

Learner Awarenesses and Attitudes

Adult learners seem to benefit most when they are involved, consciously, in the speech modification process as they work to become intelligible, communicative, confident speakers of English. Teachers can assist learners in developing useful awarenesses and attitudes, including those listed in Figure 4.

FIGURE 4
Learner Awarenesses and Attitudes

1. Speech awareness
2. Self-awareness of features of speech production and speech performance
3. Self-observation skills and a positive attitude toward self-monitoring processes
4. Speech-modification skills (i.e., self-“correction”) and the elimination of negative feelings that correction is a punitive thing
5. Awareness of the learner role as one of a “speech performer” modifying, adjusting, or altering a feature of speech/pronunciation, and the teacher role as one of assisting students as a “speech coach” who gives suggestions and cues for speech modification, support, encouragement, and constructive feedback
6. A sense of personal responsibility for one’s own learning, not only for immediate educational and occupational needs, but for future career, social, and personal goals
7. A feeling of pride in one’s own accomplishments
8. Building a personal repertoire of speech monitoring and modification skills in order to continue to improve speaking effectiveness in English when the formal instructional program is finished

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TESOL QUARTERLY
A FOCUS ON THE TEACHER AND TEACHER INVOLVEMENT

Programs that are committed to helping learners modify pronunciation/speech patterns and develop effective communicable speech skill often reflect a philosophy of learner/teacher partnership. In pronunciation work, perhaps more than in any other facet of second language instruction, clearly the teacher doesn’t “teach,” but facilitates learning in a very special learner-centered way.

The Teacher as Pronunciation/Speech “Coach”

In programs with the partnership philosophy, the role of the teacher is viewed as one of assisting learners something like a coach, a speech coach, a pronunciation coach. The work of a pronunciation/speech coach can be viewed as similar to that done by a debate coach, a drama coach, a voice coach, a music coach, or even a sports coach. A coach characteristically supplies information, gives models from time to time, offers cues, suggestions and constructive feedback about performance, sets high standards, provides a wide variety of practice opportunities, and overall supports and encourages the learner.

The pronunciation/speech coach has the critical role of monitoring and guiding modifications of spoken English at two levels, as noted earlier: (a) speech production (i.e., the microlevel) and (b) speech performance (i.e., the macrolevel). Note again that articulatory phonetics is not abandoned, but takes a place as one part in the larger communicative picture of getting the message across.

The teacher-as-coach has a challenging task made up of diverse responsibilities, including those listed in Figure 5.

A FOCUS ON THE INSTRUCTIONAL PLANNING

This final portion will look at instructional planning for a pronunciation/speech curriculum that encompasses (a) a cognitive dimension, with attention to selected information about both language and study procedures, as appropriate; (b) an affective dimension, with encouragement of learner self-involvement and self-monitoring, and a classroom atmosphere which is positive and supportive; and (c) a practice dimension with speaking tasks and activities through which learners can work toward modifying pronunciation/speech patterns in spoken English. The discussion will focus on specifics of the practice objective.

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FIGURE 5
Teacher-as-Coach Responsibilities

1. Conducting pronunciation/speech diagnostic analyses, and choosing and prioritizing those features that will make the most noticeable impact on modifying the speech of each learner toward increased intelligibility
2. Helping students set both long-range and short-term goals
3. Designing program scope and sequence for an entire group of learners; designing personalized programming for each individual learner in the group
4. Developing a variety of instructional formats, modes, and modules (e.g., whole-class instruction, small-group work, individual one-on-one tutorial sessions; prerecorded audio and/or video self-study materials; both in-class and out-of-class self-study rehearsal recordings in audio and/or video formats; work with new computer program speech analysis systems, and more). Overall, providing genuine speech task activities for practice situated in real contexts and carefully chosen simulated contexts
5. Planning out-of-class field-trip assignments in pairs or small groups for real-world extemporaneous speaking practice, with panel discussions as follow-up
6. Structuring in-class speaking (and listening) activities with invited NS and NNS guests participating
7. Providing models, cues, and suggestions for modifications of elements in the speech patterning for each student
8. Monitoring learners’ speech production and speech performance at all times, and assessing pattern changes, as an ongoing part of the program
9. Encouraging student speech awareness and realistic self-monitoring
10. Always supporting each learner in his or her efforts, be they wildly successful or not so successful

The Challenge of Fulfilling the Practice/Performance Objective

Some Questions About Practice

The big challenge pronunciation/speech teachers face lies in fulfilling the practice objective by providing meaningful and productive speaking experiences within which learners can monitor and modify their speech patterns without disrupting communication. Questions of what to practice, how to practice, and how much to practice must be faced. Moreover, the question of why learners should practice needs to be examined through two related questions, Does practice work? and if so, How can we evaluate the impact of practice on changes or improvement?

A Carry-Over Consideration

How can we determine how much practice will bring about modifications that will carry over into the learner’s speaking experiences in myriad domains outside the classroom? How does practice relate to students’ needs, especially those students who
clearly must have effective instructional assistance in order to alter speech patterns which are virtually unintelligible to speech patterns which are functionally intelligible? As a working guideline for the present, three modes of practice are presented here.

Three Modes of Practice

A pronunciation/speech syllabus can be planned to provide a variety of speaking and listening tasks and activities using an integration of three practice modes. The three modes can be characterized as follows.

Imitative Speaking Practice

This kind of practice should be used only as necessary and, in fact, may be introduced as a short-term component within a rehearsed or extemporaneous practice context, especially with advanced or intermediate students. The purpose of the practice is to focus on controlled production of selected pronunciation/speech features. It includes contextualized practice (see Bowen, 1972, 1975; Celce-Murcia, 1983, 1987; Celce-Murcia & Goodwin, 1991; English, 1988; Gilbert, 1984; and Morley, 1991a). It can include self-access audio- and/or videotaped materials for individual use or for assigned pair and small-group study sessions outside of class as well as computer program speech-analysis systems that transform speech input into a visual display on the computer screen (see Browne, 1991, and Molholt, 1988); should not be used beyond the point where the learner can produce the given feature(s) easily at will, at which time the practice activity should shift immediately to rehearsed and extemporaneous speech practice modes.

Rehearsed Speaking Practice

This kind of practice can be used in a variety of ways as a practice mode in its own right as well as an interim step between imitative and extemporaneous practice. The purpose of the practice is to work toward stabilization of modified pronunciation/speech patterns (i.e., discrete-point features, global features, etc.) so that the learner can manipulate them easily at will. Practice can include oral reading scripts of a wide variety, either teacher-selected or self-selected or composed by teachers and/or students (e.g., simulated radio or TV broadcast scripts of all kinds; excerpts from famous speeches, plays, narrative poems, novels, role-play skits and
playlets, etc.; preplanned (relatively short) oral presentations of a wide variety, with topics self-selected); in-class dress rehearsal and final performance with audio- and/or videotaping (and feedback critique sessions either immediately or later); out-of-class self-study rehearsals or paired/small-group rehearsal study sessions with audio- and/or videotaping; one-on-one individual speech work-out study sessions with the speaking teacher (i.e., speech coach). Practice can move into the next mode (extemporaneous speech practice) by adding audience-participation in the form of question-and-answer and discussion interactions. (In addition, see the following for materials which can be adapted for both imitative and rehearsed pronunciation focus: Archibald, 1987; Maley & Duff, 1978; Stevens, 1989; and Via, 1980, 1987), for drama techniques; Graham, 1978, for rhythmic chants; Maley, 1987, for poetry and song; Gilbert, 1984, and Morley, 1991a, 1991b, for oral reading materials.

Extemporaneous Speech Practice

This kind of practice can be used with a wide variety of speaking tasks and activities, and is for the purpose of working toward integration of modified speech patterns into naturally occurring creative speech in both partially planned and unplanned talks (monologues). It can include small-group panel discussion presentations, both formal and informal (preplanned outside of class or planned relatively spontaneously during class time in small-group work sessions and presented immediately); audience-interaction follow-up dialogue sessions in a question-and-answer format; in-class presentations with audio- and/or videotaping; out-of-class self-study rehearsals individually, in pairs, or in small-group preparation sessions; one-on-one individual work-out speech sessions with the teacher with audio- and/or videotaping and feedback sessions. (Many speech activity texts cited earlier can be adapted for use with this pronunciation/speech practice mode including Brown & Yule, 1983; Bygate, 1987; Morley, 1991b; Porter, Grant, & Draper, 1985; Rooks, 1987; Ur, 1980.)

These practice modes move from dependent practice (with a model given) to guided practice (with self-initiated, rehearsed speech) to independent practice (with both partially planned and extemporaneous speech practice) with the content self-generated and developed by the learners to meet their personal educational or occupational needs.
PART 3: LOOKING AHEAD

It was the intent of Part 1 of this presentation to look at pronunciation teaching over the past quarter century, to review some of the patterns of change, and to identify some of the agents of change—that is, a relatively small but committed cohort of pronunciation specialists who are dedicated to the development of new instructional alternatives that can be programmed into effective course work. Part 2 directed attention to multiple dimensions of the pronunciation teaching process with a discussion of six major instructional features. This final portion focuses on continuing needs.

THE FUTURE OF PRONUNCIATION TEACHING:
THE 1990S AND INTO THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY

Optimism and positive developments in teaching pronunciation were featured in the two preceding sections. In this final segment optimism prevails, but attention must be turned to perplexing issues and research and development needs. As observed by many colleagues in references already cited, the needs for future explorations are many. A few are listed here.

1. A need to equip ESL teachers (in both initial and in-service training) with a very specific kind of background in applied English phonetics and phonology, one that gives detailed attention to suprasegmentals and voice-quality features and their forms and their functions in interactive discourse (in addition to segmental information) and one that stresses application in communicative approaches to pronunciation teaching. (As urged by Gilbert, 1984, Wong, 1986, and others, this is an area where communication between language teachers and linguists is critical.)

2. A continuing need for development of pronunciation/speech activities, tasks, materials, methodologies and techniques across the spectrum of imitative, rehearsed, and extemporaneous speaking practice experiences—that is, more of the kinds of things now available in some of the references cited above. (One tool now becoming an economic and practical possibility is self-study computer programming both for student practice and for assessment through the use of visual displays of speech parameters. As laboratory speech analysis and synthesis capabilities have become more accessible for instructional uses, Leather (1983) notes the potential for creative uses—while
guarding against misuses—is great. (See Browne, 1991; de Bot, 1980; de Bot & Mailfert, 1982; Gilbert, 1980; Molholt, 1988.)

3. Together with the need for continuing development of creative and effective practice experiences is the need for more definitive evaluative measures and methods to quantify changes and improvements in the learner’s intelligibility and communicability. (Celce-Murcia & Goodwin, 1991, stress student assessment as both formative, or ongoing, and summative, or final; Morley, 1991a, suggests the development of a Speech Intelligibility Index that makes use of behavioral descriptors correlated with impact on communication.)

4. A need for controlled studies of changes in learner pronunciation patterns as the result of specific instructional procedures. (This is a particularly difficult area for research because, as Pennington & Richards, 1986, have pointed out, there is not likely to be a one-to-one relationship between teaching and learning, since learning “is a gradual process involving successive approximations to the target language system over time in a progression from controlled to automatic processing” [pp. 218-219].)

5. Finally, a continuing need for research (as noted in the reviews by Leather, 1983, and Pennington & Richards, 1986) into aspects of second language phonology and the nature and course of development of an L2 phonological system. A review of these areas of research has not been the focus of this discussion. Information on a range of interlanguage phonology topics, and phonological theory and L2 phonological issues is available in the papers in Ioup and Weinberger (1987) and James and Leather (1986) and in articles in Language Learning, Studies in Second Language Acquisition, Applied Linguistics, and other periodicals.

CONCLUSION

Beginning slowly in the early 1980s and gathering momentum into the 1990s, there has been a growing movement of renewed concern for and excitement about the learning and teaching of pronunciation in the field of TESL. A major concern has been the urgent needs of several special groups of adult and near-adult learners who are seriously disadvantaged without effective second language oral skills, including intelligible communicative speech patterns. The excitement has been in the challenging work of expanding the horizons of pronunciation learning and teaching, redefining basic concepts (philosophy, learner goals, instructional objectives, roles of learner and teacher), and constructing communicative approaches
An increasing number of ESL professionals are engaged in studying issues and developing programs grounded in new perspectives. Much has been accomplished but much more development is needed. It is clear that pronunciation can no longer be ignored; today intelligible pronunciation is seen as an essential component of communicative competence. The challenge to teachers and researchers is to develop an informed expertise directed toward facilitating learners’ development of functional communicative speech/pronunciation patterns.

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*THE PRONUNCIATION COMPONENT IN TESOL*

Whole Language in TESOL

PAT RIGG
American Language & Literacy

This paper presents key aspects of the whole language perspective; describes examples of whole language principles in practice in elementary, secondary, and adult ESOL programs; and reviews recent whole language research on second language development.

WHOLE LANGUAGE PRINCIPLES

The term whole language has become a popular, even bandwagon term for native speakers of English in elementary education and is beginning to be used in secondary and adult education (Goodman, Bird, & Goodman, 1991; “Special report,” 1991). Whole language is both a theoretical perspective and a movement affecting both instruction and research. The movement grew from an original focus on the teaching of reading to native speakers of English; it grew to encompass writing and then the processes of teaching and learning, which in turn involve the roles of teacher and student. What began as a holistic way to teach reading has become a movement for change, key aspects of which are respect for each student as a member of a culture and as a creator of knowledge, and respect for each teacher as a professional. The movement has had its greatest impact in elementary schools and with L1 students and is only beginning to affect secondary and adult education.

In the field of TESOL we are starting to see “whole language” in articles, in book titles, and in convention presentations. Where does the term come from? What does it mean, both to its originators and to us in TESOL? What effect is it having on our teaching of English to speakers of other languages? In this article, I propose to address these questions by summarizing the key points of the whole language perspective; describing some examples of whole language principles in practice in elementary, secondary, and adult ESOL programs; and suggesting how the whole language perspective affects research in L2 development.
Background

The term whole language comes not from linguists but from educators—people like Harste and Burke (1977), Ken and Yetta Goodman (1981), and Watson (1989)—who began using it in reference to how English-speaking children become readers. (See “Whole language,” 1989, for more detailed descriptions of whole language philosophy and history; see also Y. Goodman, 1989, 1991.) They asserted that language is a whole (hence the name), that any attempt to fragment it into parts—whether these be grammatical patterns, vocabulary lists, or phonics “families”—destroys it. If language isn’t kept whole, it isn’t language anymore. Harste and Burke (1977) first suggested the term when they described three different theories of reading: phonics, which presumed that reading was basically a process of turning letters into sounds; skills, which presumed that reading was basically a hierarchy of skills, including phonics, word recognition, and comprehension skills; and whole language, which defined reading as a psycholinguistic process (K. S. Goodman, 1967) in which readers interact with texts. Readers predict what comes next; sample cues from the semantic, syntactic, and graphophonic systems; and use their knowledge of the world, of the language, and their purposes for reading to interact with the text and to arrive at meaning (Harste & Burke, 1977).

These early leaders of the movement read the research in composition by Graves (1983), Calkins (1983, 1986), and Atwell (1987), and as a result, they enlarged their focus: Whole language proponents began to think of literacy as including both reading and writing. The researchers in composition were convincing in their focus on the processes of writing instead of on written products. Instead of looking at writing primarily as a means of demonstrating knowledge to a teacher, whole language proponents now viewed writing as a means of discovering for oneself what one thinks. In her address to TESOL in New York, Calkins (1991) moved even further, talking about how we use writing to create and recreate ourselves.

About the same time that the early whole language advocates were incorporating recent research in composition into their view, they began to read Louise Rosenblatt (1938/1976), who described reading as a process of transacting with text. In The Reader, the Text, and the Poem, Rosenblatt (1978) asserted that, instead of simply interacting, the reader and text “transact” (P. 17), and together create the poem. Rosenblatt also helped explain how individual interpretation of text (private meaning) related to a commonly accepted interpretation (public meaning), and she
distinguished between “aesthetic” and “efferent” reading (p. 22)—reading for the experience and reading to find out. For most whole language educators, whose interest had been primarily the reading process, this focus on literature and its interpretation was a significant step. The research into the reading of children whose first language was not English (Goodman & Goodman, 1978) had confirmed that these readers’ backgrounds strongly affect the meaning constructed from the page. Rosenblatt was convincing in arguing that we needed to look much more closely at what was being read—the text, at why it was being read, and at how the aesthetic possibilities could be explored. Today’s whole language emphasis on literature study (Peterson & Eeds, 1990) and an appreciation of multiple interpretations owes much to the rediscovery of Rosenblatt. As Edelsky (1991) points out, the recognition of the validity of different interpretations promotes pluralism.

Edelsky, Altwerger, & Flores (1991) offer probably the clearest description of what whole language currently is and what it is not; Whole Language: What’s the Difference? opens with “First and foremost, whole language is a professional theory, an explicit theory in practice. . . . Whole language weaves together a theoretical view of language, language learning, and learning into a particular stance on education” (p. 7). It is not a method, nor a collection of strategies, techniques, or materials although certain approaches and materials are characteristic of whole language classes.

Principles of Knowledge and of Language

This “professional theory in practice” is based in part on the belief that knowledge is socially constructed, rather than received or discovered. Traditionally, formal education has been viewed as a matter of transferring knowledge from the teacher’s head and from textbooks into the students’ heads. But if knowledge is constructed, there is no single right answer, either in the text or the teacher. More, the teacher, rather than transmitting knowledge to the students, collaborates with them to create knowledge. This is the foundation for the whole language emphasis on student choice and on collaboration.

A second basic premise is that the major purpose of language is the creation and communication of meaning. We use language to think: In order to discover what we know, we sometimes write, perhaps talk to a friend, or mutter to ourselves silently. We can think in other ways (for example, you can visualize Picasso’s Guernica or recall the first notes of Beethoven’s Fifth Symphony), but language is our primary way of creating meaning. Similarly, language is our

WHOLE LANGUAGE IN TESOL 523
primary means of communicating to others. An obvious corollary of this is the assertion that language is, always used purposefully. TESOL professionals who are accustomed to functional syllabi easily understand and accept this corollary: They recognize the myriad functions of language and they may use those functions as the basis for organizing the information they present to students learning English as an additional language. An important difference between the whole language and the functional ESL curriculum is that the whole language curriculum demands that language functions always be authentic, always be meaningful. That is, an ESL class might practice some language used in apologies, even though no one in class is really trying to apologize to anyone else. A whole language perspective requires an authentic, “real” situation in which one person truly needs to apologize to another. (See Edelsky, 1987, for a full discussion of authenticity.)

Real is a byword in whole language classes. Notwithstanding the difficulties in defining authenticity, a commitment to real activities is an important component of the whole language perspective. Real activities are defined as those relevant to students’ interests, lives, and communities. Activities designed to practice behaviors or skills that will someday be needed are not considered real under this model: Why ask students to engage in practice runs when they could be working on something immediately and directly relevant? Materials too must be real. Too often textbooks used in grades K-12 are written by committees of people who don’t teach (and often have never taught), are purchased by other committees of people who may or may not teach, but seldom teach the classes which will use the textbooks, and are read by teachers and students in classrooms far removed from both publisher and textbook selection committee. Textbooks to teach reading, “basals,” have come under attack by Goodman, Shannon, Freeman, & Murphy (1988) and Shannon (1989, 1990) and others. These researchers have convinced many teachers and school administrators to use funds allocated for textbooks and consumable workbooks for trade books of children’s literature, both fictional and nonfictional. California’s decision to replace basals with a literature program in all schools statewide has given strength and support to teachers who want to convince their administration and school boards to try the same. Whole language programs require well-stocked large classroom libraries from which students can select what they want to read, both in free reading time and in literature study. In whole language classrooms students read real books.

Writing too must be real. The students are invited to write for themselves and for others, rather than just for the teacher. Research
on the writing of L1 school children (Atwell, 1987; Calkins, 1983; Graves, 1983) has convinced many teachers that it is the processes, not the products, of writing that deserve their attention. As a result, in whole language classes students select their own topics, their own audiences, and write for their own purposes and to their own standards. The writing workshop approach postpones the correction of errors to the prepublication step of editing; this frees both students and teacher to concentrate on matters of content, organization, and style. In a process approach to composing, students and teacher can look at successive drafts with an eye towards increasing clarity, or deepening mood, or using language more vigorously or artfully. Language’s “aesthetic qualities . . . the musicality, design and balance and symbolism that give pleasure to language users” (Edelsky et al., 1991, pp. 13-14) allow language users to play with language and to revel in the creative possibilities that range from jump-rope rhymes, through puns and limericks and songs, all the way to Hamlet.

Whole language advocates recognize that language is both individual and social. “Who and what we are is determined in great part by our language. Since we are all uniquely individual with an almost infinite number of different life experiences, our oral and written language often reflects those differences” (Kazemek, 1981, p. 1). Both where we grew up and which social class we first belonged to mark our speech; our education and our profession show in both our speech and our writing. One obvious application of this principle is the acceptance (not just tolerance) of nonprestige dialects. When writing teachers support their students in finding and using their own voices, they are putting this principle into practice.

Language is social. It makes a difference who says what to whom, how, and why. What is the social relationship of two people communicating? What are their purposes? What is the situation? The language used by a person on a factory floor expressing anger at perceived incompetence differs, depending on whether the individual is speaking to the supervisor or is the supervisor. Language use is always in a social context, and this applies to both oral and written language, to both first and second language use. Applying this principle to the whole language class results in paying attention to audience and to context: Both speakers and writers are urged to consider their audience, the person(s) they are addressing; both are reminded to consider the setting in which their messages will be received.

Part of the wholeness of whole language is the inclusion of literacy as a part of language. Because reading and writing are not
separate systems from language, in a literate society, using written language is as natural as using conversation, and the uses of written language develop as naturally as do the uses of oral language (Goodman & Goodman, 1981). The four language modes—speaking, writing, listening, and reading—are mutually supportive and are not artificially separated in whole language classes.

Many traditional ESL programs have separated the language modes, offering classes in reading, in writing, in conversation, in pronunciation, in listening. Whole language classes use all four modes, but may offer ESL students the opportunity to zero in on the aspect of language they most need help with. I remember a Yemeni seaman I worked with in Detroit years ago: Ahmed spoke English fluently with near-native pronunciation, but in English he could read only the most common of environmental print signs (STOP, McDonald’s) and could write only his name. Ahmed wanted to pass the Seaman First Class test so he could move up in his chosen profession; for him, tutoring in written English seemed the best option. We used his excellent oral English as the base; he dictated his text to me using the language experience approach (Rigg, 1991). Recently a Vietnamese friend of mine, a young woman who writes so beautifully in English that she’s been published several times, spoke to an audience of teachers about her language learning experiences; as I listened and watched the puzzled faces of the audience, I wished she had access to a tutor who would use her writing as the basis for work in pronunciation.

Principles of Teaching and Learning

The principles of knowledge and of language lead to principles of teaching and learning. Primary among these is the principle that curriculum and instruction need to be both meaning-centered and student-centered. Meaning-centered means that oral and written language experiences must be purposeful, functional, and real. Reading and writing activities must serve real purposes (e.g., to entertain, to convince, to explore, to excuse oneself, and so on). Choice is vital in a whole language class, because without the ability to select activities, materials, and conversational partners, the students cannot use language for their own purposes. So teachers “issue invitations” to students, offering a choice of activities and materials. Authenticity, as defined by Edelsky (1987), is necessary. Whatever the students are doing, whether suggested by themselves or by the teacher, is for their own purposes. If students are writing

1 Student names have been changed.
letters, for example, it is because they want to communicate through writing with the people they are writing to; the letters will be mailed, and (the writers hope) answered. They are not writing pretend letters to practice the form of a friendly or business letter.

Student-centered means building the curriculum in the class with and for the students (Nunan, 1988). A major aspect of the whole language view is respect for each student, with all that that entails in terms of respect for the student’s language, home, and culture. This contrasts strongly with the typical traditional class, whether elementary or university level: The standard curriculum in public schools is usually determined by committees of people who have never met the people who actually use the curriculum—the students and teachers. Curriculum committees at the school district level and at the state department of education level do not know any of the students; legislators are even further removed from the people their educational decisions most directly affect.

Related to the principle of respect for the student, and involvement of the students in determining their own curriculum, is the principle of respect for the teacher. A whole language perspective advocates mutual respect among professionals. Typically, in whole language programs, teachers meet as committees to decide on curriculum, on evaluation, and on the management of their school; they choose themselves what books will be on the classroom shelves, deciding themselves how to spend both book and nonbook funds. The training and experience of professional teachers best qualify them to judge what the students in their rooms need and want. Only teachers have close daily contact with the students. Only they are able to determine what materials and activities are appropriate for their students at any time. They know what to offer. Also, their choice is as vital as the students’; if the teachers don’t have choices, they cannot offer much choice to their students.

This principle of respect for the teacher, coupled with students’ obvious delight in student-centered, meaningful activities, has helped make whole language a large-scale movement in Australia, Canada, and the U.S. Teachers have joined together in peer support groups, often calling their group Teachers Applying Whole Language, or TAWL. These groups are loosely affiliated across Canada and the U.S. through the Whole Language Umbrella, which drew 2,000 to its first conference in the summer of 1990 in St. Louis, MO, and almost that many in August 1991 to Phoenix, AZ. It is not exclusively a grass-roots teachers’ movement, since it was started and is still led by teacher educators at various universities. These teachers and teacher educators have held “a whole day of whole
“Whole language” for the last 2 years at the national conferences of both the International Reading Association (IRA) and the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE). The movement has become so widespread that it has become a bandwagon: Now a wide variety of publishers and presenters have adopted the label whole language and are using it to market materials and workshops that 10 years ago were labeled back to basics. (See recent issues of IRA’s Reading Today newsletter for sample ads.)

One more indication of respect for the teacher is that teachers are increasingly recognized as researchers. Bissex and Bullock’s (1987) collection of case studies by classroom teachers typifies the sort of research whole language teachers are undertaking and publishing. (Whole language research is discussed later in this paper.)

**EVALUATION**

Whole language teachers often protest being required to administer standardized tests such as the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS), arguing that those tests do not accurately describe their students’ abilities, nor do they predict their students’ performance. Teachers question not only what standardized tests are testing but what they are teaching the students. In my state of Arizona, every child must take the ITBS every year, whether the child is a speaker of English, Spanish, Navajo, or any of the several other languages in the state. (English arrived in Arizona about 150 years after Spanish and thousands of years after First Nation languages.) Teachers in several schools report horror stories of children becoming physically ill from the stress of taking the ITBS. They also tell bitterly funny stories of instances in which the ITBS score indicated a child could not do something—simple addition, for example—when the teacher had ample evidence that the child could. My own favorite story came from a member of a local school board who had insisted on basing teachers’ and principals’ salaries on schools’ ITBS scores: This man’s daughter received one of the lowest ITBS scores in the district—she had lost her place on the answer sheet.

Evaluation, like curriculum, needs to be meaning-centered and student-centered. Assessment and evaluation of whole language education must itself be holistic (Goodman, Goodman, & Hood, 1989; Harp, 1991). We cannot assess growth by using standardized or criterion-referenced tests which measure isolated, partial, or purposeless language skills (Taylor, 1990). Whole language classrooms typically use student self-evaluation as part of ongoing and informal assessment which allows the instructor and student to document growth and to plan for future instruction. Because
students themselves establish their goals, students themselves monitor their progress (Brindley, 1986). Holistic assessment in grades K-12 takes place with teachers keeping narrative records of their “kidwatching” (Y. Goodman, 1985) and portfolios of student writing and reading. Teachers’ records are based on conferring with the students about their reading and writing, noting difficulties, efficient strategies, personal goals, types of texts they need or want to read and write, and so on; preparing a checklist of specific things that the teacher and the student want to accomplish during a specific time period; collecting samples of a student’s reading (perhaps on tape, using some type of miscue analysis) and writing and charting growth over time. (Kazemek, 1989, p. 5)

WHOLE LANGUAGE IN ESOL CONTEXTS
Elementary Education

The preceding discussions have referred to L1 speakers. Do whole language principles hold true in L2 learning? Whole language advocates believe they do, citing two arguments:

1. L2 can develop much as does L1. L2 classes should offer a language-nurturing environment, paying attention to doing things with language rather than to language itself (Krashen & Terrell, 1983). This includes literacy as well as oral language.

2. L2, like L1, develops through interaction with peers, rather than through imitation of a teacher’s model or through formal study. The holistic ESOL class develops a strong sense of community in the class and school, and uses a variety of collaborative learning activities.

The most obvious place to find whole language in ESOL practice is in elementary classrooms in schools where many of the children speak English as an additional language. Else Hamayan (personal communication, 1988) calls these students “potentially English proficient (PEP)” kids—in contrast to the U.S. government’s labeling of them as limited English proficient. I find the terms LEP and limited speakers derogatory; alternatively, one might label limited English speakers those handicapped by monolingualism, people limited to English.

In elementary schools with PEP students, there are two whole language approaches which do not pull out the PEP students from their grade-level classrooms for ESL instruction. The first approach integrates L2 with L1 students and supplies ESL assistance in the class. McCloskey’s (1988) multicultural curriculum for grades K–6,
English Everywhere designed for the Dallas school system, exemplifies this approach. Enright and McCloskey's Integrating English (1988) is probably the best-known current text for teachers who want to integrate PEP students into multicultural classes and at the same time integrate content-area subjects into thematic units. An example of a school which puts this into practice is Fair Oaks in Redwood City, California. The teachers who work there have documented the changes of this bilingual school in Becoming a Whole Language School (Bird, 1987).

The second major approach offers academic instruction in L1, with ESL taught more implicitly than explicitly. This approach is suitable for bilingual programs in which all nonnative speakers of English share one home language.

Both approaches can be seen at Machan School in Phoenix, Arizona. The school has about 800 students in grades K-6, most of whom qualify as “at-risk” for both state and federal assistance: Ninety percent receive free lunch (an indicator of low income); school scores on the state-required Iowa Test of Basic Skills were lowest in the district in 1989 and 1990; over half of the students speak Spanish as a home language. For the last 3 years, the school has been receiving special state funds for a K-3 bilingual project. As the external evaluator of that project for the past 2 years, I visited Machan School frequently, sitting in on classes, observing and interacting with students, teachers, staff, and community members. I believe it is an excellent example of whole language in an elementary ESOL context.

Machan’s principal, Lyn Davey, and the K-3 project director, Kelly Draper, share a whole language view of education, a view which includes staff and community participation in the management of the school. When Dr. Davey became principal 3 years ago, she indicated to the staff that she held a strongly holistic and collaborative view of teaching, learning, and administering, and she invited teachers to join her in implementing this holistic philosophy. As the school begins its 4th year in September 1991, the staff is cohesive, with a strong sense of community and of professionalism. If we could peek into various classrooms, we would see great diversity in teaching styles, but an almost unanimous philosophy of teaching, one that is meaning-centered and student-centered.

A Machan kindergarten class exemplifies the first approach—integration of L1 and L2 students in a multicultural class. Actually, it is two kindergartens; one team of two teachers and an aide collaborate to create one large class in two rooms with two languages in use at all times. The teachers use thematic units, which allow for the integration of different content-area subjects within
one theme. The human body was the theme last fall. Early in October, I watched Spanish- and English-speaking students work in pairs to outline each other’s body silhouette on black paper. The children cut out their own silhouettes and, throughout the next several days, marked with white chalk the different bones of the human body, looking at a life-size skeleton and feeling their own arms and hands to sense where the bones really were in the flesh. These chalk skeletons on black paper served as wall decorations for the school’s celebration of both Halloween, a traditional Anglo-American holiday, and the Day of the Dead, a traditional Mexican holiday celebrated on November 2. This typifies the sorts of activities that these students engage in: Science and art blend together as students study a topic very important to them—in this case their own bodies—with an amazing maturity for 6-year-olds. Throughout an hour, many students move easily from language to language, and the teachers respond in the language selected by the student.

The two teachers believe that it is important to validate and value not only Spanish and English but other languages, so although most of their conversation and reading materials are in these two major languages, the teachers bring in examples of other languages. In both of these rooms, as in almost all the classes at Machan School, students write daily in their journals, on whatever topics they choose, in whichever language is most comfortable (Peyton & Reed, 1990), and their teachers write back. Students read for pleasure daily, selecting from a wide variety of materials, from magazines through children’s literature. One of the children who began the class, as a monolingual English speaker now offers to translate English expressions into Spanish; Albert is very proud of his new linguistic ability. Fred wrote a story in English about his grandparents, who live in Mexico; he then rewrote the story in Spanish so that his beloved grandparents could read what he had written about them. One of last year’s students, now a first grader, has moved from using only Spanish to reading and writing in English, and doing it so well that her classmates say she is the best reader in the room.

The second approach uses the students’ home language for instruction. One Machan kindergarten exemplifying the second approach is just beginning to use whole language ideas. All of the instruction in this room is in Spanish. The teacher grew up attending Mexican schools and taught in Mexico until recently, so she knows all the songs, finger games, riddles, stories, and so on, that are appropriate for children of this age from Mexican culture. She began to teach in the U.S. only last year, and only then did she have
the opportunity to try any whole language ideas. I remember visiting her room in October: She was helping 20 Spanish-speaking youngsters learn a new song in Spanish. After a few visits, I suggested that perhaps the students could start dictating their stories to her, and could start writing to her in journals, rather than spending over half of their time on drilling of individual letters and letter-sound relationships. The teacher was quite skeptical. “How can they write anything?” she asked me. “They don’t know their letters yet.” But she tried both the language experience dictation and the dialogue journals, and within the month she was inviting me to return to her class to see the books her children were making. Sure enough, over half of these PEP kids had written stories in Spanish about their families or pets or friends, and were proud to pose for my camera with their very own books. The success of letting the kids write what they wanted to, using whatever invented spelling they created, in whatever handwriting they had at this stage, convinced this teacher of both the efficiency and the joy of this new approach.

In many of Machan’s kindergarten and first grades, the students are writing before they are reading. The kids are figuring out how text works by writing their own texts and by hearing literature read to them two to four times a day. The teachers accept the students’ texts, and comment on the meaning rather than on the form. One tiny girl who had recently arrived from Mexico filled each page of her journal with a picture of a house underneath which was her emergent writing—lines and circles: ///O/O/O/OOO////. She knew that writing and drawing were different, and she could read what she had written to the teacher: “Mi mamá es en la casa.” Later she began to use letters of the alphabet, beginning with M, the first letter of her name.

In this classroom, as in many, theory follows practice. As teachers try some of the techniques or materials recommended by whole language advocates, they want to know why these were so successful, and so go on to learn more of the theoretical foundations.

Secondary Education

The whole language movement has had its least effect in secondary education. Of the 2,000 people attending the first Whole Language Umbrella conference, fewer than 500 represented middle and high school teachers; similarly, fewer than a quarter of those attending the second Umbrella conference came from secondary education. Secondary schools differ from elementary schools in many respects: the most obvious is the number of students each
teacher meets daily—easily 150 for secondary teachers, up to 30 for elementary. In part because of the number of students, many secondary teachers focus on teaching subjects, not students.

Secondary teachers typically face rigid curriculum demands: A 10th-grade English class in Virginia, for example, is required to study early American literature, including the novels of J. F. Cooper and the sermons of Cotton Mather and Jonathan Edwards. It demands every last ounce of a teacher’s power to drag 30 bored 16-year-olds through 45 minutes of reading and "discussing" “Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God”; in such contexts, there’s little energy left among teacher or students to contemplate an alternative text or topic.

Other pressures on secondary teachers to conform quietly are the tests their students must pass to graduate or, in some cases, to participate in extracurricular activities. In elementary school, children who fail an ITBS can still play on the swings at recess, and can often still move into the next grade with their peers, especially in light of research on the harmful effects of retention. But in many high schools, the motto is now No Pass, No Play and, in some cases, Low Test Scores = No Graduation. These pressures, along with the newspaper publication of average SAT scores and articles demanding more from teachers, all pressure secondary teachers into teaching to the test and following state- and district-determined guidelines very closely.

There are pockets of whole language in middle and high schools, especially among teachers of English or foreign languages. Secondary teachers are increasingly finding students from whole language elementary schools in their classes, and these students push for meaningful, relevant activities and materials, creating pressure on their teachers to question the assumption that all of their students should read the same thing at the same time and receive the same message from it. Some of these teachers manage to develop curricula with their students, curricula more relevant than the one developed by the state or district. Some secondary teachers are leaders in the whole language movement: Gilles and her colleagues, for example, wrote Whole Language Strategies for Secondary Students (1988) while they were all teaching middle and high school by day and taking classes with Dorothy Watson at the University of Missouri by night.

Wigginton’s Foxfire projects (1986), in which L1 high school students interview local elders and write up the elders’ special knowledge, have captured the attention and imagination of many English teachers across the United States, but only a few have actually tried using oral history of the local community with their ESOL high school English/language arts students. One middle
school in Tucson (Carrillo School) has used oral history: The bilingual students have interviewed the viejos in their school’s neighborhood, getting the old ones to tell stories of how the neighborhood used to be, and published these stories illustrated by old photographs and by student art. Our Hispanic Leaders and Celebrations in Our Neighborhood are titles of two of the books the students produced. In Fresno, CA, Waylon Jackson at Yosemite Middle School (D. Freeman, personal communication, 1991) publishes his students’ writing and photos, and has the books hard bound; at $7 a book, the volumes are considered bargains by the students’ families and friends. Currently, Jackson’s students are researching family medical practices and home remedies. This project will culminate in the 1992 class volume.

Sheltered English programs for ESOL students sometimes use holistic techniques. At Fresno High School, David Freeman (personal communication, 1991) consults in setting up courses with teachers from biology and social studies in collaboration with ESL teachers at the local high schools; he says the content-area teachers quickly recognize the fun of working with ESOL students, and they recognize that an experiential approach to concept development will work with all of their students. Freeman says there is a push towards student collaboration on “real” projects and a new tendency to ask discussion questions rather than display questions. Here, too, practice runs ahead of theory.

Adult Education

The term whole language is seldom used for adults learning English language and literacy. Participator is the term used by some educators of adults who want their classroom to be a community of learners, and who believe that student choice, student input into curriculum, and self-evaluation are vital. Participatory teachers often cite the teachings of Paulo Freire, from whom they have learned that literacy is much more than decoding someone else’s message. Literacy can be empowering and liberating because it opens up to adult students ways to understand and to alter their worlds (Freire, 1970; Freire & Macedo, 1987).

The Bilingual Community Literacy Training Project in Boston is a program in which Haitian Creole speakers become literate in their own dialect and then become the teachers for others of their community (Auerbach, 1990). English literacy thus builds on first language literacy. Two New York City union programs—one at the International Ladies’ Garment Workers Union and one at the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers union (Spener, 1991)—use
literacy in Spanish and in English to serve the needs of the workers, modeling both the importance of functional aspects of literacy and community involvement.

Gary Pharness' (personal communication, 1991) workplace literacy programs in the Vancouver, B. C., area are based on a writing model of literacy development. Both L1 and L2 speakers of English write personal narratives of their lives. Pharness uses writing rather than reading as the basis for literacy because he believes it is vital for adults to write their own stories and then to discuss these with peers. Through the writing and the discussion, the authors receive both an acceptance of their own histories and a chance to learn how their story is perceived by others. This has the same advantages as dialogue between friends: Ideas can be articulated and then examined. The writers not only become more literate but they become more confident about themselves as people, not just as workers. Increased self-esteem is a major goal of Pharness' programs, and many of the workers in his programs seem to be meeting that goal. One woman student after a year of writing in the literacy class decided to quit her job: “I’m tired of correcting my boss’s spelling,” she said. Her new job pays better, and the only spelling she corrects is her own.

Mark McCue directs Invergarry Learning Centre’s literacy program (Rigg, 1990). Like Pharness, a former colleague of his, McCue uses the writing of personal narrative as the basis for literacy. His students include both L1 and L2 speakers of English. As students enter the literacy class, they receive a black notebook and are instructed to write something, anything, preferably about themselves. Those who cannot do this can dictate something to McCue or an aide, and this language experience text substitutes for the student’s own writing and becomes the first reading material. Many of his students publish their writing in the school magazine, Voices: New Writers for New Readers, or in School Daze, the school newspaper, which is entirely student-run.

The Academy, a union program in the Midwest (Soifer, Young, & Irwin, 1989), publishes student writing, as does the Adult Literacy Resource Institute in Boston. New Writers’ Voices (not to be confused with Voices: New Writers for New Readers from which it derives in conception, name, and layout) are small paperback volumes from Literacy Volunteers of New York City, each telling an adult student’s memories. East End Literacy Press in Toronto 2 Available from the Lower Mainland Society for Literacy Education, 9260 140th street, Surrey, B.C. V3V 5Z4, Canada.

3 East End Literacy press publications are available from Pippin Publishing, 150 Telson Road, Markham, Ontario L3R 1E5, Canada.
also publishes student autobiographies, focusing especially on women’s stories.

These are but a few of many examples that could be cited of programs using student writing as the basis for student literacy. A. B. Facey (1981) taught himself to write so he could tell his story to his grandchildren; in the course of writing his autobiography he learned to read, but it was the drive to tell his own story, not to read someone else’s that propelled his literacy. So too, with many new literates in both L1 and L2. Programs which start with student writing are making statements about whose messages need to be told and need to be read.

By late 1991, Aguirre International is scheduled to have completed its study of model adult education programs in the United States, and may then have a lengthy list of whole language programs for ESOL adults.

RESEARCH

Holistic and naturalistic research into language and learning are part of the whole language movement; the research has been increasingly ethnographic over the last 10 years. The major characteristics of whole language research are:

1. A concern with the people being studied as people, rather than as unnamed subjects as in experimental research. Sometimes in whole language research, the people being studied are co-researchers. Instead of trying to discover how often X occurs in Y situations, whole language researchers want to know what people think and how they go about developing their knowledge.

2. A recognition of contexts as vital factors affecting results; these contexts include physical, social, economic, and political.

3. A willingness to accept the messiness that comes with opening the study to real people living real lives, seeking insights through personal histories and through reflections on those histories.

Illustrative examples are provided by the research of Read (1975); Ferreiro and Teberosky (1982); and Harste, Woodward, and Burke (1984). All interacted with and observed preschool children, trying to discover how these youngsters were thinking about literacy. The research of Read (1975) into youngsters’ grasp of alphabetic principles and the research in Spanish of Ferreiro and Teberosky (1982) on youngsters’ concepts of print both inform the whole language perspective on how literacy proficiency develops in
L1. The pioneering work of Harste, Woodward, and Burke (1984) with youngsters aged 3 to 6 demonstrated that emergent literacy—the barest beginnings of reading and writing by very young children—differed from the most sophisticated reading and writing of adults only in level of sophistication. The basic process of writing that children go through with their first scribbles is the same process an adult uses; proficiency does not alter the process. Similarly, a child’s first reading, perhaps of a McDonald’s sign or a brand name on a cereal box, is the same basic process used by sophisticated readers like subscribers to the *TESOL Quarterly*. Again, proficiency does not alter the process; it merely allows one to use the process more efficiently. The basic research procedure of all these was observational, not experimental.

Taylor and Dorsey-Gaines (1988) questioned the assumption that people of color living in extreme poverty were necessarily illiterate. They spent over a year with families living in condemned buildings in New York City and concluded that even under abysmal living conditions, parents and children read and wrote together. Their study typifies recent holistic research in its ethnographic approach and in its myth-debunking conclusion.

Whole language research with L2 populations has a history similar to holistic research with L1 populations: it has moved from an interest in literacy development to a concern with much larger contexts; the research procedures of interviewing and observing continue, but are carried out in more long-term projects. Ethnographic research has strongly affected whole language research, both in its methods and in its broad focus.

The relatively early study by Goodman and Goodman (1978) asked how school children read in English as a second language (the research was carried out in 1972-1975 and reported in Rigg, 1977). A major question of that research was, “Does it make a difference what the student’s L1 is?” Speakers of Arabic, Navajo, Samoan, and Spanish read two complete stories aloud, and their reading was subjected to miscue analysis. The conclusion was clear: It doesn’t matter which first language an ESL student speaks; the student’s ability to read (i.e., understand) material written in English is not determined by that student’s home language. The student’s background knowledge, on the other hand, does make a difference; if a story is culturally relevant, if it matches what the student knows about the world and about language, it is easier to read.

In 1984, the *TESOL Quarterly* published Hudelson’s “Kan Yu Ret an Rayt en Ingles,” a landmark study of a few youngsters developing literacy in English as an additional language. That study used repeated observations and interviews over time and showed...
examples of children’s work. Currently Hudelson and Irene Serna, a colleague at Arizona State University, are collaborating on a 3-year study of the L1 literacy development of Spanish-speaking students at Machan School. Both spend at least one day a week at the school, sitting in bilingual classes, observing and interacting with the children whose literacy they have been studying for 2 years now. They tape-record oral reading sessions and conversations with the children and photocopy the children’s written work. The case-study approach gives researchers a chance to learn a great deal about a few people, and the insights gained from that knowledge can inform future research, curriculum design, and instruction.

In 1986 TESOL published Integrating Perspectives (Rigg & Enright) which explicitly cited teachers as classroom researchers and which demonstrated one way in which researchers could integrate their perspectives. Chapters by Hudelson, Rigg, and Urzúa each focused on one aspect of a small group of Southeast Asian children in a U.S. school: Hudelson analyzed the children’s writing; Rigg analyzed their reading; and Urzúa reported on the contexts of school and home in which these children studied and lived. This integration of research was possible because the three shared a whole language view of language development.

In 1987 Edelsky reported 3 years of involvement and observation of a bilingual (Spanish-English) program at an elementary school. The volume is almost alone among research studies in recognizing and discussing the political context affecting educational efforts.

Whole language research with ESOL adults owes a debt to David Nunan (1988), who has carried out studies with thousands of students and hundreds of teachers in the Australian Adult Migrant Education Programme. Nunan uses questionnaires to discover teacher and student experiences and opinions; his insistence that teachers are the real creators of curriculum is based on responses from these surveys.

Nunan’s colleague Geoff Brindley (1986) has access to the same population of adult ESOL students and their teachers and has researched various means of assessment, many of which rely on the students themselves to evaluate their progress in language and even to evaluate the sorts of teaching they prefer. This manifests genuine respect for the student.

That respect is carried further in Auerbach’s (1991) description of a participatory curriculum, in which teachers become cocreators of curriculum with their students. The topic of this reflective research is student/teacher involvement in curriculum; the methods of research are conversation, observation, and reflection. Throughout, there is respect for the people involved, consideration of the
WHOLE LANGUAGE IN THE FUTURE?

Pendulums swing. Two forces threaten whole language teaching as it has been described here:

1. As *whole language* becomes a bandwagon term, it is used to mean a great many things, including the very ideas whole language developed in opposition to. Unfortunately, it can no longer always be assumed to refer to a philosophy of education that prizes holistic, natural ideas and respects the individual.

2. The current political situation in the U.S. bodes ill for all educational programs, but particularly for those that can be labeled liberal.

Despite strong pressures on the whole language movement to transform into yet another ineffective attempt at reform, I predict that the teachers who have learned to respect themselves and their colleagues as professionals, and their students as collaborators in building and disseminating knowledge will continue to work in the schools and will continue to demonstrate to their students, their colleagues, their administration, and their community that the best of the whole language perspective makes for the best education.

THE AUTHOR

Pat Rigg has a small consulting firm, American Language & Literacy, in Tucson, AZ. She has a longtime interest in literacy for both L1 and L2 speakers. Rigg edits TESOL'S *Adult Education Newsletter* and chairs the NCTE/TESOL Liaison Committee. She is coeditor (with V. G. Allen) of *When They Don't All Speak English* (NCTE, 1989).

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