HEINLE & HEINLE

Introducing

COLLABORATIONS

Jann Huizenga, Gail Weinstein-Shr, and Jean Bernard-Johnson

A New five-level series designed for Adult ESL learners.

Based on authentic stories written by student newcomers to North America, Collaborations fosters active participation and takes an affective approach to learning English.

Available NOW • Beginning 1 & 2 and Intermediate 1
Coming in 1996 • Literacy and Intermediate 2
Please call us for more information.

20 PARK PLAZA • BOSTON, MA 02116 • 800-278-2574
## ARTICLES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Coping Strategies of ESL Students in Writing Tasks Across the Curriculum</td>
<td>235</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ilona Leki</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Closer Look at Learner Strategies, L2 Proficiency, and Gender</td>
<td>261</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John M. Green and Rebecca Oxford</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Interaction Between Task and Meaning Construction in EFL Reading Comprehension Tests</td>
<td>299</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Claire M. Gordon and David Hanauer</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Use of Modal Verbs as a Reflection of Cultural Values</td>
<td>325</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eli Hinkel</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On the Notion of Culture in Second Language Lectures</td>
<td>345</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Flowerdew and Lindsay Miller</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## THE FORUM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Privileged ESL University Students</td>
<td>375</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stephanie Vandrick</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## RESEARCH ISSUES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Methodological Challenges in Discourse Analysis</td>
<td>381</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From Sentences to Discourses, Ethnography to Ethnographic:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conflicting Trends in TESOL Research</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ron Scollon</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Ideas for Research on Classroom Discourse</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Courtney B. Cazden</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## REVIEWS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Resources in Language Teacher Education</td>
<td>389</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Practice of English Language Teaching</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeremy Harmer</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching by Principles: An Interactive Approach to Language Pedagogy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H. Douglas Brown</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language Teaching Methodology: A Textbook for Teachers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David Nunan</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflective Teaching in Second Language Classrooms</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jack C. Richards and Charles Lockart</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reviewed by Mary Lee Scott and Cheryl Brown</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In Our Own Words: A Guide with Readings for Student Writers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rebecca Mlynarczyk and Steven B. Haber</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reviewed by Tina Biava</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Work in Progress
Martha McNamara
Reviewed by Shalle Leeming

Daedalus Integrated Writing Environment
The Daedalus Group, Inc.
Reviewed by Carolyn E. Baughan

Instructional Assessment: An Integrative Approach to Evaluating Student Performance
Sandra Holmar Fradd and Patricia Larrinaga McGee, with Diane K. Wilen
Reviewed by Constance L. Walker

Gender and Ethnicity in Schools: Ethnographic Accounts
Peter Woods and Martyn Hammersley (Eds.)
Reviewed by Ellen Skilton Sylvester

Let’s Start Talking
George M. Rooks
Reviewed by Erin Chervenak

America Now: Short Readings from Recent Periodicals
Robert Atwan (Ed.)
Reviewed by J.M. Brennan

The Basic Oxford Dictionary
Margot F. Cramer
Reviewed by Kristin A. Weidlein

BOOK NOTICES
Compiled by H. Douglas Brown 405

Information for Contributors 409
   Editorial Policy
   General Information for Authors

Publications Received 416
is an international professional organization for those concerned with the teaching of English as a second or foreign language and of standard English as a second dialect. TESOL’S mission is to strengthen the effective teaching and learning of English around the world while respecting individuals’ language rights.

Information about membership and other TESOL services is available from TESOL Central Office at the address below.

TESOL Quarterly is published in Spring, Summer, Autumn, and Winter. Contributions should be sent to the Editor or the appropriate Section Editors at the addresses listed in the Information for Contributors section. Publishers’ representative is Helen Kornblum, Director of Communications & Marketing. All material in TESOL Quarterly is copyrighted. Copying without the permission of TESOL, beyond the exemptions specified by law, is an infringement involving liability for damages.

TESOL Journal is published in Spring, Summer, Autumn, and Winter. Send contributions to Christian Faltis, Editor, TESOL Journal, College of Education, Box 871411, Arizona State University, Tempe, Arizona 85287–1411, USA.

Announcements should be sent directly to the Editor, TESOL Matters, 2 months prior to the month of publication desired and must be received by the first of that month (e.g., February 1 for the April issue). Use Central Office address below. TESOL Matters is published in February, April, June, August, October, and December. Neither TESOL Quarterly nor TESOL Journal publishes announcements.

Advertising in all TESOL publications is arranged by the marketing assistant, TESOL Central Office, Suite 300, 1600 Cameron Street, Alexandria, Virginia 22314-2751 U.S.A., Tel. 703-836-0774. Fax 703-836-7864. E-mail tesol@TESOL.EDU

OFFICERS AND EXECUTIVE BOARD 1995–96

President
JOY REID
University of Wyoming
Laramie, WY

First Vice President
DENISE E. MURRAY
San José State University
San José, CA

Second Vice President
NICK COLLINS
Capilano College
Vancouver, Canada

Executive Director
SUSAN C. BAYLEY
Alexandria, VA

Treasurer
MARTHA EDMONDSON
Washington, DC

Donald Freeman
School for International Training
Brattleboro, VT

Joe McVeigh
University of Southern California
Language Academy

David Nunan
University of Hong Kong
Hong Kong

Barbara Schwarte
Iowa State University
Ames, IA

Sharon Seymour
City College of San Francisco
San Francisco, CA

Pat Spring
Chatswood High School
Sydney, Australia

Susan Stempleski
City University of New York
New York, New York
Editor’s Note

With this issue, I welcome the following new members to the TESOL Quarterly’s Editorial Advisory Board: Ellen Block, Zoltán Dörnyei, Sandra Fotos, and Vivian Zamel. I would also like to thanks those members who are rotating off the Editorial Board for their service to the TESOL Quarterly. They are Sarah Hudelson, Thom Hudson, Anne Lazaraton, Peter Master, and Rebecca Oxford.

This issue is the first to include the new format for Book Notices. This section now includes very brief descriptions of recent publications compiled by the Book Review Editor. Comparative reviews and book reviews are still welcome. Please consult the Information for Contributors section regarding the focus and length of such submissions.

Two other changes have been made in the Information for Contributors. First, in order to enable authors to assess the appropriateness of a submission to the Quarterly, the section on full-length article requirements now includes the manuscript evaluation guidelines used by reviewers in assessing manuscripts. Secondly, the length of Brief Reports and Summaries submissions has been increased from 3 to 7 pages to 7 to 10 pages to allow for more in-depth reporting of preliminary research findings or aspects of larger studies.

Commentary submissions to the Forum are also welcome. Such commentary pieces need not be responses to published articles but may be reactions to specific aspects or practices of our profession.

In This Issue

Several articles in this issue focus on learner strategies. The lead article illustrates the coping strategies used by ESL students to meet the demands of writing tasks across the curriculum. The relationship between learning strategies, gender, and L2 proficiency in a Puerto Rican context is the topic of the second article, whereas the third article explores various
strategies used by EFL students as they attempt to construct the meaning of reading passages in a test-taking situation. The focus of the next two articles shifts to a focus on the role of culture in language learning, one on the use of modals as a reflection of culture and the other on the role of culture in L2 lectures.

- Ilona Leki reports on a qualitative research study of five ESL students in their first semester of study at a United States university. The article describes various coping strategies these students developed to meet the writing tasks of their content courses, including relying on their past writing experiences, taking advantage of their first language and culture, looking for models, and accommodating and resisting teachers' demands. Leki found three aspects of the students' use of coping strategies especially encouraging: First, they came to their studies with well-elaborated strategies for their academic work; second, nearly all were given relatively easy writing tasks early in the term that allowed them to adjust to their new environment; and third, all of them were able to use feedback to shift strategies when necessary.

- John M. Green and Rebecca Oxford report on a study of the language learning strategies used by university students in Puerto Rico. Building on previous research using the Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL), the study relates strategy use to L2 proficiency level and gender. With both proficiency level and gender, only some items on the SILL showed significant variation. Those strategies used more often by successful students emphasized active, naturalistic practice. Green and Oxford conclude by suggesting two implications of their study for the classroom: first that strategies involving active use of the target language appear to play a crucial role in second language learning and secondly, that teachers need to recognize that particular strategies may be more suited to some learners than to others.

- Claire M. Gordon and David Hanauer report on their use of verbal protocols to examine the meaning construction of EFL learners in a reading comprehension test situation. The authors maintain that a reader's mental model of a text continues to develop throughout the test-taking process. Drawing on their work with 28 10th-grade students in two public schools in Israel, they posit that readers use the testing task in one of four ways to develop their own mental model of the text. Information in the text can be used to (a) integrate new information into an existing information structure; (b) construct a new information structure; (c) confirm an existing information structure; or (d) form a new integration of existing information structures. The authors close by urging teachers to conduct individual sessions with their students in order to gain a more complete picture of their students' processing of texts.

- Eli Hinkel reports on her investigation of the use of modal verbs in native speaker and nonnative speaker essays. Based on her findings,
she argues that nonnative speakers’ usage of modal verbs reflects the pragmatic frameworks and norms of their first language environment. The results of the study suggest that the usage of modals in native speaker and nonnative speaker essays appear to be culture- and context-specific. Specifically, nonnative speakers who had been influenced by Confucian, Taoist, and Buddhist sociocultural constructions and values employed root modals must, have to, and should significantly differently from native speakers on essay topics involving family, friendships, and traditions.

- John Flowerdew and Lindsay Miller report on their ethnographic study of academic lectures at a university in Hong Kong. Based on their observations and interviews, the authors posit four dimensions of culture that affect lectures in a second language context—ethnic, local, academic, and disciplinary culture. Each of these cultural dimensions is illustrated with data from their ethnographic research. The authors close by pointing out the value of their framework for those involved in the lecture preparation of both lecturers and students in second language contexts.

Also in this issue:

- The Forum: Stephanie Vandrick focuses on privileged ESL university students, urging instructors to assess their own feelings toward such students. In her article, she examines two major tenets of critical pedagogy—that education should empower and that teachers should not allow the classroom to become a replica of society—in relation to privileged students. She maintains that although it is important for students and teachers to respect each other’s opinions, teachers should engage students in critical exchanges about their values.

- Research Issues: Ron Scollon and Courtney Cazden explore methodological challenges in discourse analysis. They explore recent trends of and offer specific classroom suggestions for discourse analysis.

- Book Reviews: Mary Lee Scott and Cheryl Brown provide a comparative review of recent resources in language teacher education.
Call for Abstracts

Language and Social Identity

The TESOL Quarterly announces a call for abstracts for a special-topic issue on Language and Social Identity to appear in 1997. In this edition, we would like to provide a forum in which contributors interested in language, gender, race, class, and ethnicity can share their research and practice with the wider TESOL community. We are particularly interested in the way contributors conceptualize identity and what methodologies they use to address their research. We encourage submissions from a wide constituency and are interested in full-length, previously unpublished articles that explore social identity in relation to:

1. Reading/Writing
2. Listening/Speaking
3. Classroom practice
4. Curriculum development
5. Assessment and evaluation

In addition to full-length articles, we solicit short reports that address identity construction in specific sites, present preliminary findings of research, or raise topics for debate. Contributions from all regions of the world are welcome.

At this stage, we are soliciting two-page abstracts for full-length articles and one-page abstracts for short reports. For all submissions, send three copies, a brief biographical statement (maximum 50 words), a full mailing address, and daytime/evening telephone numbers. E-mail addresses would be particularly helpful. Abstracts should be mailed to the address below and should be received no later than:

December 31, 1995

Bonny Norton Peirce
Modern Language Centre
Ontario Institute for Studies in Education
252 Bloor St. West, Toronto, Ont. M5S 1V6
Canada
Coping Strategies of ESL Students in Writing Tasks Across the Curriculum

ILONA LEKI
University of Tennessee

Writing research has given us few accounts of the writing experience of ESL students outside the English or writing classroom. This article reports a qualitative research study of 5 ESL visa students in their first semester of study at a U.S. university. The goal of the research was to examine the academic literacy experiences of these students in light of the strategies they brought with them to their first academic experience in the U.S. and the strategies they developed in response to the writing demands they encountered in their regular courses across the curriculum. The results of this study give us an in-depth and detailed picture of this group of ESL students at the initial stages of acquiring discipline-specific discourse strategies not in the English classroom but while fully engaged in the struggle to survive the demands of disciplinary courses. In the tradition of qualitative research, this report is at the same time fully embedded in a narrative of these students’ experiences, giving us a picture not only of students learning to write but also of human beings negotiating the exhilarating and sometimes puzzling demands of U.S. academic life.

ESL language and writing classes have been the locus of classroom oriented research, case studies, and experimental design research for some time now. We have an excellent research base on the writing and the writing processes of both ESL and native-English-speaking (NES) writers (see Krapels, 1990, for a review of ESL student writing processes; see Silva, in press, for a review of differences between ESL and NES writers and their products). Research on NES students in higher education has, however, moved beyond the English classroom and followed small numbers of NES students into their disciplinary courses and has, as a result, given us both articles and book-length studies of writing demands across the curriculum and NES students’ responses to those demands (Chiseri-Strater, 1991; Conklin, 1982; Haas, 1994; Herrington, 1985; McCarthy, 1987; Nelson, 1990; Walvoord & McCarthy, 1990). In ESL, English for academic purposes
(EAP) researchers have also tried to give us an idea of what writing life is like for ESL students outside the ESL classroom and beyond the English curriculum (Horowitz, 1986 a, b; Johns, 1981). Leki and Carson's (1993) survey of ESL students' perceptions of their writing needs attempts to gauge how well EAP writing courses articulate with writing demands across the curriculum. But we need at once closer looks at individual students and broader looks not only at their English classes but at their lives as they negotiate their way through higher education once they step outside the safe threshold of the ESL classroom. Little ESL research reports on the classrooms ESL students enter across the curriculum. Prior (1992) examined the permutations of task and response in six graduate courses which included L2 writers. Johns (1991) closely followed a student and his successes in writing for his biology class and his failures in passing an institutionally mandated writing exam. Currie (1993) focused particularly on the varying requirements for a series of writing assignments in a business course. But for the most part, L2 writing research has concentrated on issues surrounding the teaching of writing rather than on L2 students and their academic literacy experiences beyond writing classes.

L2 researchers have also been interested in learning strategies for general language learning (what does a good language learner do?), in unconsciously employed writing strategies (as part of L2 writing process research), and in strategy training for language learning and implicitly for writing. Oxford (1990) and Wenden and Rubin (1987) extensively examine language learning strategies, and Rost (1993) has compiled a listing of these strategies and their perceived usefulness and teachability. Strategy training for writing has been either oriented toward determining what good writers do and then teaching those presumably good strategies to other less experienced writers (e.g., Zamel, 1983) or, at a more microlevel, aimed at helping students understand what an assignment is asking them to do and formulate ideas about how to get words on the page and organize them appropriately in response to the task (Johns, 1993). If we are to consider the possible role of writing strategy training in ESL writing courses, we need to have some idea of what these students already know how to do, consciously or not. The descriptive study here focuses more broadly on ESL visa students' lives outside the ESL and/or writing classroom and on the strategies they bring to their writing tasks across the curriculum.

Finally, the EAP curriculum questions the validity of training in general writing and general English language as a preparation for genre-specific writing (Connor & Johns, 1989). Yet persuasive arguments have also been made against attempting to teach discipline-specific discourses in EAP classes (Spack, 1988); surely, those who do not participate as conversation partners in a discourse are hardly in a
position to teach the explicit, let alone implicit, rules of that conversa-
tion to others (Leki, 1995). It is unlikely that ESL teachers or research-
ers interested in EAP support the notion that the mere forms of
disciplinary discourses are worthy subjects for teaching or learning in
EAP courses. That is, an EAP curriculum cannot legitimately teach
discipline-specific discourse but rather would seek to determine what
might best prepare students to acquire discipline-specific discourses,
what tools would be useful to them in their accommodation to the
demands of various disciplines. Yet we know little about how ESL
students acquire forms and attitudes specific to various disciplinary
discourses or how their experiences in disciplinary courses shape their
understandings of appropriate and inappropriate discourse within
those disciplines.¹

The goal of this naturalistic study was to begin to establish baseline
data of this type without categories preconceived by either the investi-
gator or the participants but rather naturally emerging in the course
of the participants' normal engagements with real assignments as a
part of their regular course work in classes across the curriculum.

Through this study I hoped to develop insights into the academic
literacy experiences across the curriculum of 5 ESL students in their
first term at a U.S. university and to see these experiences through
their eyes. This type of emit perspective on ESL students' experiences
is best constructed through the use of qualitative research methods
for data collection and analysis.

**METHODOLOGY**

**Participants**

Participants for the study were selected from among ESL students
enrolling at a large state university in the U.S. for the first time in fall
semester 1992. Approximately 60 students initially expressed interest
in participating in the study. Parameters for selection included no
previous experience with a U.S. educational institution and enrollment
during that first semester in courses requiring a significant amount of
writing as part of the normal course work. To assure some variety in
the students' experiences, the final selection reflects, to the extent
possible, differences in gender, home country, year in school, and
academic subject areas. The participants were 3 graduate students and

¹For the moment, all of these considerations leave to the side the important political issues
of accommodation versus resistance as articulated in several published articles over the last
few years. See, for example, Allison, 1994; Benesch, 1993; Santos, 1992.
TABLE 1
Coping Strategies of ESL Students in Writing Tasks Across the Curriculum

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Ling</th>
<th>Julie</th>
<th>Tula</th>
<th>Jien</th>
<th>Yang</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Country</td>
<td>Taiwan</td>
<td>France</td>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>China</td>
<td>China</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class status</td>
<td>Undergraduate</td>
<td>Undergraduate</td>
<td>Graduate</td>
<td>Graduate</td>
<td>Graduate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major</td>
<td>Business</td>
<td>Business</td>
<td>Speech</td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Political science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOEFL score</td>
<td>527</td>
<td>617</td>
<td>597</td>
<td>627</td>
<td>617</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English course</td>
<td>Required</td>
<td>Required but dropped</td>
<td>Not required</td>
<td>Required</td>
<td>Not required</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2 undergraduates. This distribution permits observation of strategies employed both by students being initiated into disciplinary communities (the graduate students) and by students whose familiarity with disciplinary modes of discourse in the courses they were taking was likely to be slighter (the undergraduates). Ling is a female undergraduate from Taiwan, a junior-year business major; Julie is a female undergraduate from France, also a junior business major; Tula is a female graduate student from Finland in Audiology and Speech Pathology; Jien is a female graduate student from China in Education; and Yang is a male graduate student from China in Political Science (see Table 1).

All of these students had TOEFL scores above 525, the minimum required for admission to the university. On the basis of the in-house placement exam required of all incoming students, Tula and Yang were exempted from any further work in English; Julie was placed into first semester freshman composition for ESL students (which she subsequently dropped); and Jien and Ling were required to enroll in a credit-bearing ESL reading/writing/grammar course at a prefreshman composition level.

Although all participants were enrolled in classes which required a significant amount of writing, not all classes in which they were enrolled were appropriate for analysis in this study. Julie was taking a Spanish class, for example, which required writing, but in Spanish. In other cases, participants’ classes took place at times when I was unavailable.

1In the interests of protecting the students’ privacy, all names are fictional. In keeping with qualitative research methodology, all participants signed an Informed Consent form informing them of their rights. During an initial meeting participants were fully informed of the nature, purpose, and procedures of the research, offered the opportunity to review tapes and/or transcripts of their interviews, and assured of measures that would be taken to insure confidentiality of any information obtained from or about them.
to observe them. Finally, in the interest of simply managing work load, as the semester progressed, I focused my attention more intensely on some courses than on others. Courses observed were for Ling, both Behavioral Geography and World History; for Julie, American History; for Tula, Structural Disorders in Speech; for Jien, Foreign Language Teaching Methodology; and for Wang, Comparative Government and Politics.

All of the students generally performed quite successfully in their courses and in their writing tasks during their first semester at a U.S. university.

Data Collection

Sources of data included interviews with the student participants, interviews with their professors, observations of the classes I decided to focus on for each student, and examination of documents including all written materials distributed for those courses and everything the students wrote for the courses (class notes, exams, drafts of assignments, and final drafts with teachers' comments and evaluations). In addition, the participants kept journals in which they recorded anything of importance to them that occurred in relation to their academic experiences. The extensive amount and the variety of data sources were intended to ensure triangulation of the information gathered to contribute to a more complex, richer, and thicker, as Geertz (1983) describes it, ethnographic description than might be possible through the examination of single data sources.

Each of the 5 students was interviewed in my office once a week for most of the semester. The interviews lasted about an hour each time, and all were transcribed. At least one professor (and as many as four professors) of each of the students was interviewed for approximately 1 hour; these interviews were also transcribed.

Data Analysis

In keeping with qualitative research methods, analytic induction (Goetz & LeCompte, 1984) was used to analyze the transcribed interview data. In this approach, the researcher returns repeatedly to transcripts or other documentation to reread and reexamine the data, searching for salient or recurring themes. Individual strategies (e.g., Julie's strategy of recopying the words of the writing prompt in essay exams in her history course) are then grouped under similar rubrics.

---

For academic or personal reasons, the participants were occasionally unable to meet with me. Thus, the total number of interview sessions with a given student ranges from 8–13.
(e.g., under Focusing Strategies) as a means of managing the attendant
cognitive load and permitting analysis of categories and comparisons
across categories. (For examples of comparable methods of data analy-
isis, see Chiseri-Strater, 1991; Cumming, 1992; Currie, 1993; Haas,
1994; Nelson & Murphy, 1992; Walvoord & McCarthy, 1990.) Analytic
induction was used to identify methods these participants used to
approach and complete the writing tasks assigned them over the course
of the semester (see below for complete descriptions).

Because so little research exists in this area, at this point in our
understanding of the types of strategies ESL students bring to their
writing tasks across the curriculum or develop in response to them,
we need a picture of the fullest range possible of strategies employed,
that is, a catalogue. Thus, each approach or strategy mentioned or
implied in the interview transcripts was noted. This mass of specific
strategic moves was then repeatedly examined for possible logical
groupings that might suggest themselves. To achieve a broad overview
for ease of comprehension, the widely varying strategies these partici-
pants employed were finally subsumed under 1 of 10 categories of
strategies suggested by the cataloging, although for any given assign-
ment these writers might employ several strategies either at once or
in sequence to complete an assignment. The following is a list of
the categories that emerged from recursive considerations of specific
strategies the participants mentioned.

1. Clarifying strategies
2. Focusing strategies
3. Relying on past writing experiences
4. Taking advantage of first language/culture
5. Using current experience or feedback
6. Looking for models
7. Using current or past ESL writing training
8. Accommodating teachers’ demands
9. Resisting teachers’ demands
10. Managing competing demands

Each of these strategy categories is discussed in detail below.

The type of in-depth investigation of a small number of cases repre-
sented in this study does not lend itself to quantifying data because
quantification would lead to distortion of the relative importance of
the strategies displayed. Furthermore, although the number of times
a particular strategy is mentioned may be meaninglessly small, that
strategy may have great repercussions, both for that student writer
and for our understanding of the range of strategies we need to be aware of and potentially to make other students aware of. See, for example, the discussion below on resistance as a strategy.

Furthermore, the advantage of a qualitative research methodology for this type of research is precisely the rich picture we achieve of individuals’ complex motivations, talents, energies, and histories as they struggle with varying external demands (the requirements of a course assignment) and more internally driven factors they must account for, such as their image of themselves as developing professionals or their decisions about the appropriate distributions of their time. Although further research employing different types of methodologies (e.g., surveys) would potentially add to this catalogue of strategies, the methodology employed here provides a rich beginning which roots our understanding in the human implications of particular strategies. Consistent with reports of qualitative research, narrative elements allow us to see how these strategies play out in real lives.

RESULTS

Case Profiles

Although different students in this study used strategies to varying degrees, they all also displayed the flexibility necessary to shift among strategies as needed. To show how these strategies played out in the actual lives of these students, the following is an account of the distinct and shifting constellations of strategies that each student elaborated over the course of the term.

I am Chinese. I take advantage. (Ling)

One of Ling’s initial strategies seemed to be a form of relying on past experience to complete assignments, and she seemed to remember past experience as consisting of going to the library and reading books. Her first assignment in her Behavioral Geography class (which examines how behavior intersects with physical space), where Ling was the only international student, required an implicit and sophisticated knowledge of everyday U.S. culture that was far out of the reach of a student just arrived in the U.S. for the first time from Taiwan. An appealing assignment for the U.S. students in the class, the task was to place a hypothetical group of people into fictional neighborhoods by determining in broad terms their socioeconomic class through an examination of certain personal characteristics, whether, for example, they drink Budweiser or Heineken, read GQ or Track and Field, drive a Dodge or a Saab. To complete the assignment, Ling’s
initial response was to try to rely on what had worked for her in the past, and in her interviews she repeatedly made comments such as “[I] must go to library and get some information, read some book.” In what book she hoped to find this information on who drinks Budweiser is unclear. Luckily, as the due date for the assignment approached, she abandoned this strategy, one which would certainly not have worked.

Instead Ling used a backup strategy. Though she was a shy, seemingly timid person, she successfully appealed for help to a U.S. student in the class who seemed friendly and with her help was able to successfully complete the assignment. Ling increasingly extended this strategy of appealing for clarification to her teachers as well. For example, her history professor announced that the first exam would be both short answer and essay. Not knowing what those words meant, Ling felt she could not properly prepare for the exams, and she approached him for clarification, as she continued to do with several of her professors.

But the strategy that Ling used most effectively was taking advantage of first language/culture by relying on her special status as an international student. As the semester went on, she attempted to incorporate something about China or Taiwan into every piece of writing she did, saying, “I am Chinese. I take advantage.” Thus, her term paper in Behavioral Geography became a comparison of Taiwanese and U.S. shopping habits. Her term paper in World History became a comparison of ancient Chinese and Greek education and this despite her history professor’s direct request that she not focus yet again on China. In this case she used a combined strategy of resisting the professor’s request and of reliance on her special status as a Chinese person, and it worked.

I like to make long sentences that are maybe not very clear, but my philosophy teachers [in high school] liked that. And so I prefer philosophy to French [language and literature class] because in French you had to be too precise. (Julie)

Of the 5 students, probably the most successful academically and socially was Julie, from France. Whereas Ling seemed to develop strategies ad hoc in response to needs and pressures, Julie came equipped with a clear, conscious approach to her work that served her well. Of particular interest are her strategies for focusing and for using past writing experiences. When Julie sat down to write an exam or to write a paper in response to a writing assignment, her first move was to copy word for word the exam question or the directions for the assignment on to the top of her sheet. She explained during an interview that physically writing out the words of the assignment or the writing prompts helped her to tune out all other distractions and intensify her concentration; it allowed her mind to play with the meaning of
the words in the assignment as she was preparing to write. Second, although she, like the other students, was apprehensive about writing in an English-medium institution for the first time and did not quite know what would be expected of her, she had been carefully trained in high school in French rhetorical style and said that if she felt disorganized, she could always fall back on the classic French three-part framing strategy for writing essays, that is, thesis/antithesis/synthesis—look at a topic and develop a position, a counterposition, and a synthesizing position. Although the rigidity of the structure hemmed her in and constrained the expansive style she preferred, it also appeared to her as a surefire organizational approach that would keep her on topic if she felt she was straying. On her first midterm in American History, she used the tripartite French style; when the graded exams were returned, she was one of only two people in this class of about 75 to receive 90 points out of a possible 100.

She also employed a strategy of resistance to the professor's demands or requirements. Her term paper in the history course was to be a focused commentary on a particular novel; the students were to discuss the novel's portrayal of southern U.S. women in the 1950s. When she read the novel, however, she found herself interested in only one of the women and wrote only about this one despite the directions to consider all the women. Although she expressed some concern about her choice, she nevertheless stayed with her decision, this time not following the these/antithesis/synthesis format nor the teacher's directions to consider all the women in the novel but instead rewriting the terms of the assignment to suit what she thought she could do best. Her grade for this paper was also A.

If you are a stutterer, you don't want to speak. You just avoid to speaking situations. (Tula)

Tula, the graduate student from Finland in Audiology and Speech Pathology, employed an interesting combination of resistance and accommodation to her professor’s assignments. Because of the way her writing assignments were structured, Tula was able to get fair amounts of feedback early on and to alter her next assignments to accommodate the professor’s requests. Tula’s first real writing experience was a review of two professional research articles for a speech pathology course in structural disorders. The teacher had developed an elaborate and carefully prepared description of the assignment, which included among other things, the requirement to list at least five of the researchers’ basic assumptions. Tula was quite pleased with the evaluation of her first attempt at writing, 16 points out of a possible 20, but realized that she had lost the 4 points on the section of her review that called for an analysis of those basic assumptions. On her returned paper,
her professor had written out in fairly great detail the assumptions she had expected to find there. For example, where Tula had written

Authors . . . used 16 subjects in their study. Nine of them were male and seven female. All the subjects had complete unilateral cleft lip and palate and they all were northern European ancestry,

the professor wrote “The . . . subjects were assumed to accurately represent the whole . . . population.” But Tula said that all she could tell from the professor’s corrections was that each notation had the word assume or assumption in it. When Tula went to see the teaching assistant (TA) for the course, the TA simply advised her to use the words assume or assumption throughout that section. When I asked Tula again after the professors’ corrections and after her conference with the TA what the professor meant by asking the students to identify the research article’s basic assumptions, she said she was still unable to grasp what the professor was getting at, but from then on Tula included in each article review the word assume or assumption, and from then on she received full credit for her answers. The strategy of complete accommodation had worked.

But of the 5 cases here, Tula had the most interesting and profound form of resistance as well. A major assignment in the Speech Pathology class was for the students to pretend for 4 hours that they were stutterers so that these future clinicians would know what it must be like to live in the world as a stutterer. Tula had initially been intrigued by this assignment and looked forward to discovering how it would feel to be a stutterer. But when she talked to me after turning in the assignment several weeks later, she admitted that instead of following the directions to pretend to be a stutterer for 4 hours and to report on the experience, she had simply made the whole paper up out of her head. Her rationale was that her nonnative English speech was embarrassing enough to her and probably elicited responses that were similar to responses to the speech of a stutterer; and besides a real stutterer’s most prominent speech characteristic is to avoid talking at all, and so that was what she did. Her grade for the paper was A, and she was particularly complimented for the fine job she did in documenting the exact speech characteristics she used in pretending to be a stutterer.

I’m the English teacher. (Jien)

Jien, the Chinese graduate student in education, was probably the most conscious of the 5 students about the strategies she used. For example, not only did she make a point of visiting her professor in her office during her office hour in order to get to know her better, but she timed the visit to come exactly 20 minutes into the office hour,
she said, so that the professor would have a little time to rest without
students bothering her immediately after her class the previous hour.

An English teacher herself, Jien was very much concerned to meet
her own self-imposed high standards of excellence in her first writing
experiences at a U.S. university. She repeatedly said things like “I need
to be perfect . . . because my major is English. I’m the English teacher.
I’m supposed to know this well.” The first assignment in her foreign
language teaching methodology class was to read a professional article
and write a summary and commentary on it. The whole paper was to
be only two pages. In describing the assignment, the teacher spent a
great deal of class time, perhaps 20 minutes, describing the American
Psychological Association (APA) referencing system she expected her
students to use. When I asked Jien during an interview about the
purpose of this two-page assignment, she said it was to see “whether
we can do research in this field.” She said, “to write this review article
I must digest what I have learned in the course, to read the textbook,
and maybe to find other reference books.” Adopting a strategy of
looking for professional models to give her an idea of what might be
expected of her, she turned to a review article from the TESOL Quar-
terly. She wrote elaborate drafts, recopying them carefully by hand,
moving paragraphs around, recopying again neatly, eliminating para-
graphs, and again recopying neatly. She finally produced five pages,
which she was then forced to trim to two because the professor had
been quite insistent about not wanting more than two pages. Her article
review was a very sophisticated and intellectual piece of work. When
her paper was returned, of a maximum of 3 possible points Jien only
got 2, with a point being taken off because she had used some non-
APA forms in her references. The whole experience was quite deflating
for her. Despite stereotypes of group-oriented Chinese, this woman
was extremely competitive and was disappointed that others had 3
points and she had only a 2. Furthermore, her attempt to take a
thoroughly intellectual, rigorous, professional approach to reviewing
her article was trivialized by the teacher’s response, limited solely to
the formatting of her bibliography. She was further demoralized by
her realization that to write their papers, her classmates had merely
drawn on their everyday experiences as teachers, parents, or language
learners. They had done something simple and easy, while Jien had
labored mightily, describing her own approach this way: “Before, I
thought if I asked to write something I think maybe I need to have
some theoretical base or something. Actually I avoid the simple things,
the easiest things, but chose the difficult things.” But once she heard
her classmates talking about their reviews, she said: “I feel, Oh, what
I have, I am really an outsider . . . I didn’t do what others do. I don’t
know!”

COPING STRATEGIES OF ESL WRITERS 245
Jien depended heavily on models as a writing strategy, on seeing “what others do.” But grossly overestimating what was expected was also a regular habit of hers, possibly the result of her sense of herself as a professional. Her main mode of operation was to overdo whatever was required and then to take feedback on her work but also feedback given to her classmates as a model for what she should do next.

When I write a paper, I have to think carefully, and when I make an argument, I have to make sure that it is a strong argument that cannot be argued against. (Yang)

Yang, the Chinese graduate student in political science, in his first writing experience in his first political science class in a U.S. university, was asked to read several articles and book chapters on international relations and write a critical discussion of them. When his paper was returned, it was criticized for not being more critical. Yang said that the professor wanted him to find out the weak points . . . and my own ideas based on my reading. It should be critical and it should be my own and so first I have to discover, you know, the weak points or something that author doesn’t make clear, or the author is not right.

He said he found that difficult, but not for the usual reasons we often read that Chinese writers have difficulty being critical, that they are reluctant to express their own opinions, and that they tend to depend heavily on the authority of others. Yang analyzed his problem differently. In his analysis, the reason professors could be so critical and he could not was because I haven’t done as much reading as the professor has . . . . a typical professor probably has read, you know, the book again and again . . . . He teaches same course many times and he reads it every time he teaches it so of course he has . . . more, better comparison between this author and other authors and this author’s ideas and other authors’ ideas. But for a student . . . our reading is much more narrow. Just narrow within the range of the reading list.

Yang also said his previous training had impeded him but not in the way we might predict. In China he had studied political science for 1 year with a U.S. professor and in that year had got used to the requirements of that professor. Then he went on to Zimbabwe to study for 2 years, and his first papers there were unsuccessful. Why? He said because they said you put in too much of your own ideas. We’re not interested in your ideas. Your ideas are not authoritative. That’s what they said to me. So they said, you must quote, basically, the basic thing is you quote and you cite the author. So I thought I learned that lesson. So the
first paper I did here, I did the same thing. I quoted a lot and I mentioned a lot of authors’ ideas and their points and I didn’t put in much of my own. I wasn’t critical, not much criticism, not much comments. So that wasn’t a good paper here. They have very different requirements.

Like Jien, Yang felt the assignments in his international relations class were practice exercises intended to initiate students into professional behaviors. So after initially and unsuccessfully using a strategy of relying on past experience, he sought a model in his political science teacher’s behavior, which he observed to be to establish the strongest arguments possible, to be sharply critical of arguments in the readings, and to look to the readings for both support and counterarguments. The requirements for writing here were radically different from those in Zimbabwe, but Yang was quickly able to shift strategies to meet the new circumstances. Once he was able to gauge what the new requirements were, his work received excellent evaluations from his professors in China, in Zimbabwe, and in the U.S.

Strategies

Analysis of the data shows that the strategies these students employed were both numerous and diverse, with different individuals relying on them to differing degrees. For ease of comprehension, I have grouped the strategies into 10 categories.

Clarifying Strategies

The participants used these to make sure they understood what was being required of them in assignments. This category includes

• talking to the teacher specifically to understand the assignment better or, in one case, to understand even the teacher better as a person
• talking to other students about the assignment
• asking for specific feedback on, for example, a project proposal before doing the project
• trying to interpret the teacher’s purpose in an assignment.

This last example includes Jien and Yang's attempts to extend their sense that the purpose of various writing assignments was to initiate them into their professions as English teacher and political scientist, respectively. Clarification in this case meant undertaking to determine and imitate what it is that English teachers and political scientists would do with the task assigned and how the assigned activity would fit into a professional life.

COPING STRATEGIES OF ESL WRITERS
Focusing Strategies

The participants used these strategies to concentrate their attention on the writing task in both narrow and broad ways. These strategies include:

- rereading the assignment several times
- writing out the essay exam question at the top of the essay
- or more broadly, reading books and professional articles in the content area to develop a sense of what-as yet uninvestigated research niche the participant (e.g., Yang) might be able to etch out for himself.

Relying on Past Writing Experiences

All the participants (including Ling and Jien, who had not been in school for some time) referred at one time or another to past writing experiences in their efforts to accomplish their current writing tasks. In Julie's case, her training in writing in her French lycée made her entirely confident that if she found herself unable to generate something more creative, she knew she would always be able to produce a prosaic, standard, acceptable text. Tula had done a great deal of essay exam writing in Finland and so felt relatively unconcerned about the demands of essay exams here. Yang's past experience with writing worked both against him, as he initially misjudged what was expected of him based on his past experience, and then in his favor, as he tried out yet another option taken from a previous writing experience to adjust to the new demands on him.

Taking Advantage of First Language/Culture

This strategy appeared almost exclusively in Ling's work. Having been out of school for 10 years, Ling had the most difficult time of all the participants in meeting the many demands that her course work made on her. Yet, as a Taiwanese, she had access to an entire body of knowledge and experience that her classmates and even her professors lacked and that helped to compensate for other linguistic and educational disadvantages. Once Ling discovered how well this strategy worked, she used it in every possible context.

Using Current Experience or Feedback to Adjust Strategies

Except for Julie, whose first extensive writing experience during the term was a history midterm, all the other participants had the good
fortune to be assigned a short, relatively easy writing task early in the term for the courses under investigation. The feedback on these first and later assignments helped guide their work. This strategy included not only feedback on their own work but the feedback that in one way or another they noticed their NES classmates receiving from the teacher, either publicly and orally in class or on their written assignments, which several of the participants managed to surreptitiously gain access to (by looking over shoulders and across aisles).

Looking for Models

Jien pointedly sought out models for her work, assiduously hunting for examples of successfully completed tasks similar to what she imagined was being asked of her. In one sense, relying on past writing experiences and possibly using feedback are forms of looking for models but this category is distinctive in that Jien looked to real world models of English language book reviews, movie reviews, and professional review articles as sources to actively imitate in their formats, organizational styles, and even wordings. Because such models were not provided in any of the courses examined in this study, Jien, as well as the others, was faced with the problem not only of finding such models herself but also of determining their appropriacy, which, in fact, she misjudged.

Using Current or Past ESL Writing Training

In the many hours of transcribed interviews with the 5 study participants, only one example emerged of a reference specifically to something learned in an ESL class or an ESL writing class. In China, Yang had had an English class with a U.S. professor who taught the students to brainstorm and to feel free in their writing to experiment with new words and expressions. Although both Jien and Ling were enrolled in an ESL class during the time this research took place, and although Ling thoroughly enjoyed her ESL class, even depended on it for comfort and friendly group interaction in an otherwise demanding and impersonal new environment, neither ever mentioned using anything from their English classes in any of the work they were doing across the curriculum. Julie enrolled in an ESL writing class (as required by

---

It is striking that with a TOEFL score of 627, Jien should have been required to enroll in an English class on the basis of her low scores on the university’s English placement exam. The explanation probably lies in the fact that Jien’s TOEFL score was outdated. She had been out of school for 4 years, caring for her child while her husband studied, and had perhaps lost some of her facility with English in the interim.
her placement exam scores) but dropped after 2 weeks because she did not feel she was learning anything new.

**Accommodating Teachers’ Demands**

This category was used to group two types of experiences. In the first, participants either did not understand the purpose of the teachers’ requirements, yet attempted to meet them as best they could, often only superficially. In the second, Jien in particular reproduced in written statements what she gauged to be her teachers’ positions, purposely suppressing her own opinions about language teaching because she recognized that they contradicted those of the teacher.

**Resisting Teachers’ Demands**

This strategy took several forms, in Tula’s case a quite dramatic one. All the forms of resistance were consciously undertaken and the participants expressed their awareness that they were doing something that the professor might not sanction. In general, the participants resisted assignments in one of three ways. The mildest form of resistance occurred when a writer consciously slighted part of the full writing assignment because of lack of either personal interest in or knowledge about the assignment as fully specified. Stronger resistance was embodied in consciously ignoring criteria which professors gave, specifically to Ling in this case, beyond the instructions about the assignment given to the whole class. Finally, in its strongest form, which we see exemplified in Tula’s work, the resistance undermined the entire purpose of the assignment. One form of resistance that might be expected from students is failure to do an assigned task at all. This never occurred among any of the participants in this study during the term.

An alternative interpretation of the data might argue that in fact these students were not resisting demands so much as doing their best to meet demands within the range of what they deemed themselves capable. Although such a perspective is plausible, I am nevertheless persuaded to see the participants’ noncompliance as resistance (a) because it was, in each case, consciously embraced despite full and clear awareness that the choice did not reflect the professor’s intentions; (b) because to greater and lesser degrees each of the resisting students felt resistance would benefit them more than compliance and therefore

---

5 Their unjaded willingness to try to meet the requirements for the course may be what makes teaching first term students and international students so appealing to many faculty members.
they acted in pursuit of their own best interests, placing them above the professors’ requirement in importance; and (c) because each example of resistance was, at least in part, based on a reasonable principle. Tula, for example, perceived her choice as more logical (refusing to pretend to speak like a stutterer); Julie saw hers as more interesting to her personally (focusing on the single most interesting woman in the novel); and Ling found hers to be a more efficient use of her time (relying on her personal experience as a Chinese person to help her complete her writing assignments). Each case represented an assertion of power, an attempt to exert control over one’s own fate.

Managing Competing Demands

Not surprisingly, one of the most frequently spoken words in the interviews was time. All study participants were acutely aware of the need to juggle the various loads they carried in order to carry out their responsibilities in the time allotted. The participants in this study experienced five types of competing demands, ranging from the broad demands of their personal lives to the narrowest issues related to specific writing tasks. These are (a) managing course loads; (b) managing the work load for a specific course; (c) regulating the amount of investment made in a specific assignment; (d) regulating cognitive load; and (e) managing the demands of life.

Managing course loads. Most of the participants in this study consciously limited the number of courses they enrolled in during the term. Although as an English teacher trained in China, Jien had already taken courses in both English and teaching methodology, she had not been in school for several years. Because, in addition to the new burdens of student life, her personal life placed quite heavy demands on her, she enrolled only in an ESL course and a foreign language teaching methods course during the term. Both Julie and Tula kept a careful eye on the amount of work they were being asked to do in the full course loads they had taken on and had in mind which courses they intended to drop if they experienced excessive work pressures. They quite consciously intended to benefit from their stay in the U.S. beyond the offerings of formal education and expressed perfect willingness to adjust their course work loads around their felt need to travel in the U.S. and to socialize to whatever extent that became available. Julie joined the university’s rowing club, not only to meet people but to get a more well-rounded educational experience by including physical education in her program. Only Ling did as so many first term international students seem to do and took a full course load, fully determined to complete them all and, whenever necessary, to sacrifice sleep to
fulfill the demands of each. Unlike for Julie and Tula, for Ling travel and socializing needs would only be accommodated after class demands were adequately met.

Managing work load. This manipulation consisted primarily of consciously not doing work that might have permitted, for example, a better understanding, or sometimes even a basic understanding, of the course material (rereading an assignment or reading over notes from a previous lecture) or that might have led to an improved paper (asking another student to look over a paper). Yang asserted that he was unlikely to ask someone to read over his paper before turning it in because it would take too much of his time and that of his classmate; furthermore, no classmate had ever asked him to read his/her paper over, for which he was grateful, not wanting to take the time. Because he had shared his writing regularly with classmates in another educational setting where each student prepared a part of the assignment and thereby spared the other students the work of doing the whole assignment themselves, Yang’s reluctance to read his classmates’ work and show his to them cannot be motivated merely by shyness but seemed rather to be at least to some degree an effort to save time. For several of these students, pacing and working far ahead of the class schedule also served as a means of managing the work load so that no work would ever require immediate attention.

Regulating the amount of investment made in a specific assignment. Although similar to the decision making required in managing work load, this manipulation differs in that the decision about the amount of investment to make in an assignment is primarily internally driven and private rather than driven by external measures of covering required course material. An example of high investment behavior would be Jen’s decisions to write five pages instead of the assigned two in a writing assignment or to recopy pages by hand over and over until they looked perfect. Yang, on the other hand, displayed low investment in several assignments, regularly speaking of purposely selecting topics for his political science papers that he considered easy, such as the debates over international monitoring of human rights violations. (For an examination of investment strategies of NES students, see Nelson & Hayes, 1988.)

Regulating cognitive load. Several participants mentioned strategies they used to give themselves an added advantage in their work: sitting in the front in all classes; not taking notes during a lecture in order to concentrate fully on understanding the lecture; reading ahead in the course syllabus so that class lectures serve to reiterate information
rather than constituting the first encounter with the information; re-reading notes from the previous lecture in order to understand the upcoming one. On a much more microlevel, the participants spoke in particular of attempting to manipulate the cognitive demands of writing for their disciplinary courses by, for example, deferring attention to grammatical issues until they had generated the ideas in their texts to their own satisfaction. Yang described his fairly heavy use of direct quotations in his written work as motivated by the fact that it is easier to copy someone else’s words than to paraphrase a statement in his own words.

**Managing the demands of life.** Although most of the data gathered for this study was related to writing in disciplinary courses, the demands of these participants’ lives often emerged in their interviews. For example, in addition to taking two courses and participating in this study, Jien taught Chinese to students at the university during the week and to a group of young children on Saturdays. She was the primary keeper of her household and caretaker of her 3-year-old daughter, her husband being a PhD student to whose career Jien had at least temporarily sacrificed her own. However tough or light the demands of personal life may be, they are relentless, sometimes requiring abandonment of all other concerns; thus, the work we look at when examining a students’ writing necessarily comes embedded within the context of a full and variously satisfying human life.

**DISCUSSION AND CLASSROOM IMPLICATIONS**

Several aspects of the experiences of this group of international students are particularly encouraging.

1. These students came to their studies in the U.S. with a battery of well elaborated strategies for dealing with the work they would face here. They consistently showed themselves to be resourceful, attentive to their environment, and creative and flexible in their response to new demands.

2. Nearly all the students were given relatively short, easy writing tasks in their courses across the curriculum early in the term. This allowed them to get at least a few experiences under the belt in their new setting before tackling bigger assignments. Because the feedback from these assignments was positive in each of the cases examined

---

Because none of the participants mentioned ever having learned to delay concerns about grammar in this way, it is possible that this is a strategy the students came upon naturally on their own.
here (with the single possible exception of Jien’s first article review), these students were able to experience early successes with writing in their disciplinary courses.

3. These students were able to use feedback (both to their own work and to the work of other students) to enable them to shift strategies when necessary. A repertory of responses to tasks is ineffective without the ability to shift among them.

Other aspects of these students’ experiences were more ominous. Based on the grades these students collected at the end of their first term, our conclusion can only be that the students successfully met the expectations of their professors across the disciplines. However, these grades mask the toll taken from at least one of the students. Ling was unfailingly hardworking and optimistic, but in nearly each of our interviews in the fall she would comment, “Everything so rush; I feel pressure; I feel rush.” Ling did not return to classes in the spring, citing massive fatigue from her heavy academic work load as the reason.

Similarly, whereas resisting teachers’ demands worked quite well as a strategy for these students, we might, as teachers, be left somewhat uncomfortable with the realization of how little faculty across the curriculum are aware of what really takes place among their/our students. Tula’s fabrication of her stuttering paper data was only one fairly striking example of the professor’s being in the dark. Ling’s obvious lack of preparation for a writing assignment on who in the U.S. drinks Buds remained hidden from her professor, obscured by her ultimate success in completing the assignment. Other equally disturbing examples of the failure for these students of, for example, group work are reported elsewhere (Leki, 1993). In these cases as well, the professors had no indication of anything amiss, and yet from the students’ point of view the experiences varied from meaningless and a waste of time to actively destructive. Perhaps even more interesting are cases like that reported by Nelson (1990) in which neither the professor nor the student was aware that they were working at cross purposes, each one representing the assigned writing task differently in their minds. In a more positive light, however, although faculty may often be unaware of how students approach and carry out assignments, the students in

---

Ling did return to an old strategy, however. She said she would spend the spring semester studying on her own at the library, reading the textbooks for the courses she hoped to take the following fall. Although she asserted that what would help her most in meeting the demands of her courses would be more contact with NES students in her classes, she was clearly further isolating herself by deciding to work alone at the library. At the end of the spring term, she received word from Taipei that because of the sudden illness of one of her co-workers, her employer would require her return to Taiwan, and she left the U.S.
this study nevertheless did successfully ferret out their own paths toward completion of their work.

When the participants in this study resisted the demands of the assignment, they did so consciously because they recognized that they could not or did not want to do the assignment as they knew the professor intended. In some cases, they sensed that they could do a better job on the assignment if they rewrote it to suit their own interests (e.g., Julie writing only about one woman rather than about all the women in the novel for her history class) or abilities (e.g., Ling using Taiwanese/Chinese culture as a baseline for comparisons). In Tula's case, part of her resistance was prompted by deeper, more psychological reasons; she could not bear to expose herself in the way required by the assignment. This example recalls the reluctance of some students to write on English class topics that demand a high degree of personal disclosure. Thus, when students resist an assignment, we may need to make specific efforts to determine the cause of the resistance. As noted above, none of these students resisted by refusing to do an assignment at all or by turning in assignments late, another possible form of (sometimes unconscious) resistance.

These students' failure to refer to anything they might have learned in their ESL classes also merits commentary. Viewed from a positive perspective, it is possible that whatever these students had learned and were applying from their ESL training had become automatic and therefore invisible to them, integrated seamlessly into their normal writing behaviors. Clearly, this was the case at the level of language, possibly at the rhetorical level as well, because the students' professors never complained that these students' rhetorical approaches were in any way disturbing. Nevertheless it is potentially worrisome that the three students initially enrolled in ESL classes at the beginning of the term never referred to links between what they did there and what they were required to do in their other courses.

At the human level, Ling's experiences in her ESL classes were extremely positive; the class was a haven for her. From the point of view of personal vindication, Jien's experiences too were positive, as she was able to prove to herself and to her teacher that she was the best student in the class. Perhaps if she had not dropped her ESL course, Julie would eventually have found additional support there (although she never seemed to need it) for her writing across the curriculum. But the question of how writing courses, ESL and NES, appropriately articulate with the rest of the curriculum is one that remains thorny.

Although it might be argued that several of the strategies these students displayed are fairly obvious and that, confronted with a writing assignment, most students might naturally engage in clarifying
and focusing strategies such as consulting with teachers and classmates or rereading and even writing out the writing prompt, other of the strategies are less obvious and perhaps worthy of bringing to the conscious awareness of ESL students newly embarking on an experience with U.S. higher education. As in most human endeavors, in attempting to deal with new writing challenges, these students tended to harken back to past writing successes.

In many ESL writing classes, teachers purposely structure writing assignments for success. But to be meaningful, the success must come from overcoming a serious and challenging obstacle. The disciplinary writing assignments faced by the participants in this study fully engaged them intellectually. If writing successes in English classes come too easily, these may be insufficiently challenging to serve the purpose of giving students writing experiences they can later refer back to in attempting to address tasks across the curriculum. Although ESL class should no doubt be psychologically nurturing places, surely being a safe refuge is not enough.

Looking for models also seems to be a strategy that students might come upon naturally. In several instances during this study, professors provided quite extensive models. Julie's history professor spent the day before the first exam not only reviewing course material but also writing out on the board an outline of his version of a properly constructed essay exam answer, complete with thesis statement, topic sentences, body paragraphs with several examples, and concluding paragraph. On the other hand, in other instances when the students were left entirely to their own devices in determining how to do an assignment, they expressed a longing for models as examples. The use of models, specifically rhetorical models, in teaching writing has, of course, been widespread in both ESL and NES instruction, though it currently seems in relative disfavor. One of the problems with rhetorical models in writing classes is that those models are, naturally, course specific (i.e., specific to the writing class), and despite claims that they represent good writing, they are quite unlikely to be the models for specific assignments across the curriculum that these students seek, the history professor's outline on the board notwithstanding. Harrington and Cadman (1991) suggest that teachers in general need to find a balance between giving students too much structure by asking them to imitate models and giving students too little structure by providing no models for students to consult. The students in this study sought out models for their disciplinary assignments, intuitively perceiving them as beneficial. For writing classes, perhaps the real issue is not so much whether or not models should be used but rather what kind of models are useful. Many ESL writing professionals have come to shun formal, rhetorical models in teaching writing; like their
NES colleagues, they have sensed that adherence to models did little to promote intellectual engagement with the content of the writing. Perhaps we need to think instead of functional, task models, that is, rather than consistently assigning English-class essays, also giving ESL writing students the opportunity to experience and to grapple with such tasks as taking an essay exam or conducting and reporting on a survey. The importance for students of such assignments lies not in learning the correct forms for writing an essay exam or writing up survey results but in having at least one experience with going about such tasks to draw upon later.

In addition to providing successful experiences in writing in English, ESL classes can address other strategies. We might ask students to actively recall other writing successes of the past and to consider the factors in the experience which might have been responsible for the success and might also be recreated in the present. ESL classes might also encourage students to consider feedback not only as evaluative but also as formative, as suggestive of the need (or not) for a change in approach. We might warn students that a danger inherent in imitating models for writing assignments when the model is not provided by the professor in the course is the potential inappropriacy of the model, that the appropriacy of a model ought to perhaps be verified with the professor. And ESL classes can perhaps be the site of discussion on how to manage competing and insistent demands made on students.

Less obvious and more interesting strategies employed by the participants in this study were taking advantage of first language/culture, accommodating teachers’ demands, and resisting teachers’ demands. The most pressed student of the group, Ling was the only one to use the strategy of relying on her first language and culture to give her a step up in her efforts. Her discovery of the value of her experience as a Taiwanese may have been what allowed her to make it through the term as well as she did; it effectively cut her work nearly in half as she repeatedly compared new information (e.g., how people shop in the U.S.) to what she already knew. It is possible that she experienced a simple stroke of luck that the courses in which she was enrolled lent themselves to the angle she took. And it may not be wise for students to overuse such a strategy. Nevertheless, adding this approach to a broader arsenal of strategies might give students greater options.

The question of accommodating versus resisting teachers’ requirements is an issue of balance. When Tula, like Sperling and Freedman’s (1987) Good Girl superficially changes her text to bring it to conformity with her professor’s expectations without understanding the rationale for those expectations, she is apparently making a mistake, losing an opportunity for a deeper understanding of her specialty area. However, it is difficult to justify an argument that would have Tula expend.
more energy on deciphering her professor’s intent when she is re-
warded for her superficial compliance. It is also likely that many of
the requirements made of ESL students in their first encounters with
U.S. higher education, are mysterious to them (writing/typing on only
one side of a page, having a cover page on an assignment, the whole
system of referencing and citation), require fairly strict compliance,
and are not worth pondering. In sum, the temptation is to encourage
ESL students to find out the rationale behind requirements; in practice,
perhaps some things are better left alone.

Resisting teachers’ demands is the strategy most fraught with dan-
gers and yet possibly most useful. None of the participants in this
study who used this strategy suffered for it. Yet, both ESL and NES
students cite meeting the requirements of the assignment as one of
the most important factors in doing well in a writing task in a disciplin-
ary area (Leki, 1995). Most of us have also heard anecdotal accounts
of professors who will not accept assignments which violate the smallest
of the requirements stated in the assignment. Although in some cases
wisdom might dictate that students check with their professors about
proposed alterations of the professor’s parameters, it is also possible
that saying nothing and doing part of the assignment well, or doing
a rewritten version of the assignment well, that is, in effect rewriting
the assignment to suit one’s own taste and talents, is a better idea than
struggling to meet all criteria and not doing as well. To judge by the
experience of the participants in this study, the faculty investigated
here was for the most part less concerned with the terms of the assign-
ment than with the quality of the attempt to meet those terms.

CONCLUSION

The research reported here explores strategies these ESL students
used to successfully complete writing tasks across the curriculum. Aside
from the preliminary cataloging of strategies that this research sug-
gests, what seems interesting from a pedagogical perspective is the
degree to which at least some ESL students come to their studies at
U.S. universities with a variety of already very well developed strategies
for coping with their assignments. Furthermore, all 5 students were
able to alter their strategies and pursue new ones when their first
attempts did not produce the desired results. Some of these students
were more conscious of their strategies than others and some took a
bit longer to shift to alternative strategies when necessary, but they
were all flexible and fairly richly endowed with ideas about what to
do.

Qualitative research studies of ESL students in their writing across
the curriculum seem to show that writing demands vary considerably from one discipline to the next and even from one course to the next within disciplines (Prior, 1992). In EAP courses which work to prepare ESL students for their future encounters with writing assignments across the curriculum, it would seem wise to consider discussing strategies that successful students or anyone might use in approaching writing tasks. Given how well developed the strategies of the participants in this study were, however, it would also seem important to build from what students already know and not attempt to teach them something they already do. What does seem reasonable is to consult with students to learn what strategies they already consciously use, help them bring to consciousness others that they may use and not be aware of using, and perhaps suggest yet others that they had not thought of before.

AUTHOR

Ilona Leki, Director of ESL and Professor of English at the University of Tennessee, is author of Academic Writing (St. Martin’s Press), Understanding ESL Writers (Boynton/Cook), and Reading in the Composition Classroom (with Joan Carson, Heinle & Heinle). She also edits (with Tony Silva) the Journal of Second Language Writing.

REFERENCES


A Closer Look at Learning Strategies, L2 Proficiency, and Gender

JOHN M. GREEN
Salem State College

REBECCA OXFORD
University of Alabama

This study builds on previous research using the Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL). Most previous SILL research has made comparisons across the entire survey or in terms of strategy categories and has stressed proficiency level at the expense of other variables. The present largescale (N = 374) study of language learning strategy use by students at three different course levels at the University of Puerto Rico relates strategy use to gender as well as to L2 proficiency level and includes analysis of variation in the use of individual strategies on the SILL. Like previous researchers, we found greater use of learning strategies among more successful learners and higher levels of strategy use by women than by men. Our analysis, however, revealed more complex patterns of use than have appeared in previous studies. With both proficiency level and gender, only some items showed significant variation, and significant variation by proficiency level did not invariably mean more frequent strategy use by more successful students. The strategies reported as used more often by the more successful students emphasized active, naturalistic practice and were used in combination with a variety of what we term bedrock strategies, which were used frequently or moderately frequently by learners at all levels. The study’s generalizability and its implications for teachers and researchers are discussed.

The relationship of the use of language learning strategies to success in mastering a second or foreign language, as well as to gender and other variables, has been the focus of a growing body of research over the past decade. Much of the quantitative strategy research, however, has had the strengths and limitations of an aerial photograph: It shows prominent features of the landscape but only gives hints as to what the trees and buildings in the picture would look like up close. This is because most quantitative studies comparing
strategy use by different groups of students have tended to pay more
attention to overall strategy use or to the use of broad categories of
strategies than to differences in the use of individual strategies. In
addition, variation by proficiency level has sometimes been emphasized
to the neglect of other variables such as gender or learner styles. The
largescale quantitative study reported here presents a more detailed
picture than that of most previous studies by systematically examining
variation in the use of individual strategies as well as overall strategy
use and strategy categories, and by looking for patterns of variation
by gender at the same time as by proficiency level.

RESEARCH REVIEW

Importance of Strategies in Language Learning

Language learning strategies are specific actions or techniques that
students use, often intentionally, to improve their progress in devel-
oping L2 skills. Strategies encompass a wide range of behaviors that can
help the development of language competence in many ways (Oxford,
1990; Rigney, 1978). Lists of characteristics of good language learners
refer to a variety of learning strategies, such as taking advantage of
practice opportunities, willingly and accurately guessing, handling
emotional issues in language learning, consciously developing the L2
as a meaning system and a structure system, and monitoring one's
own speech (Naiman, Fröhlich, & Todesco, 1975; Naiman, Fröhlich,
Stern, & Todesco, 1978; Rubin, 1975; Stern, 1983).

Effective L2 learners are aware of the strategies they use and why
they use them, according to diary research (Lavine & Oxford, in press)
and think-aloud studies (Abraham & Vann, 1987; O'Malley & Chamot,
1990). Such learners manage to tailor their strategies to the language
task and to their own personal needs as learners. Students who are
less successful at language learning are likewise able to identify their
own strategies; however, they do not know how to choose the appro-
priate strategies or how to link them together into a useful “strategy
chain” (Block, 1986; Galloway & Labarca, 1991; Stern, 1975; Vann &

Many recent models of second language acquisition and learning
have included language learning strategies (see, e.g., Gardner & Mac-
focused on language learning strategies as one of the most important
individual difference factors in L2 acquisition, as shown by his detailed
review of learning strategy research in the context of various models
of acquisition. McLaughlin (1987) and Oxford (1990) pointed out that
Selinker's (1972) model of interlanguage development directly involves several core processes, one of which is use of learning strategies. Systematicity of the interlanguage, according to Selinker, is evidenced by recognizable strategies (Selinker, Swain, & Dumas, 1975). In another model, which relates to declarative and procedural knowledge, Ellis (1985) categorized the three processes for developing L2 knowledge as learning strategies, production strategies, and communication strategies, and McLaughlin (1987) adopts this three-part distinction in his own integrated model of L2 teaching and learning. However, others (see Oxford, 1990) have argued that it is often impossible to tease these three kinds of strategies apart and that often all three result in learning. Like Ellis, O’Malley and Chamot (1990) use an information-processing model highlighting declarative and procedural knowledge to illustrate the centrality of strategies.

Social psychologists have added to the theory of language learning and of language learning strategies. For instance, Gardner and MacIntyre (1993) found that characteristics of the language learner, situational variables, and types of learning strategies interact in a complicated way to influence proficiency in a second language. Although Oxford (1989) showed gender and ethnicity (two learner characteristics) as determinants of strategy use, MacIntyre (1994) asserts that the influence of these two factors “may be more clearly understood through the attitudinal, motivational, and learning style differences generally associated with gender and ethnicity” (p. 187). MacIntyre and Gardner (1991) observed that the use of certain affective (emotion- or motivation-related) learning strategies reduces the level of language anxiety, thus freeing up cognitive resources to be applied to the use of cognitive learning strategies.

One of the most insightful strategy-related models of language learning is that of MacIntyre (1994), who highlights the importance of affective factors and links the use of a given language learning strategy with task demands, proficiency, aptitude, situation, attitude, motivation, previous success, anxiety, self-confidence, sanctions against strategy use, goals, and criteria for success. In this model, students (influenced by all the variables above) must be aware of the strategy, must have a reason to use it, and must not have a reason not to use it.

This model allows for strategy use to be context-dependent; . . . indicates that students who are motivated to use a strategy may fail to do so because of interference from another variable, such as anxiety; . . . also indicates that future strategy use depends on the consequences or outcomes of prior strategy use and that the judgment of success in meeting the communicative demand will be a key predictor of the continued use of a given strategy. (p. 193)
Language learning strategies enable students to gain a large measure of responsibility for their own progress, and there is considerable evidence that effective strategy use can be taught. Learner training, which often involves teaching better strategy use and sometimes addresses individual learning styles as well, has been highly successful in some instances and not in others, sometimes depending on the language skills involved (O’Malley & Chamot, 1990; Oxford & Crookall, 1989). The best learner training includes an explicit and clear focus on specific strategies, has frequent practice opportunities for strategies, is integrated with regular classwork, and shows students how to transfer strategies to new situations (Oxford, 1992/1993; Oxford et al., 1990).

The SILL as a Research Instrument

A number of important findings concerning the relationship of strategies to a student’s degree of success in learning and to other variables as well have been generated by studies using the Strategy Inventory for Language Learning, or SILL (reprinted in Oxford, 1990). This is a self-scoring, paper-and-pencil survey that has been the key instrument in more than 40 studies, including 12 dissertations and theses. These studies have involved approximately 8,000 students around the world. The SILL consists of statements following the general format “I do such-and-such”; students respond on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (“Never or almost never true of me”) to 5 (“Always or almost always true of me”). Reliability (Cronbach alpha for internal consistency) of various forms of the SILL is .93-.98, depending largely on whether the students take the SILL in their own language or in the L2 (Oxford & Burry, 1993; Oxford & Burry-Stock, 1995). The structure of the SILL is based on Oxford’s (1990) system for classifying strategies into six groups:

1. affective strategies for anxiety reduction, self-encouragement, and self-reward
2. social strategies such as asking questions, cooperating with native speakers, and becoming culturally aware
3. metacognitive strategies for evaluating one’s progress, planning for language tasks, consciously searching for practice opportunities, paying attention, and monitoring errors
4. memory-related strategies, such as grouping, imagery, rhyming, moving physically, and reviewing in a structured way
5. general cognitive strategies, such as reasoning, analyzing, summarizing, and practicing (including but not limited to “active use of the language”) and
6. compensatory strategies (to make up for limited knowledge), such as guessing meanings from context and using synonyms and gestures to convey meaning.

The six a priori categories were created as (not mutually exclusive) areas of strategy use to be investigated. These areas partially reflected earlier factor analyses of a longer version of the SILL designed for native English speakers learning foreign languages (see Ehrman & Oxford, 1989). These areas were also constructed to redress a problem, namely that many previous inventories of strategies included a severely limited number of items reflecting affective and social strategies and contained a relative overabundance of cognitive and metacognitive strategies. Such inventories appeared to emphasize information-processing and executive management aspects of the learner and did not capture the essence of the whole learner. Although the six categories of the SILL were not intended to reflect a perfected theoretical construct of language learning strategies, they were designed to expand the frequently restricted conception of such strategies in the research. The SILL can be used to measure a student's strategy use in three ways: across the entire survey, in terms of the six broad strategy categories listed above, and in terms of particular strategies. The first two of these methods have been more commonly used than the third in the SILL research to date. The advantages and disadvantages of Oxford's classification system are analyzed, and many other major strategy classification systems are presented in depth, by Oxford and Cohen (1992).

Strategy use has been significantly related in SILL studies to language performance, gender, whether a language is being studied as a second or a foreign language, and differences in students' learning styles. These findings provide evidence of the instrument's validity, as well as contributing to our understanding of how students use learning strategies.

In studies conducted in a wide variety of geographical and cultural settings, students who were better in their language performance generally reported higher levels of overall strategy use and frequent use of a greater number of strategy categories. Language performance was gauged in many different ways: self-ratings of proficiency (Oxford & Nyikos, 1989; Watanabe, 1990), language proficiency and achievement tests (O'Mara & Lett, 1990; Oxford, Park-Oh, Ito, & Sumrall, 1993; Phillips, 1990, 1991; Rossi-Le, 1989; Wen & Johnson, 1991), entrance and placement examinations (Mullins, 1992), language course grades (Mullins, 1992), years of language study (Watanabe, 1990), and career status reflecting expertise in language learning (Ehrman & Oxford, 1989).
Gender differences have appeared in SILL-based studies around the globe, with females usually reporting more strategy use than males. Oxford and Nyikos (1989) found that females taking the SILL reported using strategies far more often than did males in three of the five factors: formal rule-related practice, general study strategies, and conversational input elicitation strategies. Ehrman and Oxford (1989) discovered significant gender differences in the SILL (favoring women) in the following strategy classifications: general study strategies, strategies for authentic language use, strategies for searching for and communicating meaning, and metacognitive or self-management strategies. In Japan, Watanabe (1990) found distinctly different patterns of strategy use between a major metropolitan university with both male and female students and a rural, all-female college (though location and prestige might have influenced the differences just as much as gender). Sy (1994) discovered that students of English in the Republic of China showed significant gender differences on the SILL. In that study, females significantly surpassed males in their use of cognitive, compensation, metacognitive, and social strategies. Similar gender differences have been found using different strategy assessment techniques (Zoubir-Shaw & Oxford, in press). Findings such as these are important because they show us that there might be some consistent differences in the ways that females as a group learn a language, compared with males as a group although variability also exists within groups. If gender differences appear in many studies across different cultures, this suggests that biological and/or socialization-related causes for these differences might exist and that these causes might have a real, if subtle, effect in the language classroom.

As noted earlier, gender, like ethnicity, might not be as salient as the learning styles, attitudes, and motivations that are typically associated with gender and ethnicity (MacIntyre, 1994).

SILL studies have shown that students in many L2 situations (where there is constant exposure to the new language and a strong communicative demand from the environment) make greater use of language learning strategies than students in foreign language situations (where there is limited exposure and limited communicative demand). In an analysis of 10 large SILL studies of more than 200 students each (Oxford, 1992), typical foreign language learners showed an average of less than one of the six strategy groups to be used frequently, while typical second language learners reported frequent use of an average of 3.7 of the six groups.

Two SILL studies have shown a conceptual link between individual students' language learning styles and their choices of language learning strategies. Ehrman and Oxford (1989) found more than a dozen significant relationships between strategy use and language learning
styles as reflected by Myers-Briggs personality types. Rossi-Le (1989) found significant relationships between perceptual learning style (visual, auditory, tactile, and kinesthetic) and strategy use for 7 out of 10 strategy categories.

The SILL research to date, while impressive in quantity and quality, has left a number of questions unanswered because of its tendency to focus on broad patterns of strategy use. Few largescale SILL studies involving learners across a wide range of proficiency levels have looked at variation in the level of use of individual items, and even fewer have looked for individual item variation in terms of both proficiency level and gender. Bedell's (1993) investigation of strategy use by EFL students in China is a well-executed and welcome exception. Phillips (1991) studied variation of individual SILL items by proficiency level among adult Asian ESL students in the western United States and produced some very interesting findings, but she herself acknowledges as a possible limitation of her study (pp. 63, 65) that students with Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) scores below 397 were not tested because of likely problems understanding SILL items in English. In addition, her study only included 43–50 students at each level.

THE CURRENT STUDY

The purpose of the present study was to describe the patterns of variation in overall strategy use, strategy use by SILL categories, and strategy use at the individual item level, by students in three different course levels, and by males and females, in the specific setting of the University of Puerto Rico (UPR) at Mayagüez. We expected that, as in previous SILL studies, overall strategy use and the use of strategy categories would vary significantly with L2 performance level and gender, but we were not sure what we would find at the individual strategy level. Would more strategy use by more proficient students or by women, for instance, mean greater use of all the strategies on the SILL, or only some? If only some, how many and which ones? Would some strategies be used more often by less proficient students?

And supposing some strategies were found not to vary by proficiency level, what then? As we will argue below, such strategies could be very important for understanding how students really learn, yet previous studies have tended to ignore them. A new and special feature of the present study, therefore, is the identification of strategies used equally frequently or infrequently across proficiency levels.

Another important characteristic of this study is the examination of a hybrid language use situation, one that fits neither the description
of a second language setting nor that of a foreign language environment. The language situation in Puerto Rico is complex. Although acknowledging Puerto Rico’s mixed status as an English-using society, Blau and Dayton (1992), drawing on Moag (1982), have argued that Puerto Rico shares more features with ESL English-using societies such as Malaysia and Nigeria than it does with EFL English-using societies such as China and Argentina. As Blau and Dayton point out, English speakers in Puerto Rico (both native speakers and bilingual) exercise considerable influence, and a great deal of potential English input is available for learners who wish to take advantage of it. On the other hand, Puerto Rican learners can easily survive without using English for communication, so the island might in this respect appear to have characteristics of an EFL setting. Therefore, we can consider Puerto Rico to be a hybrid foreign/second language environment. Strategies are often studied in the context of clear-cut foreign or second language circumstances, but throughout the world there exist many mixed settings. This is the first report linking results of a factor analysis of language learning strategies to the characteristics of a hybrid language use environment.

METHOD

Subjects

A total of 374 students in five sections each of Prebasic, Basic, and Intermediate English at the University of Puerto Rico at Mayagüez participated in the study. For the exact numbers of students at each of the three course levels, see Table 1. We must be cautious about possible confusions caused by the course names Prebasic, Basic, and Intermediate because these span the entire range of nonnative English proficiencies. The Basic level actually includes many low intermediate students along with high beginners, and the Intermediate level includes many advanced students as well as high intermediates. For the test-related meaning of each course level, see the section on instruments below.

The overwhelming majority of Prebasic and Basic students in the study had lived in Puerto Rico for most or all of their lives. Approximately one fourth of the Intermediate-level students had lived in the continental U.S. for a year or more. English is a required subject in Puerto Rican schools from first grade through high school, so all of these students, regardless of course level, had been exposed to a considerable amount of English instruction. This is an important point, because any study in which contrasts between “successful” and “unsuc-
TABLE 1
Distribution of Subjects by Course Level and Gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Level</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Women</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Total by Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intermediate English</td>
<td></td>
<td>49</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic English</td>
<td></td>
<td>72</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prebasic English</td>
<td></td>
<td>57</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>178</td>
<td>196</td>
<td>374</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Successful" learners are based on data from students at different course levels needs to address the possibility that at least some of the low-proficiency students might be excellent learners who have only begun studying the target language. With this sample, when we examine the data from students at different course levels, we can legitimately claim to be comparing strategy use by more successful and less successful language learners. It is important to emphasize that in characterizing some students as less successful we are implying no judgment of their potential as learners, but are merely referring to the fact that at the time of our study they had not been successful learners of English, for any of a number of possible reasons. The fact that many students in Puerto Rico do not become fluent in English despite years of English classes has been the subject of numerous studies. Among the factors that are almost certainly involved are variation in the quality of English instruction students receive and cultural resistance toward the English language (Bliss, 1993; Resnick, 1993; Schweers & Vélez, 1992).

Instruments

Students at UPR Mayagüez are placed in the three course levels in the study according to their scores on the English as a Second Language Achievement Test (ESLAT). This is a general proficiency test, rather than a curriculum-specific achievement test, administered only in Puerto Rico along with the College Board's Prueba de Aptitud Académica (PAA), the Spanish-language equivalent to the Scholastic Achievement Test (SAT). There are two parts to the ESLAT. The first part deals with grammar (syntax, use of function words, and inflected forms of verbs, adjectives, and nouns). The second part is made up of reading passages with comprehension questions. Items in both parts are multiple choice. The ESLAT mean is 500, and the standard deviation is 100, as in other College Entrance Examination Board (CEEB) tests. The ESLAT’S high validity has been demonstrated (Alderman, 1981; Mohr,
Mohr's study explores areas of difficulty that students experience on the ESLAT and examines current textbooks to see whether they cover structures in the difficulty areas (so called curricular validity, which is, of course, a form of content validity). Alderman's research looked for and found relationships among scores on the SAT, the PAA, the ESLAT, and the TOEFL. Most importantly, the ESLAT is correlated at $r = .91$ with the TOEFL, according to Alderman's study.

Prebasic English at UPR Mayagüez at the time of this study served students with scores in the range of 200-419 on the ESLAT. The score of 200 is the lowest possible, so the Prebasic students in this study can be considered as a low beginner group. Basic English students had scores in the 420–570 range and thus made up a high beginner to low intermediate proficiency level. The Intermediate English course (the highest level course open solely to nonnative speakers of English) included students whose ESLAT scores ranged from 571 to the highest score possible, 800, so it included a combination of high intermediate and truly advanced learners. Native speaker-level students at Mayagüez were and are placed in a course called Honors English.

Another main instrument was the SILL (50-item Version 7.0 for ESL/EFL), described above. For exhaustive details on reliability and validity, see Oxford and Burry-Stock (1995). A Spanish translation of this instrument was used to maximize ease of administration and ensure greater accuracy of results, especially with the less advanced students. The Spanish translation was originally done for Puerto Rico by Gladys Bonilla, a language learning strategy expert and professional translator. This translation was then checked for local usage on site with native Spanish-speaking members of the UPR Mayagüez faculty. A few items were refined to reflect local usage as recommended by these faculty members. Therefore, not only did the translation reflect general Puerto Rican usage, but also community-specific (Mayagüez) usage. Additional data were gathered with a 16-item demographic survey appended to the SILL for the purposes of this study.

**Data Collection and Analysis Procedures**

All data were collected during the first 2 weeks of the fall 1992 semester. Students were advised that responses would not affect course grades and were urged to answer forthrightly. To determine significance throughout the study, we used the standard of $p < .05$. This means that a result was considered statistically significant if it could have occurred by chance fewer than 5 times out of 100.

Significant variation in mean strategy use across the entire SILL by proficiency and gender was determined using a two-way analysis of variance (ANOVA), as were differences in mean strategy use in the
six SILL categories established in advance (the dependent variables) as related to the two independent variables: gender (male-female) and proficiency as reflected in course level (Prebasic, Basic, and Intermediate). To determine where specific significant differences lay (e.g., between which of the three proficiency levels), we used a standard post-hoc test, the Scheffe.

Chi-square tests were used to check all SILL items for significant variation by course level and gender. This test compared the actual frequencies with which students gave different responses on the 5-point SILL scale, a method of analysis closer to the raw data than comparisons based on average responses for each item. For the chi-square tests, responses of 1 and 2 ("never or almost never true of me" and "usually not true of me") were consolidated into a single "low strategy use" category, and responses of 4 and 5 ("usually true of me" and "always or almost always true of me") were combined into a single "high strategy use" category. The purpose of consolidating the five response levels on the SILL into three categories of strategy use (low, medium, and high) was to obtain cell sizes with expected values high enough to ensure a valid analysis. We set a level of 5 as the minimum permissible expected value for any cell in the matrix, consistent with the recommendations of Tate (1955, p. 477) and Spatz and Johnson (1989, pp. 245–249). Spatz and Johnson also note that conclusions based on chi-square tests can be accurate, even with expected cell frequencies lower than 5, as long as there is a large overall number in the sample.

When the chi-square test showed that an item varied significantly by course level, we characterized the variation as positive, negative, or mixed. This was done by examining the percentages of students at each course level reporting low use (1 or 2 on the 5-point SILL scale), medium use (3), or high use (4 or 5) of the strategy in question. A strategy was classified as having positive variation if there was a pattern similar to that illustrated in Figure 2 (see Results section, below), in which the percentages of students reporting high use showed a step-by-step pattern of increase at higher course levels, and the percentages of students reporting low use showed a corresponding decrease at more advanced course levels. The term negative was used to describe the variation when students at more advanced course levels reported lower use of a strategy than did their less proficient peers. (See Figure 3, below, for an example.) We anticipated that some items with significant variation by course level might exhibit neither of these regular patterns (thus mixed). This was indeed the case with a few items, which we examined on a case-by-case basis to determine how they should be classified.

To compare the extent to which strategies not showing significant
variation across course levels were used relatively frequently or infrequently by students in general, we defined three levels of use based on the percentage of students who responded 4 or 5 ("usually true of me" or "always or almost always true of me"):

1. Frequent use at all course levels: 50% or more of all students in the study responding 4 or 5
2. Moderate use at all course levels: 20-49% of students responding 4 or 5
3. Infrequent use at all course levels: fewer than 20% of students responding 4 or 5.

In addition, we conducted a factor analysis. This is a procedure that derives the underlying factors in a set of data. Factors are “ordered” based on which factors account for the greatest amounts of variability, (i.e., differences among responses). The first factor accounts for the greatest variability, the second factor explains the second greatest variability, and so on. The underlying hypotheses in any factor analysis of a survey like the SILL are, first, that a significant amount of the variability in responses across the entire survey can be explained in terms of a few factors (clusters of items that tend to vary together), and secondly, that identifying these factors will reveal meaningful patterns. Factor analysis is routinely used to assist in explaining the nature and operation of a phenomenon (such as language learning strategies). It is also used to provide evidence of the construct validity of an instrument, although that was not its chief purpose here.

We used a 9-factor Varimax (oblique) factor analytic solution. Eigenvalues were required to be greater than 1.0, and the loading of any item had to be greater than or equal to .30 for the item to be included as part of the factor. We assessed the overall variability explained by the 9 factors and the variability accounted for by each of the factors.

RESULTS

Variation in Overall Strategy Use

Overall strategy use, according to the ANOVA results, varied significantly (F [2, 371] = 10.41, p < .0001) by course level. The post-hoc Scheffe test showed no significant difference (p > .05) for overall strategy use between Basic and Intermediate courses, the two top proficiency levels (means were 3.12 and 3.15 respectively), but significant differences did occur between each of those levels and the Prebasic level (mean 2.88). The ANOVA also showed greater strategy use for
females as compared to males ($F_{[1,372]} = 9.82, p < .002$; means were 3.13 and 2.96 respectively). Although variation by proficiency and gender was significant, all means fell between 2.5 and 3.4, the range which Oxford (1990, pp. 291, 300) defines as medium use. There was no significant interaction between the two independent variables (proficiency and gender) in the ANOVA.

**Variation in Use of the Six Categories of Strategies**

The ANOVA results demonstrated significant relationships to proficiency, gender, or both for each of the six SILL categories. A summary of the ANOVA results for the six categories is shown in Table 2. Proficiency level had a significant effect for the cognitive, compensation, metacognitive, and social categories (all representing positive variation, i.e., more use by more successful students). With the compensation, metacognitive, and social strategy groups, the post-hoc Scheffe test revealed the same pattern that occurred with overall strategy use: Prebasic students used these strategies significantly less often than Intermediate or Basic students did, but there were no significant differences in levels of use at the Intermediate and Basic course levels. With the cognitive group, the Scheffe test showed significantly greater strategy use by the Intermediate students than by the Basic students, who in turn used these strategies significantly more frequently than the Prebasic students did. For four of the strategy categories (memory, metacognitive, affective, and social), females used strategies significantly more often than males. Although there was significant variation by proficiency and gender, all means for the six strategy categories fell within (or, in the case of metacognitive strategy use by Intermediate students, Basic level students, and women, very slightly above) the medium range of 2.5 to 3.4.

**Variation in Use of Individual Strategies by Proficiency (Level)**

The chi-square tests indicated that 22 of the 50 SILL items varied significantly by course level. For a graphic summary of the various kinds of relationships between strategy use and proficiency we found across all 50 items on the SILL, see the pie chart in Figure 1, in which the items that showed different types of significant variation by proficiency level are represented by the black and shaded areas, and the items that did not vary significantly by proficiency are represented by the white areas.

**Classification by stairstep patterns.** With 17 of the 22 items that showed significant variation by level, the variation could be classified as positive
TABLE 2

Summary of Variation in Use of Strategy Categories

I. Independent Variable: Proficiency (Course Level)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dependent Variable (SILL category)</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>F [2,371] and significance level</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Memory</td>
<td>2.81</td>
<td>.62</td>
<td>2.95</td>
<td>.62</td>
<td>2.93</td>
<td>.58</td>
<td>n.s.</td>
<td>Int&gt;Basic&gt;Prebasic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cognitive Compensation</td>
<td>2.79</td>
<td>.60</td>
<td>3.08</td>
<td>.63</td>
<td>3.28</td>
<td>.55</td>
<td>21.47 (p &lt; .0001)</td>
<td>Basic&gt;Prebasic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metacognitive</td>
<td>2.69</td>
<td>.54</td>
<td>3.02</td>
<td>.68</td>
<td>2.99</td>
<td>.57</td>
<td>11.53 (p &lt; .0001)</td>
<td>Prebasic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affective</td>
<td>5.16</td>
<td>.67</td>
<td>3.42</td>
<td>.70</td>
<td>3.45</td>
<td>.76</td>
<td>6.08 (p &lt; .0025)</td>
<td>Int&gt;Prebasic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social</td>
<td>2.91</td>
<td>.62</td>
<td>3.05</td>
<td>.73</td>
<td>2.89</td>
<td>.80</td>
<td>n.s.</td>
<td>Basic&gt;Prebasic</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

II. Independent Variable: Gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dependent Variable (SILL category)</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>F [1,372] and significance level</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Memory</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>.62</td>
<td>2.83</td>
<td>.59</td>
<td>9.39 (p &lt; .002)</td>
<td>W&gt;M</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cognitive Compensation</td>
<td>3.08</td>
<td>.65</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>.60</td>
<td>n.s.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metacognitive</td>
<td>2.95</td>
<td>.66</td>
<td>2.85</td>
<td>.60</td>
<td>n.s.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affective</td>
<td>3.45</td>
<td>.71</td>
<td>3.25</td>
<td>.72</td>
<td>6.89 (p &lt; .009)</td>
<td>W&gt;M</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social</td>
<td>3.10</td>
<td>.70</td>
<td>2.81</td>
<td>.72</td>
<td>14.83 (p &lt; .0001)</td>
<td>W&gt;M</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Of the 17 items with clear stairstep patterns of variation, 16 showed greater strategy use by more proficient students (positive variation). Only one item showed a stairstep pattern indicating greater strategy use by low-proficiency learners (negative variation): Item 42, noticing when one is tense or nervous.

Classification of the nonstair-step patterns. Five items that varied significantly by course level did not exhibit clear stairstep patterns. After examining the somewhat complex data for these five items, we classified
FIGURE 1
Relationships of Individual SILL Items to Proficiency (Course Level)

- Frequent use at all levels: 9 items
- Moderate use at all levels: 14 items
- Infrequent at any level: 5 items
- POSITIVE (more use by more advanced students): 17 items
- NEGATIVE: 1 item
- MIXED: 4 items

Note: Black and shaded areas represent statistically significant variation

FIGURE 2
Example of Regular (Stairstep) Pattern Classified as Positive:
Item 22, Try not to translate word-for-word

LEARNING STRATEGIES, L2 PROFICIENCY, AND GENDER 275
one as positive (making a total of 17 items where variation was classified as positive) and the other four as mixed.

With Item 29 (using circumlocutions or synonyms; see Figure 4), the percentages of students reporting high use showed a marked stairstep increase at higher course levels. However, the percentages of students reporting low use did not show a corresponding straight decrease. Despite the complexity of this pattern, we felt that the basic trend was toward greater use of this strategy by higher proficiency students, and we classified the variation as positive.

We classified four items as having mixed patterns of variation across course levels. Two closely related compensation strategies, Item 25 (using gestures when unable to think of a word; see Figure 5) and Item 26 (making up new words when unable to come up with the “right” one; see Figure 6) showed patterns in which neither the Intermediate nor the Prebasic students, but rather the group in between—the Basic students—reported the highest levels of strategy use.

Two other items were classified as having mixed relationships between strategy use and proficiency: Items 32 (paying attention when someone is speaking) and 39 (trying to relax when one feels afraid). With the first of these (see Figure 7), the percentages of students reporting low strategy use showed a stairstep decrease at higher course levels, but the percentages of students reporting high use did not form

Note: \( x^2 = 13.488 \) (df = 4), \( p < .05 \)
FIGURE 4
Nonstairstep Variation Characterized as Positive:
Item 29, Use circumlocutions or synonyms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Intermediate</th>
<th>Basic</th>
<th>Prebasic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Black areas)</td>
<td>(White areas)</td>
<td>(Grey areas)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item 29</td>
<td>&quot;Never&quot; (1) or &quot;Generally Not&quot; (2)</td>
<td>&quot;Sometimes&quot; (3)</td>
<td>&quot;Generally&quot; (4) or &quot;Always&quot; (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>Response (%)</td>
<td>Response (%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intermediate</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>7 (6)</td>
<td>24 (19)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>7 (5)</td>
<td>36 (28)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prebasic</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>23 (19)</td>
<td>43 (36)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: $\chi^2 = 29.932$ (df = 4), $p < .05$

FIGURE 5
Nonstairstep Variation Characterized as Mixed:
Item 25, Use gestures when stuck for word

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Intermediate</th>
<th>Basic</th>
<th>Prebasic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Black areas)</td>
<td>(White areas)</td>
<td>(Grey areas)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item 25</td>
<td>&quot;Never&quot; (1) or &quot;Generally Not&quot; (2)</td>
<td>&quot;Sometimes&quot; (3)</td>
<td>&quot;Generally&quot; (4) or &quot;Always&quot; (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>Response (%)</td>
<td>Response (%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intermediate</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>39 (32)</td>
<td>34 (29)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>19 (15)</td>
<td>35 (27)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prebasic</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>24 (20)</td>
<td>30 (25)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: $\chi^2 = 13.115$ (df = 4), $p < .05$
a step-by-step sequence, and the percentage of students reporting moderate use at the Basic level was quite small. With Item 39 (see Figure 8), there was a higher percentage of students at the Intermediate level than at the other two levels reporting both high use and low use of this strategy, and a lower percentage of students reporting only moderate use.

**Summary of Types of Variation by Level.** The specific strategies that showed the various kinds of significant variation by course level (positive, negative, and mixed) are listed in Table 3, along with chi-square values showing the strength of the variation for each item. In this table, as also in Tables 4 and 5 (below), information on percentages of students reporting high strategy use (responses of 4 or 5) is given as an indication of the relative popularity of the strategies listed.

By far the commonest type of significant variation across course levels was positive variation, indicating greater strategy use by more proficient, more successful learners. Seventeen of the 22 items that varied significantly with course level varied in the positive direction, many with observed chi-square values considerably higher than 9.49, the critical value above which chi-square values for these data are significant at $p < .05$. Complete student response data for Item 22, a representative example of an item showing positive variation, are given
FIGURE 7
Nonstairstep Variation Characterized as Mixed:
Item 32, Pay attention when someone is speaking

Intermediate  Basic  Prebasic

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>0%</th>
<th>20%</th>
<th>40%</th>
<th>60%</th>
<th>80%</th>
<th>100%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Black areas: "Never" (1) or "Generally Not" (2)
White areas: "Sometimes" (3)
Grey areas: "Generally" (4) or "Always" (5)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Response (%)</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>124</td>
<td>3 (2)</td>
<td>15 (12)</td>
<td>106 (85)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>129</td>
<td>6 (5)</td>
<td>9 (7)</td>
<td>114 (88)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>121</td>
<td>11 (9)</td>
<td>22 (18)</td>
<td>88 (73)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: $\chi^2 = 13.732$ (df = 4), $p < .05$

FIGURE 8
Nonstairstep Variation Characterized as Mixed:
Item 39, Try to relax when I feel afraid

Intermediate  Basic  Prebasic

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>0%</th>
<th>20%</th>
<th>40%</th>
<th>60%</th>
<th>80%</th>
<th>100%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Black areas: "Never" (1) or "Generally Not" (2)
White areas: "Sometimes" (3)
Grey areas: "Generally" (4) or "Always" (5)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Response (%)</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>122</td>
<td>24 (20)</td>
<td>14 (11)</td>
<td>84 (69)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>129</td>
<td>16 (12)</td>
<td>40 (31)</td>
<td>73 (57)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>120</td>
<td>18 (15)</td>
<td>38 (32)</td>
<td>64 (53)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: $\chi^2 = 17.927$ (df = 4), $p < .05$
TABLE 3
Items Showing Significant Variation by Course Level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>PreBas</th>
<th>Basic</th>
<th>Int</th>
<th>Observed</th>
<th>Variation by Gender</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. Positive Variation (used more frequently by more successful students)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 COG Try to talk like native Engl speakers</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>30.43</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 COG Practice sounds of English</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>20.44</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 COG Use known words in different ways</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>20.05</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 COG Start conversations in English</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>37.98</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 COG Watch TV or movies in English</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>19.21</td>
<td>M&amp;W</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 COG Read for pleasure in English</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>78.92</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 COG Write notes, etc. in English</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>71.77</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22 COG Try not to translate word-for-word</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>24.47</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27 COM Read without looking up all new words</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>113.10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28 COM Try to guess what other person will say</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>13.22</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29 COM Use circumlocutions or synonyms</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>29.93</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35 MET Look for people to talk to in English</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>20.63</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36 MET Seek opportunities to read in English</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>21.84</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37 MET Have clear goals for improving skills</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>10.06</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40 AFF Encourage self to speak when afraid</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>15.53</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47 SOC Practice English with other students</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>41.78</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49 SOC Ask questions in English</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>39.48</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. Negative Variation (used more frequently by less successful students)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42 AFF Notice when I’m tense or nervous</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>13.49</td>
<td>W&gt;M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. Mixed Variation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 COM Use gestures when stuck for word</td>
<td>(see Figure 5)</td>
<td>13.12</td>
<td>W&gt;M</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 COM Make up new words when stuck</td>
<td>(see Figure 6)</td>
<td>13.80</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32 MET Pay attention when someone is speaking</td>
<td>(see Figure 7)</td>
<td>13.73</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39 AFF Try to relax when I feel afraid</td>
<td>(see Figure 8)</td>
<td>17.93</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Critical Value of $x^2$ = 9.49 (df = 4), $p < .05$

in Figure 2 (above), along with a graphic representation of the variation. Although the pattern of variation clearly visible in Figure 2 is strong, there were other items for which the variation was much stronger. If the 17 items showing positive variation were to be ranked by their chi-square values, Item 22 would be in the middle of the list, with equal numbers of items showing stronger variation (higher chi-square values) and weaker variation (lower chi-square values).

**Strategies not varying significantly by level.** The 28 SILL items that did not show significant variation by course level, represented by the
white sectors of the pie chart in Figure 1, are grouped in Table 4 according to frequency of use. Nine items represent strategies used frequently at all course levels, and 14 represent strategies used moderately at all course levels. Identifying strategies used frequently or moderately frequently across proficiency levels is a new feature of this study, and we will have more to say about these strategies below. Five

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 4</th>
<th>Items Showing No Significant Variation by Course Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Item</td>
<td>% High use</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I. Strategies used frequently at all course level</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(50% or more of students reporting high use)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 MEM</td>
<td>Associate new material w/already known</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 MEM</td>
<td>Connect word sound w/image or picture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 MEM</td>
<td>Connect word to mental picture of situation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 MEM</td>
<td>Connect words and location (e.g. on page)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31 MET</td>
<td>Notice my mistakes/try to do better</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33 MET</td>
<td>Try to find out about language learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38 MET</td>
<td>Think about my progress in learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45 SOC</td>
<td>Ask other person to slow down or repeat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48 SOC</td>
<td>Ask for help from English speakers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. Strategies used moderately at all course levels</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(20%—49% of students reporting high use)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 MEM</td>
<td>Use new English words in sentence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 MEM</td>
<td>Review English lessons often</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 COG</td>
<td>Say or write new words several times</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 COG</td>
<td>Skim then read carefully</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 COG</td>
<td>Seek L1 words similar to L2 words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 COG</td>
<td>Try to find patterns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 COG</td>
<td>Find meanings dividing words into parts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23 COG</td>
<td>Make summaries of information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24 COM</td>
<td>Guess meaning of unfamiliar words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 MET</td>
<td>Seek many ways to use English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41 AFF</td>
<td>Give self reward for doing well</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44 AFF</td>
<td>Talk to someone about feelings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46 SOC</td>
<td>Ask to be corrected when talking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50 SOC</td>
<td>Try to develop cultural understanding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. Strategies used infrequently at any level</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(fewer than 20% of students reporting high use)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 MEM</td>
<td>Use rhymes to remember new words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 MEM</td>
<td>Use flashcards to remember new words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 MEM</td>
<td>Physically act out new words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34 MET</td>
<td>Plan schedule to have enough time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43 AFF</td>
<td>Record feelings in learning diary</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Critical Value of $X^2 = 9.49$ (df = 4) $p < .05$
strategies on the SILL were used infrequently at any level, although a few students; of course, did use these strategies frequently.

Variation in Use of Individual Strategies by Gender

We found 15 of the 50 SILL items, almost one third of the total, to be used differently by women and men. These are listed in Table 5. Fourteen strategies were used significantly more often by women, and 1 was used significantly more often by men. Only 3 strategies that varied significantly by gender also varied significantly by proficiency. None of the 14 strategies used more often by women showed positive variation by proficiency (more use by more successful students).

### TABLE 5
Items Showing Significant Variation by Gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>W</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>x²</th>
<th>Variation by observed proficiency level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. Used significantly more often by women: fourteen strategies (representing all six strategy groups)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 MEM</td>
<td>Use flashcards to remember new words</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 MEM</td>
<td>Review English lessons often</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>10.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 MEM</td>
<td>Connect words and location (e.g. on page)</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>11.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 COG</td>
<td>Skim then read carefully</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>19.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 COG</td>
<td>Seek L1 words similar to L2 words</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>10.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23 COG</td>
<td>Make summaries of information</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>9.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 COM</td>
<td>Use gestures when stuck for word</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>7.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33 MET</td>
<td>Try to find out about language learning</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>8.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38 MET</td>
<td>Think about my progress in learning</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>9.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41 AFF</td>
<td>Give self reward for doing well</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>8.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42 AFF</td>
<td>Notice when I’m tense or nervous</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>12.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45 SOC</td>
<td>Ask other person to slow down or repeat</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>8.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46 SOC</td>
<td>Ask to be corrected when talking</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>13.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48 SOC</td>
<td>Ask for help from English speakers</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>14.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. Used significantly more often by men: one strategy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 COG</td>
<td>Watch TV or movies in English</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>19.22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Critical Value of $x^2 = 5.99$ ($df = 2$) $p < .05$. Even though the use of strategies in this table varied significantly by gender, almost all were used frequently or moderately frequently by males and females alike.
Factor Analysis Results

Using Varimax rotation, we identified nine factors (listed in Table 6) which together explained 51.6% of the variability among the 50 SILL items. This is approximately the same amount of variability explained by nine-factor solutions in other SILL research around the world (see Oxford & Burry-Stock, 1995). In the present study, the 51.6% figure means that a little less than half of the variability was not explained by the nine factors, so other influences also make a difference in strategy use. It is worth noting that 100% of the variability in the SILL responses would be explained if we were willing to drastically increase the number of factors in the solution.

The SILL’s six a priori categories and the nine a posteriori factors resulting from the factor analysis were not expected to be identical, but they were expected to be mutually supportive. This assumption was confirmed by the results. The first of the nine factors represented active language use, a powerful combination of techniques from the a priori categories of cognitive, metacognitive, and social strategies. Note that Oxford (1990, 1992) shows that language learning strategies are often used in combinations to provide greater strategic power, so this factor-analytic result makes both theoretical and practical sense. The second factor in our study was preponderantly metacognitive with a focus on planning (reflecting the metacognitive a priori category). The third factor was a combination of affective and social strategies (echoing the a priori categories of affective and social strategies, which are often combined into one group in the research literature). The fourth factor emphasized cognitive reflection strategies (see especially

**TABLE 6**
List of Factors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>% of Variance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Strategies for active, naturalistic use of English</td>
<td>21.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Metacognitive strategies with affective support</td>
<td>7.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Social and affective strategies</td>
<td>4.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Reflective strategies for language analysis and anxiety awareness</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Sensory memory strategies</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Cognitive and social strategies for conversation practice</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Sensory imaging strategies for learning vocabulary</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Strategies for cognitively manipulating the language</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>General compensation strategies</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td></td>
<td>51.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

LEARNING STRATEGIES, L2 PROFICIENCY, AND GENDER
the analysis strategies in the cognitive a priori category), supported by other strategies touching on affective self-reflection. The fifth factor dealt with sensory memory strategies (reflecting the a priori category of memory strategies). The sixth factor was composed of cognitive and social strategies that are used together in oral conversations (see the cognitive and social a priori categories). The seventh factor again showed sensory memory strategies but with an emphasis on the visual (see the a priori category of memory strategies). The eighth factor was cognitive and relaxation strategies (reflecting the a priori categories of cognitive and affective strategies). The final factor comprised compensation strategies (an echo of the a priori category of compensation strategies). Somewhat similar findings, except with different orderings of factors reflecting differential explanatory importance, were discovered in an international, crosscultural study of SILL results involving Puerto Rico, Egypt, Taiwan, the Peoples’ Republic of China, Japan, and the U.S. (Oxford and Burry-Stock, 1995). A detailed discussion of the current study’s factors is a subject for another paper. However, it is worth noting that four of the nine factors were dominated by strategies that varied by proficiency level or gender.

Factors strongly related to proficiency level. (See Table 7.) On Factor 1, which accounted for 21.6% of the variance, all but three items showed positive variation by proficiency level (more use by more successful students). Of the 17 SILL items that showed positive variation by proficiency (see Table 3), 11 loaded significantly on this factor. The three strategies on Factor 1 that did not show positive variation by proficiency were used moderately by students at all proficiency levels. Although this factor grouped together a number of proficiency-related items, it did not do the same for items that varied by gender. Factor 1 contained the only strategy used more frequently by men, and none of the items used significantly more often by women.

Factor 6 explained 3.1% of the variance. Like Factor 1, Factor 6 was made up almost entirely of items showing positive variation by level, and in fact the two factors overlapped, with four of the seven items on Factor 6 loading on Factor 1 as well (Items 11, 14, 49, and 47). No items on Factor 6 showed significant gender differences.

Factors strongly related to gender. (See Table 8.) Factor 3 explained 4.8% of the variance in the study. Five of the 10 items on this factor were used more frequently by females, and among these five were the top four items in terms of factor weights. On Factor 5, which explained 3.7% of the variance, all but two strategies were used more frequently by women.
TABLE 7
Factors Wrongly Related to Proficiency (Course Level)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Factor Weight</th>
<th>Variation by Proficiency</th>
<th>Variation by Gender</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>16 COG</td>
<td>.71</td>
<td>+</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36 MET</td>
<td>.69</td>
<td>+</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35 MET</td>
<td>.68</td>
<td>+</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 COG</td>
<td>.63</td>
<td>+</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 COG</td>
<td>.58</td>
<td>+</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27 COG</td>
<td>.58</td>
<td>+</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47 SOC</td>
<td>.58</td>
<td>+</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49 SOC</td>
<td>.56</td>
<td>+</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 COG</td>
<td>.53</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>M=W</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 MET</td>
<td>.51</td>
<td>Mod./all levels</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37 MET</td>
<td>.45</td>
<td>+</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50 SOC</td>
<td>.39</td>
<td>Mod./all levels</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 MEM</td>
<td>.37</td>
<td>Mod./all levels</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 COG</td>
<td>.36</td>
<td>+</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: + = positive variation by proficiency level

DISCUSSION

As anticipated, the results of this study are consistent with the general tenor of previous SILL studies and provide new evidence for a substantial relationship between strategy use and success in language learning. Like previous researchers, we found significantly greater overall use of language learning strategies among more successful learners, higher overall strategy use by women than by men, and significant differences by proficiency level and gender in students’ use of the broad strategy categories on the SILL. At the same time, our findings at the individual strategy level reveal more complex patterns of use than have appeared in earlier studies and give a clearer picture of the relationship between strategy use and successful learning.

In looking at patterns of variation by proficiency in overall strategy

LEARNING STRATEGIES, L2 PROFICIENCY, AND GENDER
TABLE 8
Factors Strongly Related to Gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Factor Weight</th>
<th>Variation by Proficiency</th>
<th>Variation by Gender</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Factor 3 (4.8% of variance): Social and affective strategies</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45 SOC</td>
<td>.69</td>
<td>Freq./all levels</td>
<td>W&gt;M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46 SOC</td>
<td>.65</td>
<td>Mod./all levels</td>
<td>W&gt;M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48 SOC</td>
<td>.64</td>
<td>Freq./all levels</td>
<td>W&gt;M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42 AFF</td>
<td>.54</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>W&gt;M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39 AFF</td>
<td>.47</td>
<td>+</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40 AFF</td>
<td>.44</td>
<td>+</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49 SOC</td>
<td>.41</td>
<td>+</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41 AFF</td>
<td>.39</td>
<td>Mod./all levels</td>
<td>W&gt;M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44 AFF</td>
<td>.32</td>
<td>Mod./all levels</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Factor 5 (3.7% of variance): Sensory memory strategies</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 MEM</td>
<td>.74</td>
<td>Mod./all levels</td>
<td>W&gt;M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34 MET</td>
<td>.54</td>
<td>Infr./all levels</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 COG</td>
<td>.42</td>
<td>Mod./all levels</td>
<td>W&gt;M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 MEM</td>
<td>.40</td>
<td>Infr./all levels</td>
<td>W&gt;M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 MEM</td>
<td>.40</td>
<td>Freq./all levels</td>
<td>W&gt;M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23 COG</td>
<td>.35</td>
<td>Mod./all levels</td>
<td>W&gt;M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 COG</td>
<td>.33</td>
<td>Mod./all levels</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: + = positive variation by proficiency level
- = negative variation by proficiency level
* = mixed variation by proficiency level

use and in the use of strategy categories on the SILL, we found that the variation was most likely to be significant when the Prebasic students (the lowest proficiency group) were compared with the other groups. The exception to this trend occurred with the cognitive strategies, where the highest level (Intermediate) students reported greater use than the middle level (Basic) students, who in turn reported greater use than the low (Prebasic) students. With overall strategy use and with the compensatory, metacognitive, and social strategy categories on the SILL, however, differences in strategy use were not significant between the Intermediate and Basic students, but they were significant between each of those groups and the lowest group, the Prebasic students. This suggests that in research of this kind, the strength of the findings obtained can depend to a significant extent on the range of ability levels in the study. Had we only included Basic and Intermediate students in our sample, our results would have been much weaker—
and in fact, this is what happened in an earlier pilot version of this study.

At the individual item level, significant variation by proficiency level was usually positive (more frequent strategy use by more proficient students), but there were several interesting exceptions to this general trend (see Figure 3 and Figures 5–8 for full data and graphic representations of the variation for these items). Some of the significant but nonpositive patterns of variation by proficiency that we found at the individual item level were easy to interpret. The only strategy showing negative variation (more use by less successful students) was Item 42, noticing tension or nervousness, and this is a strategy less successful learners might be expected to use more frequently than their peers.

A probable explanation for the complex mixed patterns for Item 25 (using gestures when unable to think of a word; see Figure 5) and Item 26 (making up new words when unable to come up with the right one; see Figure 6), where Basic students reported higher use than either the Intermediate students above them or the Prebasic students below them, is that the Basic students find more opportunities to converse in English than the Prebasic students do, and have developed a greater ability to coin new words and use circumlocutions in English, but as their competence grows, the need to use gestures or make up new words diminishes. The reasons for the mixed patterns of Items 32 and 39 (see Figures 7 and 8), on the other hand, are less apparent to us.

The diversity in the kinds of variation we found is a clear signal to future researchers of the importance of looking at variation in the use of individual strategies as well as at broader categories of strategies and strategy use in general. We have provided detailed data on the more unusual patterns we found in order to clarify our classification of these as mixed or (in the case of one item) as positive, in order to illustrate the complex relationships between strategy use and proficiency level which can and do occur, and also to stress the importance with this type of survey data of using chi-square tests to compare actual frequencies of student responses rather than some other procedure comparing means. Item 39 is a good case in point. Had we relied on mean responses when analyzing the relationship between strategy use and proficiency for this item, we would have noticed a slight increase in means at progressively higher course levels (Prebasic, 3.5; Basic, 3.6; Intermediate, 3.7), while missing entirely the complex and interesting pattern clearly visible in Figure 8.

About a third of the individual strategies on the SILL were used more frequently by more successful students (for listing, see Table 3). It is striking and significant that all or almost all of these strategies
involved active use of the target language, with a strong emphasis on practice in natural or naturalistic situations. Of course, the finding of a substantial relationship between greater use of these strategies and higher L2 proficiency is not in itself evidence of causality. We believe, however, that there is a causal relationship between strategy use and proficiency level here, and that this relationship is best visualized not as a one-way arrow leading from cause to effect, but rather as an ascending spiral in which active use strategies help students attain higher proficiency, which in turn makes it more likely that students will select these active use strategies.

Our factor analysis supplied further evidence for the key role of active use strategies. We identified nine factors which together explained 51.6% of the variance among the 50 SILL items. Each of the nine factors (listed in Table 6) grouped together recognizable types of strategies, and two factors were dominated by strategies used more frequently by students at higher course levels.

The items on these two factors are listed in Table 7. Factor 1, accounting for an impressive 21.6% of the total variance in the study, was made up entirely or almost entirely of strategies for active, naturalistic use of the language, all but three of which showed positive variation by course level. Of the 17 SILL items that showed positive variation by course level (listed in Table 3), 11 loaded significantly on this factor, indicating that besides being used more frequently by more successful learners, these strategies tend to be used in concert with each other—a very interesting and significant finding.

Factor 6 consisted entirely of strategies from the cognitive and social sections of the SILL. The emphasis in this factor was on strategies associated with active practice, especially in speaking, and four of the speaking-related items on this factor loaded on Factor 1 as well. Most or all of the strategies on Factor 6 involved cooperating with others in various ways. That no items on this factor showed significant gender differences is interesting because we might have expected cooperation-related strategies to be favored by women more than men.

Twenty-eight strategies did not vary by course level, but there was a good deal of variation in the extent to which they were used by students in general (see list in Table 4). Most of these were used frequently or moderately frequently at all course levels. Only five were used infrequently at any level. How are we to evaluate the importance of these strategies used equally, often across course levels? One possible interpretation is that these strategies do not make a difference and that only those used more often by more successful students are important or productive. However, we find it unlikely that such strategies as thinking about one’s progress in learning, or using memory tech-
niques to remember new vocabulary words, or skimming a selection before reading it carefully, are unproductive or unimportant.

We believe the strategies used equally frequently across course levels are a key part of the picture we are bringing into focus. In describing the strategy choices of successful learners, common sense would suggest that we should look at the total range of strategies selected by those learners, rather than paying attention only to the strategies such learners use more frequently than their less successful peers. The successful learners in this study reported using a number of strategies more often than other students, and they reported using them in combination with other strategies used frequently or moderately so by students at all levels. The strategies used frequently or moderately frequently by successful and unsuccessful learners alike are not necessarily unproductive. A more likely interpretation, in our view, is that these are what we term bedrock strategies, which contribute significantly to the learning process of the more successful students, although not being in themselves sufficient to move the less successful students to higher proficiency levels. The concept of bedrock strategies has not been explored in previous strategy research, and we speculate that it could be important to a full understanding of language learning strategies.

Our findings of significant relationships between gender and strategy use serve as a useful reminder that strategy use is a complex phenomenon, related to a number of variables including but not limited to L2 proficiency. As with our proficiency findings, it is at the individual strategy level that the gender differences we observed become particularly interesting.

Fourteen strategies were used significantly more often by women in this study, although only one was used significantly more often by men: Item 15, watching television programs and video movies in English. According to Victor Vazquez of Mediafax, a company which (like the Nielsen organization in the U.S.) compiles information on television viewing, men in Puerto Rico do not spend more time watching television in any language than do women; in fact, the opposite is true (personal communication, May 1993). We believe the difference we found is due to differences in English and Spanish programming. English language television in Puerto Rico means cable, with its varied menu including sports, movies, and music videos. Prime time programming in Spanish is dominated by soap operas (telenovelas), which probably appeal more strongly to women than to men.

How can the stronger showing of females be explained in the other significant strategies (see Table 5 for list)? Many of these (Items 9, 18, 19, 23, 25, and 38) are rather global strategies, and females are more
often than males classified as global learners (see research reviews by Oxford, 1993a, 1993b). Three strategies (Items 33, 41, and 42) are introspective and to an extent affective strategies, and females have been shown to pay greater attention to these aspects of learning (Oxford, 1993a, 1993b). Several strategies (Items 45, 46, and 48) reflect women’s conversational behavior that is typified—even in the native ‘language’—by rapport-seeking, sociability, and elicitation of comment by the speaker (Lakoff, 1975; Tannen, 1986, 1990). The only strategy whose gender difference explanation was not readily apparent was Item 8, reviewing often, although this might fit with women’s documented desire to follow rules and be compliant (Bardwick, 1971; Benefield, Clinchy, Goldberger, & Tarule, 1986) or their documented desire to manage their learning in a metacognitive sense (Zoubir-Shaw & Oxford, in press).

Strategies used more often by women dominated two of the nine factors in our factor analysis (see Table 8 for specific strategies on these two factors). Factor 3 included almost all of the social and affective strategies on the SILL. (The only affective strategy not included was Item 43, recording one’s feelings in a learning diary; the only social strategy not included was Item 50, trying to develop cultural understanding.) In this factor, the affective strategies appear to be playing a powerful role in supporting social strategies that involve asking for help, especially in conversational situations. Factor 5 centered primarily on sensory memory strategies and supporting strategies. At the heart of this factor were three sensory memory strategies (Items 6, 9, and 10) and two other memory strategies (Items 8 and 23), buttressed by an active use strategy (Item 18) and a metacognitive strategy (Item 34, which helps with memory by providing enough time to study). The strategies on this factor (with the possible exception of Item 9, remembering words by their location) tend to support reading and writing more than speaking and listening. Several items on this factor (Items 8 and 34 especially) are particularly appropriate for language learning in a classroom environment. For no strategy in this set was there significant variation across proficiency levels.

Male-female differences in language learning strategies do not necessarily mean that people of one gender are more successful at language learning than people of the other. In the current study, variation by gender and variation by proficiency appear to be working in very different and probably unrelated ways. It is notable that there was no overlap between the strategies used more often by women and the strategies used more often by more proficient students (see Tables 3–5). In addition, although women used strategies more than men in this study, we did not find greater numbers of women at more advanced course levels (see Table 1). Concrete information on gender
effects on both strategy use and proficiency must be gained through multiple studies in various cultures. It is clear, however, that gender difference trends in strategy use are quite pronounced within and across cultures, and this means that women and men are using different approaches to language learning. This could be related to underlying learning styles, motivations, and attitudes.

How generalizable are the results of this study to other settings and populations? As noted above in our review of previous SILL studies, strategy use has been shown to vary with proficiency level and gender in a wide variety of settings. The similarity of those findings across cultures is strong evidence for their generalizability. On the other hand, the SILL research to date has also shown differences in strategy use between second language and foreign language situations. (See also Yang, 1992, for differences between ESL and EFL settings.) Puerto Rico, as we observed earlier, can be considered a special kind of hybrid foreign/second language environment. In our factor analysis, the strongly explanatory nature of the first factor (active, naturalistic language use) is similar to findings in studies of students in second language learning situations, where authentic use strategies have likewise been very important (Oxford & Burry, 1993). By way of contrast, see for example the factor analysis of strategy use by a population of foreign language learners reported by Nyikos and Oxford (1993). In that study, active, naturalistic language use did not arise as the main factor, probably because the students were in foreign language classroom settings that did not call for self-motivated, authentic use of the language for daily communication. In terms of the details of the present study, we would predict similar results if this kind of item-by-item analysis were to be conducted in other settings where extensive opportunities exist for real use of the target language outside the classroom.

CLASSROOM IMPLICATIONS AND EXTENSIONS OF THIS STUDY

The findings in this study suggest a number of implications and extensions for the classroom. A crucial role in L2 learning appears to be played by strategies involving active use of the target language. Students should be made aware of the key importance of active use strategies involving naturalistic practice, especially in situations where the opportunities for such practice are widely available. Sharing research results such as those in this study could be useful in persuading students to use such strategies as much as possible. At the same time, we believe that students should be made aware of the broad range of strategy options available to them. The fact that the bedrock strategies
were used equally often by students at all proficiency levels does not mean teachers can assume that all students are equally aware of these strategies. We would suggest that students and teachers would do well to think of the active use strategies as being like the keystone that holds together the pieces of an arch whose strength derives from all its pieces and the way they are combined.

It is important for teachers to recognize that some strategies may be more suited to some learners than to others. Many factors exist to explain individual differences in strategy choices. Males and females (as groups), for instance, might have different preferences in terms of strategy use, although individuals would certainly differ from the overall group picture. People at different levels of proficiency are likely to use different kinds of strategies, partly because they are dealing with various kinds of materials and situations. Although not examined in the current study, students with different degrees and types of motivation tend to choose certain kinds of strategies. Students with different learning styles (e.g., visual, auditory, and hands-on; reflective and impulsive; analytic and global; extroverted and introverted) often choose strategies that reflect their style preferences. The more that teachers know about such factors, the more readily the teacher can come to grips with the nature of individual differences in the classroom. Such knowledge is power—the power to plan lessons so that students with many different characteristics, including varied strategies, can receive what they need.

This study opens a number of avenues for further research. We need to know the extent to which the specific patterns of strategy use we found in Puerto Rico would occur in other geographical and cultural settings. Also worthy of further investigation is the relationship of gender and potentially gender-related factors such as learning styles, motivation, and attitude to the choice of individual strategies and combinations of strategies. Other possible topics are suggested by what we have called the bedrock strategies. It is interesting that among the SILL items that did not vary significantly by proficiency level (see listing in Table 4) were the entire group of items representing memory strategies (Items 1–9). Although there seemed to be no connection between proficiency level and the use of memory strategies, this group as a whole did show variation by gender, and we think it likely that student use of memory strategies, especially at the individual strategy level, is influenced by as yet unidentified personality factors. Another group of strategies that did not show significant differences in use among more successful and less successful learners was a subset of cognitive strategies involving analysis of and reasoning about the target language in order to find meaning (Items 19–21). This is an interesting
finding, given the ongoing debate about the importance of explicit as opposed to implicit knowledge about language in L2 learning (see, e.g., Ellis, 1993, 1994; Robinson, 1994), but further work is needed to determine the generalizability and significance of this finding.

Our primarily descriptive findings point to the need for more study of the relationship of learning strategies to language proficiency. Studies addressing the issue of causality (which as we suggested above is probably bidirectional, with well-chosen strategies helping to develop L2 proficiency, but with proficiency level also influencing strategy choices) would be especially welcome. To our knowledge, no SILL study to date has adopted a longitudinal approach. The relationship of strategy use to L2 proficiency is much more complex than might have been supposed in the past, as indicated by the data presented here. Use of particular strategies might lead to proficiency, but proficiency might lead to use (or abandonment) of particular strategies (MacIntyre, 1994; Oxford, 1990). Use of some strategies (such as deep breathing) might be a sign of anxiety, which relates to hampered proficiency. Linear (usually positively linear but sometimes negatively linear) and occasionally curvilinear relationships have been found between strategy use and language proficiency in a variety of studies (Oxford & Leaver, in press). Perhaps the MacIntyre (1994) model might help to explain some of the complexity here and might enlighten future classroom studies involving language proficiency and learning strategies.

Finally, we would stress that because quantitative and qualitative methods each have their strengths and limitations, both kinds of research are necessary if we are to develop multifaceted insights that are at once broadly applicable and rich in observed detail. Both traditions can add immensely to our understanding of how students learn languages. Neither tradition will give the whole answer, but both together can provide a clearer picture of the processes of language teaching and learning.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The results of this study were reported and discussed in a presentation by both authors at the 27th Annual TESOL Convention in Atlanta, Georgia, in April 1993. Salem State College and the English Department at the University of Puerto Rico at Mayagüez supported the research in several ways including course reductions granted to the first author. The authors would like to thank the anonymous TESOL Quarterly readers for their very helpful comments on earlier versions of the manuscript.
THE AUTHORS

John M. Green is Associate Professor of English at Salem State College in Massachusetts, where he is developing a new course sequence for entering ESL students. He has taught ESL in Venezuela, Puerto Rico, California, and Massachusetts.

Rebecca Oxford is Professor and Area Head for Teacher Education at the University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, the author of the Strategy Inventory for Language Learning and the book Language Learning Strategies: What Every Teacher Should Know (Newbury House), and the co-author of The Tapestry of Language Learning (Heinle & Heinle).

REFERENCES


Schweers, C. W., & Vélez, J. A. (1992). To be or not to be bilingual in Puerto Rico: That is the question. TESOL Journal, 2, 13–16.


LANGUAGE PROFESSIONALS! RETURN THIS COUPON FOR A FREE COPY OF THE RESEARCHER.  

Involved with testing English as a foreign language? You’ll find the TOEFL Research Reports informative reading at a modest cost. Reflecting Educational Testing Service’s commitment to assuring test validity and reliability, these studies are approved by the TOEFL Research Committee, a six-member panel of independent research specialists.

To date, 58 studies have been completed, with 20 others in progress. A recent title is An Investigation of Proposed Revisions to Section 3 of the TOEFL Test. New studies on the Test of Spoken English and the Test of Written English are forthcoming.

Return the coupon to receive a free copy of The Researcher, which includes descriptions of each TOEFL Research Report, as well as an order form.

Please send me a free copy of The Researcher.

Name ______________________________
Institution ____________________________________________
Address ____________________________________________
City __________________ State ______ Zip ______

Check here if you would also like a free copy of the official TOEFL Programs and Services Catalog.

Detach and mail to: TOEFL Program Office
P.O. Box 6455
Princeton, NJ 08541-6455 USA

TQ/SM-95
The Interaction Between Task and Meaning Construction in EFL Reading Comprehension Tests

CLAIRE M. GORDON  
The Open University of Israel

DAVID HANAUER  
Tel Aviv University

This study investigates the interrelationship between meaning construction and testing tasks. The study’s basic hypothesis is that a reader’s mental model continues to develop throughout the test-taking process. Thus, testing tasks are information sources which affect the ongoing construction of the test taker’s mental model. Within the framework of this study, the ability to comprehend a text is considered to be the ability to construct a mental model of the text. Current thinking in the field of language testing emphasizes the need for taking into account the processing involved in the test-taking situation and not solely the product. Thus, in order to study the test-taking process in greater depth and, specifically, to examine the interrelationship between testing tasks in different formats and the test taker’s on-line meaning construction, an exploratory study was carried out. Think-aloud data were obtained as subjects responded to both multiple choice and open ended comprehension test questions written in both Hebrew and English on an EFL reading test. The subjects were 28 10th-grade high school students studying EFL.

The analysis of the verbal protocols revealed that testing tasks function as an additional information source which interacts in one of four ways with the continuing development of the test taker’s mental model: (a) integrating new information into an existing information structure; (b) constructing a new information structure; (c) confirming an existing information structure; and (d) newly integrating existing information structures. The results are discussed in relation to the validity of reading comprehension tests and implications for instruction and evaluation.

Recent studies into the test-taking process reflect the concern of language testers with the issue of test validity. As a result, both
theoretical discussions and empirical studies have called for a broadening of the validation process to include a more in-depth study of the test-taking process (Bachman, 1990; Messick, 1988). The effect that test method has on test performance as well as the strategies involved in completing testing tasks have been the focus of much research on the test-taking process (Anderson, Bachman, Perkins & Cohen, 1991; Cohen, 1984; Gordon, 1987; Nevo, 1989; Shohamy, 1984). Work has also been done on the relationship between test question and test takers’ responses on literacy tasks (Hill, 1992). In continuing this line of research in a foreign language setting, what is needed is an in-depth investigation into the processing of the testing task and the degree to which answers to it reflect the trait being measured. When testing reading comprehension, the validity of the test depends upon the degree to which the test takers’ responses reflect the meaning they have constructed of the text. It is this issue that the present study addresses.

Reading comprehension tests should be constructed according to current theories of text processing as well as psychometric principles. The validity of these tests depends upon the degree to which the score obtained is “a meaningful indicator of a particular individual’s ability . . . and measures that ability and very little else” (Bachman, 1990, p. 25). In the case of reading comprehension, the ability or trait being measured is the processing of written text in order to construct a coherent internal representation of its content. Tests of reading comprehension, therefore, should render scores which reflect the process and the product of meaning construction in order to ensure that inferences made about a person’s reading ability and decisions made on the basis of these scores are valid. Thus, a necessary condition for validity of any assessment of reading comprehension is an explicit theory of text processing and meaning construction.

MENTAL MODEL CONSTRUCTION

Text processing has been described as the ability to construct a coherent internal representation of the spatio-temporal relations described in the text (Glenberg, Meyer, & Lindem, 1987; Schmalhofer & Glavanov, 1986). This type of internal representation, sometimes called a mental model, is considered to go beyond the literal meaning of the discourse because it embodies inferences, instantiations, and references not explicitly mentioned in the text (Johnson-Laird, 1983). These mental models are supposed to incorporate the events, actions, persons, and the general situation that the text is about, which van Dijk and Kintsch (1983) refer to as a situational model.
One theory which considers text comprehension as the construction of an internal representation of the text is Gernsbacher’s (1990) theory of structure building. Gernsbacher describes three basic processes involved in the way incoming information is processed in the construction of a mental model: laying a foundational structure, mapping on new information to an existing structure, and shifting to a new structure. The onset of developing an internal representation of the text is the construction of an initial (foundational) structure. Subsequent incoming information is either mapped on to the foundational structure or shifted in order to create a new structure. Mapping on occurs when the incoming information coheres with the initial structure. This new information, which has been mapped on, can be seen as an expansion of the foundational structure. When the incoming information does not cohere with the foundational structure, a new structure is constructed. This process is called shifting to a new structure. Information is considered coherent if it relates referentially, vocationally, causally, or temporally to the foundational structure.

Within Gernsbacher’s model, the meaning construction process is not limited to textual information. Her theory is based on a general comprehension model. As such, information from various sources can be included within the developing mental model. Information sources such as world knowledge, knowledge of linguistic systems and formal knowledge of the text can become structures in themselves which can be integrated within the existing foundational structure or shifted to construct a new foundational structure. Thus, according to this theory, mental model construction is an ongoing process involving the continuous accommodation of incoming information from a variety of sources. It therefore offers an explanatory framework which can relate to meaning construction during the stages of the test-taking process: the reading of the stimulus text and the processing of the testing tasks to their completion.

READING COMPREHENSION ASSESSMENT

Within the framework of reading comprehension assessment, the process of mental model construction as well as its product are elements that tests of reading comprehension are purported to measure. However, measuring mental model construction is problematic because mental processes are unobservable. Information on the mental model constructed must be inferred from the way the test taker responds to test items. The problem with this, as noted by Harrison and Dolan (1979), is that “by attempting to observe the reader’s response we are bound in some way to affect that response” (p. 13). They claim that
different modes of investigation and test format may be attributed to
differences in performance and subsequently to evaluations of how
well people read and comprehend.

Bachman (1990) states that “performance on language tests . . . var-
ies as a function both of an individual’s language ability and of the
characteristics of the test methods” (p. 133). According to Bachman’s
model, one characteristic (or facet) inherent in the test method is the
language of the input and the expected response (native, target, or
both). Within the context of reading comprehension assessment in L2,
the language in which comprehension questions are written (the input)
can quite feasibly affect test takers’ performance on reading tests.
Having questions written in the L1 would facilitate the test takers’
understanding of what is being asked in a particular item. This would
decrease the chances of the test taker providing the wrong information
due to misunderstanding the comprehension question. Furthermore,
the more certain testers can be regarding the degree to which the test
-takers have understood the comprehension question, the more testers
can accept the test takers’ responses as valid representations of their
understanding of the text.

The language of the expected response also has direct ramifications
for the assessment of reading in L2. According to the framework for
testing reading for meaning proposed by Swaffer, Arens, and Byrnes
(1991), “Reading tests should, if feasible, allow some reader conceptu-
alization of text meaning in the native language” (p. 155). They claim
that use of the L1 on L2 reading tests would allow a “fuller assessment
of students’ rhetorical schematizing and command of detail” (p. 155).
Similarly, Lee (1986) found that “assessing comprehension with the
-native language allows learners to more fully demonstrate their com-
prehension” (p. 353). Thus, when test takers are presented with
comprehension tasks in the L1 or are allowed to answer open ended
comprehension questions in their native language, the problem of
misunderstanding or not fully understanding tasks is eliminated and
they benefit from the opportunity to express the meaning they have
constructed without being inhibited by poor reading or writing ability
in the L2.

The effect of test format on test performance (method effect) has
been examined quite extensively. The research indicates that the test
method itself has a significant effect on test scores (Birenbaum &
Tatsuoka, 1987; Gordon, 1987; Samson, 1983; Shohamy, 1984; Ward,
Fredrickson, & Carlson, 1980) and on the way people respond to
test questions. Furthermore, the Shohamy (1984) and Gordon (1987)
studies show that the language (L1 or L2) in which the test questions
are written and responded to also affects performance on EFL reading
comprehension tests. Thus, two variables have been seen to contribute
to method effect—test format and language. As Campbell and Fiske (1959) note, if the method effect is strong enough, the information obtained from the test will be invalid: “To the extent that irrelevant method variance contributes to the scores obtained, these scores are invalid” (p. 84).

As a result of the research on method effect, testers have called for an expansion of the validation process to include an examination of the processing of test tasks and of test takers’ performance (Alderson, 1990; Anderson, Bachman, Perkins, & Cohen, 1991; Bachman 1990; Grotjahn, 1986; Messick, 1988). Such a study of the test-taking process requires a qualitative investigation of how test takers process and respond to items on reading comprehension tests. One useful method in the investigation of the test-taking process is that of think-aloud procedures and verbal reports (Ericsson & Simon, 1980).

A number of studies have used verbal report procedures to follow the test-taking processes on language tests using a variety of formats (Anderson et al., 1991; Cohen, 1984; Gordon, 1987; Nevo, 1989). Results of these studies have described various test-taking strategies employed when responding to test items. This information has shed light on the phenomenon of method effect because it identified aspects of the test-taking process which influence the way a person responds to a test item in a particular method. In an investigation of multiple choice (MC) and open ended (OE) formats on EFL reading tests, Gordon (1987) found that the test question itself provides clues to understanding the text. This means that not only does the test format affect performance on reading tests but, in fact, the test task has an effect on the meaning the test taker has constructed of the stimulus text as well. Taking this one step further, we could assume that if information from test questions is incorporated in a reader’s mental model, the meaning constructed by a reader of the stimulus text continues to be revised and/or expanded as a result of interacting with comprehension questions.

As discussed above, Gernsbacher’s (1990) theory accounts for the accommodation of various knowledge sources within the developing mental model. Accordingly, the testing task itself might be considered as an additional knowledge source which develops the test takers’ mental model. Thus, the knowledge sources available to the test taker during the test-taking process are not only knowledge of the text, knowledge of the world, and linguistic knowledge, but may also be knowledge derived from processing the testing task as well. If information derived from the processing of each task on a test has the potential to develop the mental model, it can become an available information source for the processing of subsequent tasks on that test. From a testing point of view, responses to testing tasks may not be solely a
reflection of the meaning constructed from the initial reading of the text but rather a reflection of both the initial reading of the text and the knowledge derived from the processing of the current and previous tasks on that test. In this sense, the testing process can be seen as an ongoing and cumulative process in which the mental model is developed throughout the entire test. This view of the reading comprehension test-taking process is schematically presented in the model in Figure 1.

As seen in the model, a response to a testing task fulfills two roles in the test-taking process. On the one hand, it is a product of the interaction between the testing task and the mental model the test taker has constructed up to that point. On the other hand, it is an additional knowledge source which can be incorporated into the mental model and used in the processing of subsequent tasks on a particular test.

None of the previous studies to date has related to the dual role of the testing task within the test-taking process. An investigation of the test-taking process which focuses on the interaction between testing
tasks and the test takers’ mental model construction on reading comprehension tests in EFL would have direct implications for test validity. This study will examine the interaction between testing task and the ongoing construction of a test takers’ mental model on EFL reading comprehension tests when the task constitutes a combination of format (MC and OE questions) and language (L1-Hebrew, and L2-English).

METHODOLOGY

Subjects

Twenty-eight 10th-grade students studying EFL in two Israeli public high schools took part in this study. They were all in the academic stream which provided 5 hours of EFL instruction per week. Because reading texts in English is a major goal of the Israeli educational system and a prerequisite for acceptance to institutions of higher education, reading comprehension is greatly emphasized in the EFL program.

The students were chosen for participation on the basis of their performance on the classroom reading comprehension tests that the respective teachers had administered throughout the semester as well as teacher recommendations. The typical classroom reading comprehension tests consisted of a text followed by both MC and short OE items written and responded to in English (L2). The students considered for participation were those averaging a score within the range of 60 to 90 on their classroom reading tests that semester. The final selection was made with the respective classroom teachers. This selection process was necessary in order to ensure that neither nonreaders in English or Hebrew nor native English speakers would be in the subject sample. Participation was strictly voluntary.

Instrument

A reading comprehension test consisting of one expository text advertising a competition (see the Appendix) with eight comprehension questions was taken by each of the subjects. The reliability of the test as determined from a prior administration was .75 (Cronbach’s alpha). This coefficient, which is a measure of a test’s internal consistency, estimates the consistency of test takers’ performance on different parts (items) of a particular test. The higher the reliability coefficient (maximum value being 1.00), the more reliable the scores are as indicators of a particular ability (Bachman, 1990). Given the small number of items on this test, a reliability coefficient of .75 is satisfactory.
The eight comprehension questions appeared in one of four test methods:

- Multiple choice in Hebrew (MC/H)
- Multiple choice in English (MC/E)
- Open ended in Hebrew (OE/H)
- Open ended in English (OE/E)

In order to ensure that each subject experienced all four test methods and that each question would appear in each method, four parallel versions of the test were prepared. The same eight comprehension questions appeared on each of the versions in a combination of the four test methods mentioned above such that two questions appeared in MC/E; two questions appeared in MC/H; two questions appeared in OE/E; and two questions appeared in OE/H. Each subject received only one version.

**Procedure**

The think-aloud technique for elicitation of verbal reports was employed because this procedure enabled the authors to best follow the processes the test takers were engaged in while completing testing tasks (Ericsson & Simon, 1980). Prior to the collection of the data, a preparatory meeting was held with each of the subjects individually. There were several aims to this meeting: to acquaint them with the researcher, to inform the subjects about the research project in general, and to train them in the procedure of thinking aloud and verbal reporting.

The training of the subjects focused on various aspects. The researcher illustrated the task of reporting thoughts on-line while being engaged in the task of responding to the test question. Following a few demonstrations, the researcher discussed with the subject the importance of reporting everything that came to mind while reading and responding to the task, such as deliberations regarding possible answers, hesitations, difficulties in comprehension (in the text or testing task), lexical or grammatical problems, uncertainties, and generally whatever influenced their final response. The subject was then given short tasks in the various testing methods to practice thinking aloud. When the researcher felt that the subject was engaged in the task for a length of time without saying anything, she would probe by asking, “What are you thinking about now?” The subjects were encouraged to think aloud regardless of how silly they might feel or how trivial they might think the information was. The emphasis of the training session was that every element in their thinking process was relevant.
When the trainer felt that the subject had grasped the procedure of thinking aloud and that the subject was comfortable with it, the training session was over. The actual data collection session followed soon after.

Following the training session, the researcher met with each of the subjects individually. The subjects were given the stimulus text to read without any time constraint. When the subjects finished reading the text, they were asked to verbalize their understanding of the text in whatever language was most comfortable. Following this, a version of the eight comprehension questions was presented to the subjects. The researcher told the subjects to answer the questions and verbalize their thoughts while doing so. In cases where the question appeared initially in English, upon completion of the task, the subjects were given the same item in Hebrew to see whether any effects occurred as a result of the language the item was presented in (Hebrew or English). Similarly, when items appeared initially in an OE format, subjects were given the same item in MC format to see if effects occurred as a result of test method. Upon completing each task, the subjects were told to verbalize the reason they responded as they did. The subjects were interviewed individually in Hebrew, and the interviews were tape recorded and later transcribed.

Data Analysis

Each of the 28 protocols was analyzed carefully and notes were made relating to the test takers' use of information from the test questions in constructing meaning. The researchers found that the same cognitive processes in Gernsbacher's (1990) comprehension model—mapping-on and shifting—could also be used to describe the use of information from testing tasks in constructing meaning during the test-taking process. Four interactions between information in test questions and on-line meaning construction were identified: (a) integrating new information into an existing information structure; (b) constructing a new information structure; (c) confirming an existing information structure; and (d) newly integrating existing information structures.

Once they identified interactions, the two researchers independently reanalyzed the 28 protocols. The unit of analysis was the individual test question. The answer to each question was analyzed to determine which of the four interactions described the test takers' use of information in the test question to develop his/her mental model. Specifically, the researchers analyzed if the test taker used the information in the question to: (a) integrate this new information into a structure which already existed in his/her mental model; (b) construct a new informa-
tion structure; (c) confirm an existing structure; or (d) use the information to newly integrate existing structures.

To get an indication of interrater reliability, a sample of 25% of the verbal protocols was compared to determine the percentage of correct categorizations between the two researchers. The level of agreement achieved was .84, which indicates that the two raters were in high agreement as to which interaction had taken place. In the final coding of the data, the researchers discussed disagreements in interpretations until consensus was reached. The analysis of the protocols focused on two aspects of the test-taking process: the processing and completion of each individual test item and the test takers’ meaning construction of the stimulus text. Analyzing the verbalizations of the test taker while processing each task enabled the identification of the knowledge sources used in processing and completing testing tasks. By analyzing the test takers’ verbal explanations as to why they responded as they did following the completion of each test item, the authors were able to obtain information as to the test takers’ ongoing meaning construction of the stimulus text. In this way, any influences on the test takers’ meaning construction following the processing of a testing task could be identified. In addition, influences resulting from task format or language used in the task were also noted.

RESULTS

Results of the analysis of the 28 verbal protocols indicate that the testing task does interact with the ongoing construction of the test takers’ mental model. The test takers’ mental model continued to develop throughout the test-taking process. This development was influenced not only by the processing of the stimulus text but by processing the various tasks on the test and responding to them. Knowledge derived from the text and the testing task, as well as linguistic and world knowledge were all sources available to the test taker in the process of completing the reading comprehension.

It was also observed that the processing of testing tasks had a cumulative effect on the test takers’ mental model. The additional information acquired from the processing of a testing task affected the processing and completion of subsequent tasks on the test. The protocol analysis revealed that the test task interacted with and thus developed the mental model in one of the following ways:

1. Integrating new information into an existing structure (mapping on)
2. Constructing a new structure (shifting)
### TABLE 1
Percentages of the Four Interactions Between Testing Task and Mental Model Construction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interaction</th>
<th>Percentage of total number of interactions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interaction 1:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mapping on</td>
<td>40 (n=172)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interaction 2:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shifting</td>
<td>4 (n=4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interaction 3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confirming</td>
<td>51 (n=219)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interaction 4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newly integrating</td>
<td>5 (n=22)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100 (n=428)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. Confirming an existing structure
4. Newly integrating existing structures.

A quantification of the number of times each of these interactions occurred appears in Table 1.

From Table 1 we see that the most frequently occurring interaction of testing task with mental model development was Interaction 3, confirming an existing structure, observed in 51% of the responses. This result is logical in the sense that options in testing tasks or responses to open questions very often match or confirm the meaning that the test taker has constructed up until that point. The second most frequent interaction was Interaction 1, integrating or mapping on new information into an existing structure, which was observed in 40% of the responses. This finding emphasizes the dynamic nature of the test-taking process and the degree to which information in testing tasks influences the ongoing development of the test takers' mental model. The remaining two interactions, constructing or shifting
to a new structure (Interaction 2) and newly integrating existing elements (Interaction 4), occurred much less frequently (4% and 5% respectively). This is also to be expected because information derived from a testing task would have to be very powerful to cause test takers to reorganize the existing elements into a revised interpretation (Interaction 4) or reject the meaning they have constructed in favor of a new interpretation cued or derived from information in the testing task (Interaction 2).

**Student 1: Daphna**

The following examples taken from the verbal protocol of one of the subjects, Daphna (pseudonym), illustrate these four interactions. The main reason for choosing Daphna to highlight the findings of this study was that examples from her protocol demonstrate how information from testing tasks develops the test takers' mental model, and they clearly illustrate the four interactions identified in this study.

Daphna was a weak language learner in general and of below average reading ability in EFL in particular. She was one of the weaker students in the study sample although her reading ability in English did allow her to construct meaning of the text to a limited degree and respond to the testing tasks. She did reflect upon new incoming information and constantly developed her mental model in light of new evidence, which showed her to be very active in the meaning construction process. Thus, we chose Daphna as an example not because she represented a particular type of reader but rather because the clarity of her responses illustrated the interactions identified in this study.

**Example of Interaction 1: Integrating New Information Into an Existing Structure**

Following the initial reading of the text, Daphna made the following comment:

1. It has something to do with the newspaper.

Daphna then proceeded to answer Question 1 which appeared in a MC format in English.

What does this passage ask people to do?
   a. To send in something about Jerusalem in order to win a prize.
   b. To take a trip to Jerusalem and stay at the Plaza Hotel.
   c. To buy a subscription for the Jerusalem Post.
   d. To visit the art exhibition on Jerusalem Day.
After reading the options, she focused on those which she felt she had the linguistic capability to process (Options A and B). She ultimately chose A. She matched "send" in Option A to "written" in the text (Line 9) and mapped it on to the foundational structure of her mental model, the newspaper. She developed her mental model by integrating new information from the following three knowledge sources; the test question ("send"), the text ("written" and "Jerusalem Post") and knowledge of the world (it is common to send in letters to the editor of a newspaper). This is indicated by her verbalization upon completion of the task:

2. [The passage asks people] to send in letters to the editor of the newspaper.

This is an example of an interaction between testing task and mental model development in which new information from the test question is integrated within (mapped on to) the test takers’ existing structure.

**Example of Interaction 2: Constructing a New Structure**

In order to gain more information on the strength of the developed mental model, Daphna was given the same question in the MC/H format. Receiving the question in Hebrew cleared up the language problems due to difficult lexical items in Options C and D and enabled her to evaluate the information presented in each of them in relation to her newly developed mental model. After reading all the options, she changed her original response (the one given to Question 1 in MC/E format) and chose D “to visit the art exhibition on Jerusalem Day.” She justified this change by saying

3. because it’s talking about an exhibition and it sounds more correct than A (to send in something in order to win a prize).

This statement is different from the verbalization of her mental model when she completed the first question. Daphna considers the main focus of this text to be about an exhibition rather than having something to do with the newspaper. This verbalization shows a shift of focus and indicates the construction of a new structure in the development of a mental model. The main information source for this new structure is the information in the test question itself. In addition to information derived from the question, the other information source used to develop the mental model was textual information (such as “artistic;” which appears in Line 9 of the text).

This is an example of an interaction between the testing task and mental model development in which new information from the test question is used to construct a new structure.
Example of Interaction 3: Confirming an Existing Structure

Question 2 appeared in MC format in English:

The main reason for holding this competition is
a. to get more people to read the Jerusalem Post.
b. to advertise the Jerusalem Plaza Hotel.
c. to set up an art exhibition about Jerusalem.
d. to celebrate Jerusalem's 15th birthday as a united city.

Daphna verbalized her inability to respond to this question due to the perceived linguistic complexity of the options. The same question was therefore presented to her in Hebrew.

Daphna reported that Options A (“to get more people to read the Jerusalem Post”) and C (“to setup an art exhibition”) seemed the most likely to be correct answers. Each of these options includes information that had been integrated into her developing mental model. Information from the processing of Question 1 in English (Jerusalem Post—her initial foundational structure “it has something to do with the newspaper”) and in Question 1 in Hebrew (art exhibition) was coherent with Options A and C respectively. She chose Option C because it confirmed the central element in her mental model (“it’s talking about an exhibition”) in its current state of development.

This is an example of an interaction between the testing task and mental model development in which information from the test question is used to confirm an existing structure.

Example of Interaction 4: Newly Integrating Existing Structures

After completing Question 2, Daphna, in justification of her answer, stated that:

4. It is more to set up an exhibition and by doing this and giving prizes, more people will buy the Jerusalem Post.

This statement indicates that Daphna’s mental model included information from two previously developed structures: “it has something to do with the newspaper” and “it’s talking about an exhibition.” From this response, it is clear that the elements of Jerusalem Post and an exhibition have been reintegrated to form a new coherent structure in which the element of exhibition receives more prominence than the newspaper. In addition, her statement indicated that the substructure “winning a prize,” from Question 1 (Option A), had been mapped on to the existing structure. Her newly integrated structure showed evidence that a new element, “more people will buy the Jerusalem Post,” which was derived from the option she was considering (A), had also
been integrated into her mental model. Thus, in responding to this question, elements from a variety of knowledge sources—her existing mental model, knowledge of the world, knowledge of the text, information from the previous questions, as well as information from an option in the question currently being processed—were integrated into one new coherent structure. It seems that the motivation for this new integration stemmed from the processing of new information appearing in the test question. This is an example of an interaction between testing task and mental model development in which information from the test question is used to reintegrate existing structures.

**Student 2: Michal**

The analysis of another verbal protocol is presented in order to further illustrate the effects of test format and language on mental model development. The version of the instrument used in this protocol was one which began with OE questions in English. This protocol was chosen in order to highlight the effects of OE questions and language on mental model development. The analysis will focus on the first question that was analyzed in Daphna’s protocol. The subject in the second protocol was Michal (pseudonym), also a weak student who did not have a well-integrated representation of what the text was about as evidenced by her initial response. (The responses to the question in the OE format in English appear as written by the subject. The responses to items in the OE format in Hebrew are translations.

Question 1 appeared in an OE format in English:

What does this passage ask people to do?

The answer as written by the subject in English was:

5. Dose people wont me to came to Jerusalem to the Plaza Hotel.

When asked to respond to the same question in Hebrew, she elaborated (English translation):

6. They want me to come to Jerusalem to the Plaza in order to enjoy all that they are offering.

A new element is present in the Hebrew response which did not surface in the English response—something being offered by the hotel. When allowed to respond in Hebrew, she offered a more detailed response which reflected a more developed (although still sparse) mental representation of text information. In Gernsbacher's (1990) terms we would say that the response given in an OE format in Hebrew was an extension of the foundational (initial) structure Michal constructed.
The response written in Hebrew confirmed the information in her mental model and exhibited new information that had been mapped onto her existing foundational structure. It is possible that this additional element was present in Michal's initial understanding of the text but because of her limited writing ability in English, she was only able to express part of it in the OE English format.

The same question was then presented to Michal in MC format in English to identify any effects of this test format. Michal did not fully understand all of the options. She focused on Options B and C because of the elements Jerusalem Post and Jerusalem Plaza which were repeated a number of times in the text. She eliminated Options A and D stating that

7. They have nothing to do with the (Plaza) hotel.

This verbalization confirmed the prominence of the hotel element in her mental model because it is the point of reference against which she evaluated the MC options. She chose Option C and explained:

8. The Jerusalem Post is organizing something for tourists with the Jerusalem Plaza Hotel.

This verbalization reflected Michal’s attempt to integrate new information derived from Option C (the Jerusalem Post) into her existing mental model. The language element was a strong factor influencing Michal’s choice because she related seriously only to those options she felt she understood best (even though not completely). When presented the same question in the same format (MC) but written in Hebrew, we see a change in Michal’s focus once she fully understood the options.

After reading the options in Hebrew, she immediately realized that her initial response in the OE format was wrong. She eliminated Options B and C (the only ones she considered when the item appeared in English) and said:

9. There is something here about winning prizes.

The element of prizes is derived from Option A. She also focused on Option D, particularly Jerusalem Day, a known holiday, which obviously did not mean the same to her when translated into English. She ultimately decided that Option D was the correct answer realizing that winning prizes is related to the celebrations of Jerusalem Day. As a result of Michal’s processing of this question in the MC Hebrew format she shifted this new information to create a new structure that prizes would be won as part of the celebrations of Jerusalem Day. The construction of this new structure was clearly influenced...
by information appearing in Options A and D. Furthermore, this example demonstrates the high degree of information available in both MC format and items written in and/or responded to in Hebrew.

From the point of view of mental model construction, OE and MC tasks constitute different levels of information. This would be evidenced by a greater degree of mapping on new information from the testing task (Interaction 1) and shifting to construct a new structure as a result of new information derived from the testing tasks (Interaction 2). The results of this study show that more mapping and shifting occurred in the MC formats than when the question appeared in OE format (see Table 2). This result reflects the fact that MC items constitute a richer information source than stems in OE items, thus having a greater potential for influencing the test takers’ mental model.

Regarding the language in which items are written, we see that

\section*{TABLE 2}

Mental Model Construction by Test Method (%)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interaction</th>
<th>Mapping on</th>
<th>Shifting</th>
<th>Confirming</th>
<th>Newly integrating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Test Method</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OE / E</td>
<td>16 (N = 28)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>24 (N = 52)</td>
<td>5 (N = 1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OE / H</td>
<td>19 (N = 33)</td>
<td>13 (N = 2)</td>
<td>21 (N = 46)</td>
<td>36 (N = 8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MC / E</td>
<td>34 (N = 58)</td>
<td>27 (N = 4)</td>
<td>30 (N = 66)</td>
<td>32 (N = 7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MC / H</td>
<td>31 (N = 53)</td>
<td>60 (N = 9)</td>
<td>25 (N = 55)</td>
<td>27 (N = 6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Interactions</td>
<td>100 (N = 172)</td>
<td>100 (N = 15)</td>
<td>100 (N = 219)</td>
<td>100 (N = 22)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

READING COMPREHENSION TESTS AND MEANING CONSTRUCTION 315
TABLE 3
Mental Model Construction by Language (%)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interaction</th>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Mapping on</th>
<th>Shifting</th>
<th>Confirming</th>
<th>Newly integrating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Hebrew (L1)</td>
<td>50 (N = 86)</td>
<td>73 (N = 11)</td>
<td>46 (N = 101)</td>
<td>64 (N = 14)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>English (L2)</td>
<td>50 (N = 86)</td>
<td>27 (N = 4)</td>
<td>54 (N = 118)</td>
<td>36 (N = 8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Total Interactions</td>
<td>100 (N = 172)</td>
<td>100 (N = 15)</td>
<td>100 (N = 219)</td>
<td>100 (N = 22)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

more shifting to create new structures occurs in Hebrew than in English (see Table 3). This finding suggests that testing tasks presented in Hebrew provide test takers with new information that was not part of or which was different from their initial representation of the text which resulted in the creation of new information structures in their internal representation of the text.

No differences were observed in the degree to which the language influenced the mapping on of information from testing tasks. This may be due to the fact that test takers were seen to consider most seriously and integrate more readily information they felt they understood best. This is particularly true when processing options in MC items appearing in English.

There was slightly more confirming of existing structures (Interaction 3) when the item appeared in English and more reintegration of existing structures (Interaction 4) when the item appeared in Hebrew. This finding is interesting because it suggests that when items are written in Hebrew the information derived from them has a greater potential for reorganizing the information that already exists in the test takers’ internal representation of text. Furthermore, subjects were seen to give fuller answers to open ended questions when they were allowed to respond in Hebrew. Thus, testing tasks written in Hebrew were more informative to the test taker as well as tester than testing tasks presented in English. That is, tasks
written in Hebrew were seen to be a richer source of information for the test taker in developing their mental models.

DISCUSSION

The results of this study lead to three central conclusions. The first conclusion is that the testing task functions as an additional information source that is used in developing the mental model. The assumptions that the mental model which has been constructed after reading a text is in its final stage and that the test tasks only tap elements of this final construction do not take into consideration either the test task as an information source or the continuous development of the mental model throughout the testing situation.

The second conclusion relates to the interaction between the testing task (format and language) and the mental model. From the point of view of mental model construction, OE and MC tasks have different levels of information. Multiple choice provides more information for the test taker to consider and therefore has a greater potential for influencing the ongoing construction of the mental model. Open ended questions provide less information to the test taker; however, they still have the potential of being an information source. When testing tasks are written in the L1, the potential for information is even greater. This explains the empirical findings of Shohamy (1984), which showed the following rank order of difficulty for open ended and multiple choice tasks appearing in either the L1 or L2:

1. Open ended in the L2 (most difficult)
2. Open ended in the L1
3. Multiple choice in the L2
4. Multiple choice in the L1 (easiest).

Within the model of the test-taking process presented above, the relative difficulty of the testing tasks reported in the Shohamy study can be explained by the degree of information resulting from the combination of format and language. Because OE tasks in L2 are the least informative, they could be considered the most difficult to answer. Similarly, because MC tasks in L1 are highly informative, they constitute a richer source of information for the test taker, they are potentially easiest to answer.

The third conclusion relates to the assumption that test takers’ responses are a valid reflection of the meaning they have constructed from the text. As seen in this study, responses were based on a number of knowledge sources: knowledge of the text, knowledge of the world,
linguistic knowledge, and information derived from the testing tasks themselves. Because the tasks themselves influence the ongoing construction of the mental model, the mental model, by definition, will be more developed at the end of the test-taking process than at the outset.

**IMPLICATIONS FOR WRITING AND EVALUATING TESTS**

The results of this study have implications both for the validity of reading comprehension tests as well as for evaluation purposes.

**Test Validity**

Regarding the issue of test validity, the results of this study imply that assumptions about the test-taking process in EFL comprehension tests need to be reevaluated. First, the assumption that the meaning that test takers have constructed from the text is static and that their mental model does not develop beyond the initial reading of the stimulus text cannot be supported. Accordingly, the assumption that the testing tasks tap this initial finite construction of meaning also cannot be supported. Furthermore, the assumption that the response to a testing task reflects the comprehension of the stimulus text alone must also be reconsidered. The findings of this study suggest that the test-taking process has to be seen within the framework of a dynamic mental model which is continuously developing. Moreover, the testing task is not neutral from a processing point of view. Evidence from this study shows that the test task itself can be active in the continuing construction of meaning in that it constitutes a source of information which serves as input to the mental model.

Thus, if the current view of validity is one which recognizes the importance of obtaining information on how test takers respond to testing tasks, this view should be expanded even further to include within the examination of the test-taking process the effect that responding to tasks has on the test taker’s developing mental model of the text. As Johnston (1984) states regarding the validity of reading tests, “the content we ought to be concerned about—the content we do not have in our current tests—relates to the processes employed in the performance of the reading test. These are clearly the domain of construct validity” (p. 165).
Reading Instruction and Assessment

The findings of this study also have implications for reading instruction and assessment. Because the construction and integration of coherent structures about text content is a central element in successful reading comprehension, information on the students’ mental model construction as they are engaged in a reading task can provide valuable information for reading instruction and assessment. This approach is in line with the current trend toward process-oriented assessment in the classroom, which provides useful information for formative evaluation purposes (Johnston, 1987). Hill and Parry (1992) call for alternative methods such as think-aloud protocols and interviews with students in order to gain insight into “the sociocultural norms of language, thought and experience” (p. 455) readers draw upon when constructing meaning from text. Johnston (1984, 1987) argues strongly for an individual process-oriented approach to reading assessment because it allows both the teacher and student to monitor progress over time; it yields more meaningful information on how one processes text; and it is instructionally more relevant to the teaching and learning process. This can be achieved by conducting individual sessions with students whereby the students convey to the teacher their reasoning for responding to comprehension questions as they did. This enables the teacher to get on-line information on the students’ processing of the text and task and highlights the information sources and constructive processes they draw upon during the reading process. Furthermore, during such sessions, teachers have the opportunity of further probing, clarification and identification of processing problems. This information provides a more in-depth picture of the students reading ability, which will render more valid assessments as well as inform future instruction.

Summative or Product Evaluation

Relevant implications for summative or product evaluation can also be made on the basis of the findings of this study. Due to the tendency of the testing task to affect the test takers’ developing mental model of text as well as their responses to subsequent testing tasks, it seems that a more valid test of reading comprehension ability would be one which asks fewer test questions on a larger number of texts. This would limit the cumulative effect of test questions on mental model construction thus providing a more valid reflection of the meaning the test taker has constructed on a variety of texts.

Regarding the interaction of test method and mental model con-
struction, OE and MC tasks have different levels of information, such that MC is more informative and thus has greater potential as input to the test taker's mental model. Thus, for product or summative evaluation purposes, the least informative testing method should be employed in order to minimize its effect on the mental model constructed by the test taker and maximize the information obtained on the meaning construction ability of the test taker. Open testing procedures would therefore be more appropriate for this assessment purpose.

Using the L1 on reading comprehension assessments should be considered in light of its advantages and disadvantages. Presenting items in the L1 does alleviate the chance that the test taker might not have fully comprehended the task, but it runs the risk of becoming a very rich knowledge source. This is particularly true in MC format. It seems that the wealth of information provided to test takers when MC questions appear in the L1 has a great influence on test takers' mental model development, particularly among weak readers. Furthermore, in this study, responses were constructed differently as a result of the language in which the task was written and/or responded to. Allowing test takers to respond to open ended tasks in the L1 enables them to express more clearly what they have comprehended from the text. For as Langer, Bartoleme, Vasquez and Lucas (1990) note: “when students use their native language to talk or write about what they have read in English, more text understanding is displayed” (p. 429). This would be especially pertinent to students of limited language proficiency in the L2.

In addition to implications that are directly related to the focus of this research, a few words must be said in favor of the use of qualitative methods for research in reading. As was seen in this study, responses to test items were based on a number of knowledge sources including information in the task itself. Furthermore, the responses were at times correct for reasons which did not reflect reading ability. As a result, inferences made about a person's reading ability based upon the responses which are given on reading tasks may not be valid. Consequently, because much research on the reading process is based upon results of reading comprehension tests, invalid inferences might be made about comprehension processes if the processing involved in performing those tasks is not analyzed as well.

This current study, though limited in its scope, generated a large amount of data touching on important issues in the assessment, instruction, and research of reading. Further research of this sort should be done in conjunction with more controlled empirical methods so that reliable as well as valid information on the process of mental model construction and its assessment can be attained.
THE AUTHORS

Claire M. Gordon is Head of the Testing Unit for Education Projects in the English Department of The Open University of Israel. Her research interests include language testing and research in reading.

David Hanauer is Lecturer at the School of Education at Tel Aviv University. His research focuses on reading and writing processes and specifically on the interactions between educational background and text processing.

REFERENCES


We are pleased to announce

My Jerusalem

a contest honouring Jerusalem

on the 15th anniversary of its reunification.

Readers of *The Jerusalem Post* of all ages are invited to submit a written, artistic or other expression of their personal feelings about Jerusalem, in an international competition co-sponsored by *The Jerusalem Post* and the Jerusalem Plaza Hotel.

FOUR FIRST PRIZES (two for readers in Israel, two for readers overseas): A week for two, bed and breakfast at the Jerusalem Plaza (One round trip fare for each overseas winner will be provided).

FOUR SECOND PRIZES: Subscriptions to *The Jerusalem Post*.

**Contest rules**

1) One entry per contestant will be accepted.
2) All entries should be mailed to the Jerusalem Plaza Hotel, 47 King George Street, 94261.
3) Entries must be received by the Jerusalem Plaza not later than April 16, 1982.
4) Whiners will be chosen by a committee of prominent Jerusalem residents.
5) Entries will be judged by their originality and creativity.
6) Winning entries will be displayed at the Jerusalem Day Exhibition in the Plaza Hotel beginning May 18, 1982.
7) Entries become property of the City of Jerusalem.
8) *Jerusalem Post*, Jerusalem Plaza Hotel employees and their families are not eligible.

Adapted and used with permission of *The Jerusalem Post*. 

READING COMPREHENSION TESTS AND MEANING CONSTRUCTION 323
1. What does this passage ask people to do?
   a. To send in something about Jerusalem in order to win a prize.
   b. To take a trip to Jerusalem and stay at the Plaza Hotel.
   c. To buy a subscription to the Jerusalem Post.
   d. To visit the art exhibition on Jerusalem Day.

2. The main reason for holding this competition is
   a. to get more people to read the Jerusalem Post.
   b. to advertise the Jerusalem Plaza Hotel.
   c. to set up an art exhibition about Jerusalem.
   d. to celebrate Jerusalem's 15th birthday as a united city.

3. How many prizes will there be?
   a. two  b. four  c. six  d. eight

4. The word “its” in line 7 refers to
   a. Anniversary  c. contest
   b. Jerusalem  d. reunification

5. Winners of the contest will be chosen by
   a. people who work for the Jerusalem Post.
   b. the management of the Jerusalem Plaza.
   c. people who live in Jerusalem.
   d. Teddy Kolleck, the mayor of Jerusalem.

6. The word “contestant” in line 20 means
   a. resident  c. family
   b. judge  d. participant

7. Which of the following would not be a suitable entry to the competition?
   a. A poster of Independence Day
   b. A poem about the Western Wall
   c. A story about the fight for the Old City
   d. A picture of the Knesset

8. Entries must be sent to:
   a. The Jerusalem Post
   b. The Jerusalem Plaza Hotel
   c. The Mayor’s office
   d. The Jerusalem Day Exhibition
The Use of Modal Verbs as a Reflection of Cultural Values

ELI HINKEL
Xavier University

Much research has focused on nonnative speaker (NNS) use of modal verbs of obligation and necessity, indicating that NNSs may have difficulty with these modals and use them in different contexts from those of native speakers (NSs). Research also indicates that appropriate modal verb usage relies on presuppositions commonly known and accepted in a language community. This article proposes that NNS usage of modal verbs reflects the pragmatic frameworks and norms specific to the learner’s L1 environment, which may be different from those expected in L2 conceptual structures. To determine whether NNS and NS usage of modals varies in relation to each other in the contexts of different topics, 455 essays written by speakers of Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Indonesian, and Vietnamese were compared to 280 essays on similar topics written by NSs of American English. The results of this study indicate that the usage of the root modals must, have to, should, ought to, and need to in NS and NNS writing appears to be culture and context dependent.

In English, modal verbs, such as must, have to, should, ought to, and need to, in their root meanings often express obligation and necessity (Coates, 1983; Quirk, Greenbaum, Leech, & Svartvik, 1985), for example:

1a. John must see the dean this week.
   b. Mary should attend the meeting.

These are distinguished from epistemic modals which deal with knowledge and belief about certainty, probability, and logical possibility (Bublitz, 1992; Huebler, 1983; Lyons, 1977), for example:

2a. John is not here today. He must be sick.
   b. Mary fixed the printer. It should work now.

*An earlier draft of this paper was presented at the Eighth International Conference on Pragmatics and Language Learning, at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, Illinois (April 1994).*
The meanings and contextual implications of English modal verbs of obligation and necessity are recognizably complex. Even within an L1, conditions and degrees of obligation and necessity are not always straightforward or obvious. For students coming from different language communities, using modal verbs in appropriate ways and in appropriate situations can be difficult. Although Hasan and Perrett (1994) point out that modal verbs of obligation and necessity are found in all languages, little is known about their uses and pragmatic meanings in languages other than English, in which, for example, the notion of obligation can combine with other culturally bound notions, such as subjectivity, assertion, explicitness, and a degree of imposition. Levinson (1983) observes that there has been “considerable confusion” (p. 140) about the pragmatics of obligation and necessity expressed by modal verbs in English and other languages and that these notions have different semantic and contextual entailments in different conceptual frameworks.

Many researchers have investigated modal usage in nonnative speaker (NNS) speech and writing. Cook (1978) states that English modal verbs present a problem for NNSs because of their “underlying meanings” (p. 5) and contextual implications. Kasper (1979) explained that German students of English are not always aware of modality as a pragmatic category and often translate modal verb meanings from German into English without accounting for their differing contextual implications. Similarly, DeCarrico (1986), who examined NNS usage of modals in compositions and teachers’ reactions to these modals, found that NNSs use modal verbs in contexts where native speakers (NS) would not.

ESL teachers have also expressed concern that learners appear to have difficulty using modals in appropriate contexts. The ELT Journal column, titled Language Conundrums, has traditionally addressed teachers’ questions pertaining to various aspects of teaching ESL. In 1991, 1992, and 1993, the annual column discussed several issues associated with the teaching of modal verb usages and pragmatics.

Experts on L2 language learning and acquisition do not always agree on the causes of divergencies in NS and NNS modal verb use. It appears, however, that these differences may depend on more complex factors than can be explained by developmental difficulties or a lack of thorough teaching. Altman (1990) investigated NS and NNS understandings of modal verb implications. She noted that NNS usage of modal verbs of obligation can be perceived to be offensive by NSs and explained that NNSs’ inappropriate uses of modals, as in You should study hard every day addressed to a classmate can stem from learner misunderstandings of the sociocultural and pragmatic implications of modal verbs. Basham and Kwachka (1989) and Kwachka and Basham
(1990) determined that when NNSs use modals in their writing, the meanings assigned to them are distinct from those commonly found in Standard American English. In their view, NNSs interpret the meanings of modal verbs differently from NSs because the NNSs function within the domains of different norms, expectations, and cultural values that are transferred to L2 and reflected in NNS modal verb use. Although these and other researchers indicated that learners' understanding of modal meanings appears to be constrained and that their contextual uses in English need to be taught in detail, Holmes (1988) observes that in the teaching of ESL, little attention has been given to the pragmatic and sociocultural implications of modal verbs.

The effect of sociocultural values on NNS modal verb use is an issue with pedagogical implications. This article addresses whether NNSs who have achieved a relatively advanced proficiency in English and have been exposed to L2 sociocultural norms use modals verbs of obligation and necessity similarly to NSs. I propose that NNs usage of modals of obligation and necessity reflects the pragmatic frameworks, norms, and presuppositions specific to the learner’s L1 environment and may be different from the usage expected in L2 conceptual constructs according to L2 sociocultural views. If this is the case, NNS and NS usage of such modals may vary in relation to each other in the contexts of different notions and topics.

MODAL VERBS OF OBLIGATION AND NECESSITY

As noted in the introduction, in English, modal verbs, such as must, have to, should, ought to, and need to, usually express obligation and necessity, that is, root meanings (Collins, 1991; Leech & Coates, 1980). Should and ought to can also be described as modals of obligation and “noncommitted necessity” (Quirk et al., 1985, p. 221). Palmer (1986) and Lyons (1977) indicate that the root modals must, have to, should, and ought to carry meanings of obligation, necessity, and requirement imposed by a source of authority. Palmer (1990) indicated that the speaker’s direct involvement in what is necessary and required is implicit in the meanings of must and have to when “circumstances compel—external necessity” (p. 114). For example, in Anglo-American societies where the authority of parents is diminished compared to that in many other societies, native speakers may not choose to express their respect for their parents by saying

3. I have to give up anything to make my parents happy. (Chinese)\(^1\)

\(^1\)All examples identified by language are from student texts described later in the article.
Although in Anglo-American and other societies, parental authority and its requirements are externally imposed, the sociocultural understanding of its power, the degree of an entailed obligation, and the stringency of the requirements may differ considerably.

Lyons (1977) stipulated that modal verbs of obligation are subjective with respect to some authority or moral values; however, the sources of authority are rarely specified. According to Warner (1993), the speaker's evaluation and judgment determines the contextual appropriateness of obligation and necessity that is implicit in the meanings of must, have to, and should. In his view, the abstract and indeterminate notions of obligation and necessity are central to the meanings of the modals that express them. Coates (1983) comments that modals of obligation and necessity “conform” (p. 27) to the conceptual structure and reality of NSs of English and are heavily dependent on the notions of factuality and truth.

In his investigation of uses and meanings of must, should, ought, need, and have (got) to, Collins (1991) indicates that the meanings of these modals are indeterminate, subjectively gradient, and often culturally stereotyped. According to his findings based on American, Australian, and British English, modals of obligation and necessity convey normative and referential relationships that differ across the dialects of English and societal structures. Similarly, Gerhardt's (1991) study shows that such modals as have to and need express a variety of attitudes, with have to indicating “the existence of certain norm-based procedures [that] compel one to carry out a particular activity in a particular way” (p. 539). She uses the term norm based to refer to certain activities which are organized in terms of the norms of the social group. As von Wright (1963) notes, norms define ways of doing things which are characteristic of a particular culture, for example,

4. When you live in your parents' house and you are a student, you have to answer to everybody, whatever you do and wherever you go. (Korean)

On the other hand, U.S. college students who live with their parents may see their accountability a little differently.

The teaching of L2 modal verbs of obligation and necessity frequently draws on presentations of models and examples from target language sentences and texts to facilitate the learner interpretation of the pragmatic meanings entailed in these modals (Celce-Murcia & Larsen-Freeman, 1983; McKay, 1985). However, presenting models and examples does not ensure the learners' ability to understand the L2 contexts and points of reference that would enable them to use modals similarly to NSs. Lewis (1991) comments that the usage of modal verbs heavily relies on the presuppositions of what is known, relevant, appropriate, necessary, and “commonsensically” (p. 425)
truthful in a language community. For example, if learners are informed that must and have to express necessity, with have to being less formal than must, the student may say, I must do my laundry tonight, in an exchange with a teacher simply because they believe that the more formal must is situationally appropriate. On the other hand, You must always take care of your parents may have a smaller truth value in Anglo-American communities than in Chinese. In L2 writing, NNS texts often refer to and discuss relationships of obligation and necessity that would not be ordinarily encountered in the European and American culture, (i.e., those concerning social frameworks and cultural perceptions viewed as common knowledge and axiomatic truths in learners’ L1 environments). For example,

5. Being the oldest child in a family is always an advantage. Firstborn sons will succeed to most property and the honor of the family, and they also must take the responsibility for maintaining the whole family. They must have a strong mind, heart, and soul. For this reason, they must receive very strict training. Although sometimes they have to sacrifice their wishes, their advantages outweigh the disadvantages. They become the hope of the entire family, and everybody looks up to them. Being the eldest, they have to give up anything to make their parents happy. Sometimes, you have to go out to work early in order to support your family. In this case, you have to sacrifice your chance to be educated, and in my opinion, that’s a very big sacrifice. (Chinese)

Because the pragmatic usage of modals of obligation and necessity often reflects culture-specific norms, expectations, roles, and concepts defining relationships between people and events (Sweetser, 1990), the usage of modals must and have to in this text may reflect NNS presuppositions and assumptions pertaining to personal and familial obligations.

**PRAGMATIC PRESUPPOSITIONS AND SOCIOCULTURAL VALUES**

Pragmatic and sociocultural assumptions represent fundamental points of reference that may not be frequently questioned by members of a language community in which values and common background beliefs appear to be mutually shared. Green (1989) defines a presupposition as a “proposition whose truth is taken for granted . . . , propositions without which the utterance cannot be evaluated” (p. 71). She further observes that presuppositions are “relative to an assumed ‘world’” (p. 76), that the relevant world is presumed to be mutually known, and that the proposition is presupposed to be true. In his
account of pragmatic presupposition, Stalnaker (1991) shows that shared mutual beliefs and assumptions are essential in communication and understanding. Common background beliefs and pragmatic assumptions include views on what is required, necessary, and appropriate. Gonzalez (1987), Schachter (1983), Strevens (1987), and Schmidt (1993) have found that presuppositions, world views, values, beliefs, and points of reference are almost always transferred from L1 to L2 environments. Mey (1993) asserts that unfamiliar presuppositions may lead to cross-cultural misunderstandings and that “challenging presuppositions” (p. 301) may not be easy. Other researchers have also established that there may be little connection between, on the one hand, linguistic proficiency and exposure to L2 social and conceptual constructs, and, on the other hand, the willingness or ability to assume L2 sociocultural beliefs and norms (Adamson & Regan, 1991; Schmidt, 1983; Schumann, 1978). Adamson (1988) states that NNSs do not necessarily come to share the presuppositions of an L2 community, despite having lived there for periods of time up to 10 years. Acton and Walker de Felix (1986) found that until proficient NNSs reach an advanced acculturation stage, their points of reference and semantic constructs are largely based on the L1 world and its sociocultural frameworks. Therefore, even NNSs who have attained a relatively high L2 proficiency may interpret L2 social frameworks according to L1 notional paradigms and “principles of interpretation” (Moerman, 1988, p. 4). As Barro, Byram, Grimm, Morgan, and Roberts (1993) mention, an advanced NNS cannot be expected “simply to abandon his/her own cultural world” (p. 56).

Numerous researchers (Hu & Grove, 1991; Lebra, 1986; Lii-Shih, 1988; Park, 1979; Scollon, 1993; Scollon & Scollon, 1992; Yum, 1987 a, b) have analyzed and discussed the fundamental presuppositions that are ubiquitous in Confucian, Taoist, and Buddhist societies but not necessarily shared by members of the Anglo-American cultures. According to these authors, the following values are axiomatic, that is, presuppositions, in these cultures: filial piety, reverence of ancestors, loyalty to family, the supreme value of education as a means of benefiting prior and subsequent generations, group solidarity and harmony, and adherence to tradition. These notions have a variety of facets and entailments reflected in sociocultural frameworks, thought processes, and even personal views. The children's primary duty is to respect their parents, obey their wishes, and take care of them when they are old, as indicated in the following example:

6. Filial piety is the basis of a successful man. I am looking for a successful man to be my husband, a man who is devoted to his parents. As a responsible man, he must take care of his parents, his family and his job. (Chinese)
According to Confucian and Taoist philosophical precepts, teachers also have a highly respected position, next to parents:

7. According to Confucianism, “people have to respect their parents. They also have to respect teachers. Teachers are like parents to students and we have to follow their advice. (Korean)

Although many similar notions pertaining to the respect for one's parents and superiors, the value of hard work, and love for one's family and country exist in the Anglo-American culture, a native speaker might find it odd when these notions are expressed through the subjective root modality (must, have to, and should).

The axiomatic value of tradition in Confucian, Taoist, and Buddhist societies has also been widely discussed. Oliver (1971), Hall & Ames (1987), De Mente (1993), Yum (1987a), Saville-Troike (1989), Sohn (1974) and many other experts assert that adherence to tradition and order represents one of the foundations of Confucian societies that is almost never questioned. In fact, tradition is equated with order, and the absence of order is unthinkable (Cheng, 1987; De Mente, 1993; Lee, 1987). Group harmony and harmony maintenance, as one of the many facets of order, has also been extensively covered in literature. The notions of group harmony and cohesiveness often carry over to expressions of friendship and “collective responsibility” (De Mente, 1993, p. 39), which are distinct from those in Western societies. The group defines and controls the individual, and loyal friendships are means for establishing group belonging.

8. If your friend is sick, you must visit him and cook for him and take care of him. You have to talk to him about gossip to give him amusement. If you don’t do these things, he will think you are not a friend for him. (Chinese)

9. If your friend loses his wallet, you have to give him money until his father sends him some. When they don’t have a driver’s license, you have to teach them to drive. If they want to go to the mall, you have to drive them to the mall, even if you have other things to do. (Indonesian)

Patriotism too can have different associations and manifestations in different cultures. In Confucian societies, loyalty to family, tradition, and friends is closely intertwined with the love for one's country (De Mente, 1993; Hall & Ames, 1987; Lee, 1987).

10. When I study here, I must work very hard. I must study to respect my parents and to participate in the development of my country. (Chinese)

The study reported here investigated whether these differences in presuppositions and axiomatic values between NS and NNS from cul-
METHODS

The Data

The primary data pool for this study came from 455 essays, written by 450 ESL students, gathered over a period of 5 years. The essays were written on topics dealing with family roles, responsibilities, obligations, and relationships, as well as friendships, family and cultural traditions, education, patriotism, racism, politics, and relationships between people performing various social and familial roles (see the Appendix for a complete list of essay prompts). Only first drafts of essays were included in the data set.

The NNS subjects had received extensive instruction in ESL and L2 reading and writing for a period of 4 to 20 years, with a mean of 12.6 years. Their residence in the U.S. typically fell within 1.5 to 4 years, with a mean of 2.4 years. The only exception was the Vietnamese who were graduates of U.S. high schools and had lived in the U.S. for 4 to 12 years (an average of 6.1 years). It follows that the NNSs had had a relatively extensive exposure to L2 social constructs and cultural norms and had acquired a certain degree of familiarity with L2 sociocultural presuppositions and frameworks. Of the 450 NNSs, 195 were speakers of Chinese, 87 of Japanese, 72 of Korean, 63 of Indonesian, and 33 of Vietnamese. Each of these language groups represents a culture heavily influenced by Confucian, Taoist, and/or Buddhist philosophy, tradition, and cultural values (Cushman & Kincaid, 1987; Yum, 1987b). The NNSs had achieved a relatively high English language proficiency with a mean TOEFL score of 583. As U.S. resident aliens or citizens, the speakers of Vietnamese were not required to take the TOEFL. All NNSs had been admitted to graduate and undergraduate university programs and pursued studies toward their degrees. The NNSs whose writing was analyzed were selected on the basis of their relatively high linguistic proficiency, as established by TOEFL scores, and their length of residence in the U.S. Length of residence was deemed important to determine whether advanced NNSs who had lived in the U.S. for relatively extensive periods use modals of obligation and necessity in ways similar to those of NSs.

The usage of modal verbs of obligation and necessity in the NNS texts was compared to that in essays written by NSs of American English. The primary NS data consisted of essays written by 280 NSs who were raised in Midwestern states and who were first-year university
students enrolled in required composition classes. The topics of NS essays were selected to match those of NNS texts. Both NS and NNS essays were written in response to assigned topics, here labeled Academics, Politics, Family, Friendships, Traditions, Patriotism, and Racism. On average, NS essays were 62% longer than those of NNSs. To allow for comparisons of NS and NNS data pools, a statistically representative sample of 30 essays per topic was randomly drawn from NS and NNS sets, as described in the next section.

Data Analysis

To determine whether NSs and NNSs similarly used root modals in essays written on a particular topic, random samples of 30 NS and 30 NNS essays were selected from the data pool for each of the seven topics, thus yielding two sets of 210 essays each. The number of words in each essay was counted, followed by a count of the occurrences of must, have to, should, ought to, and need to per essay. The essays were examined for usage of must, have to, should, ought to, and need to with root meanings; modal verbs with epistemic meanings were excluded. For example, NS Essay 1 on Academics consisted of 240 words and included one occurrence of must and two of have to. To ascertain the percentage of the modal verb must used in the essay, a computation was performed, that is, 1/240 = .4%, and then repeated for the two occurrences of have to (2/240 = .8%). The computations were performed separately for modals, must, have to, should, ought to, and need to and for each of 30 NS and NNS essays per topic.

Nonparametric statistical comparisons of NS and NNS data based on rank order were employed because the majority of percentage rates were not normally distributed, with a high number of essays that did not contain all types of modals of obligation and necessity. The measure used to establish differences between NS and NNS root modal use was the Mann-Whitney U Test. The medians, ranges, and results of statistical tests are presented in Table 1. In cases where the reported median is 0, it indicates that at least half of the sample essays written on the topic did not contain a particular modal. The ranges are reported to reflect a frequency of use for each modal verb.

FINDINGS

The findings indicate that in essays on the topic of Academics, NNS usage of root modals must and should differed significantly from that of NSs, with NNSs using more of these modals in their essays. On the other hand, in the essays written on Politics, NSs used must and need
to at higher rates than NNSs did; must was not encountered in NNS essays on this topic.

The NS and NNS usage of the modals of obligation and necessity, must, have to, should, and ought to exhibited significant differences in essays on family roles and relationships. The topics dealing with friendships showed a similar trend, with the NNS rate of root modal use in both topics exceeding that of NSs. In the essays discussing traditions, NSs rarely employed root modals, while NNSs employed them at a relatively high rate. On the topic of Patriotism, NSs used the modal verbs should and need to but did not use must and have to. NNSs utilized a wider variety of modal verbs when addressing this topic, and used them, with the exception of need to, in greater ranges.

In essays written about Racism, NNSs did not use the modals must and have to, but as is apparent from range values, NSs employed a comparatively high number of them, as well as should and need to. In general, NNS writing did not contain many root modals when discussing Racism. Overall, the differences in NS and NNS use of modals of obligation and necessity were significant for must, have to, and should; fewer significant differences were found in the use of ought to and need to.

The comparisons of NS and NNS values in Table 1 indicate that the use of root modals is largely topic dependent, and the greatest

**TABLE 1**
Modal Verbs of Obligation and Necessity in NS and NNS Essays (Median %)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Modal Verb</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>NSs</th>
<th>NNSs</th>
<th>NSs</th>
<th>NNSs</th>
<th>NSs</th>
<th>NNSs</th>
<th>NSs</th>
<th>NNSs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>must</td>
<td>Academics</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.35</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>have to</td>
<td>Politics</td>
<td>0.49</td>
<td>1.22</td>
<td>0.34</td>
<td>0.63</td>
<td>0.43</td>
<td>0.77</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>should</td>
<td>Family</td>
<td>0.21</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>0.19</td>
<td>1.54</td>
<td>0.42</td>
<td>1.14</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>1.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ought to</td>
<td>Friendships</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.39</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.40</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.42</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>need to</td>
<td>Traditions</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.71</td>
<td>0.44</td>
<td>1.12</td>
<td>0.69</td>
<td>0.42</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Patriotism</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>1.71</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.83</td>
<td>0.68</td>
<td>1.42</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Racism</td>
<td>1.08</td>
<td>0.65</td>
<td>0.90</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>1.71</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.72</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*2-tailed p < .05
ranges in the use of must, have to, and should were found in NNS essays describing family roles, family responsibilities, and traditions. Family and family obligations represent one of the fundamental values in many Confucian and Taoist societies, where loyalty to kin and tradition, as well as the responsibility for maintaining these values, are essential social presuppositions, whose quality and importance find few parallels in Anglo-American societies (Hall & Ames, 1987). The gradience of root modality is reflected in the NNSs’ usage of have to in essays discussing family, friendships, and patriotism. Modals must and have to carry implications of authority (Palmer, 1990; Quirk et al., 1985), which is usually presupposed or assumed (Coates, 1983). Although all modals of obligation and necessity, except ought to, were used in NS and NNS texts discussing Politics, NNS essays contained fewer of them. When writing on topics associated with Patriotism, NNSs employed more modals must, have to, and should than need to.

DISCUSSION

Sweetser (1990) describes must as an external imposition of “a compelling force directing the subject toward an act” (p. 52) and states that ought to, should, have to, and need to resemble must in denoting obligation and/or necessity. In her view, the meaning difference between these modals lies in the kind of obligation: Ought to is less strong than others, but it contains social and moral overtones. Should can be an interpretation of ought to with an implication of social expectation; like must, have to has a meaning of obligation imposed by an external source of authority. On the other hand, following Talmy (1988), she indicates that need to can refer to an internal, personal obligation, compulsion, and/or requirement.

Thus, from the perspective of NNSs describing family roles and relationships and traditions, must refers to strong external compulsion and/or requirements extrinsically imposed by a source of authority. Because in many Confucian, Taoist, and Buddhist cultures, such values also hold for education, friendships, and patriotism, NNSs raised in societies based on Confucian philosophical precepts may have presuppositions different from those of NSs. Therefore, NNSs may accurately use modals of obligation and necessity to describe a different compelling force that directs one to act (Talmy, 1988) within a different reality.

NSs who used must and have to a great deal more frequently than NNSs in essays describing their views on racism may feel compelled and directed to eradicate it with a force akin to that with which NNSs feel compelled to meet their obligations to family, tradition, and
friends. NSs, however, used need to more frequently in essays on the topics of Politics, Friendships, Patriotism, and Racism. Because the primary difference between the meaning of must and need to lies in the external versus internal force that compels one to act (Talmy, 1988), the distinctions between NS and NNS use of root modals may lie in the fundamental presuppositions based on individualist or group sociocultural frameworks and the associated intrinsically or extrinsically imposed obligations and necessity expressed through these modal verbs.

Notably, NSs did not use ought to in their writing, although occasionally, it is used in spoken American English. The lack of ought to can be largely explained by the fact that in American English, it is viewed as somewhat outmoded in writing or other types of planned discourse (Hermeren, 1978; Quirk et al., 1985). Because the data for the study were obtained from NS and NNS essays, the absence of ought to in the NS sample is not particularly surprising. ESL texts rarely mention that ought to has become somewhat outdated and is not commonly used in writing. Thus, the NNS overuse of ought to in writing can be induced by ESL training.

In ESL texts, the pragmatic usage of should and its sociocultural implications is also rarely examined in detail, even though many researchers have noted the complexity of its meaning. Collier and Thomas (1988) indicate that should and ought to refer to culturally normative dimensions of conduct and even social sanctions that differ with the behavior and communication codes in cultures and cultural subsystems. It would be hard to argue that the usage of should in 11 and must 12 is inappropriate without considering the sociocultural implications of these modals:

11. In my opinion, the teacher should be always right. People believe that teachers should be respected, and teachers should not make any mistakes. (Vietnamese)
12. All married couples must have a baby because it is their duty. However, women must raise their own children, not babysitters. The mother must take care of her child because he is the reason for her existence. Most women can face this fact and some quit their jobs in order to take care of their children. (Japanese).

These and numerous other usages of must and should in NNS texts are likely to appear different from those that NSs would employ and seem to be culture specific and culture bound. L2 teaching methodologies often focus on the form grammaticality of must and should, rather than on their pragmatic and contextual uses and implications. Within U.S. social frameworks and culturally normative codes of
conduct based on the “core symbols . . . linked to notions of personhood” (Collier & Thomas, 1988, p. 104) and the dimensions of individualism, need to, which denotes internally imposed requirements, seems to be more appropriate in contexts where NNSs, raised with the fundamental values of socially and externally imposed obligations and responsibilities are more likely to use must and should (see Table 1). In the teaching of ESL, the sociopragmatics of need to and/or the differences between its usages and those of must, have to, and should are rarely addressed possibly because their meanings and implications appear to be self-evident to NSs of American English.

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS FOR TEACHING

The results of this study indicate that the usage of root modals must, have to, should, ought to, and need to in NS and NNS writing appears to be culture and context dependent. NNSs who operate within domains of Confucian, Taoist, and Buddhist sociocultural constructs and presupposed values employed root modals must, have to, and should significantly differently from NSs on topics of Family, Friendships, and Traditions. The fundamental social values and presuppositions associated with the notions of harmony maintenance, family and group responsibility, and extrinsically imposed obligation and necessity are often expressed through root modality in NNS writing. On the other hand, NS essays on similar topics showed a preponderance of need to convey intrinsically imposed responsibility and necessity. The reasons for the divergence may lie in the NS and NNS culturally bound understandings of the nature of obligation and necessity and adherence to sociocultural norms and codes fundamental to Anglo-American, and Confucian, Taoist, and Buddhist cultures. The achievement of advanced L2 linguistic proficiency and exposure to L2 sociocultural constructs for a period of approximately 2 years does not necessarily lead to NNSs assuming nativelike beliefs and presuppositions.

The teaching of L2 modal verbs of obligation and necessity has largely focused on the presentations of grammatically accurate forms, rather than on the sociopragmatic meanings and implications of root modals, such as must, have to, and should. It appears, however, that the teaching of modals can be made more effective if the fundamental notions and values accepted in Anglo-American culture are addressed, and the differences in how NSs and NNSs view their roles in society and in a community are highlighted. The implications of divergent
fundamental sociocultural presuppositions may be discussed even when dealing with such seemingly simple topics as descriptions of family roles and relationships, teachers and classes, and friendships, commonly found in both NS and ESL writing tasks.

Addressing fundamental sociocultural presuppositions that both students and teachers take for granted and whose commonsensical truthfulness is rarely questioned may become a learning experience for both parties.

In general, analyzing usage of root modals in various contexts can prove helpful if the cultural norms that underlie it are subsequently discussed. When students read, they can be asked to note the occurrences of must, have to, should, ought to, and need to. The contexts in which students come across these modals can be brought forth and analyzed for their sociocultural implications. The same technique can be used when students are asked to pay attention to modals in conversations with NSs. The students' findings that, for example, in peer group interactions, NSs rarely use must but choose have to a great deal more frequently and largely avoid ought to can serve as a vehicle for further discussions of Anglo-American sociocultural norms and concepts of obligation and necessity. Such fieldwork and analysis can facilitate learner access to axiomatic presuppositions accepted in the L2 community.

Contrasting examples from NNS student and NS writing on similar topics and speech in formal and informal registers can also prove very helpful in addressing differences between NS and NNS pragmatic presuppositions. Contextualized analysis of root modal uses and their sociocultural entailments can bring into focus the distinct notions of obligation and necessity in Anglo-American, Confucian, Taoist, and Buddhist cultures.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I appreciate the comments provided by Georgia Green, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, at the initial stages of this research.

THE AUTHOR

Eli Hinkel received her PhD in linguistics from the University of Michigan and has taught ESL for the past 14 years. Her research interests include concept-based transfer and L2 teaching methodologies. She directs the ESL Program at Xavier University, in Ohio.
REFERENCES


Hassan, R., & Perrett, G. (1994). Learning to function with the other tongue: A MODAL VERBS AS A REFLECTION OF CULTURE


MODAL VERBS AS A REFLECTION OF CULTURE 341
APPENDIX
Prompts for NS and NNS Essays by Topic

Academics
NS
What is your major? Describe your values and characteristics that caused you to make this choice.

NNS
What job or profession are you preparing for? What are your personal views and qualities that made you choose this field of study?

Politics
NS
Do you think the U.S. can maintain its role as the world leader in the 21st century?

NNS
Can the U.S. remain in its position of world leadership? State your views and explain in detail.

Family
NS
In your opinion, is it better to be a member of a large or a small family?

NNS
Would you prefer to be a member of a large family or a small one? Discuss your reasons.

Friendships
NS
Describe characteristics of a person whom you would choose as a friend.

NNS
What kind of a person would you consider as a friend? Describe his or her characteristics and explain in detail.

 Traditions
NS
Describe how a holiday is celebrated or a tradition is observed in your family or hometown.

NNS
Describe how a particular holiday is celebrated (or how a particular tradition is observed) in your family or country.

Patriotism
NS
Describe how you or your chosen career can benefit our country.

NNS
Discuss how you or your training in your major can contribute to the development of your country. Use detailed reasons and examples.
Racism

Almost every day newspapers tell us about racial conflict. Discuss your views on the causes of racial conflict.

In your opinion, what are the causes of racial or cultural conflict? Explain your point of view, using specific reasons and examples.
The Study of Second Language Acquisition
Rod Ellis
First Prize English Speaking Union's Duke of Edinburgh Book Competition
This book serves as both a comprehensive up-to-date, and accessible introduction to second-language acquisition research and as a reference book for this important field of study.

Language and Understanding
Edited by Gillian Brown
This collection contains contributions from leading researchers that enable the applied linguist to keep up-to-date with current thinking in diverse fields including psycholinguistics, pragmatics and SLA.

Discourse and Literature
Guy Cook
Discourse and Literature examines the relevance of schema theory to literary theory, and includes illustrative analyses of literary and advertising texts. It offers fresh insights into the use of literary texts in language teaching.

A Grammar of Speech
David Brazil
This unique book presents a fresh analysis of spoken English grammar that is based on naturally-occurring speech, rather than derived from written models.

Oxford University Press ESL/EFL Department
200 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10010, USA
+(800) 441-5446 or +(212) 684-1500

Oxford University Press, ELT Division
Walton Street, Oxford, OX2 6DP, England - (0865) 56767
On the Notion of Culture in L2 Lectures

JOHN FLOWERDEW and LINDSAY MILLER
City University of Hong Kong

This article reports on one aspect of the findings of a 3-year ethnographic study into academic lectures conducted at a university in Hong Kong, where native speakers of English lecture to ethnic Chinese ESL students. Based on ethnographic data, the article develops a framework for the analysis of L2 lectures. The framework has four dimensions: ethnic culture, local culture, academic culture, and disciplinary culture. Each of the dimensions is illustrated by means of data from the ethnographic research. The article suggests that application of the model, because of its potential for developing cultural synergy, is likely to be of interest for those involved in the lecture preparation of lecturers and students in an L2, both in Hong Kong and elsewhere.

As ethnographers have long been aware, every community has its own distinctive culture, although the members of a given community are often not themselves explicitly aware of the nature of their culture, especially as it may relate to others. As Moerman (1988) puts it, “All natives take their native knowledge for granted, take it to be nothing other than the nature of the world” (p. 4). Educational communities have been recognized as fruitful sites for ethnographic research (see, e.g., Benson, 1989, 1994; Canagarajah, 1993; Harklau, 1994; Heath, 1983; Trueba, Guthrie & Au, 1981; Watson-Gegeo, 1988). In developing thick descriptions (i.e., explanatory, interpretive accounts; see, Geertz, 1973), relating to the values, roles, assumptions, attitudes, and patterns of behaviour which operate in classrooms, ethnographers have attempted to provide descriptive theories capable of accounting for the ways teachers and students interact with each other and with texts, and how learning does or does not come about.

In educational contexts where students and teachers share the same language and have similar cultural backgrounds, a common set of assumptions is likely to underpin the acts of all participants. In situations where students from non-Western countries study in English-
speaking Western countries (as they are doing in ever increasing numbers), or where expatriate teachers coming from Western universities and colleges are teaching students brought up in a non-Western culture (as, again, is happening more and more frequently), there is a danger of a clash of cultures. Ethnographic research, by bringing the cultural assumptions of lecturers and students to consciousness, can be of particular value in providing a basis for developing mutual understanding.

As already suggested, the concept of culture is integral to the ethnographic enterprise, and the goal of ethnography is to provide a “descriptive and interpretive-explanatory account of what people do in a particular setting” (Watson-Gegeo, 1988, p. 576). The purpose of the present study is to provide an interpretive-explanatory account of the culture of L2 lectures. By providing such an account of the experiences of expatriate lecturers in Hong Kong and their Hong Kong Chinese students, we hope that the resulting theory will be of interest for those attempting to account for lecturer and student behaviour in L2 lectures in other contexts. As such, it might provide input for lecturer and student training where lecturers and students come from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds.

In discussing, analyzing, and attempting to interpret our data from a sociocultural perspective, we arrived at the conclusion that there are four primary dimensions of the notion of culture which are likely to help lecturers, students, and those concerned with the training of these two groups to prepare for and reflect upon their practice in cross-cultural lectures. These four dimensions are: (a) ethnic culture—culturally based, social-psychological features which affect the behaviour of lecturers and students; (b) local culture—the local setting with which students are familiar and which may be alien to foreign lecturers; (c) academic culture—features of the lecture situation which require an understanding of the particular academic values, assumptions, roles, and so on of a given society; and (d) disciplinary culture—the theories, concepts, norms, terms, and so on specific to a particular academic discipline. This article will describe in greater detail what we mean by each of these terms, how the data led us to consider these four aspects of culture, and how we have come to believe that the framework we propose, developed out of our Hong Kong data, is likely to be of interest to others working in L2 lecture contexts.

BACKGROUND

In the past 10–15 years, Hong Kong has been transformed from what some have described as a colonial backwater, isolated at the tip.
of a relatively closed communist China, its economy reliant on a small range of low-value-added, labour-intensive industries, to a high-tech, service-oriented economy, acting as the gateway for Western business interests to Asia and as the principal entrepot for China’s burgeoning trade with the rest of the world. This socioeconomic transformation has brought with it the need for a highly skilled work force, the unskilled jobs of the low-value-added industries being relocated to factories on the Chinese mainland and highly skilled, professional positions in high-tech and financial service industries taking their place.

In response to the need for a highly skilled cadre of professionals (and also, perhaps, with the impending transfer of sovereignty to China in 1997, to try to make up in part for years of colonial neglect), the Hong Kong government has overseen a rapid expansion of tertiary level education in Hong Kong, increasing the number of universities from two to six, while at the same time greatly expanding the intake of the existing two. As a result of the increase in available university places, all of which have English as a medium of instruction, concern has arisen about the English proficiency of students and their ability to study through this medium. As part of the drive to expand tertiary education in Hong Kong, the administration had to look overseas to recruit lecturers. Many of these foreign lecturers come from English-speaking countries (Britain, the U. S., Canada, Australia) and form a large part of the teaching staff in each university. Many of these overseas lecturers have limited experience living abroad and teaching large groups of nonnative-English-speaking (NNES) students.

The study reported on here took place at City University of Hong Kong (City U), one of the new universities. At CityU, 75% of the teaching staff is Chinese, with English as their second language, while 25% of the staff come from overseas.

The Students

The students involved in this study are Hong Kong L1 Cantonese speakers. They are predominantly the children of the huge influx of economic and political refugees who came to Hong Kong in the 1960s, fleeing the cultural revolution in mainland China. The parents of the majority of these students will have at best been educated to primary school level, if at all. Both within the family and at school, the moral education of the students involved in this study will have been firmly based on those Chinese historical, cultural, and traditional philosophical patterns broadly referred to as Confucianism (Scollon & Scollon, 1994). The term Confucian is as rich in meaning for the educated East Asian as the term Judæo-Christian is for the educated Westerner, but just as the latter term can be used as a shorthand for a whole set of
Confucian and Western Values as They Relate to Academic Lectures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Confucian</th>
<th>Western</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>● respect for authority of lecturer</td>
<td>● lecturer valued as a guide and facilitator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● lecturer should not be questioned</td>
<td>● lecturer is open to challenge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● student motivated by family and pressure to excel</td>
<td>● student motivated by desire for individual development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● positive value placed on effacement and silence</td>
<td>● positive value placed on self-expression of ideas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● emphasis on group orientation to learning</td>
<td>● emphasis on individual development and creativity in learning</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

beliefs readily accessible to the average educated Westerner, so does the term *Confucianism* readily evoke a set of fundamental ideas and attitudes for East Asians (Scollon & Scollon, 1994). Figure 1 lists those features of Confucianism which perhaps most noticeably contrast with Western values in the context of L2 lectures.

A more detailed discussion of Confucianism is outside the scope of this article, although it is a theme that we will return to throughout. (See Scollon & Scollon, 1994, for an extensive bibliography on Confucianism and its influence among the contemporary ethnic Chinese people.)

Academically, CityU students will have gone through the Hong Kong secondary school system where a mixed mode of instruction (English and Cantonese) is used, with the emphasis usually on English for reading and writing and Cantonese for oral explication of the English language texts and for other oral teaching and learning activities (Johnson & Lee, 1987). The students will have been taught in large classes (around 40) by means of a traditional method of instruction, with considerable emphasis on rote memorization. As far as listening and interacting orally are concerned, students’ pre-CityU experience will have been largely Cantonese. Students at CityU have little or no exposure to English at home (Pennington, Balla, Detaramani, Poon, & Tam, 1992).

Chinese students’ attitudes toward teaching and learning differ from those of Western students and can cause problems for Western teachers who are unfamiliar in teaching such students. Scollon and Scollon (1994) comment on the Confucian teacher-student relationship and state that students generally do not ask teachers questions while in class as “questioning might be thought of as saying that the teacher had not taught well because there were still unanswered questions” (p. 17). Chinese students adopt a receptive role in class and look to the teacher to provide the information needed to successfully pass the
course. Memorization plays an important role in Chinese students’ attitudes toward learning. Even in situations where, as a Western teacher, we might assume that the students needed to use analytical and critical thinking, such as in literary analysis, Chinese students rely on memorization techniques.

The students attending the lectures commented on in this study would all have sat for the Hong Kong Certificate of Education (HKCE) English exam. To gain entrance into the university, they must have at least a grade E in their Use of English paper. The students’ entry levels ranged from E to C. An E correlates to around 450 on the TOEFL test, whereas a C correlates to around 530 (Hogan & Chan, 1993). As a point of comparison, most U.S. universities have an entry level of about 550.¹

The Lecturers²

Ten native-English-speaking (NES) lecturers (British, U.S., Australian, and Canadian)—7 male and 3 female—from both scientific and nonscientific disciplines at CityU played a principle role in this study. They were selected so as to provide a representative cross-section of NES lecturers in the institution. The subject areas, rank, and experience of these lecturers and the numbers of students in their classes can be seen in Table 1.

Physical Setting

CityU is situated in a 4-year-old, purpose-designed building. The lectures commented on took place for the most part in lecture theatres, although a few were given in large classrooms. The size of lecture theatres in CityU varies from minitheatres that seat up to 100 to large theatres that seat more than 300. All lecture theatres contain the same standard equipment. There are two or three large whiteboards, an overhead projector and screens, and a lectern on which there are control panels for video- and computer-based presentations. The lecturer may use the microphone at the lectern or a clip-on microphone. The students sit on plastic moulded seats which are attached to a narrow writing desk which runs the breadth of the theatre. The rows of seats are arranged in amphitheatre-style tiers. Where classrooms are used for lectures, the students sit on plastic moulded chairs and

¹A score of 550 on TOEFL is the standard advocated by NAFSA (Association of International Educators) and has been accepted by the majority of U.S. universities.

²We refer to the British title of lecturer throughout this article as this is the title in use at CityU. For U.S. readers, Lecturer = Assistant Professor, Senior Lecturer = Associate Professor, and Reader = Associate Professor or Professor.
TABLE 1
Background Information on the 10 Lecturers Principally Engaged in the Study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data Code</th>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Class size</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Lecturing experience (years)</th>
<th>Lecture experience to Chinese Students (years)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LA</td>
<td>Building and Construction</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>SL</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LB</td>
<td>Economics and Finance</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>L</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LC</td>
<td>Business Management</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>1½</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LD</td>
<td>Computer Science</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>L</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LE</td>
<td>Law</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>L</td>
<td>1½</td>
<td>1½</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LF</td>
<td>Electrical Engineering</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>L</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3½</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LG</td>
<td>Information Systems</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>SL</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LH</td>
<td>Marketing</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>L</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>½</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L1</td>
<td>Public and Social Administration</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>L</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L1</td>
<td>Accountancy</td>
<td>163</td>
<td>L</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>3½</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: R = Reader, SL = Senior Lecturer, L = Lecturer.

They have narrow desks to lean on, two students per desk. Each classroom has two whiteboards, an overhead projector plus screen and a TV monitor. Speaking in a normal teaching voice, the lecturer can be heard by all students without the use of a microphone. The classrooms seat up to 40 students.

METHODOLOGY

The data for this study were collected over a 3-year period. Prior to this, in order for the researchers to gain insights into the most appropriate methodology to adopt and likely areas of focus for the research, a pilot study was conducted over a period of one semester with one lecturer in Manufacturing Engineering. An earlier study, focusing on students’ perceptions, problems, and strategies in attending lectures in English (Flowerdew & Miller, 1992), provided us with insight regarding appropriate methodology and areas of interest for the students. We also had the benefit of being ourselves lecturers in the university which was our research site.

The data were collected in a range of ways:

● questionnaires and at least two in-depth interviews administered to 10 lecturers (LA-LJ) principally involved in the study before and after they conducted a lecture course.

350 TESOL QUARTERLY
● reflective diaries kept by Lecturers LA-LJ and one class of 40 students during their lecture courses
● questionnaires given to students of Lecturers LA-LJ immediately after a lecture (several hundred)
● field notes arising from less formal discussion with and observation of lecturers and students over the full 3-year period of the study (LA-LJ and their students, but also others)
● intensive discussion and observation, often on a daily basis, with three lecturers (LB, LE, LI) with whom the researchers built up a particularly good rapport, during the whole 3-year period of the research
● written self-reports elicited from the students of Lecturers LB, LE, LI after a lecture in the middle of their course, focusing on their perceptions, problems, and strategies
● in-depth interviews administered to 18 students of Lecturers LB, LE, LI during a lecture course
● focus groups consisting of six to eight students of Lecturers LB, LE, LI conducted in the middle of a lecture course
● participant observation of 16 lectures by the two of us
● recordings and transcriptions of 34 lectures
● other artefacts of the lecture situation, such as textbooks, handouts, and student notes.

We designed our questionnaires to provide standardized (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1983) basic data on the lecturers and students and their attitudes toward lecturing. The interviews were reflexive (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1983); that is, the interviewer did not start with a specific set of questions, although he did start with a set of areas to be covered, this evolving as more interviews took place. The aim of the interviewing was to minimize the influence of the researcher on what the interviewee said while at the same time providing some structure in terms of what was or was not relevant and eliciting clarification where ambiguity occurred (Spradley, 1979a). The three main areas in which we questioned lecturers were: (a) perceptions of being a lecturer to Hong Kong students, (b) problems in lecturing to Hong Kong students, and (c) strategies used to overcome the problems. The first lecturer interview was conducted to establish the lecturer’s general views on these areas, whereas in the second interview the lecturers were asked to focus on the course they had just taught. Student interviews were conducted in a similar way, but with the focus on perceptions, problems, and strategies of listening to an expatriate lecturer. The approach to diary keeping was broadly similar to that of the
interviews, that is, lecturers and students were encouraged to report on what they felt to be significant aspects of their lectures, but some broad guidelines and ongoing feedback were provided so as to ensure some sort of structure and relevance to the research.

We will only refer to that data which we used to develop our theoretical framework for the notion of culture in second language lectures. In Watson-Gegeo's (1988) terms, our emphasis is on analysis, interpretation, and explanation rather than simple naturalistic description. A more detailed description of the data is available elsewhere (Flowerdew & Miller, in press).

We arrived at our theoretical insights in the following way. We collected and discussed the data on an ongoing basis. Having data from a variety of sources and subjects and having two researchers ensured an element of triangulation to the data and to theory building. As we generated hypotheses, we sorted and resorted the data into categories, using either the wordprocessor or photocopying and physical cut-and-paste. During this process, we were continually going back to lecturers and students to ask questions and observe or record lectures for further data, in order to develop new avenues or test out developing hypotheses. Following Davis (1992), our approach was to have prolonged engagement, and persistent observation, in order to “build trust with respondents, learn the culture, and test for misinformation introduced by both the researcher and researched” (p. 606). In addition, following Davis (1992) again, we tested the ongoing conclusions in a number of public presentations and discussion sessions with invited informants and other Hong Kong lecturers and students present (Flowerdew & Miller, 1993, 1994, 1995a, b, c).

Although data came from all of the sources listed above, our main orientation to the data, as far as this article is concerned, was from the lecturer interviews. The interviews (and questionnaires) were the starting point for building rapport with the lecturers. Subsequent to the interviews, as rapport developed, the researchers gained access to lecture classrooms and to students and built a basis for further contact. Hypotheses were mainly generated from the interview data and then cross-referenced with data from the other sources. Gradually patterns emerged, one being the cultural framework which is the focus of the present article. We stress that the cultural framework we outline in this article developed out of the data and not vice-versa. We agree with van Lier (1989) that “[the ethnographer] walks a fine line between naive observation and externally imposed interpretation” (p. 43). In our article, readers will note that we draw on the literature, as well as our observed data, when appropriate, in developing our cultural framework. However, we emphasize that we have tried to be as rigorous
as we can in making our inferences and interpretations based upon the data (see also Atkinson, 1994).

THE LECTURES

Before outlining the cultural framework, in order to develop a sense of the lectures as experienced by the students and lecturers, we provide vignettes of two lectures during which each of the investigators acted as a participant observer (Spradley, 1979b).

First Vignette

The topic of this second-year undergraduate lecture in Economics was foreign exchange. The lecture took place in an amphitheatre-style lecture hall, with well over a 100 students attending. As the students waited for the lecturer (LB), there was considerable hubbub, the noise only diminishing slightly upon the lecturer's arrival.

The lecturer began by distributing a coursework assignment handout. Students continued talking while this was done and continued talking further as the lecturer, with the use of the podium microphone, explained how the assignment was to be done. As students received the handout, their discussion switched to the contents of the handout, with much code-mixing (i.e., discussion about what to do in Cantonese, with use of English for citing from the handout and for terminology). The lecturer devoted considerable time in explaining how to write an essay style assignment, stressing the need for a main point, subpoint structure, and how past students had difficulty writing in this style. At several points the lecturer asked if there were any questions concerning the assignment, but no students responded. He told students that if they had any questions, he was available at most times for consultation in his office.

The lecturer then moved on to the topic of the lecture, relating it to previous lectures. Students turned to their course notes, provided by the department in a bound booklet at the beginning of the course. The notes were quite detailed, with the result that students did not need to make extensive lecture notes of their own. There was still considerable noise from the students as the lecturer started to introduce the topic of the lecture. At this stage the lecturer asked the students to quiet down as it was difficult for him to lecture over such noise. He then showed a transparency with the outline of the lecture. Students related this to their notes.

The discourse structure of the lecture took the form of the presenta-
tion of a number of concepts to do with exchange rate fluctuations. These concepts were elucidated and related one to the other by means of a humorous (for the observer) recurrent example of the difference in the price of fishballs (a favourite Chinese fast food) in two different parts of Hong Kong. Each of the individual, but related, exchange rate concepts was illustrated by additional examples, most relating to Hong Kong, but some contrasting Hong Kong with the U.S. In talking about prices in the U.S., for example, the lecturer used the example of McDonald’s hamburgers instead of fishballs.

As the lecturer developed his topic, students began to annotate their notes, using both Chinese characters and English. Some students helped others in this, writing on their notes for them or explaining in Cantonese. There was no evidence of students’ taking notes in the traditional way, with points and subpoints, on a blank piece of paper. By this stage, the noise level, although still quite appreciable because of continuing peer assistance, had died down considerably. The noise abated further when the lecturer displayed a transparency showing information that was not in the students’ prepared notes. At this point, there was a flurry of activity as students copied this information down. One complaint of students about this lecturer, as expressed in their interviews, was that the prepared notes were not detailed enough. However, the lecturer and both researchers felt them to be very detailed.

Throughout the lecture, many examples and asides were, for the observer, quite humorous. However, students did not seem to pick up on much of the lecturer’s use of humour. As an example of humour, the lecturer, developing his fishball example, stated as follows:

1. LB: Fishballs cost the same on Hong Kong side as on Kowloon side, or nearly; a little more on Hong Kong side. I don’t know why. That would be a good final year project. (lecture extract)

Some students laughed at this, but the majority did not. The observer noted one student sitting close to him explaining the joke to his neighbour in Cantonese. This pattern of humour from the lecturer picked up by only a few, or sometimes no students, was a recurrent feature of the lecture.

Throughout the lecture, the observer was struck by the large number of technical terms used by the lecturer. The following terms were noted down at one stage as coming in very close succession: appreciate, depreciate, position, assets, goods, purchasing power parity, arbitrage, absolve, relative price parity. The observer was also struck by the number of opportunities the lecturer gave the students throughout the lecture to ask him questions, but how at each of these opportunities there was no response from the students.
In discussion after the lecture, the lecturer expressed his general satisfaction with the way things went. However, he said he would like to have a better rapport with the students and would like them to participate more, by asking questions. Students, when interviewed following the lecture, were generally satisfied with the lecturer. They felt that they got a lot out of this lecture course, although they said they had to rely on peer help to understand the main points, and they had to do a lot of back-up reading.

Second Vignette

The topic of this second-year undergraduate lecture in Public and Social Administration was public housing management. This lecture was presented to a small group (the smallest observed) with just 32 students attending. The lecture was given in a 40-seat classroom.

The lecturer (LI) started by framing the lecture within the overall course. He explained how the lecture fit into what he had previously presented and gave a brief outline of what he would cover in this lecture. As it was a classroom, the lecturer could talk in a normal classroom voice and be heard clearly. During the lecture, the lecturer used a lot of sign posting: first, then, secondly, in conclusion. He also attempted to cater to the students’ linguistic and conceptual needs by frequently paraphrasing the general points he made and by following them up with a local example.

The students had detailed notes, bound in a booklet, which are provided by the department for the whole course. Having framed the topic within the series of lectures he was giving, the lecturer referred to the handout throughout his lecture. From this point, the structure of the lecture followed closely what was in the notes. The lecturer directed the students’ attention to the relevant section of the handout and elaborated on the notes. As he did this, some students made additional notes in their booklets in Chinese and/or English or used a marker pen to highlight parts of the text.

The discourse structure of the lecture took the form of a historical overview of the public housing situation in Hong Kong, where the programme had been developed very rapidly to meet the sudden need for public housing following a major fire. This situation in Hong Kong was compared to public housing in the U.K., where the system had been developed more systematically over a longer period.

Throughout the lecture the lecturer used quite complex vocabulary. Terms noted from a randomly selected short segment of the transcript include the following: paternalistic administration, hidden agendas, non-interventionist, laissez-faire, proactive, social constraints, population dynamics, global capitalist system, economic barricade, deregulation. The lecturer
invited questions at various stages, but the students did not respond. However, during a short break and at the close of the lecture, a number of students asked questions on a one-to-one, rather than an open-class, basis. At two points, the lecturer attempted humour, but the response was minimal. Nevertheless, the atmosphere in the class was friendly, with the students chatting freely to the lecturer before and after the lecture. The students attending this lecture were generally quiet, but several instances of peer help were noted when one student would turn to a neighbour and have a short discussion in Cantonese.

Following the lecture, when questioned by the observer, the lecturer expressed his general satisfaction with his lectures to this group of students. He noted that students particularly liked the detailed notes he provided, but that he would like more participation. In comments students were asked to write immediately after the lecture and in interviews, although generally positive, students noted that some of the examples the lecturer used were unfamiliar to them and oriented too much to the U.K. and that they sometimes got lost in what the lecturer was saying. Students stated that close attention to the notes was a strategy for alleviating the comprehension problem, along with out-of-class reading.

THE FOUR DIMENSIONS OF CULTURE

Having established the background to our study and provided two examples of how a lecture is conducted at CityU, we now turn to the four dimensions of culture—ethnic, local, academic, and disciplinary—as outlined in the introduction, referring back to the two vignettes, but also drawing on our extensive other data, to illustrate our framework.

Ethnic Culture

In referring to ethnic culture in the context of cross-cultural lectures, we are concerned with social-psychological features which affect the behaviour of students and which may contrast with the social-psychological make-up of Western lecturers. In some cultures, there are certain taboos which Westerners are usually warned about—physical contact between the sexes, for example, in Muslim countries, touching on the head in Thailand—which can be traced to social-psychological cultural traits. To our knowledge, there are no such taboos in Hong Kong which stand out so strongly as the above (although ethnic Chinese are averse to physical contact between the sexes and public displays of affection, something lecturers are well advised to be aware of). However, certain social-psychological features affect the behaviour of
Hong Kong Chinese in lectures and are susceptible to cross-cultural misunderstanding in more subtle ways.

Perhaps the most salient features of the social psychology of Chinese people reported in the literature is the influence of their Confucian heritage, with its emphasis on the family, filial piety, and respect for one's elders (Bond, 1986, 1991). For Confucius, one's teacher is on a par with one's father in terms of the loyalty and deference that is one expected to show. In accordance with this cultural trait, most expatriate lecturers interviewed for this study find their students to be extremely deferential, a feeling corroborated in our interviews with students and our observation of lectures (as well as from our own experience as teachers of Hong Kong students). As one student said to one of the researchers when asked why she returned a copy of an article he had lent her in the traditional Chinese way, with both hands and with a slight bow, "To show respect to my teacher." A similar expression of respect is evident in a statement from business students, as reported by one of the lecturers, when asking him for detailed notes:

2. LJ: When I asked them why they wanted such detailed notes and said they weren't necessary, the students said that it was because they respected me as a teacher and that they would not ask me if they did not have such respect for me. (postcourse interview, Accountancy)

As another example of respect for one's teacher, we might cite here the fact that, at undergraduate level, it is very unlikely that Hong Kong Chinese students would ever question the grades awarded by their lecturers.1

Another behavioral feature of Hong Kong students which might be related to respect for one's teacher (recorded in our vignettes and noted in other lectures) is students' reluctance to give their opinions, even when asked. This is a problem consistently remarked upon by lecturers, who for the most part favoured an interactive style of lecturing, a point we will develop further under the heading of academic culture. Hong Kong students often decline to give an opinion, or if and when they do give one, it is after careful consideration. This can be frustrating for expatriate lecturers. As Lecturer K commented on her earlier experience of lecturing in multiethnic classes in the U. S.:

3. LK: American students start to answer a question before they know what they are going to say. Chinese students wait until they are sure of what they are going to say before they speak. That makes the American professors really mad. (field notes)

Readers who have experience of teaching Arab students will note how this attitude contrasts strongly with that of Arab students, who tend to treat grades as negotiable and who will sometimes expect the teacher to "help" them by raising the grade awarded. This attitude can be related to teachings in the Koran.
Students seem to be aware of the frustration of lecturers with their reluctance to give their opinions, but are not concerned about remedying the situation. As one student noted in her diary:

4. Dr X asked us our opinion about this theory, but, as is our way, nobody answered. [emphasis added]. (student diary)

Such behaviour seems to be deeply embedded in the social-psychological make-up of Hong Kong students. One possible reason for this rather negative attitude to participation may be related to the Confucian teaching on the need to maintain face. In answering a question, students run the risk of being wrong or of revealing their weak English. Another possible reason, as offered to the researchers by students, relates to the Confucian precept of group solidarity and the inappropriacy of shining in front of one's peers. An ethnic Chinese lecturer commented that if students ask or answer a question, they will be seen by their peers as “showing off” and will become “an outcast.”

Another behavioral trait of ethnic Chinese commonly cited in the cross-cultural psychology literature is their collectivism approach to human interaction (e.g., Bond, 1986, 1991, in press; Hofstede, 1983). In our focus group sessions conducted with students after lectures, in answer to the question, “If you have any problems understanding, what will you do about it?”, by far the most common answer was, “Ask my classmate.” As shown in our vignettes and in other lectures we observed, students were seen to engage in a high level of peer assistance, helping each other by explaining in Cantonese points their classmates were having difficulty with. Such peer assistance in lectures can reach such a level in the CityU lecture theatre that a number of lecturers, unaware of what was really going on, commented to us that they found their students inattentive and to chatter too much while they were lecturing. Our own observations of lectures, however, in general, seemed to indicate to us that this was not the case and that students were genuinely focusing on the subject matter of the lecture when they were talking to each other.

A further feature of Chinese ethnic culture is a high level of achievement motivation (Bond, 1986, 1991, in press). In Chinese culture, achievement for young people is defined almost exclusively in academic terms (later switching to financial success [Lau & Kuan, 1988]). Surveys conducted in Hong Kong (Pennington & Yue, 1994; Pierson, Fu, & Lee, 1980; Richards, 1994) show that although secondary school and university students have little integrative motivation toward the study of English, their instrumental motivation for learning English for academic and career purposes is very high. Our interviews with both lecturers and students and our observation of lectures provide ample evidence of the motivation of students to do well at university. High
achievement motivation of their students is something which lecturers consistently identified in their interviews with us. However, lecturers were at times somewhat taken aback by the pragmatic, or instrumental, nature of this motivation. Many statements by lecturers in their interviews indicate that they would like to feel that students are motivated by a genuine desire to learn and to discover things about themselves and the world around them. In the words of one lecturer:

5. LI: [I want a] more interactive and participatory [style] . . . I want the students to question me about my experiences. (precourse interview, Public and Social Administration)

However, students are much more likely to be motivated by a desire to obtain good grades and to thereby be able to get a good job:

6. LB: They . . . try to learn what they need to learn to pass the test, very few of them think outside that framework. (precourse interview, Economics and Finance)

The desire to do well at university and the influence this has on the students’ learning styles may be seen more clearly in the context of academic culture, an area we shall discuss later.

A final example involving a contrast in ethnic culture in our data is that of humour. This is a cross-cultural feature not commonly noted in the literature on Chinese ethnicity. However, it seems to us to be a significant potential problem area in cross-cultural communication. When lecturers discover that things that they find funny are not appreciated as humorous by their audiences (frequently noted by lecturers in their interviews and diaries, and recorded also in the two lecture vignettes), this can be interpreted as a mismatch, or case of negative transfer, between the conception of humour in the host culture and lecturers’ own ethnic background (of course, there may be a strictly linguistic problem here also). In contrast, when Lecturer LJ finds that he is able to use self-deprecation effectively as a humorous device, this can be interpreted as a case where the two ethnic cultures overlap, or a case of positive transfer of ethnic culture. In their interviews, most lecturers stated that they found difficulties in using humour in the way they would do in their home countries, many claiming that they had given up on making jokes, as they were not understood.

**Local Culture**

Local culture refers to aspects of the local setting with which the members of a particular society are familiar. The importance of local culture manifests itself in the lecturers’ need to use local examples in
their elucidation of concepts. The following quotations illustrate the difficulty experienced by lecturers in adapting to the local culture:

7. LF: You can use a car as an example for something in North America as most people have one, but that’s not the case here. (precourse interview, Electrical Engineering)

8. LA: I talk about the Bond Centre or Pacific Place [well-known building projects in Hong Kong]. There’s no point in talking about a project in Liverpool, but they will recognize international projects like Sydney Opera House (precourse interview, Building and Construction)

A common complaint of students was the difficulty they found when lecturers based their examples on their experience outside Hong Kong. As one student from the lecture described in our second vignette put it:

9. Usually he [the lecturer] takes examples from U.K. and sometimes I don’t understand because I am not familiar with U.K. housing. Because he is British he is familiar with the U.K. situation but not Hong Kong. (student interview, Public and Social Administration)

The importance of relating material to the local context is highlighted because locally produced textbooks are not available at the tertiary level. This means that lecturers either have to rely on lectures and handouts alone, or, if they use a book, have to devote a lot of their attention to bringing the material in the book closer to the students. As one lecturer put it:

10. LI: The material on Hong Kong available in textbooks is extremely limited in my subject. That means I have to try to respond and redress an imbalance or sensitivity, that is I have to bring the material into the Hong Kong context for students to understand. (postcourse interview, Public and Social Administration)

In several interviews, we noted a mismatch between claims by students that lecturers were not using enough local examples and the evidence from our observations and recordings of lectures. One explanation here may be that Western lecturers often refer to international celebrities, products and organizations which are well known locally (although their names are usually adapted to Cantonese phonology or are given a Chinese name, a fact which Western lecturers are often unaware of). A case was reported during a public presentation of our ongoing findings (Flowerdew & Miller, 1995c), for example, in which a lecturer based a complete lecture around the example of the computer product Atari. The lecturer assumed (correctly, as it later turned out) that Atari, which is popular in Hong Kong, would be familiar to his students. However, Atari has a completely different name in Can-
In lectures we observed, and as illustrated in the vignettes, examples played a prominent role in elucidating key concepts. In describing the structure of lecture discourse, Young (1994) highlights the importance of a recurrent examples phase, pointing out that strands of the examples phase may be more numerous than strands of the theoretical concepts phase. Young notes that it is in the examples phase that lecturers “illustrate theoretical concepts through concrete examples familiar to students in the audience” (p. 196). Clearly it is important that lecturers are able to identify with the local culture if they are to successfully perform this important phase in lectures.

With time, lecturers can adapt to local culture, as they can begin to find local examples to illustrate their points. Lecturer H described her strategy in lecturing on marketing as follows:

11. LH: What I do is make sure I know as much about the local market as possible. While the examples are English based I look for examples in Chinese magazines, newspapers, t.v. I encourage them [the students] to bring in examples of Chinese so we have a mixture. (postcourse interview, Marketing)

The more familiar lecturers become with the local setting, the more easily they are able to come up with suitable examples. In interviews, one group of public administration students attending the lecture in the second vignette, found the use of examples taken from the British context to be a problem in their understanding of this lecture on public housing policy. However, as the following extract from a later lecture on public housing shows, the lecturer responsible for the course was able to adeptly use Hong Kong as an example and to even contrast the Hong Kong situation effectively with overseas settings, by referring to the reaction of foreign visitors when they encountered this example:

12. LI: and so the government went about providing the first permanent housing programme at the same time / and within a year there were eight of these six storey mark one blocks which were built / you can still see them just off / ah / Wo / ah / Wo Chi Street / they are still there / the first eight / em / just off Wo Chi Street / just the other side of ah / Shek Kip Mei station / em / and that was the origins really of the first permanent public housing in Hong Kong down in Shek Kip Mei / . . . we've had visitors to the department on several occasions and I've taken them down to the estate next door / em and just showed them some of the older blocks myself and walked them around / the point I point out to them/ which they can hardly believe it/ is that cooking was carried out on these areas as well . . . (lecture extract, Public and Social Administration)

CULTURE IN L2 LECTURES
Academic Culture

Academic culture refers here to those features of the lecture situation which require an understanding of the particular academic values, roles, assumptions, attitudes, patterns of behaviour, and so on. Academic culture may be identified at various levels: at the level of a group of countries (e.g., Western countries); at the level of an individual country; at the level of a group of institutions within a given country; or at the level of the individual institution within a given country. At any of these levels, a given academic culture is likely to be imbued with the values and practices of the ethnic culture within which it is situated (Flowerdew, 1986), and it may be difficult, in analyzing a given instance of behaviour in an academic context, to ascribe such behaviour to ethnic or academic influence.

One of the most significant factors in any analysis of Chinese academic culture is the role and nature of literacy within Chinese society as a whole. As Bond (1991) notes, the achievement of literacy by an individual in Chinese is a truly formidable task. Some 3,500 different characters need to be mastered before even a rudimentary understanding of a book or newspaper is possible. In order to achieve literacy, from kindergarten age, Chinese are subjected to lengthy classroom and homework assignments involving the intensive rote learning of characters. It is not surprising that, as a result of this training, Chinese students have highly developed memorization skills, which carry over to other learning tasks in the primary and secondary school and which students expect to continue to use at the university level.

Given the large size of classes, coupled with the well-developed skill of memorization and the Confucian values of deference to teachers, the stereotypical style of teaching in Hong Kong schools is very much teacher-centred (Johnson & Lee, 1987). Because of this academic background, such a teaching style is also likely to be expected at the university level by students who receive no induction into the academic culture of a Western-oriented tertiary academic institution. When one couples this with the fact that, even if students want to participate, they must express themselves in an L2, it is understandable that although many lecturers in our study, including those in our two vignettes, expressed...
a desire to use a participatory style of teaching acceptable in Western classrooms, they find it difficult to apply in Hong Kong. As one lecturer stated:

13. LC: They [Hong Kong students] have been conditioned to expect a [nonparticipatory] delivery system. In one way it would be difficult to break that down. (postcourse interview, Business Management)

And another:

14. LH: They are not accustomed to participating in lectures. They feel quite threatened when they have to do so. (postcourse interview, Marketing)

Confucian values and a collectivism approach to social interaction can be identified as the source of another feature of academic culture in Hong Kong; the propensity for students to help each other. One aspect of peer help noted by us in our observation of lectures and illustrated in our vignettes was that of linguistic informant, one student glossing in Cantonese a word, phrase, or stretch of talk for another student or group of students who were less proficient in English. As a result of this peer assistance during lectures, lecturers may feel that they do not have the full attention of their audiences. In addition, the noise level, as illustrated in our first vignette, tends to be higher than most lecturers are used to and can be quite distracting. Although it was clear from their interviews that some lecturers realized the importance and need for peer help, as noted earlier, others thought their students were merely inattentive.

A final feature of academic culture in Hong Kong which diverges from Western norms concerns the question of original thought. As one lecturer, who had obviously given cross-cultural issues some thought, put it:

15. LJ: In Europe you are valued for independent thought—here you are not. If you are in a junior position you're not expected to voice opinions or make recommendations. (precourse interview, Accountancy)

In their interviews, many lecturers expressed their frustration with students’ lack of creative thinking:

16. LA: The main problem I find is if my ideas don't feature in a standard textbook, then the students seem to be lost for a point of reference . . . . I try to encourage them to do the thinking and analyzing but at best they will only do this after I have shown them how to do it once. (postcourse interview, Building and Construction)

17. LD: They only experience a system [of education] which requires them

---

The habit of glossing English texts in Chinese has also been noted at the secondary school level (Johnson & Lee, 1987) and in tertiary level lectures at our own research site (Walters & Balla, 1992).
to learn the ‘right’ answer and to regurgitate [it]—the concept of evaluation and analysis appears to be totally lacking. (postcourse interview, Information Science)

In setting an assignment, a Western lecturer may be looking for originality of thought. Because for Chinese students the teacher is viewed as an authority who is not to be questioned, their view of an assignment may be they are expected to reflect on what the lecturer has told them in the lecture course rather than to present original thought.

The lecturers’ perception of what their students should be able to do is reflected in their course objectives, the kind of assignments they set, and in the type of questions set for examinations, fairly typical examples of which are shown below.

Examples of Course Objectives

18. To present opportunities for the student to think creatively and independently and hence make a realistic estimate of his own potential. (Electronic Engineering)
19. To stimulate the student to develop an enquiring, analytical and creative approach to the study of building and encouraging the habit of independent judgement and critical awareness. (Building and Construction)

Examples of Assignments

20. “A major feature of Hong Kong company law is the disclosure of information to the public.” Critically examine the value of public information concerning companies in Hong Kong. (Law)
21. [Based on a case study] Krisler Management decides not to sell the investments it had reclassified as short term. Has management behaved unethically? Give your reasons. (Accountancy)

Examples of Examination Questions

22. Analyse and comment on the performance of XYZ Limited, with particular reference to the assessment of bankruptcy risk. (Accountancy)
23. Critically evaluate the view that “incrementalism is inefficient: rationality is unattainable” with regard to public budgeting, giving examples in an organization with which you are familiar. (Public and Social Administration)

The above are fairly typical of the sort of objectives, assignments, and examination questions set by CityU departments. The weighting of marks on most courses is 70% for examination and 30% course work. None of the lecturers we asked said that it would be possible for students to achieve anything better than a bare pass without some application of these more analytical and creative skills. However, a
bare pass is clearly not good enough for average Hong Kong students, with their high achievement motivation; nor is a bare pass good enough for the Hong Kong job market, with its requirement of highly skilled professionals in the high-tech and financial service industries. Although the focus in the above examples is on encouraging the students to think independently and creatively, lecturers are concerned this objective is not being achieved. They feel that students would do much better if they were able to demonstrate a more effective command of these analytical and creative skills. A recent summary of external examiners' reports circulated at CityU (City University of Hong Kong, 1994) indicates that examiners found many of the answers given in examinations and course-work assignments to be rigid and lacking in critical and original thought.

Students and lecturers may be approaching the context of learning from different ends of Bloom's (1956) Taxonomy of Educational Objectives. The lecturers may be aiming at Levels 4, 5 and 6 of the taxonomy: analysis, synthesis, and evaluation of information. Students, on the other hand, may be aiming at Level 1, acquiring knowledge, defined by Bloom as the ability to remember and recall information and facts without error or alteration. In answer to the interview question, “What is the purpose of a lecture?” a typical student answer was simply “To teach us.” Other typical comments were:

24. To teach me the subject, the content. (Public and Social Administration)
25. The lecture is to tell us some information and explain things . . . to give us some information about the exam at the end [of the lecture course]. (Computer Science)

A few students had a slightly broader view of the role of the lecture, involving some creativity on the part of the student, as did the following law student:

26. It is for the lecturer to tell students what the syllabus is . . . the lecture provides what is important and where it needs further study and reading in a particular area. (Law)

But none of the students we interviewed expressed a conception of lectures and lecturing in any way matching that of the lecturers quoted above.

Before leaving the topic of academic culture, it might be argued that the features identified by the lecturers as problematic in their students are not much different from the sort of complaints lecturers make about their students in the West. However, the point is that the lecturers involved in this study have experience of lecturing both in the West and in Hong Kong and so, presumably, even if the problem
is not one of kind, but of degree, lecturers find the problems to be more serious in Hong Kong.

Disciplinary Culture

Disciplinary culture refers to the theories, concepts, norms, terms, and so on of a particular academic discipline. This notion has been developed previously by Becher (1981, 1987). Perhaps the most obvious way to recognise a discipline is through its specialised vocabulary. In both of our vignettes, we pointed out the frequent use of technical terms. All lecturers are faced with the problem of introducing and using a large repertoire of discipline-specific technical terms. Some lecturers (e.g., the lecturer in our first vignette) make an attempt to at least draw the students’ attention to this technical lexis. Others (e.g., the lecturer in the second vignette), however, while aware of the problem, do not feel it is their role, or that they are capable of dealing with this issue, which for them would constitute English teaching, something many of them stated in their interviews they considered not to be part of their job.

Another important feature of disciplinary culture, from the linguistic point of view, is the fundamental relation between the structure of the body of knowledge of a given discipline and the discourse and related language structures (not just lexis) which this gives rise to. Much of the research conducted throughout the short history of English for specific purposes (ESP) has been interested in this question, although most studies have focused on written text (see, e.g., Bhatia, 1993; Swales, 1990, for a review). With regard to the lecture, Brown (1987) notes that, “(The experience of giving and receiving lectures in different subjects has not been fully explored, yet it is clear that the structure and content of subjects have a marked influence upon the mode of lecturing” (p. 287)."

Among lectures observed and recorded by the present researchers a considerable variation in discourse structure was noted across disciplines. In law, for example, the lecture discourse was found to be often structured around a series of problem-solving tasks designed to illustrate a certain legal concept. In computer science, lectures typically followed a repeated pattern of problem-solution (Hoey, 1983). In

---

One rare example worthy of mention is Dudley-Evens (1994), who has shown how the discourse structures of lectures in two disciplines, Highway Engineering and Plant Biology, vary—Highway Engineering employing a so-called point-driven strategy, while Plant Biology more likely following a framework built around the systems of plant classification developed by various biologists.
economics, as exemplified in our first vignette, lectures were sometimes structured around a series of related concepts, each illustrated by examples. In public and social administration, as exemplified in our second vignette, lectures may take the form of a comparison between different models or systems. A more thorough study, however, would be required to determine to what extent the variation we noted was due to disciplinary culture, on the one hand, and personal preference, on the other. Nevertheless, lecturers do seem to have some idea about the typical characteristics of lectures in their particular disciplines. As one law lecturer was recorded as saying in an interdepartment discussion:

27. LL: In true legal fashion, let’s attempt a few definitions.

And as an engineering lecturer stated, when beginning a presentation at a similar forum:

28. LM: As I’m an engineer, I’ll use graphs and overhead transparencies.

Sometimes lecture structure can be identified in our lecture transcripts explicitly stated at various stages in the lecture, particularly at the beginning. This phenomenon is illustrated from the following extract from the beginning of the lecture on public housing policy in Hong Kong, featured in our second vignette, where the lecturer indicates that the lecture will be structured around a description of the origins of a policy and an analysis of possible reasons for this policy:

29. LI: what I want to do is set out the origins of the very major public housing programmes which are such an important feature of Hong Kong social welfare / . . . / to take those as a starting point / and set them in the broader context of the development of public and social welfare services/ the context of / why did government intervene? / why did it choose the particular steps it did? / (lecture transcript, Public and Social Administration)

Another question concerning the relation between disciplinary culture and lecture discourse structure, but which is unfortunately beyond the scope of our data, is the question of the potential for cross-cultural variation. Since Kaplan (1966), researchers have been aware of the potential for cross-cultural variation in academic discourse, although this research has focused on expository prose. To our knowledge, no work has been conducted to investigate to what extent lecture discourse might be subject to cross-cultural variation. Some disciplines have developed differently in different cultures. However, as far as lectures are concerned, where there is no international standard, there is prima
facie a stronger likelihood of cross-cultural divergence. Given that there may indeed be cross-cultural variation in lecture discourse structure according to disciplines, it would be wise to alert nonnative speakers to the typical structures they are likely to be exposed to in English.

The relation between knowledge structure and the structure of lecture discourse is but one aspect of disciplinary culture as it relates to lectures in an L2. Another aspect, of particular significance within the second language context, concerns the rate at which a particular discipline is developing. All disciplines evolve, but a discipline-like computer science, where even the fundamental concepts are developing at an extraordinary rate, contrasts strongly with a discipline like history, where the knowledge base and the concepts employed to develop knowledge within the discipline are relatively static. Because CityU is oriented toward applied disciplines, they tend to be dynamic in terms of their development. Significant ramifications for lecturing follow from a discipline which is experiencing rapid evolution. First, because the field is developing so fast, lecturers are forced to deal with a host of new vocabulary. Referring to the main difficulties in lecturing to Hong Kong students, Lecturer J stated as follows:

30. LJ: A huge amount of vocabulary. And the area I’m working in a lot of it is evolving and you are constantly coming across new words in the commercial world or new computer terms. (precourse interview, Accountancy)

And, as Lecturer F pointed out, these new technical terms are unlikely to have an equivalent in the mother tongue:

31. LF: (in answer to the interview question, “What are the main linguistic problems of the students?”) Lots of jargon. But in our discipline, electronic engineering, there is no equivalent in Cantonese so they are forced to use the English word. (precourse interview, Electrical Engineering)

One effect of a rapidly developing vocabulary is that Hong Kong students, who in secondary school have relied on glossing their English texts and handouts in Chinese, now have to adopt an alternative strategy, there being no Chinese equivalent with which to gloss the English term. This may partially account for the peer assistance we have noted. A second result of the rapid development of certain disciplines of particular significance in the cross-cultural context is that textbooks are not available as a teaching and learning resource because the publishers cannot keep up to date with the field. As a consequence, students have to rely more on lectures (and accompanying handouts), as they become the sole source of information. The importance of lectures vis a vis other learning media is thus enhanced, and the need to depend on
the spoken medium as opposed to the written, increased. The effect of this situation on students is doubly hard because at school students are used to using an English text, but with a largely Cantonese commentary. As mentioned in our introduction, teaching at secondary level in Hong Kong is officially largely English medium, but in practice, although the texts are in English, much of the teaching of the texts is in Cantonese (Johnson & Lee, 1987). Students are now faced with no set text to refer to and a commentary only in English. This to a large extent accounts for why departments provide their students with detailed lecture notes.

Space has only allowed us to discuss two features of disciplinary culture as they relate to the L2 lecture. Researchers in ESP have devoted considerable attention to the analysis of written text from a disciplinary perspective; Dudley-Evans & Henderson (1990), for example, is a recent example of work on Economics written text. It would have been interesting, however, if the contributions to this book had included something on Economics lecture discourse. The whole question of how the different types of text within a discipline relate one to the other and how students relate to these different types would likely be a fruitful area for research.

CONCLUSION AND APPLICATIONS

Based on an ethnographic study of L2 lectures given at a research site in Hong Kong, we have outlined four aspects of the notion of culture which may underlie the process of lecturing to NNESs. Our ethnographic study has allowed us, as Geertz (1973) would put it, “to uncover an important conceptual structure [that] informs our subjects’ acts” (p. 27). Although the context of the present study is Hong Kong, the analysis and resulting framework for the conception of culture we present are likely to be of interest to several groups: They are likely to be of use to content lecturers who lecture to NNESs; to language instructors responsible for the preparation of students for academic listening; and to the NNES students themselves.

The lecturers who took part in this study were enthusiastic about receiving feedback from our observations of their lectures, our discussions with their students, and from their students’ written comments. Many of the lecturers reported that this was the first time they had

It was only when Swales attended a lecture course in law that he realized the purpose of reading in law was to “spot the crucial facts on which the decision (rightly or wrongly) rested and not to understand the story of the cases” (Swales, 1990, cited in Bhatia, 1993, p. 195).
received such feedback on their lecturing, and they viewed the experience as valuable. Eight of the 10 lecturers who took part said that the study had raised their awareness of their lecturing and their audience. The extent to which these lecturers use the information passed on to them will be important to examine in the future. However, making such information available to the lecturers is, we believe, in itself a useful service.

Training lecturers to deliver lectures to NESs as well as NNEs is not a common practice (Lynch, 1994). There are programmes in which foreign teaching assistants are given advice about how to deliver lectures, and material to guide teaching assistants in both linguistic and sociocultural aspects of giving lectures to Western students is also available (Byrd, Constantinides, & Pennington, 1989; Pica, Barnes, & Finger, 1990). However, there is a dearth of information as to the cross-cultural aspects of lectures which can assist Western lecturers in teaching non-Western students. We hope that this demonstrates the importance of considering the question of the cultural background and assumptions of their NNE students.

Language instructors responsible for the preparation of students for academic listening need to take into account some of the cultural features of lectures we have outlined. They need to sensitize their students to the culture of lectures being delivered in English by Western lecturers. Most textbooks which help prepare foreign students for listening to lectures focus on developing linguistic skills: identifying main points, comprehension exercises, and note-taking skills. The cultural aspects of lectures such as those outlined here are often missing from such textbooks. Language instructors can help their students understand not only the content, but also the cultural aspects of lectures, by discussing such things as students’ cultural assumptions about lectures and comparing and contrasting these with the objectives and underlying assumptions of the Western lecturers.

It is a premise of ethnographic research that communities are often unaware of the assumptions, ideas, and beliefs that constrain their acts. In putting forward a framework for the analysis of the culture of second language lectures, it is our aim to provide a means for lecturers and students (and those involved with the training of these two groups) to develop a conscious awareness of their own and the other culture. Developing such an awareness provides for a mutual coming together, or cultural synergy (Jin & Cortazzi, 1993), which can in turn lead to more effective communication in the cross-cultural lecture theatre. Further research in this area, an agenda for which we have sketched out here, is likely to be of value to lecturers, students, and those responsible for their training, all of whom want to work toward greater cross-cultural understanding.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We are extremely grateful for the willing cooperation and interest of the anonymous students and lecturers who took part in this study. We also acknowledge the helpful discussion and comments of Vijay Bhatia, Bertha Du-Babcock, Belinda Ho, David Li, Martha Pennington, and Ron Scollon during the preparation of this article.

THE AUTHORS

John Flowerdew is Associate Professor in the Department of English, City University of Hong Kong. His main research interest is academic discourse. He has published in a number of leading applied linguistic and TESOL journals and has recently edited a collection of research papers, Academic Listening: Research Perspectives (Cambridge University Press).

Lindsay Miller is Assistant Professor in the Department of English, City University of Hong Kong. His main research interests are in self-access language learning and listening for academic purposes. His is co-editor (with D. Nunan) of New Ways in Teaching Listening (TESOL), and co-editor (with D. Gardner) of Directions in Self-Access Language Learning (Hong Kong University Press).

REFERENCES


CULTURE IN L2 LECTURES


City University of Hong Kong. (1994). Internal document issued by the Quality Assurance Committee. Hong Kong: Author.


Flowerdew, J., & Miller, L. (1993, March). Listening to lectures in a second language. Paper presented at the City University of Hong Kong Faculty of Humanities and Social Science Forum.


Flowerdew, J., & Miller, L. (1995b, March). The culture of second language lectures. Seminar conducted at Hong Kong University of Science and Technology.


Flowerdew, J., & Miller, L. (in press). Lecturer and student perceptions, problems and strategies in second language lectures. (Research Report). Hong Kong: English Department, City University of Hong Kong.


NEW EDITION! NEW EDITION!

Schooling & Language Minority Students: A Theoretical Framework

Second Edition

of the text used by 100 universities & school districts
to train bilingual teachers!

Prepared with CLAD/BCLAD requirements in mind!

Authors Include:

• Jim Cummins
  “Primary Language Instruction and the Education of Language Minority Students”

• Stephen D. Krashen
  “Bilingual Education and Second Language Acquisition Theory”

• Alan N. Crawford
  “Communicative Approaches to Second Language Acquisition: From Oral Language Development into the Core Curriculum and L2 Literacy”

• Marguerite Ann Snow
  “Primary Language Instruction: A Bridge to Literacy”

• Eleanor Wall Thonis
  “Reading Instruction for Language Minority Students”

To Order:
EDMC-LA
School of Education, CSULA
5300 Faboro Rancho Castilla
Box 2019
Los Angeles, CA 90032
Phone: (213) 343-4872
FAX: (213) 343-4338

Beyond Language:
Social & Cultural Factors in Schooling Language Minority Students

The text used by 60 universities
to train bilingual teachers!

Authors include:

• Carlos E. Cortes
  “The Education of Language Minority Students: A Contextual Interaction Model”

• Stanley Sue & Amado Padilla
  “Ethnic Minority Issues in the United States: Challenges for the Educational System”

• John U. Ogbu & Maria Eugenia Matute-Bianchi
  “Understanding Sociocultural Factors: Knowledge, Identity, and School Adjustment”

• Shirley Brice Heath
  “Sociocultural Contexts of Language Development”

• Stephen Diaz, Luis C. Moll & Hugh Mehan
  “Sociocultural Resources in Instruction: A Context-Specific Approach”

• Spencer Kagan
  “Cooperative Learning and Sociocultural Factors in Schooling”

• Mary McGroarty
  “Educators’ Responses to Sociocultural Diversity: Implications for Practice”

• Charles F. Leyba
  “Epilogue: Far Beyond Language”

To Order:
EDMC-LA
School of Education, CSULA
5300 Faboro Rancho Castilla
Box 2019
Los Angeles, CA 90032
Phone: (213) 343-4872
FAX: (213) 343-4338
Privileged ESL University Students

STEPHANIE VANDRICK
University of San Francisco

Much has been written in ESL, composition, and basic writing journals recently about our students being oppressed and marginalized outsiders who need extra instruction in writing and other language skills, as well as extra nurturing and empowerment from their instructors. Some ESL students, especially immigrants from some minority groups, are indeed discriminated against, marginalized, and disempowered because of their minority and their language status. Yet the above, in my experience, does not ring true for many international students. My students, at a small private university, are able to pay a high tuition. They write unself-consciously of their parents in high positions, of summer homes, of expensive overseas vacations, of servants, of parties at exclusive hotels and clubs, and of upscale cars given them on their sixteenth birthdays.

This kind of privileged international student, although not often focused on in our professional literature, makes up a large proportion of students in ESL classes at many U.S. universities. These students are comfortable with privilege and know they will return to their countries and step into positions of power, wealth, and influence. They take their privilege for granted, as privileged people everywhere tend to do.

It is true that even these privileged students suffer some marginalization as foreigners, as people who cannot use the English language fluently, and, sometimes, as people of minority races and ethnicities. These students do sometimes experience discrimination or at least a sense of being outside the mainstream of college life. But clearly these problems are balanced, and probably outweighed by the students’ privilege.

Instructors must consider which aspect of these students’ experience they should address: the oppressed outsider, the privileged insider, or both at once. Instructors also need to consider ways in which the
tension between the two aspects affects the classroom, the students themselves, and the instructor, along with ways in which this tension should be addressed in the curriculum and in teaching approaches.

First, we instructors need to be honest about our own feelings toward privileged students. We are human beings and cannot help noticing and perhaps even, sometimes, resenting the fact that these young students are often far more affluent than we instructors are. Their carefree sense of entitlement and their offhand references to their expensive possessions may sometimes make us feel that we are glorified servants to this elite population. We may feel that our devotion to our students and their education merely “reinforces among [our] students that their teachers are akin to the family retainer—unobtrusive, hard-working, and ultimately expendable” (Cookson & Persell, 1985, p. 93). Or, as one preparatory school teacher put it, it may sometimes seem that our hard work and dedication, normally associated with service to the poor or disadvantaged, is in this case like being “missionaries to the rich” (Cookson & Persell, 1985, p. 85). We must be aware of and yet transcend such feelings.

Here I am clearly writing about privileged students as if they were a monolithic unit; just as clearly, they are not. I do so in order to grapple with the issues outlined here. Also, my writing about the issue of how to think about and approach the teaching of these privileged students in no way asserts that this issue is as pressing or in any way equivalent to the issue of aiding those who are truly poor, oppressed, and/or discriminated against, with no privilege to retreat to or be armored by. And even to address this issue may seem in some way frivolous. But these privileged students are a population many of us serve, and these students will be leaders in their countries. Perhaps we have an opportunity to influence influential people in a positive way; perhaps we need to adapt our teaching methods to their needs. As Friend (1994) puts it, (paraphrasing Knoblauch), “educators must find ways to broaden our political scope to include all our students and all our pedagogical practices. In other words, a truly political classroom must focus on the privileged majority as well as the disadvantaged minority of students” (p. 554).

THE UNDERLYING ISSUE: CLASS AND POWER

We cannot discuss privilege without discussing class. In the U.S. we tend not to want to talk about class, feeling that our society at least aims to be a classless society, where everyone has equal opportunity to succeed. The working class in the U.S. prefer to identify with their race, ethnic group, geographic location, or occupational group, rather than with their class (Mantsios, 1992). The upper class prefers not to
use the terms class or upper class (Ostrander, cited in Mantsios, 1992).
In the U. S., too, we tend to associate discussion of class with Marxism
and discussion of Marxism and communism has an unfortunate, even
tragic, history in the U.S., where many still remember the days of
Joseph McCarthy and the communist witch hunts (Ehrenreich, 1989,
p. 25).

Educators too are often reluctant to talk about class. Chordas (1992)
points out that class is
glossed over in all classrooms, from elementary school through college . . . .
This blindness derives partly from our persistence in thinking of ourselves
as a classless society. The adjective has become a badge we wear with pride;
it proves the equalitarian, democratic nature of our society . . . . if everyone
in the open classroom is equal, then problems like class distinctions and
asymmetries in distribution of wealth don't exist; and if they aren't present
in the classroom, they don't need to be recognized and dealt with. (pp.
217–218)

But by ignoring the concept and discussion of class, we may in fact
be patronizing working class or underclass students, subtly implying
that there is something wrong with their background that should be
politely overlooked. Myers (1992) states that the idea that all students
are and should be taught as “status equals” is “an attractive and idealistic
vision, but . . . [i]f we turn a blind eye to social factors we're likely
merely to perpetrate the provision of different kinds of knowledge
for the rich and the poor” (cited in Chordas, p. 217). And ignoring
the class privileges of elite students may allow them to continue having
these privileges, without comment or the possibility of more genuine
equity.

APPLICATION OF TENETS OF CRITICAL PEDAGOGY

Adherents of critical pedagogy generally make two broad (overlap-
ping) points regarding teaching oppressed students. The first point is
that education should empower. Freire (1992) addresses ways in which
minorities have been marginalized and have suffered and ways in
which education can give people tools to construct better lives and to
participate more fully in determining their own destinies. The second
point is that instructors should not allow the classroom to become a
replica of society which merely reinforces the status quo, the power
structure, and thus keeps students in their (outside) place. Writers in
this vein caution instructors against simply training students to fit into
the system better, thus disempowering students and quashing any
energy or impetus to work to change the system. (Auerbach & Burgess,
1985; Benesch, 1993). In Bizzell’s words, “our dilemma is that we want to empower students to succeed in the dominant culture so that they can transform it from within; but we fear that if they do succeed, their thinking will be changed in such a way that they will no longer want to transform it” (cited in Herndl, p. 350).

These points made by critical pedagogues may apply in reverse to the case of privileged students. Regarding the first point, education as empowerment, privileged students do not need to be educated in order to be empowered; we might hope to educate them to empower others less fortunate than themselves, but this is difficult. Freire in a conversation with Kennedy states that it is hard to use his principles to educate the rich, because they educate themselves to perpetuate the status quo; that it is hard to get rich people to give up anything in order to liberate the poor; and that one cannot get away from the concept that those who have power are unwilling to give it up, even to help others (Kennedy, 1987). However, I believe that we educators must continue to have faith in the goal of Freire and other radical pedagogues: “to bring students to the point of cultural self-consciousness in which they neither accommodate nor merely oppose the social order—both positions being still circumscribed by the structure—but can actively reposition themselves within it” (Herndl, 1993, p. 351).

The second point, not allowing the classroom to be a replica of society, may also be kept in mind in reverse in that for these students too, instructors should not allow the classroom to be a place which reinforces the status quo power structure. There is less question of teaching these students to use their education and skills to transform the system because they are generally comfortable and satisfied with the current system; it works well for them and their families and peers. These students are generally happy to use the educational system to help them take over the managerial and professional roles that they see as theirs by entitlement. Also, they are sometimes not particularly interested in classroom discussion of social/political issues. For them, these questions have no immediacy, and in fact these students often tend to blame the victim when discussing people with social problems (e.g., minority races, the homeless, gays, women), showing little or no sensitivity to the societal reasons for their own far easier access to power and success. Instructors can gently jog them out of their complacency.

IN THE CLASSROOM

Although it is not my intention here to propose specific classroom practices, I would like to speculate on the relevance of the above
discussion to certain classroom practices. The underlying premise here is that teaching is political, whether recognized as such or not.

Friend (1994) points out that in order to set up classroom situations where students are exposed to diversity in opinion and democratic interchange, instructors must not avoid conflict. It is important that students and instructors respect each other's opinions, but that (paraphrasing Jarratt) teachers should "engage with students in rigorous, critical exchanges about their values. Although students do not always find this process enjoyable" (Friend, 1994, p. 561). Perhaps the most privileged students may find this kind of conflict the least enjoyable because it is likely to focus on ways in which the status quo (which generally benefits them) is unjust. Or their very privilege may allow them to resist this classroom conflict or to see it as merely a classroom exercise which has no real meaningful effect on their way of thinking. In any case, it is essential that these fortunate students be led to question the status quo and even to question their own sense of entitlement. They need to think about why they have power and wealth and the expectation of continuing to have such power and wealth and why most other people in their society and the world do not.

Let us look at specific common practices in the classroom and consider whether the needs and behavior of privileged students regarding these practices may be different and whether instructors need to modify their teaching accordingly. For example, in peer editing sessions in writing classes, do privileged students feel more comfortable criticizing others' written work? Do they feel more or less comfortable receiving critiques from others? Are they less likely to be willing to revise because they feel that their first drafts are perfectly adequate? Or, on the contrary, are they more comfortable revising because they do not take suggestions for revision as reflections on their already secure sense of self-worth? How do they feel about referrals to the writing center, or to tutoring? Are these seen as shameful or as extra help that they are entitled to? Do these students tend to dominate in classroom or small group discussion because they are used to regarding their own opinions as worthy? Are these students' feelings about testing, grading, plagiarism any different from those of other students? Do these students look down on other less fortunate students? Are they possibly more prejudiced and less tolerant because they themselves have not suffered as much discrimination as the others? Or is there a sense of noblesse oblige that allows these students to generously condescend to be kind to others less fortunate than themselves? Research is needed to find answers to these questions, but in the meanwhile, an awareness and consideration of these issues might help us meet the needs of our various students better.
CONCLUSION

What then is the responsibility of and the opportunity for the instructor teaching privileged students? Is it mainly to open their eyes and minds to social issues? And if so, can we really make a difference? Perhaps assuming we can influence these students in any substantive way is presumptuous. Because of the social structure in most countries, power is very entrenched; no one gives up power easily. Are we merely making ourselves feel better? Is such teaching equivalent to our students’ learning, as one (very earnest and kind) student recently told me she had learned, that one should give one’s used clothing to poor children? Are we simply salving our consciences and allowing our students to salve their consciences, with superficial gestures, which then allow all of us to go on without making any of the deep structural changes necessary for a more equitable, just world? Perhaps so, yet we are entrusted with our students’ education and that brings with it a responsibility, not only to teach them to be better writers and speakers of English, but also to help them become critical thinkers and responsible world citizens. I believe that we cannot wait for the unspecified time in the future when structural change will somehow be magically made; we must begin where we are and do what we can to make small dents in the injustices perpetuated in societal systems in which there is a vast divide between the privileged and the far less privileged.

REFERENCES

Research Issues

The TESOL Quarterly publishes brief commentaries on aspects of qualitative and quantitative research. For this issue we asked two researchers to discuss methodological challenges in discourse analysis.

Edited by DONNA M. JOHNSON
University of Arizona

Methodological Challenges in Discourse Analysis

From Sentences to Discourses, Ethnography to Ethnographic: Convicting Trends in TESOL Research

RON SCOLLON
City University of Hong Kong

Research methodology is a cover term for day-to-day practices which are often less well formed than our final research reports suggest (Goodwin, 1994). The problem which I want to highlight in this article is that there have been two conflicting trends in TESOL discourse research and practice which warrant resolution.

The first trend which has taken place over a number of years has been to move from an interest in vocabulary and sentence grammar through studies of paragraphing and genre structure to studies of Discourses in the sense that Gee (1990) has proposed, that is, studies of the enveloping social contexts in which English is used. This has been reflected in the development of such specialized areas of study as English for special purposes (ESP) or English for academic purposes (EAP) in which it has been recognized that there are forms and functions of English which need to be studied and taught which are specific to particular Discourses and that the learning of these Discourses is closely tied to a student’s social identity. Along with this trend of
increasing the scope of the units of study in TESOL research has come a shift in research methodologies from those of formal linguistics (and psychology) to methodologies more closely akin to anthropology and literary analysis in the use of ethnography and critical discourse.

At the same time that the term ethnographic has come into greater currency in TESOL and other classroom research, the concept of ethnography seems very much on the wane or even on the defense in its home fields of anthropology and sociology. Some researchers make convincing arguments that this is as it should be. Rosaldo (1993) has pointed out how easily the stance of the ethnographer as one somehow apart from the objects of study is both a falsification and an ideological obfuscation of the actual power relationships. Geertz (1973, 1983) has called for a thick description which would capture more and more of the interpretive process by which researchers transform the material of their research, and in doing so, erase the easy line between ethnographic research and literature. Atkinson (1990) like Goodwin (1994) furthers this argument by noting the power of the ethnographer's rhetoric of objectivity to highlight as well as to obscure observed reality.

Thus, as TESOL researchers have come to use the term ethnography more freely, critics have argued that it may well obscure relations of power between the researcher and the subjects of study, lead to an excessive relativization of concepts, and, with the recognition of cultural complexity in any speech community, lead to a lessened usefulness in applied contexts such as the teaching of English. Coupled with these trends has come pressure within the field toward a shorter time span within which to complete and publish research, a reduced length of research degree programs in TESOL (some as short as two semesters), briefer conference papers, and shorter published articles.

One response to these conflicting trends has been the miniaturization of the concept of culture so that researchers study and write about the culture of the school or even the culture of the classroom. I do not mean to question the value of much of this work; I believe essential insights have been gained by coming to understand the self-contained interpretive systems and symbols of ordinary TESOL classrooms, especially in seeing how these contrast with those of the communities in which these classrooms function. But as the focus is narrowed from ethnographies to ethnographic studies, in some cases the broader contextualizing goal of such research may be lost. Furthermore, the domain against which the relevance of TESOL research is tested, especially in publication, is often the classroom alone.

There is, however, another strategy by which a broader, contextualizing view of discourse can be developed in TESOL research. Studies of genres and discursive functions which cross or bridge classroom-community boundaries may be a productive way of achieving a broader
cultural perspective without the need to resort to full-fledged ethnographics. For example, it is frequently understood that a major problem in teaching academic writing in TESOL (as well as other) contexts lies in the teaching of attribution of sources. When the focus remains within the TESOL classroom it can all too easily seem that the problem is simply that students are plagiarizing the work of others. This arises because of the discrepancies between students’ practices and standard academic practices. In one line of research I have argued that so-called standard academic citation practices may mask more fundamental ideological issues (Scollon 1994, 1995). Bell (1991) notes, on the other hand, that it is common within journalistic practice for much purloining with and without citation of the writings of others to take place. Preliminary studies we have undertaken (Li et al., 1993) of newspaper, radio, and television reports in Hong Kong indicate widely varying standards for citation across the three media and across two languages (English and Chinese). I suggest it will be profitable to study citation, attribution, and discourse identity across contexts of both classroom and public discourse. I believe that by keeping the focus constant upon a discourse function, in this case citation, and varying the contexts of study, we can achieve insights of importance to TESOL teaching which are not available as long as we work solely within the classroom model of TESOL research.

THE AUTHOR

Ron Scollon is University Senior Lecturer in the English Department, City University of Hong Kong. His current research is focused upon the social construction of identity in public discourse. His most recent book is *Intercultural Communication: A Discourse Approach* (with Suzanne Wong Scollon, Blackwell).

REFERENCES


THE FORUM
In the years since I finished writing Classroom Discourse (1988), there have been two important changes in analyses of talk in classrooms: (a) research by outsiders is increasingly being supplemented by research by teachers themselves; and (b) the focus has enlarged beyond features inherent in all discourse, such as who gets and maintains the floor, to relations between the content of talk and specific curriculum goals. I want to support both changes with three suggestions (and recommend Edwards & Westgate, 1994, as an excellent accessible source of further guidance).

First, consider the features inherent in all discourse. How is participation distributed among the classroom members? A tape recording is easy to make but not so easy to listen to. The results usually shock teachers when they hear their own voice filling so much air time (typically two thirds), and the rest filled disproportionately by a few confident students. A more subtle question is how much those students who do speak show evidence of really hearing, and taking into account, what others before them have said. In short, is the content of their speech responsive as well as expressive?

To work toward more equitably distributed and more responsive voices, some teachers (e.g., Allen, 1992) have successfully videotaped their classrooms, shown the video to the class, and discussed desirable changes together. Students then become co-researchers, with their participation in that role valuable talk in itself. Together, teacher and students can look for processes of getting and keeping the floor, being explicit in expressing one’s own ideas, and helping to clarify those of others.

In Allen’s case, some of the boys dominated discussions. “Classes were lively, students were engaged, but too many people felt excluded” (Allen, 1992, p. 94). When collective reflection about the videotaped evidence was not enough to achieve more affirmative interaction, Allen intervened more directly. She spoke to some of the students privately; she suggested that students not sit in the same seats every day; and at
least once, she asked three boys not to speak at all for 20 minutes. In other classrooms, patterns of unequal participation may follow lines of ethnicity or social class.

But more equitable distribution of even the most responsive voices is not in itself a sufficient standard. We also need to analyse more specific social and cognitive functions of classroom talk. Consider the reasoning involved in persuasion, important in discourse in any democracy and found to be difficult for students in largescale studies of writing conducted both in the U.S. and internationally (National Center for Education Statistics, 1994; Gorman, Purves & Degenhart, 1992). In a follow-up analysis of a sample of persuasive essays written in English by 16-year-olds in England, New Zealand, and the United States, Connor (1990) found that application of Toulmin, Reike and Janik’s (1979) framework for practical reasoning correlated highly with holistic scores of the student texts.

To exemplify that framework, here is an essay by a student in a socioculturally diverse 10th-grade class in the U.S. It was written the day after the first jury verdict in the Rodney King court case in Los Angeles—the verdict that acquitted the police officers of charges of brutality:

Although at first it may have been necessary force. The Rodney King beating turned out to be police brutality. Rodney King may have been resisting arrest and the police are allowed to use force to subdue him. But it turned out to be excessive force used upon him. Clubbing him when he was on the ground was uncalled for. Some officers at the scene even protested. (Sperling, personal communication, 1995)

Three categories in Toulmin’s framework are claim (the position being argued); data (the supporting facts); and warrant (the assumption or generalization, explicit or implicit, that connects data to claim). My interpretation of this short but reasoned essay is:

claim: the beating was police brutality
data: he was clubbed while on the ground; some officers “even” protested
warrant: a distinction can be made between legitimate force and brutality.

(Sperling, 1995, has analysed the relation between classroom talk and writing in this lesson.)

Students are increasingly being asked to explain their reasoning in curricula for understanding, even in the previously least language-dependent subject, mathematics. For example, here is a second grader’s explanation of how, after figuring out that 47 + 19=66, she quickly realized that 48+ 18 was the same:
If you take 1 from the 19 and put it with the 7, and [it] makes 48 and that makes this just the same. (Cobb, Wood & Yackel, 1993, p. 103)

Going beyond language functions to language forms, ESL teachers and researchers may also want to attend to sentence-level features that are needed to fulfill these functions. In both these examples, students used subordinating conjunctions (although, if); and in the first example, the writer included terms of epistemic modality (may have been) that express degree of certainty of some fact or belief.

In researching language functions and forms, students can again be collaborators. In Heath’s (1993) ethnographic study, Ways with Words, fifth-grade students become “science translators” as, with their teacher, they investigate differences between the language of foods and farming in their community and in their textbooks (pp. 315–324).

It should be useful to examine patterns of participation and the language functions and forms needed and used within them—useful not only for conducting classroom research (carried out by researchers, teachers, or both), but for developing teaching goals as well, especially goals for content-linked ESL teaching.

THE AUTHOR

Courtney Cazden is Professor at the Harvard Graduate School of Education. Her research and teaching centers on the functions and forms of oral and written language in both L1 and L2 education. Her most recent book is Whole Language Plus: Essays on Literacy in the United States and New Zealand. Support from the Spencer Foundation is gratefully acknowledged.

References


British Council International Seminar  
(Seminar Number 9551)  

Communicative language testing revisited  

3 to 14 September 1995   Lancaster  

Directed by Professor J Charles Alderson  

The aim of this seminar is to attempt to take stock of what the achievements of communicative language testing are, what issues in test design, delivery and analysis remain outstanding and what problems need to be defined and addressed. The seminar will revisit issues raised at the 1985 seminar, and should provide an interesting forum for investigating what progress has been made in defining, implementing and understanding communicative language testing in the past decade.  

Fee: £1,770 (inclusive)  

For further information contact:  
Publicity Manager, International Seminars Department, The British Council, 10 Spring Gardens, London SW1A 2BN  
Phone: +44(0)171 389 4264/4162/4226 Fax: +44(0)171 389 4154  
Telex: 8952201 BRICON G  

The British Council, registered in England as a charity no: 209131, is Britain’s international network for education, culture and development.
The TESOL Quarterly welcomes evaluative reviews of publications relevant to TESOL professionals. In addition to textbooks and reference materials, these include computer and video software, testing instruments, and other forms of nonprint materials.

Edited by H. DOUGLAS BROWN
San Francisco State University

Resources in Language Teacher Education*

The Practice of English Language Teaching (2nd ed.).

Teaching by Principles: An Interactive Approach to Language Pedagogy.

Language Teaching Methodology: A Textbook for Teachers.

Reflective Teaching in Second Language Classrooms.

Current approaches in language teacher education vary in terms of the explicitness of the recommendations given regarding teaching approaches and techniques and in the involvement of the teachers/learners in reflecting upon their own beliefs and efforts regarding language teaching and learning. The four texts reviewed here reflect this variety in approaches.

Harmer’s The Practice of English Language Teaching (2nd Edition) is aimed at training teachers of adolescents in EFL situations. Possibly

*Editor’s note. Because the Book Review Editor is the author of one of the books under review, this review article was not juried by him.
because this text is an updated version of an older text, it is more traditional in its approach to teacher education, with the major portion of the book prescribing classroom exercises and activities. Part A touches on why people learn languages and what language teaching and learning involve. Although the discussion gives some idea of basic theoretical issues, it does not always use common terms associated with the field (e.g., the idea of input at the i + 1 level is discussed, but the term i + 1 is never used). The discussion questions and exercises associated with each chapter vary in quality, but some are very good, leading readers to consider their own experiences in light of the ideas presented.

Probably the greatest strength of Harmer’s book is its presentation in Part B of classroom exercises and activities, including those for productive and receptive skills and vocabulary and grammar, with separate chapters on communicative activities and practice. Although the exercises are good, especially for beginning and intermediate students, the rationale behind the division of chapters in this section is not particularly clear. The presentation of the activities is very prescriptive in nature, spelling out exactly what teachers should do. Although some would consider this a drawback, novice teachers may find such explicitness helpful. In addition, the discussion questions and exercises (when provided) at the end of the chapters encourage readers to reflect on and try out suggestions given.

Part C of Harmer’s book deals with management and planning. This section helps potential teachers understand the various roles that teachers can play within institutional systems and in classrooms—controller, assessor, prompter, resource, facilitator, and so on. It also helps teachers see how different kinds of feedback affect learners. The suggestions given for dealing with behavior problems in the classroom are valuable especially for those who teach adolescents. Although this section presents ideas about lesson planning, the suggestions and examples seem cumbersome and difficult for use in real situations.

Overall, Harmer’s book presents very concrete suggestions for activities, considers the real roles and position of a teacher of adolescents within an institution and classroom, and updates previous editions by presenting more information about task-based learning, self-directed learning, vocabulary teaching, and discovery techniques.

Brown’s Teaching By Principles is written primarily for preservice teacher education, although he suggests that it may serve as a “refresher course” for teachers in the field. In contrast to Harmer, Brown provides teachers with guiding principles for decision making as well as concrete suggestions for teaching practice. Early in the text, he discusses 12 principles relating to cognitive, affective, and linguistic factors which underlie language learning and teaching. Theoretical
concepts are presented in a straightforward way with clear definitions of specialized terms and conversational tone. Theoretical underpinnings are treated in greater depth in a companion volume, Principles of Language Learning and Teaching (Brown, 1994) and in suggestions for further reading.

Although chapters on motivation, learner strategy training, learner variables (addressing differences in age and proficiency), techniques for initiating and sustaining interaction, and testing reflect current knowledge and areas of focus in the field, the approach is fairly traditional. The text also includes chapters on lesson planning, classroom management, and materials. A historical overview of methods is followed by a chapter on current communicative language teaching trends. Brown advocates an integrated approach to teaching the four skills but also discusses theoretical issues and specific techniques for each skill (as well as vocabulary and grammar) in separate chapters. He briefly addresses sociopolitical concerns and institutional and geographic contexts of teaching. A final chapter encourages teachers to pursue lifelong professional growth, offering suggestions for peak performance, stress management, and techniques for classroom observation and research.

A strength of the Brown text is the extensive use of the recent work of a variety of teachers and researchers in the field (including summary tables, surveys, checklists, and observation schedules). Excellent discussion questions and activity ideas promote self-reflection, or suggest application or observation of principles in actual ESL classrooms.

Nunan's textbook, Language Teaching Methodology: A Textbook for Teachers, encourages teachers “to identify what works for them and their learners, in their own particular context, through the collaborative exploration of their own classrooms” (p. xiv). The book is not aimed at teachers of any particular level or in any particular setting; nonetheless, the classroom extracts presented seem to come mainly, if not exclusively, from adult classrooms.

Like previous authors, Nunan treats the teaching of major language components (pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammar) and the integrated skills. He also looks at classroom management and materials development. Like Brown, he evaluates approaches to language teaching in general and discusses learner styles and strategies.

Probably the most important characteristic of Nunan's text is the intertwining of presentation of research/theoretical ideas and the exercises that readers can use to explore the implications of those ideas for their own teaching. The activities in each chapter require that teachers use real classroom data (some of which is provided in the text as classroom extracts) and instructional materials, comparing their features with claims made by theoreticians or researchers. Overall, the
activities foster understanding of the ideas and their usefulness within their own teaching contexts. The only drawback for some teachers in preservice training might be lack of access to learners or materials from which to extract examples. On the other hand, the textbook would work well in an in-service training context.

As the title suggests, critical reflection constitutes the basis for learning from Richards’s and Lockhart’s Reflective Teaching in Second Language Classrooms, written for in-service and preservice teachers. Like Nunan, and in contrast to Harmer and Brown, Richards and Lockhart believe that teachers will gain more through critical reflection than by receiving specific guidelines and techniques for teaching because every teacher and teaching situation differs in fundamental ways. Therefore, for each topic discussed, they offer extensive probing questions for teachers to consider in light of their own beliefs and experiences. Because action research thus constitutes the basis for their approach to teacher education, use of the text presupposes extensive concurrent access to language classrooms.

The first chapter describes a variety of data collection procedures, which teachers can use to investigate classroom teaching in connection with the topics raised in subsequent chapters. Topics covered include teacher and learner beliefs, teacher decision making and roles, lesson structure, classroom interaction, learning activities, and language use. The authors draw extensively on current research regarding teaching and learning and offer many direct quotes from practicing teachers to illustrate teacher concerns, beliefs, challenges, and strategies. Included at various points are action research case studies which show how actual teachers investigated a particular issue, what conclusions they reached, and the improvements they determined to implement. At the end of each chapter, discussion questions and follow-up activities are given, involving observation, lesson recording, journal keeping, and analysis of lesson transcripts and records. Appendices provide many guidelines, observation schedules, questionnaires, checklists, and so on.

Although Richards and Lockhart focus on asking rather than answering questions regarding language teaching, they do provide more concrete suggestions in later chapters in the text, specifically those regarding lesson structure, learning activities, facilitating interaction, and the nature of classroom language use. Still, it seems this text would be most useful to teachers who already have some teaching experience or to preservice teachers involved in an extensive teaching practicum.

As can be seen from the previous discussion, the four textbooks reviewed illustrate the breadth of situations for which teachers may need training, differing philosophies regarding how teacher education is most effectively carried out, and dynamic changes and growth within
the field of language teaching, Teacher trainers should consider the needs of their own students and resources available as they select among these generally excellent textbooks.

MARY LEE SCOTT and CHERYL BROWN
Brigham Young University

In Our Own Words: A Guide with Readings for Student Writers.

In Our Own Words is aimed at low advanced-level ESL students, either in or preparing for a United States university program or degree. As such, it takes writers from personal writing to academic writing, this format being one of the book’s many strong points.

The book has three parts, mirroring the writing process. Part 1, Starting Out, deals with some issues common in the prewriting stage as well as with early stages of a writing course. Chapter 1 has students evaluate their attitudes toward writing; Chapter 2 introduces some prewriting techniques such as journal keeping; Chapter 3 discusses a variety of common concerns, such as purpose, audience, and even writer’s block.

Part 2, Writing, contains seven chapters of thematic readings, activities, and essay assignments. The first three chapters comprise personal writing material: experiences, people, places. The latter four chapters deal with more formal topics: Interviewing with a Purpose, Cultural Contrasts, Looking at America, and Matters of Life and Death. Each chapter contains at least five outstanding readings, primarily by student writers. This emphasis is particularly effective for ESL students, who may feel unable to write eloquently in their L2.

Part 3 offers material for the revising/editing stage. In Chapter 11, strategies for revising are presented along with a peer response sheet for each of the chapters in Part 2. Chapter 12 covers editing strategies along with exercises for some ESL grammar demons (e.g., tense, articles).

The book is consistent with ESL theory and writing theory in many ways besides those already mentioned, like journal keeping and peer response. Most appealing are several places where the authors encourage student writers to examine their own thoughts/habits about writing and to take responsibility for choosing ways to improve their writing.
For instance, writers are encouraged to “take an active approach” (p. 218) and discover their own particular grammar problems.

Another strong point is the book’s interesting activities that eventually lead into essays, including well-described people-watching and place-observing activities. In fact, students turned in some of the most outstanding essays I have ever read as a result of following these activities. Later chapters instruct the learners in conducting interviews and library research.

In Our Own Words has some shortcomings. The editing chapter probably does not cover enough grammar points, although the ones it does cover are generally well designed. A grammar point is explained briefly and a couple of exercises follow, all on the essay (rather than sentence) level. One of my few complaints is that these explanations are too brief. For instance, the section on tense presents the three simple tenses—present, past, future. This is much too simple for advanced-level students, who are more likely to experience problems with the more complex tenses.

In spite of these minor drawbacks, In Our Own Words is now my favorite text for this level of writing class.

TINA BIAVA
Southwest Missouri State University

Work in Progress.

Work in Progress is an advanced-level writing textbook for ESL students preparing to enter universities in the United States. As the title suggests, the book has a process-oriented approach to the teaching of writing, emphasizing the recursive nature of writing and the importance of revision. However, the book also includes some aspects of a more form-based approach including an introduction to select rhetorical devices, sentence structures, and grammar points.

The book is divided into three parts. The first part, Drafted Works in Progress, constitutes the bulk of the text. It contains four chapters that guide students through the writing process to complete four writing assignments of increasing complexity. Each chapter starts with prewriting activities, such as freewriting or mapping, to help students generate ideas. Next, explanations of ways writers develop ideas, such as adding more details or examples, are presented. Samples of student writing at various stages of the writing process provide material for students to analyze methods of development and revision strategies.
The peer review questions in each chapter convey to students the priorities of developing point, purpose, and audience. Each chapter is sequenced so that students do not concern themselves with sentence-level aspects until after the content of their writing has been shaped. Then, the chapter provides students with a particular grammatical or syntactic structure to focus on (e.g., using logical connectors) for that assignment. The examples of the structures are always in the context of student writing, and the related exercises analyze how the structure helps writers communicate their ideas more effectively. Suggestions for further study of the emphasized grammar point or sentence structures, or related ones, are given and referenced in Part 3 of the book, which contains explanations of and grammar exercises for sentence structures and grammar patterns that are difficult for developing ESL writers. Part 2 addresses summary writing and writing essay exams, both common academic writing tasks. Indeed, one of the strengths of the book is in the realistic nature of the writing tasks for academic students. For example, one chapter asks students to write an autobiographical essay where they must choose a specific purpose for their brief essay, such as applying to undergraduate or graduate school, or applying for a job in their field. Clearly, this is a writing task relevant to their situation, and it also lends itself to developing the writer’s sense of audience and purpose. The chapter entitled “Taking a Stand” gives a useful introduction to writing research papers and argumentation.

Work in Progress is not just a text to help initiate students to the expectations of the academic writing environment. Although the academic tasks and the many samples of academic student writing in progress help to serve this purpose and make this book particularly suited for the pre-academic ESL student for which it was intended, this text will also help students develop skills that will make them independent and competent writers in any environment.

SHALLE LEE MING
University of San Francisco

Daedalus Integrated Writing Environment
(Computer Program).

Daedalus is a multifaceted computer writing program which fosters a collaborative approach to writing without sacrificing attention to
the role of the individual in the writing process. The system is divided into several programs that students can use during the writing process.

The first program, Write, is a simple word processor that is very similar to and compatible with Microsoft Word. By using Write, students eliminate the need to reformat their texts for Word. Students can easily go back and forth between their texts and the other programs in the system.

Invent, another program in the Daedalus system, helps students explore topics. Instructors or students choose an appropriate prompt series based on the assignment type. For example, if students want to write a persuasive essay, they may find that Aristotle's Topoi series helps them generate arguments. Or, if writers are trying to find connections between different ideas, they might use Burke's Pentad to help them think about idea relationships. For most writing situations, the different prompt series are useful ways to explore and focus the topic of a particular type of essay. Students can explore their topics independently and at their own pace.

Interchange and Mail, on the other hand, are two programs that foster collaboration. In these powerful programs, students converse with one another through a computer network. Students, in large or small groups, can discuss reading and writing issues with their classmates. These programs help facilitate contributions from some students who are ordinarily less involved in classroom discussions by changing the medium through which students speak. One benefit of the Mail program is that students can organize information by using mailboxes. The Interchange program, in comparison, benefits students by helping them sort through different ideas about topics. It can also serve as a place where students can test ideas out on a particular audience—the other students in their class. Finally, students can consult the Interchange and Mail programs when they write their essays by saving a copy of the exchanges. One final point about Interchange and Mail, is that teachers who use the program must be willing to tolerate a little chaos in their classroom. The discussion inevitably proceeds in a nonlinear fashion and sometimes digresses to other subjects altogether. Teachers can counteract these digressions by serving as discussion moderators within the interchange.

After the students have produced first drafts, they can electronically open a classmate's essay on any of the networked computers and run through a peer revision with the Respond program. This program asks a number of pointed questions to enable students to respond to other students' essays. Although the questions are rather generic, students can skip irrelevant questions, moving forward through the series. Furthermore, teachers can tailor the questions in both Respond
and Invent with the Daedalus program Promptmaker. This program allows the teacher to write the question series.

One other program in the Daedalus system is a bibliography program. Bibliocite helps students with their works cited and bibliography listing. This program can build a listing in either the American Psychological Association (APA) or Modern Language Association (MLA) style. The program is most useful when students are unsure about specific stylistic conventions.

The incorporation of Daedalus in the writing class broadens the choices of pedagogical strategies and options for teachers. Teachers, however, should use the program strategically and carefully: In many cases a good deal of preparation is necessary to tailor the program for specific goals and purposes. And most important, the teacher must learn when the software will be most effective to use given specific classroom situation. It is only with practice that the teacher will begin to understand the potential of this interesting and complex program.

CAROLYNE E. BAUGHAN
Illinois State University

Instructional Assessment: An Integrative Approach to Evaluating Student Performance.

This volume assists educators in developing guidelines for meaningful assessment of limited English proficient (LEP) students, responding to the need for instructional assessment that results in improved learning. As is evident from the volume of information included in this text related to oral language and literacy development, academic achievement, and special needs populations, there is much to be culled from the array of formal and informal assessment procedures that are available to teachers. The authors propose that multiple assessment measures be utilized that can contribute to a picture of a child’s competence and what is necessary for further language and academic development. This text is an outgrowth of the authors’ years of experience developing assessment and instructional practices for non-English language background (NELB) students. In the same way these authors combined their varied backgrounds in special education, bilingual education, ESL, and school psychology to produce a collaborative perspective on LEP student assessment, they urge other educators to work...
across professions and disciplines to understand students’ needs and communicate those needs to others.

Chapters 1 and 2, “Concepts in Instructional Assessment” and “Understanding Second Language Performance,” set the stage for discussing assessment practices. Both of these chapters develop a theoretical basis for later discussions about decisions to be made in determining language and academic competence. The third chapter, “Assessing Oral Language Performance,” and the subsequent chapter, “Differentiating Language Disorders from the Effects of Limited Opportunities for Language Learning,” are crucial in painting the complex picture of language development where bilingualism is concerned. Chapters 5 and 6—academic performance assessment—are central to the text. In those and the subsequent chapters on advocacy and special-needs students, the authors have skillfully woven the theory needed to understand literacy and cognitive development together with case studies which describe in detail the characteristics and experiences of particular children. Also included are methods for gathering qualitative and quantitative information on student performance.

Each section of a chapter contains a short Research in Practice subsection in which three or four cogent questions are presented to the reader pertaining to the issues discussed. Following this is a summary that ties together the complex information presented. Each section also concludes with a What Can You Do? feature that allows readers to relate their own experiences to the topics. The value of this text is its skillful blending of theory and practice. In years of offering a course on the assessment of LEP students, this is the first volume I have found that has successfully pulled together the complex issues that bear on the assessment of NELB learners and includes as well those problems associated with special-needs learners. Where bilingual students are concerned, there are no easy steps to assessment and instruction. Instructional Assessment has made a bold move in pulling together complex information that can better illuminate the task of providing appropriate and equitable instruction for NELB students.

CONSTANCE L. WALKER
University of Minnesota

Gender and Ethnicity in Schools: Ethnographic Accounts.

It is exciting to see a collection of ethnographic accounts that systematically addresses the role of both gender and ethnicity in schools.
Although not perfect, it addresses a gap in the research which has tended to focus on understanding the role of socioeconomic class or race or ethnicity in relation to educational achievement and has tended to ignore gender as a factor or focus primarily on the experiences of boys in schools. This collection of studies in British schools also attempts to present some of the strengths and limitations of ethnography as a method of understanding school processes.

The book is divided into two sections: one on gender and the other on ethnicity. The chapters on gender include an analysis of playground culture with an emphasis on girls’ games, an exploration of the stereotype of quiet schoolgirls, a discussion of a merger between three schools and its effect on gender relations, an analysis of the role of humor in teacher-student relations across socioeconomic classes, and a comparison and analysis of boys’ and girls’ turns-at-talk in an elementary school classroom. The final article in this section is a critique of the last chapter in terms the rationale for the study, the methods used, and the claims made about student-teacher interaction.

The chapters on ethnicity include a report on two different methods of studying ethnicity and friendship in an elementary school, an exploration of orientations toward and experiences of schooling among Black students, a comparison of interactions between two Bangladesh students and their teachers concerning the style and semantic content of the students’ written work, and an analysis of teacher-student interaction with a focus on teacher racism and its effect on their relationships. Like the final chapter in the first section, the concluding article in this section is a critique which questions the evidence presented in the previous chapter to support the existence of teacher racism.

As a whole, this collection offers interesting data and discussion about gender and ethnicity. However, at times, some of the articles feel outdated. (Just three were published for this volume; one was published as early as 1984). In addition, the structure of the book artificially separates studies on gender, and ethnicity. Only a few of the chapters do a good job of discussing the interrelated and overlapping nature of gender and ethnic identities or the relationship between socioeconomic class, gender and ethnicity. The chapters that critique other articles in the book are strong and more of this kind of discussion would have added to the book.

The article which discusses the writing processes of two Bangladesh students would be perhaps of most interest to teachers of ESL. However, because all of the studies take place in educational settings and discuss the perspectives and interactions of teachers and students, this book has something to interest anyone who wants
to understand how gender and ethnicity influence classrooms and schools.

ELLEN SKILTON SYLVESTER
University of Pennsylvania

Let’s Start Talking.

Let’s Start Talking is a workbook-style textbook that focuses on oral communication. The text provides a variety of topics, useful for teenagers or adults at a high-beginning/low-intermediate level. Its goal is active conversation in class, in both small and large groups. The text incorporates all four skills to achieve the goal of effective conversation.

Each of the 20 chapters presents a specific theme to develop conversational skills. The themes, such as budgeting, traveling, and choosing a university, contain skills that are directly applicable for students in an ESL setting in the United States. Conversation focuses on specific tasks related to the theme. Each topic presents informal conversation and insights into U.S. culture.

Although the format varies, each chapter consists of six parts: Vocabulary, Read and Consider, Pre-Discussion, Decide and Write, Discussion, and Extend. At the beginning of each chapter, the text presents target vocabulary encapsulating the theme along with a wealth of common expressions useful for student discussion. Read and Consider gives a concise statement of the situation under discussion, easily grasped by the students. The Pre-Discussion phase introduces model phrases and dialogues that lay the groundwork for conversation. This section centers on individual preparation of the task, giving students an opportunity to formulate their thoughts clearly. Ideally, this process leads to focused conversation in small groups. Using the target vocabulary and phrases practiced in the Pre-Discussion phase, the small group forms a response to the situation and shares the result in whole-class discussion. In the Discussion segment, students compare and contrast the decisions of each group, as well as individual choices. Finally, in the Extend section, students relate class material to real-life contexts outside of the classroom. The major strength of the text lies in this section, because it carries classwork to unrehearsed communication beyond the classroom.

Interactive activities, such as practicing model dialogues, making decisions, writing letters, formulating conversations, and role playing,
give students the opportunity to experiment with formal and informal conversational structures. The activities also include types of interactive speech such as agreeing/disagreeing, thanking, and interrupting. The text contains an appendix of conversational expressions, giving key phrases used in specific speech acts. The layout of the book adds an additional tool, providing ample space for students to write.

Although the activities are valuable, chapter sequencing sometimes lacks logic. For example, Chapter 4, How Will You Plan Your Family's Budget?, is a difficult chapter, including cumbersome vocabulary such as liability, maintenance, and insurance. Simpler chapters occur later in the text. Also, because the book emphasizes fluency, instructors should consider using this text in conjunction with materials that focus on accuracy. This textbook provides solid foundations for fluent conversation. The creative discussion topics and sections of thematic vocabulary are effective tools inside the ESL classroom.

**ERIN CHERVENAK**
The Pennsylvania State University

---

**America Now: Short Readings from Recent Periodicals.**

America Now is a writing text comprising recent periodical articles written in response to current social issues and events. The articles are both intriguing and thought-provoking and cover a wide range of topics including sexual harassment, division and diversity, guns and violence, television talk shows, and interracial relationships. The 41 articles come from 34 different periodicals and are less than 5 years old. The rhetorical modes of the articles range from personal viewpoints and autobiographical stories to informative essays and persuasive arguments.

Although America Now was not written specifically with nonnative speakers of English in mind, it is very appropriate for ESL students. It leads students to examine current issues in the United States and engages them in the kind of meaningful interchange that has been found to engender language learning. The articles are accessible without being simplistic, and the questions and activities at the end of each chapter lead students to use top-down comprehension strategies. This kind of text would be most appropriate for advanced ESL students in intensive English programs or for college-level students who are preparing to enter lower-division composition classes. It could even be used in a speech class where the issues in the text could motivate...
debates, individual argumentative speeches, and objective informational reports on societal viewpoints.

Each chapter begins with a prereading question to introduce the issue under discussion and a preview of the articles dealing with that issue. Several short subsections follow each article and include a review of difficult or unusual vocabulary and questions to motivate discussion of the author’s intentions. At the end of each chapter, there are ideas for preparing classroom discussion, moving from discussion to writing, and developing cross-cultural awareness. The instructor using this text has the freedom to use any combination of chapters in any order because each theme-based chapter is complete in itself; subsequent chapters are not built on preceding ones.

For many instructors, the most useful feature of this text will be the multiple readings on a single topic. As many instructors using theme-based units have found, one reading is usually insufficient because it provides only one viewpoint, one style, and a necessarily limited amount of information. Reading several articles on the same subject gives students practice in narrow reading (the kind advocated by Kralshen, 1984) and in writing sources (which Johns, 1986, and Horowitz, 1986, point out is the most common kind of academic writing).

The philosophy informing this text is that reading and discussion fuel good writing, both in terms of content and structure. The editor claims that the two biggest problems students face are getting started and having something to say. He views writing as a public activity most often engaged in as a response to something someone else said. The engaging comprehensible articles in this text keep students from trying to write in a vacuum by giving them vital connections to the world around them.

Perhaps because of the editor’s viewpoint, America Now departs from the usual format of a writing text book. Grammar is never overtly addressed, and there are no sections explaining models of specific rhetorical structure. Another possible limitation is that the articles come from only one genre—the periodical. The style and rhetoric of this genre may not serve as a model of the kinds of academic discourse students will be required to produce after the introductory writing class is over. However, using this text will liberate students from those nebulous directives so common to writing texts (e.g., select a topic that you can compare and contrast) and will hopefully allow them to create more authentic essays, essays which are meaningful responses to issues that truly concern them.

REFERENCES
The Basic Oxford Picture Dictionary.

The Basic Oxford Picture Dictionary is a picture dictionary that will satisfy many needs. This dictionary is intended for and will be most helpful in meeting the survival English needs of true beginners whether adult or young adult ESL learners. In addition, the 1,200 words and phrases are relevant to the modern day; some of the words and phrases that students are introduced to include those related to ESL classrooms, family relations, and household problems. All terms and phrases are introduced by colorful, labeled pictures.

To introduce the vocabulary, the author has divided the new material into the following logical sections: everyday language, people, family, the home, the market, meal time, clothes, health, the community, transportation, work, and recreation. These sections are further divided to allow for related words to be introduced together. For example, to introduce food names, new vocabulary is categorized into food groups and introduced together. One such category is fruit, and the author has introduced this material by showing and labeling a fruit stand. This thematic format is followed for introducing all vocabulary. The dictionary also includes a useful appendix which supplies maps, numbers, weights and measures, and temperature conversion. The dictionary on its own is worth adopting into any beginning ESL classroom.

However, the strength of this dictionary is the additional reference materials that can be used to better teach beginning ESL students. The Basic Oxford Picture Dictionary Workbook is one supplement which has students working with the new vocabulary directly. Students are asked direct questions that demand clear understanding of the terms. For example, students may be given a situation in which they must apply all of their knowledge about the terms to solve a problem. A second reference tool is the teacher's resource book. Like the workbook, this text introduces numerous exercises to reinforce vocabulary from the
dictionary. These activities include such activities as focused listening, total physical response, and life skills reading. These lesson ideas are sure to make students understanding easier and more enjoyable. Overall, The Basic Oxford Picture Dictionary is well organized, attention grabbing, and relevant. It will prove itself invaluable in any beginning ESL classroom.

KRISTIN A. WEIDLEIN
University of Idaho
BOOK NOTICES

The TESOL Quarterly prints brief book notices of 100 words or less announcing books of interest to readers. Book Notices are not solicited. They are descriptive rather than evaluative. They are compiled by the Book Review Editor from selected books that publishers have sent to TESOL.


This book describes how to teach language through content and provides a theoretical rationale for this genre of teaching. It offers practical examples of programs and classroom activities that ESL teachers can use to prepare their students to succeed in content courses and explains how the research programs and activities discussed in the text relate to a general theory of second language acquisition. Illustrating this approach with a series of case studies, the author shares the insights and experiences of ESL students mainstreamed into content courses and suggests teaching techniques for preparing ESL students for the academic mainstream.


According to the author, overcrowded classrooms, heightened social tensions, fierce controversy over curriculum, and inferior instruction are the inevitable result of massive new waves of immigration into the U.S.A. This book contends that the root of these difficulties lies in the absence of coordination between the federal government's immigration policy and related education policies at the federal, state, and local levels. Our rich resource of immigration can be harnessed into a productive force for education, the author argues, through creative local programs, newcomer schools, specialized assessment centers, language assessment systems, year-round school calendars, culturally sensitive teaching techniques, and partnerships with community agencies.


This is a compilation of papers from the Aston University/IATEFL conference on classroom action research and teacher development in ELT/ TESOL. The conference brought together teachers from 23 countries to
consider how research in the language classroom can lead to more effective student learning, continuing personal and professional development, and high quality research. Among the papers included are keynote addresses by David Nunan, Bridget Somekh, Mel Myers, and Dick Allwright. Many papers offer practical descriptions of recent or ongoing classroom-centered research projects.


- The author provides answers to such questions as: How do children learning ESL become bilingual? How do their individual learning styles affect the task? What strategies do they adopt as they go about learning English? What role does their native language play in the process? What happens if they have special needs? How can programs be designed and adapted to meet the needs of all ESL students? Aimed at both novice and experienced classroom teachers, the book offers practical resources for helping children achieve proficiency in English.


- This book is about classrooms where children sometimes misbehave and where teachers are sometimes too overworked to spend hours preparing lessons or are anxious about their own knowledge of English. The book gives insights into how children learn language and how to achieve a positive and uninhibited attitude to language learning in the classroom. The author identifies priorities for working with young learners, suggests strategies for teaching, explains how English can be taught with other subjects in the primary curriculum, and gives practical activities that illustrate the teaching methodology described.


- This book is written for teachers of children for whom English is a second language, although the material applies equally well to teachers of English-speaking children. The book is based on the assumption that the classroom program is a major resource for language development and that a responsive program takes into account the fact that children are not only learning a new language but that they are learning in that language as well. It offers a wide range of strategies and practical suggestions for the teacher.

- This book offers an introduction to the international field of TESOL by bringing together the basics that new teachers will need in order to make an effective start. It is a practical how to book but also gives an overview of the field which challenges experienced teachers to reflect on their own ideas and practices. The book encourages its readers to inform themselves and then make their own decisions. It includes chapters on learners, learning processes, the English language, materials, equipment, class management, and testing. Questions and activities help teachers adapt ideas to a particular situation.


- A wide range of activities are offered here that teachers can use to exploit, effectively and imaginatively, the sort of dialogues that are found in textbooks or are created in class to present or practice specific language items. The activities offer ways of generating through dialogues more genuine spoken interaction in the classroom. The collection of activities draws on research in communicative and strategic competence as well as more traditional approaches to language learning. The book includes an introductory rationale to the subject and indexes of teaching purpose, language level, and subject matter.


- This book is a comprehensive introduction to teaching the pronunciation of North American English. The first part of the book contains an illustrated description of the sound system of English. In the second part, the authors provide ideas for overcoming common pronunciation problems. There are sections devoted to the specific problems of speakers of 15 different language groups. Part 3 gives numerous useful classroom techniques to help teachers improve their students’ pronunciation effectively. The book includes exercises, a glossary, and an index.


- The emphasis here is on linking pronunciation with work on developing speaking skills. The aim is not to produce an ideal standard of English pronunciation but to concentrate on what is important in making sounds which will be readily understood and accepted. Part 1 deals with basic...
principles of teaching pronunciation, intelligibility, assessment, developing and extending skills, sounds and spellings, and integration of pronunciation teaching into the rest of the curriculum. Part 2 lists specific problems encountered by speakers of nine different languages. An accompanying 60-minute cassette is available.
INFORMATION FOR CONTRIBUTORS

EDITORIAL POLICY

The TESOL Quarterly, a professional, refereed journal, encourages submission of previously unpublished articles on topics of significance to individuals concerned with the teaching of English as a second or foreign language and of standard English as a second dialect. As a publication that represents a variety of cross-disciplinary interests, both theoretical and practical, the Quarterly invites manuscripts on a wide range of topics, especially in the following areas:

1. psychology and sociology of language learning and teaching; issues in research and research methodology
2. curriculum design and development; instructional methods, materials, and techniques
3. testing and evaluation
4. professional preparation
5. language planning
6. professional standards

Because the Quarterly is committed to publishing manuscripts that contribute to bridging theory and practice in our profession, it particularly welcomes submissions drawing on relevant research (e.g., in anthropology, applied and theoretical linguistics, communication, education, English education [including reading and writing theory], psycholinguistics, psychology, first and second language acquisition, sociolinguistics, and sociology) and that address implications and applications of this research to issues in our profession. The Quarterly prefers that all submissions be written so that their content is accessible to a broad readership, including those individuals who may not have familiarity with the subject matter addressed.

GENERAL INFORMATION FOR AUTHORS

Submission Categories

The TESOL Quarterly invites submissions in five categories:

**Full-length articles.** Contributors are strongly encouraged to submit manuscripts of no more than 20 to 25 double-spaced pages. Submit three copies plus three copies of an informative abstract of not more than 200 words. To facilitate the blind review process, authors' names should appear only on a cover sheet, not on the title page; do not use running heads. Manuscripts should be submitted to the Editor of TESOL Quarterly:

Sandra McKay
English Department
San Francisco State University
1600 Holloway Ave.
San Francisco, CA 94132
The following factors are considered when evaluating the suitability of a manuscript for publication in the TESOL Quarterly:

- The manuscript appeals to the general interests of the TESOL Quarterly readership.
- The manuscript contributes to bridging the gap between theory and practice: Practical articles must be anchored in theory, and theoretical articles and reports of research must contain a discussion of implications and/or applications for practice.
- The content of the manuscript is accessible to the broad readership of the Quarterly, not only to specialist in the area addressed.
- The manuscript offers a new, original insight or interpretation and not just a restatement of others’ ideas and views.
- The manuscript makes a significant (practical, useful, plausible) contribution to the field.
- The manuscript is likely to arouse readers’ interest.
- The manuscript reflects sound scholarship with appropriate, correctly interpreted references to other authors and works.
- The manuscript is well written and organized and conforms to the specifications of the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (4th ed.).

**Reviews.** The TESOL Quarterly invites succinct, evaluative reviews of professional books, classroom texts, and other instructional resources (such as computer software, video- or audiotaped material, and tests). Reviews should provide a descriptive and evaluative summary and a brief discussion of the significance of the work in the context of current theory and practice. Submissions should generally be no longer than 500 words. Submit two copies of the Review to the Review Editor:

H. Douglas Brown  
American Language Institute  
San Francisco State University  
1600 Holloway Avenue  
San Francisco, CA 94132 U.S.A.

**Review Articles.** The TESOL Quarterly also welcomes occasional review articles, that is, comparative discussions of several publications that fall into a topical category (e.g., pronunciation, literacy training, teaching methodology). Review articles should provide a description and evaluative comparison of the materials and discuss the relative significance of the works in the context of current theory and practice. Submissions should generally be no longer than 1,500 words. Submit two copies of the review article to the Review Editor at the address given above.

**Brief Reports and Summaries.** The TESOL Quarterly also invites short reports on any aspect of theory and practice in our profession. We encourage manuscripts which either present preliminary findings or focus on
some aspect of a larger study. In all cases, the discussion of issues should be supported by empirical evidence, collected through qualitative or quantitative investigations. Reports or summaries should present key concepts and results in a manner that will make the research accessible to our diverse readership. Submissions to this section should be 7–10 double-spaced pages (including references and notes). Longer articles do not appear in this section and should be submitted to the Editor of the TESOL Quarterly for review. Send two copies of the manuscript to the Editors of the Brief Reports and Summaries section:

Graham Crookes and Kathryn A. Davis
Department of English as a Second Language
University of Hawaii at Manoa
1890 East-West Road
Honolulu, HI 96822 U.S.A.

The Forum. The TESOL Quarterly welcomes comments and reactions from readers regarding specific aspects or practices of our profession. Responses to published articles and reviews are also welcome; unfortunately, we are not able to publish responses to previous exchanges. Contributions to The Forum should generally be no longer than five double-spaced pages. Submit two copies to the Editor of the TESOL Quarterly at the address given above.

Brief discussions of qualitative and quantitative Research Issues and of Teaching Issues are also published in The Forum. Although these contributions are typically solicited, readers may send topic suggestions and/or make known their availability as contributors by writing directly to the Editors of these subsections.

Research issues:
Donna M. Johnson
English Department
ML 455
University of Arizona
Tucson, AZ 85721

Teaching issues:
Bonny Norton Peirce
Modern Language Centre
Ontario Institute for Studies in Education
252 Bloor St. W.
Toronto, Ontario M5S 1V6
Canada

Special-Topic Issues. Typically, one issue per volume will be devoted to a special topic. Topics are approved by the Editorial Advisory Board of the Quarterly. Those wishing to suggest topics and/or make known their availability as guest editors should contact the Editor of the TESOL Quarterly. Issues will generally contain both invited articles designed to survey and illuminate central themes as well as articles solicited through a call for papers.

General Submission Guidelines

1. All submissions to the Quarterly should conform to the requirements of the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (4th
ed.), which can be obtained from the Order Department, American Psychological Association, P.O. Box 2710, Hyattsville, MD 20784-0710. The Publication Manual is also available in many libraries and bookstores. Authors are responsible for the accuracy of references and reference citations, which must be in APA format.

2. All submissions to the TESOL Quarterly should be accompanied by a cover letter which includes a full mailing address and both a daytime and an evening telephone number. Where available, include an electronic mail address and fax number.

3. Authors of full-length articles should include two copies of a very brief biographical statement (in sentence form, maximum 50 words), plus any special notations or acknowledgments that they would like to have included. Double spacing should be used throughout.

4. The TESOL Quarterly provides 25 free reprints of published full-length articles and 10 reprints of material published in the Reviews, Brief Reports and Summaries, and The Forum sections.

5. Manuscripts submitted to the TESOL Quarterly cannot be returned to authors. Authors should be sure to keep a copy for themselves.

6. It is understood that manuscripts submitted to the TESOL Quarterly have not been previously published and are not under consideration for publication elsewhere.

7. It is the responsibility of the author(s) of a manuscript submitted to the TESOL Quarterly to indicate to the Editor the existence of any work already published (or under consideration for publication elsewhere) by the author(s) that is similar in content to that of the manuscript.

8. The Editor of the TESOL Quarterly reserves the right to make editorial changes in any manuscript accepted for publication to enhance clarity or style. The author will be consulted only if the editing has been substantial.

9. The views expressed by contributors to the TESOL Quarterly do not necessarily reflect those of the Editor, The Editorial Advisory Board, or TESOL. Material published in the Quarterly should not be construed to have the endorsement of TESOL.

Statistical Guidelines

Because of the educational role the Quarterly plays modeling research in the field, it is of particular concern that published research articles meet high statistical standards. In order to support this goal, the following guidelines are provided.

Reporting the study. Studies submitted to the Quarterly should be explained clearly and in enough detail that it would be possible to replicate the design of the study on the basis of the information provided in the article. Likewise, the study should include sufficient information to allow readers to evaluate the claims made by the author. In order to accommo-
date both of these requirements, authors of statistical studies should present the following.

1. A clear statement of the research questions and the hypotheses which are being examined
2. Descriptive statistics, including the means, standard deviations, and sample sizes, necessary for the reader to correctly interpret and evaluate any inferential statistics
3. Appropriate types of reliability and validity of any tests, ratings, questionnaires, etc.
4. Graphs and charts which help explain the results
5. Clear and careful descriptions of the instruments used and the types of intervention employed in the study
6. Explicit identifications of dependent, independent, moderator, intervening, and control variables
7. Complete source tables for statistical tests
8. Discussions of how the assumptions underlying the research design were met, assumptions such as random selection and assignment of subjects, sufficiently large sample sizes so that the results are stable, etc.
9. Tests of the assumptions of any statistical tests, when appropriate
10. Realistic interpretations of the statistical significance of the results, keeping in mind that the meaningfulness of the results is a separate and important issue, especially for correlation

**Conducting the analyses.** Quantitative studies submitted to the TESOL Quarterly should reflect a concern for controlling Type I and Type II error. Thus, studies should avoid multiple t tests, multiple ANOVAs, etc. However, in the very few instances in which multiple tests might be employed, the author should explain the effects of such use on the probability values in the results. In reporting the statistical analyses, authors should choose one significance level (usually .05) and report all results in terms of that level. Likewise, studies should report effect size through such strength of association measures as omega-squared or eta-squared along with beta (the possibility of Type II error) whenever this may be important to interpreting the significance of the results.

**Interpreting the results.** The results should be explained clearly and the implications discussed such that readers without extensive training in the use of statistics can understand them. Care should be taken in making causal inferences from statistical results, and these should be avoided with correlational studies. Results of the study should not be overinterpreted or overgeneralized. Finally, alternative explanations of the results should be discussed.
Qualitative Research Guidelines

To ensure that Quarterly articles model rigorous qualitative research, the following guidelines are provided.

Conducting the study. Studies submitted to the Quarterly should exhibit an in-depth understanding of the philosophical perspectives and research methodologies inherent in conducting qualitative research. Utilizing these perspectives and methods in the course of conducting research helps to ensure that studies are credible, valid, and dependable rather than impressionistic and superficial. Reports of qualitative research should meet the following criteria.

1. Data collection (as well as analyses and reporting) is aimed at uncovering an emit perspective. In other words, the study focuses on research participants’ perspectives and interpretations of behavior, events, and situations rather than etic (outsider-imposed) categories, models, and viewpoints.

2. Data collection strategies include prolonged engagement, persistent observation, and triangulation. Researchers should conduct ongoing observations over a sufficient period of time so as to build trust with respondents, learn the culture (e.g., classroom, school, or community), and check for misinformation introduced by both the researcher and the researched. Triangulation involves the use of multiple methods and sources such as participant-observation, informal and formal interviewing, and collection of relevant or available documents.

Analyzing the data. Data analysis is also guided by the philosophy and methods underlying qualitative research studies. The researcher should engage in comprehensive data treatment in which data from all relevant sources are analyzed. In addition, many qualitative studies demand an analytic inductive approach involving a cyclical process of data collection, analysis (taking an emit perspective and utilizing the descriptive language the respondents themselves use), creation of hypotheses, and testing of hypotheses in further data collection.

Reporting the data. The researcher should generally provide “thick description” with sufficient detail to allow the reader to determine whether transfer to other situations can be considered. Reports also should include the following.

1. A description of the theoretical or conceptual framework that guides research questions and interpretations.

2. A clear statement of the research questions.

3. A description of the research site, participants, procedures for ensuring participant anonymity, and data collection strategies. A description of the roles of the researcher(s).

4. A description of a clear and salient organization of patterns found
through data analysis. Reports of patterns should include representative examples not anecdotal information.

5. Interpretations that exhibit a holistic perspective in which the author traces the meaning of patterns across all the theoretically salient or descriptively relevant micro- and macrocontexts in which they are embedded.

6. Interpretations and conclusions that provide evidence of grounded theory and discussion of how this theory relates to current research/theory in the field, including relevant citations. In other words, the article should focus on the issues or behavior that are salient to participants and that not only reveal an in-depth understanding of the situation studied but also suggest how it connects to current related theories.
Publishers are invited to send copies of their new materials to the TESOL Quarterly Review Editor H. Douglas Brown, San Francisco State University, at the address listed in the Information for Contributors section. Packages should be labeled REVIEW COPIES.

TESOL Quarterly readers are invited to contribute review articles and evaluative or comparative reviews for consideration for publication in the Review or Book Notices section of the Quarterly. These should be sent to the TESOL Quarterly Review Editor H. Douglas Brown, San Francisco State University, at the address listed in the Information for Contributors section.

TESOL gratefully acknowledges receipt of the following publications.


416


New Ways Series II
Contributions Invited

The only series of its kind, TESOL's New Ways Series I is a collection of classroom-tested, skills-based activities for ESOL teachers by ESOL teachers. Unlike other single-authored activity books, New Ways volumes offer teachers the perspective, experience, and frame of reference of hundreds of teachers and teacher educators from around the world. Many exploit technology, such as using audiotape recorders to provide feedback, using e-mail to foster a continuing dialogue, or narrating stories with video.

TESOL is soliciting contributions to nine new volumes that move beyond traditional skills-based approaches to language instruction. New Ways Series II offers volumes on how to incorporate technology, culture, innovative assessment, content-based lessons, English for specific purposes, authentic materials, communicative games, drama, and literature into varied classroom activities and settings. Volumes on teaching secondary-level students and adults will complement topic-based volumes by focusing on activities directed at these specific populations of learners.

New Ways volumes have been favorably reviewed (e.g., in the Modern Language Journal and the Journal of Reading). Reviewers have cited specific volumes for challenging novice and experienced teachers alike with varied and stimulating activities.

TESOL currently offers six volumes: Reading, Speaking, Vocabulary, Teacher Education, Grammar, and Listening. A volume on Writing is in production.

GUIDELINES FOR CONTRIBUTORS

TESOL professionals are invited to contribute to one or more of the volumes. More than one contribution may also be submitted for any particular book in the series. Contributors will not be paid, but their names will appear with their submissions.

HOW TO CONTRIBUTE

Contributors should send requests for specific guidelines to TESOL Central Office with a self-addressed envelope and $.64 postage for every two sets of guidelines requested. (TESOL will provide postage for requests coming from outside the US.) Detailed guidelines will then be provided on how to develop, reference, and format submissions and to which address to send them. Contributors must follow the submission guidelines.

TESOL Central Office, New Ways Series,
1600 Cameron St., #300
Alexandria, VA 22314 USA

New Ways Series Editor is Jack C. Richards.
The following specialists will edit each volume:

- Tim Boswood, Using Computers in Language Teaching
- Donna Brinton and Peter Master, Content-Based Instruction
- Donna Brinton and Peter Master, English for Specific Purposes
- J.D. Brown, Using Alternative Assessment in Language Teaching
- Alvino Fantini, Teaching Culture
- Ruth E. Larimer and Jennifer Allen, Using Authentic Materials in Language Teaching
- Marilyn Lewis, Teaching Adults
- Deborah Short, Teaching English in Secondary Programs
- Makhan Tickoo, Using Communicative Games in Language Teaching
- Valerie Whiteson, Using Drama and Literature in Language Teaching
The Thirtieth Annual Convention and Exposition
Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages, Inc.

TESOL'96

Host Affiliate: Illinois TESOL-BE

March 26-30, 1996
The Chicago Hilton
Chicago, Illinois USA

World-known Speakers • Publishers and Software Exhibition
Preconference Institutes • Educational Visits • Workshops
Poster Sessions • Fun Run • Swap Shop
Breakfast Seminars • Affiliate Events
Colloquia • Interest Section Events
Software Fair • Discussion Groups
Employment Clearinghouse
Video Showcase • Papers

For more information please contact:
TESOL, Inc. Conventions Department
1600 Cameron Street, Suite 300
Alexandria, Virginia 22314-2751 USA
Telephone (703) 836-0774 Fax (703) 836-7864
E-mail conv@TESOL.EDU