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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.

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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 above. TESOL Matters is published in February, April, June, August, October, and December. Neither TESOL Quarterly nor TESOL Journal publishes announcements.

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Editor’s Note

I am honored to accept the invitation to serve as editor of the TESOL Quarterly. I would like to acknowledge those who made it possible for me to accept this invitation and those who helped to make the transition a smooth one.

First and foremost, I would like to thank Sandra Silberstein for her encouragement and counsel. Throughout the transition period, she graciously shared with me editorial information and insights. I know I speak on behalf of the entire readership when I thank Sandra for the time and attention she has devoted to the journal. I would also like to thank Helen Kornblum and Marilyn Kupetz of the TESOL Central Office and the Executive Board of TESOL for the support they have given me.

The residency of the Quarterly at San Francisco State University would not have been possible without the resources provided by a variety of individuals. I would like to thank Nancy McDermid, Dean of the School of Humanities, Stephen Arkin, Chair of the English Department, and H. Douglas Brown, Director of the American Language Institute, for the institutional support they provided.

I would also like to thank those who have accepted my invitation to serve as section editors. H. Douglas Brown has agreed to take on the very time-consuming task of editing the Book Review and Book Notice section. Donna M. Johnson has agreed to take over Research Issues while Bonny Peirce will coordinate Teaching Issues. I am grateful that Graham Crookes and Kathryn Davis are willing to continue in their role as editors of the Brief Reports and Summaries. I welcome the following new members of the Editorial Advisory Board: Lyle Bachman, Kathleen Bardovi-Harlig, Keith Chick, Nancy Hornberger, Donna M. Johnson, Patsy Lightbown, Mary McGroarty, Patricia Porter, and Kamal Sridhar. Finally, I would like to thank continuing Editorial Advisory Board members for their important contribution to the review process of the Quarterly.
In This Issue

The articles in this issue of the TESOL Quarterly illustrate the diversity of our field in scope and method. Employing quantitative and qualitative methods, the contributors investigate ESL teachers and learners, mainstream and ESL classrooms, adults and children, grammar and writing.

Using an ethnographic approach, Linda Harklau examines the learning experience of four Chinese ethnic immigrant high school students as they make the transition from ESL to mainstream classrooms. She documents the differences that exist in these two classroom contexts in terms of spoken and written language use, content and goals, language instruction and feedback, and socializing functions. She argues that ESL and mainstream educators must work toward a systematic integration of content and language in order to best serve the special needs of language minority students.

Drawing on her own experience as an ESL writing teacher, Joy Reid examines the commonly accepted notion that ESL writing teachers must avoid “appropriating” students’ texts. After discussing the historical basis for this idea, she explores the “myths of appropriation” which fail to consider the social context of writing and to differentiate intervention from appropriation. In assessing these myths, she maintains that many teachers have abrogated their responsibility as writing teachers.

In a microethnographic study of an elementary L2 classroom, Gisela Ernst analyzes one recurring event of the classroom, the talking circle, in terms of its topic development, social demands, and communicative dimensions. She demonstrates how the nature of a communicative task can be a more important variable in analyzing L2 interaction than the organizational structure of a group. Based on her analysis of the talking circle, she argues that L2 students need abundant practice in turn taking, interrupting, and listening.

Sandra Fotos examines another classroom event, grammar consciousness-raising tasks. In a quantitative investigation of an EFL classroom context, Fotos compares the communicative and grammar gains of Japanese university students involved in three types of instructional contexts: teacher-fronted grammar lessons, grammar tasks, and communicative tasks. Based on her findings, she concludes that grammar consciousness-raising tasks can be a valuable technique in promoting grammatical competency in communicative classrooms.

Like Reid, Eli Hinkel is concerned with the teaching of writing in ESL academic contexts. Her focus, however, is on the students rather than the teacher, on their pragmatic interpretations of student essays. In her study, she finds little similarity between native speakers’ and
nonnative speakers' interpretations of student essays and attributes these differences to differing discourse traditions, maintaining that for nonnative speakers to acquire nativelike pragmatic interpretations of texts, they need familiarity with (Aristotelian) argumentation, justification, and proof.

Also in this issue:

● The Forum: H. G. Widdowson examines the question of standards in the teaching of English, arguing that English and English teaching are correct to the extent they are appropriate. Nathan Jones' commentary on Ann Johns's “Written Argumentation for Real Audiences” is followed by a response from the author. Donald Freeman and Jack Richards respond to the comments of Julian Edge on their article entitled “Conceptions of Teaching and the Education of Second Language Teachers.” In the subsection Research Issues, Keith Richards and Paula Golombok explore teachers' knowledge.

● Brief Reports and Summaries: Virginia LoCastro examines learning strategies in the context of learning English in Japan in large classes. Dana Ferris examines a variety of quantitative, lexical, and syntactic features of ESL texts written by students at various levels of proficiency.


● Book Notices: Seven ESL grammar, writing, and reading texts are discussed in this section.

Sandra McKay
San Francisco State University
Call for Abstracts

Language Planning and Policy and the English Language Teaching Profession

The TESOL Quarterly announces a call for abstracts for a special-topic issue on language planning and policy and the English language teaching profession to appear in 1996. We are beginning work especially early to encourage international contributions. We are interested in full-length, previously unpublished articles dealing with:

1. The language planning and policy decision-making process at the national, state, or local level
2. The impact of language policy decisions on
   a. teacher training and practices
   b. curriculum design and development
   c. students and communities
   d. research directions and funding

Quantitative and qualitative studies which provide insight into the decision-making process and which document the impact of planning and policy decisions on the English language teaching profession are especially welcome.

In addition to full-length articles, we solicit short reports on recent language trends and policies from countries around the world. We also solicit brief, personal accounts on the classroom experiences of practitioners who have been affected by policy decisions at the national or local level. 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 or brief accounts. For all submissions, send three copies, a brief biographical statement (50 words, maximum), a full mailing address, and daytime and evening telephone numbers (along with fax and e-mail information, if available). Abstracts, mailed to one of the addresses below, should be received no later than December 31, 1994.

Thomas Ricento
Dept. of English Language and Literature
301E Anspach Hall
Central Michigan University
Mt. Pleasant, MI 48859-0002 USA

Nancy Hornberger
Graduate School of Education
University of Pennsylvania
3700 Walnut St.
Philadelphia, PA 19104-6216 USA

Abstracts should be received no later than December 31, 1994.
ESL Versus Mainstream Classes: Contrasting L2 Learning Environments

LINDA HARKLAU
University of Rochester

Language minority students are often placed in mainstream, English-medium classrooms long before they develop the degree of language proficiency necessary to compete on an equal footing with native speakers of the school language. With the ever-increasing presence of such students in U.S. schools, ESL and content-area educators are working to better integrate their respective curricula and instructional roles. In order to accomplish this integration, significant instructional differences in these two contexts must be identified, and systematic comparisons must detail how L2 learners fare in each of these instructional environments. What do students lose and gain in their transition from ESL to the mainstream? This question was addressed in a 3½-year ethnography of the L2 learning experiences of newcomer students attending a high school in northern California. The study, which followed 4 Chinese ethnic immigrant students as they made the transition from ESL to mainstream classes, contrasted patterns of spoken and written language use in classrooms, identified significant differences in the content and goals of the ESL versus mainstream curricula, and documented language instruction and feedback in both contexts. Both contexts were also evaluated in terms of the socializing features of schooling, such as counseling and peer networks. As in many other U.S. public schools, the isolated and marginalized position of the ESL program in an institution that otherwise made no adjustment for nonnative speakers produced a makeshift system in which there was no appropriate instructional environment for learners of the school language.

Students in the U.S. who are in the lengthy process of acquiring English as an additional language are frequently found in mainstream English-medium classes alongside native speakers (O’Malley & Waggoner, 1984; Penfield, 1987). In some cases, students or their families may refuse special help because of a perceived remedial stigma, or students slip through screening systems set up by school districts to identify students who need special language instruction.
More typically, however, schools do not have funding or administrative support to offer more than 2 or 3 years of special instruction to learners of the school language.

Bilingual education and ESL classes are often viewed as an extra burden on already overtaxed school resources. Equally significant in shaping educational policy for linguistic minority students is a pervasive folk belief that children will learn English faster if they are in regular classes with native speakers of English. Although evidence for this notion is far from conclusive (Wong Fillmore with Valadez, 1986), it nevertheless dominates practice. Newcomers are often placed in mainstream classes immediately upon arrival, concurrent with ESL or classes in their home language, and they are exited from special programs quite rapidly. Thus, even though language minority students may take up to 7 years to develop the level of language proficiency necessary to compete on an equal footing with native speakers of the school language (Collier, 1987; Cummins, 1982), they are likely to be in mainstream classes long before then.

This demographic reality has led educators to seek ways in which they might better articulate ESL and mainstream instruction and thus ensure a smooth transition. One approach to this issue has been to develop “sheltered” or content-area curricula for ESL classrooms (see Chamot & O’Malley, 1987; Crandall, 1987; Mohan, 1986). Another has been to provide practical pedagogical advice on educating language minority students to regular classroom teachers who are untrained in ESL (see Hamayan & Perlman, 1990; Richard-Amato & Snow, 1992; Riddlemoser, 1987; Rigg & Allen, 1989; Scarcella, 1990). Researchers, however, have noted the paucity of closely detailed ethnographic descriptions comparing these two contexts which might serve as the basis for such approaches and facilitate the articulation and transition between ESL and the mainstream (Crandall, 1993; Freeman, 1993). How do ESL and mainstream classrooms differ instructionally and linguistically as L2 learning environments? How do students experience the differences between ESL and mainstream classes, and what do they lose and gain on their transition from ESL to the mainstream? These questions were addressed in a 3½-year (Spring 1987 to Spring 1990) ethnographic study of the L2 learning experiences of newcomer students attending a high school in the San Francisco Bay area. The study represented a unique opportunity to compare the same students’ language learning experiences and behavior across ESL and mainstream contexts and to trace each student’s high school career each year as they were making the transition from ESL into mainstream classes. This article documents differences in the goals and organization of instruction of mainstream and ESL classrooms in one school context. The article also contrasts the functions of ESL and mainstream
classes in terms of their role in socializing students into U.S. schools and society.

METHOD

Gateview High School (a pseudonym), where the study took place, was marked by the ethnic and social diversity typical of many urban high schools in the San Francisco Bay area, drawing its student population from both affluent hill areas and the poorer, industrial “flats” closer to the bay. The school population of approximately 1,600 students averaged 50% African American, 30% Asian American, 20% White, and 2–3% Hispanic. Nevertheless, its limited English proficient (LEP) population was relatively small, consisting of fewer than 100 students. One veteran teacher, Maureen Carson (a pseudonym), oversaw the ESL program serving these students. She established her classroom as the ESL homeroom for the school and was the language minority students’ advocate and unofficial counselor at the school. Her formal training was in English and social studies, and she had taught ESL alongside these subject areas for some 20 of her 30 years in teaching. Although she was not formally certified in ESL, she had rich and lengthy experience working with ESL students and evidenced a commitment to continuing professional development on a number of fronts, including the local teachers’ union, a university program for gifted students, a national College Board committee on preparing high school students for college, and a school-university partnership program.

Carson taught the majority of ESL classes at Gateview, including ESL 1, 2, and 3; a reading course for ESL 1 and 2 students; ESL sheltered U.S. and world history; and sheltered (but required) citizenship and first aid courses for seniors. Because she could not cover all of these courses by herself, however, the school assigned a mainstream teacher, untrained in ESL, to teach one or two of the courses on a yearly basis. Carson was often skeptical of the administration’s motives in selecting teachers for these courses, and experiences over the course of the study showed her suspicions to be well founded. In two cases, an English and Spanish teacher exhibited difficulty in keeping ESL students in their classes on task, suggesting that they had similar or even greater difficulties with mainstream students. In another case, Carson believed that a mainstream social studies teacher volunteered to teach sheltered social studies courses because he saw them as an “easy out,” with small class sizes and docile students. It was not until the final year of the study, in anticipation of Carson’s retirement, that the school acquired another experienced ESL teacher, Pat Malone (a
pseudonym). Because she had no background in content areas other than Spanish, however, Malone was not prepared to employ the sheltered subject matter approach that Carson used in higher proficiency levels of ESL and in social studies courses, and she thus took on the lower proficiency classes (ESL 1, ESL 2, and ESL reading) in the program.

The assignment of mainstream teachers to ESL classes was symptomatic of the relationship between the ESL program and the rest of the school. At best, the school administration tolerated the program as a necessary nuisance. As steadily increasing enrollments over the course of the study required more resources devoted to the program, administrators applied pressure to either increase class sizes to levels that exceeded those stipulated in the union contract and district regulations, or to decrease enrollment by encouraging some students to exit the program before they had reached the level of English proficiency legally required for reclassification. As a result, Carson was frequently embroiled in conflicts that resulted in time-consuming appeals to the union and district bilingual education office. Furthermore, the administration provided little leadership or encouragement of mainstream teacher involvement in language minority education at the school, fostering a widespread attitude that the ESL program and its students were Carson’s exclusive concern. Mainstream teachers were untrained in working with language learners, and ESL and mainstream curricula were not coordinated. A survey of mainstream teachers done as part of an accreditation process showed many misunderstandings about the nature and purpose of ESL instruction.

Carson was my initial contact at the school, and her classroom served as my base of operations over the course of the study. Because the ESL classroom was the main gathering place for immigrant students at the school, I was quickly able to establish myself as a participant observer in a role similar to that of the two aides who worked in the program. Like the aides, I was accessible to students at lunchtime to help with homework, to provide information about negotiating the schooling system, or just to socialize. I was an observer and sometimes a participant in ESL classes at Gateview throughout the study. I frequently consulted with Carson to inform her about the progress of the study and to ask for additional information and insights.

Although there were more than a dozen linguistic and ethnic groups represented at any one time in ESL classes at Gateview, Chinese ethnic students were selected as the sample group for the study because of their predominance in the ESL program, in which they constituted one third of the student population. They also had conspicuous, well-formed intragroup peer networks and tended to take leadership roles in the mixed ethnic group peer networks among ESL and former ESL
students. With the assistance of Carson, 4 students from this group were selected as case studies. The sample was “purposive” (Merriam, 1988), meaning that criteria for subject selection were predetermined on the basis of typical background characteristics of Chinese American ESL students at the school. Most of these students, for example, had several years of schooling and a strong literacy foundation in their native language. Most were planning to remain in the U.S., and most were planning to attend a U.S. college or university. Of the 4 case study students selected, 3 were Taiwanese immigrants, and 1 was from Hong Kong. They had arrived in the U.S. between sixth and tenth grade. (Figure 1 contains background information regarding individual focal students.)

Each of these students was followed over a period of four to seven semesters in the transition from ESL into mainstream classes. This transition followed a similar pattern for most students. Students at the

**FIGURE 1**

Focal Student Background Data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Native country</th>
<th>Began school in U. S.</th>
<th>Participation in study</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Eddie</td>
<td>Taiwan</td>
<td>enrolled in sixth grade in Fall 1984</td>
<td>six semesters (Fall 1987-Spring 1990; Grades 9—11)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(attended one year of elementary school and junior high school in the same school district as Gateview)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anne</td>
<td>Taiwan</td>
<td>enrolled in eighth grade in Fall 1985</td>
<td>seven semesters (Spring 1987-Spring 1990; Grades 9—12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(attended junior high school in the same school district as Gateview)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gary</td>
<td>Taiwan</td>
<td>enrolled in ninth grade in 1985</td>
<td>five semesters (Spring 1987-Spring 1989; Grades 10—12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mei Li</td>
<td>Hong Kong</td>
<td>enrolled in tenth grade in Fall 1986</td>
<td>four semesters (Fall 1987-Spring 1989; Grades 11—12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(attended high school in the neighboring district for one semester)</td>
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</table>

‘Students’ names are pseudonyms.

CONTRASTING L2 LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS
ESL 1 (beginner) level were also enrolled in an ESL reading class and usually a sheltered social studies class as well. For the remaining two to three periods of instruction, students were enrolled in a math course, a science course, physical education, or an elective such as typing, music, or art. As students progressed through the program, their ESL course load was reduced to one class (ESL 2, intermediate, or ESL 3, advanced) and in some cases a second sheltered social studies course. Mainstream English and social studies courses were usually added at this point. All of the focal students joined the study at this stage, when they had been enrolled in ESL for at least 1 year and were taking ESL 2 or ESL 3. Within 1–2 years, all of them except Mei Li, who graduated, completed ESL 3 and were mainstreamed completely. (Each focal student’s courses over the duration of the study are detailed in Figure 2).

Each of the focal students was observed through full school days, in most cases on 2 consecutive days, in both ESL and mainstream classes. Samples of schoolwork and homework, and school records were collected. Much of my contact with students occurred in informal conversation at lunchtime, allowing students’ emit perspective on their experiences to unfold, while providing opportunities to guide the conversation, clarify, or raise a new subject when necessary. Between two and seven formal interviews up to 1 hour long were conducted with each student at less frequent intervals, when informal contact did not suffice. In general, they took place when a student joined the study, at the end of school year, or following classroom observations.

Focal students’ mainstream teachers were all interviewed briefly before or after class. Teachers were asked to comment on the student’s performance in their class and if they had had other experiences with ESL students in their classes. Many teachers scheduled an extra 10 or 15 min to talk with me when their schedules permitted. For the most part, they seemed eager to share their reflections about ESL students in their classes. Formal 45-min interviews were conducted with two of the students’ English teachers and two of their social studies teachers because these were the mainstream subject areas in which linguistic demands made of learners appeared greatest.

In the final year of the study, ongoing efforts to supplement case study observations and interviews were extended and formalized. A broad sample of Taiwanese and Hong Kong immigrants at the school was interviewed. Additional Chinese-ethnic students were observed in mainstream English and social studies classes, and two class discussion sessions were organized with immigrant students regarding their experiences in school. These data served to assess the representativeness of focal student experiences and to gain additional insight into immigrant student experiences at Gateview. All told, 315 hours of observations
<table>
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<td>Computer science (elective)</td>
<td>Band (elective)</td>
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<td>Economics (1 semester)</td>
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*All courses, with the exception of the first aid course, were credit bearing.*
(165 hours in 56 mainstream classes, and 150 hours in ESL classes) and 38 formal interviews were conducted in addition to innumerable informal encounters that took place with students and school personnel during the 3½ years of the study.

The following discussion explores two significant ways in which ESL and mainstream instruction were found to differ. The first is in the organization and goals of instruction, such as how spoken and written language were used in classroom activities, how teachers’ perceived goals affected course curriculum and content, and the degree to which explicit language instruction and feedback were reflected in the curriculum. It also explores what might be called the socializing functions of a U.S. high school, illustrating contrasts in opportunities for peer interaction and activities, as well as counseling.

ORGANIZATION OF INSTRUCTION AND LANGUAGE USE

Interactional Routines

Spoken Language Use in the Mainstream

One important contrast in the instructional and linguistic environment of ESL and mainstream classes was found in interactional routines, or the way spoken and written language were used in the course of classroom activities. Traditionally, the dynamics of spoken discourse patterns have received the most attention in both L1 and L2 classroom research (see Cazden, 1988; Green & Wallat, 1981; and Mehan, 1979 for mainstream classrooms; and van Lier, 1988; and Chaudron, 1988, for L2 classrooms), and thus it is a logical starting point for comparison. The nature of spoken interaction in high school classroom activities has been documented (see Applebee with Auten, 1981; Boyer, 1983), although the implications of these activities for L2 learning have not been explicitly addressed.

The predominant activity in mainstream classrooms at Gateview was what Applebee (1981) has termed teacher-led discussion. Discussion may be a misnomer for this activity because teachers overwhelmingly dominate the talk, initiating three quarters of the questions asked according to Applebee’s findings. Thus, the value of these activities to L2 learners like those at Gateview rested mainly in the copious spoken input received from the teacher. Research has suggested, however, that the utility of input is not solely a function of quantity. Rather, effective input also has an authentic communicative purpose, emphasizing the content of the message rather than its grammatical form (Krashen,
1981; Lambert, 1984; Tikunoff, 1985; Widdowson, 1978; Wong Fillmore, 1985). Mainstream classrooms at Gateview fit this criterion for “good” input extremely well. Because the majority of students were native speakers of the language, the target language served an authentic communicative need, as the medium through which concepts needed to perform school tasks were communicated.

Nevertheless, input received by learners in mainstream classrooms had at least one major failing. Because they primarily were addressing native speakers of English, mainstream high school classroom teachers seldom adjusted input in order to make it comprehensible to L2 learners. Adjustments such as reducing the speed and complexity of speech; increasing repetition, pausing, and comprehension checks; and contextualizing abstract concepts through the use of realia such as maps or photos, graphs, or graphic organizers such as webbing have been identified as necessary in order to make input useful as raw material for language learning (Cantoni-Harvey, 1987; Krashen, 1981; Short, 1991; Wong Fillmore, 1985). Learners had particular difficulty understanding teacher talk which contained puns or was sarcastic or ironic. This talk provoked rejoinders or groans from native speakers but was received with blank, slightly puzzled looks from ESL students. Learners were also frustrated with teachers who habitually spoke very fast, who used frequent asides, or who were prone to sudden departures from the instructional topic at hand. One teacher, for example, was known for suddenly departing from lessons in order to tell tales about his days in the navy, much to the consternation of L2 learners in his class. Immigrant students expressed exasperation about such talk, like Mei Li, who commented,

1. I don’t want to spend my time to listen to something I don’t understand . . . . When my words come through my brain, and I couldn’t, like, have time for me to understand? And then, when I take the time to understand, then he [the teacher] is speaking another stuff.

The evaluation of mainstream classrooms as spoken language acquisition environments rests not only on input received but also on opportunities for output and the entire process of interaction. The productive use of an L2 and feedback from native speakers is also a major component in the process of second language acquisition (SLA) (Hatch, 1983; Swain, 1985). Because Asian American immigrant students at Gateview reported that they communicated in their native language almost exclusively outside the classroom, interaction at school was learners’ greatest potential opportunity to interact with native speakers. Opportunities for interaction in mainstream classrooms varied as a function of the instructional activity structures typically employed in various subject areas. Math classes, for example, relied almost exclu-
sively on teacher-led discussion, while English and social studies classes were somewhat more likely to include group work or student presentations. Tracking also led to different curricula, activity structures, and language learning opportunities in classes deemed “high” and “low” in academic ability (see Harklau, in press a, b). Although case study students varied in their track placements, recently mainstreamed students typically were placed in low-track classes, on the assumption that such classes would be easier for them. However, high-track classes were most likely to employ interaction-fostering activities such as student-led group work, whereas low-track classes often relied heavily on teacher-directed activities and individual seat work. While acknowledging such variation among classrooms, one could say that overall opportunities to engage in extended interactions with mainstream teachers during classroom instruction were rare. Classes of up to 35 students were large and unwieldy to facilitate such interactions, and the demands that teachers faced to cover the material often made classroom discussion a luxury. As a result, teacher-led discussions featuring the familiar initiation-reply-evaluation (IRE) sequence (Mehan, 1979) were the prevalent mode of instruction at Gateview. In an average class, all other things being equal, individual students had only a 1:25 or 1:30 chance of being allocated a turn by the teacher during these activities. Even more significant for L2 learners, student participation in teacher-led discussion using the IRE format was usually limited to a single word or phrase. Thus, learners had little occasion to practice the communicative strategies that they would employ in building interaction over several turns, such as negotiating turns, joint construction and maintenance of topics, and comprehension checks and repairs. Nor did they have the opportunity to produce extended, coherent discourse within a single turn, in which they might manipulate features such as tense usage, pronominal forms, or the arrangement of information through manipulation of clause structure, conjunctions, and subordinators.

Lacking specific training in strategies for teaching ESL students, teachers varied considerably in whether their instructional style facilitated interaction with the nonnative speakers in their classrooms. Many teachers had learned through experience to place ESL students in desks close to the front of the room so that they could scan students’ faces for signs of comprehension, confusion, or responses to questions. However, there were also many teachers who seemed to face the board for most of the class. Although some teachers made a point of talking one-to-one with their students, including ESL students, others could not recall the names of students without reference to seating charts. Some teachers preferred to structure discussions so that every student was specifically invited to share opinions or information over the course
of the class. In general, however, mainstream teachers were less likely to elicit output from ESL students than the native speakers in their classes. (Previous studies at the elementary and college levels have reported similar phenomena. See Schinke-Llano, 1983; Sato, 1982.) Many elicited student response by addressing questions to the entire class. This format favored the students who could most loudly or confidently bid for the floor and allowed more reticent students, such as English learners, to simply not respond. Some teachers noted that they wanted to spare nonnative speakers from being put on the spot. Learners often preferred to remain silent as well and rarely volunteered for turns. One explained,

2. I don’t like to talk very much because of a lack of confident and I don’t know what to say most of the times. Also kind of lazy in talking.

Gary also explained reticence as a cultural value, by referring to a Chinese saying,

3. “Being quiet is gold and vigorously debating is silver.” Being quiet is considered polite and intelligent because only the insecure ones need to prove themselves smart by talking loud. For that reason, the school [in Taiwan] wanted the students to keep quiet in the classroom.

In total effect, the lack of interaction between L2 learners and their mainstream teachers at Gateview was quite striking. Observations recorded a total of only 8 instances of learners talking in class discussions over the course of 12 days of classes, and 10 dyadic exchanges with teachers over the same 12 days. In other words, students were on the average likely to engage in any form of interaction with teachers only once or twice during any given day of mainstream classes. One of Mei Li’s teachers observed that he was not even certain that he would recognize her voice. Although there were no doubt native speakers for whom interaction with teachers was similarly limited, for L2 learners, this pattern assumed special significance, negating a potentially important source of output and interaction with native speakers.

Because they were seldom required to participate in classroom interactions, L2 learners were able to tune out many mainstream instructional interactions entirely. Students often sat, heads bent over desks, engrossed in their books and papers, paying little attention to teacher or peer talk going on in the class. Because it was an effort to understand spoken language used in a mainstream class, Mei Li commented that,

4. Like, sometimes I . . . just don’t listen to him [the teacher]. So I do my own work.

Tuning out was partially a function of input that students found incomprehensible, and partially a function of their preferences for interac-
tion with written materials. The net result was that students were often withdrawn and noninteractive in mainstream classes. They were not even paying particular attention to the input, much less engaging in interaction.

**Spoken Language Use in ESL Classes**

Teacher-led discussion was also the predominant activity conducted through the spoken channel in ESL classes. However, qualitative differences existed in how discussion was organized and framed, differences which resulted in qualitatively superior input and richer, more frequent opportunities for interaction and spoken language output. As one might expect, as an ESL teacher Carson was adept at adjusting input in order to make it comprehensible. For example, she used extremely explicit directives and transitions, such as “Look at me. Now, I’m going to point to you and give you a number. 1, 2, 3 . . . .” She scanned the faces of students as she spoke, looking for signs of comprehension or confusion. She kept a small blackboard by her side as she spoke, ready to draw pictures or write down unfamiliar words when needed. Such adjustments have been shown to be integral to creating an effective instructional environment for LEP students and in ensuring input that is comprehensible to nonnative speakers (Tikunoff, 1985; Wong Fillmore, 1989).

Besides making input more comprehensible than in mainstream classrooms, Carson also created extended opportunities for students to interact and participate. Students agreed that they talked the most in ESL classes. As one student commented,

5. And here [ESL class], I dare to talk more, and gradually I will rather ask more question.

Carson was able to create smaller classes by dividing classes between herself and aides. Unlike most mainstream classes, which were arranged in the traditional rows of desks facing the front, Carson arranged her classroom so that she and the students were seated close together in a circle in the middle of the room in order to facilitate communication. During instruction, she called on every student in the room several times. She frequently asked open-ended questions, modeling extended responses and then asking students to do the same, such as “If you had to think of one picture from the 80s that you would remember, what would it be? Mine would be . . . .” She then called on every student in the class to share his/her opinion. The overall effect of these differences was to stress participation and to encourage self-expression in class. In fact, although tuning out was common in mainstream classes, students were usually active participants in ESL
class activities. They even bid for turns, a phenomenon rarely observed in mainstream classes.

**Written Language Use in the Mainstream**

Investigation of classroom language, particularly in L2 contexts, has tended to direct attention to spoken discourse processes in the classroom. It is only when one examines contexts such as mainstream high school classrooms, with a deep and pervasive bias towards the written mode, that one perceives the equally pervasive bias towards the spoken language often implicit in classroom SLA research and pedagogy. Indeed, it sometimes seems that classroom language is construed as synonymous with spoken language (see Chaudron, 1988; Ellis, 1984; Long, 1989; Mitchell, 1985; van Lier, 1988). Nevertheless, in the context of the U.S. high school classrooms examined in this study, spoken language was regarded by students and teachers alike as a relatively insignificant mode. Of course, communication-input and interaction—certainly occurs through the written channel as well, and some SLA researchers have explicitly linked the written mode to the particular linguistic demands of academic contexts (Adamson, 1993; Cummins, 1982; Saville-Troike, 1984). By high school, U.S. educators assume that native speakers of English are capable of conducting most of the linguistic transactions that take place in classrooms through reading and writing. It is not only the most efficient means of conveying content-area concepts, but it is also more highly valued as the mode through which the most important information is communicated and through which students’ progress is measured. If we are to truly understand the differences between ESL and mainstream classrooms, then, it is critical that we explore the demands placed on students in linguistic transactions occurring in the written mode.

Reading, for example, is potentially an excellent source of input for L2 learners because, unlike spoken input, learners can adjust their interactions with texts according to proficiency level. In mainstream classes at Gateview, students read copiously. Although input in the form of reading was plentiful, however, it was also somewhat lacking in variety. Textbooks were the predominant source of reading matter for most students. Students in high-track classes were also assigned supplementary materials, such as magazine articles in social studies and science, and literature and poetry in English. For students in low-track classes, however, textbooks were likely to be the exclusive source of assigned reading. Although activities surrounding reading material varied by track as well (see Harklau, in press b; Oakes, 1985), comprehension exercises or tests requiring students to memorize factual infor-
Reading activities in mainstream classroom activities required an academically oriented, technical lexicon spanning several subject areas. Because literacy and language learning become symbiotic processes by the time individuals reach the secondary level of schooling (see Nip-pold, 1988), it stands to reason that L2 learners, just like their native-speaker peers, were developing the majority of their vocabulary through a process of contextual abstraction while reading. Students confirmed that their vocabulary came primarily from written sources. Eddie noted that his class studied the words that,

6. appear in the book. And if [you just saw] some kind of word is difficult, and all those stuff, and she [the teacher] will, like, write it down and tell us to memorize it.

Just as spoken output is hypothesized to be essential in developing L2 speaking proficiency, writing output—the process of composing and producing written texts—is viewed as necessary in order to develop proficiency in the written mode (Edelsky, 1986; Farr & Daniels, 1986). In mainstream classroom activities, students had occasion to produce extended discourse in written form much more frequently than they had to speak. Teachers reported that they had more opportunities to interact with students in written work, where they could respond and individualize according to learner needs. Nevertheless, the amount and quality of writing experiences offered to students were not consistent across mainstream classrooms. Although virtually all writing activities entailed the transfer of information from textbooks, literary texts, or other written sources to schoolwork, there was considerable variation across classes in the frequency and extent of composing and in the degree of original thought required by assignments. Although some students learned to produce academically valued genres, such as offering a personal opinion supported by a synthesis of information, in other classrooms, students did nothing more than locate and repeat verbatim information from textbooks. Assignments also varied considerably in length, ranging from a single sentence or phrase to three- or four-page essays, depending on students’ track level and subject matter.

Like the spoken language activities in mainstream classrooms, many writing activities were limited to a single word or phrase, in the format of fill-in-the-blank, multiple choice, and short answer exercises. L2 learners in mainstream classes were proficient in bluffing their way through such mechanical writing exercises without a clear idea of what they were talking about. Eddie, for example, used his bilingual dictionary to generate “original” sentence contexts for vocabulary
words, transforming the activity into a copying exercise. In other instances, students recast what teachers hoped were meaningful note-taking exercises into measures of how accurately they could copy what the teacher wrote on the board. Activities such as textbook or novel-reading summaries might elicit texts of up to a paragraph in length, but nevertheless limited, in that the text served only to recount learned facts. In response to such activities, ESL students became extremely adept at locating information in texts and repeating it in answer to factual questions, often with a marginal understanding of the information they were copying or memorizing.

**Written Language Use in ESL Classes**

As in mainstream classes, students were exposed to a great deal of reading material in ESL classes. Carson’s selection of materials was, of course, also influenced by her students’ limited language proficiency. In response to these needs, she often selected texts which had been written for younger students or abridged texts adapted especially for L2 readers. She realized, however, that these texts had shortcomings. She observed, for example, that abridged literary texts were often stripped of metaphoric language. She therefore supplemented these materials with authentic reading, such as newspaper stories about current events, particularly in students’ home countries; political cartoons; and original works of short fiction. Carson also fostered extensive reading outside of ESL by using class time to distribute catalogues and take orders for a mail order paperback club for teenagers.

ESL learners had two somewhat distinct sets of lexical gaps or needs—(a) the vocabulary used in negotiating everyday U.S. culture and social interactions, and (b) the technical and academic vocabulary needed to perform academic tasks across subject areas. Perhaps because students faced such a need for content-area vocabulary in their mainstream classes, and perhaps because of learning preferences brought from previous schooling experiences, students favored academic and, to Carson’s view, “esoteric” vocabulary. At the same time, they were sometimes unfamiliar with what native speakers would consider more basic or common vocabulary. One ESL student, for example, volunteered the word *silhouette* in a class discussion, even though later in the same discussion he had to ask the meaning of *sleeve*, and look up the word *snake* in the dictionary. Because Carson attempted to address both needs, one of the students’ main complaints about ESL was that the vocabulary of everyday life and interaction they sometimes studied was too easy. As Eddie commented,

> 7. they [ESL] used vocabulary words very lower level.
Although writing opportunities in mainstream classrooms were inconsistent in frequency and quality, every student in ESL classes at Gateview received rich and plentiful experiences with written output. This was in large part due to Carson’s own individual vision of the goals of ESL. Because of her emphasis on academic preparation, she made a point of including extended composition projects in every ESL class. Students wrote in a variety of genres. Every student, from beginning to advanced, wrote descriptive and narrative compositions inspired by the Bay Area Writing Project teaching philosophy and techniques (see Caplan & Kech, 1980). Every class level had unique projects as well. Students in the ESL government class were required to write their own legislative bills. Each year, the ESL 2 (intermediate-level) class wrote and illustrated storybooks based on folk tales from their native countries, which they then read for children at a local elementary school. Students in ESL 3 (the most advanced level) were required to do a library research project using outside sources. They chose topics such as the reunification of Germany or the enforcement of child abuse laws.

In contrast to most mainstream teachers, Carson was mindful of students’ penchant for covering a lack of understanding by memorizing and repeating back language used in instruction and was vigilant in working against it. She was likely to call students’ bluff when they incorporated language from source materials into their work without a clear understanding of its meaning. For example, when one student copied sentences from the book verbatim onto her homework and then read them aloud in class, Carson told her,

8. Jane, you’re new to this class, but what we do is, we never write down words we don’t understand.

In counteracting this propensity, Carson emphasized the ability to think critically and to support opinions. One of the school counselors at Gateview observed,

9. She [Carson] makes them—she makes a situation a seed bed, where opinionation can grow. That’s what she likes to foster.

**Structure and Goals of Instruction**

ESL classes also differed significantly from mainstream classes in terms of the assumptions that guided teachers in planning instructional goals and in the institutional constraints and freedoms that impinged upon these goals. The content and course objectives of high school subject-area instruction presumed a relatively stable student population with a uniform knowledge base shaped by 8 or 9 years of previous
instruction in U.S. elementary and middle schools. Thus, curriculum in subject areas depended on continuity, with content in any one course built upon a knowledge base that students were assumed to possess from previous courses in the sequence. In mathematics, for example, students were expected to follow a sequence from algebra to geometry to advanced algebra to math analysis to calculus. Even though there might be several algebra courses offered in any given year, each course had to be similar enough so that the following year’s geometry teachers could assume a uniform knowledge base. Thus, all teachers at a given level followed the same course text and aimed to cover the same material. Mathematics courses followed the strictest uniformity in content and sequencing, while English and social studies teachers appeared to have the most latitude of subject-area teachers. Even in these areas, however, teachers worked together to ensure that whatever material was used at one grade level would not be repeated by another teacher in subsequent grades.

Curriculum in mainstream subject areas was also constrained by many forces outside the classroom, including state curriculum guidelines, district guidelines, the curriculum set by each subject-area department at Gateview, and the requirements of standardized measures such as Advanced Placement tests. For example, the social studies curriculum was shaped by a state directive that students receive at least 1 year of world history, 1 year of U.S. history, and 1 semester each of economics and of U.S. government while in high school. Less formal constraints also acted to routinize the curriculum. Because subject-area teachers worked as a group within their respective departments, curricula were mutually negotiated and predetermined by the department as a whole. For example, the syllabus for Advanced Placement English classes was set by a mandatory summer reading list for incoming students. Curriculum was also established by custom, as colleagues worked together over the years to develop and share resources for teaching a given unit.

In contrast to the relatively static curriculum and student population of mainstream classes, one of the most salient ways in which the ESL program at Gateview differed was that it was constantly changing. Over the years, Carson had dealt with a succession of students from widely varying cultural and linguistic groups, socioeconomic levels, and educational backgrounds ranging from refugee camps to exclusive private schools. Every September, the number of students entering the program was different, and new students suddenly appeared at random intervals throughout the school year. The constantly shifting needs of the population in ESL classes can exercise a profound effect on course curriculum and planning. Like many other ESL teachers, Carson had looser guidelines and considerably more autonomy in
setting course curriculum than most mainstream teachers. However, she also faced challenges stemming from constant change which mainstream teachers did not face. Carson’s response to these challenges was a spiral syllabus and unit-based approach to curriculum that followed a similar format and routine for all classes. It could easily be adjusted up or down or supplemented, depending on the needs of the class. She had built a repertoire of units based on abridged versions of classic U.S. and British literary works which she drew upon and adapted for each ESL 2, ESL 3, and reading class. However, because the class format was similar at all levels, students sometimes experienced a feeling of déjà vu, contributing to an impression that ESL was an easy class. Eddie complained that,

10. ESL is kind of like re—I mean, every time is review. I mean, every year is exactly the same thing.

Students therefore tended to devalue ESL instruction compared to mainstream classes.

The latitude allowed ESL teachers also made it possible for different teachers to create very different instructional environments based on their own interpretations and beliefs about appropriate ESL curriculum and goals. Recall that there were two sometimes competing goals for ESL instruction. One goal was to equip newcomers with the background knowledge and skills commensurate with native speaker academic preparation for high school graduation and possibly higher education. The other goal, which is perhaps unique to ESL, was to make students more comfortable with the language of their new home, and to make them familiar with the language used in everyday life and interaction.

Carson emphasized the first goal, of preparing students to compete academically with native speakers of English. This is how she described her agenda:

11. My philosophy is that I want to prepare the students as soon as possible to get into the mainstream of the school. And since most of them are college bound, it tends to be more academic.

The teaching agenda of Malone, the new ESL teacher at Gateview in the final year of the study, contrasted considerably with that of Carson. She focused on the other goal, of making everyday language more familiar to students. She believed that,

12. ESL should be a comfortable, safe environment for the students to explore and discover the language, and use it and experiment with it, so they can learn how to be comfortable with it, and not afraid of it.

and
13. In ESL they should have a lot of drama, and a lot of, uh, situations they can act out, so they can feel the language. And, my goal is that they can get some—soul into the—some, some, some soul of the language into them. And once it’s in there, then they’ll feel more comfortable with being in this country.

Malone emphasized activities such as role playing, information gap exercises using everyday vocabulary (e.g., giving directions), and expressive writing.

It turned out, however, that the Chinese American immigrants at Gateview High School did not particularly value instruction on the largely spoken, fluency-building content in ESL classes. Mei Li, for example, noted somewhat critically that

14. we have fun in this [ESL] class.

She evidently devalued ESL activities emphasizing everyday, communicative spoken language proficiency, and did not regard them as “real” learning. Anne complained,

15. . . . in this class [ESL], it’s going very slow, and the language seems kind of like emergency things. If you don’t learn it, you can’t—you have to be stupid.

She felt that ESL included instruction in language that learners should pick up naturally in the course of living in an English-speaking society and therefore felt that it was unsuitable and unnecessary to give formal instruction in it.

Some of the content in Carson’s class was devalued by students for this very reason. Because she construed this content as her main subject matter, Malone encountered more pronounced resistance. Taiwanese and Hong Kong immigrant students in her classes were often disruptive, bored, or unresponsive. It was not that Malone was a poor teacher. On the contrary, in both Carson’s estimation and my own, she was quite skillful. She employed a variety of classroom activities which emphasized student participation and worked to elicit language through authentic communication and student experience in her classes. Many of the activities she employed, such as publishing students’ poetry and personal reflections in a book at the end of the year, and using drama and role plays to facilitate spoken interaction, were exactly what one would find advocated in current ESL methods texts. However, her agenda did not match that of her students, and therefore increased their sense that ESL was stigmatized and remedial.

**Explicit Language Instruction**

Despite students’ perception that classes were too easy, ESL nevertheless provided students with essential forms of language instruction
not provided in the mainstream and activities which met students’ particular linguistic needs. On students’ written work, Carson provided explicit feedback which drew students’ attention to language form in a way that has been found beneficial to learners (see Bialystok, 1981; Chaudron, 1988; Ellis, 1984; Schmidt, 1990; Sharwood-Smith, 1981; Swain, 1985; Wong Fillmore, 1985). She noted grammatical and mechanical errors such as incorrect use of articles, prepositions, verb tenses, and faulty spelling, and supplemented subject matter instruction when necessary with explicit grammar instruction targeting students’ current weaknesses. Students learned to identify their own most frequent errors through proof reading exercises, as well as working with peers to identify and correct errors. Carson also incorporated language as a criterion in subject matter instruction. For example, worksheets and tests asked students to “Write five good sentences telling . . .” or “Use your own words and write about . . . .”

In contrast, out of all the mainstream classes at Gateview, explicit grammar instruction took place exclusively in English classes. Typically, activities focused on formalizing and labeling native speakers’ intuitive understandings about English usage, rather than on articulating principles or rules that nonnative speakers could apply in lieu of these intuitions. For example, students in one English class learned to differentiate possessive nouns (e.g., brother’s shoes, neighbor’s dog), contractions (it’s, they’re), and possessive pronouns (ours, mine) so that they would be aware of correct apostrophe placement. No explanation was offered in the lesson as to how these items differed in grammatical function, and their use was explained only through a few sentence examples. Another English class exercise focused on errors in sentence run-ons and fragments, errors which native speakers have been found to make with far greater frequency than nonnative speakers (Fein, 1980; Raimes, 1979), and in yet another class, students labeled individual sentences in a textbook exercise as simple, compound, or complex. This exercise did not instruct nonnative writers on producing a compound or complex sentence but simply put labels on what native writers already recognize as grammatical options for building a sentence.

Mainstream teachers often seemed to be at a loss in dealing with the particular sorts of grammatical errors made by nonnative language writers, such as verb tense and preposition errors. They lacked the linguistics background necessary to explain to students why their language was wrong. As a result, schoolwork returned by teachers showed that they often chose to ignore errors entirely. For example, on one student’s paper, the teacher left all errors unmarked, and simply wrote, “Syntax needs work—you lose clarity because of your expression.” Another student reported that his teacher had told him, “Just don’t
write too long, in one sentence.” These global comments would not be particularly useful to most writers, but they are particularly unproductive for nonnative language writers. More significant, however, is that such feedback indicates that many mainstream teachers were abdicating responsibility for instructing nonnative speakers on issues of language form.

Marking every error that nonnative writers make would, of course, be impractical as well as undesirable for students’ self-esteem. However, when mainstream teachers at Gateview did mark errors, they did it inconsistently, selecting a random mixture of stylistic, grammatical, and word choice errors which they corrected or circled without comment. For example, one teacher corrected an error of number (“a property”) in one line, while leaving a similar error in the next line (“different opinion”) untouched:

16 . . . . every man has the right to own a property and it is up to the government to protect that right. However, they have different opinion about . . . .

Lacking a native speaker’s intuitions about usage and learning primarily through vocabulary exercises and from academic sources, students made frequent errors in word choice and usage. Nevertheless, teachers tended to assume that students could alter such errors by ear. For example, one student wrote, “I wish you hadn’t spared my birth” (i.e., I wish you had not allowed me to be born), and “the founding fathers were a discontented faction of the British regiment,” (regiment meaning empire or citizenry). The student’s teacher simply wrote question marks next to sentences such as these, or circled a word with the comment Usage, evidently not realizing how cryptic nonnative speakers would find such feedback.

As a result of learning English largely through mainstream instruction, students said that they edited their written work by ear, while at the same time noting that their intuition about what sounded right was faulty. When I asked Eddie how he edited his compositions—by using grammar rules or by asking how it sounds—he replied,

17. By sound, or how it sounds. But I need the rule. Mostly I just, [hear by sound], but not the rule. Sometime, like, the rule is kind of important, but I don’t know much of the rule.

Feedback to learners regarding their pronunciation or spoken language errors was particularly problematic in a mainstream context. In a room filled with native speakers, teachers risked embarrassing learners who were extremely timid about speaking and who were subject to teasing or mockery from other students. Accordingly, mainstream teachers never discussed correct pronunciation, corrected student per-
formance, or even rephrased what an ESL students said in class. However, understandable or necessary, mainstream instruction nevertheless failed students in this respect.

In ESL, on the other hand, Carson was able to organize instruction so that students not only spoke frequently but were also evaluated on how they spoke. Learners were coached explicitly on speaking louder, more clearly, and maintaining eye contact while speaking; their pronunciation was corrected or rephrased when it impeded communication. ESL classes also included dictations to hone listening skills, which sometimes included homonyms or contrasting vowel sounds. Poetry was utilized to develop pronunciation and rhythm. Carson and the aides also audio- or videotaped some ESL class activities so that students could look at and evaluate their own language performance. Although students were not always particularly enthusiastic about hearing themselves on tape (an aide reported that they winced sometimes when they heard themselves speaking), such activities were useful in helping students towards a greater awareness of their articulation.

Socializing Functions of Schooling

The goals and organization of classroom instruction are the most obvious ways in which mainstream and ESL contexts differ in what they provide to L2 learners. There is another, less explicit but equally important function of schooling, however. Public schools, particularly high schools, are not simply vehicles for the transmission of academic knowledge. Most in the U.S. view them as having an important socializing function as well, as centers of teenage friendship networks and sources of extracurricular activities, and as sources of information about future schooling and career opportunities. The socializing function of schooling has been extremely important historically in assimilating new immigrants into U.S. society. In fact, accompanying the folk belief that immigrants should be mainstreamed as rapidly as possible is the implicit assumption that newcomers will inevitably be drawn into the social life of the school during this process. Thus, the folk belief dictates they will not only be motivated to learn English but also will come to share the same social outlook as their U.S.-born peers. In terms of peer interaction, the social aspect of Gateview High School provided a number of potentially rich opportunities for L2 learners to learn language through interaction with their native-English-speaking peers. Simply because these interfactional opportunities existed, however, does not necessarily mean that the English learners in this study had the ability or the inclination to take advantage of them.

Perhaps the single most salient aspect of observations of ESL students in mainstream classes was their reticence and lack of interaction
with native-speaking peers. Students were intimidated by the sociolinguistic environment of mainstream classes where, they complained, “the kids talk too much.” For example, in one instance, when a U.S.-born student tried to strike up a casual conversation with Eddie about one of the classes they shared, Eddie looked startled and even flinched a bit. Like most of the immigrant students, his response to the native speaker’s conversational initiatives was shyly uttered monosyllables. Interactions between native and nonnative speakers often appeared awkward and uncomfortable, and they were unlikely to persist beyond two or three turns.

While U.S.-born high school students seized any teacher-sanctioned opportunity for classroom interaction such as group work, Asian American immigrant students showed a preference for working independently in silence at their desks. Even when they were asked to work with other students, they were likely to be reserved and uncommunicative, allowing or forcing other students to take over their role in the group. In one group work exercise, for example, a student from Hong Kong (Douglas) remained completely silent, even though he had a specific contribution that he was expected to make to the group, and even though he had the information he had prepared on a piece of paper sitting on his desk in front of him. Over the course of the discussion, a native speaker in his group began to grab the paper off his desk and read items from it to the rest of the group, while Douglas remained quiet and sometimes withdrawn from the work of the group. Learners were often observed retreating from group activities after a few minutes in order to work alone.

The lack of interaction between U.S.-born and immigrant students had several sources. Learners expressed frustration and embarrassment at their spoken English ability, which made even the most casual interactions with native speakers an effort. Furthermore, as Mei Li observed, immigrant students did not usually share native speakers’ background in U.S. popular culture.

18 . . . . it’s very hard for a newcomer, especially, you know, you don’t know English, not very well. And then you don’t know about the society very much, you know, they talk about singer or movie star. You couldn’t know anything, right?

Thus, conversation was likely to be limited to the school-related concerns that they held in common. Racial and ethnic tensions between Asian American immigrants and the African American, European American, and Latino students at the school further complicated interactions.

Mainstream teachers at Gateview tended to play a very minor role in immigrant students’ acclimatization to U.S. schooling. They seldom
acknowledged the diversity of ethnic and cultural backgrounds found in their students, and many seemed to feel that it was not their business or responsibility. Furthermore, each teacher typically saw 150 to 175 students daily, leaving little time to pay attention to the backgrounds of students other than those who were having serious problems in their classes. It is not surprising, then, that a survey of mainstream teachers conducted by Carson one year showed that many of them did not even know who the English learners in their classes were, despite the fact that Carson circulated yearly memos with that information. Some teachers at Gateview incorporated ethnic perspectives into their curricula; for example, one English teacher did a unit annually on multicultural poetry featuring Asian American, African American, Latino, and Native American writers. Such activities, however, were the exception rather than the rule. For the most part, immigrant students’ ethnic background and adjustment to U.S. society were likely to come to mainstream teachers’ attention in only one of two ways.

One, mainstream teachers were likely to talk with Carson about English learners who had just been placed in their classes or who were having difficulty. Two, students were likely to write about their background in journals or essay assignments exploring personal experience. In fact, both Anne and Gary learned that writing poignant essays about the immigrant experience was an excellent strategy for winning mainstream English teachers’ attention and approval.

Outside of class, students seldom participated in Gateview-sponsored extracurricular activities. Students commented that their parents tended to place an emphasis on academic achievement to the exclusion of extracurricular and recreational activities that are typical for U.S.-born high school students. Comparing U.S.-born families’ attitudes towards extracurricular activities to her own family’s, Anne reflected,

19. They [U.S.-born families] have different values. They think if their kids are healthy, and they’re having fun, it’s more important than, you know, studying all day. And then, Chinese parents [are not] like that. Say if you don’t study, it’s the end of your life.

Gateview provided little in the way of role models for Chinese American students interested in extracurricular participation. There were never more than a handful of Asian American teachers at the school, for example, and none of them were from the local Chinese American community. Although the school had a Chinese American Student Society, immigrant students reported that U.S.-born students of Chinese ancestry held a monopoly on its leadership.

Furthermore, immigrant students did not always find U.S.-born students’ recreational pastimes particularly interesting or enjoyable. David, a student from Hong Kong, reported that he had engaged in
the venerable U.S. teenage pastime of cruising with some U.S.-born Chinese acquaintances. He found it difficult to understand how anyone could enjoy pointlessly driving around with the radio blaring, calling his experience “frustrating” and “too loud.” Most of these students’ social activities and associations, such as extended family get-togethers or church socials, occurred within the Chinese American community. Venturing outside of the community was not a comfortable, natural, or easy process, and students who desired to do so generally had to work at it. Students perceived so real a distance between themselves and U.S.-born peers that they referred to it as the “wall” or the “barrier.” Anne commented,

20. Because of the language barrier, they’re [ESL students] often separated from the society, they don’t feel they’re a part of it by themselves . . . . That’s why I think that friends that can speak your language are quite important while you are learning English in an English-speaking environment.

Thus, even though students at Gateview often spoke of ESL as though it were just another school subject, the program also played a facilitative role in the formation of peer networks and adjustment to U.S. school and society. In most of their school experience, students faced an overwhelmingly monolingual environment, where expressions of their native language and culture, if not actively discouraged, were certainly not encouraged. By opening up her classroom to ESL students at lunchtime and free periods, Carson provided students with a retreat from the English-medium mainstream, where students could be among others who valued and respected Chinese language and culture. In fact, Chinese-born students who had not been in ESL for years often came to spend their lunch hour among more recent immigrants. The importance of these associations to students was voiced by Anne, who wrote,

21. . . . having no friends speaking your language forces you to be cut off from your past.

The ESL program was also instrumental in the development of peer relationships among immigrants from various linguistic and cultural backgrounds at the school. Although the majority of the case study students’ friends and acquaintances were ethnic Chinese, each of them had friends from other countries as well, including Japan (Anne), Korea (Mei Li), the Philippines (Eddie), and Iran (Gary). The importance of ESL to students’ social life and interaction at school was evident in observations, where long hours of silence and impassivity in mainstream classes suddenly turned to noisy animation in ESL. ESL was where recent immigrants first formed their peer networks, and
those associations endured long after students went into mainstream classes. As Anne put it,

20. I have been with my close friends for years. And . . . most of my close friends, I know them before I knew how to speak English well.

Only these students understood what the immigrant experience was like, knew what students had left behind, and what they were going through at school, at home, and in U.S. society.

The ESL program also provided students with assistance in adjusting to U.S. life and society which was unavailable in the mainstream. Carson and her aides went well beyond the usual realm of teacher responsibilities, providing students with assistance including lunch time tutoring, course placement changes, college application counseling, and coping with family problems. Over the course of the study, they dealt with everything from an illegal chain letter circulating among students, to a young man’s failure to register for the draft, to student harassment in mainstream classes, to a swindling scheme in which a student gave $3,000 for luck charms to someone who told him he had a dangerous aura. Carson also worked, although with limited success, to get students involved in school activities such as the senior picnic or prom.

In sum, ESL performed a different and valuable role in students’ education in terms of socializing students into U.S. society. It also facilitated the development of a supportive peer group while they made the transition. Although students were undoubtedly isolated socially from native speakers of English when they were in ESL, the formidable impediments that students perceived to social interaction with native speakers made them equally isolated in mainstream classes. In the complex social world of high school adolescents, one could not simply assume that proximity would ensure interaction. In this context, then, the special emphasis on spoken language skills and the social opportunities afforded by ESL classes took on extra significance, creating one place in the school where students regularly interacted in English, albeit with fellow nonnative speakers.

CONCLUSION

What were relative advantages and disadvantages of learning English in mainstream versus ESL classes at Gateview? The main advantage of mainstream classes was plentiful, authentic input that served a genuine communicative purpose—to transmit the content of school subject matter. The mainstream curriculum also provided students with rich and plentiful linguistic interactions through the written mode. However, the structure of mainstream instruction allowed few oppor-
tunities for extended interaction. Furthermore, L2 learners seldom received explicit feedback or instruction on the target language, leaving them to depend on somewhat faulty intuitions about language form. Finally, although the mainstream offered many social opportunities for language use and interaction with native speakers on the face of it, closer examination revealed that newcomers to U.S. society were seldom able to take advantage of such opportunities and perceived a barrier between themselves and U.S.-born peers.

ESL classes at Gateview, on the other hand, provided students with language instruction and experiences not commonly available in the mainstream. Instruction emphasized productive use of both spoken and written language. Students were given explicit feedback on their linguistic production and were given appropriate instruction on linguistic principles and rules which could help them monitor their own production. The ESL program also offered students readily available opportunities for counseling and peer social interaction. Nevertheless, ESL was not a panacea for these students. Students stigmatized ESL as easy and remedial because instruction not only addressed their need for academic language that would facilitate transition to mainstream instruction but also instructed them on the language used in everyday life and interaction. The fact is that there was no truly appropriate educational environment for L2 learners at Gateview. Rather, students’ educational experience was a makeshift response of a system fundamentally geared towards the instruction of native speakers of the language.

This article depicts the experiences of ESL students within a single school. Nevertheless, Gateview High School’s response to the challenge of educating its language minority students is probably not atypical. Many schools initially respond to this challenge by superimposing a layer of ESL or bilingual education on an unchanged mainstream curriculum. Increasingly, however, educators are going beyond this arrangement, acknowledging that special language instruction that is isolated from and unintegrated with the mainstream curriculum is not sufficient to develop the language proficiency required to succeed in academic contexts and that mainstream instruction must be more responsive to these students’ needs. As van Lier (1988) has observed,

We increasingly find classrooms in which only a few, or maybe just one, of the learners speak a native language which is different from the language of instruction. For these learners every classroom is an L2 classroom, and unless they are left to sink or swim, every teacher in such a classroom is at least a part-time L2 teacher. (p. 7)

By highlighting the strengths and weaknesses of each environment, detailed ethnographic examinations such as this one contribute to
a long-term effort by educators in a variety of contexts to develop approaches that integrate language and content-area instruction.

How might mainstream instruction become more responsive to ESL student needs? At Gateview, perhaps the most pressing concern was to increase mainstream practitioners’ and administrators’ awareness of and sensitivity to learner needs. There were, in fact, many mainstream teachers with learners already in their classrooms who expressed interest in learning more about effective instructional approaches. These teachers’ concerns could be built upon in developing a collaborative dialogue with ESL teachers and in-service professional development. At Gateview, discussion might center on issues such as how ESL instruction is organized and what ESL teachers do; how input can be adjusted for nonnative speakers; how instructional activities can be organized so that they foster student-teacher interaction and student-student interaction; how written assignments might be organized in order to foster extended synthesis and analysis; how appropriate, explicit, and consistent language instruction for ESL students might be incorporated into mainstream instruction; and what sorts of special help in counseling and social adjustment ESL students are likely to require.

How might ESL instruction become more responsive to the needs of students who will learn most of their English in mainstream classes? At Gateview, Carson prepared students to take on mainstream academic and linguistic demands by adopting a content-area approach to instruction. A survey of integrated language and content-area programs in U.S. schools now being completed at the Center for Applied Linguistics (1993) indicates that thousands of program across the country already have adopted similar approaches to linguistic minority student instruction. Such approaches necessitate a change in the disciplinary isolation of ESL educators from teachers in academic subject areas. The development of a curriculum that reflects both mainstream content objectives and the particular needs of ESL students requires that ESL teachers work closely with colleagues who have expertise in subject areas. At Gateview, some of the factors that Carson considered in implementing a content-ESL curriculum included the constantly changing population of ESL students and their diverse levels of English proficiency and academic preparedness; school curriculum guidelines for subject areas; opportunities in the content-area curriculum to interweave rich opportunities for language input and output in both speaking and writing; and students’ need for preparation in the vocabulary and register of mainstream subject areas.

Although efforts such as these can enhance ESL and mainstream educators’ understandings of their mutual roles, they nonetheless preserve a separation between them. More fundamental changes, leading to a systematic integration of content and language, might well serve
students best. ESL and mainstream teachers might, for example, work collaboratively to develop a curriculum for language minority students that parallels the regular curriculum. In some programs, collaboration might lead to the formation of interdisciplinary teams of ESL and content-area teachers who instruct both learners and native speakers of English. Such a realignment of instructional roles is no doubt easier to accomplish at the elementary level than it is at the secondary level, where disciplinary boundaries are firmly established. At the same time, however, the increased linguistic and academic demands made of older learners make integrated content-area programs, if anything, more crucial for them. Collaboration between ESL and mainstream educators should also go beyond the classroom. The exclusion of language minority students’ native languages and cultures in the mainstream at Gateview, and resulting barriers students perceived to interaction to participation, confirm the notion that students need a schoolwide atmosphere in which diversity is respected and valued. Changes such as these often begin with individual educators who examine their own instructional context and include the means and the colleagues to initiate a collaborative dialogue. Although the form that these collaborations take will vary by context, they all begin with a comparative understanding of and sensitivity to the strengths and weaknesses of each of these contexts as language learning environments.

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Responding to students’ texts is central to successful composition teaching and learning, yet many ESL writing teachers are fearful that their responses to students’ academic prose may appropriate student texts and thereby disempower their students. This paper reviews the historical bases for the appropriation issue in native English speaker (NES) and ESL writing classrooms, then focuses on the reasons for the development of myths of appropriation: the exclusion of the social context in writing, both in the classroom and in academic discourse communities, as well as a tendency not to differentiate intervention from appropriation. As a direct result of these myths, many teachers have stepped outside the communication processes of their students. Instead of entering the conversation of composing and drafting, instead of helping students negotiate between their interests and purposes and the experiences and intentions of their academic readers, many teachers have retreated into a hands-off approach to student writing. This article concludes with suggestions that encourage teachers to use their roles as writing experts and cultural informants to empower students in their writing.

Responding to students’ texts has always been central to teaching writing. As we have embraced process writing, however, our methods of responding to student writing have changed. We used to treat students’ texts as finished products, and we responded to and evaluated that product; now we usually intervene and respond at several points during the writing process. Because we comment on students’ work in progress, the kinds of comments we traditionally made on the final draft are no longer sufficient and may even be counterproductive. In addition, many of us have discovered that product-based responses used during process-based intervention can result in the potential problem of appropriating students’ texts.

I had been teaching ESL writing for nearly 20 years when I first encountered the phrase “appropriating student text” in two compan-
ion pieces about teacher response to native English speaker (NES) writing. In the first, “On Students’ Rights to Their Own Texts: A Model of Teacher Response,” Brannon and Knoblauch (1982) discussed the concept of authority in the classroom, and in so doing, defined the context for text appropriation:

In classroom writing situations, the [teacher-reader] assumes primary control of the choices that writers make, feeling perfectly free to “correct” those choices any time an apprentice deviates from the teacher-reader’s conception of what the developing text “ought” to look like or “ought” to be doing . . . . Student writers, then, are put into the awkward position of having to accommodate, not only the personal intentions that guide their choice-making, but also the teacher-reader’s expectations about how the assignment should be completed. (p. 158)

In the second article, Sommers (1982) used the word appropriating as she described the role of the teacher in a writing classroom: “The teacher appropriates the text from the student by confusing the student’s purpose in writing the text with her own purpose in commenting” (p. 149).

Like many writing teachers, I was curious about and puzzled by the concept of appropriation. Greenhalgh (1992) summarizes the dilemma I faced in my composition classes:

Teachers of writing regularly face the task of advising students about their work-in-progress. The task is problematic because it raises many practical and theoretical issues. Not least is the ethical issue of rights and responsibilities with respect to texts. Researchers recommend that a teacher must somehow make it possible for students to take control of their own writing. A responsible teacher, then, would be a responsive reader, one who helps students identify and solve writing problems but . . . . avoid[s] unwittingly appropriating the draft. Responsible students would, in turn, be their own best readers, taking responsibility for solving writing problems of their own making. (p. 401)

Greenhalgh argues that teachers must therefore find ways to comment on student writing while at the same time respecting the differences between teacher and student responsibility for an emerging text. As a partial solution, she states, instead of seeking the ideal text that exists in teachers’ imaginations, teachers must negotiate with their students about the intentions of the text, and they must simultaneously broaden their expectations of successful student prose.

For ESL teachers, the issue of text appropriation during the last decade has been particularly complex, principally because it is entwined with several dichotomies: product versus process, accuracy versus fluency, and practical considerations of audience expectations versus creativity. In this article, I examine the question of text appro-
Appropriation in the light of these dichotomies and propose that appropriation of student text is largely a mythical fear of ESL writing teachers. Instead of being worried about appropriating texts, I believe that teachers should accept their responsibility as cultural informants and as facilitators for creating the social discourse community in the ESL writing classroom.

BACKGROUND

As I began to prepare this article, I realized I should investigate the reasons that appropriation became an issue in composition teaching. First, the revival of classical rhetoric described writing as an act guided by its situation—its purpose and audience (Bitzer, 1968; Faigley, 1986). If, in response to this perspective, teachers taught student writers to address readers and contexts outside the classroom, teachers could no longer measure student writing solely against their criteria for an ideal text. Next, a paradigm shift from product to process described by Hairston (1982) occurred as teachers and researchers began to practice teaching writing, as opposed to merely assigning and evaluating writing. As teachers began intervening in students’ drafts, they realized the theoretical awkwardness of their position, the pedagogical gap between the need to teach writing and the need for students to develop their own intentions and purposes for writing. Finally, as students practiced invention heuristics, drafted, and revised their prose—often in expressive, writer-based classrooms—the question of authority and ownership of writing arose (Bizzell, 1990; Bruffee, 1986; Fish, 1980). If the writer owned the text, and therefore had authority for and over that text, what part could the teacher play without “stealing” (i.e., appropriating) that text? These three issues—rhetorical situation, process methodology, and authority concerns—converge at the moment teachers respond to students’ drafts.

In retrospect, as a writing teacher, I could not see the larger picture of that paradigm shift; I was unable to distinguish between what Clark (1993) calls legitimate and illegitimate collaboration. Moreover, instead of understanding how the rights and responsibilities for making meaning in texts are shared by writers and readers, instead of responding to students’ texts as a surrogate academic audience, I began to fear that I was appropriating my students’ work. During the 1980s, appropriation became a buzzword for everything that was wrong with the old approaches to teaching writing; I could hardly go to a conference presentation without hearing about the evils of commenting (i.e., intruding on) student papers; about the “tyranny” of teachers’ responses; and about the student confusion that surrounded teacher response.
These presentations ended by warning teachers not to get in their students’ way, not to interfere with their writing, not to impose control or authority over their students’ writing.

Appropriation seemed particularly serious when it occurred in the ESL classroom. One reason for this focus on text appropriation was the result of a distorted view of the product/process dichotomy. Although most ESL teachers regularly integrated process and product approaches in their writing classrooms, researchers often sought to castigate the product of writing (and its absolute focus on the mechanical, the accurate, the “recipe” rhetoric) in favor of the creative, intellectually stimulating autonomy of process writing (Taylor, 1981; Zamel, 1976, 1980, 1982). At its most extreme, teacher intervention in student writing processes was seen as culturally imperialistic, an attempt to teach ESL students that U.S. academic rhetoric was somehow superior to other cultural rhetorics (Kachru, 1982, 1985; Ououicha, 1986). Carried further, these attitudes inextricably linked process writing with personal and expressive writing and academic writing solely with product-based pedagogy.

Furthermore, researchers suggested that in the event of teacher intervention, students either slavishly responded to teacher comments, relinquishing their authority over their texts, or they misunderstood teacher response; the resulting revisions were therefore at best no more successful than the original texts (Cardelle & Corno, 1981; Freedman, 1987; Freedman & Sperling, 1985; Purves, 1986, 1992; Schwartz, 1984). Zamel (1985) noted that teachers should “no longer present ourselves as authorities but act instead as consultants, assistants, and facilitators” (p. 96).

Like any interested teacher, I thought about what I heard and read. The idea of text appropriation was intriguing and worrisome. What was appropriation? Correcting a spelling error? Underlining a syntax error? Possibly, because error correction establishes the authority of the teacher and leads students to give up ownership of their texts. If students acquiesce in matters of black and white grammar errors, they may transfer that acquiescence to more complex teacher responses about rhetoric, audience, and levels of evidence. Was appropriation asking a question about content? Mentioning the need for additional detail? Possibly, because depending on the question or the comment, the teacher might be substituting her intention for the student’s. Directing the student to rearrange paragraphs, eliminate ideas, or add evidence? Probably, because the writing might then fulfill the purposes of the teacher rather than the student’s intent. As a consequence, the student who revised the text might well cede control of the text to the teacher.

So I drew away from writing comments on my students’ papers;
after all, when might I interfere with their objectives or crush their creativity? In what ways might I assume control or ownership over their texts? What might I say that would deter them from becoming independent writers? The fewer comments I made and the less I tried to “interfere,” however, the more fraudulent I felt as a teacher. And when I evaluated final drafts of student writing and wrote the summative comments that explained the grade, I often thought that I could have helped the students more if I had not been so worried about appropriating their texts. I began to resent my fear of appropriation because it had begun to affect my effectiveness as a teacher.

In time, I realized that I felt fraudulent because avoiding “appropriating” students’ texts conflicted with my philosophy of teaching ESL writing. My teaching philosophy is based on two assumptions. First, education is change, and the teacher’s primary responsibility is to provide opportunities for change in the classroom. In the ideal classroom, the students would have the foresight, knowledge, and perspective to approach, identify, and implement change in themselves. In reality, it is the ESL teacher who often acts as the change agent, who offers students a classroom atmosphere and cultural expertise that will allow them the choice of change (of education). Second, the major difference between isolated learning—through, for example, instructional television—and classroom education is the community of students and teacher whose goals are established and who work together to reach those goals. Communities are not ideal either, nor are they composed of clones; hierarchies, individual strengths and weaknesses, and different levels of commitment exist. In the ESL writing classroom, the teacher is responsible for establishing the classroom discourse community, for providing an atmosphere in which that community of writers can grow, and, especially at the beginning of the class, for providing the necessary scaffolding that will result in students’ opportunities to work together to change—to learn.

In light of this philosophy, I now believe that many of the appropriation arguments are myths and that these myths of appropriation grew out of teachers’ good intentions to withdraw from student texts in order to provide better learning experiences for their students. Two reasons account for the flawed theory of appropriation. First, the theoretical basis for defining text appropriation all but ignored the social contexts for writing: how writers negotiate meaning with their academic audience in mind, how peers are or are not able to make meaning from a student’s text, and how readers in discourse communities outside the classroom might construct meaning successfully from students’ texts. These situational contexts inside and outside the classroom were underrepresented and undervalued, particularly in light of the fact that many ESL writers are unable to identify the needs and
expectations of U.S. audiences. Second, like most new perspectives on pedagogy, the idea of appropriating student text was embraced and then exaggerated; in application, teachers would not utilize their expertise as cultural informants and experienced academic readers for fear of changing (i.e., educating) their students. However, the teacher exists because of her expertise, and it is therefore the responsibility of the teacher to share her cultural and rhetorical knowledge with her students, to intervene in student writing in order to educate her students.

APPROPRIATION AND SOCIAL CONTEXT

As I began to examine the meaning of appropriation, I realized that the original definition of appropriation excluded the social context of writing. With the possible exception of some personal writing, the processes and products of writing do not occur in a vacuum, and, in Flower’s terms (1979), most academic writing is reader based (i.e., written for someone other than the author), not writer based. Writing/reading theory has demonstrated that written communication has three interactive parts: the writer, the text, and the reader. The transaction that occurs among these three elements results in communication (Carrell, 1987; Meyer, 1982; Meyer & Rice, 1982; Rosenblatt, 1988, 1993). In order to communicate successfully, writers must therefore consider not only their purpose(s) but also the purpose(s) and expectations of their readers. The author's intentions, and the author's control (or ownership) of a text must be balanced by the increasing knowledge of the audience (Frank, 1992; Johns, 1992, 1993b; Schriver, 1992). Identification and analysis of audience is a complex process that involves more than a brief character sketch (“I'm writing this for novice skiers” or “to the President”): From discrete items like word choice to greater concerns with focus and with levels of evidence, to decisions about form and format—all these and more impact directly on the reader. As Arrington (1992) states,

First, writers should usually try to reduce a reader’s uncertainties about meaning as far as possible. Second, readers seem to need some conventions of written prose to help them reduce those uncertainties. These conventions aren’t absolutely or historically fixed, but they do help writers address and affect readers they don’t know and would likely never meet. (p. 327)

For academic prose, the audience outside the context of the writing classroom is U.S. academic readers who belong to various discourse communities: Each discourse community comprises a group of readers
who share similar objectives, values, and expectations about (among other things) academic prose. In the ESL writing classroom, the teacher serves not simply as an evaluator of products, and not only as an expert in the skills of written communication, but also as the surrogate academic audience. She is a liaison between student and discourse communities, and it is in this role that she “conspires” with her students in order to “manage, in advance, the encounter between writer and reader” (Geisler, 1991, p. 26). As Newkirk (1989) states, “No one (I hope) condones the practice condemned by Knoblauch and Brannon in which students must guess at some Platonic text that exists in the teacher’s imagination. But by the same token, the expectations of the teacher, the course, and the academy must interact with the intentions of the students” (p. 329). From this perspective, teachers collaborate with students not as gatekeepers but as coaches and discourse community experts who use their resources to help their students through the gate into those communities of writers.

A discussion of text appropriation must also include the social context of the ESL writing classroom. Within the class, written response to student drafts by teacher and peers also takes place in a discourse community; within the classroom community, teachers and students establish lines of communication. At the beginning of the class, when the community of the classroom is in a formative stage, teacher response to student writing parallels initial conversations between strangers. In my own classes, I begin that conversation by assigning writing that requires the students to analyze their writing in some way (through a description of the results of a learning styles survey, a discussion of individual writing rituals, or an observation of previous successful and/or unsuccessful writing). In this way, the essays themselves introduce the students. Still, because the students are strangers, my written comments on drafts tend to be more directional and more generic than my comments later in the course because I am striving to establish my place in the community of the classroom as I begin to represent the expectations of academic audiences. Students respond in the conversation by revising, and, during those revision processes, they discuss and negotiate possible changes with peers, with writing center tutors, and with me. As the processes of the developing conversation continues within the classroom community, members of this community of writers assume a variety of roles (as drafters, peer reviewers, revisers, and responders). As knowledge and experience within the community grows, students become more aware of their responsibilities to the classroom community, and of the need for intervention (by self, peers, and teacher) in their writing.

As the course progresses, the teacher accumulates knowledge of
individual student strengths and weaknesses, expectations, and needs. In my classes, my responses to student writing tend to become more individualized and shorter, but in this case, less is often more. For instance, because students’ writing processes and strengths differ, I approach each text with the writer in mind, becoming increasingly aware of the differing levels of language knowledge, background knowledge, and rhetorical experience of the writers. Consequently, within a single set of student papers, I may underline a particular stubborn grammar problem on one (“Again??”), praise the support in a paragraph on another (“Whoopee! This is great support”), and ask questions about audience awareness on a third (“How will the hostile audience [whom we have discussed in class and who is the assigned audience for this essay] respond?”).

Yet research focusing on the efficacy and effectiveness of teacher comments on student drafts does not take into account this social context. Often the results of such research label teacher responses as strictly mechanical, unhelpful, and confusing (Purves, 1984; Schwartz, 1984) without considering the context in which the comments were written. After examining written teacher responses on student papers, Zamel (1985) castigated teacher-responders:

ESL writing teachers misread student texts, are inconsistent in their reactions, make arbitrary corrections, write contradictory comments, provide vague prescriptions, impose abstract rules and standards, respond to texts as fixed and final products, and rarely make content-specific comments or offer specific strategies for revising the text. (p. 86)

Connors and Lunsford (1993) researching a corpus of teacher responses written on 3,000 NES student essays found a “large number of short, careless, exhausted or insensitive comments” (p. 215). According to Connors and Lunsford,

The job that teachers felt they were supposed to do was, it seemed, overwhelmingly a job of looking at papers rather than students; our [research evaluators] found very little readerly response and very little response to context. Most teachers, if our sample is representative, continue to feel that a major task is to “correct” and edit papers, primarily for formal errors but also for deviation from algorithmic and often rigid “rhetorical” rules as well. (p. 217)

Whether or not these ESL and NES papers were representative, they had been isolated from the social context of the classroom community and evaluated in that isolation; the one-dimensional quality of such research, and the assumptions made by the evaluators concerning the misreading, contradictions, and insensitivity of the responders, at
best weaken the results. Moreover, studies that asked ESL students to evaluate the efficacy of written teacher response has demonstrated that a great majority of students found the comments helpful, used the comments to revise, and particularly appreciated teacher response that led them to positive learning experiences in their revision processes (Cohen & Cavalcanti, 1990; Fathman & Wholley, 1990; Leki, 1990; McCurdy, 1992).

A researcher outside the social context of my classroom who examines just my written responses (above) on a midsemester set of ESL papers may classify my comments as erratic, useless, and/or appropriative. The researcher may miss the rationale and the result of the communicative negotiation between the student and the teacher, made within the established and mutually understood content and context of the classroom. Another example: Late in the semester, as my students begin drafting persuasive essays, they study logical fallacies. In peer review groups, they examine each other’s essays to discover and revise hasty generalizations or inadequately supported opinions. Before they turn in their final drafts, they know that I, too, will be looking for the fallacies (among other features and factors). If I find one, I promise to circle it with yellow highlighter, and in the margin to label the fallacy: “hasty” or “oversimplification” or “post hoc.” An outside examiner viewing those abbreviated remarks might conclude that I am being obtuse, negative, and appropriative. Instead, my students view it as a game; they fully understand the shorthand of the response, which reminds them of our classroom discussion and activates their background knowledge about logical fallacies.

This is not to say that misunderstanding, inadequacies, and contradictions do not occur in teacher comments, but rather that many teacher comments, seen within the context of a classroom or conference, are more communicative and more valuable than they seem when taken out of context. Furthermore, if a sense of community has been established and maintained in the ESL classroom, mutual respect and good will can overcome such errors. If, for example, a student does not know the correct verb tense, cannot identify the problem with focus in a paragraph, or is unable to answer a question about how an audience might respond to certain evidence, that student can consult with peers during a revision workshop, or the teacher during a conference, or a tutor during a visit to the writing center. Within the social situation of the classroom community, then, students and the teacher participate in the meaning-making process concerning intentions and communicative purposes that will be applied in student writing to the larger social context—the academic discourse community outside the classroom (Johns, 1993a; Johns, 1993b; Reid, 1989).
Research that considers the social contexts for academic writing has demonstrated that even many NESs must learn about academic discourse communities; they must be taught to identify, analyze, and fulfill audience expectations (see Faigley, 1985; Greenhalgh, 1992; Onore, 1989; Thompson, 1989). Interestingly, even in early appropriation discussions Brannon and Knoblauch (1982) did not believe that teaching takes place in a hands-off environment. Instead, they felt strongly that teachers should be intervening in student texts:

The challenge we face as teachers is to develop comments which will provide an inherent reason for students to revise; it is a sense of revision as discovery, as a repeated process of beginning again, as starting out new, that our students have not learned. We need to show our students how to seek, in the possibility of revision, the dissonances of discovery—to show them through our comments why new choices would positively change their texts and thus show them the potential for development implicit in their own writing. (p. 156)

If this is true for NES classes, it is essential for ESL writers, whose cultural schema for writing differs, sometimes dramatically, from that of their NES audience. Because their linguistic, content, contextual, and rhetorical schemata differ, they often have problems with the identification and fulfillment of U.S. audience expectations. For these students, a writing class is more than practice of acquired skills; it is a content course about the rhetorical and contextual expectations of their academic audience.

These ESL students have extraordinary needs. Teachers must therefore act as cultural informants as well as surrogate audiences. They must investigate the requirements and expectations of academic assignments and then help their students analyze and understand U.S. academic assignments and readers (Canesco & Byrd, 1989; Horowitz, 1986; Reid, 1992; Smagorinsky & Smith, 1992). In my classes, we often examine actual academic assignments from across the curriculum, analyzing the parameters of the assignment, identifying the expectations of that academic reader/evaluator, and discussing strategies to meet those expectations. In addition, from nearly the first day of class, I begin educating the students about contrastive rhetoric. Importantly, the students understand that they have choices and that each choice involves consequences. If, for example, they choose not to modify their rhetoric to fulfill the needs of their U.S. discourse communities, they may encounter confusion and misunderstanding from their readers. If, on the other hand, they adapt their rhetoric, they might find it difficult to readjust their writing when they return to their countries
of origin. I ask the students to experiment with their rhetorical presentation skills in the relatively unthreatening atmosphere of our class before they make decisions about their U.S. academic writing assignments outside the classroom.

POWER AND EMPOWERMENT

At the foundation of the text appropriation argument is the problem of power and empowerment in the classroom. Should students have exclusive power (and ownership) over their texts? What is (or should be) the influence of the social situation of the discourse communities and readers within the academic context? How can teachers help to empower student writers? What is the role, and what is the level of authority, of the teacher in student writing processes?

At the foundation of my teaching philosophy is a firm belief that power does not have a finite quality. The teacher does not have to give up power in order to empower her students. Instead, teachers must introduce situations and contexts in which students can feel empowered, some of which students may not have considered previously; we must introduce students to ways in which they can learn to gain ownership of their writing while at the same time considering their readers.

One of the problems with student empowerment lies in the definition of academic writing. Unlike much of the writing discussed in conference presentations and research, the audiences and purposes of academic writing rest on asymmetrical relationships among the elements of writer, text, and reader. First, in contrast to much personal writing—diaries, letters to familials, and the like—academic topics are usually assigned, and the written product is evaluated. Next, the audience for academic writing is often limited to the person who also designs, assigns, and assesses that writing, so the relationship between the writer and the reader does not approximate that of most other socially situated writing. Instead of writers having an expert-to-novice relationship, or a colleague-to-colleague relationship with their readers, the relationship is skewed: novice-to-expert, with the expert (teacher/reader) assessing the novice (student/writer) in ways that impact on the writer’s life. Teacher/readers also face unusual social interactions in their responses to and evaluations of student writing. They often play several roles, among them coach, judge, facilitator, and gatekeeper as they offer more response and more intervention than an ordinary reader (Freedman & Sperling, 1985; Johnson, 1992; Moxley, 1989; Radecki & Swales, 1988).

As anomalous as academic writing seems, there are other academic
parallels. Grant proposals are submitted for review, and articles, like this one, are examined and carefully reviewed. In each of these cases, authors write for a group of unknown readers whose expertise may be greater than theirs; in each case, there is an evaluation (and in some cases, even a grade) for the work. For each, there is a potential for written feedback, sometimes detailed with suggestions. If the writers are fortunate enough to be advised to revise and resubmit, surely those (experienced, academic) writers will strive to make the necessary changes for resubmission in order to appeal to and satisfy the expectations of the readers/evaluators. Because of their level of expertise and experience, they may question some of the comments, but generally they will revise with the readers/evaluators in mind. Finally, in each case, acceptance of the proposal or article results in some direct benefit to the writer (money, fame), while rejection sends the opposite real-life message.

Are the grant readers and the editors appropriating the text of the experienced academic writers? Are those writers abandoning their creativity and their independence as writers by revising their manuscripts? Is it any wonder that students look to teachers’ comments and responses, striving to fulfill those expectations because in doing so they serve their own self-interest? When I receive a manuscript for revision (and the initial feeling of rejection has waned), I find that the comments by reviewers usually have been made to more carefully describe the parameters and constraints of the social context and to point out inconsistencies that might later prove embarrassing. Ideally, they offer me new perspectives, they open new areas for communication, and they allow me to see more clearly my writing through readers’ eyes in the discourse community for whom I am writing. If the reviewers praise the work I have done well, make specific suggestions for improvement, and offer additional ideas and resources, I am grateful for the insights, and I am empowered to revise. If, on the other hand, the review is unhelpfully vague, if an article or grant proposal is rejected without comment, or if even one remark is off-handedly sarcastic, revision is much, much more difficult for me.

Therefore, when I respond to student texts in my classes, I try first to describe what those student texts seem to say, discuss the linguistic and rhetorical choices the students have made, and offer alternatives that are based on my knowledge of U.S. academic audience expectations. I think of these processes as intervention, as an effective use of my cultural knowledge that can assist my students in their entrance into the U.S. academic community. If this is appropriation, I am guilty. However, I see my intervention as a direct result of student needs, probably more directive (i.e., content based) than I might be with NESs. Although I try not to appropriate students’ language by, for
example, rewriting passages, I often indicate directly how academic readers might respond, and I offer rhetorically based choices. If, instead, I would refrain from intervention in order to avoid appropriation, I believe that I would abdicate my responsibilities as a cultural informant and an educator.

**INTERVENTION AND EMPOWERMENT**

So what about the appropriation of student work? Do ESL students expect and need directive teacher response? Because academic writing is a social endeavor, and because, as the teacher, I know more about the parameters and constraints of academic writing, I believe that it is my responsibility to intervene in my students’ writing. The teacher is a resource and an authority as well as a facilitator and a member of the classroom community—which, like all communities, comprises a hierarchy. I agree with Mitchell (1992):

My job is to orchestrate: I probe students to find out what they really want to focus on; help them find models of writing; discuss the elements of style and teach students to analyze style as a basic for designing their projects; ask questions that encourage deeper reading of models; comment on drafts; present evaluative workshops based on common patterns of error in each set of paper I read; push students to work beyond what they perceive as their capacities. (p. 400)

For those who feel that this view is too narrow, too teacher-centered, too formalistic, I offer the following: Some years ago, when I received an Exxon grant, I decided I needed to know more about statistics, so I enrolled in a class convenient to my teaching schedule. It turned out to be an Honors Statistics class, a dozen bright-eyed undergraduates and me. For fully 2 weeks I sat in class, trying with increasing desperation to understand the three languages: the ordinary English language of greetings and discussion, which made up about a third of the class; the language on the board, filled with symbols; and the simultaneous explanation of those symbols by the professor in statistics as a foreign language. The worst, though, was the freedom within the class. Regularly, the professor would demonstrate three ways to solve a problem; he would mention in passing that we were to determine, through analysis and trial, which of the three was preferable.

I couldn’t. I didn’t understand the statistics discourse community: I didn’t have the necessary linguistic, content, contextual, or even rhetorical schemata that would allow me to function. Because I knew so little, I could not enter into the verbal analyses of the variations; in fact, I could not even follow them. And, as my affective filter rose,
I was able to take in less and less. What I needed was a single way to solve a problem, one that I could understand linguistically and schematically, and then I needed adequate practice to make it my own. I needed the professor to pay attention to what I didn’t know and to intervene in the problem-solving processes so that I could succeed. And secretly, what I believed was that the professor knew which of the ways to solve each problem was the best (for me? for the discourse community? for efficiency?), but that for reasons of his own (his choice to be the keeper of the secret answer? the culture of statistics as a mystery? his desire to be cruel to me?) he had chosen not to tell me. At the end of the third week of class, overwhelmed, I talked with the professor and changed into a different class, one in which the professor was willing to say “Here’s the best [fastest, easiest, more accepted] way,” and to offer worksheets, class discussion, and office hours (all in one language: classroom English). He has remained my statistics mentor to this day.

ESL writing classes, I believe, are no less disorienting than my experiences in the statistics class. Therefore, ESL writing classes should be pragmatic places in which students learn the essentials of academic writing. Written literacy does not come naturally, particularly for L2 writers, for whom the context for writing needs what Arrington (1992) calls a “social translation.” I suspect that our students think that there is just one correct way to write, and that we teachers know but won’t tell them. In order to demystify the writing process, I believe that teachers must intervene to provide students with adequate schemata (linguistic, content, contextual, and rhetorical) that will serve as a scaffolding for writing, then offer opportunities to discover coping styles and strategies that will result in effective communication (Harris & Silva, 1993). And because writing is an act of confidence, we must help students to see both the potential and the problems in their writing, and we must be able, through our intervention, to send our students back into the writing process with a concrete plan for improving their writing. I therefore show my students ways to fulfill audience expectations, but I remind them again and again that I am providing only a skeleton for effective communication. The muscles, the ligaments, the filling out of the skeleton comes only with experience, practice, and additional intervention.

AVOIDING APPROPRIATION

Can appropriation of student text occur? Of course. In fact, the greatest potential for appropriation is in the most process-based, writer-based classes, particularly those in which evaluation occurs solely
on the final portfolio of writing. Although it may seem that appropriation of student texts is least possible in this situation because the power of the grade is not behind the teacher’s comments, in fact the specter of the final grade looms large in students’ minds, particularly when interim evaluation is not specific and therefore is unknown. In such classes, the teacher is simply one member of the writing community in which, supposedly, all members have equal status; students turn in draft after draft, and the teacher comments (orally or in writing) on each draft, encouraging students by making suggestions for improvement (or asking questions that are, in actuality, suggestions) but not evaluating the writing directly.

Unfortunately, the more assistance the teacher offers, the less responsibility the student needs to take. Students are not, generally, any more ideal than the texts they write; their objectives in the class may differ dramatically from the teacher’s wishes that they become mature, experienced decision makers about their writing. Instead, for many students, the final grade is the bottom line, so these students will acquiesce willingly, reshaping their prose according to teacher comments with each successive draft. This ceding of responsibility for the text is easy in the expert-novice relationship between teacher and student; much more difficult for the teacher is working in tandem with a student while simultaneously requiring that all decisions be the purview of the student. The results are often predictable: If judgments concerning the improvement of student writing remain the sole province of the teacher, then the student may choose not to make choices, not to negotiate with the expert/teacher to solve problems. At the end of the course, when the final writing is assessed, the “owner” of the writing may be dual—the student and the teacher—but quite suddenly the teacher/collaborator is the evaluator. This sudden change in roles, from facilitative to evaluative, is at best confusing for both student and teacher, and the evaluation may easily focus on the collaborative success rather than on student achievement.

Fortunately, with substantial effort and self-discipline, we can assist our students without appropriating their texts. First, we need to bring our students into the conversation about response by discussing their expectations about the teacher’s role. I work with the students to identify and describe criteria for successful U.S. academic writing, the criteria by which we will all respond to student papers. I ask students to write metacognitive memos or journal entries that reveal their intentions, describe their struggles, and analyze their rationales, for writing strengthens their investment (and ownership) in their writing. Second, we must teach students the skills and strategies to reread their own writing as the reader, not the writer, of the text; to do this, we must model for our students how U.S. academic audiences read, which
discourse conventions they expect, and how they respond to texts. This training is more time-consuming and complex for me than simply reading and marking student drafts; however, the students gradually learn to be aware of the discourse communities for whom they write and to modify their intentions to fulfill the expectations of their audiences. The result of this training (this educating) may be students who grow into independent writers, capable of making effective choices in their future writing. My job as responder, as Elbow (1993) advises, is to look “hard and thoughtfully at [each] piece of writing in order to make distinctions as to the quality of different features or dimensions” (p. 91). As I read the student memos that accompany their writing, I gain insights into student intention that makes response and intervention more effective. As a consequence, I am both direct and directive as I suggest revision options. Finally, as I praise what each student does well, I try to individualize response: Which student needs additional support? Which “tough love”? Which a touch of humor?

Moreover, responding to student writing should be a learning process for the teacher as well as for the student (Bates, Lane, & Lange, 1994). As teachers of academic prose, we must first relinquish the concept of the ideal text and approach our students’ texts with their intentions and authority in mind. Then we must meet each of our students at his/her developmental stage, intervening individually in ways that will allow the student to learn. Next, we can learn to respond responsibly by reexamining our intervention strategies and analyzing our goals by considering such questions as

- When and how frequently during the writing process should I respond?
- Who is the student, and in what ways can I best respond to this student?
- How can I respond to the student’s writing so that the student can process the comments and apply the specifics of my response?
- Which role(s) should I play in this response: responder, consultant, describer, coach, evaluator?
- Where should I respond: in conference, in class? directly on the paper or in a written memo at the end of the paper?
- Who else should be responding to the student’s text?
- What form(s) of response (written, oral, individual, group, formal or informal) would be most successful for the student?
- When should my response be global (i.e., focusing mainly on the major strengths and/or weaknesses) or discrete (i.e., focusing on local concerns—single items) in the discourse?
• What are my objectives for this writing task? That is, what do I want the students to learn?

Finally, while the teacher is the expert resource concerning academic prose and discourse communities, students must be taught to authentically engage in choice making and problem solving, and to accept responsibility for their own writing. The teacher then becomes the respondent instead of the initiator in the response conversation, and, rather than a monologue, response becomes a dialogue in which teacher and student negotiate meaning (Murray, 1985).

CONCLUSION

Despite its sometimes extreme applications, the research on appropriation of student texts has provided some useful insights for teachers. It sensitized me to the differences between the summative evaluation of written products and the formative intervention in student drafts (Horvath, 1985). It also demonstrated the multiple roles that writers must assume as readers, responders, coaches, and expert members of the academic discourse community.

Articles on appropriation of student texts have all but passed out of the NES literature; instead, the focus is on empowering students to enter discourse communities. Yet distortions of the appropriation arguments still persist in some ESL writing classrooms. These myths of appropriation may give a very few teachers license to abdicate their responsibilities as cultural informants and surrogate academic audiences—as educators. For most teachers, however, seeing intervention in the wider context of discourse communities opens the door to a classroom in which teachers begin by responding to students’ own purposes and goals and by negotiating text meaning through questions, conferencing, and written comments.

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THE MYTHS OF APPROPRIATION 291
“Talking Circle”: Conversation and Negotiation in the ESL Classroom

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Language classrooms are often said to provide little opportunity for student-generated talk and meaningful use of language. However, this research shows that one classroom event, the talking circle, can provide a rich opportunity for students to extend their receptive and productive repertoires in the L2. Moreover, this type of instructional activity creates opportunities for learners to engage in meaningful communication, on the one hand, and to practice recently acquired social and linguistic knowledge, on the other. Both are appropriate activities for the L2 classroom. Results of a microethnographic analysis of one talking circle in an elementary ESL classroom are examined in relation to specific academic, social, and communicative requirements that constrain or enhance language use and language learning. Discussion of these results illustrates the value of ethnographic research in increasing our understanding of talk and interaction in L2 classrooms.

Research in L1 classrooms has revealed that teachers tend to do most of the talking (see Cazden, 1988; Mehan, 1979). In most educational settings, the teacher sets the same instructional pace and content for everyone, by lecturing, explaining a grammatical rule, leading drill work, or asking questions to the whole class. Research in L2 classrooms tends to support similar conclusions. In terms of quantity of teacher talk, two thirds of classroom speech can be attributed to the teacher (Long & Porter, 1985; Nunan, 1989). In terms of the quality, there are also serious limitations. L2 classrooms have been characterized by an abundance of questions asked by the teacher (White & Lightbown, 1991); a predominance of display questions (Long & Sato, 1983); an extremely high proportion of teacher-initiated interactions (Bialystok, Fröhlich, & Howard, 1978); and a high number of imperatives related to classroom management and disciplinary matters and explanations (Ramirez & Merino, 1990). Thus, the quality and amount of student participation in L2 classes are indeed limited. As Sinclair
and Brazil (1982) point out, “the pupils have a very restricted range of verbal functions to perform. They rarely initiate, and never follow-up. Most of their verbal activity is response, and normally confined strictly to the terms of the initiation” (p. 58).

In recent years, discussions about L2 teaching have changed from a focus on grammatical form to meaningful interaction. In the view of many researchers and practitioners (see Allwright, 1980; Ellis, 1984, 1992; Pica, 1987; Pica & Doughty, 1985; Varonis & Gass, 1986), conversation and instructional exchanges between teachers and students—when authentic and relevant—can provide the best opportunities for learners to practice L2 skills, to test out their hypothesis about how the language works, and to get useful feedback. This type of meaningful conversation is what Allwright (1980) has called “real attempts at communication” (p. 185). He suggests that the benefit of this form of engagement for language learning is not only for the participating speaker but also for those listening. By listening to other students, learners can observe, and later practice, different communicative strategies used by others to keep the flow of the conversation.

The purpose of this article is twofold. The first goal is to demonstrate how the talking circle (a group activity used by the teacher to encourage talk and interaction) can provide rich opportunities to practice the L2 and to engage in direct and meaningful interaction. The second goal is a methodological one, to illustrate how a sociolinguistic/ethnographic perspective can increase our understanding of talk and interaction in L2 classrooms. The analysis of one recurrent event, the talking circle, will focus on the different phases comprising this event, the content of the talk, the social requirements for participation, and the use of different communicative functions.

METHODS

The research reported in this paper has been influenced by a variety of separate literatures, including ethnography, ethnography of communication, discourse analysis, and sociolinguistics. This combination of perspectives and approaches characterizes language use and language learning as dynamic and interactive processes embedded in complex social contexts. An important implication of this body of research is that there is much more to learning a language than learning the structural aspects of language. Students need to learn when it is appropriate to speak, in which circumstance, how to gain the right to speak, how and when to change a topic, how and when to invite someone else to speak, and so on. In other words, L2 learning involves
the acquisition of lexical, phonological, grammatical, strategic, and sociolinguistic knowledge (Hymes, 1981).

The study reported here is part of a larger study (Ernst, 1991) in which data were gathered during 1 school year through participant observation; examination of students’ work; and audio- and videotaping of students’ interactions in different school settings (e.g., ESL classrooms, cafeteria, homeroom classroom). Detailed fieldnotes, transcriptions of interviews, audio- and videotapes, maps and other records (e.g., schedules, report cards, students’ work and files) constitute the bulk of the data.

**Data Analysis**

Grounded on this general exploration of setting and participants, everyday events in the ESL classroom (e.g., writing, story reading/discussion, talking circle) were identified and videotaped. Microanalysis of videotapes was based on recent work in the analysis of face-to-face classroom interaction (see Bloome, 1987; Cook-Gumperz & Gumperz, 1982; Green, 1983; Green & Wallat, 1981; Green & Weade, 1987, Gumperz, 1981, 1982; Hymes, 1981; Weade & Green, 1989). The system provided a principled approach for freezing, reconstructing, and analyzing recurrent events within and across different groups of students, across instructional and noninstructional settings, and over time.

As shown in Figure 1, microanalysis of classroom events required a series of steps. The first involved making a transcript of the activity based on narrative records, video-, and/or audiotapes. The second step involved the construction of detailed maps of interactions. These maps served to facilitate the identification and examination of particular variables such as the establishment of norms and expectations for participation, topics of discussion, emerging and recurring themes, and communicative functions. Maps also provided a representation of classroom events in terms of message units, interaction units, and phase units. *Message units* (MU) are minimal units of meaning and were determined by considering delivery (e.g., pitch, intonation, stress, pauses, nonverbal behaviors). An MU is comparable to a free morpheme in structural linguistic terms (Green & Wallat, 1981). MU boundaries are marked by contextualization cues. *Interaction units* (IU) are sequences of conversationally tied message units (e.g., teacher: “Hello Misha;” student: “Hi.”). *Phase units* (PU) are pedagogically tied instructional sequence units (e.g., question-response segment, story discussion segment).

Step 3 involved an analysis of maps. Once a map was constructed, it was possible to explore frozen actions and talk for recurrent patterns.
FIGURE 1
Analytic Steps Used in Mapping Instructional Conversation

Step 1. Transcription
Typescript is prepared from videotape. Transcript lines are assigned, numbering from 1. Transcript is segmented into message units through the observation of verbal and nonverbal cues in the video.

Step 2. Map Construction
*Interaction Units* (i.e., sequences of tied or cohesive message units) are determined post hoc on the basis of prosodic cues and the social and conversational demands made and/or responded to by participants.
*Instructional Sequence Units* (i.e., sequences of tied interaction units) are determined post hoc on the basis of thematic cohesion.
*Themes* (i.e., topic threads) are designated post hoc in hierarchical units to characterize an interaction unit, a series of interaction units, a lesson phase, events, and so forth.

Step 3. Analysis
Bases of inference are recorded where necessary throughout the mapping process.
Questions and issues for triangulation are recorded as they arise throughout the mapping process.


Whereas maps of lesson structures (built upon transcripts) constituted the basis for the analysis, the original broader records (e.g., videotape, audiotape, narrative record) were used to provide a context for the information presented. In this way, data reduction, although kept to a minimum, facilitated the analytic search and interpretation.

In this paper, one recurrent event in an elementary L2 classroom is analyzed following a type-case analysis procedure (Erickson & Schultz, 1981; Green & Weade, 1987). One videotaped talking circle was selected for in-depth analysis from a total of 16 videotaped talking circles collected throughout the school year. For all of the tapings, a camcorder was placed in the back part of the classroom and aimed at the participants. Videotaping had previously occurred in the classroom, almost daily for approximately 4 months, so students were used to having a camcorder in their classroom. Once the camcorder was set up, it operated on its own. By using a wide-angled lens it was possible to capture the broad classroom context in which interactions were taking place.

A 16-min talking circle, videotaped on April 30, 1990, was selected for in-depth analysis for three reasons. First, sounds and images in the
videotape were exceptionally clear. Second, the five-phase structure, representative of other talking circles, was decidedly noticeable. Third, the extended section of teacher talk, in one of the phases was particularly useful when contrasting and comparing participation structures within and across phases. Careful observation of the videotape made clear that in this talking circle, the nature of the task changed—even when participants did not shift from one space or from one structure to another. Thus, one rationale for selecting this particular videotaped talking circle was the possibility of exploring Pica and Doughty’s (1985) suggestion that task rather than organizational structure can become a more important variable when analyzing language use and language learning.

Systematic exploration of this activity will be approached following the analogy between observation and taking pictures suggested by Wilkinson and Silliman (1990). They stated that at least four levels of information can be selected and filtered according to a series of different lenses. In essence, each of these lenses conveys a particular view—a wide-angled lens captures the contextual landscape in which interaction takes place, a regular lens explores how topics emerge and develop, a close-up lens provides a detailed analysis of patterns of interaction within an event, and a microclose-up lens focuses on a more detailed level such as the different communicative functions used by teachers and students or the opportunities available for student-initiated interactions. These observational levels filter information in different ways so that only selected factors can be seen through the lens used. Outcomes of this process are different sets of data representing different aspects of an event. In this study, the first level, the wide-angled lens, includes analysis of macrofeatures of the school and ESL program, or what Spradley (1980) terms a grand tour of the program. A second level of analysis deals with topic development. Academic demands are made clear through the content of the interactions and thus depend on which topics are emphasized, accepted, or abandoned by participants. These topics, however, are not brought along to an interaction ready-made for the participants to introduce into the interaction at some appropriate moment. Rather, topic initiation, development, and change are processes that are negotiated and jointly constructed by the participants during an interaction (Nunan, 1989).

A third level, that is, the analysis of the social demands, begins with an examination of the rules and expectations for participating that evolved across phases. This aspect of the activity can be identified by repeated observation of the videotape in conjunction with the exploration of structural maps of conversations. By analyzing message and interaction units, indicators of who was permitted to talk, in what ways, about what, when, for how long, and with what outcome became visible.
Of particular importance in understanding social demands is the notion of floor. That is, the right of access by an individual to a turn at speaking that is attended to by other individuals who at that moment function as listeners (Shultz, Florio, & Erickson, 1982). Simply talking alone does not constitute having the floor. The floor is produced through interactions; speakers and hearers must work together at maintaining it. If hearers stop attending a speaker or if a speaker is speaking without being attended by any audience, then, there is no longer a floor.

A fourth and final level of analysis focuses on the quality and quantity of teacher and students talk in relation to activity phases, themes, and rules for participation within this activity. For this analysis, every message unit was categorized according to source (teacher or student) and to communicative function. For example, a message such as: “All right so on Monday what group is in the listening center?” (see the Appendix, Segment 2, Lines 351–352) has a source (teacher) and a function (display question). Responses to direct interrogations were also categorized according to whether they were given in one clause or word (minimal) or in a more elaborated way (extended). Different message units were later organized in separate categories and frequencies that emerged from the data, according to their communicative function.

In this paper, a brief overview of the program and participants will be presented first. This will provide a backdrop for a detailed examination of other levels. These levels will be presented in the following order—the wide-angled lens, the regular lens, the close-up lens, and the microclose-up lens—reflecting an increase in the power of magnification.

**Program and Participants: The Wide-Angled Lens**

Arthur Elementary School (pseudonym) is located in an economically depressed neighborhood in a midsized city in north-central Florida. During the 1989–1990 school year, this school enrolled 602 limited English proficient (LEP) students—12% of whom attended the ESL pullout program. Students ages 6–11, speaking 20 different languages, receive instruction in English from regular classroom teachers and attend three 45-min periods in the ESL program—one period for conversational English, one for math, and one for reading.

As part of their everyday conversational ESL activities, 10 elementary LEP students gathered with the ESL teacher, “Grandma”—a senior volunteer in the ESL program, and the researcher in a talking circle. Although some students talked more and more often than the rest, all students actively participated in this activity. These students,
TABLE 1
Students Participating in Talking Circle

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Home Language</th>
<th>Gender</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Andy</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Korean</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Borui</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marcos</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michal</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Polish</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gabriel</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San-Ha</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Korean</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evelyn</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Misha</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Russian</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ji-Hae</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Korean</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ru-Chi</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tony</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hye-Kang</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Korean</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hyun-Tae</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Korean</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rolf</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>German</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

'Not present on this day.
'Arrived after the school year had stinted.

described in Table 1, all spoke little or no English at the beginning of the school year.

The talking circle is a total group activity that generally takes place at the beginning of the 45-min conversational English class. Almost every day, teacher and students gather in the talking circle to share and discuss experiences, anecdotes, news, special events, introduce the weekly theme, and the like. Although the teacher might open the discussion by suggesting a general topic, the overriding assumption is that the talking circle provides a place and an audience for students to discuss anything of interest to them. The purpose of this everyday event is, as stated by the teacher, “To help children talk” or, more specifically, to assist LEP students in the development of language conversational forms by exchanging and requesting information, asking and answering questions, and elaborating and repairing oral discourse.

FINDINGS

As illustrated in Figure 2, the talking circle can be described, structurally, in five phases: getting ready, entry, core, teacher’s agenda, and moving on. Boundaries of this whole event in terms of where it begins and ends and in relation to its five sequential phases are marked by participants’
inter factional work and by subtle shifts in verbal behaviors (i.e., control of interactions, turn allocation, quantity and quality of the talk, topics discussed) and nonverbal behaviors (i.e., proxemic shifts, gestures). Each phase has been labeled according to the central focus of participants’ talk and actions. For example, the initial phase, getting ready, begins when students arrive to the classroom and ends when students and teachers assemble with their chairs placed in a circle.

The analysis will focus on three interrelated and interdependent aspects: topic development, social demands, and communicative function of message units. For students to participate appropriately, they must understand the cues available to them at these three levels. To facilitate the discussion of topical, social, and communicative dimensions of classroom interaction, two segments are presented in the Ap-

FIGURE 2
Talking Circle’s Phase Structure, Topical Development, and Social Demands

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase</th>
<th>Topical Development</th>
<th>Social Demands</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Getting Ready</td>
<td>how many chairs; haircut; where are the students; how long in the circle; chair for Marcos.</td>
<td>bring chair to circle; talk with others if you want; join circle; sit down.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Entry</td>
<td>jumped out of the bathtub; chair for Gisela; jumped out of the bathtub; what is bathtub; everyone got a haircut; about this weekend; everyone got a haircut; yellow hair.</td>
<td>talk when designated; stay in the circle; listen to speaker; ask questions if you want; say something if you want; talk with others if you want; listen as teacher explains term; respond when called on.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Core</td>
<td>go swimming; getting a tan; you have a dinosaur; go swimming; Nintendo; getting a tan; go swimming,</td>
<td>say something if you want; listen to speaker; continue talking; ask/say something related to speaker’s talk if you want; say anything you want when called on by teacher.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Teacher’s Agenda</td>
<td>five groups will be called: green, blue, brown, purple and yellow; groups will work on centers: listening, writing, art project, computer and project/game; about chart; theme for the week is Cities; review of groups/centers; story: City Mouse-Country Mouse.</td>
<td>listen when teacher talks; look at chart held by the teacher; allow others to view chart; answer questions when called on; hold your questions for later; give group response to teacher’s question; volunteer by raising hand; respond when designated; clarify last comment; say one sentence about story.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Moving On</td>
<td>transition to centers.</td>
<td>move to designated place; walk quietly; take your chair with you.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

300 TESOL QUARTERLY
pendix. They are representative of the type of interaction that took place during Phases 3 and 4—the two longest and markedly different phases of this talking circle activity. Both segments will be further explored in the analysis.

**Topic Development: The Regular Lens**

One important dimension of classroom activities is the content of instructional talk. The topics discussed provide a signal to participants as to what is important to know, what to do, say, or perform to appropriately participate in classroom events. As illustrated in Figure 2, the content of teacher and student talk vary from phase to phase. For example, in Phase 1, or getting ready, although some participants moved towards the center of the room where the talking circle generally takes place, others were already arranging chairs in a circle. This “getting ready” behavior was also evidenced in the content of student talk (e.g., “How many chairs in the circle”) and teacher talk (e.g., “Michal and San-Ha are not coming”). Although other topics were mentioned (e.g., “She did have a haircut”), most of the talk dealt with procedural matters. In this phase the emphasis was placed on seeking or providing information about organizational aspects of the activity.

In the second phase, once most participants were settled in a circle, a series of verbal exchanges between two or more participants was initiated. As evidenced in Figure 2, the range of topics discussed was broad. This phase of the talking circle was apparently a warm-up period. As in the earlier phase, students mostly talked about things of interest to them such as participants’ changes in appearance (e.g., getting a tan, getting a haircut). Although several conversations were emerging simultaneously, three factors were common across sub-groups: Discussion of topics was brief, a variety of topics was mentioned, and topics did not have a procedural focus (as in the previous phase) but an expressive one. Throughout this phase, topics were brought up alternatively by teacher and students alike. In one way, the teacher’s role was similar to that of the students—at times a speaker, at times the audience. In another way, the teacher’s role involved supporting students’ conversations by encouraging, acknowledging, and extending their contributions.

Unlike Phases 1 and 2 where the content of simultaneous conversations shifted quickly from one topic to another, in the third or core phase, there was often a sustained focus on a single topic and single speaker. As in the second phase, the content of talk dealt mainly with students’ personal interests, experiences, or concerns. Two topics were recurrent throughout: going swimming and getting a tan.

In the following example, Ji-Hae (all names are pseudonyms) helped
by her brother, Hyun-Tae, extends the discussion of the topic going swimming by sharing two accounts. She begins by narrating one anecdote about being in Korea: She was swimming and the water was “too higher” (i.e., too deep).¹

What followed after Line 251 is Ji-Hae’s second recount. In this instance, she went to the swimming pool and found out that her “swim sweater” (i.e., bathing suit) was too small.

As evidenced in the above segment, students are contributing freely from their own experiences. As Ji-Hae narrates her story, her brother Hyun-Tae extends or clarifies the information provided (Lines 228, 229, 237). The teacher contributes to the conversation by listening and supporting students’ narratives (Lines 224, 228a, 230, 233, 236, 239). In addition, by acknowledging students’ messages (e.g., “um-huh,” “yeah”), repeating (“to the beach”), or extending previous comments (e.g., “shallow”), she indicates to students that what they have to say is important—that sharing personal experiences is of value. Thus, one

¹See Appendix for notation conventions.
important characteristic here is that students had ownership of the topics they talked about. Because they were encouraged to freely express and share their own experiences, the fear of being wrong, of not knowing the “right” answer, was avoided. This phase ends after Ji-Hae’s second account when the teacher announces “we are going to start a new plan.”

An analysis of the themes and interactions in Phase 4, or teacher’s agenda, suggests a sharp contrast between this and the preceding phases. The first and most obvious difference is the content of talk. Unlike Phase 3 where the focus of the discussion was an expressive one, in Phase 4, the discussion dealt with classroom management issues. Another important difference between this phase and the preceding ones can be noted in relation to topic control. Although in Phases 1 and 2, topics were brought up alternatively by teacher and students alike and almost exclusively by students during Phase 3, in this phase, topics are controlled solely by the teacher. Because the teacher wants to provide her students with information about a particular topic—that is, a new classroom arrangement—she does not allow for students’ contributions as in earlier phases. Because she has to cover a fairly large amount of information, opportunities for students to share some of the responsibility for generating the topics for discussion are constrained.

The closing phase, named moving on, is filled with directives from the teacher. The content of her talk indicated to students to which center to go, with whom, and, in some cases, what procedural actions were required (e.g., “If you go to the media center, you need to get a yellow frog”). As students’ names were mentioned and directives given, students proceeded to carry their chairs and settled around their designated table or center. In sum, the content of talk varied throughout the five different phases of this event. Each phase had a different set of participation demands marked by the content of the interactions.

Social Demands: The Close-Up Lens

So far, the analysis indicates that topics develop in relation to what is emphasized, accepted, or rejected. Similarly, the social norms of the event, derived mainly from the teacher’s actions, get established and reestablished as the event unfolds. In the first phase of the talking circle (see Figure 2), participants informed one another about organizational aspects of the activity. As participants worked on the physical arrangements required for this activity (e.g., bringing chairs to circle, joining the circle, sitting down), they also chatted with one another.

In the second phase, social demands shifted. Ru-Chi, a third grader,
sat next to the teacher and gained her attention by saying “teacher.” The teacher’s acknowledgment of this request by saying “yes” (verbal message) as she turned her body toward Ru-Chi and looked at her (nonverbal message), gave the student the floor, or right to speak. Ru-Chi proceeded to tell her story. It did not take long before multiple conversations were taking place. The analysis indicated that, at times, there were not only several participants talking simultaneously but also several audiences. Participants were attending to, and participating on, different floors.

Phase 3, unlike the previous phase, is characterized by a predominance of one single conversational floor (i.e., one speaker at a time). Participants no longer formed small postural-defined subgroups but rather oriented toward the primary speaker. Turns were generally long and allocated by the teacher—partially in response to students’ bids. These bids, or attempts to gain access to the teacher or the group discussion at times other than their designated turn at talk or at times when the floor was open to anyone (Green & Harker, 1982), were mostly of three types: by raising one arm, by calling the teacher’s name, or by initiating talk.

The shift to the core phase, or the talking circle’s *raison d’être*, was signaled by one student’s successful endeavor in getting both the teacher’s and the group’s attention. As illustrated in the following excerpt, Hyun-Tae made several attempts to gain the attention from all participants in the group even after the teacher’s face and eyes were focused on him,

111 Hyun-Tae my sister go swimming
112 Gisela no I am a little bit conservative
113 I come from a developing country [to Teacher]
114 Hyun-Tae my sister went to swimming and she has a [student raises voice;
114a Teacher looks at Hyun-Tae]
115 Ru-Chi Gisela let me see your dinosaur here [looks at Gisela’s dinosaur]
116 Hyun-Tae swimming umm um [pointing at his torso]
117 Ru-Chi you put it on
118 Teacher BATHING SUIT [nods yes, looking at Ru-Chi]
119 Gisela ohh look at his face [looking at Gisela’s blouse]
120 Ji-Hae yeah yes and she’s put and then she’s put and then she’s black
121 Hyun-Tae go and put [whispering to Borui]
122 Grandma that on the table
123 Ji-Hae look at his face
124 Hyun-Tae and my my mother saw she’s umm chase
127 and she’s white
128 Teacher SHE’S WHITE AND SHE’S TURNING BROWN
129 Ji-Hae /laughs/
130 Teacher ONLY ONLY HER BATHING SUIT IS WHITE AND HER
131 ARMS AND LEGS ARE BROWN
132 Hyun-Tae um-huh I’m going swimming pool too but I’m I’m not getting umm
132a black
After Hyun-Tae increased his volume and sat more erectly on his chair (Line 114), the teacher focused on him. Then, most students first turned to look at the teacher and then looked at Hyun-Tae. Except for Grandma’s brief call to Borui (Line 122) and for Ru-Chi and Ji-Hae’s interactions (Lines 115, 117, 120, 124), all other participants sustained their attention on Hyun-Tae. Thus, the commencement of a student’s extended turn dealing with a personal experience marked the initiation of this phase.

To further explore the social requirements for participation in this phase, the analysis of a typical student turn is presented. This interaction (see the Appendix, Lines 167–199 of Segment 1) illustrates different ways of teacher and student participation. In this segment, several students had made either verbal or nonverbal bids for access. Examples of verbal bids were calling the teacher’s name (Lines 168 and 169), repeating one word (Line 170), or just initiating talk (Line 171). Nonverbal bids were generally signaled by raising one arm (Line 167) or standing up (Line 169).

Turns to speak were assigned by the teacher by calling the student’s name (Line 174) or by looking at one student as she nodded or said “okay.” Unlike other phases where turns were brief, in this phase, students’ assigned turns were longer. As illustrated in the excerpt, when Tony was speaking, all others were listening (see Lines 174–198). Thus, in this phase, overlapping talk was not accepted—as clearly established by the teacher at the onset of this phase (Lines 172–174).

From time to time, the teacher’s responses provided continuance, a type of verbal or nonverbal message (e.g., nods, gaze, “yes,” “go ahead,” “urn-huh”) that supplies a cue to the speaker that the listener is following the speaker’s message and may continue speaking (Green & Wallat, 1981). Lines 176, 178 and 185–186 in Segment 1 exemplify this type of feedback, characteristic of this phase. Although another characteristic of this phase is the presence of one speaker and the rest of participants being attendees, students could participate by asking questions or making comments about the speaker’s previous remarks (Lines 183, 191). Students’ turns seemed to extend either as long as they had something to say and others were listening or insofar as the teacher did not assign another speaker. In sum, characteristics of the core phase included a predominance of one single conversational floor and one speaker (generally a student), long turns allocated by the teacher, and feedback from the teacher for students to continue talking.

Boundaries between Phases 3 and 4 are quite clear, as evidenced by the teacher’s announcement of the shift in social and participation demands in the following segment (Lines 273–276). Unlike the earlier phase, where several students had access to the floor, in this phase the primary speaker was the teacher. Throughout this phase students had
to predominantly listen to the teacher’s explanation and observe the chart she was holding.

Teacher OKAY LET ME SEE ANDY IN JUST A MINUTE YOU CAN
TELL US BUT UH WE ARE GOING TO START A NEW PLAN
UMM TODAY
OKAY
students new plan
Tony
Teacher AND THIS IS IT
I’LL EXPLAIN IT TO YOU

And so the interaction continued in Phase 4 with the teacher doing most of the talking and the students doing most of the listening.

Unlike other phases where questions were generally responded or acknowledged, in this phase, the teacher did not answer most questions. This might be an indication of the teacher’s concern, at that moment, to complete her explanation about the new classroom arrangement and to not discuss students’ concerns. This can be noted in Segment 2 (see the Appendix, Lines 418–445a). Although the teacher acknowledged Hyun-Tae’s question (teacher focused on student, Lines 428, 440–442) and the responses it provoked (teacher looked at both students, Lines 430–432), she chose not to clarify Hyun-Tae’s concern and to continue with her explanation. Unlike previous phases where students were required to make bids to get a turn, in the second part of this phase, students often responded in unison to teacher’s questions (Segment 2, Lines 365-368, 386-387, 389-391).

In sum, in Phase 4, students’ opportunities to talk and participate became highly constrained. This phase is marked by students’ rearranging themselves into a sitting position, turning their faces and eyes toward the teacher, and by the commencement of the teacher’s visual scanning around the circle as she discussed the new classroom organization. At the outset of this phase and, perhaps, as the result of the teacher “reading” students’ cues (e.g., increased body movement, constant interruptions, overlapping talk, increase in noise level, individualization of students’ eyes-gazes), there is a shift in the activity. The teacher asked students if they knew the City Mouse-Country Mouse story and after receiving an affirmative answer, she invited students to say one thing about the story. Thus, in this instance, the teacher is responding to students’ signs of lack of involvement by announcing a shift in participatory demands and initiating a discussion around the theme of the week (i.e., the city). The latter demonstrates that the organization of the classroom is not unidimensional, with actions and interactions originating only from the teacher and flowing toward the students, but is multidimensional (Mehan, 1981), with students and teacher jointly contributing to the flow of the activity.
In the final phase, moving on, students sit up more erectly as the teacher gives directions about who is going with whom and to which center. Throughout this time, the teacher becomes the primary speaker. Then, as students begin to move to their centers, several simultaneous conversations arise, as in the first phase. Multiple floors have, in fact, been reestablished.

Analysis of the talk and actions of participants showed that social demands varied across the different phases of the event. In the third phase, for example, students had to first get the teacher’s attention to get a turn to speak; during the fourth phase, to speak, students needed to call out their answers. Thus, in order to participate in the talking circle, it was not enough to have something to say, want to say it, or have the linguistic knowledge to express it. Successful participation in this event also required that students learn how to gain the right to speak (e.g., calling the teacher’s name), how to get and maintain the teacher’s and students’ attention (e.g., using place holders), how and when to change the topic, and so on.

**Communicative Dimension: The Microclose-Up Lens**

This section explores the quality and quantity of language use in relation to activity phases, themes, and rules for participation within the same talking circle. Because one important objective of the conversational ESL class is to help students develop and extend their linguistic and participatory repertoire, a comparison of two of the more extended and dramatically different phases of this event—Phases 3 and 4—will be explored in terms of the opportunities or constraints they offer for language use. In particular, this discussion considers (a) the amount of teacher talk as compared with student talk, (b) the different characteristics of message units used by teacher and students—in terms of communicative function, and (c) the opportunities for student-initiated interactions. The analysis will reveal that the talking circle can provide a rich opportunity for students to practice the L2. In addition, it will be demonstrated that the nature of the task, within the same instructional activity, may render very different results in exposure to, and practice of, the L2.

Table 2 shows the distribution of teacher and student talk for all five phases of this talking circle. For this table, MUs were timed in seconds (rounded to the nearest half-second). After all messages were timed, they were summed by speaker (i.e., teacher or student) and phase.

As indicated in Table 2, the distribution of talk between teacher and students over the full course of this 16-min talking circle, was nearly even (516 s/teacher and 410 s/students). However, this average
It is only by comparing time allocations for speakers within each phase that time differences become visible.

During the first two phases, there were several short exchanges taking place at the same time. When the frequencies of student and teacher talk are compared (see Table 2), the teacher talked slightly more in these two initial phases than her students (58.6% to 41.4% in Phase 1, and 64.7% to 35.3% in Phase 2). Differences between the amount of teacher and student talk become more evident in the next three phases. Whereas in Phase 3, the teacher talked considerably less than her students (28.6% to 71.4%), in Phase 4, she talked almost as twice as much as her students (63.1% to 36.9%). The last phase, moving on, although brief (50 s), was characterized by a preponderance of teacher talk (85.0% to 15.0%).

Although Table 2 illustrates important differences in time allocation across phases, it does not provide information as to what accounts for those, at times, striking differences between phases. To understand those differences, the exploration will go one step further to include an analysis of qualitative aspects of language use. Tables 3 and 4 present frequencies of teacher’s and students’ messages according to activity phase and to the communicative function of each message. A complete set of possible characteristics for each message and pertinent examples are presented at the end of both tables.

### Teacher’s Messages

When considering the highest frequencies of communicative functions in relation to the total number of teacher messages (223), important patterns become visible. Three features were pervasive in the teacher’s talk throughout this activity: explaining (25), continuance (21), and clarification requests (19). This suggests that although a great

---

**TABLE 2**

Distribution of Teacher and Student Talk by Time

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity Phase</th>
<th>Teacher s (%)</th>
<th>Student s (%)</th>
<th>Total s</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Getting Ready</td>
<td>25.5 (58.6)</td>
<td>18.0 (41.4)</td>
<td>43.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entry</td>
<td>71.5 (64.7)</td>
<td>39.0 (35.3)</td>
<td>110.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Core</td>
<td>65.5 (28.6)</td>
<td>163.5 (71.4)</td>
<td>229.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher’s Agenda</td>
<td>311.0 (63.1)</td>
<td>182.0 (36.9)</td>
<td>493.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moving On</td>
<td>42.5 (85.0)</td>
<td>7.5 (15.0)</td>
<td>50.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>516.0 (55.7)</strong></td>
<td><strong>410.0 (44.3)</strong></td>
<td><strong>926.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# TABLE 3
Communicative Functions of Teacher and Adult Messages:
Frequency and Percentage by Activity Phase

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Messages</th>
<th>Phase 1</th>
<th></th>
<th>Phase 2</th>
<th></th>
<th>Phase 3</th>
<th></th>
<th>Phase 4</th>
<th></th>
<th>Phase 5</th>
<th></th>
<th>Total Teacher</th>
<th></th>
<th>Total Adults</th>
<th></th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>f</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>f</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>f</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>f</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>f</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>f</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>f</td>
<td>%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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amount of her talk was to provide information (explaining), she was also being supportive of students’ talk by listening and prompting speakers to continue (continuance) and by soliciting students to explain or redefine their previous message (clarification). Clearly language use is being promoted either by providing students with a considerable amount of L2 input (explaining) or by encouraging student participation in the ongoing conversation (continuance and clarification). As indicated in Table 3, most of the teacher’s messages were delivered during Phases 3 and 4 (17.0% in Phase 3 and 46.8% in Phase 4). Other phases, in comparison, were brief (see Table 2) and, altogether, only accounted for 15.4% of the teacher’s messages.

Differences across Phases 3 and 4 are further heightened when frequencies within each phase are considered. In Phase 3, for example, the highest frequencies were for continuance (14 out of 48) and for clarification requests (6 out of 48). In other words, almost half of the teacher’s comments supported students’ talk by listening and prompting students to continue talking (continuance) or by soliciting speakers to elucidate some aspect of their message (clarification request). These features evidence the decisive teacher’s role in providing students with an interfactional scaffold in Phase 3; she was not only an attentive listener—by acknowledging students’ comments and prompting them to continue—but also a collaborator supporting students’ participation.

The quality of teacher talk in Phase 4 is very different when compared to previous phases. First, the frequency of teacher messages increased considerably, from 48 in Phase 3, to 132 in this phase. Second, higher frequencies were for explaining (22), holding (18), and asking display questions (16). Given that teacher talk was dominated by these three features, it is not surprising that students’ opportunities to talk were seriously reduced. The type of talk predominant in this phase was either to provide information (explaining) or to maintain the floor (holding). In addition, most of the questions asked by the teacher were display questions.

Other predominant features of teacher talk in this phase included partial or total repetitions of previous messages (repeating) and shifts or changes in form and content of original message (repairing). Separately, any of these five features (explaining, holding, asking display questions, repeating, and repairing) does not promote participation. On the contrary, they function as devices to control the interaction. Altogether, when these features are dominant in the speech of one conversational partner, the quality of the interaction is strongly affected. The conversation no longer is a negotiated process where participants share roles and responsibilities but a unidirectional process wherein, as in this case, the teacher does the talking and the student the listening.
Altogether, exploration of Tables 2 and 3 uncovered a series of patterns across the third and fourth phases. In Phase 4, not only did the teacher spend considerably more time talking than her students but, in most instances, she also initiated the conversation. Furthermore, the teacher tried to hold the attention, asked most of the questions—particularly display questions—and repeated numerous messages. But how does teacher talk enhance or constrain student talk? Answers are to be found by looking at the other participants in the setting. The analysis now turns to looking at student talk.

**Students’ Messages**

Table 4 presents frequencies and percentages of students’ messages throughout the talking circle. Analysis of higher frequencies reveals that more than one fourth of student messages (85 out of 324) were minimal responses, that is responses in one word or one clause. As evidenced in Segment 2 (e.g., Lines 357, 360, 365–368 in the Appendix), this type of response generally followed a display question. The next two predominant categories are more student controlled. Extending/elaborating (i.e., messages that modify, partially or totally, a portion of the previous message by providing additional or new information) came to a total of 42. Students’ self-initiated turns and repetitions of previous messages (partial or total) comprised 33 messages each. This suggests that even though a proportionately high number of messages were basically brief responses, there were also opportunities for students to initiate their turns and to extend and elaborate the content of their own talk. Other categories included in Table 4 are attention getters (14), clarification requests (14), explaining (13), repairing (11), and responding in at least one sentence (10). Editing, directing, expanding, and continuance came further behind.

Further examination of Table 4 reveals a series of patterns across phases. Most of the messages were produced in Phase 4 (51.9%) and Phase 3 (33.3%). Analysis of the predominant category throughout the activity, that is minimal responses, indicates that 81.2% of these messages were given in Phase 4. Another high frequency throughout the activity, with a high concentration on one phase, is the category of extending/elaborating (66.6%) in Phase 3. Although repetitions of previous messages were, pervasive in Phase 4 (81.8%), messages providing information were frequent in Phase 3 (69.2%). What the above suggests is that messages that involve a more active role in the conversation and a considerable amount of language use (such as explaining and extending/elaborating) were concentrated in Phase 3. By contrast, messages that are the result of students’ more passive role in the interaction and that involve simple and fragmentary utterances
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**TABLE 4**

Communicative Functions of Students' Messages: Frequency and Percentage by Activity Phase
Note. Codes, definitions, and examples of message units for Tables 3 and 4 follow.

1. Exchanges which can provide information (e.g., “We are going to start a new plan today”).
2. Verbal or nonverbal message (e.g., “yes,” “go ahead,” “um-huh”) which can provide a cue to the speaker that the listener is following the speaker’s message and may continue his turn (Green & Wallat, 1981).
3. Messages to bring about explanations or redefinitions of preceding message. May take the form of a question or a response (e.g., “very very big?”).
4. Messages concerned with the control of the interaction and/or behavior of participants (e.g., “Let’s do it one at a time”).
5. Responses in a complete sentence or more (e.g., “Bathtub is you sit in the water and you wash yourself”).
6. Messages (e.g., “OK,” “well,” “alright”) that enable a speaker to maintain a turn.
7. Requests for information already known by teacher (e.g., “On Monday what group is going to the listening center?”).
8. Exact repetition of previous message unit either partial or full.
9. Messages that modify partially or totally a portion of previous speaker’s message by providing additional or new information. (e.g., a student says: “in here sun hurts” to which the teacher responds with: “That’s right in Florida the sun is very strong”).
10. Requests for information not known by teacher (e.g., “Were you with your father?”).
11. Messages that indicate shifts or changes in content or form after the original message began. False starts and words such as “uh,” “um,” act to hold place within a message.
12. Verbal or nonverbal messages to assign a turn in the conversation (e.g., “OK Ru-Chin).
13. Modifying partially or totally a portion of previous speaker’s message by providing additional or new information.
14. Responses in one clause or one word (e.g., “eleven I think”).
15. Comments about student previous participation (e.g., “That was a great story Tony”).
16. Self-initiated talk not tied with previous interactions.
17. Messages (e.g., modeling, paraphrasing, nonverbals) not coded in one of the other categories.
18. Messages that modify partially or totally a portion of previous message by providing additional or new information (self).
20. Verbal or nonverbal message intended to get the teacher’s attention (e.g., raising hand, calling teacher’s name, one word).
21. Message intended to alter or rectify previous speaker’s message (e.g., “not too higher, you say too deep”).
22. Messages (e.g., holding, nonverbals) not coded in one of the other categories.
(such as minimal responses and repetitions) were clustered in Phase 4.

In relation to the expectations for students’ participation, differences between phases are also evident when excerpts of both phases are compared. In Phase 3 (see Segment 1), students’ messages were longer and more abundant. Although students made use of several turns to make their points, participation of other students or adults was frequent throughout. For instance, in Tony’s turn (see Segment 1, Lines 174–198), as he explains his swimming experience in Taiwan in the summer time, he has several opportunities to extend and elaborate his own speech. It is here that Tony has a chance to try out recently acquired vocabulary, to discover new ways of utilizing his communicative resources, or to discover how the new language sounds when he speaks it. In all this process, the audience plays a fundamental role. Comments like Hyun-Tae’s (Line 183): “that’s cold” can indicate to Tony that he has interested listeners who are following and understanding his point. Furthermore, with the teacher as an attentive listener and occasional prompter (e.g., Lines 176, 178, 181, 185–186, 190), Tony is encouraged to further develop his topic and to try out new linguistic means without the fear of being wrong. This type of meaningful conversation that Allwright (1980) has called “real attempts at communication” is beneficial for language learning.

The type of interaction characteristic of Phase 4, or teacher’s agenda, is quite different from the above, as evidenced by Segment 2 and Tables 2 and 3. Differences are evident not only in the organization of turns, topic control, quantity and quality of teacher and student talk, but also in the opportunities for communicating and negotiating meaning. As reflected in Segment 2, this phase is characterized by teacher-dominated exchanges in which the teacher explains the new classroom arrangement (Lines 344–349, 422–427, 441–445a) and then asks display questions to check for understanding (Lines 351–352, 355–356, 363–364, 374, 383, 388). On the other hand, students’ responses, although abundant in number, are generally brief (one or two words), composed of mere repetitions, and little elaboration (see Lines 353, 354, 365, 367, and 387). It is not surprising that in contexts where teacher talk consistently overpowers student talk, where the agenda to cover takes over the content of the conversation, and where procedural instructions need to be transmitted, that students’ possibilities to engage in conversations are relatively constrained.

In sum, the contrast between Phases 3 and 4 is quite evident. Although many factors remained the same throughout phases (i.e., participants, activity, physical arrangement, medium), the opportunities to participate and to try out a variety of linguistic skills changed dramatically.
CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

The analysis of one classroom event—the talking circle—has focused on three interrelated and overlapping dimensions of classroom talk and interaction: topic development, social demands, and communicative functions. For students to participate successfully in classroom events, they must know the content of the talk, the appropriate ways of participating, and the necessary linguistic resources.

The content of the talk during this talking circle has principally been related to procedural matters and students’ personal experiences. Distinctive characteristics of student talk were visible at least in three levels: Topics discussed involved personal experiences, contributions to the talk frequently took the form of narratives, and speakers seemed more concerned with conveying meaning than presenting linguistically correct information. Although these three characteristics might not be considered as top priority in traditional discussions of L2 acquisition, they are as relevant to and as true of language learning as they are of students’ needs to communicate.

The talking circle is a communicative event with specific demands and participation rules. As the analysis indicated, changes in the purpose of teacher talk rendered very different results in student talk. When the teacher assumed the role of initiator, students assumed the role of respondents; when the teacher asked display questions, students’ responses were brief, mere repetitions and with little elaboration. Clearly, student participation and language use were restricted or facilitated depending on the type of questions asked by the teacher, the type of feedback offered, the extension and organization of turns, and who had control of the topics. Because of this unequal status of teachers and students in terms of the language medium and in terms of control of topic, turns, and direction of interactions, the role of teachers in L2 classrooms can be decisive in enhancing or constraining language use and language learning.

Several pedagogical implications can be drawn from this study. First, if students are to use their new language, they need abundant practice in taking turns, interrupting, and listening actively. They need to practice how to hold back the more talkative members and draw out the shy or self-conscious ones. They need to learn how to request clarification, how to ask for repetitions, how to slow down, and how to explain. In addition, students need to practice how to gain time to think, change the topic, and how to look attentive to keep the conversation going. In sum, students need ample opportunities to hear and practice the new language. Furthermore, they need to be in classroom environments where conversation and negotiation are not only encouraged but carefully orchestrated, supported, and monitored by the teacher.
Second, when students have control over the topic of conversation, they are more likely to use a variety of communicative strategies to overcome problems of communicating with limited L2 resources. In this talking circle, the content of classroom talk was of particular importance because topics were principally related to students’ interests. When the topics discussed are of interest to the students, when students can use their recently acquired language skills to express thoughts and feelings, when students have a say in what is being discussed, when the conversation offers students a tight relationship between what is being said and the situation in which it is being said, then students will have abundant opportunities to practice the L2 and to negotiate meaning.

Third, the nature of the task rather than the organizational structure can be a more important variable when analyzing L2 activities. The detailed analysis of a classroom event has illustrated how within the same activity, with the same participants, and in the same setting, there can be significant variations in terms of the content of discussion, social demands for participation, and quantity and quality of teacher and student talk. Furthermore, these variations rendered different results in exposure to and practice of the L2. At a time when many educators are fearless defenders of small-group and cooperative learning arrangements, questions need to be raised about the type of interactions that take place within those organizational structures. Attention needs to paid not only to the type of organizational arrangement (e.g., small group, dyads) but more importantly to the nature of the task at hand.

A final implication involves specific recommendations for ethnographic research in L2 classrooms. Research that follows a systematic, detailed, and rigorous approach is needed in educational settings to document the complexity of teaching and learning processes. In ESL contexts, this need is more acute because L2 teaching and learning occur in a variety of settings (e.g., bilingual programs, ESL classes for adults, EFL contexts, ESL pullout programs) with diverse students (children, adults, refugees, immigrants, business people) and in many parts of the world. In addition to the value of ethnographic studies for research purposes, ethnographic techniques can also serve practitioners. As suggested by Watson-Gegeo (1988), ethnographic research can serve practice in two ways. First, because ethnographic techniques of observation and interviewing take a holistic behavior in settings, they can be very useful in teacher supervision and feedback. These techniques can help the observer note and understand those behaviors often invisible to teacher and students. Second, teachers can benefit from increasing their observational skills. By learning systematic in-depth exploration techniques, practitioners can gain new aware-
ness of classroom organization, interfactional patterns, and teaching and learning strategies in their own classrooms.

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REFERENCES


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APPENDIX

Talking Circle Transcript

Segment I: Phase 3 or Core

The following verbatim transcript illustrates the nature of the interaction during Phase 3 of the talking circle. The information presented in this segment includes, from left to right: line numbers, speaker's name, message unit (teacher's talk is in upper case letters), and nonverbal information within braces. In addition, text within brackets indicates approximate transcription. Inaudible messages are indicated by a blank space within brackets.

The initiation of this phase was signaled by Hyun-Tae's successful attempt to gain the group's attention. He initiated his talk by first narrating an anecdote about his sister “going swimming” and “then she’s black.” At the point when this segment begins Hyun-Tae was sharing his second anecdote—very much related to the first topic—about being “very white” when he was born.

138 Hyun-Tae umm my mother says when I was a baby
139 Teacher YEAH
140 Hyun-Tae when I was born
141 Gisela [ ]
142 Borui [ ]
143 Grandma [ ] /laughs/
144 Hyun-Tae when I was born
145 Ru-Chi [when I go to the pool]
146 this is black
147 Hyun-Tae when I was born my mother says
148 Ru-Chi this is very white
149 Hyun-Tae I was very white
150 Hyun-Tae my mother went to the hospital
151 Ji-Hae me too/laughs/
152 Teacher OH BECAUSE YOU WERE SO WHITE SHE WAS WORRIED
153 Hyun-Tae yeah
154 Hyun-Tae yeah
155 Teacher UM-HUH /LAUGHS/
156 Grandma /laughs/
157 Andy just like I [ ]
158 Teacher DO YOU KNOW WHAT DO YOU KNOW THAT’S CALLED
159 WHEN WE GO TO IN THE SUN AND OUR AND OUR
160 SKIN TURNS BROWN
161 IS CALLED TAN GETTING A TAN
162 Rolf right
163 Tony [ like Wei-Jue ]
164 Ru-Chi my
165 Grandma and it’s very unpleasant
166 Teacher AND IT IS YEAH THAT’S RIGHT IN FLORIDA THE SUN IS
167 VERY STRONG {Andy raises arm}
168 Ji-Hae Misses S
169 Borui Misses S [stands up]
170 Ru-Chi my my father
171 Teacher WAIT WAIT A MINUTE HONEY TONY {LOOKING AT JH}
172 Teacher LET’S TAKE IT ONE AT A TIME
173 TONY
174 Tony in Taiwan in the summer time I go to a swimming
175 Teacher UM-HUH
177 Tony um umm a teacher teach me swimming
178 Teacher UM-HUH

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and then you know in the I am I am I go umm morning six o'clock go swimming
SIX O'CLOCK IN THE MORNING GO SWIMMING
that's cold
and and urn at nine o'clock go home
OH WOW
UM-HUH
and and then night nine o'clock some people go there I see I see
these umm eyes at a circle looks like [sunglasses]
you got the sun [pointing at his eyes]

and that's cold

Tony

OHH<br>
UH OKAY I COMPLETED THE CHART FOR MONDAY AND I MADE A MISTAKE IN MAKING THE CHART AND THAT IS I PUT YOUR GROUP COLORS HERE WHEN I REALLY MEANT TO PUT IT IT DOWN HERE SO SO THIS LINE HERE AND I'LL PROBABLY FIX IT IS THE GAME OR PROJECT BOX

Tony oughh {while yawning}

Teacher ALL RIGHT SO ON MONDAY WHAT GROUP IS IN THE LISTENING CENTER

Rolf Hyun-Tae

Ru-Chi Hyun-Tae Rolf Tony

Teacher WHAT'S THE NAME

WHAT'S THE NAME OF THE GROUP purple

Teacher ALL RIGHT THE PURPLE GROUP

AND THAT'S HYUN-TAE ROLF AND TONY

Hyun-Tae Rolf and Tony

Teacher ALL RIGHT

yeahhhhh {as he agitates arms in the air}

Hyun-Tae

Teacher ON MONDAY WHAT GROUP IS IN IS GOING TO BE AT THE COMPUTER
Evelyn and Andy

/laughs/

EVELYN AND ANDY

/laughs/

hem hem

OKAY

ON MONDAY WHAT [GROUP] IS GOING TO GRANDMA’S

brown

BROWN JI-HAE RU-CHI

laughs/

HT’s voice is louder

AND HYE-KANG

/laughs/

two girls and one boy /laughs/

Teacher

OHHH WHO IS GOING TO BE AT MY TABLE TODAY

Brown Ji-Hae Ru-Chi and Hye-Kang/laughs/

AND HYE-KANG

/laughs/

OKAY

UHHH WHO IS GOING TO BE AT MY TABLE TODAY

ummm Borui and

Gabriel

Gabriel

Gabriel

Teacher

WHAT WHAT GROUP

blue

blue

blue

Teacher

OKAY JI-HAE CAN YOU SIT DOWN SO EVELYN CAN SEE

THANK YOU

ALRIGHT THE BLUE GROUP BORUI AND GABRIEL ARE

GOING TO BE AT MY TABLE

ALRIGHT AND THE PROJECT OR GAME TABLE IS GOING TO BE

green

green

green

Teacher

AND WHO IS IN THE GREEN GROUP

San-Ha

San-Ha

Marcos

Teacher

AND

Michal and Marcos

Teacher

AND MARCOS ON WEDNESDAY AND FRIDAY

Hyun-Tae

[ ]

Teacher

WHO LET ME SEE

MICHAL AND SAN-HA AND THEY ARE BOTH

today we have Grandmother

[claps hands]

Teacher

ON A FIELD TRIP TODAY SO THEY ARE THE GREEN

GROUP IS NOT EXISTENT

UMM AND THE THEME OR IDEA FOR THIS WEEK IS GOING

TO BE THE CITY

[ ]

(to Tony who is jumping on his chair)

student

the city

Teacher

THE CITY
SO UHH
WHAT THE ART PROJECT IS GOING TO BE IS YOU
GRANDMA WILL EXPLAIN IT TO YOU BUT YOU ARE
GOING TO SET STREETS ON A CITY AND YOU ARE
GOING TO MAKE YOUR OWN CITY AND

what city

AND INSTEAD OF GAMES THIS WEEK

you don’t know what city is

[Teacher looks at Rolf]

I know city

[Teacher looks at Hyun-Tae]

yes city [inaudible]

OKAY

UGH UHH SO HYUN-TAE

WE ARE GOING TO BE TALKING ABOUT THE CITY IN

OTHER WORDS WHEN YOU COME TO THE WRITING

TABLE WHEN IS YOUR DAY TO COME TO THE

WRITING TABLE WE ARE GOING TO WRITE

SOMETHING ABOUT A CITY
Integrating Grammar Instruction and Communicative Language Use Through Grammar Consciousness-Raising Tasks

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Grammar consciousness-raising tasks combine the development of knowledge about problematic L2 grammatical features with the provision for meaning-focused use of the target language. However, for this task type to be pedagogically useful in ESL/EFL classrooms, it must be shown that task performance is as effective as a teacher-fronted grammar lesson in promoting gains in knowledge of the target structure and is comparable to performance of regular communicative tasks in terms of opportunities for communicative language exchange. This article reports an investigation of three grammar consciousness-raising tasks dealing with word order. The results indicate that the tasks successfully promoted both proficiency gains and L2 negotiated interaction in the participants, with negotiation quantity being determined by the combination of task features present rather than by the nature of the task content. Thus, grammar consciousness-raising tasks can be recommended as one way to integrate formal instruction within a communicative framework.

A compelling body of evidence has accumulated recently supporting the position that formal instruction on language properties is related to the subsequent acquisition of those properties (see Ellis, 1991; Long, 1983a, 1988b; Pienemann, 1989). These findings present a dilemma for many teachers who have become committed to the use of communicative approaches to language learning, wherein learners are given a rich variety of comprehensible input, and teacher-fronted grammar instruction is generally omitted. In response to empirical findings which indicate that a return to some type of formal instruction may be necessary after all, several lines of research have recently emerged which are exploring ways to integrate instruction on problematic grammar forms within a communicative framework.
One response has been to investigate whether grammar instruction can be conducted through meaning-focused activities. A recent study by Doughty (1991) compared gains in relative clause usage achieved by learners who read passages which contained the target structure. One group received a presentation of formal grammar rules together with the text, and another group received a meaning-focused treatment in which paraphrases and clarifications of the text content were displayed, with target structures visually highlighted and printed in capital letters. Both treatment groups showed similar significant gains on posttests of the structure compared with a control group, this result providing evidence in support of the role of formal instruction in developing knowledge of grammar features compared with communicative exposure alone. In addition, the meaning-focused treatment group showed a better recall of the content of the reading text than the group exposed to a formal presentation of grammar rules. Doughty considered the format of the meaning-focused treatment to be an example of “focus on form” (see Long, 1988a), referring to content-oriented instruction which also draws learners’ attention in meaningful ways to the use of target structures in context. She suggested that such instruction can lead to improved mastery of language features as well as the provision for meaning-focused use of the target language. The results of this study also gave some confirmation to recent findings by VanPatten (1990), suggesting that learners have difficulty consciously attending to both form and meaning at the same time.

A second line of investigation has been pursued by researchers such as Lightbown and Spada (1990); White (1991); White, Spada, Lightbown, and Ranta (1991). Here the focus is on the favorable learning outcomes resulting from instances of formal, teacher-fronted grammar instruction and corrective feedback delivered within communicatively organized classrooms. In the first study, various communicative classrooms were examined for incidents of teacher-initiated grammar instruction or error correction. It was determined that learners in such classrooms showed greater accuracy in subsequent use of some of the forms than learners from classrooms where there was no focus on form or correction of errors. The other two studies required teachers in different communicative classrooms to present formal instruction and feedback on two grammar points, Wh-questions and adverb position. Again, short-term improved accuracy in the taught grammar points resulted, compared with uninstructed control groups, although long-term gains were not evident for adverb position. These research-
ers suggested that an instructional focus on a grammatical feature enhances language input and is consciousness-raising (Rutherford, 1987; Sharwood Smith, 1981, 1991) in the sense that learners develop knowledge about the feature and tend become more aware of the feature in communicative input afterwards, a process seen as essential for language acquisition (McLaughlin, 1987; Rutherford & Sharwood Smith, 1986; Schmidt, 1990; Sharwood Smith, 1991).

Additional studies (Tomasello & Herron, 1988, 1989) reported greater significant gains in communicative use of target forms resulting from immediate teacher feedback on overgeneralization and translation errors which learners were deliberately permitted to make, in comparison to gains produced by informing students in advance about potential problems. The authors suggested that such a “garden path” technique allows learners to make immediate cognitive comparisons between their own interlanguage and the correct form.

The view that grammar instruction is important in raising learners’ conscious awareness of a particular feature has also been proposed in the context of developing the theoretical framework for a task-based approach to the study of grammar (Fotos & Ellis, 1991), an approach which constitutes a third line of research aimed at integrating grammar instruction with the provision of opportunities for meaning-focused use of the target language.

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN GRAMMAR CONSCIOUSNESS-RAISING TASKS AND OTHER TASK-BASED APPROACHES TO GRAMMAR INSTRUCTION

Fotos and Ellis (1991) recommended a task-based approach to grammar instruction using a task type which provides learners with grammar problems to solve interactively. Called a grammar consciousness-raising task, it is communicative and has an L2 grammar problem as the task content. Although the learners focus on the form of the grammar structure, they are also engaged in meaning-focused use of the target language as they solve the grammar problem. They develop grammatical knowledge while they are communicating. It must be noted, however, that a number of other researchers have also recommended a task-based approach to grammar instruction. Some suggest the use of tasks aimed at promoting accurate production of the target feature (Ur, 1988). Others (Dickins & Woods, 1988; Nunan, 1989) emphasize the consciousness-raising function of task performance. The use of tasks which require interpretive comprehension of input containing the correct usage of the target form has been suggested.
Another proposal (Loschky & Bley-Vroman, 1990) recommends the creation of structure-based communicative tasks in which production of the target structure is essential to complete the task content, which is nongrammatical in nature. Both types of tasks are consciousness-raising because the learners’ attention is focused on the nature of the required target structure. This type of approach is similar to the one employed by Doughty (1991) and is consistent with the aim of manipulating meaningful context to draw learners’ attention to problematic grammatical features.

There are two main differences between the use of such consciousness-raising communicative tasks and the type of grammar consciousness-raising tasks discussed in this article. The first concerns the nature of the task content. Whereas the former task is nongrammatical, but requires either recognition of the target structure or its use in reaching the task solution, the content of the grammar consciousness-raising task is the target structure itself. Second, the grammar consciousness-raising task is not aimed at developing immediate ability to use the target structure but rather attempts to call learner attention to grammatical features, raising their consciousness of them, and thereby facilitating subsequent learner noticing of the features in communicative input.

It should be noted that there are distinct pedagogic advantages in having grammar as the task content. First, grammar problems constitute serious task material, in contrast to the trivial nature of many communicative tasks. This point is particularly important in EFL teaching situations where formal, teacher-fronted grammar instruction characterizes many classrooms and communicative activities may not be regarded as serious language study. Second, when learners share the same L1, it is often possible for them to complete task requirements in that L1, avoiding use of the target language. Having a grammar problem as task content requires learners to use and attend to utterances in the target language in order to solve the task. Another advantage is the ease of assessment of task performance through pre- and posttests on the particular grammar structure.

WHY ARE COMMUNICATIVE LANGUAGE USE AND TASK PERFORMANCE SEEN TO BE IMPORTANT?

At this point, it is useful to review the widely held theoretical assumptions that communicative interaction is fundamental to language acquisition, and that both learner comprehension and production are necessary to produce acquisition. A number of recent studies (reviewed in Pica, 1987) provide evidence in support of the need for learners to
be exposed to meaning-focused use of the target language, as opposed to teacher-fronted explanations of language features. When learners use the target language to communicate with native speakers or each other, they often must ask and answer questions when certain items of discourse are not understood. This type of interaction has been termed *negotiated interaction* (Long, 1983b) and has been shown to be important in promoting improved learner comprehension of the target language (see Pica, Holliday, Lewis, Berducci, & Newman, 1991, for a recent overview of the role of negotiated interaction in language acquisition). In addition, negotiated interaction often results in adjustment and modification of language output (Pica, 1987). Native speakers modify their output to learners so that it becomes more comprehensible, and learners strive to make their own output increasingly like the target language in order to be understood—a process termed *pushed* output (Pica, 1987). Swain (1985) has suggested that such comprehensible output is as critical to the language acquisition process as comprehension.

Compared to a teacher-fronted language lesson, the use of tasks and group work has been found to expose learners to more comprehensible input and to require learners to make more adjustments in their own output (Long & Porter, 1985; Pica, 1987). Furthermore, investigation has indicated that the format of the tasks is important in producing opportunities for negotiated interaction. Researchers such as Pica and Doughty (1985) and Long (1989) have classified tasks into different types depending on who holds and who conveys information; the requirements for and precision of information conveyed; and the type and number of task resolutions. A survey of research on the amount of task talk produced by manipulating these variables (Long, 1989) indicated that the greatest and most complex use of the target language resulted when all learners were required to exchange information through the use of information gap tasks (see Doughty & Pica, 1986); when they had to agree on a single task resolution; and when they had an opportunity to plan their use of the target language (see Crookes, 1991, for the importance of planning for complex language production).

**THE STUDY**

For grammar consciousness-raising tasks to be pedagogically acceptable in communicative classrooms as substitutes for grammar lessons and in traditional, teacher-fronted classrooms as a method of studying grammar while providing essential opportunities for communicative use of the target language, two general empirical results are necessary.
First, it must be shown that task performance is as effective at promoting gains in knowledge of the grammar structure as traditional, teacher-fronted grammar lessons. After all, there is no point in recommending grammar consciousness-raising tasks as communicative alternatives to formal grammar lessons if they fail to produce equally favorable learning outcomes. Second, it must be shown that performance of the grammar task produces amounts of L2 task talk comparable to those produced by performance of regular, meaning-focused communicative tasks because it is through the provision of comprehensible input and the requirement for adjusted output that language acquisition has been suggested to take place (Doughty & Pica, 1986; Long, 1983b; Pica, 1987; Pica et al., 1991).

An initial study on the design and use of a prototype grammar consciousness-raising task (Fotos & Ellis, 1991) suggested that task performance resulted in gains in the grammar structure used as task content comparable to the gains made by a matched group who received a formal, teacher-fronted grammar lesson on the same structure. Performance of the grammar task also produced amounts of negotiations in the target language comparable to those reported in the literature for similar in formation gap tasks, in which all participants were required to exchange information (Doughty & Pica, 1986). However, the study left open the question of the general application of the results of grammar task performance. The present study builds on the results of the pilot study and addresses new points of investigation: (a) whether the favorable results of the pilot study, which used only one task, were consistent for a number of tasks dealing with different grammatical structures; (b) whether the gains in knowledge produced by performance of different grammar tasks were seen to be durable over time; (c) whether counts of negotiated interaction for different grammar tasks were comparable to negotiation counts produced by similar types of communicative tasks; (d) whether the negotiations made were less mechanical than those reported in the first study, in which negotiations averaged only one word in length; and (e) whether the presence of different combinations of task features produced differences in the quantity of negotiated interactions produced. The following research questions were addressed:

1. How do proficiency gains produced by learners who performed different grammar consciousness-raising tasks compare with the gains achieved by learners who were given traditional, teacher-fronted grammar lessons matched to the content of the grammar tasks?

2. How does the number of L2 negotiations made while performing different grammar consciousness-raising tasks compare with L2
3. How do variations in task features affect the number of L2 negotiations produced?

METHOD

Subjects and Design

Overview of Research Design

The subjects of this research were 160 Japanese university EFL learners making up three intact classes of first-year non-English majors. There were 53–54 learners per class, almost entirely male, and learner assignment into classes was random. The learners had one required 90-min period per week of oral English with a native-speaker instructor who, in this case, was also the researcher. One class received three teacher-fronted grammar lessons on adverb placement, indirect object placement, and relative clause usage, respectively. The second class performed three grammar tasks dealing with the same grammar structures, and the third class performed three communicative tasks matched to the grammar tasks in terms of length, format, instructions, and task features, but lacking grammatical task content. Assignment into four-member discussion groups for each task treatment was random and resulted in 10–11 grammar task discussion groups and 10–12 communicative task discussion groups per task performance, depending on student absences. Before the research began, all classes were administered a cloze test previously determined to be valid and reliable (Fotos, 1991) in order to investigate whether there were significant differences in integrative English proficiency among the three groups. A one-way ANOVA was performed and did not indicate a significant difference among the test score means ($F(2, 146) = 2.69$, $p < .05$).

Treatment Cycles

The three treatments were administered during the weekly 90-min English class and consisted of three cycles of 3 weeks each. During the first week of each cycle, the two task groups performed the tasks, and the grammar lesson group received a formal, teacher-fronted grammar lesson. The contents of the lessons were read to the grammar
lesson group directly from the task material used for the grammar tasks, with all sentences written on the board and erased after the lesson. During task performance, the 10–12 discussion groups of each treatment group were sent to separate rooms and all groups were audiotaped; administration of the grammar lessons was audiotaped as well. Before performance of the grammar tasks and administration of the grammar lessons, the two grammar treatment groups took pretests on the grammar structure. After the tasks/lessons, the two grammar treatment groups took posttests which were identical to the pretests. No discussion of the grammar structure took place before any of the treatments, and no teacher feedback on the tests, grammar lessons, or task performances was given at any subsequent time. The task groups were not permitted to keep their task material, and the grammar lesson group was not allowed to take notes on the grammar presentation. The communicative task group received no instruction on the grammar structure studied by the two grammar treatment groups, nor did they take any of the proficiency tests.

During the second and third weeks of each cycle, all classes received regular instruction and performed normal communicative activities. However, two of the communicative activities had the previously studied grammar structure embedded from three to five times—a short story in the second week and a dictation exercise in the third week. After listening to the story and writing the dictation, the learners were given the texts, which they read as part of the regular lesson and then underlined anything they noticed in the texts. Underlined items were counted and analyzed; the results are presented elsewhere (Fotos, 1993). During the third week of each cycle, the two grammar treatment groups took final tests on the grammar structure. The final tests were identical to the pre- and posttests; the issue of possible practice effects will be addressed in the discussion.

Development of Materials

Selection of Grammar Structures

The pilot study (Fotos & Ellis, 1991) used a grammar consciousness-raising task based on the syntactic feature of indirect object placement. This task was also used in the study presented here, and two additional structures involving word order were selected: adverb placement and relative clause usage. These structures are problematic for Japanese learners of English and have been investigated in previous research: indirect object placement by Mazurkewich (1984) and Tanaka (1987); relative clause placement by Schachter (1974), Gass (1980), Bardovi-Harlig (1987), and Akagawa (1990); and adverb placement by White.
The three structures were considered to vary in difficulty according to the number of grammatical rules which had to be learned during task performance, and their presentation in tasks/grammar lessons was sequenced accordingly. Mastery of one main rule for adverb position was presented first (i.e., adverbs cannot be placed after the verb and before the object); mastery of three rules for indirect object placement was presented next (see Fotos & Ellis, 1991, for a discussion of the rules for this grammar point), and mastery of a number of different factors, including the function of the relative pronoun in the sentence and the position of the relative clause in the sentence matrix for relative clause usage, was presented last.

**Development of the Proficiency Tests**

A major research aim was to examine the significance of gains produced from grammar task performance compared with gains produced through receiving grammar lessons. Therefore, the proficiency tests were seen as the most critical research instrument, from which the tasks and other materials were derived. The body of research on the grammar structures of adverb placement, indirect object placement, and relative clause usage cited above was consulted for measurements of proficiency. In general, the trend has been to increasingly require multiple tests of grammar structure acquisition rather than to rely solely upon grammaticality judgment tests—a test type called into question recently (Ellis, 1991). Accordingly, two-part tests giving a total of 30 points were constructed, using from 5 to 10 examples of the chosen structure. These consisted of a grammaticality judgment section and a sentence production section. In the case of indirect object and adverb placement, the learners were asked to produce correct sentences from scrambled word groups (e.g., Toshi—to school—quickly—ran). To test relative clause usage, the learners were requested to combine two short sentences into one long sentence containing a relative clause (e.g., The cake tastes good. Taka made the cake).

**Development of the Tasks**

Although the nature of the grammar structure was predicted to be related to proficiency gains, it was not expected that the type of grammar structure selected would change the quantity of negotiated interactions produced during task performance. Rather, four task features shown to influence interaction (Long, 1989) were used in this study: whether the task requires a single solution; whether all participants must exchange information in an information gap exercise; the extent to which use of the target language is planned; and whether partici-
pants must agree on a task solution. The last feature was not investigated separately but was combined with the first feature, a closed solution. This was due to time limitations and also to cultural considerations involving the Japanese preference for consensus and their tendency to avoid conflict and disagreement (Barnlund, 1989).

The task features listed above were varied in both the grammar consciousness-raising tasks performed by the grammar task group and in the matched communicative tasks performed by the communicative task group. Figure 1 presents the distribution of task features across the task.

**FIGURE 1**
Distribution of Task Features—All Tasks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task 1 (Adverb)</th>
<th>Information Gap</th>
<th>Planned Language</th>
<th>Agreed-Upon Solution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Task 2 (Indirect Object)</td>
<td>n o</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task 3 (Relative Clause)</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>n o</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Because of time constraints connected with the Japanese academic year, it was not possible to pilot any of the new material. However, because the second task on indirect object placement and its grammaticality judgment test had been used successfully in previous research (Fotos & Ellis, 1991), the two other tasks and tests closely followed their format, with a task sheet giving instructions and requiring written rules, and separate task cards for the information gap tasks. (See Appendix C for copies of the two new tasks developed for this study.)

**Data Analysis**

**Analysis of Proficiency**

Although the pilot study on which this research is based used students’ $t$ tests to examine the significance of differences between the pre- post- and final test scores between the two grammar treatment groups, considerations have been raised (Brown, 1990) regarding the risk of obtaining false results of significance when the test is used repeatedly within the same experiment. Consequently, in the present investigation, repeated measures multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) procedures were used to examine the significance of differences in test means for all test scores within the two grammar treatment groups, as well between the two groups. In addition, univariate statistics were calculated from the repeated measures MANOVA,
and follow-up statistics were calculated for the significance of differences found in the main effect for tests. These reverse Helmert contrasts have been reported as univariate statistics.

At this point, it should be noted that learner attendance across the tests/tasks was variable and therefore the number of data points in some of the cells of the repeated measures MANOVA analysis were also variable. To adjust for this, following the procedures suggested in Hatch and Lazaraton (1991) and Tabachnick and Fidell (1989), the mean test value was computed for each cell with missing data, and additional data points equal to the mean value were added to each cell until the design was balanced. This resulted in the addition of 145 mean-value data points to the 755 original data points, producing 18 balanced cells—three for each of the two treatment groups for three tasks—containing 50 entries each. However, because 19% of the data points in the repeated-measures MANOVA now consisted of added values, the assumption of equal variance (Hatch & Lazaraton, 1991) was compromised. Therefore, to confirm the results of the repeated measures MANOVA using the full data set, a second MANOVA was performed using a subsample of the data. Here, only those learners who were present for all nine proficiency tests were used, and every other learner was interval sampled until a subsample of 30 learners per cell was obtained. The present report gives the subsample repeated MANOVA results in Appendix A. Details of the full-data MANOVA appear elsewhere (Fotos, 1993).

Analysis of Negotiations

Following the procedures used in the pilot study (Fotos & Ellis, 1991), one-way chi-square tests corrected for continuity were used to examine the significance of differences between separate quantitative counts of L1 and L2 negotiations made by all discussion groups in the grammar task treatment and the communicative task treatment. Again, negotiations were considered to be meaningful utterances or c units (defined in Duff, 1986) of inquiry about previously supplied information and consisted of those categories suggested by Long (1983b) and Doughty and Pica (1986): The categories were defined as follows with the examples taken from the present study: clarification requests, made by the listener when he has not understood and wants new information (e.g., “What is answer?”); confirmation checks, made by the listener when he believes he has understood but wants to be sure, often by requesting previous information to be repeated or expanded (e.g., “Adverbs may occur in front, yes?”); and comprehension checks, made by the speaker to be certain that the listener has understood (e.g., after reading a task card, “You understand?”). Repetitions, requests for
repetitions (e.g., “Once more”), and questions regarding the correctness or incorrectness of task card sentences (e.g., “Do you think correct?”) were included in counts of negotiated interaction, as they were in the pilot study. Interrater reliability procedures consisted of sampling every tenth negotiation from the total transcription corpus of 1,036 L2 negotiations until a sample of 100 L2 negotiations was obtained. A second trained researcher then coded these negotiations independently. Interrater agreement was 89% for placement into the negotiation categories discussed above.

Following Duff (1986), a second measure of negotiation quantity was determined by counting the number of L2 words and meaningful word fragments—such as the first half of a word being repeated—contained in each L2 negotiation. This procedure allowed calculation of the total number of L2 words/fragments produced by all discussion groups for each task treatment. Chi-square tests were again used to examine the significance of differences across the three tasks and between the two task groups. In addition, the average number of words per L2 negotiation and the average number of L2 negotiations per min were calculated for each treatment group for each task.

The last measure was important because, in the interests of obtaining maximum negotiation data for analysis, the present study did not control for time by limiting negotiation counts to the first 10 rein, as the pilot study did. The alpha level was set at .05, $p < .05$.

RESULTS

Proficiency Gains

In this article, proficiency has been defined as gain in grammatical knowledge. A regime of pre-, post-, and final tests was administered to the grammar task group and the grammar lesson group, and the learners present for all three tests in the these two treatment groups were compared on the basis of (a) between group proficiency differences on the three test scores for each of the three tasks; and (b) within group proficiency differences among the three tests for each task. This analysis was performed by repeated-measures MANOVA procedures using both the full data set consisting of all learners who participated in the treatments, and therefore having unequal cell size (Fotos, 1993), and a subsample data set of matched cell size, consisting of 30 learners from each treatment group present for all three tasks/testing regimes. The total test score means out of a possible total of 30 points for the grammar task group (GmT) and the grammar lesson group (GL) across the three tasks are given in Table 1 for the full sample, and the scores
for the subsample are given in Table A–1 in Appendix A. As mentioned above, the communicative task group did not participate in the testing regime.

Table A–2 in Appendix A presents a summary of the subsample MANOVA statistics for all effects, both between groups and within subjects, involved in the repeated measures procedures. The multivariate statistics include the Hotelling and Roy tests. These were estimated for each of the repeated measures main effects of task and tests for the interaction terms: (a) Groups x Tasks, (b) Tasks x Tests, (c) Groups x Tests, and (d) Groups x Tasks by Tests. Table A–3 in Appendix A presents univariate statistics calculated from the repeated measures MANOVA. These resemble regular ANOVA tables and agree with the multivariate analysis. Orthogonal reverse Helmert contrasts are reported as univariate t statistics, and are given in Table A–4, Appendix A.

The repeated-measures MANOVA analysis presented here confirms the results of the full-data repeated measures MANOVA analysis published elsewhere (Fotos, 1993). There was no significant three-way interaction among test, treatment group, and task, as indicated by the Effect: Group x Task x Test (p < .334). Two of the interaction effects lost their significance in the subsample analysis (Group x Test, at p < .886; and Group x Task, at p < .084). This finding can be suggested to result from the artificial nature of the subsample, wherein the lower test scores of both groups, characteristic of learners who tended to miss lessons, were omitted from the sampling procedure. In addition, the orthogonal reverse Helmert contrasts (Table A–4) indicate that the differences between all pre- and posttests, and all pre- and final tests, were significant, regardless of the treatment group or the task performed. Thus, the results of the full-data repeated-measures analysis are verified by the subsample analysis reported here.

The results of the different analyses can be summarized as follows:

1. Differences between the two treatment groups on all tests

There was no significant three-way interaction among test, treatment group, and task (Table A–2, Appendix A) for the Effect: Group x Task
The two groups’ initial proficiency in all grammar structures was similar, and after the treatments, both groups achieved similar immediate significant proficiency gains and maintained these significant gains after 2 weeks. Within the full data set, average total learner pretest/posttest gain scores in both treatment groups was 5.75 points for Task 1, the adverb placement task; 6.8 points for Task 2, the indirect object placement task; and only 3.61 points for Task 3, the difficult relative clause usage task. Within the data subset used for the MANOVA analysis given in this report, the average gain for Task 1 was 5.74 points; 6.39 points for Task 2; and 3.49 points for Task 3. Thus, the gains for the full sample and the subsample were quite similar.

Within group proficiency, differences among the three tests for all tasks

Proficiency gains between the pretest and posttest scores for each task and the maintenance of those gains after 2 weeks, as shown by the final test scores, were examined for the two treatment groups. Significant gains were made between all pre- and postscores by both treatment groups for all tasks (Tables A–3 and A–4, Appendix A). Furthermore, the proficiency gains were significantly maintained after a period of 2 weeks by both treatment groups across the three tasks.

**Negotiation Quantity**

Table 2 presents the negotiation quantities made during performance of the three tasks by the two treatment groups, the grammar task group (GmT) and the communicative task group (CT). Chi-square values are given in Table B–1, Appendix B.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Total neg.</th>
<th>L2 neg.</th>
<th>L1 neg.</th>
<th>Total L2 words</th>
<th>L2 words/neg</th>
<th>L2 neg./min</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Task 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GmT</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>260</td>
<td>3.13</td>
<td>9.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CT</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>206</td>
<td>1.91</td>
<td>11.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task 2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GmT</td>
<td>349</td>
<td>293</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>907</td>
<td>3.09</td>
<td>12.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CT</td>
<td>421</td>
<td>374</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>815</td>
<td>2.18</td>
<td>18.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task 3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GmT</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>254</td>
<td>2.95</td>
<td>9.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CT</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>258</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>10.58</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Between-group differences significant at $p < .05$. 

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Task 1: Adverb Placement

For the first task, which was not an information gap but required planned language and an agreed-upon task solution, there were 11 grammar task groups and 12 communicative task groups, the difference due to absences in the grammar task treatment group. Each group consisted of 4 learners. The average time for task completion was 8.56 min for the grammar task group and 9.24 min for the communicative task group. In comparison, administration of the grammar lesson took 19 min, including time spent writing sentences on the board. The grammar task group produced significantly more L2 words during performance of Task 1 and also produced significantly more negotiations in the L1. The L1 negotiations involved discussion of the task directions, terms, and rules. The grammar task group’s L2 negotiations were more than one word longer, and the communicative task group made only two more L2 negotiations per min.

Task 2: Indirect Object Placement

This task was an information gap task, requiring a task solution and lacking only planned language. It was performed by 10 grammar task groups and the 10 communicative task groups. The grammar task group took an average of 23.38 min to perform their task and the communicative task group averaged 20.04 min. Administration of the grammar lesson took 25 min. Significant differences were observed for all frequency counts except for L1 negotiations. The communicative task group made significantly more total negotiations, L2 negotiations, and made at least six L2 negotiations per min more than the grammar task group. These higher negotiation counts were caused by the presence of several unusual lexical items in the sentences of the communicative task, which was about the development of the English alphabet. These terms prompted many one- or two-word requests for repetition and clarification, such as once more and what. Nevertheless, as was seen for Task 1, the grammar task group produced significantly more L2 words during negotiations, and their average number of words per L2 negotiation was nearly one word higher than the figure for the communicative task group.

Task 3: Relative Clause Usage

Task 3, which was an information gap task requiring planned language and lacking a task solution, was performed by 11 grammar task groups and 11 communicative task groups. The grammar task group’s average time for task performance was 9.12 min, and the communica-
tive task group’s average time was 8.13 min. Administration of the grammar lesson took 18 min. No significant differences were found between any of the frequency counts for the two task groups except for the L1 negotiations, which were significantly greater for the grammar task group. In addition, the average number of words per L2 negotiation was nearly the same for the two groups, and the communicative task group made only one more L2 negotiation per min.

In summary, it can be seen that Task 1 and 3 promoted comparable counts of L2 negotiations in both of the two task treatment groups. In Task 2, the L2 negotiation counts of the communicative task group were inflated by the presence of unfamiliar lexical items. Nonetheless, the grammar task group produced more total L2 words and more L2 words per negotiation than the communicative task group. For Task 1 and Task 3, the communicative task group made only one or two words more per L2 negotiation than the grammar task group but at least six more L2 negotiations per min during performance of Communicative Task 2, which contained unfamiliar lexical items.

Regarding negotiation quality, task performance by the grammar task group produced an average of 3.06 words per English language negotiation compared to an average of only 1.06 words per L2 negotiation produced during the initial study (Fotos & Ellis, 1991). The greater number of words per L2 negotiation produced more complex language than the single-word utterances observed in the pilot study protocols, as shown in the following portions of a protocol from a grammar task discussion group performing Task 2, the indirect object task which was also used during the first study.

A: (learner reads two sentences) Which do you think correct sentences?
B: I can’t understand. Teach me.
A: I don’t know. I don’t know why those two sentences is good. Do you understand?
C: Probably both sentence are correct. OK?
B: I can understand first sentence, but second sentence don’t understand. Explain. You must explain.
C: Both sentences are post. Preposition “to” may use. OK?
All members: OK OK.

Another area of interest was whether variations in negotiation quantity were related to different combinations of task features, rather than to task content. Table 3 presents a summary of the total negotiations, L2 negotiations and total L2 words produced per task, with the counts for the two treatment groups combined. No significant differences were found between the total number of negotiations, L2 negotiations and L2 words for Task 1 and Task 3. However, the total number of
TABLE 3
Summary of Negotiations for All Tasks (Both Treatment Groups Combined)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task features present</th>
<th>Total neg.</th>
<th>L2 neg.</th>
<th>Total L2 Words/Task</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Task 1 (planned language + solution)</td>
<td>273</td>
<td>166</td>
<td>466</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task 2 (information gap + solution)</td>
<td>770*</td>
<td>640*</td>
<td>1725*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task 3 (information gap + planned language)</td>
<td>266</td>
<td>172</td>
<td>512</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*All between-group differences significant at $p < .05$.

negotiations, L2 negotiations and L2 words for Task 2 were significantly greater than the total counts produced by either of the other two tasks. Chi-square values are reported in Table B–2, Appendix B.

DISCUSSION

Proficiency Gains

The most important research question motivating this study was whether different grammar consciousness-raising tasks, varying in both the nature of the grammar structures studied and the type of task features present, would consistently produce significant proficiency gains in knowledge of the target grammar structure comparable to the gains produced by traditional, teacher-fronted grammar lessons. No instruction on the grammar point preceded or followed the task treatment, so learner mastery of the grammar structure was gained solely from performance of the task activities.

The results of the repeated-measures MANOVA procedures and the derived univariate statistics give strong support for a positive answer to this critical research question. No significant differences were found to exist across the three tasks/lessons between the test scores of the grammar task group and the grammar lesson group for their initial levels of proficiency, as measured by pretests; their significant gains in proficiency after the grammar treatment, as measured by posttests; and the maintenance of these significant gains after 2 weeks, as measured by final tests. Although the gain scores were not large, ranging from about 6 points for the easier adverb and indirect object tasks to only 3 points for the relative clause task, the gains were uniformly significant across the three grammar structures. Furthermore, these significant gains were consistently maintained after a 2-week period.
However, during the initial study (Fotos & Ellis, 1991), similar task performers from the same university did not maintain significant gains after performance of Task 2, the indirect object placement task. The failure of grammar task performance to promote the same type of durable gains as produced by the grammar lesson was seen as an important consideration limiting its pedagogic usefulness. Three factors in the present study are suggested to have promoted the successful maintenance of proficiency gains by the grammar task group across the three tasks: (a) the sequencing of task performance from easy to difficult: The first task on adverb placement required identification of only one rule and was not an information gap task. Thus, learners were able to become familiar with task performance in a group participation pattern before attempting tasks with multiple rules to master and the requirement for information exchange; (b) the presence of a production section on the proficiency tests, requiring the learners to produce the structures they had studied, this serving as an additional consciousness-raising activity; and (c) the subsequent communicative use of the structures, which were embedded in communicative activities presented during the second and third week after the grammar treatments. It has been suggested (Lightbown, 1991) that repeated communicative exposure to grammar structures presented through formal instruction tends to consolidate learner accuracy, and the results of the present study support this observation. However, it is necessary to ask whether these results could be due to teacher/researcher effects or to practice effects from taking the same test three times. The teacher was also the researcher, and one must consider whether the former role could have been used to produce results desirable to the latter. Yet, while teaching the grammar lessons, it was to the researcher’s advantage to present effective instruction, and, as mentioned, the various pretests and posttests were administered to the treatment groups without discussion of or comment on the grammar structure either before or after testing. The issue of practice effects was of greater concern. Inspection of Table 1, which shows the mean test scores of both treatment groups for all tests, reveals that the post-and final test scores for the tasks are mostly the same or lower, or if they are higher, they are only higher by a point/fraction of a point. The lack of a posttest/final test gain suggests that, similar to the initial study, there was no practice effect from taking the same tests repeatedly.

In summary, the knowledge developed through performance of the three different grammar tasks compared favorably with the knowledge gained from formal instruction on the three grammar points. It can therefore be suggested that the positive results of grammar task performance may be widely applicable to a range of grammar structures.
Negotiation Quantity

The second research question of this investigation involved the number of L2 negotiations produced during grammar task performance compared with the number of L2 negotiations produced by performance of regular communicative tasks lacking grammatical content. The results indicate that no significant differences in L2 negotiation counts existed between the two treatment groups for Task 1 and Task 3. The average times for task completion were quite similar for the two groups across the two tasks, and the L2 negotiations per min and average number of words per L2 negotiation were also similar. However, for Task 2, both treatment groups took more than twice the time taken for performance of Task 1 and 3, and, as a result, they produced more than twice as many L2 negotiations and more than three and a half times as many total L2 words per task. Due to the presence of unknown lexical items in the content of the communicative task, the communicative task group made significantly more total negotiations and L2 negotiations than the grammar task group and made at least six L2 negotiations per min more than the grammar task group. Nonetheless, the latter group still produced significantly more total L2 words per task and one more average word per L2 negotiation.

Having multiple measures of negotiation quantity allows comparison between the two treatment groups, which bypasses the problem of the extra negotiations in Communicative Task 2. It can therefore be suggested that grammar task performance promoted negotiation quantities comparable to those produced by communicative task performance, even for Task 2, when the total L2 words produced and the average number of words per L2 negotiation are considered separately. Thus, the second research question can be answered affirmatively.

Of the different measure of negotiation quantity used in this report, it is interesting that the average number of words per L2 negotiation was not subject to much fluctuation. It ranged from a few more than two words per negotiation to a few more than three words, regardless of the task type, the length of time needed for task performance, or the nature of the treatment group. The limited number of L2 negotiations (only 143) analyzed during the initial study were characterized as mechanical because they tended to consist of one-word checks of whether task card sentences were correct. However, the data obtained during the present study were more extensive, consisting of 462 L2 negotiations made by the grammar task group during performance of three different tasks. Analysis of this data suggests that the negotiations made during performance of the three grammar tasks
were not as mechanical as those reported for the first study in the sense that they were consistently more than three words in length. As shown in the portion of the protocol cited above, negotiated interaction often consisted of short sentences rather than the one-word utterances reported previously for Task 2 performance by similar learners from the same institution. Once again it can be suggested that this favorable result was produced by allowing the learners to become familiar with group work and task performance through careful sequencing of tasks. In contrast, the learners in the initial study had no previous experience with either group work or task performance prior to their performance of Task 2, a difficult task requiring a multiway exchange of information and the generation of three grammar rules as a task solution. In addition, the opportunities for planned language provided in Task 1 and Task 3 may have also served to promote more complex language production for these tasks, an important function of planning discussed by Crookes (1991).

Negotiations made during communicative task performance were slightly shorter, about two to three words in length. Such lack of variation across the six tasks raises the possibility that negotiations, in general, may tend to have a characteristic length because of their discourse function, and this is an area for future research.

The final research question concerned the cause of variation in negotiation quantity. It was not expected that the nature of the grammar structure used as the task content for the grammar tasks would be a source of differences in negotiation quantities. Rather, the combination of task features present were predicted to influence negotiation counts. In this study, Task 2, the information gap task requiring a single, agreed-upon solution and lacking only planned language, took the greatest amount of time to perform and significantly promoted the greatest number of negotiations in both treatment groups. The combination of these features promoted more negotiation than the other combinations of features in both the grammar task group and the communicative task group. Thus, it can be suggested that negotiation quantity is determined by the combination of task features present rather than by the specific nature of the task content.

**CONCLUSION**

The research questions of the present study can be answered in ways which support the use of grammar consciousness-raising tasks as one possible method for the development of knowledge of problematic grammar structures through communicative activities. The three grammar tasks presented here were comparable to formal grammar
lessons in terms of promoting significant proficiency gains in the target structure, and the gains achieved through task performance were found to be durable even after 2 weeks had passed. In addition, performance of the grammar consciousness-raising tasks produced quantities of L2 negotiations comparable to the number of L2 negotiations produced by communicative tasks matched for task features but lacking grammatical content. The average length of the English language negotiations produced was three times longer than in the pilot study (Fotos & Ellis, 1991) and was slightly longer than the average length of negotiations produced by communicative task performance. Thus, task performance led to negotiation that was sufficiently rich to suggest that grammar consciousness-raising tasks may be of general benefit to L2 acquisition, in accordance with the claims of Long’s (1983b) interaction hypothesis. It was also indicated that negotiation quantities were promoted differentially through manipulation of task features, regardless of the nature of the grammar structure which constituted the task content, and that the greatest interaction was produced by the combination of an information gap and the requirement for a single, agreed-upon task solution. Grammar consciousness-raising tasks can therefore be recommended to the field of language teaching as useful pedagogy at a time when many teachers are seeking acceptable ways to bring formal instruction on grammar back into their communicative classrooms, and other teachers are searching for communicative activities which harmonize with the goals of more traditional educational curricula emphasizing the formal study of language properties.

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REFERENCES


GRAMMAR CONSCIOUSNESS-RAISING TASKS


**GRAMMAR CONSCIOUSNESS-RAISING TASKS**


APPENDIX A
Repeated-Measures MANOVA Tables (Subsample of 30 Learners)

TABLE A—1
Mean Scores for All Tests, All Tasks (n = 30)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Task 1 (Adverb)</th>
<th>Task 2 (Ind. Obj.)</th>
<th>Task 3 (Rel. Cl.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pre</td>
<td>Post</td>
<td>Final</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GmT</td>
<td>17.63</td>
<td>22.63</td>
<td>24.13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TABLE A—2
Summary of MANOVA Statistics for All Effects Involved in Repeated Measures (n = 30)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Effect Test Name</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Approximate F</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Task Hotellings Roys</td>
<td>.99642</td>
<td>28.39807</td>
<td>2.57</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Test Hotellings Roys</td>
<td>.634443</td>
<td>180.81632</td>
<td>2.57</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group x Task Hotellings Roys</td>
<td>.09084</td>
<td>2.58900</td>
<td>2.57</td>
<td>.084</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group x Test Hotellings Roys</td>
<td>.00425</td>
<td>.12118</td>
<td>2.57</td>
<td>.886</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task x Test Hotellings Roys</td>
<td>.40952</td>
<td>5.63088</td>
<td>4.55</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group x Task Hotellings Roys</td>
<td>.08508</td>
<td>1.16985</td>
<td>4.55</td>
<td>.334</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. p values reported by Pillais and Wilks tests were identical to 3 decimal points to the p value for Hotellings in each case.

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TABLE A-3
Summary of Univariate Statistics From the Repeated-Measures MANOVA (n = 30)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>SS</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between Subjects</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Cells</td>
<td>1888.73</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>32.56</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>284602.98</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>284603.98</td>
<td>8739.74</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group</td>
<td>14.02</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>14.02</td>
<td>.43</td>
<td>.514</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Subjects</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task</td>
<td>1763.16</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>15.20</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group x Task</td>
<td>823.38</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>411.69</td>
<td>27.09</td>
<td>.000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Within Cells</td>
<td>73.23</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>36.62</td>
<td>2.41</td>
<td>.094</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task x Test</td>
<td>880.25</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>7.59</td>
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<tr>
<td>Test</td>
<td>3736.13</td>
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<td>1868.07</td>
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<td>.000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Group x Test</td>
<td>2.56</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.28</td>
<td>.17</td>
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<td>Within Cells</td>
<td>1712.19</td>
<td>232</td>
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<tr>
<td>Task x Test</td>
<td>214.90</td>
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<td>53.72</td>
<td>7.28</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group x Task x Test</td>
<td>54.47</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>13.62</td>
<td>1.85</td>
<td>.121</td>
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</table>

TABLE A—4
Reverse Helmert Contrasts for Comparisons Within Main Effect for Tests (n = 30)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contrast</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre versus Post</td>
<td>16.07</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre versus Final</td>
<td>15.05</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX B
Chi-Square Statistics for Negotiation Frequencies

TABLE B-1
Chi-Square Statistics for Table 2, Differences in Negotiation Frequencies—
Grammar Task Group Versus Communicative Task Group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Negotiations</th>
<th>Total neg.</th>
<th>L2 neg.</th>
<th>L1 neg.</th>
<th>Total L2 words</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Task 1</td>
<td>0.0586</td>
<td>3.0157</td>
<td>4.4024*</td>
<td>6.2789*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task 2</td>
<td>6.547*</td>
<td>9.595*</td>
<td>0.6214</td>
<td>4.8089*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task 3</td>
<td>1.9887</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5.7829*</td>
<td>0.0176</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Significant at $p < .05$.

TABLE B-2
Chi-Square Statistics for Table 3, Differences in Negotiation Frequency Totals
Between Each Set of Tasks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Negotiation Category</th>
<th>Total neg.</th>
<th>L2 neg.</th>
<th>Total L2 words</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Task 1 &amp; 2</td>
<td>235.8734*</td>
<td>204.2721*</td>
<td>722.3021*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task 2 &amp; 3</td>
<td>243.7322*</td>
<td>268.5825*</td>
<td>656.6580</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task 1 &amp; 3</td>
<td>.0667</td>
<td>.0739</td>
<td>2.070</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Significant at $p < .05$. 

GRAMMAR CONSCIOUSNESS-RAISING TASKS
1. **Adverb Placement Task**

   Directions: Working in your groups, study the following sentences. These sentences contain *adverbs*, words which describe the verb. Adverbs can occur in several places:

   *Yesterday* he studied English.
   *We quickly* ate lunch.
   *He studied for the test carefully.*

   But adverbs cannot occur in one location in the English sentence. In groups, you must find that location. To help you solve this problem, you will ask and answer questions which contain these five adverbs: *yesterday quickly carefully easily often*

   1. First, decide who will start.
   2. Then, that person asks the person to his/her right Question 1, and the person answers it.
   3. Then, the person who answered Question 1 asks Question 2 to the person on his/her right.
   4. Continue until everyone has asked and answered questions.
   5. When people are answering questions, you should think about the location of the adverb. Do you think that the person is using the adverb in the correct location? If not, tell the person where you think the correct location is.
   6. When everyone has finished, discuss 4 general rules for adverb placement.
   7. When you agree on the rules, write the rules at the bottom of this page.

   **Question 1:** What did you do *yesterday*?
   **Question 2:** Many people can solve mathematical problems *quickly.*
   How *quickly* can you calculate?
   **Question 3:** Are you the type of person who prepares for examinations *carefully*?
   **Question 4:** Some people remember what they read *easily.* Other people *easily* learn sports.
   What activities can you *easily* do?
   **Question 5:** What type of activity do you *often* like to do?
   How *often* do you do this activity?

   **General Rules for Adverb Placement in English:**

   1. Adverbs may occur
   2. Adverbs may also occur
   3. And adverbs may also occur
   4. However, adverbs may not be used

   (Because this task was not an information gap task, there were no separate task cards.)
2. Relative Clause Task and Task Cards

Today’s task is about making sentences with who, whom, which and that. You will also study questions using who or whom.

Directions: Taking turns, read your task cards. Each task card gives one rule, and correct and incorrect sentences showing the rule. The student who reads the rule and sentences must then make his/her own sentence. The sentence should show the rule. The students should write down all of the rules, and then take turns making sentences for each rule.

Task Cards (one to each group member)

Task Card 1
Rule 1: When the relative clause goes with the subject of the sentence, it should be near the subject, not at the end of the sentence.
Correct: The boy who is five years old is very clever.
Incorrect: The boy is very clever who is five years old.
Now, make your own sentence using this rule

Task Card 2
Rule 2: Don’t leave unnecessary pronouns in the sentence, and don’t forget to use who, whom or which.
Correct: The boy who likes English speaks well.
Incorrect: The boy who he likes English speaks well. (he is unnecessary)
Correct: I like flowers which bloom in spring.
Incorrect: I like flowers bloom in spring (which has been forgotten)
Now make your own sentence using this rule.

Task Card 3
Rule 3: Don’t use the wrong pronoun. Who and whom are for people, which is for things. That is often used with people or things.
Correct: The dictionary which is on the table is mine.
Incorrect: The dictionary who is on the table is mine.
Correct: The girl that just stood up is my friend.
The book that is on the table is mine.
Now make your own sentence using this rule.

Task Card 4
Rule 4: Questions can begin with Who and end with to or can begin with to whom. Both are correct. But be careful not to use to twice.
Correct: Who did you give the book to? To whom did you give the book?
Incorrect: To whom did you give the book to? (to is used twice)
Now make your own sentence using this rule.
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Fun Run, Swap Shop, Discussion
Groups, Breakfast Seminars,
Interest Section Events, Affiliate
Events, Exhibits, Employment
Clearinghouse, Video Showcase,
Software Fair, and the glorious
California sunshine!
Native and Nonnative Speakers’ Pragmatic Interpretations of English Texts

ELI HINKEL
Xavier University

Cultural differences in writing conventions complicate the process of learning to write in an L2. This study highlights some of the differences between writing conventions accepted in discourse traditions influenced by Confucian and Taoist precepts and those accepted in the U.S. academic environment. The study compares native-speaker (NS) and nonnative-speaker (NNS) evaluations of four short essays, two written by NSs and two by advanced ESL learners. In terms commonly used in the teaching of L2 academic writing (e.g. a text’s purpose and audience, specificity, clarity, and adequate support), there was little similarity between NS and NNS judgment. The effects of this disparity on L2 learners’ pragmatic interpretations and practical applications of L2 writing conventions are examined and pedagogical implications are discussed.

L2 students and teachers have long acknowledged that learning to write in an L2 is a complex and sometimes tedious process. In addition to linguistic concerns, there are difficulties associated with written discourse frameworks and rhetorical conventions. Written texts represent a convergence of different stylistic, cultural, religious, ethical, and social notions, all of which comprise written discourse notions and frameworks. Kachru (1988) asserts that “different language speaking communities have developed different conventions” (p. 112) of writing.

Cushman and Kincaid (1987) have established that the differences between written discourse frameworks and conventions accepted in language communities influenced by Confucian and Taoist precepts and those accepted in the U.S. academic environment extend into fundamental concepts underlying writing. The predominance of assertion, the type and extent of proofs, and the persuasive value of appeals to history and authority accepted in Confucian cultures contrast with
Anglo-American writing conventions, such as rational (Aristotelian) justification and specific exemplification (Kincaid, 1987).

Oliver (1971) indicated that in Chinese writing, the need for explanation is not self-evident but the need to maintain harmony is, and text is written with a different purpose from that in many English-speaking societies, that is, to “adjust people to people” (p. 98), rather than explicitly state a point of view. From this perspective, general harmony between the writer and the reader “has greater value than achievement of any particular result” (p. 99). The author observes that the outcome of harmony maintenance is the depersonalization of text, which then becomes indirect and distant from any individual writer or audience and devoid of argumentation and persuasion since writing that does not reveal the writer’s position on an issue is unlikely to argue very strongly for that position and is unlikely to be very persuasive.

Bloom (1981) concluded that his U.S. and Chinese subjects displayed significantly different interpretations of a text’s purpose and the abstract notion of argumentation in English text. His Chinese subjects described English discourse and written argumentation as “insufferably” redundant, cyclical, excessively detailed, forced, and unnecessary.

Yum (1987) makes similar observations regarding contemporary Korean writing and states that persuasion and explicit description are rarely employed. Indonesian and Vietnamese writing conventions also reflect their Confucian cultural heritage and the classical Chinese writing tradition (Nguyen, 1987; Prentice, 1987). According to Hinds (1976, 1983) and Tsujimura (1987), vagueness and ambiguity are valued highly in Japanese text because they allow for the communication of minds rather than the communication of words. On the other hand, in Anglo-American rhetorical frameworks, vagueness and ambiguity are viewed negatively, explicit argumentation is considered more effective, and concrete support for most points is expected (Hinds, 1983; Winkler & McCuen, 1984).

Over the past 20 years, numerous studies have been carried out to determine how NNS writers structure L2 text (Connor, 1987a; Kaplan, 1978, 1988; Raimes, 1985; Scarcella, 1984). These and many other researchers into the acquisition of L2 writing have observed that ESL writers transfer concepts and conventions associated with writing from L1 to L2 (Carlson, 1988; Friedlander, 1990; Scarcella & Lee, 1989; Soter, 1988; Wong, 1990).

NNSs with demonstrated L2 proficiency who have assimilated the rhetorical frameworks of one tradition may have difficulty communicating effectively with readers who are familiar with and operate in a different discourse framework (Bloom, 1981). Matalene (1985) reports that her Chinese students’ writing in English closely adhered to the
classical Chinese writing tradition in which the primary function of text is harmony maintenance and in which presenting brief images to indirectly affect the audience is viewed as a means of promoting unity between the writer and the reader. The author cautions ESL teachers that “logics different from our own are not necessarily illogical” (p. 806). Scarcella (1984) also found that her Japanese, Korean, and Chinese ESL students approached expository writing differently from NSs and tended to make different assumptions about their audience’s background knowledge than NSs did.

Although many specialists on language and the acquisition of L2 writing have come to recognize that NNSs rely on their knowledge of L1 rhetorical paradigms, it has not been established with certainty whether NNSs who have received extensive L2 training and have achieved a relatively high L2 proficiency can effectively bridge the gap between L1 and L2 writing conventions. This paper focuses on distinctions between NS and highly-trained NNS pragmatic interpretations of Anglo-American notions pertaining to writing, such as a text’s audience and purpose, specificity, support for the main idea, and persuasiveness. The purpose of the study is to ascertain whether rhetorical notions accepted in the U.S. academic environment and familiar to NSs are as clear to advanced and trained L2 learners from a written discourse tradition influenced by Confucian and Taoist precepts and culture.

PRAGMATICS OF TEXT INTERPRETATION

Differing rhetorical assumptions between NNSs and NSs have more than stylistic impact on written communication. In his account of pragmatic interpretation, Stalnaker (1991) shows that communication takes place only when the participants share mutual beliefs and assumptions which are recognized as shared. These common background beliefs and pragmatic assumptions impose constraints on what is reasonable, necessary, and appropriate in communication. He further indicates that the success of communication is contingent on the extent to which the common background beliefs and mutual contextual assumptions are shared. Bach and Harnish (1979) assert that mutual contextual beliefs play a central role in the success of communication because these beliefs determine the purpose, clarity, and relevance of the communicative act. In their view, cultural differences in contextual beliefs fundamentally affect the success of cross-cultural communication.

Strevens (1987) explains that cultural differences and notions pertaining to writing can become impediments in the acquisition of L2 communication patterns, particularly when these notions are related
to purposes which are absent from the learner’s culture (i.e., precision in discourse, (Aristotelian) rationality of argument, and the need for reasoning, justification, and proof). He concludes that rhetorical value systems have a great deal of influence on rules of discourse and thus determine the extent of the cultural barrier between the learner and the target language.

Research has shown that when sufficient data are not available for interpreting abstract notions and information, both NSs and NNSs “default” to conventionalized presuppositions and assumptions in order to structure information (Jackendoff, 1983; Hudson, 1989). If NNSs lack access to the shared NS background in and mutual knowledge of notions used in the teaching of L2 writing, such as explicit support for the main idea, text’s purpose, audience, persuasiveness, and specificity, they may interpret these notions differently from NSs. To a large extent, their pragmatic interpretations of L2 notions pertaining to writing may be derived from L1-based conceptual frameworks and communicative paradigms. Schachter (1983) provided extensive evidence that, in concept learning, adult L2 learners do not seek to refute their hypotheses regarding L2 abstract notions; instead, they look to L1 for confirmation. She indicates that learners gather information pertaining to a particular concept, observe regularities in the data, and formulate a hypothesis, which is then tested. However, “previous knowledge” (p. 109) that includes L1 knowledge and conceptualization serves as the basis from which the hypotheses are tested, confirmed, or rejected. Thus, if learners’ previous background knowledge does not verify the newly formed conceptualization hypothesis, it is rejected.

The teaching of writing in an L2 frequently draws on presentations of models and examples from target language texts to facilitate the learner’s interpretation of abstract notions pertaining to writing (Arnaudet & Barrett, 1984; Leki, 1989; Smalley & Ruetten, 1990). However, even if the models and examples are provided and explained, their correct interpretation by L2 writers cannot be assured. Acton and Walker de Felix (1987) found that until educated learners reach the advanced acculturation stage which they term the immigrant, their semantic networks and the cognitive constructs are almost exclusively L1 based.

Because the NNSs’ understanding and pragmatic interpretation of the conceptual written discourse frameworks and associated conventions are dependent on their access to the L2 common background beliefs, the effectiveness of teaching L2 writing may be contingent on the NNS’ acculturation rather than on explicit explanations and exemplification of notions associated with L2 writing.
Two methodologies for the teaching of L2 writing are widely adopted in ESL teaching today: the process-centered approach and traditional explication of the rhetorical structure of English text. The former emphasizes the writing process and focuses on such issues as invention through discovery, purpose, audience, revising/drafting, and the clarity of the text to the reader (Zamel, 1982, 1983). The latter concentrates on the product of writing, the text’s purpose, elements of style, form, clarity, and precision in meaning and considers prewriting preparation for the actual writing (Connor, 1987b; Kaplan & Shaw, 1983). Some methodologists of ESL writing have called for an integrated approach that involves both process and product as both seem to be essential for learning to write in an L2 (Raimes, 1985; Smalley & Ruetten, 1990).

Despite their methodological differences in how to approach the teaching of writing, both process and product methodologies, in one form or another, incorporate such notions as the text’s purpose, audience, support for the main idea, clarity, and information relevance (Flower, 1984; Raimes, 1983, 1992; Zamel, 1982, 1983), because these are fundamental to writing in English (Matalene, 1985; Zamel, 1992).

In academic settings, instructors teach L2 writing by directly or indirectly alluding to, referring to, and exemplifying conventions accepted in writing in English. They bring their students’ attention to the fact that a text addresses an audience and has a clear purpose (Arnaudet & Barrett, 1984; Leki, 1989; Raimes, 1992; Reid, 1988). In order to develop and explain the text’s ideas, the writer needs to include specific and explicit information to support the main idea (Arnaudet & Barrett, 1984; Raimes, 1983, 1992; Reid, 1988) and clearly and convincingly show the author’s views on the topic (Leki, 1989; Raimes, 1992; Reid, 1988; Zamel, 1982).

To construct a text that demonstrates their “knowledge of the format” (Reid, 1988, p. xiv) accepted in L2 academic environment and clearly conveys ideas to readers (Raimes, 1992), learners need to make presuppositions regarding their text’s audience and its purpose. They have to understand what certain terms, such as the text’s purpose and audience, persuasion, and specific and supporting information, entail within the L2 conceptualization of text, relate these abstract notions to text, interpret them according to L2 writing conventions, and apply them to writing. As many L2 writing and composition teachers know from experience, students frequently have difficulty accomplishing these tasks (Hinkel, 1992).
THE STUDY

This study is based on two experiments; in each, NS and NNS writers compared and evaluated two English texts, one written by a NS and the other by an advanced ESL student. The texts were written in response to essay prompts that were modeled on the Test of Written English, administered by the Educational Testing Service (ETS), and the Michigan Test of English Language Proficiency Composition prompts, as well as those commonly found in ESL writing/composition texts (Leki, 1989; Raimes, 1992). The comparison and the evaluation of the texts was structured around Anglo-American writing conventions and the terms in which L2 academic writing is frequently described. The experiments were designed to ascertain whether trained L2 learners from written discourse traditions influenced by Confucian and Taoist conventions pragmatically interpret L2 writing conventions and text constructs in ways similar to NSS and whether they have like access to the common background knowledge and mutual contextual beliefs associated with L2 writing conventions.

Experiment 1

Subjects

Of the 146 ESL students who participated in the experiment, 91 were speakers of Chinese (CH), 20 of Korean (KR), 14 of Japanese (JP), 12 of Indonesian (IN), and 9 of Vietnamese (VT). All had been admitted to the Ohio State University and were actively working toward their degrees; their mean Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) score was 577. As U.S. resident aliens or citizens, the speakers of Vietnamese were not required to take the TOEFL.

The NNS subjects had received extensive instruction in ESL and L2 reading and writing for a period of 4–18 years, with a mean of 10.8 years. Their residence in the U.S. typically fell within 1.5 to 4 years, with a mean of 2.2 years. The only exception was the Vietnamese who were graduates of U.S. high schools and had lived in the U.S. for 4–11 years with an average of 5.7.

All NNSs subjects were enrolled in either Level 2 or Level 3 of a three-level postadmission ESL composition program that adopts the integrated process/product approach and that stresses the rhetorical notions and conventions of a text’s purpose, audience, explicitness, clarity, specificity, and thesis. Classes met daily at Level 2 or thrice-weekly at Level 3 and included 30-min student-teacher conferences each week. Most NNS subjects had taken two ESL composition courses.
in the program; those with TOEFL scores above 563 had taken at least one.

In addition to the ESL students, 28 NSS of American English, enrolled in various departments in the University, participated in the experiment and served as a control group. The total number of participants was 174.

Questionnaire Design and Administration

The students read the following prompt:

Many people believe that there is no such thing as bad luck. They believe, in other words, that misfortune is caused by bad planning or incompetence. Do you agree with this opinion? Using detailed and specific examples, explain why you believe or do not believe in “bad luck.”

Then the students read two English texts written in response to this prompt. Text A was written by a NS student enrolled in an English class and Text B by a speaker of Chinese who had achieved a 583 TOEFL score (see both texts below). They were given 1 hour to respond to the prompt. The NNS’s text was edited for grammatical and lexical accuracy. After the participants read both texts, they responded to 12 questions which required them to make comparisons between the two texts and choose rhetorical notions that were applicable to one of them. (See Table 1.) The questions focused on the authors’ utilization of English writing conventions and the texts’ persuasiveness. The terms associated with English writing conventions and notions pertaining to writing—ease of understanding the text’s ideas (Leki, 1989), the clarity of the text’s purpose and explicitness (Arnaudet & Barrett, 1984; Leki, 1989; Reid, 1988), the text’s persuasiveness (Leki, 1989, Smalley & Ruetten, 1990), audience (Leki, 1989; Reid, 1988; Smalley & Ruetten, 1990), specific and sufficient supporting details/information (Leki, 1989; Raimes, 1983, 1992; Reid, 1988; Smalley & Ruetten, 1990)—have been adopted from current ESL writing and composition texts.

Text A

Do not open an umbrella in-doors—it will bring bad luck. Pick up a penny if you find one on the street—it will bring good luck. Is there really such a thing as good or bad luck? It would be hard to deny that things happen to people over which they have little or no control, but luck, either good or bad, is mainly a function of how one responds to a situation—not something that controls us.

One of my friends unexpectedly made twenty thousand dollars on a real estate deal several years ago. This would seem to be extremely good luck. But instead of investing the money or using it wisely, he bought a new
luxury car. The insurance for the car was very expensive. Every time the car needed repairs, he had to pay a great deal of money. Furthermore, he was not comfortable driving it because he was afraid of having a wreck. In spite of this apparent stroke of good luck, my friend was not really benefited because he did not respond well to the situation.

History is also full of examples of people who have experienced difficulties but still managed to succeed. Viktor Frankl was interned in a Nazi concentration camp in World War II. His family was killed and all his possessions were lost due to circumstances entirely beyond his control. One might think that his luck was bad. However, he used this experience to learn about himself and about human spiritual survival. He came to peace with himself and wrote a book which has enriched millions.

There is really no such thing as good or bad luck, only good or bad responses to situations.'

Text B

I do not believe in bad luck because people can exercise self-control. People use bad luck as an excuse if they are not willing to work hard, develop good habits, and save their money. A person who overcomes difficulties, cooperates with others, and has a positive outlook may never encounter bad luck.

If a student studies hard for good grades and succeeds in his classes, he won't need excuses to explain why his grades are low. It is better not to start drinking than become an alcoholic and let the drink ruin one's health, cause damage to one's health, and then to go through the pain of changing the way of life and being forced to stay away from drink. Therefore, a person who has good habits will never say that his luck is bad. A frugal man can prosper because he knows how to invest well and accumulate greater wealth. Of course, the person who saves his money and does not spend extravagantly will never say that his luck is bad.

If a man chooses to do the right thing however difficult it may be, he will not withdraw from a difficult choice and by doing so, he will become successful. He may never find out what bad luck is. Napoleon, a historical figure, definitely never knew what bad luck was because he consolidated his power and never let it be divided. If a person maintains a positive outlook, he will not feel that he is aging as he is getting older, and he will encounter many opportunities to be happy. Good luck will accompany him, and he may wonder if bad luck really exists.

I always believe that good luck will come to those who learn self-control and self-denial, develop good manners, and have a good temper.

In the original version of the text, the lucky financial gain was obtained through the lottery. However, during the pilot study which preceded the actual administration of the questionnaire, it became clear that the subjects were distracted by the lottery. Instead of analyzing the text for its rhetorical devices, many commented on the fact that lotteries are associated with gambling and, therefore, can be immoral. In an attempt to find a subject-neutral means for a lucky financial gain, several options were considered and rejected. A lucky real estate deal proved to be the least distracting.
Both texts were written in the rhetorical mode of argument/exposition with the purpose of convincing/informing an unspecified general audience (Park, 1988). The texts are very similar in their overall organization: Both consist of an introductory paragraph, a recounting of third party experiences and generalizations from them, a historical allusion, and a one-sentence conclusion. Both texts stated essentially the same idea: They denied bad luck and asserted that an individual can have control of events in their lives.

However, the two texts differed in their approaches to the topic and the utilization of textual devices. In keeping with Anglo-American writing conventions, Text A explicitly discussed two contrasting events—a lucky financial gain through a real estate deal and the experience of a concentration camp survivor, both of which served as evidence of one’s control in responding to extreme circumstances. The examples were followed by detailed descriptions and specifics of the two situations, provided as justification and proof for the thesis. In the first example, the text moved inductively from specific facts to the general thematic point. The second example started with the point to be illustrated and offered corroboration.

On the other hand, Text B briefly mentioned seven illustrative personalities—a student, an alcoholic, a frugal man, a person who is not extravagant, the man who chooses to do the right thing, Napoleon, and a person who maintains a positive outlook. These were referenced without a detailed situational proof, leaving the audience to infer much of the particulars. It is important to note that Text B did not exhibit a lack of focus. The first sentence established the theme and thesis, which were reiterated and upheld throughout the essay. The next two sentences identified habits or characteristics that negate bad luck. Most of the examples illustrated these habits or characteristics. Text B reflected conventions of Chinese writing with little elaboration, use of assertion, and vagueness (e.g., good habits, being forced to stay away from drink, doing the right thing).

The fact that both authors operated on the same basic premise and denied bad luck is important to the extent that the writing prompt does not appear to be culture bound (Lay, 1982). The number of words in neither text exceeded 300. Beyond the prompt, neither of the authors was instructed as to how they were to approach the topic.

Discussion of Results

Although the majority of subjects in all groups, except Indonesian and Vietnamese, liked Text A more than B, each group of NNSs evaluated both texts very differently from NSs. In fact, the NNS values were closest to those of NSs in response to the question, The ideas in
### TABLE 1
Comparative Evaluation of Texts A and B (%) $N = 174$

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NSs</th>
<th>CH</th>
<th>RR</th>
<th>JP</th>
<th>IN</th>
<th>VT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(n = 28)</td>
<td>(n = 91)</td>
<td>(n = 20)</td>
<td>(n = 14)</td>
<td>(n = 12)</td>
<td>(n = 9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Which text did you like more, A or B? ($\chi^2 [1, N = 74] = 9.63 \ p = .0019$)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>96</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. The ideas in which text are easier to understand, A or B? ($\chi^2 [1, N = 174] = 8.71 \ p = .0032$)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. The text’s purpose is more clearly presented in which text, A or B? ($\chi^2 [1, N = 174] = 17.22 \ p = .0000$)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>89</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Which text is more explicit, A or B? ($\chi^2 [1, N = 174] = 14.74 \ p = .0001$)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>89</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Which text is more convincing, A or B? ($\chi^2 [1, N = 174] = 23.23 \ p = .0000$)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>A</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>93</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. The audience can relate better to points made in which text, A or B? ($\chi^2 [1, N = 714] = 11.91 \ p = .0006$)</td>
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<td>A</td>
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<td>A</td>
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<tr>
<td>82</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
7. Do you think it is better for writers to use specific points to explain their ideas or choose a broader, more general approach? (S = specific; G = general; O = other) ($\chi^2 [1, N = 174] = 20.47, p = .0000$; testing specific against all others)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>S</th>
<th>G</th>
<th>O</th>
<th>S</th>
<th>G</th>
<th>O</th>
<th>S</th>
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<th>S</th>
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<th>O</th>
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<th>O</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>96</td>
<td>4</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8. In which text are the ideas more specifically presented, A or B? ($\chi^2 [1, N = 174] = 15.22, p = .0001$)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>A</th>
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<th>A</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>89</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

9. Neither text contains too much supporting information. (Ag = agree; Dis = disagree) ($\chi^2 [1, N = 174] = 7.61, p = .0058$)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Ag</th>
<th>Dis</th>
<th>Ag</th>
<th>Dis</th>
<th>Ag</th>
<th>Dis</th>
<th>Ag</th>
<th>Dis</th>
<th>Ag</th>
<th>Dis</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>82</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

10. In your opinion, which text contains too much supporting information, A or B? (Expected counts were too small so a chi-square was not used. Fisher’s exact test yielded a p value of .2889 with a sample size of 72.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>A</th>
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<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
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<td>12</td>
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<td>50</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

11. Neither text contains too little supporting information. (Ag = agree; Dis = disagree) ($\chi^2 [1, N = 174] = 7.61, p = .0058$)

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Ag</th>
<th>Dis</th>
<th>Ag</th>
<th>Dis</th>
<th>Ag</th>
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</thead>
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<td>18</td>
<td>82</td>
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<td>57</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

12. In your opinion, which text contains too little supporting information, A or B? ($\chi^2 [1, N = 102] = 34.27, p = .0000$)

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
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<th>B</th>
<th>A</th>
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<td>42</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
which text were easier to understand, A or B; and even here, only 56% to 83% of NNSs found Text A easier to understand, whereas all NSs did. Fewer than half of the subjects in all NNSs groups, except the Vietnamese, thought that A’s purpose was more clearly presented than B’s, although 89% of NSs thought so. Only 11% to 56% of NNSs thought that A was explicit while 89% of NSs did. A half or fewer of the NNSs viewed A as convincing while 93% of NSs did. Similarly, the majority of subjects in each NNS group, except for the Koreans (45%), thought the audience could relate better to points made in B than to those in A. Only 18% of NSs agreed.

In response to the question *Do you think it is better for writers to use specific points to explain their ideas or to choose a broader, more general approach*, 96% of NSs, 83% of Indonesians, half of the Chinese and Japanese subjects, but only 40% of Koreans and 33% of Vietnamese indicated that a specific approach is better than a general approach. The prompt, of course, asked for detailed and specific examples. However, whereas 89% of NSs evaluated Text A as more specific than Text B, only 66% or fewer of the NNSs in any language group had a similar view. The Korean and Japanese students’ interpretation of the notion of textual specificity was particularly distant from that of NSs—only 29% of the Japanese and 45% of Koreans evaluated A as more specific than B. According to Yum (1987), implicit and ambiguous communication is valued very highly in Korean writing because words are perceived as misleading. The author emphasizes that “to understand without being told is . . . but a practical communication skill” (p. 83). Hinds (1984) shows that in Japanese text, information is implied or alluded to rather than explicitly stated. Because 34% to 71% of NNSs described B as more specific than A, whereas only 11% of NSs made the same evaluation, a sizable proportion of NNSs appear to interpret textual specificity according to L1 rhetorical conventions (Matalene, 1985).

The next 4 questions represent a four-tier approach to investigating the NSs and NNSs understanding of the notion of supporting information. Questions 9 and 11 require the subjects to Agree or Disagree with two statements Neither text contains too much supporting information and Neither text contains too little supporting information, respectively. In Question 10, the subjects who disagreed with the statement in Question 9 specified which text (A or B), in their opinion, contained too much supporting information. Similarly, those who disagreed with the statement in Question 11 indicated in Items 12 which text (A or B) contained too little supporting information.

Although 82% of NSs noted that neither text contained too much supporting information, 55% of the Chinese, 45% of Koreans, 43% of the Japanese, and 42% of Indonesians made such an evaluation.
The perceptions of the NSs and NNSs subjects differed substantially as to which text contained too much supporting information. Although 7% of NSs thought that A contained too much support and 11% believed that B did, 33% to 50% of NNSs indicated that in their view, A was overly supported. A smaller percentage of NNSs (0% to 25%) thought that B was.

A majority (82%) of NSs disagreed with the statement Neither text contains too little supporting information, with 68% indicating that B provided insufficient support. On the other hand, 0 to 13% of NNSs viewed B’s supporting information as insufficient. Most of the NNSs who disagreed with the statement in Item 11 (34% to 100%) indicated that A lacked sufficient supporting information.

The apparent differences between NS and NNS responses (pooling together the different nationalities) were generally statistically significant (as confirmed by chi-square and Fisher’s exact test results reported in the tables) with the exception of Question 10 in Table 1 (which did not reflect all individuals).

The disparity in the NSs’ and NNSs’ evaluation of the support provided in the two texts implies that whereas NNSs may be familiar with the notion of textual support, their interpretation of the form that it may take in English differs from that of NSs. Of special interest is the finding that 30% to 50% of NNSs believed that A provided too much support (Question 10), 34% to 100% of NNSs believed that A did not provide sufficient support for its points (Question 12), and only 7% and 14% of NSs, respectively, agreed with either view. Therefore, it appears that in the view of NNSs, Text B was relatively well supported whereas A provided too much and/or too little supporting information.

In their discussion of pragmatic relevance of information in communication, Sperber and Wilson (1982, 1986) and Wilson and Sperber (1986) demonstrate that pragmatic relevance is indeterminate. The authors show that, among many other factors, perceived relevance of information in text depends on the contextual implications, the assumptions made by communication participants, their common contextual beliefs, and their mutual background knowledge. They further state that although the information giver provides the foreknowledge, it is the information recipient who must supply the specific contextual assumptions and arrive at specific contextual interpretations. According to Sperber and Wilson’s principle of relevance, most NS subjects interpreted the information in Text A as relevant and a large percentage of NNSs interpreted it as irrelevant to the text’s purposes. Despite the NNSs’ many years of training in L2 writing and the associated conventions, the NSs’ and NNSs’ interpretations of textual relevance seem to be based on different pragmatic presuppositions and assumptions.
Experiment 2

The purpose of Experiment 2 was to verify the results of Experiment 1 by controlling for possible topic and population sample biases in Experiment 1.

Subjects

Of the 160 ESL students who participated in the second part of the study, 91 were speakers of Chinese (CH), 22 of Korean (KR), 16 of Japanese (JP), 23 of Indonesian (IN), and 8 of Vietnamese (VT). All had been admitted to the University, and their mean TOEFL score was 573. The only exception was the speakers of Vietnamese whose TOEFL scores were not obtained. The NNS subjects had received extensive instruction in ESL writing for a period of 5–20 years, with a mean of 10.1 years. Their residence in the U.S. typically fell within 9 months to 4 years, with a mean of 1.7 years. In addition to the ESL students, 32 NS students participated in the second experiment and served as a control group. The total number of participants was 192. The conditions for the questionnaire administration in Experiment 1 were duplicated in Experiment 2: The NNS subjects were taking courses toward their degrees and were enrolled in the same ESL Composition Program and courses described for Experiment 1.

Questionnaire Design and Administration

The students read the following prompt:

Many people believe that it is better to act quickly and decisively than to wait and think something over carefully because opportunity may be lost by waiting. Do you think that taking quick, decisive action is or is not advisable? Explain, using detailed and specific examples.

As in Experiment 1, the students read two English texts written in response. Text C (see below) was written by a speaker of Chinese who had achieved a 590 TOEFL score and Text D was written by a NS enrolled in an English class. They were given 1 hour to answer the prompt. Text C was extensively edited for grammatical and lexical accuracy. The same questionnaire was administered as in Experiment 1.

Text C

"Time is money." This is what my teachers have often told me. On the other hand, my parents also taught me that people must think carefully
before acting. Therefore, I have a dilemma. It is difficult to say which approach is better. It depends on the situation you are in. Many people get confused and do not know what to do when they have to make an important decision.

In some circumstances, we need to act quickly and decisively. In business, you should be quick and decisive; otherwise, a competitor may take advantage of the opportunity. When you drive a car, you need to make decisions and take action quickly. If someone is drowning, you cannot wait to make your decision, you jump in the river and save them. In an exam situation, you need to act quickly because if you take too long, you will run out of time.

However, in some other situations, we need to think things over. When deciding in which university to enroll, you need to check your information very carefully because a lot depends on your choice. If you are in love, you should think carefully if this person is a good match for you. If you are planning to buy a car, you should think carefully about the car you want to buy. When you take out a loan, you need to choose the bank carefully and decide whether you can afford the payment.

Those who act quickly and decisively usually think that opportunities and chances will be lost if they do not take action as soon as they arrive at a decision. Yet, they do not seem to realize that quick decisions may not be as good as they first thought. Sometimes, quick decisions will only harm them. Those who think first before taking any action will be able to handle things as they planned to.

Sometimes, something needs to be thought out carefully before taking any action. A quick decision cannot be made if people think carefully before making any decisions. In a different situation, people need to take a different action to respond to the situations they face. Therefore, whether to act quickly or to think carefully depends on the events that people are involved in.

I believe that taking quick and decisive action is better in some situations, and in some other situations, waiting and thinking carefully is more advisable. You may lose many great opportunities and regret losing them if you do not act quickly. Yet, if the decision you need to make is a serious one, you need to slow down and think before taking action.

Text D

“Is it better to think things over carefully before acting or to take quick and decisive action?” If you think things over carefully, you are much less likely to make a mistake, but a quick and decisive action allows you to take advantage of opportunities that may not wait for you to deliberate all the pros and cons. This, of course, is the central dilemma. You have to achieve some kind of balance between thinking and acting. As a general rule, though, I’d say the more that is at stake in a decision, the more you’d better think it over carefully.

Ordinarily, when you are deciding what to have for lunch, careful deliber-
In some situations, quick decision making is not required. Not a lot is at stake. If you make a bad choice, not a lot of damage is done. If you make a profoundly good choice, you don’t reap a tremendous benefit. You’ll be hungry again tomorrow anyway. Better to make a quick culinary decision and get on with the rest of your day.

A car is less ephemeral than a lunch. When you purchase a car, you’ll have to live with the results of your decision probably for several years. A little planning is highly recommended. Research various makes and models, weigh carefully the cost and quality, think about what you really want and what you can afford. Even though the salesman may insist that several other people are interested in the same car, that it is the last of its kind on the lot, and that he has to have an immediate answer, your decision should only follow careful thought.

Marriage may be one of the most crucial decisions of your life. The impact of this choice could have a significant influence on the rest of your life and even on subsequent generations. Taking quick and decisive action regarding an issue of this magnitude would be a folly. Careful scrutiny of yourself and your intended over a fairly long period of time should precede your decision.

There are clearly advantages to quick and decisive action in some situations—you waste less time and capitalize on opportunities that would otherwise be missed—but when the decision could have significant consequences, it’s better to think carefully first.

Again, the texts were very similar in their overall organization: Both consisted of an introductory paragraph that presented the author’s thesis and both proceeded to discuss the situations in which a quick and decisive action is necessary or is not advisable. Both authors argued that whether to make a quick decision or to think something over depends primarily on the situation and/or on the importance of the decision. Both texts recounted common experiences. The number of words in either text did not exceed 440.

The texts differed in their presentation of information: C briefly mentioned four situations in which quick action is warranted (competing in business, driving, seeing someone drown, taking an exam), four situations in which quick action is inadvisable (deciding which university to attend, falling in love, buying a car, taking out a loan), followed by two paragraphs containing assertions and generalizations on the theme and then a conclusion that reiterated the thesis. It is important to note that the topic was addressed throughout text C, and the examples were carefully balanced. Text D discussed a method of decision making in three situations, listed from least significant to most significant, deciding what to have for lunch, buying a car, and considering marriage. Each of the three situations was supported with three to five sentences that argued for the amount of deliberation that the author felt each situation should be given. Like C, D ended with a brief conclusion that reiterated the thesis.
Discussion of Results

The results of Experiment 2 are presented in Table 2 and appear to be similar to those of Experiment 1. ²

Although 91% of NSs liked D more than C, only 44% to 75% of NNSs shared this view. A similar proportion of NNSs found the ideas in D easy to understand, although 91% of NSs did. Only a minority of NNSs in all groups (26% to 46%), except Vietnamese (75%), believed that the D’s purpose was more clearly presented than C’s, although 94% of NSs thought otherwise. A half or fewer of NNSs found D explicit versus 84% of NSs; less than 40% of NNSs found D more convincing than C versus 94% of NSs. Fewer than half of the NNSs believed that the audience could relate better to points made in D than to those made in C; 94% of NSs had the same view.

The majority of subjects in all groups (56% to 92%) believed that text should present specific information to support its points (Question 7). However, NSs and NNSs interpreted the notion of specificity differently, as 89% of NSs indicated that D was specific whereas only half or fewer of NNSs made the same evaluation.

Again, a majority of NSs (84%) believed that neither text contained too much supporting information. On the other hand, slightly fewer than half of the subjects in all NNS groups (41% to 50%), except the Vietnamese, thought that D contained too much supportive information. Together with this, 78% of NSs evaluated C as containing insufficient supporting information, while 0% to 9% of NNSs had the same view; however, 41% to 48% indicated that D lacked adequate support.

Again, the apparent differences between NS and NNS responses (pooling together the different nationalities) were generally statistically significant (as confirmed by chi-square and Fisher’s exact test results reported in the tables) with the exception of Question 10 in Table 2 (which did not reflect all individuals).

According to several studies (Bach & Harnish, 1979; Grice, 1991; Sperber & Wilson, 1982, 1991), the clarity of communicative purposes, the sufficiency of information, and the uses of language congruent with these purposes are essential in order for the information giver to be understood. Similarly, the appropriate strategies which the information recipients employ to evaluate sufficiency of information and discern these purposes and uses are also necessary for a communication to be successful. For example, if the purpose of a communication is to persuade the audience, the purpose must be clear to the audience.

²In Experiment 2, Text C was presented to subjects before Text D. However, for the convenience of readers, in Table 2 the order of data presentation has been reversed to make it consistent with that in Table 1 (i.e., the NS text appears first).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>NSs</th>
<th>CH</th>
<th>KR</th>
<th>JP</th>
<th>IN</th>
<th>VT</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(n = 32)</td>
<td>(n = 91)</td>
<td>(n = 22)</td>
<td>(n = 16)</td>
<td>(n = 23)</td>
<td>(n = 8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Which text did you like more, C or D? (χ² [1, N = 192] = 13.37 p = .0003)</td>
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<td>D</td>
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<td>C</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. The ideas in which text are easier to understand, C or D? (χ² [1, N = 192] = 11.39 p = .0007)</td>
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<td>91</td>
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<td>59</td>
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<td>73</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>57</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. The text's purpose is more clearly presented in which text, C or D? (χ² [1, N = 192] = 28.03 p = .0000)</td>
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<td>4. Which text is more explicit, C or D? (χ² [1, N = 192] = 19.86 p = .0000)</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Which text is more convincing, C or D? (χ² [1, N = 192] = 36.36 p = .0000)</td>
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<td>40</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>38</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. The audience can relate better to points made in which text, C or D? (χ² [1, N = 192] = 31.57 p = .0000)</td>
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<td>94</td>
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<td>41</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
7. Do you think it is better for writers to use specific points to explain their ideas or choose a broader, more general approach? (S = specific; G = general; O = other) \( \chi^2 [1, N = 192] = 5.82, p = .0159 \); testing specific against all others

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th>S</th>
<th>G</th>
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<td>91</td>
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<td>88</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8. In which text are the ideas more specifically presented, C or D? \( \chi^2 [1, N = 192] = 18.76, p = .0000 \)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>D</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>C</th>
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<td>25</td>
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<td>57</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

9. Neither text contains too much supporting information. (Ag = agree; Dis = disagree) \( \chi^2 [1, N = 192] = 13.66, p = .0002 \)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Ag</th>
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<th>Ag</th>
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10. In your opinion, which text contains too much supporting information, C or D? (Expected counts were too small so a chi-square was not used. Fisher's exact test yielded a \( p \) value of .0156 with a sample size of 86.)

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11. Neither text contains too little supporting information. (Ag = agree; Dis = disagree) \( \chi^2 [1, N = 192] = 13.66, p = .0002 \)

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12. In your opinion, which text contains too little supporting information, C or D? \( \chi^2 [1, N = 106] = 63.83, p = .0000 \)

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and the language used must include a sufficient amount of persuasion devices and techniques. The audience must also employ the appropriate strategies to understand the information purpose and the utilization of the persuasion devices.

Presuming that oral communication and/or written text has the goal of communicating to an audience, this goal is accomplished if the audience recognizes the text’s communicative purposes and its uses of language to achieve them (Davis, 1991). In the view of the NSs Text D achieved its communicative purposes to a greater extent and used rhetorical devices more appropriately than Text C. Conversely, in the perceptions of the trained NNSs, in Text D, the communicative goals and its use of rhetorical devices were not as easily discernible as those in Text C.

The NSs’ evaluation of writing conventions and constructs utilized in Texts A and B in Experiment 1 and Texts C and D in Experiment 2 indicates that they appear to know the conventions of writing in English and recognize the textual devices that represent these conventions in text (Kachru, 1988). They share common background knowledge and contextual assumptions from which they derive pragmatic interpretations of notions pertaining to writing and textual paradigms. Therefore, they evaluated the sample texts according to these pragmatic interpretations.

The NNSs with many years of training in L2 writing do not seem to have the NS-like access to this common background knowledge and the contextual assumptions associated with L2 rhetorical notions and conventions and the appropriate rhetorical devices. Thus, despite their apparent familiarity with and formal exposure to L2 conventions and devices, NNSs made pragmatic interpretations noticeably distant from those of NSs.

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS FOR TEACHING

The results of this study indicate that the advanced abstract notions widely accepted in the teaching of composition to NSs are readily accessible to them for pragmatic interpretation. However, because these conventions of English writing require rational (Aristotelian) argumentation, justification, and proof which are concepts and frameworks not commonly accepted in many other writing traditions, such as those based on Confucian and Taoist philosophical precepts, NNSs exposed to different notions pertaining to writing seem to interpret L2 rhetorical notions differently from NSs. It further appears that many years of L2 composition instruction based on methodologies for
teaching composition to NSs may diminish this conceptual distance only to a limited extent, even if the rhetorical notions and conventions of text’s purpose, audience, explicitness, clarity, specificity, and thesis support are stressed. In addition to the impact this conceptual distance has on L2 writing, further research should probably be devoted to the effect of Aristotelian argumentation and justification of NNS reading comprehension and information retention.

Most trained ESL writers have been instructed that English text must be clear and convincing. It seems, however, that these notions are not always self-evident, particularly when it comes to NNSs raised in cultures where harmony maintenance is emphasized and discourse vagueness is valued. Bloom’s (1981) Chinese subjects clearly disliked the rhetorical constructs that they encountered in English texts. However, students need to be taught that learning Anglo-American writing conventions is inextricable from learning to write in English and that a lack of familiarity with these conventions may prove detrimental to their academic and professional opportunities.

As has been discussed, methodologies for teaching L2 writing and the associated text constructs are largely derived from those accepted in the teaching of L1 writing to NSs (Flower, 1984; Memering & O’Hare, 1983; Winkler & McCuen, 1984). Today, few of the writing/composition texts adopted in the U.S. teaching of ESL acknowledge that rhetorical traditions other than the Anglo-American tradition exist and even fewer delve into contrasts between the writing conventions accepted in other cultures.

An issue for further research to pursue is whether a methodology for teaching L2 writing to NNSs raised in Confucian and Taoist cultures can be made more effective by considering students’ L1 rhetorical conventions. Although in ESL classes the student’s writing frequently serves as means for sentence structure analysis, instructors rarely employ this technique for teaching Anglo-American notions pertaining to rhetorical development because they often appear to be either prohibitively complex or self-evident. However, juxtaposing reasonably short compositions written by NSs and NNSs can make clear the differences in the amount and type of textual support required in various traditions. When various experiments for this study were conducted over 2 academic years, ESL teachers who administered the questionnaires subsequently used Texts A and B, and C and D as models in class discussions. The teachers reported that comparing and contrasting the texts according to different rhetorical conventions proved to be very helpful in facilitating learner pragmatic interpretation of Anglo-American rhetorical paradigms and the rationale that underlie them.

The results of this study indicate that the advanced notions and conceptualizations of writing appropriate in the teaching of composi-
tion to NSs of English may not be fully accessible for pragmatic interpretation even to highly trained NNSs. Although learners’ detailed familiarity with Aristotelian logic and rationality is not necessary for learning to write in an L2, familiarity with these assumptions is necessary if learners are to acquire nativelike pragmatic interpretations of English texts.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank the teaching assistants, ESL teachers and students at the Ohio State University for their participation in this study and support they gave me during the 2 years it took to complete. Also, I would like to express my gratitude to the anonymous reviewers for helpful suggestions with the earlier draft of this paper and to Sandra Silberstein and Andrew Siegel for their help with the statistical analysis.

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REFERENCES


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THE FORUM

The TESOL Quarterly invites commentary on current trends or practices in the TESOL profession. It also welcomes responses or rebuttals to articles or reviews published in the Quarterly. Unfortunately, we are not able to publish responses to previous Forum exchanges.

The Ownership of English

H. G. WIDDOWSON

University of London

The following is the text of a plenary address delivered in April, 1993, in Atlanta at the 27th Annual TESOL Convention. The oral character of the presentation has been preserved.

Given the theme of this convention, Designing Our World, and at a time when territorial disputes and matters of ownership and identity are so prominent in the affairs of the world in general, this is perhaps an appropriate occasion to raise the question of how we stake out our own territory as English teachers in delimiting and designing our world. And to ask who does the designing and on what authority.

To start with, who determines the demarcation of the subject itself? We are teaching English and the general assumption is that our purpose is to develop in students a proficiency which approximates as closely as possible to that of native speakers. But who are these native speakers?

One answer might be: the English. And why not? A modest proposal surely. England is where the language originated and this is where the English (for the most part) live. The language and the people are bound together by both morphology and history. So they can legitimately lay claim to this linguistic territory. It belongs to them. And they are the custodians. If you want real or proper English, this is where it is to be found, preserved, and listed like a property of the National Trust.

Of course English, of a kind, is found elsewhere as well, still spreading, a luxuriant growth from imperial seed. Seeded among other people but not ceded to them. At least not completely. For the English still cling tenaciously to their property and try to protect it from abuse.
Let us acknowledge (let us concede) that there are other kinds of English, offshoots and outgrowths, but they are not real or proper English, not the genuine article.

As an analogy, consider a certain kind of beverage. There are all kinds of cola, but only one which is the real thing. Or, further afield, an analogy, from the French. They have, until just recently, successfully denied others the right to use the appellation Champagne for any wine that does not come from the region of that name where Dom Perignon first invented it. There may be all kinds of derivative versions elsewhere, excellent no doubt in their way, but they are not real or proper Champagne, even though loose talk may refer to them as such. Similarly, there is real English, Anglais real, Royal English, Queen’s English, or (for those unsympathetic to the monarchy) Oxford English. The vintage language.

I do not imagine that such a view would gain much support in present company. The response is more likely to be outrage. You cannot be serious. Well, not entirely, it is true. As I have expressed it, in somewhat extravagant terms, this position is one which very few people would associate themselves with. It is reactionary, arrogant, totally unacceptable. And the argument is patently absurd. Perhaps as I have expressed it. But then why is it absurd? The particular associations of England, Queen and country, and Colonel Blimp which I have invoked to demonstrate the argument also in some respects disguise it. If we now remove the position from these associations and strip the argument down to its essential tenets, is it so readily dismissed? Is it indeed so uncommon after all? I want to suggest that the ideas and attitudes which I have just presented in burlesque are still very much with us in a different and less obvious guise.

To return briefly to Champagne. One argument frequently advanced for being protective of its good name has to do with quality assurance. The label is a guarantee of quality. If any Tom, Jane, or Harry producing fizzy wine is free to use it, there can be no quality control. Recently an English firm won a court case enabling it to put the name Champagne on bottles containing a nonalcoholic beverage made from elderflowers. Elderflowers! The Champagne lobby was outraged. Here, they said, was the thin end of the wedge. Before long the label would be appearing on bottles all over the place containing concoctions of all kinds calling themselves Champagne, and so laying claim to its quality. The appellation would not be contrôlée. Standards were at stake. The same point can be made, is made, about the local Georgian beverage. There can only be one. This is it. Be wary of variant products of lower quality.

And the same point is frequently made about English. In this case, you cannot, of course, preserve exclusive use of the name and indeed
it would work against your interests to do so, but you can seek to preserve standards by implying that there is an exclusive quality in your own brand of English, aptly called standard English. What is this quality, then? What are these standards?

The usual answer is: quality of clear communication and standards of intelligibility. With standard English, it is argued, these are assured. If the language disperses into different forms, a myriad of Englishes, then it ceases to serve as a means of international communication; in which case the point of learning it largely disappears. As the language spreads, there are bound to be changes out on the periphery; so much can be conceded. But these changes must be seen not only as peripheral but as radial also and traceable back to the stable centre of the standard. If this centre does not hold, things fall apart, mere anarchy is loosed upon the world. Back to Babel.

In itself, this argument sounds plausible and it is difficult to refute. But for all that, there is something about it which is suspect. Let us replay it again. Standard English promotes the cause of international communication, so we must maintain the central stability of the standard as the common linguistic frame of reference.

To begin with, who are we? Obviously the promoters of standard English must themselves have standard English at their disposal. But to maintain it is another matter. This presupposes authority. And this authority is claimed by those who possess the language by primogeniture and due of birth, as Shakespeare puts it. In other words, the native speakers. They do not have to be English, of course, that would be too restrictive a condition, and one it would (to say the least) be tactless to propose especially in present company, but they have to be to the language born. Not all native speakers, you understand. In fact, come to think of it, not most native speakers, for the majority of those who are to the language born speak nonstandard English and have themselves to be instructed in the standard at school. We cannot have any Tom, Jane, and Harry claiming authority, for Tom, Jane, and Harry are likely to be speakers of some dialect or other. So the authority to maintain the standard language is not consequent on a natural native-speaker endowment. It is claimed by a minority of people who have the power to impose it. The custodians of standard English are self-elected members of a rather exclusive club.

Now it is important to be clear that in saying this I am not arguing against standard English. You can accept the argument for language maintenance, as indeed I do, without accepting the authority that claims the right to maintain it. It is, I think, very generally assumed that a particular subset of educated native speakers in England, or New England, or wherever, have the natural entitlement to custody of the language, that the preservation of its integrity is in their hands:
their right and their responsibility. It is this which I wish to question. Not in any spirit of radical rebellion against authority as such but because I think such questioning raises a number of crucial issues about the learning and teaching of the language.

Consideration of who the custodians are leads logically on to a consideration of what it is exactly that is in their custody. What is standard English? The usual way of defining it is in reference to its grammar and lexis: It is a variety, a kind of superposed dialect which is socially sanctioned for institutional use and therefore particularly well suited to written communication. In its spoken form it can be manifested by any accent. So it is generally conceded that standard English has no distinctive phonology. The same concession is not, however, extended to its graphology. On the contrary, it is deviant spelling which, in Britain at least, is most frequently singled out for condemnation. There is something of a contradiction here. If standard English is defined as a distinctive grammatical and lexical system which can be substantially realized in different ways, then what does spelling have to do with it? It is true that some spelling has a grammatical function (like the’s which distinguishes the possessive from the plural) but most of it does not. If you are going to ignore phonological variation, then, to be consistent, you should surely ignore graphological variation as well and overlook variations in spelling as a kind of written accent.

The reason it is not overlooked, I think, is that standard English, unlike other dialects, is essentially a written variety and mainly designed for institutional purposes (education, administration, business, etc.). Its spoken version is secondary, and typically used by those who control these institutions. This means that although it may not matter how it is spoken, it emphatically does matter how it is written. Furthermore, because writing, as a more durable medium, is used to express and establish institutional values, deviations from orthographic conventions undermine in some degree the institutions which they serve. They can be seen as evidence of social instability: a sign of things beginning to fall apart. So it is not surprising that those who have a vested interest in maintaining these institutions should be so vexed by bad spelling. It is not that it greatly interferes with communication: It is usually not difficult to identify words through their unorthodox appearance. What seems to be more crucial is that good spelling represents conformity to convention and so serves to maintain institutional stability.

Similar points can be made about grammatical features. Because language has built-in redundancy, grammatical conformity is actually not particularly crucial for many kinds of communicative transaction. What we generally do in the interpretative process is actually to edit
grammar out of the text, referring lexis directly to context, using lexical items as indexical clues to meaning. We edit grammar back in when we need it for fine tuning. If the reason for insisting on standard English is because it guarantees effective communication, then the emphasis should logically be on vocabulary rather than grammar. But the champions of standard English do not see it in this way: On the contrary, they focus attention on grammatical abuse. Why should this be so? There are, I think, two reasons.

Firstly, it is precisely because grammar is so often redundant in communicative transactions that it takes on another significance, namely that of expressing social identity. The mastery of a particular grammatical system, especially perhaps those features which are redundant, marks you as a member of the community which has developed that system for its own social purposes. Conversely, of course, those who are unable to master the system are excluded from the community. They do not belong. In short, grammar is a sort of shibboleth.

So when the custodians of standard English complain about the ungrammatical language of the populace, they are in effect indicating that the perpetrators are outsiders, nonmembers of the community. The only way they can become members, and so benefit from the privileges of membership, is to learn standard English, and these privileges include, of course, access to the institutions which the community controls. Standard English is an entry condition and the custodians of it the gatekeepers. You can, of course, persist in your nonstandard ways if you choose, but then do not be surprised to find yourself marginalized, perpetually kept out on the periphery. What you say will be less readily attended to, assigned less importance, if it is not expressed in the grammatically approved manner. And if you express yourself in writing which is both ungrammatical and badly spelled, you are not likely to be taken very seriously.

Standard English, then, is not simply a means of communication but the symbolic possession of a particular community, expressive of its identity, its conventions, and values. As such it needs to be carefully preserved, for to undermine standard English is to undermine what it stands for: the security of this community and its institutions. Thus, it tends to be the communal rather than the communicative features of standard English that are most jealously protected: its grammar and spelling.

I do not wish to imply that this communal function is to be deplored. Languages of every variety have this dual character: They provide the means for communication and at the same time express a sense of community, represent the stability of its conventions and values, in short its culture. All communities possess and protect their languages.
The question is which community, and which culture, have a rightful claim to ownership of standard English? For standard English is no longer the preserve of a group of people living in an offshore European island, or even of larger groups living in continents elsewhere. It is an international language. As such it serves a whole range of different communities and their institutional purposes and these transcend traditional communal and cultural boundaries. I am referring to the business community, for example, and the community of researchers and scholars in science and technology and other disciplines. Standard English, especially in its written form, is their language. It provides for effective communication, but at the same time it establishes the status and stability of the institutional conventions which define these international activities. These activities develop their own conventions of thought and procedure, customs and codes of practice; in short, they in effect create their own cultures, their own standards. And obviously for the maintenance of standards it is helpful, to say the least, to have a standard language at your disposal. But you do not need native speakers to tell you what it is.

And indeed in one crucial respect, the native speaker is irrelevant. What I have in mind here is vocabulary. I said earlier that the custodians of standard English tend to emphasize its grammatical rather than its lexical features. I have suggested that one reason for this is that grammar is symbolic of communal solidarity. “Ungrammatical” expressions mark people as nonmembers. What you then do is to coax or coerce them somehow into conformity if you want to make them members (generally through education) or make them powerless on the periphery if you don’t. So much for grammar. What then of lexis.

It is said that standard English is a variety, a kind of dialect, in that it is defined by its lexis and grammar. In fact, when you come to look for it, standard lexis is very elusive. It is my belief that it does not actually exist. And on reflection it is hard to see how it could exist. To begin with, the notion of standard implies stability, a relatively fixed point of reference. So if I invent a word, for example, it is not, by definition, standard. But people are inventing words all the time to express new ideas and attitudes, to adjust to their changing world. It is this indeed which demonstrates the essential dynamism of the language without which it would wither away. So it is that different groups of users will develop specialist vocabularies, suited to their needs but incomprehensible to others. When I look at my daily newspaper, I find innumerable words from the terminology of technology, law, financial affairs, and so on which I simply do not understand. They may claim to be English, but they are Greek to me. Are they standard English? One way of deciding might be to consult a standard reference work, namely a learners’ dictionary. But most of these words of re-
stricted technical use do not appear. This is because, reasonably enough, the dictionary only contains words of wide range and common occurrence. If this is the way standard is to be defined, then these words of restricted use do not count by definition. Yet they are real enough, and indeed can be said to represent the reality of English as an international language. For the reason why English is international is because its vocabulary has diversified to serve a range of institutional uses.

As I indicated earlier, the custodians of standard English express the fear that if there is diversity, things will fall apart and the language will divide up into mutually unintelligible varieties. But things in a sense have already fallen apart. The varieties of English used for international communication in science, finance, commerce, and so on are mutually unintelligible. As far as lexis is concerned, their communicative viability depends on the development of separate standards, and this means that their communication is largely closed off from the world outside.

The point then is that if English is to retain its vitality and its capability for continual adjustment, it cannot be confined within a standard lexis. And this seems to be implicitly accepted as far as particular domains of use are concerned. Nobody, I think, says that the abstruse terms used by physicists or stockbrokers are nonstandard English. It is generally accepted that communities or secondary cultures which are defined by shared professional concerns should be granted rights of ownership and allowed to fashion the language to meet their needs, their specific purposes indeed. And these purposes, we should note again, are twofold: They are communicative in that they meet the needs of in-group transactions, and they are communal in that they define the identity of the group itself.

The same tolerance is not extended so readily to primary cultures and communities, where the language is used in the conduct of everyday social life. Lexical innovation here, equally motivated by communicative and communal requirement, is generally dismissed as deviant or dialectal. Take, for example, the two words depone and prepone. The first is a technical legal term and therefore highly respectable. The second prepone is not. It is an Indian English word of very general currency, coined to contrast with postpone. The coinage exploits the morphology of English in an entirely regular way. It is apt. But it is also quaint. An odd Indian excrescence: obviously nonstandard. And yet there is clearly nothing deviant in the derivational process itself, and indeed we can see it at work in the formation of the related words predate and postdate. But these are sanctioned as entirely ordinary, proper, standard English words. What, then, is the

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difference? The difference lies in the origin of the word. Prepone is coined by a nonnative-speaking community, so it is not really a proper English word. It is not pukka. And of course the word pukka is itself only pukka because the British adopted it.

Where are we then? When we consider the question of standard English what we find, in effect, is double standards. The very idea of a standard implies stability, and this can only be fixed in reference to the past. But language is of its nature unstable. It is essentially protean in nature, adapting its shape to suit changing circumstances. It would otherwise lose its vitality and its communicative and communal value. This is generally acknowledged in the case of specialist domains of use but is not acknowledged in the case of everyday social uses of the language. So it is that a word like depone is approved and a word like prepone is not.

But the basic principle of dynamic adaptation is the same in both cases. And in both cases the users of the language exploit its protean potential and fashion it to their need, thereby demonstrating a high degree of linguistic capability. In both cases the innovation indicates that the language has been learned, not just as a set of fixed conventions to conform to, but as an adaptable resource for making meaning. And making meaning which you can call your own. This, surely, is a crucial condition. You are proficient in a language to the extent that you possess it, make it your own, bend it to your will, assert yourself through it rather than simply submit to the dictates of its form. It is a familiar experience to find oneself saying things in a foreign language because you can say them rather than because they express what you want to say. You feel you are going through the motions, and somebody else’s motions at that. You are speaking the language but not speaking your mind. Real proficiency is when you are able to take possession of the language, turn it to your advantage, and make it real for you. This is what mastery means. So in a way, proficiency only comes with nonconformity, when you can take the initiative and strike out on your own. Consider these remarks of the Nigerian writer, Chinua Achebe (1975):

I feel that the English language will be able to carry the weight of my African experience . . . . But it will have to be a new English, still in communion with its ancestral home but altered to suit its new African surroundings. (p. 62)

Achebe is a novelist, and he is talking here about creative writing. But what he says clearly has wider relevance and applies to varieties of English in this country and elsewhere. The point is that all uses of language are creative in the sense that they draw on linguistic resources to express different perceptions of reality. English is called upon to
carry the weight of all kinds of experience, much of it very remote
indeed from its ancestral home. The new English which Achebe refers
to is locally developed, and although it must necessarily be related to,
and so in communion with, its ancestral origins in the past, it owes no
allegiance to any descendants of this ancestry in the present.

And this point applies to all other new Englishes which have been
created to carry the weight of different experience in different sur-
roundings, whether they are related to specialist domains of use or to
the contexts of everyday life. They are all examples of the entirely
normal and necessary process of adaptation, a process which obviously
depends on nonconformity to existing conventions or standards. For
these have been established elsewhere by other people as appropriate
to quite different circumstances. The fact that these people can claim
direct descent from the founding fathers has nothing to do with it.

How English develops in the world is no business whatever of native
speakers in England, the United States, or anywhere else. They have
no say in the matter, no right to intervene or pass judgement. They
are irrelevant. The very fact that English is an international language
means that no nation can have custody over it. To grant such custody
of the language, is necessarily to arrest its development and so under-
mine its international status. It is a matter of considerable pride and
satisfaction for native speakers of English that their language is an
international means of communication. But the point is that it is only
international to the extent that it is not their language. It is not a
possession which they lease out to others, while still retaining the
freehold. Other people actually own it.

As soon as you accept that English serves the communicative and
communal needs of different communities, it follows logically that it
must be diverse. An international language has to be an independent
language. It does not follow logically, however, that the language will
disperse into mutually unintelligible varieties. For it will naturally stabi-
lize into standard form to the extent required to meet the needs of
the communities concerned. Thus it is clearly vital to the interests of
the international community of, for example, scientists or business
people, whatever their primary language, that they should preserve
a common standard of English in order to keep up standards of
communicative effectiveness. English could not otherwise serve their
purposes. It needs no native speaker to tell them that. Furthermore,
this natural tendency towards standardization will be reinforced by
the extending of networks of interaction through developments in
telecommunications and information technology. For there is little
point in opening up such amazing new transmission systems if what
you transmit makes no sense at the other end. The availability of these
new channels calls for the maintenance of a common code. And these
are therefore likely to have greater influence on stabilizing the language than the pronouncements of native speakers.

The essential point is that a standard English, like other varieties of language, develops endo-normatively, by a continuing process of self-regulation, as appropriate to different conditions of use. It is not fixed by exo-normative fiat from outside: not fixed, therefore, by native speakers. They have no special say in the matter, in spite of their claims to ownership of real English as associated with their own particular cultural contexts of use.

And yet there is no doubt that native speakers of English are deferred to in our profession. What they say is invested with both authenticity and authority. The two are closely related, and a consideration of their relationship brings us to certain central issues in language pedagogy. An example follows.

Over recent years, we have heard persuasive voices insisting that the English presented in the classroom should be authentic, naturally occurring language, not produced for instructional purposes. Generally, what this means, of course, is language naturally occurring as communication in native-speaker contexts of use, or rather those selected contexts where standard English is the norm: real newspaper reports, for example, real magazine articles, real advertisements, cooking recipes, horoscopes, and what have you. Now the obvious point about this naturally occurring language is that, inevitably, it is recipient designed and so culturally loaded. It follows that access to its meaning is limited to those insiders who share its cultural presuppositions and a sense of its idiomatic nuance. Those who do not, the outsiders, cannot ratify its authenticity. In other words, the language is only authentic in the original conditions of its use, it cannot be in the classroom. The authenticity is nontransferable. And to the extent that students cannot therefore engage with the language, they cannot make it their own. It may be real language, but it is not real to them. It does not relate to their world but to a remote one they have to find out about by consulting a dictionary of culture. It may be that eventually students will wish to acquire the cultural knowledge and the idiomatic fluency which enable them to engage authentically with the language use of a particular native-speaking community by adopting their identity in some degree, but there seems no sensible reason for insisting on them trying to do this in the process of language learning. On the contrary, it would seem that language for learning does need to be specially designed for pedagogic purposes so that it can be made real in the context of the students’ own world.

The importance of getting students engaged with the language, cognitively, affectively, personally, is widely accepted as established wisdom. Let the learners be autonomous (at least up to a point), allow
them to make the language their own, let them identify with it, let not the teacher impose authority upon them in the form of an alien pattern of behaviour. Very well. But this injunction is totally at variance with the insistence on authentic language, which is an imposition of another authority, namely that of native-speaker patterns of cultural behaviour. If natural language learning depends on asserting some ownership over the language, this cannot be promoted by means of language which is authentic only because it belongs to somebody else and expresses somebody else’s identity. A pedagogy which combines authenticity of use with autonomy of learning is a contradiction. You cannot have it both ways.

The notion of authenticity, then, privileges native-speaker use (inappropriately, I have argued) as the proper language for learning. But it also, of course, privileges the native-speaker teachers of the language. For they, of course, have acquired the language and culture as an integrated experience and have a feel for its nuances and idiomatic identity which the nonnative speaker cannot claim to have. Indeed, native speakers alone can be the arbiters of what is authentic since authenticity can only be determined by insiders. So if you give authenticity primacy as a pedagogic principle, you inevitably grant privileged status to native-speaker teachers, and you defer to them not only in respect to competence in the language but also in respect to competence in language teaching. They become the custodians and arbiters not only of proper English but of proper pedagogy as well.

But what if you shift the emphasis away from contexts of use to contexts of learning, and consider how the language is to be specially designed to engage the student’s reality and activate the learning process? The special advantage of native-speaker teachers disappears. Now, on the contrary, it is nonnative-speaker teachers who come into their own. For the context of learning, contrived within the classroom setting, has to be informed in some degree by the attitudes, beliefs, values and so on of the students’ cultural world. And in respect to this world, of course, it is the native-speaker teacher who is the outsider. To the extent that the design of instruction depends on a familiarity with the student reality which English is to engage with, or on the particular sociocultural situations in which teaching and learning take place, then nonnative teachers have a clear and, indeed, decisive advantage.

In short, the native-speaker teacher is in a better position to know what is appropriate in contexts of language use, and so to define possible target objectives. Granted. But it is the nonnative-speaker teacher who is in a better position to know what is appropriate in the contexts of language learning which need to be set up to achieve such objectives. And that, generally speaking, is not granted. Instead what
we find is that native-speaker expertise is assumed to extend to the teaching of the language. They not only have a patent on proper English, but on proper ways of teaching it as well.

So it is that the approaches to pedagogy which are generally promoted as proper are those which are appropriate to contexts of instruction in which native-speaker teachers operate. And their prestige, of course, exerts a powerful influence so that teachers in other contexts are persuaded to conform and to believe that if the approaches do not fit, it is their fault.

So it is that native speakers write textbooks and teachers’ books, make pronouncements and recommendations, and bring to remote and hitherto benighted places the good news about real English and good teaching to lighten their darkness. Real English: their English. Good teaching: their teaching. But both are contextually limited by cultural factors. Their English is that which is associated with the communicative and communal needs of their community, and these may have little relevance for those learning English as an international language.

And their teaching is suited to particular contexts of instruction which in many respects are quite different from those which obtain in the world at large. Consider, for example, a language school in England, with English as the ambient language outside the classroom, the students well off and well motivated, but quite different in linguistic and cultural background both from each other, and from the teacher. In such a context it is, of course, necessary to focus on what can be established as a common denominator. Everybody is here in England, for example, and everybody is human. And so you devise an approach to teaching which combines authenticity with an appeal to universal natural learning and humanistic response. This is an example of appropriate pedagogy: Such an approach is necessary and of course it works in these local conditions. Highly commendable. But it is exclusive in that it excludes possibilities which might be particularly appropriate elsewhere—translation, for example. The problem is when an absolute virtue is made of local necessity by claims of global validity, when it is assumed that if the approach works here it ought to work, or made to work, everywhere else. This is a denial of diversity.

For of course there is no reason why it should work elsewhere where quite different conditions obtain. It is difficult to resist the conclusion that such an approach, which makes a virtue of necessity, is only privileged because of the authority vested in the teachers by virtue of their native-speaker status. This is not to say that it may not offer ideas worth pondering, but then these ideas have to be analysed out of the approach and their relevance evaluated in reference to other contexts. You should not assume, with bland arrogance, that your way of teach-
ing English, or your way of using English, carries a general guarantee of quality. To put the point briefly: English and English teaching are proper to the extent that they are appropriate, not to the extent that they are appropriated.

TESOL has recently made public its opposition to discrimination against the nonnative teacher, as a matter of sociopolitical principle. This is obviously to be welcomed. But if it is to be more than a token gesture, such a move needs to be supported by an enquiry into the nature of the subject we are teaching, what constitutes an appropriate approach, what kinds of competence is required of teachers—in other words an enquiry into matters of pedagogic principle which bring sociopolitical concerns and professional standards into alignment. In this convention we are concerned with designing our world. Our world. Possessive. Who are we then? What is this world we own? TESOL has designs upon us. Us. I think we need to be cautious about the designs we have on other people’s worlds when we are busy designing our own.

REFERENCES


**Comments on Ann M. Johns’s “Written Argumentation for Real Audiences: Suggestions for Teacher Research and Classroom Practice”**

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I read with interest Ann Johns’s article (Vol. 27, No. 1) about giving ESL/EFL students real writing experiences writing for real audiences. Although Johns raises some important points about audience analysis in grant writing situations, I have some strong reservations about the applicability of her conclusions for general ESL/EFL writing methodology.

Johns begins with the claim that most ESL/EFL courses “often do not take a variety of audiences and their expectations into consideration” (p. 76). After criticizing the teaching of general principles of composition, she then recommends teaching students how to handle a variety of task-and-community-specific demands.

THE FORUM
In her study of two successful grant writers in an engineering college, Johns concludes that careful consideration of audience should occur throughout the grant-writing process. The two writers reviewed accepted grants, read related journal articles, communicated with colleagues to become familiar with the current conversations in their discipline, and investigated the research histories of the grant reviewers. The purpose of this was to ensure that the grant applicants avoided disagreeing “too much with their reviewers” or by presenting “an argument that was too revolutionary, too odd, or too dated” (p. 81). Based on this, she recommends that ESL/EFL writing teachers at every level should have students write argumentative texts for real audiences. Although she acknowledges that a writer’s sense of awareness can shift or become clearer, she urges teachers to have students develop awareness of real audiences from start to finish. She recommends that teachers provide tasks for which “real audiences can be researched and real tasks and communities can be addressed” (p. 87).

Although it may be true that some ESL/EFL composition courses may exclude mention of the importance of tailoring writing to meet the multiple conventions of multiple audiences, I am skeptical about her claim that this means most. In 10 years of ESL/EFL teaching, I have always emphasized the importance of audience awareness to students in latter stages of writing. Every composition instructor I have ever worked with has also understood the importance of audience and convention in the writing process. Until solid evidence resulting from systematic quantitative research shows otherwise, ESL/EFL writing practitioners should be given more credit for their expertise.

Johns’s point about the importance of writers being aware of standard discourse conventions and producing what Flower (1979) terms reader-based prose is commensurate with modern writing pedagogy. However, her claim that writers should keep their real audiences in mind throughout all or most of the writing process ignores some important scholarship addressing the relationship between audience awareness and writing. For example, Elbow (1987) has strongly argued that for those who use writing as a discovery process, audience awareness in the early stages can, in fact, become inhibiting, especially for writers with negative feelings toward a potential reader. Elbow recommends that attention to audience be delayed until the revision stage. Park (1982) even argues that the term audience refers not as much to actual readers as it does to “those apparent aspects of knowledge and motivation in readers and listeners that form contexts for discourse and the ends of discourse” (p. 249). In other words, the audience is really context and convention of a given discourse community.

Another problem arises from the narrow data base upon which her conclusions are founded. The two grant writers in Johns’s study...
allegedly became successful because of their careful—one might even say meticulous—consideration of audience expectations throughout the grant writing process. They did not want to disagree with the opinions of readers too much. Such advice may be helpful for grant writers in engineering colleges but to try to draw a lesson from this very narrow case study of two engineering grant writers for thousands of ESL/EFL writers of other disciplines, such as those in humanities and the social sciences, is questionable.

There are also some very practical problems associated with her recommendations. In EFL settings, where native English speakers are scarce and the need for students to communicate with the local people in written English is usually nonexistent, the opportunities to write for real audiences other than the teacher are limited at best.

Probably the greatest limitation of Johns’s article is her use of the term *real audience* which appears to lessen the writing teacher’s credibility as a knowledgeable authority of the target community’s discourse rules. As long as writing teachers have adequately prepared for a course by becoming thoroughly familiar with the writing conventions of a particular discourse community, they should be real enough. Park (1982) probably put it best: “Much of the time it is not possible to separate a sense of audience from a sense of genre and convention” (p. 256). By writing different kinds of assignments under the teacher’s guidance, students learn how to convert abstract rhetorical conventions into tangible, useful things: term papers, business letters, research proposals, progress reports, and so on.

In short, Johns’s article recommending extensive use of real or authentic audiences in ESL/EFL writing has pushed the value of authenticity a bit too far. Although having ESL/EFL writing teachers teach students rhetorical conventions and serve as the primary audience of written work might be criticized by some as a pedagogical contrivance, this is their job and what schools are all about. As teachers, we are responsible for preparing a special, nurturing, supportive environment in which to prepare our students with the skills they need in the wider community. As Widdowson (1990) observes, “Pedagogy is bound to be a contrivance: that is precisely its purpose. If what went on in classrooms exactly replicated the conditions of the outside world, there would be no point in pedagogy at all” (p. 162).

**REFERENCES**


The Author Responds . . .

ANN M. JOHNS
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I am pleased that Nathan Jones has chosen to critique my argumentation paper, for in his response, he has raised issues that trouble me and many other writing instructors. Though these issues can be approached in a number of ways, I find that the “autonomous” and “pragmatic” models of literacy, as suggested by Street (1984) and Hill and Parry (1992), respectively, are useful starting places. These authors criticize the autonomous model, common in schools, in which a text and its conventions are considered separately from readers and writers and the contexts in which the text was produced. “This focus on physical properties has obscured the essentially social character of text” (p. 445), for the model isolates “those who use [the text]” (p. 448).

In the pragmatic model, on the other hand, a text is viewed as the result of reciprocity (and negotiation) between readers and writers. The influences upon this interaction and the coherence between readers and writer that can result (see, e.g., Enkvist, 1990) are derived from the confluence of the many factors from the context in which the text is situated.

In my TESOL Quarterly article, I attempted to argue for a more pragmatic model and a pedagogy that takes students—and their instructors—outside of classrooms in order to increase their understanding of the complexity of text histories, text processing, and text production within specific contexts. Continuing with this perspective, I will respond to some questions that Jones’s comments raise.

Can and should we confine our students’ experiences with audiences to the ESL/EFL classroom? My answer is no, particularly in the case of argumentation in which “true and known audiences” (Park, 1986, p. 482) play such a central role in text coherence.

Instead, teachers should expose students to a variety of rhetorical situations outside of (as well as within) the classroom, so that students can gain a more complete understanding of the many and varied elements that interact to produce a successful situated text. Among these elements are the purposes, values, expectations, text histories, educations, and cultures of writers and their readers. Too often, ESL/EFL students are exposed to few audiences (the teacher and fellow students) confined to composition classrooms. Not incidentally, limita-
tions upon audience and context can also limit students’ purposes and motivations for writing.

Jones claims that in EFL contexts, there is little need to communicate with local audiences outside of the classroom in written English. This may be the case. However, there are many distant audiences to whom students can—and often need to—write. Here are a few examples from my own experience: In Morocco, at the Institute of Agronomy (Hassan II), the graduate students are revising their theses for international publication in English-medium journals; in Shanghai, students write letters to the English language newspaper, *The China Daily*, critiquing the teaching of English in that country; in Egypt, secondary school students write to English-speaking pen pals. Exploiting available technology (especially e-mail), students from many countries have discovered a variety of audiences to whom they have chosen to address their written texts. (See Cummins & Sayers, in press).

Should writers envision (and assess) audiences as they plan their texts? Should they revise their views of audience throughout the writing process? I would say yes to both questions. There is considerable support for this, particularly in the task representation literature (e.g., Flower, 1987; Flower, Schriver, Carey, Haas, & Hayes, 1989).

Jones cites Elbow (1987), who views writing as a discovery process. Drawing from this author, Jones maintains that “audience awareness in the early stages can . . . become inhibiting, especially for writers with negative feelings toward the potential reader.” The reality is that most ESL/EFL students’ writing outside of composition classes is immediately public; it is graded or evaluated by English-speaking audiences often quite different from the students and their writing instructors. Therefore, the more we can assist our students in making discoveries about true and known audiences and in developing strategies for audience awareness at all stages of their writing, the better off they will be when they go public.

Can’t teachers, as Jones states, “become thoroughly familiar with the writing conventions of a discourse community”? Can’t students” learn how to convert abstract rhetorical conventions into tangible, useful things: term papers, business letters, research proposals, progress reports, and so on”? As composition teachers, bound by our own text histories, literacy theories, values, and expectations, we cannot put ourselves in the shoes of audiences from other discourse communities (a problematic term) nor can we completely grasp the motivations for other communities’ texts or conventions (see Swales, 1990). We may even have difficulty predicting text conventions in the communities with which we identify (e.g., of L2 writing specialists). In our community’s pedagogical genres, are the core conventions found in the traditional five paragraph essay? In our professional writing, are the conventions of the *Publication Manual*
What are the conventions of the term paper or the business letter to which Jones refers? On my campus, there appear to be as least as many variations upon term paper texts as there are faculty requiring them. Therefore, students who believe that they have not learned the conventions of a term paper in ESL/EFL classes may not be able to produce a successful text for another class where other rules and models are appropriate (Coe, 1993).

It is inadvisable, then, to present students with texts autonomously saying, “In these are the conventions for a term paper.” Instead, we might ask students to collect several texts from other classes that fall under the term paper rubric in order to compare them in terms of organization, grammar, lexicon, and other features. Using these texts, students can begin to hypothesize about what may be the invariant and variant features (Toulmin, 1958) of term papers. They can also take assigned papers to faculty to ask questions about what motivates text conventions and grading criteria. In the ESL/EFL classroom, we can talk together about text histories (i.e., the origins of similar texts) or about the various written discourses (e.g., notes, rough drafts) that contribute to the history of one complex text.

It appears that Nathan Jones and I are in basic disagreement about some of the things that ESL/EFL teachers can and should do. I would argue that we should exploit extensively our considerable knowledge of language and language acquisition, expertise that far exceeds that of most other communities. However, the “special, nurturing, supportive environment” (Jones) we create should not lull students into believing that we have become “thoroughly familiar” with socially-constructed and situated text conventions or that “abstract . . . conventions” can be easily converted into “useful things.”

Instead of attempting to provide answers that may be wrong, I believe that we need to create a collaborative, problem-solving environment in which students are:

1. Exposed to many rhetorical situations in which they confront and analyze their own purposes, their audiences, and the other factors that influence the production of situated texts;
2. Encouraged to conduct literacy research, examining texts and text processing with the assistance of a number of potential audiences;
3. Assisted in developing strategies for approaching text processing and production in a variety of situation (See, e.g., suggestions in Kinery & Rose, 1990); and
4. Asked to reflect upon their evolving literacy theories, their processes, and the texts that they produce. (I have found the use of writing portfolios important for these goals.)
Because literacy development is an active, lifelong process, we ESL/EFL teachers cannot provide definitive answers or enable students to achieve their long-term literacy goals in our classes. However, we can help students pragmatically, in developing strategies and questions for a variety of rhetorical situations and situated texts. Audience awareness can, and should, play an important role in these efforts.

REFERENCES


Comments on Donald Freeman and Jack C. Richards’s “Conceptions of Teaching and the Education of Second Language Teachers”

Toward Communication in and About Second Language Teacher Education

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In the their article (Vol. 27, No. 2), Freeman and Richards set out to “stimulate further thinking, debate, and inquiry into the nature of
teaching in the field of second languages” (p. 213). I doubt that anyone who has read their paper would disagree that they are to be congratulated on their purpose and success. There are three areas of this debate which I should like to address: first, the detail of the framework which Freeman and Richards propose; second, the purpose of carrying out such analyses, and third, their use in teacher education.

THE FRAMEWORK

In their introduction, Freeman and Richards refer in passing to four ways in which teaching may be seen: “as a science, a technology, a craft, or an art” (p. 194). This is immediately persuasive, and it is worth pausing to reflect on how these perspectives illuminate the lives of teachers.

Teachers are scientists to the extent that they are involved in the investigation of their teaching contexts, in the careful observation of what is going on, the formation and testing of hypotheses, and the ongoing development of their own teaching. Teachers are technicians to the extent that they are skilled in the use, maintenance, and adaptation of the methods and techniques which they employ with their learners, be they drills, problem-solving tasks, or large-scale simulations. Teachers are also craftspeople to the extent that they acknowledge a tradition of wise and skilled practitioners who have gone before them and from whom they can learn both the lore and the craft of teaching. Finally, teachers are artists to the extent that they illuminate the lives of other people with the expression of their individual creativity.

I have expanded on these perspectives because I find them so useful. The difficulty presented by Freeman and Richards is that, having introduced these four terms, they abruptly abandon them and shift without comment into an analysis based on a brief paper by Zahorik (1986), which, as they say “classifies general conceptions of teaching into three main categories: science/research conceptions, theory/philosophy conceptions, and art/craft conceptions” (p. 194). A great deal is lost, of which I shall pick up only some fragments from each of the three new categories.

First, the explicitly positivist science/research category is not centrally concerned with conceptions of teaching. It presents conceptions of the type of research which this school of thought believes should have its results applied by teachers (e.g., Chaudron, 1988; Long & Crookes, 1992). The conception of teaching with which we are dealing here is the technological one, where teachers function to operate delivery systems. Among the collateral damage, we note that the actual concept of teacher as scientist or researcher has been lost to us.
Second, we are both gratified and concerned to discover that action research and associated approaches have reappeared but now in the theory/philosophy category. Freeman and Richards are quite correct to point out that action research as most of us are now familiar with it has its focus on individual practice rather than on social and institutional reform, and we should take up their challenge to investigate why and how this shift of emphasis has taken place. But we are not likely to be helped in this investigation by categorizing either an individual or social emphasis as a conception of teaching in which “effectiveness is measured in the reasoned exercise of belief rather than in the successful application of findings” (p. 205). Or where, “The role of teachers is to carry out the system, however it is derived, and not to formulate their own individual views of classroom practice” (p. 205). I certainly do not recognise this view of the teacher-as-researcher, in which tradition the formulation of local understanding and autonomous action is central (Hopkins, 1985; Kemmis, 1985; Somekh, 1993; Stenhouse, 1975).

Third, and at least equally confusing in terms of the educational tradition and terminology with which I am familiar, we find the drafts-person and the artist thrown into a single pot. Zahorik (1985) refers to Eisner (1983) in offering the following formulation: “Behaviors that teachers retrieve from their past experiences are the craft of teaching. Behaviors that the teachers create are the art of teaching” (p. 23). Beguiling though this is, it sits uneasily in the company of centuries of guild/craft learning, of apprentices, journeymen and master craftsmen, where the venerability of the tradition is betrayed by the difficulty in finding appropriate nonsexist terms.

In the world of contemporary TESOL, Wallace (1991) has presented a clear description of what is known as the craft model:

The young trainee learns by imitating the expert’s techniques and by following the expert’s instructions and advice. . . . By this process, expertise in the craft is passed on from generation to generation. (p. 6)

Neither original invention nor individual personalization, which Freeman and Richards cite from Zahorik, are a necessary part of this tradition. Fulfillment is to be found in the proper realisation of the craft, which is itself bigger than both master and apprentice.

I have attempted, in this section, to demonstrate how Freeman and Richards’s use of Zahorik’s category framework runs the risk of fostering misunderstandings. This is, I suggest, because Zahorik’s framework is less convincing than the intuitive analysis with which Freeman and Richards initially approached the field. This debate will doubtless continue. In the meantime, however, it is to the issue of purpose that I
should now like to turn, before going on to consider the potential use of such categorisations in the processes of teacher education.

PURPOSE

First of all, I should like to distinguish between two alternative purposes which Freeman and Richards describe. One is “to shift the focus of discussions of teaching from behavior and activity to the thinking and reasoning which organizes and motivates these external practices” (p. 193). The other is implicit in their statement: “Broadening our discussions to take in these embedded conceptions of teaching is crucial to the maturation of the field of second language instruction” (p. 194).

The distinction is not trivial. The last thing that we should want to do is to shift our discussions away from what teachers do in classrooms. This would only further alienate teachers from an educational culture which is already frequently seen as too caught up in its own abstractions. It would also play directly into the hands of the currently dominant political ideologues who wish to proceed as though educational thought and theory were irrelevant to teacher education. Broadening our discussions, however, is exactly what we need to be about: broadening them in directions indicated by Freeman and Richards and also broadening them in terms of addressee so that teacher educators are seen and heard to be addressing both teachers and policy makers in terms meaningful to both.

We are, then, in urgent need of analyses which will illuminate the nature of teaching beyond the listing of classroom activities. Freeman and Richards, following Zahorik, have chosen a system of categorical analysis. Both papers note the potential dangers of this approach, namely, that of appearing to cut up our experience into pieces and to force those pieces into boxes. Zahorik (1986) is careful to say that his categories “should be viewed as a heuristic for examining teaching skills rather than as fixed domains” (p. 22). Somewhat less clearly, Freeman and Richards hedge their categories with caveats, such as:

To say, for example, that a conception is scientifically based is not to exclude the values or other attributes which contribute to it, but rather to address what we find as its primary features. (p. 195)

But once we have acknowledged that all conceptions of teaching are underpinned by a more-or-less coherent, more-or-less articulated set of values, there seems little usefulness in establishing a specific category into which we can put those conceptions in which we define values as a primary feature. And we can repeat this same point with
regard to all the other primary features used to establish the other
categories. In other words, instead of attempting to define primary
features in order to place a particular example of teaching in the
correct category, we are better advised to see our lines of analysis as
parameters along which any approach to teaching can be investigated.

With this approach in mind, we can usefully return to the insightful
terminology of Freeman and Richards’s introduction and establish
our parameters of investigation as: teaching as science, teaching as
technology, teaching as craft, and teaching as art. We can also add:
teaching as expression of values. On this basis, rather than saying, for
instance, that task-based teaching is a clear example of the science/
research conception of teaching, we can investigate task-based teaching
along the various parameters we have established and see what is
illuminated by each of them.

**USE**

Finally, we come to the question of how such analyses might be used
in teacher education. Although they refer to the existence of several
possibilities, Freeman and Richards again follow Zahorik in taking up
three:

1. The *noncompatability* position, where a teacher education programme
   is rooted in one conception and teaches it exclusively
2. The *eclecticist* position, where teachers are informed about all three
   conceptions and encouraged to choose the one which suits them
   best
3. The *developmental* position, where teachers are introduced to the
   conceptions sequentially as befits their personal and professional
   maturation.

At this point, I must confess to a certain nervousness. Despite dis-
claimers to the contrary, what began as a heuristic device has now
taken on all the solidity of, in Freeman and Richards’s own expression,
an “architecture of conceptions” (p. 213), and we are to be faced with
the problem of taking up a position among the columns.

I decline. One of the central purposes of teacher education is the
raising of teacher awareness as to the nature of the endeavour in
which they are engaged. The discussion of such analyses, frameworks,
and perspectives as we have here is a necessary part not only of teacher
education programmed but also of the wider debate about the purposes
and means of teacher education in our societies. But to present our
heuristic instruments as though they construct the reality in which we
live is to deceive ourselves. And to debate among ourselves as teacher
educators as to whether we should tell teachers about only one perspec-
tive, or insist that they choose one of three, or decide for them when they will be ready for which particular box in our system, speaks to me of underlying attitudes which themselves require further illumination.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I should like to thank Mark Clarke, Michael Legutke, and Keith Richards for their comments on an earlier draft of this response.

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The Authors Respond . . .

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Julian Edge appears to make three points about our paper: (a) that the categories of our (and Zahorik’s) analysis in fact overlap in the classroom practice of individual teachers; (b) that the categories themselves risk becoming rigid; and (c) that their use in analysis and in teacher education may become prescriptive. We agree with his first and second points, having said as much in our paper. The categories do indeed overlap in practice and one needs to guard against applying
them inflexibly. They are intended to be a heuristic device, nothing more.

With regard to the third point, our intent is not to prescribe but rather to suggest how these categories might contribute to the analysis and understanding of teacher education programs and practices. Clearly a map is not the territory; it does, however, help us to see certain features of the landscape which we might have missed by walking through it.

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**Research Issues**

The *TESOL Quarterly* publishes brief comments on aspects of qualitative and quantitative research. For this issue, we asked two researchers to discuss teachers’ knowledge.

**Edited by ANNE LAZARATON**

*The Pennsylvania State University*

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**Teachers’ Knowledge**

*From Guessing What Teachers Think to Finding out What Teachers Know: The Need for a Research Agenda*

**KEITH RICHARDS**

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When Freeman and Richards (1993) called recently for “substantial research to examine how teachers’ conceptions of their work unfold throughout their careers” (p. 213), they highlighted an area which has been sadly neglected in our field. Their appeal is an important one, but in the absence of relevant research, their proposed categorisation seems premature. The frameworks we need are those which will enable us to develop a coherent research agenda for discovering more about how teachers think and work. What follows is an attempt to indicate how broad such an agenda needs to be. The areas embraced are conceptions of teaching, dimensions of knowledge, and teachers’ lives and careers.

**THE FORUM 401**
CONCEPTIONS OF TEACHING

Conceptions of teaching are an area that Freeman and Richards (1993) specifically address, but it may not provide the best starting point. The problems of choosing among the rival claims of different models and avoiding charges of reductionism are real enough, but more serious drawbacks are likely to arise when classifications are applied to teaching. Several studies have found that similarities and differences among teachers have been oversimplified and that in practice, mutual exclusivity of categories and homogeneity within categories cannot be assumed. Significantly, it has been found that conceptions teachers hold about teaching tend to be highly complex and marked by contradictions and inconsistencies (for a brief summary of these issues, see Zeichner, Zeichner, Tabachnik, & Densmore, 1987).

DIMENSIONS OF KNOWLEDGE

The view of knowledge which we have will influence how we characterise teaching. A view of knowledge as an external body of information is likely to lead to a focus on imparting that information, on content; if the knower is not separated from the known, the focus is more likely to be on engagement and exploration. This rather crude formulation of a complex debate revolving around the rejection of positivism (for a detailed discussion, see Philips, 1987) provides a convenient distinction which applies as much to the investigation of teacher knowledge as to the knowledge itself.

One approach to research focuses on distinct areas of knowledge. Shulman (1987), for example, has offered a number of formulations, including the following: content knowledge; general pedagogical knowledge; curriculum knowledge; pedagogical-content knowledge; knowledge of learners and their characteristics; knowledge of educational contexts; and knowledge of educational ends, purposes and values, and their philosophical and educational grounds. The issue of content knowledge has to some extent already been addressed in TESOL, but other areas have so far been neglected. We also know nothing of the way that such knowledge is structured (Calderhead, 1988) or how it changes over time (Bennett, 1993).

A different approach to researching teachers’ knowledge focuses on the development of craft knowledge as it is created in the course of professional activity. The concept of craft knowledge is itself interesting: Narrowly conceived, it refers to a finite set of skills and procedures which can be passed from one individual to another; viewed more broadly, it can be regarded as a “unique set of personal skills which teachers apply in different ways according to the demands of specific
situations” (Freeman & Richards, 1993, p. 206), reflecting the responsibility for decision making which teaching involves. More broadly still, it can embrace institutional dimensions which are central to the conception of the development of craft knowledge (Zeichner et al., 1987).

In order to explore the development of such knowledge, it will be necessary to consider not just the knowledge areas identified above but developing images of the self-as-teacher and the application of practical (Elbaz, 1983) or situated (Leinhardt, 1988) knowledge. This contextualised knowledge draws on characteristic features of the environment, knowledge which is “individual and attuned to the teacher’s unique purposes” (Elbaz, 1983, p. 131). Effective research in this area will demand a heavy investment of time and an intensity of involvement which will bring researchers close to their subjects as they make their day-to-day professional decisions (for studies of individual teachers, see Elbaz, 1983; Louden, 1991).

TEACHERS’ LIVES AND CAREERS

There are a number of reasons why research into teachers’ lives and careers must occupy a central place in any attempt to develop a picture of teacher knowledge. For example, we need to know how teachers change over time. Such change is unlikely to be consistent or susceptible to convenient categorisation, but even rough characterisations can be illuminating, as with Floden and Huberman’s (1989) identification of three seasons of professional life: stabilisation, stock-taking or self-interrogating, and disengagement. The lives of teachers are deserving of study not least because person and practice cannot be separated: Teachers do not separate their lives from their actions in the classroom, and it is our life experiences which help make us what we are, both personally and professionally (Goodson, 1992).

These, then, are the main areas we need to address if we are to develop an understanding of teacher knowledge. The research agenda to be developed must necessarily be an ambitious one. Much of the research on teacher thinking in TESOL to date has been based on groups attending courses in professional development, but if we are to understand how teachers know we need to be with them in their places of work. An understanding of teacher knowledge derived from such intimate research can then be combined with findings from wider investigations into teacher careers to form the basis for developing an adequate epistemology of experience. The action research and teacher-as-researcher movement has wrought powerful and important changes, but it is not a substitute for more conventional research (Hammersley, 1993): The two are complementary, and it is time to move in step toward new understandings and shared stories.
THE AUTHOR

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Putting Teachers Back Into Teachers’ Knowledge

PAULA GOLOMBEK

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What do ESL teachers need to know to be effective teachers? What constitutes appropriate teachers’ knowledge depends on how teachers’ knowledge is conceptualized. The problem is that traditional research on teachers’ thinking has focused on teachers’ knowledge as external to the teacher and has attempted to quantify and categorize what the teacher needs to know. Such an approach to teachers’ knowledge, furthermore, is based on specific assumptions about what constitutes valid knowledge and how teachers should be valued as knowers (i.e., the knowledge that is close to science of a theoretician is more highly valued).
valued than that of a practitioner). Thus, attempts to create a knowledge base for teachers to legitimize the field of ESL and to professionalize teaching assert a paternalistic relationship between researcher and teacher because the former claims to be detached and neutral from the object studied and to know what is best for teachers, even though both the researcher and subject are socially situated. In this sense, teachers’ knowledge is given to teachers by outside authorities. Yet, this approach fails to acknowledge the teacher as a thinking person and supports the view that teaching is “behavioral, acontextual, and non-personal” (Freeman, 1991, p. 3).

This view of knowledge is also disturbing given that teaching has been characterized as “a mass occupation dominated by women, with a flat career, comparatively low pay and status” (Buchmann, 1987, p. 153) and that feminist research shows that women frequently consider knowledge within more context-dependent and personal dimensions than men (e.g., Belenky, Clichy, Goldberger, & Tarule, 1986). Women’s ways of knowing have been discredited in the positivist paradigm (Freeman, 1991).

A paternalistic and positivistic approach then to conceptualizing and researching teachers’ knowledge has several negative implications. A scholarly body of knowledge that becomes so decontextualized may deny the experience of the individual and/or groups involved in the teaching situation studied. What gets defined as teachers’ knowledge may not only be ineffectual in practical terms for the teacher but may marginalize the status of teachers whose knowledge lies outside of the status knowledge domain. Teachers’ voices, often women’s voices, are not only devalued but are frequently silenced.

However, interpretive, qualitative approaches to teachers’ knowledge are not without research challenges. Teachers have specialized knowledge, although it may not be articulated, and use it to make sense of their students’ behaviors as well as their own. Studying teachers’ tacit knowledge remains problematic because such knowledge is hard to access and to articulate for both teachers and researchers alike.

In addition, teachers’ knowledge cannot be solely conceived in cognitive terms: It is imbued with an affective, a moral, and an aesthetic component and is always used in response to one’s purpose and values, among other personal factors (Connelly & Clandinin, 1988). Unfortunately, the field of L2 teacher education lags behind mainstream educational research in its attempts to understand the cognitive dimensions of L2 teaching and teachers’ knowledge (e.g., Freeman & Richards, 1993; Johnson, 1992). Furthermore, the affective dimensions of L2 teaching and teachers’ knowledge are only treated secondarily or implicitly in works that focus on cognitive dimensions. A synthesis of the cognitive and affective aspects of teachers’ knowledge can help us...
understand what is generalizable about teachers, as well as personal. This synthesis goes beyond a cataloging of the components of teachers’ knowledge and provides a context for how and why that knowledge is acquired and used.

The above criticisms make it clear that researchers should attempt to understand teachers from their own perspectives. Any attempts to study teachers’ knowledge should first embody the perspective that teachers are active agents in their classrooms. Teachers, with students, create meaning and draw upon a number of resources in their pedagogical behaviors. By focusing on teachers in this way, it is appropriate to begin by asking such questions as what knowledge teachers have, how teachers acquire that knowledge, how knowledge changes, how students affect teachers’ knowledge, and how teachers use that knowledge to make sense of their classrooms. Knowledge is then conceptualized as being dialectical and “tentative, subject to change and transient” (Clandinin, 1986, p. 20). By examining how teachers use their knowledge to make sense of their classrooms in a natural setting, teachers’ knowledge can be valued as an organic whole. Moreover, researchers should use methodologies that integrate teachers’ perspectives while avoiding knowledge claims that are prescribed by the researcher.

Another approach to studying teachers’ knowledge, the teacher-as-researcher supported by Lytle and Cochran-Smith (1992), implies a different theory of teacher knowledge in which the systematic inquiry of teachers by teachers themselves can generate both individual and public knowledge about teaching. In the process, teachers create their own voice in research and its application. Actively integrating teachers’ stories and interpretations and using a language that is close to teachers’ experiences provides a way to bridge the all too frequent gap between theory and practice.

In sum, no matter how teachers’ voices are integrated into research on teachers’ knowledge, research must be systematic and rigorous despite what may seem as constructs that are elusive to operationalize. Research in which teachers share their own stories may result in “a humanizing and democratizing of knowledge” (Beyer, 1987, p. 29). By expanding conceptions of knowledge and highlighting teachers’ creation and use of knowledge, research and teaching may have a more fruitful impact on each other.

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Learning Strategies
and Learning Environments

VIRGINIA LoCASTRO
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In the last decade, researchers in second language acquisition (SLA) (e.g., O’Malley & Chamot, 1990; Oxford, 1990; Wenden, 1986) have been attempting to provide an empirical basis for learning strategies, defined by Ellis (1985) as the means by which learners internalize L2 rules. Earlier work on learning strategies focused on the good language learner (Niaman, Fröhlich, Stern, & Todesco, 1978; Rubin, 1975; Rubin & Thompson, 1982; Stern, 1975) while others have centered on promoting learner autonomy (Wenden & Rubin, 1987).

In spite of this body of research, serious questions have begun to be raised. The results of instruction in learning strategies have been less than satisfactory (see O’Malley & Chamot, 1990). Vann and Abraham (1990) suggest we lack sufficient knowledge about strategies which unsuccessful learners use. In addition, there is a tendency for researchers to generate different sets of learning strategies, resulting in overlapping and poorly defined categories (Ellis, 1985).

Another problematic area concerns the applicability of the research findings to language learning outside mainstream school or university settings, particularly in difficult learning conditions. For example, large classes, in which the student-teacher ratio ranges from 45 to 1 to more than 150 to 1, changes the learning environment and thus potentially the learning strategies employed. Much of the published work on learning strategies is based on research carried out in ESL programs in North American university settings. Immigrants or ESL students generally constitute the informants. It seems questionable that the list of learning strategies generated on the basis of such studies can apply to L2 learners with...
different educational and social backgrounds (see O’Malley & Chamot, 1990: Reid, 1987).

There have been some investigations of nonmainstream modes of learning. Reid (1987) examined learning style preferences of nonnative speakers in ESL programs in the U.S.; she used a self-reporting questionnaire to assess intermediate and advanced ESL students, asking them to respond as if the items on the questionnaire applied to their learning English as a foreign language.

Oxford (1989) suggests that a more important concern in the choice of language learning strategies may be the purpose for which a language is learned. I would stress that the purpose is also influenced by the learning context. The ubiquitous grammar-translation method in Japan reflects the fact that languages have been taught with the aim of reading and understanding texts in a foreign language. Methods reflect the social system of values embedded in an educational context.

The focus of this report is learning strategies in different educational environments; specifically, I will discuss the question of strategies of Japanese language learners in the context of the learning of English in large classes of 40 or more students.

The topic of learning strategies has only begun to be addressed in Japan. Izawa (1990) provided a summary of work done on learning strategies of Japanese learners of English outside Japan, and Watanabe (1992) and Christensen (1992) have addressed the strategies of EFL learners inside Japan.

From 1987 to 1991, I carried out a series of small-scale research studies on the possible effect of class size on language learning in the Japanese context (LoCastro, 1980, 1990). I attempted by questionnaire to elicit information from students about their perceptions of six classroom variables in their university English language classes. The results indicated that method, teacher, and personal efforts were regarded as more important than class size or textbooks in becoming a good speaker of English.

THE STUDY

In this study, I examine the kinds of effort good or successful Japanese learners of English make to develop their language skills in spite of the large class size found in their educational system. I did two things: (a) administer a learning strategies self-assessment inventory and (b) conduct unstructured, group interviews. The goal was to understand what this population of students does to learn languages in this learning environment.

LEARNING STRATEGIES INVENTORY

Method

The quantitative research tool on learning strategies that I used was Oxford’s (1990) self-assessment inventory: the Strategy Inventory for Lan-
guage Learning (SILL), 1989 version 7.0 (EFL/ESL). The inventory is easy to administer, and Oxford claims it is designed for use in both ESL and EFL contexts. The 28 respondents were all advanced learners from a master’s degree in International Relations program, a master’s degree in TEFL program, and one other group of third-year undergraduates majoring in TEFL/Linguistics at a major Japanese university. I labeled these groups of students successful learners of English in the Japanese educational context as all were required to demonstrate a high level of English language ability (equal to a 500 or higher TOEFL score) to enter the programs. Sixteen respondents were Japanese; 12 were other Asians: Chinese, Taiwanese, Thai, and South Korean. I did not control for gender, age (average age was mid-20s), or ethnicity.

Findings

Based on Oxford’s (1990) suggested analysis, the aggregate average (2.944) indicates that the respondents are only medium or average users of strategies. For each of Oxford’s six macrocategories as well, there is only a medium use of strategies; the range of use was from 1.5 to 4 on her scale of 1 to 5, and the range of means for the six categories was 2.553 to 3.268.

In order to identify the most frequently used strategies, I further analyzed eight strategies which had been selected by more than five respondents. According to Oxford’s categories, those used most frequently by the respondents are concerned with the management of learning, whereas those less frequently used, or not used at all, involve managing the language, specifically strategies involving memory. However, this result does not correspond with Japanese learners’ statements that their main learning strategy is memorization (see below, Group Interviews). It is possible that the memorization techniques employed by Japanese learners engage them in learning management rather than with management of the language itself.

I also analyzed the strategies rarely or not used, and one pattern could be seen: a low use of two strategies concerned with reading. Other low-use strategies involved vocabulary and imagery. This confirms the results in O’Malley, Chamot, Stewner-Manzanares, Russo, and Kupper (1985), who found a similar tendency on the part of Asian students in their study. Yet my interview data revealed that, of the list of the most frequently used strategies, three were vocabulary strategies. The discrepancies between SILL findings and group interviews clearly suggested the need for further investigation.

GROUP INTERVIEWS

Methods

I collected additional information by setting up tasks in situations where I could elicit talk from the learners about what kinds of efforts they have made and continue to make to improve their language ability.

\footnote{Oxford (1990) claims that “most learning strategies can be applied equally well to both ESL and EFL contexts.”}
Interviews and observations focused on two groups of students studying for master’s degrees in International Relations and a third group of students in the master’s in TEFL program. The first two groups discussed the topic learning another language after reading an article on the subject and the third, composed of in-service teachers, discussed language learning strategies in the context of readings they had done for an SLA course. While setting the discussion tasks, I gave examples of my own strategies and experiences with learning Japanese. I monitored the groups’ discussions and asked a member of each group to present a summary of their own conversations.

Findings

From the notes I took during the discussions and feedback sessions, I formulated the following statements of the patterns I found in the data:

1. Exam preparation was students’ primary motivation in junior and senior high school, and their main strategy was memorization.
2. A source of motivation for a few was “love of language.” However, individual students differed regarding sources of motivation.
3. By overwhelming consensus, students thought that one had to do extra work outside the regular educational system if one really wanted to learn a language. The respondents reported using the following strategies: listening, especially to radio and TV programs, or videos of movies; oral reading and recitation; and memorization of grammar and vocabulary.
4. Students believed that the teacher and, to a lesser extent, the method are important only as a source of motivation.
5. Respondents thought that their motivation changed while at the university, when they began to want to learn English as a language of international communication. At this time, they made more efforts to use the language, to take risks, and to go abroad.
6. Some found they tried to apply rules consciously, for example, to improve their pronunciation. Some respondents commented that it is how one speaks, not the content, that matters.

Class discussion of the SILL suggests that participants generally found the SILL inappropriate in that there are no strategies specifically addressing listening as a means to learn. My observations and interviews reveal that listening is often cited as a problem and many motivated learners engage in English listening practice on their own. In addition, respondents criticized the lack of contextualization of some items, such as Item 14: “I start conversations in English” (only two reported using it). Overwhelmingly, they suggested it depends on the situation and the people.

and EFL situations” (p. 6). The version of the Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) I used is labeled Version 7.0 ESL/EFL. However, no explanation is given of the meaning of the label.
The respondents’ reactions to the SILL clearly raise questions as to the extent to which such research tools and concepts can transfer across learning environments. The inventory may not be sensitive to the concerns of the respondents and thus may not generate a clear picture of the nature of their learning strategies. Furthermore, the fact that Oxford (1990) categorizes memorization strategies as something different from cognitive strategies suggests that future research must consider the empirical and theoretical bases of such instruments as the SILL.

CONCLUSION

Clearly the results call for more research on language learning strategies in different learning environments. Values and beliefs of a learning context influence every aspect of educational practice, including the aims of the learners, the methods, and consequently the strategies used to achieve what that setting perceives to be a high level of competence in an L2. Furthermore, as the SILL maybe predisposing the researcher to arrive at certain conclusions not supported by even anecdotal evidence of teachers, ethnographic research should precede the development of any quantitative research instrument that may be desired to be used in the collection of further data on learning strategies in different learning contexts. Only then can we begin to build a solid collection of studies of the expectations of formal educational systems and of the learning strategies of different populations of learners.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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This brief report is not the place to engage in a critical analysis of the theoretical basis of Oxford’s work.
Lexical and Syntactic Features of ESL Writing by Students at Different Levels of L2 Proficiency

DANA R. FERRIS
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Many analyses of ESL writing have focused on only a few features found in student texts (e.g., cohesive ties or relative clauses). Recently, researchers in text analysis have called for a more multidimensional approach to written discourse, one which would consider writers’ rhetorical and lexical choices in addition to their syntactic ones (Connor, 1990; Ferris, 1991, 1994; Kaplan, 1987, 1988). In this study, 62 quantitative, lexical, and
syntactic features in a corpus of 160 ESL texts were identified and counted. Twenty-eight text variables obtained from this analysis were then compared with ESL proficiency levels of the writers and with the holistic scores received by the compositions in the corpus. The results provide a description of syntactic and lexical strategies used by the ESL writers in this context and point to several pedagogical implications which should be considered by ESL composition instructors.

**METHOD**

In this study, a corpus of 160 ESL student compositions was analyzed. There were 40 texts each by students from four L1 groups: Arabic, Chinese (Mandarin), Japanese, and Spanish. The compositions were written in 35 min as part of a university placement examination, and the students were asked to respond to a prompt about the effects of culture shock. Each composition was rated by three independent raters on a 1–10 scale, and a composite score (the sum of the three ratings) was assigned. Originally, 62 quantitative, lexical, and syntactic features of the text (following Biber, 1988; and Grabe, 1987) were identified and counted in the corpus. Some were combined or dropped for the purposes of statistical analysis, leaving a total of 28 text variables to be compared with holistic scores assigned to the compositions. These variables are listed in Figure 1.

---

1. Number of words
2. Words per sentence
3. Word length
4. Present tense verbs
5. Past tense/perfect aspect
6. 1st/2nd person pronouns
7. 3rd person pronouns
8. Impersonal pronouns
9. Adverbial
10. Special lexical classes
11. Relative clauses
12. Medals
13. Negation
14. Stative forms
15. Coordination
16. Passives
17. Complementation
18. Prepositional phrases
19. Participials
20. Nominal forms
21. Coherence features
22. Definite article reference
23. Deictic reference
24. Repetition
25. Comparatives
26. Lexical inclusion
27. Synonymy
28. Reduced structures

Indicates combined variable.

---

‘A separate analysis examined the differences in distributions of the text variables across the four L1 groups. See Ferris (1991). Because the compositions were obtained from the files of the ESL program, only composite holistic scores were available. Thus, analysis of interrater reliability was not possible in this study.'
complete description of all variables analyzed in the study is available in Ferris (1991).

For statistical analysis, the compositions were divided into two groups. Papers written by students who were placed into lower levels of the ESL program (intensive or semintensive classes) were put into Group 1 \((n = 60)\); those written by students assigned to advanced levels of the ESL program (a maximum of four hours per week of ESL) or released from ESL requirements were designated as Group 2 \((n = 100)\). The compositions in Group 1 had a mean essay score of 14.8, while the mean score for Group 2 was 22.9 (out of a possible range of 3–30). A discriminant analysis was performed to see how well the independent (textual) variables distinguished between the two groups of writers. In addition, correlation coefficients and the results of a stepwise multiple regression analysis were examined in order to see how well the independent variables predicted the holistic scores given to the texts.

### TABLE 1

**Overview of the Two Proficiency Levels**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>Chinese</th>
<th>Japanese</th>
<th>Spanish</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 ((n = 60))</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 ((n = 100))</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

**Differences Between the Two Proficiency Levels**

The discriminant analysis demonstrated that the 28 text variables divided the subjects into groups with 82% accuracy. Further, 18 of the 28 text variables showed significant differences between the two groups \((p < .05\) or less), as shown in Table 2.\(^4\)

It can be seen from Table 2 that ESL students who were at higher levels of L2 proficiency used more of the targeted textual features in their compositions than did those at lower levels. However, it should be pointed

\(^3\)Because the average length of the texts was about 225, the other text variables were standardized to this length.

\(^4\)The discriminant analysis procedure utilized by the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) employed in this study reports the results of multiple \(F\) tests (one for each predictor variable); however, such results should be interpreted differently from normal \(F\) tests because of a lack of control for overall experimentwide error level (Tabachnick & Fidell, 1989). Thus, it is likely that one of the variables in Table 2 is not significantly different—but we do not know which one. However, the analysis clearly demonstrates that the predictor variables do distinguish between the two groups of essays, that many of them are significantly different among groups, and that the more advanced subjects, without exception, used more of the features targeted for analysis in this study.

TESOL QUARTERLY
### TABLE 2
Means of Proficiency Groups: Significantly Different Variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Group 1</th>
<th>Group 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M</td>
<td>SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of words</td>
<td>187.43</td>
<td>25.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specific lexical classes</td>
<td>4.55</td>
<td>1.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complementation</td>
<td>4.52</td>
<td>1.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prepositional phrases</td>
<td>16.87</td>
<td>5.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Synonymy/antonymy</td>
<td>1.82</td>
<td>.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nominal forms</td>
<td>4.13</td>
<td>.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stative forms</td>
<td>7.75</td>
<td>1.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impersonal pronouns</td>
<td>6.12</td>
<td>2.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Passives</td>
<td>.93</td>
<td>.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relative clauses</td>
<td>1.10</td>
<td>.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deictic reference</td>
<td>12.75</td>
<td>3.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Definite article reference</td>
<td>5.80</td>
<td>1.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coherence features</td>
<td>6.87</td>
<td>.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participials</td>
<td>.42</td>
<td>.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negation</td>
<td>2.07</td>
<td>.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Present tense</td>
<td>15.80</td>
<td>3.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adverbial</td>
<td>2.73</td>
<td>.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ist/2nd person pronouns</td>
<td>12.98</td>
<td>3.23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

out that the use of present versus past tense seemed to vary according to the recency of the writer’s own experience of culture shock (the assigned topic). Thus, it should not be generalized from these data that good writers use more present tense and first person than do poor writers. Rather, the importance of studying a text in its context of production (in this case, the specifications of the essay prompt) should be stressed.

Some of the data shown in Table 2 support predictions and findings of earlier research. For instance, Connor (1990) found that the use of a factor composed of passives, nominalizations, conjunctions, and prepositions was positively correlated with compositions’ holistic scores, and, in this study, all four of these variables were used with greater frequency by students at higher levels of ESL proficiency.

The greater production of other text variables by more advanced acquirers suggests that they have more lexical and syntactic tools available when they approach a writing task. Examples of this include the more frequent use of specific lexical categories (e.g., emphatics, hedges) and the greater production of difficult syntactic constructions (e.g., stative constructions, participial constructions, relative clauses and other adverbial clauses). In addition, the more advanced group used a greater variety of cohesive devices. Although the lower proficiency writers tended to rely on repetition to promote textual cohesion, the more advanced students would use an assortment of lexical and referential cohesion devices (Halliday & Hasan, 1976), such as synonymy, antonymy, definite article refer-
ence, and deictic reference. Finally, the students in the higher proficiency
group used more devices which show pragmatic sensitivity (Bardovi-Har-
lig, 1990) and which appear to promote textual coherence. These included
the use of passives, existential there, preposed adverbial, clefts, and topi-

Relation of the Text Variables to Holistic Score

As discussed above, all of the texts had been holistically scored by
three independent teacher-raters. The 28 text variables were entered as
predictors (independent variables) in a multiple regression analysis to see
how well they predicted the holistic scores given to the compositions. The
results are shown in Table 3.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step/Variable</th>
<th>Contribution to ( R^2(%) )</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of words</td>
<td>37.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Synonymy/antonymy</td>
<td>6.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Word length factor</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Passives</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd person/impersonal pronouns</td>
<td>.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. \( F(1,157) = 11.92; \ p < .0001; R^2 = .503.\)*

Table 3 shows that many of the same variables which distinguished
between the two groups discussed above were also good predictors of the
holistic scores. In addition, several other variables (coherence variables,
complementation, participials, and sentence complexity factor), while they
did not add significantly to the \( R^2 \) in the regression model, were by them-
selves highly correlated with the holistic scores.

CONCLUSION

Summary of the Results

Because of the nature of the texts analyzed in this study (placement
essays written in 35 min), it is not possible to draw conclusions about the
students’ writing processes, rhetorical strategies, or ability to produce
acceptable academic discourse. However, the study does succeed in identi-
fying syntactic and lexical features which were produced more frequently
by students who were at higher levels of L2 proficiency; many of these

This table includes some variables that were shown by means of a factor analysis to covary
significantly: (a) The word length factor includes average word length and use of nominaliz-
ations; (b) The sentence complexity factor includes the following variables: words per
sentence, relative clauses, coordination, and prepositional phrases.
same features were also significantly related to the holistic scores given to the texts by teacher-raters.

**Implications for Teaching**

This study also showed that students at higher levels of L2 proficiency used a variety of lexical choices, syntactic constructions, and cohesive devices, and that their texts received higher holistic scores. This finding suggests that teachers should help students expand their lexical and syntactic choices by modelling options for them and by suggesting ways that they could use synonymy, antonymy, and alternate syntactic constructions more effectively. It is possible that such rhetorical, lexical, and syntactic variation (or sophistication) emerges naturally as the writer acquires more of the L2. However, the efficiency and precision of the students’ acquisition processes may be improved by encouraging increased class and/or individual student awareness of lexical, syntactic, and pragmatic choices through the types of activities suggested in Bardovi-Harlig (1990), Cerniglia, Medsker, and Connor (1990) and Connor and Farmer (1990). A return to mechanical activities such as sentence-combining is not advocated here, nor is the explicit teaching of structures/devices like the passive or topicalization. Rather, examination of the choices utilized by successful and novice writers (e.g., through in-class analysis of model essays), together with microlevel work on individual student papers (through teacher-student conferences, written teacher commentary, or peer or self-evaluation) is suggested.

ESL composition teaching typically focuses on global organizational or rhetorical patterns and/or on specific mechanical errors (grammar, spelling, punctuation) that students make. This study indicates that students could also use specific encouragement in the areas of correct word choice, diversity in lexical/syntactic features, and use of cohesion and coherence devices. The trends observed in this study indicate that such microlevel attention and instruction is perhaps of more significance than many ESL writing practitioners might realize.

**REFERENCES**


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Linguistic Imperialism.

As the end of the 20th century approaches, more people speak English as a native language (about 315 million) and as a second or foreign language (estimates are as high as 1.5 billion, Phillipson, p. 24) than at any time in history. Why has English gained such dominance? How has its spread affected the lives of indigenous languages and peoples? How did the English language training (ELT) profession develop, and what precepts guided its development? Who has benefited most from the explosion in the ELT profession? What is linguicism, and can informed and critical ELT professionals combat it? These and dozens of other probing and often uncomfortable questions are raised and often answered in great detail in Linguistic Imperialism.

This book should be required reading for language teachers, program developers, and anyone interested in the role that “dominant” languages (especially English) have played in the postcolonial histories of Africa, Asia, Eastern Europe, the Middle East, and the Americas. The documentation and detailed discussion of the history and evolution of the ELT profession—roughly from the end of World War II up to the present time—is impressive. Persons unfamiliar with the critical theory literature, especially the tenets of cultural imperialism and hegemony, will find this book challenging and somewhat inaccessible. This problem, however, is offset by the range of topics covered, ensuring there is at least something for all interested readers.

Phillipson interviewed eight important British figures in the ELT profession. He also references a number of governmental and other official documents (e.g., the Makerere Report and the Swann Report).
refers to the pedagogical literature, the critical theory literature, UNESCO and other world organization reports, private foundation research reports (the Ford Foundation among others), and the published work of language scholars such as Fishman, Jernudd, Haugen, and Skutnabb-Kangas. This book is unique in its scope and integration of primary and secondary sources, especially from the theoretical literatures of political science, sociology, linguistics, and education (among others).

Relying on his own research and that of colleagues Skutnabb-Kangas, Kachru, Pattanayak, Fishman and others, the author builds the case that the export of English to formerly colonized countries has not paves the way to modernity and prosperity, as was foreseen by at least some planners in the post World War II era. In many cases, the study of English has impeded literacy in mother tongue languages, has thwarted social and economic progress for those who do not learn it, and has not generally been relevant to the needs of ordinary people in their day-to-day or future lives. Far from being a neutral medium allowing for international communication and access to the technology of developed countries, English has served the political, cultural, and economic interests of the principal colonial powers, Great Britain and the U.S., at the expense of local and national development in third world countries.

Phillipson spells out some consequences of the “ideological encum-berment” of the spread of English, noting that in Kenya, for example, “English was the official vehicle and the magic formula to colonial elitedom” (Ngūgi, 1985, as cited in Phillipson, p. 115). Although there have been some attempts to reduce the Eurocentric emphasis in the teaching of literature in Kenya, Ngūgi (1981, as cited in Phillipson) observes that

the teaching of only European literature . . . in our schools, means that our students are daily being confronted with the European reflection of itself, the European image, in history. Our children are made to look, analyse, and evaluate the world as made and seen by Europeans. (p. 36)

In many formerly colonized nations and territories, local and regional languages frequently have lower status than English, are not seriously studied in school, and are sometimes displaced by English. For example, Phillipson reports a study showing that the indigenous language of Guam, Chamorro, has been effectively neutralized by English, even though Chamorro was declared the official language in 1974.

France, Britain, and more recently, the U.S., have all been particularly successful among imperial powers in maintaining and expanding
their economic and geopolitical influence, especially in the postcolonial countries of Asia and Africa, and language has played a key role. The high status of English and French, especially in government and education, serves the interests of the Centre and helps maintain a dependency on the part of the Periphery. Phillipson refers to Galtung’s (1986) theoretical work on imperialism in which a distinction is made between a dominant Centre (the powerful Western countries and interests) and dominated Peripheries (the underdeveloped countries). Elites in both the Centre and the Periphery are linked by shared interests within each type of imperialism (economic, political, military, communication, cultural and social). Those in power in Periphery countries have internalized the norms of the Centre. Today, the elites in the Periphery are mostly indigenous, but many have been educated in Centre countries, and/or in the language of the Centre countries. The Centre controls and dispenses expertise, methodology, and materials to Periphery countries which are dependent consumers.

According to Phillipson, linguicism, consists of “ideologies, structures, and practice which are used to legitimate, effectuate, and reproduce an unequal division of power and resources . . . between groups which are defined on the basis of language” (p. 47). One example of linguicism is English linguistic imperialism, in which “the dominance of English is asserted and maintained by the establishment and continuous reconstitution of structural and cultural inequalities between English and other languages” (p. 47). Linguistic imperialism is a primary component of cultural and social imperialism.

For Phillipson, English language teachers are vectors of linguistic and cultural imperialism, or inter-state actors in Preiswerk’s (1978) terms. There is no intent to ascribe bad intentions on the part of ELT professionals. Indeed, Phillipson points out that

like racism, linguicism may be conscious or unconscious on the part of the actors, and overt or covert. It may be of an abstract kind (regulations for the use of particular languages) or more concrete (resource allocation to one language but not others). (p. 55)

An example of linguicism would be an African university that has 20 posts in English and only a minute number in the indigenous languages of the country. Another example of linguicism can be seen in the subtype which Galtung (1980) refers to as scientific imperialism. The Centre provides the teachers, decides what is worthy of being taught (from the gospels of Christianity to science and technology), and collects data, which is then analyzed in Centre universities, produced as a final product (e.g., a book, journal), and referred back for consumption in the Periphery. According to Phillipson, “most of the benefits and
spin-offs of this relationship accrue to the Centre, while the Periphery remains in a dependent situation” (p. 57).

For Phillipson, ELT, mostly funded and organized by the State (in both the Centre and Periphery), fulfills the economic-reproductive, ideological, and repressive functions described in Carnoy’s (1982) analytical framework. First, English qualifies people to operate the technology to which English provides access (economic-reproductive function); second, English brings “modern” ideas and serves as a channel for interpersonal, social, and cultural values (ideological function); and third, English is the only language that may be used in English classes (repressive function). Phillipson notes that in some cases, English is the only permitted language in courts of law, in detention, dealings with authorities, and so on. Phillipson classifies Centre policies as neo-colonialist, transmitted to Periphery countries via hegemonic processes.

Phillipson offers a detailed account of how English (and French) became so important in Africa and Asia and why indigenous languages became undervalued. The French made no attempt to mask their goal of “civilizing” the Africans. Phillipson cites Rambaud, Minister of Public Education in 1897, who explained some of the goals of education in the French empire, specifically in regard to Algeria:

The first conquest of Algeria was accomplished militarily and was completed in 1871 when Kabylia was disarmed. The second conquest has consisted of making the natives accept our administrative and judicial systems. The third conquest will be by the School: this should ensure the predominance of our language over the various local idioms, inculcate in the Muslims our own idea of what France is and of its role in the world, and replace ignorance and fanatical prejudices by the simple but precise notions of European science. (pp. 113–114)

The English, according to Phillipson, were not different in their assessment of African culture and language. The Reverend Metcalfe Sunter, the first Inspector for West Africa (1873–1883) believed that Africans had no history of their own, was opposed to the study of indigenous languages, and contended that Africans should know the language of commerce and the ruling power (i.e., English). Later, the British Council, which began operations in 1934, promoted the study of English abroad to, in the words of the Prince of Wales, “assist the largest number possible to appreciate fully the glories of our literature, our contribution to the arts and sciences, and our pre-eminent contribution to political practice” (as cited in Phillipson, p. 138).

The U.S., in competition with the U.K. for overseas markets and friendly regimes, gradually overtook the British presence in many parts of the world after World War II, especially in Latin America
and the Middle East. U.S. funding for educational and cultural work increased significantly in the 1950s. By 1964, at least 40 governmental agencies were involved, spending 200 million dollars annually. Investment in academic research and planning also increased with the help of private foundations, notably the Ford and Rockefeller foundations. In the U.S., teaching English internationally is typically seen as being in the national and international interest. The notion persists that English is a neutral tool, a technical instrument, not a link language to world order.

In 1961, a Commonwealth Conference on ELT was held at the University College of Makerere in Uganda, attended by delegates from 23 commonwealth countries. Implicit in the written report of that conference are tenets of methodology which continue to influence English language teaching today in Periphery countries. These are:

- English is best taught monolingually
- The ideal teacher of English is a native speaker
- The earlier English is taught, the better the results
- The more English is taught, the better the results
- If other languages are used much, standards of English will drop. (p. 185)

The implications for the welfare and status of indigenous languages and for the continued reliance of Periphery countries on the expertise, methodologies, materials, and teachers from Centre countries is clear. Skutnabb-Kangas and Phillipson (1986, 1989) have shown how policies of English monolingualism have denied minority language speakers their linguistic human rights on a worldwide basis and have been “highly functional in inducing a colonized consciousness” (p. 187).

Despite the rather bleak picture presented in *Linguistic Imperialism*, Phillipson notes some recent efforts to promote minority language rights around the world. Several recent European parliament resolutions recommended that “‘regional’ minority languages be taught in official curricula from nursery school to university, and that these languages should be used in the media and in dealings with public authorities” (p. 95). The Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe seeks to guarantee the rights of minorities in participating countries, with several clauses guaranteeing linguistic rights. The most comprehensive of these efforts is the Council of Europe’s proposed *European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages* (1988), significant because it “assumes a multilingual context and expressly states that support for minority languages in no way represents a threat to official languages” (p. 95). Within the United Nations system, the *Draft Universal Declaration on Indigenous Rights* establishes as fundamental human rights that indigenous peoples have:
The right to develop and promote their own languages, including a literary language, and to use them, for administrative, judicial, cultural, and other purposes. The right to all forms of education, including in particular the right of children to have access to education in their own languages, and to establish, structure, conduct, and control their own educational systems and institutions. (p. 96)

In a 1989 conference, the Fédération Internationale des Professeurs de Langues Vivantes endorsed the call for a Universal Declaration of Language Rights first proposed by UNESCO in 1987.

Unfortunately, none of these declarations is enforceable. However, their existence demonstrates a commitment on a worldwide basis to linguistic human rights as a universal principle. According to Phillipson, other steps need to be taken: EFL teachers should be trained in local languages; donor countries should provide more support for developing local languages and local teachers; and educational planning should be rooted in the problems of the country and not on the Western monolingual model.

Although Phillipson focuses on the role of English in the third world, the implications of this book for ESL professionals in English-dominant countries, such as the U.S., the U.K., Australia, and New Zealand, are clear. The following issues are of particular relevance: Should English be the only language permitted in the ESL classroom? Should development of L1 literacy precede or parallel development of L2 literacy for adult ESL learners? Should nonnative English speakers be allowed equal opportunity to teach ESL in high schools, universities, and adult education classes? Should youngsters from minority language communities be taught English exclusively if it leads to the loss of their L1? (For a discussion of these issues, see, e.g., Auerbach, 1993; McKay & Weinstein-Shr, 1993; Skutnabb-Kangas, 1988; Wong Fillmore, 1991.)

As Phillipson points out, although we cannot use ELT planning and policies as a scapegoat for the failures of education in the third world, we surely can no longer believe that English is a neutral tool with no cultural baggage or that it has nothing to do with political, economic, or military power. Former (and current) imperial powers understand the processes of linguistic and cultural hegemony especially well. With the advent of the so called information superhighway, English will likely have even greater influence on cultures around the world in the coming decades. Whether dominated languages and cultures survive and prosper depends, in part, on whether we believe linguistic and cultural diversity is intrinsically valuable or a commodity whose value (and existence) should be determined by global market forces. ELT professionals can, and should, play a more active role in this debate.

I would hope that Linguistic Imperialism could serve as a starting point
for discussions on curricular reform, especially in graduate TESL/TEFL programs. The practical, and not just the theoretical, effects of ELT should be dealt with throughout the graduate curriculum (not just in culture classes). *Linguistic Imperialism* can stimulate ELT professionals—planners, administrators, researchers, teacher educators, and teachers—to re-examine the assumptions, goals, and methods which inform their various practices.

**REFERENCES**


**THOMAS RICENTO**  
*Central Michigan University*
Books for a Small Planet:
A Multicultural/Intercultural Bibliography for Young English Language Learners

Dorothy S. Brown

A sequel to her popular A World of Books, Brown’s newest bibliography includes books with diverse ethnic settings and characters appropriate for young people from preschool through high school. All entries are currently in print. Books for a Small Planet can be used as a guide to selecting appropriate books for ESOL students to read outside of class or to supplement the workbooks, basic readers, and abridged texts commonly found in ESOL classrooms.


Use order form in this issue or call 703-518-2522.
The *TESOL Quarterly* welcomes short evaluative reviews of print and nonprint publications relevant to TESOL professionals. Book notices may not exceed 500 words and must contain some discussion of the significance of the work in the context of current theory and practice in TESOL.


The title of this book captures the purpose of this grammar/writing text, which is designed to help students improve grammatical aspects of their writing skills so that they can become college-level writers. The text is designed for native speakers, but many features could prove useful for nonnative speakers as well.

Of the book’s two parts, the first focuses on the skills that are most important for comprehensible, clear, written English, and the second offers less vital rules, writing tips, and more detailed information about the skills presented in Part 1.

Some featured grammar points include subject-verb agreement, irregular verb forms, sentence fragments and run-on sentences. The sentence-level mechanics of punctuation and capital letters receive thorough treatment, and students will find valuable practice exercises to help them with such writing difficulties as homonyms, parallelism, and dangling modifiers.

The discussion of each grammar point is prescriptive in order to help students produce papers which are grammatically correct. However, the text focuses on editing rather than production to give students practical experience correcting their own writing. The exercises follow a predictable pattern: fill in the blank, identification and rewriting, and paragraph editing. The paragraph exercises are very useful as they provide contextualized, practical, editing experience. A limited answer key is included so that students can do some self-teaching; the instructor’s edition contains a complete answer key.

Part 2 is probably most useful as a reference section or to provide extra, more deductive rules to students who prefer explicit grammar learning. Some of the guidelines in this section are: spelling rules, abbreviations, hints for replacing common spoken phrases with acceptable written usage, and the formatting requirements for an academic paper.

A wealth of support materials for this text can be ordered free of charge by instructors who adopt the book: an instructor’s edition, additional tests, and computer software.

Although all of these materials are available, the book does not pretend to replace the teacher and makes no attempt to teach writing skills or processes. It is intended as a grammar text to supplement and assist the teacher and students. The target audience of the book is anyone who needs to improve their written grammar, but its broad focus means that
some needs of nonnative speakers are not met in the text: Treatment of articles and prepositions is noticeably absent. However, the excellent exercises and the way students are led into editing their own writing could benefit an ESL classroom. This text should not be overlooked as a resource or supplementary text for ESL college-level writing classes.

JOANN RISHEL KOZYREV
The Pennsylvania State University


Beginning Interactive Grammar presents the basics of grammar in a contextualized, communicative manner. The intended audience, teenage and adult beginners, will find that the book’s title accurately reflects its contents: the requisite grammar needed to interact in English. In addition to a variety of communicative activities, traditional exercises help develop accuracy. Most activities involve pair/group work and promote negotiation of meaning and information exchange.

McKay’s grammar book is unique in that it goes beyond the focus of traditional books. She clearly considers grammar to be more than a sentence-level concern and recognizes it as dependent on context. For example, she appeals to discourse/pragmatic considerations in distinguishing between formal and casual ways of making introductions. A second unconventional feature is that she points out how pronunciation affects grammar in certain instances (e.g., inflectional endings such as -ed and plural -s are difficult to pronounce but crucial to being grammatically correct). Another unique feature is the table of contents, which includes a helpful list of communicative functions or speech acts that correspond with each grammatical point.

McKay provides a comprehensive presentation of the grammatical essentials and compresses them into just four chapters. She starts with the most basic components of English such as the alphabet, numbers, and days of the week and then ends with a review of verb tenses.

McKay begins her prescriptive presentation of the rules by briefly stating the function of the particular rule (e.g., prepositions show place.) and then giving sample sentences. Contextualized practice exercises follow in which the students work in pairs, groups, or by interacting as an entire class. Activities vary in the types of skills used; most of them involve speaking, but many also entail writing. All four skills of reading, writing, listening, and speaking can be developed through these activities.

Teachers will find this textbook to be thorough with one exception: There is no explanation of articles outside of the count/mass distinction. Also, the chapters do not seem to be organized according to any clearly defined themes; even though Chapter 2 is called “Day to Day Life” and Chapter 3 is “Starting Out,” these vague titles do not represent altogether different ideas. Another problem is that the order of presentation is not
always logical. For example, students learn to express likes and dislikes before learning how to introduce themselves.

The strength of *Beginning Interactive Grammar* lies in its abundance of quality activities—the students have many opportunities to practice the forms in a communicative manner within a context. Because all texts used in the exercises seem to be created, teachers probably will want to supplement this book with some authentic texts. The heavy reliance on group work makes the book most suitable for the classroom and a poor choice for self-study. Teachers and students alike will find that this book provides a solid framework upon which they can build basic English skills through interaction with other members of the class.

**STACIE WAGNER**  
*The Pennsylvania State University*

**Reactions: Multicultural Reading-based Writing Modules.**  

Reactions is more than an English composition text book; it is a resource for writing instructors and students alike, reflecting recent research on the writing process, the role of correction and grammar within that process, and the use of cooperative learning groups. The stories reflect a variety of experiences and attitudes about language and learning, school and culture. Designed for intermediate- to advanced-level ESL university students, for whom this multicultural perspective is especially appropriate, *Reactions* would also be appropriate for advanced-level high school or college freshman composition classes. Instructors looking for an up-to-date text which focuses on content and process should take note: Grammar is presented as a part of the editing stage within the writing process.

The book is divided into three modules, each with a different theme: learning a second language, education, and stereotypes. Each module is then divided into four units which comprise journal writing topics, readings, short writing activities, and a culminating essay assignment.

At the beginning of each module is a section on keeping a journal. This section gives some guidelines for journal writing and refers students to an appendix featuring excerpts from the journals of famous writers (e.g., Anne Frank and Joan Didion). Students are instructed to select three of the suggested topics to focus on in their journal each week. These include such topics as: How do you feel about English and writing in English? (Module 1); How is schooling different in the U.S. as compared to a different country? What are the strengths and weaknesses of each system? (Module 2); How do stereotypes contribute to racism and discrimination? (Module 3). Module 3 also includes journal assignments featuring excerpts from *Los Angeles Times* articles which document instances of discrimination resulting from stereotypes. Students are asked to explain how they would feel and what they would do or say if they were in the victim’s situation. There are additional
journal topics which encourage students to explore each module’s theme in greater depth. They ask students to incorporate concepts from the unit readings and their reactions to them into their journal entries.

The readings include glossed vocabulary and are followed by comprehension checks and group discussion questions. Featured authors include Kate Chopin, Maya Angelou, and Maxine Hong Kingston. Captivating stories deal with language-related issues like the illiteracy of a parent or being forced to speak in a strange language. There are also articles which deal with the role of grammar in writing instruction, the pressures of college, women in higher education, the negative effects of schooling, the portrayal of Native Americans in film, the effect of stereotypes on self-image, and contrastive rhetoric. Such topics are timely and require readers to be critical of the social phenomena and institutions which influence their lives.

Each reading is followed by short writing assignments which begin with peer writing samples and editing activities. After reading the samples of student work included in the book and editing them for grammar, content, and organization, students do short writing activities (e.g., responding to a character, varying the point of view, or responding to ideas presented in the article).

In the longer essay assignments, students are encouraged to use the unit readings and their journal entries as resources. They are informed that they will be expected to produce multiple drafts which will be commented on by the teacher and their peers. Before beginning to write, students read and comment on samples of student work presented in the book which include the entire composing process, from brainstorming through final draft. Discussion questions focus student attention on the writing process so students can understand it better and see what works. With guidance from the instructor, students practice the process modeled in the text and produce their own essays.

Grammar is, appropriately, addressed in an appendix. It is thus presented as a resource for students in the revision stage. As grammar issues arise in preliminary drafts, the instructor can refer the student to the appropriate page in the appendix and assign exercises as necessary.

Reactions is an excellent resource for any instructor interested in using the writing process to explore relevant issues through a multicultural lens. It gives students information and strategies for critically examining the world around them and developing the ability to express their own reactions.

RAQUEL SANCHEZ
California State University, Los Angeles

Write Soon!: A Beginning Text for ESL Writers. Eileen Prince.

Write Soon! is a beginning-level text for teenage and adult ESL writers. It is divided into 10 chapters, each of which can provide between 5 and 10 hours of teaching material. The tasks in each chapter increase in difficulty as they prepare students for later academic or business writing.
Each chapter is divided into 10 sections, beginning with a prewriting activity and moving through sentence writing, grammar, editing, and a discussion of connectors and transitions. These are followed by sections on getting ready to write, writing, and expanding a paragraph, as well as revising and editing again. The final section, More Writing, offers extra work for advanced students or review activities for later in the course.

Students can do nearly all of the chapter exercises in the textbook itself, in the lined spaces provided. Some of these exercises are individual, such as answering questions based on a picture prompt, practicing the lesson’s grammatical points, or untangling scrambled sentences. But most of the exercises involve working with a partner, and these exercises also include asking and answering questions in writing, writing and editing single paragraphs, and finally, writing and editing multiparagraph essays.

The chapter topics range from describing oneself and other people to trips and plans to making suggestions. Each chapter has sections focusing on rhetorical, mechanical, and grammatical concerns and a section on connectors and transitions. Some examples of the rhetorical items are supporting generalizations, chronological organization, and comparison and contrast. Mechanical topics include capital letters and commas, sentence word order, and writing an informal outline, whereas the grammatical points include the simple present tense of to be, pronouns and possessive adjectives, comparison of nouns, and so on. The connectors and transitions include and, too, either, another, and initial prepositional phrases.

The theory underlying Write Soon! is clear and consistent. The recursive nature of writing, fundamental to the process approach, is developed almost without effort in this text. Models are provided in each chapter to help the students become familiar with what is considered acceptable native-speaker writing. The editing activities that come up at least twice in every chapter encourage the students to create and focus their own writing monitors. The frequent occasions for pair work give the teacher a chance to work with individual students or groups on individual difficulties and also offer the students further opportunities to develop their ability to monitor their own writing by giving them extensive practice in the process of monitoring other’s work.

Write Soon! is an extremely well-designed text. The two-color format is clear, uncluttered, and easy to use, and the illustrations, many of them photographs taken by Eileen Prince herself, illuminate the text without confusing the beginner. ESL teachers of all levels of experience must welcome this text as a book designed to free teachers to do what they do best, teach.

SALLY ROSS
Purdue University


The author states that the goal of this text is to “provide ESL students with a transition into the world of academic writing” through making “the
transition from writing paragraphs to writing essays, and the transition from concrete to abstract writing topics” (p. vii). The 13 chapters of *Transitions* are organized thematically and begin with a corresponding piece of professional writing. They also include models of student writing, and both are accompanied by reading strategies which vary from direct questioning, to boldfacing possibly unfamiliar vocabulary words, to developing critical reviews. Moving from reading to writing, activities are developed based on a process approach incorporating heuristics such as freewriting, clustering, and tree diagraming as students make the transition from writing paragraphs to writing essays. The chapters then turn to grammatical concerns, modeling and explaining specific aspects of grammar, and concluding with editing checklists that contextualized grammar within the students’ own writing. The text throughout emphasizes peer review and includes guides for each chapter.

Although this text is a good beginning point for integrating reading, writing, and grammar, trying to account for all of them in 13 short chapters is done at the expense of ignoring some rhetorical concerns crucial to college-level ESL students. For example, there is no explicit discussion of audience or the use of appeals in persuasive writing. Also lacking are discussions/activities that can help the students develop a growing awareness of the transitions necessary to become a writer in an academic context.

Further, although the author claims that one of the strengths of this text is its flexibility for different programs and class levels, the tone suggests that it may be most appropriate for advanced-level high school students. For example, each chapter includes questions to be answered before reading professional writing, such as “Can you locate Greece on the map that appears on the inside back cover of this book?” (p. 4) and “Why do you think a person might become an astronomer?” (p. 106). The workbook format and fill-in-the-blank activities, while certainly convenient and well explained, might also be better suited for high school than college ESL students.

Overall, *Transitions* is a good attempt at integrating reading, writing, and grammar using a process approach. It provides many valuable heuristics and starting points for teachers of ESL especially in its use of models of writing and grammar which can be contextualized within the students’ own writing.

JOANNE ADDISON
Purdue University


*Worldbeat* is a collection of culturally based readings directed at beginning- to intermediate-level ESL students in academic and adult education.
programs. The explicit purpose of the textbook is clearly defined in the preface: “Worldbeat facilitates the integration of fluency and skills through a combination of authentic reading passages and a variety of reading skills activities” (p. iv).

Culture—North American culture in particular—is the unifying theme. Chapters are split into distinct pre-, while-, and postreading sections, with the topics of each chapter listed concisely in the table of contents. The chapters are well organized, and the topics seem fairly representative of North American culture. For example, in a prereading lesson on garage sales, students are asked if they have ever been to one or if they can identify typical garage sale items in some authentic pictures; such schematic questions about the upcoming reading occur in each chapter. Students then study the vocabulary words they will encounter in the reading and then read a one- or two-page description of the topic. After answering reading comprehension questions, students learn to decipher a word’s meaning from its context or from its prefix, suffix, or root in the Reading Skill section.

As promised in the preface, Blass and Pike-Baky bring Worldbeat to life with diverse authentic texts and realia. Menus, newspaper articles, book excerpts, advertisements, environmental bumper stickers, and other realia are all displayed, depending on the content of a particular lesson. An actual cartoon-style map of Knott’s Berry Farm also appears in the Chapter 8 lesson on U.S. theme parks.

Because Worldbeat stresses fluency and communication, vocabulary is naturally another prime component throughout the text. Some imaginative strategies to reinforce and review words include crossword puzzles, scrambled word games, and timed brainstorming exercises; the answers appear in the Appendix. Multiple choice items, discussion questions, and cloze activities constitute some of the practice and comprehension exercises. In one task, the reader examines a bar chart and then extrapolates information. More pragmatic, general survival exercises are also provided, such as extracting information from advertisements and bibliography cards.

Exciting nontraditional reading activities also appear in topics like Fitness Facts and Fantasies in Chapter 4. Here, students are directed to visit a neighborhood recreation center, talk to the employees, and present what information they gathered about various exercise classes to their classmates. These short reports allow students to engage in real-life communication with native speakers, as well as learn about what they have just read firsthand. In other chapters, too, readers are exposed to interviews with native or nonnative speakers who have participated in or have experienced the subject of the reading.

Overall, Worldbeat seems more appropriate for general adult ESL learners than academically oriented students because practical activities (e.g., ordering from a mail-order catalogue and reading garage sale advertisements) seem to dominate. However, the more academic lessons—the bar graph activity, for one—could possibly complement an English academic purposes (EAP) or English for specific purposes (ESP) class activity. Per-
haps a wider spectrum of U.S. locales could be represented in the text as well because most of the readings and realia originate from the Pacific Northwest and California.

Imaginative texts and inter factional activities, however, lend overriding appeal to Worldbeat. For those two reasons alone, I believe this textbook would be an excellent source of ESL reading exercises and North American cultural information.

MARY-ANN HALL
The Pennsylvania State University


Billed as an “interactive, task-based integrated text,” Focus on the Environment, one of five exciting titles in the new Regents/Prentice Hall ABC News Video Library, is unique in a number of ways.

First, it differs from commonly available integrated texts—which usually present listening materials via audiotape or staged video—by providing the core language input through legally acquired video broadcast footage from well-known U.S. news programs. A key feature of these programs, 12 authentic news reports in all, is that they all fall under the category of the “shortie” (i.e., the short, self-contained television item which has a particular message to communicate to the viewer). In addition to their authenticity and brevity, each video segment displays on-screen time codes for easy cross-referencing. The segments are also closed captioned, allowing one to view the written transcriptions of what the speakers are saying while they are speaking.

Another striking departure from traditional integrated textbooks, which follows naturally from one of Stempleski’s textbook goals of encouraging critical thinking about the environment, is that particular attention is given to focusing on environmental issues. This is done by using the accompanying video to act as a stimulus for a variety of viewing activities (including predicting, getting the main idea, listening for details, doing listening cloze passages, and note-taking), exercises (focusing on vocabulary development through word puzzles, word games, and getting the meaning from context), and tasks (such as debates, conducting classroom surveys, brainstorming, discussions, and reading and writing assignments). The author has worked hard at developing an all-skills focus, with the topic of the environment chosen as a means for studying English.

Furthermore, unlike other video aids, each of the Focus on the Environment video segments consistently ranges in running time between 4 and 6 min. This results in better organization of the textbook, more effective classroom management for the teacher, and more opportunities for the student to study, interact with, and thoroughly comprehend each of the 12 video segments in the course.

Structurally, the 12-segment textbook falls into four main units: Plant
and Animal Habitats; Air, Land, and Water; Energy, Resources, and Recycling; and Ideas and Applications. Each segment is well organized and divided into five sections: Previewing, Global Viewing, Intensive Viewing, Language Focus, and Postviewing. The accompanying Teacher’s Manual is an asset, supplying the teacher with easy-to-read answer keys and transcriptions to all the video segments. The latter serve as an invaluable time saver for the teacher who would otherwise have to spend hours transcribing.

Focus on the Environment is not without some minor shortcomings. Apart from a brief mention of the text being designed for adult learners of English as a second or foreign language, careful examination of the functions of each section in the text reveals that it does not have a clearly defined learner in mind. For example, the course does not seem to address the intermediate-level student, whose limited command of language may not be sufficient for some of the research tasks. On the other hand, some of the listening cloze passages in this course might be a bit easy for advanced-level students.

Second, some of the tasks in the Postviewing section in the course inadvertently imply that either the student has access to a coastal living experience by not providing optional tasks for those who might live far inland, or that the student is a mainstream user of consumer goods as indicated in the last major task in the textbook. As a result, a teacher in a foreign university setting instructing young adults would have to adapt the textbook to make the material more relevant for EFL students.

Still, the above objections do not seriously detract from the value of an integrated text which not only stimulates the use of language by using authentic video but also encourages students to go beyond the pages of their textbook to use English as a medium to talk about an important global concern. And although a textbook which emphasizes only environmental topics might not appeal to everyone, nevertheless, the materials for each segment are so well written, creative, and devoted to skills development, that the value of the text as an instructional tool for English outweighs its singular focus on environmental concerns.

MICHAEL LYNN
Kwansei Gakuin University

Erratum

The review of Accurate English (Book Notices, Volume 27, Number 4, p. 772) indicates that there is no answer key. However, a 71-page instructor’s manual that includes an answer key, supplementary materials, and sample tests is available free of charge from Regents/Prentice Hall (ISBN 0-13-007261-3).

We apologize for this error.
State of the Art TESOL Essays
Celebrating 25 Years of the Discipline

Sandra Silberstein, Editor

Taken together, the contributions to this anthology comprise a portrait of TESOL—profession and association—as it enters its intellectual and institutional maturity. Each chapter explores a unique set of links between theory and practice, documenting the diversity and integrity of the language teaching enterprise.

As both a synthesis and a vision of the future, *State of the Art TESOL Essays* serves as the foundation volume to survey and methods courses as well as to classes focusing on materials development and teacher preparation.

As befits a volume intended to be both retrospective and prospective, Overview articles compose the first of its four sections. Mary Ashworth and H. Douglas Brown examine the field as it is and as it might be, addressing fundamental issues of what it means to be language educators in a global society.

The second section, Perspectives on the Field, observes the profession through a variety of lenses. Educators such as David Nunan, Pat Rigg, Christian Faltis, Ann Johns, and Diane Larsen-Freeman discuss communicative, whole language, and ESP approaches as well as perspectives on second language acquisition research and testing.

In the Skill Areas and Beyond, readers will find state-of-the-art discussion of research and practice during the past quarter century. Although they do not necessarily endorse a “skills approach” to language teaching, the authors (e.g., Ann Raimes, Marianne Celce-Murcia, Joan Morley, and William Grabe) share the view that much can be learned about specific elements of language and language use.

James Alatis and Robert Kaplan look historically at the TESOL association, exploring its relationship to the field of applied linguistics and its growth from a learned society to a professional organization.

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 which 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. Manuscripts should generally be no longer than 20 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 incoming Editor of the TESOL Quarterly:

Sandra McKay
Department of English
San Francisco State University
1600 Holloway Avenue
San Francisco, CA 94132
Reviews. The TESOL Quarterly invites reviews of the following types of materials, published within the past 3 years: textbooks, scholarly works related to the profession, tests, other instructional materials (such as computer software, videotapes, and other nonprint media, and other journals concerned with issues relevant to our profession. Comparative reviews, which include a discussion of more than one publication, and review articles, which discuss materials in greater depth than in a typical review, are welcome. Reviews should generally be no longer than five double-spaced pages, although comparative reviews or review articles may be somewhat longer. Until further notice, submit two copies of reviews to the incoming Review Editor of the TESOL Quarterly:

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

Book Notices. The TESOL Quarterly also welcomes short reviews. Book notices should provide a descriptive summary of a recent publication (see preceding section for appropriate types of publications) and a brief discussion of the significance of the work in the context of current theory and practice in the relevant area(s) of TESOL. Submissions should range between 350 and 500 words; any submission that exceeds 500 words will be returned. Submit two copies of book notices to H. Douglas Brown, 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 three to seven 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:
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Modern Language Centre
Ontario Institute for Studies in Education
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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 (3rd 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 accommodate 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.
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Educators in diverse settings will learn from 46 varied activities how to increase their effectiveness in the classroom as they better define their role in it. This book changes the focus from what teachers need to learn to how they are to learn it.


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1993, 300 pp., ISBN 0-939791-45-5. $18.95 (member $15.95)

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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.


Piper, T. (1993). *And then there were two: Children and second language learning.* Markham, Canada: Pippin.


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Diversity as Resource:
Redefining Cultural Literacy
Denise E. Murray, Editor

Some educators see the growing cultural and linguistic diversity within the United States as a liability. But the authors of this collection offer insight into the language uses of diverse student populations so that we—ESOL and Language Arts teachers and teacher educators—can find ways to see diverse learners as resources, not problems.

1992, 326 pp., ISBN 0-939791-42-0. $22.95 (member $19.95)

A New Decade of Language Testing Research:
Selected Papers from the 1990 Language Testing Research Colloquium
Dan Douglas and Carol Chapelle, Editors

A look at current research directions and practical issues of language ability measurement based on Michael Canale’s theoretical work on communicative competence. In Part I, contributors explore a variety of approaches to producing validity evidence for language tests. In Part II, authors report research on attempts to develop new tests of communicative language ability. Exemplifies collaboration and cooperation among applied linguistics from different academic specialties.


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Discourse and Performance of International Teaching Assistants

Carolyn G. Madden and Cynthia L. Myers, Editors

This volume is the first comprehensive work on international teaching assistants (ITAs) devoted entirely to language and teaching research. The 12 articles focus on specific issues related to the language needs of ITAs and relate these issues to the broader field of applied linguistics and English for specific purposes (ESP).

The authors demonstrate the uniqueness of problems related to classroom discourse and to the training of ITAs unfamiliar with the pedagogical and cultural customs of U.S. classrooms. Although ITAs are second language learners, their needs are simultaneously more and less complex than the majority of university bound or enrolled international students.

Section one provides a larger view of how ITA training fits into the theoretical framework of second language learning and teaching. Section two contributes insights into the specific language use of ITAs in academic environments. The chapters look at ITAs in context to help readers understand the variables in ITA teaching environments. Section three deals with different aspects of ITA interaction, and offers insights into ITA program design.

This volume offers readers new frameworks for ITA issues as well as specific pedagogical suggestions.


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