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Title:

Change and Continuity: English Language Teaching in Singapore

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Abstract:

This paper focuses on change and continuity in English Language Teaching (ELT) in Singapore as revealed by a study of the English language syllabuses and their respective textbooks since the time of Singapore's evolvement from a British colony to the modern independent nation it is today. It will also examine how the relevant changes were directly influenced by political, social, and economic concerns of the nation as well as larger developments in language research and language teaching taking place elsewhere.

Background and Introduction

Change is being experienced in all walks of life, in society, in the sciences and in political, economic and educational practices. Change is a fact of life, it is irresistible and education is an integral part of these broader currents of society and change. Change is accelerating and the paradigms that have been used to analyze society are themselves changing. Change in education is nothing new. There have been great pedagogues such as Rousseau, Dewey, and Montesorri who invented new systems of education. However, while these changes were relatively few and far in between, change is now on the acceleration and often comes before the dust of the last change has settled down.

Traditionally, education served as the guardian of tradition, responding only to gradual change and the impact of external events. However, by the 1960's, this was no longer true. Cros (1999) observed that in the 1960's and 1970's, change in education began to accelerate but that much of the changes still depended on official injunction. In the 80's, probably due to the worldwide yearning for democracy and the higher value placed on human resources, change began to be seen more positively and was promoted and encouraged either through direct measures or incentives. By the 1990's, innovation was no longer encouraged but became an imperative of professional endeavour. Now people look forward to new ideas- and everyone tries to develop "an innovative spirit". Grassroot initiatives become important and change is now part of the professional repertoire of teachers. The new is seen as a form of creativity and it has become "creative" to break with established paradigms.

As an international and cosmopolitan city, Singapore is not immune to educational changes. Singapore looks for change and wants to change. As a small nation devoid of natural resources and ever hungry for material success, it has always looked ahead to future challenges. It is oriented to the anticipation of impending problems in the future and the changes it instituted, either educational or otherwise, are carefully calculated on pragmatic risk. Like many governments throughout the world, Singapore have been regularly reforming the school system to increase educational standards so as

to ensure that more young people can have the appropriate knowledge and skills in the fierce international competition for economic success. In the primary level (ages 6-12) the government tries to ensure as quickly as possible the literacy and numeracy, which provide essential access to the rest of the school curriculum. At the secondary level (ages 13-18), the main focus is to prepare students for the world of work

The focus of this paper is on change in ELT because English is currently, the medium of instruction for all schools in Singapore. It is also the first language for a growing number of school children. Language learning, be it first or second language, is also the basis of thinking and is tied to social and emotional development. Owing to the very important role language plays in the education of an individual, the subject of the language of instruction has been given a prominent place in the school curriculum in Singapore and plays a significant part in the streaming process which takes place in Primary 4 (age 9), primary 6 (aged 12), and secondary 4 (aged 16).

In studying changes and continuity in ELT, the syllabuses and respective textbooks will be examined. Teachers and their respective Ministries of Education normally like to draw up syllabuses because they are logical organized and can provide a measure of accountability within the school administration. More importantly for the purpose of this paper, the syllabus represents the adherence to some set of sociolinguistic beliefs regarding education. It can be viewed as a political manifesto because it reveals the designer's views on authority and status. Cooperation with the syllabus and its respective textbooks is encouraged (through grades, encouragement /promotions) while restrictions (through denial of credentials, reduced job opportunities) await those who teach out of synchrony with the syllabus. In the last years, there has been all kinds of English language syllabuses available, e.g. theme-based, communicative, functional, structural, task-based and even hybrid syllabuses.

The first twenty-five years (1959-1984).

In examining how the English language was taught in Singapore, two broad periods can be widely discerned: the first is from 1959 to 1984, while the second is from 1985 to the present. The first period may be further sub-divided into 1) 1959-1970 and 2) 1971 to 1985 for ease of analysis.

1959-1970

The colony of Singapore attained self-governing status from Britain in 1959. Not surprising, the 1960's were years whereby the fledgling nation was more concerned with issues directly related to national survival. This was a period when the government focused not only on the creation of a sustainable industrial economy but also on building values in its people such as loyalty, patriotism, history or tradition. Four official languages were recognized - English, Tamil, Mandarin and Malay in view of its multi-ethnic and multi-cultural population. Correspondingly, there were four language-stream schools.

Understandably then, ELT continued in much the same way that it had operated in the 1950's when it was under British colonial rule. Teaching in the 1950's was influenced by the classical tradition which emphasized the written text, translation from one language to another, a set of approved canonical literary texts of high status, and a procedure which was predominantly instructional. Elsewhere in the English teaching world, the early sixties were the heyday of structural linguistics, which attempted to describe languages more consistently, objectively and scientifically than traditional grammar had done.

Correspondingly, the new primary English syllabus, published in 1958, changed its earlier emphasis on high literary text to one which emphasized the oral text. While not dismissing the continued importance of a high standard in written English, it now highlighted the importance of correct speech. Its stated objectives were to develop pupils' ability to "carry on a simple conversation in grammatical English and understand simple

English prose; as well as write simple connected English prose" (Ministry of Education 1958). This was to be acquired by the mastery of the English sound system and the basic patterns of English sentences and phraseology. Oral work was emphasized and the favorite teaching technique was drilling and repetition, especially in areas such as speech training, spelling and dictation. A knowledge of phonetics was also deemed an important tool for "correct speaking." Attention was paid not just to accuracy of writing but also accuracy of speech (cf. Tan 1966).

Reading lessons began with the reading aloud of words and sentences so that the correct intonation and expression could be acquired. Reading meant reading aloud and around the class. Importance was attached to completeness of sentences and accuracy. Textbooks usually contained units which begin with comprehension, followed by vocabulary, grammar or structure exercises and some advice on composition (cf. Woon 1966).

Grammar was important because it gave a "structure" to the language. The teaching of language was highly structured and repetition and drill practice in the teaching of grammar, syntax, reading and writing were the norms. Grammar was also taught as a subject to be learnt and the teaching of rules were favored (cf. Seet, 1966).

1971-1985

This period saw more attention paid to how English was taught as the 60's and saw a marked increase in enrollment in English-medium schools. It was marked by the introduction of the 1971 and 1981 syllabuses,[1] the establishment of the Advisory Committee on Curriculum Development, and the creation of a centrally coordinated Curriculum Development Institute (CDIS).

It was a period where "bilingualism" meant the learning of English as well as one other official language. However, the 1971 English Language Syllabus was continued and not changed from its structuralist orientation. What was changed was that

more effort was put in the refining of structuralist methodology by, for example, finding ways to make drilling and repetition more interesting and varied.

Because language was still believed to be a set of habits, reinforcement exercises continued to be important. It was taught through sentence pattern drill (e.g. substitution tables) and repeated practice. This was also the period when the Ministry of Education began building language laboratories in schools and junior colleges, whereby students would be able to practice the use of the English language. While grammatical structures and repetition had been taught in the 1960's, what was changed was that more care was now taken to teach them in a graded sequence not only at word but also at sentence level. Carefully selected and graded grammatical structures of English were presented in effective meaningful situations. The structures or teaching items were graded by language teaching experts in terms of "What comes before what?" and "What goes with what?"

In the primary schools, a series of flash cards and basal readers were adopted to teach pupils how to read words and sentences. The teaching of phonics was encouraged and pupils taught to read most effectively by learning the sounds that letters make and joining these together to make words.

By the late 1970's, policy makers became convinced that existing textbooks, which had long been published by commercial enterprises, were not written well enough to deal with advancing curriculum reforms in English, Science and Mathematics. It was felt that "textbooks deriving from the open market were not likely to exploit media which were then available - material or sound tape, or video tape, or slides, or film strips, or charts, or transparencies for the overhead projector." (Yeoh 1984: 2). Accordingly, in 1980, the CDIS was established by the government and staffed by hand-picked full-time teachers and educationalists for the main purpose of producing better quality textbooks for the different subjects in both primary and secondary schools. Being a government-funded body, it was deemed capable of exercising more care and thoroughness in the systematic development of textbook materials of the schools. Unlike commercial

publishers, the CDIS subjected their materials to pilot-testing or trials as well as in-service training in the monitoring of the materials in the formative stages of their development.

The first English book produced by CDIS was CUE in 1981. In line with the 1981 syllabus, which continued the structuralist orientation of the 1971 syllabus, it was based on three main tenets:

1. grammatical rules and explanations are necessary (indeed CUE was derived from an error analysis of pupil's written compositions;
2. grammar should be taught in the context of communication, not as passive knowledge;
3. language drills and written practice were important but should not be the only activities.

The next two CDIS English language textbooks were *NESPE* and *PEP* in 1984, books which complemented each other in the teaching of English in Primary Schools. Like CUE and its predecessors, *NESPE* and *PEP* were basically structural in approach. The teacher continued to be a model of good speech and pupils were required to improve their English through the practice of oral and written exercises.

Where reading was concerned, the "best" method then advocated was to teach it at the word and sentence level before proceeding to brief functional passages such as notices and messages. There continued to be a stress on oral speech. Pupils were to read aloud so that teachers should focus on correcting pronunciation stress and intonation. Word recognition skills, phonics and spelling exercises were also encouraged.

There was no change in the emphasis on oral skills. The units in the course book started off with conversation, which provide pupils with opportunities to make use of English in a variety of situations. Phonics continued to be stressed with a set of books to help teachers in the teaching of phonics in lower primary. Each book contained a

number of sounds which were well graded. At the onset, lessons on phonics make pupils realize that many speech sounds were represented by predictable written symbols. There were also audio tapes (every lesson was presented on tape), phonics cards (containing vowels, consonants, blends and digraphs) and phonics slides (for reinforcement and revision of sounds).

Perhaps the most significant change in this period was not so much in the methodology, which remained basically structural, but in the fact that the *NESPE* and *PEP* packages were a strikingly more comprehensive, cohesive and well-coordinated approach comprising a collection of course book, phonics book, practice books and audio visual materials.

The next 25 years - 1985 to present

The year 1985 marks the beginning of the second period of our discussion. Besides the fact that 1985 marks the end of 25 years since the evolution of Singapore from a British colony, that year is also significant because it saw the introduction of REAP (Reading and English Acquisition Programme), the inception of communicative language teaching (CLT) in the schools, as well as the introduction of process writing in the schools. There was a heightened concern with "democratization" and "student-centeredness", evident in the 1991 and 2001 English language syllabuses. Most important of all, this period also saw the teaching of English *as a first language* in all Singapore schools.[2]

The communicative language teaching movement reached Singapore in the early 1980's. The movement generated a lot of classroom research interest which coincided with and drew its vigour from an upsurge in theories of teaching and learning, which downplayed the role of explicit instruction in general and grammatical explanation in particular, so popular before the 80's.

In Singapore, the communicative language movement influenced the implementation of ACT (Active Communicative Teaching) from the mid-80's in

Singapore schools.[3] ACT emphasized both the importance of language acquisition and of immersing the learner in a print-rich and stimulating environment in which the target language was used comprehensively to convey meaning. Teachers trained under ACT were encouraged to use a wide range of communicative teaching strategies to encourage pupil interaction and participation. Lessons tended to take the form of a number of activities and there was only incidental learning of language items. Reading was a starting point for a new experience with extensive reading as an important component. ACT also emphasized he appropriateness of language use and the relevance of task-based activities.

The publication of *CLUE* (Course in Learning and Using English) for secondary schools in 1983 may be said to exemplify the pedagogical mood. As the first locally-produced communicative language textbook, it was distinctive in terms of its communicative features. Each unit was integrated thematically and grammatically. For the first time in Singapore, language was taught as a means of communication in meaningful context and an integrated approach in the teaching of the four skills was stressed. Key words were "authenticity in materials", "fluency" and "context". *CLUE's* "activities" (rather than "exercises") included language games, mind engaging tasks, role-play, retrieving text order, and group work/pair work.

On the other hand, in the primary schools, definitive changes were also taking place. In 1985, REAP was implemented in 30 schools in Singapore, (with more schools joining in the programme subsequently). It was a high profile ministerial supported programme, which drew inspiration from the Big Book and Book Flood Approach which began with Marie Clay in New Zealand.[4] It emphasized the importance of language acquisition as well as the necessity of immersing the learner in a print-rich and stimulating environments in which the target language was used comprehensively to convey meaning. The teaching of reading was integrated with writing, listening and speaking activities. REAP introduced the following features in ELT in the primary school,

which were subsequently incorporated in the 1991 and 2001 syllabuses as well as their respective textbooks:

1) SBA (Shared Book Approach) introduced beginning readers to an enjoyable experience with books. Teachers used Big Books with enlarged texts and pictures to read aloud to their pupils and taught them beginning reading skills.

i) LEA (Learning Experience Approach) worked on the principle that all children have experiences which they enjoy sharing and these experiences could be thought about, talked about, written down, read and re-read.

ii) CDS (Class Dictated Story) in which pupils engaged in joint writing with teacher.

The 1991 syllabus

The 1991 syllabus may be considered highly innovative in relation to its predecessor syllabuses. For one, it was much less prescriptive and structured than the ones before it. Following the lead from the methodological reforms in the mid-80's, it allowed teachers to select from several inventories and lists of language skills, communicative functions, grammar items and task and activities in the various chapters of the syllabus as well as the use of themes/topics to flesh out an integrated lesson sequence. True to the communicative and functional spirit then in vogue, it emphasized fluency rather than accuracy and function rather than form. Language was viewed as a system of meaning making and the importance of purpose, audience, context and culture in the acquisition of learning of language was taken into consideration. It was the first syllabus in Singapore to view teachers as facilitators rather than purely knowledge-givers.

The central innovation here may be said to be that of "integration". This integration was achieved by having sequences of lessons built around themes, which

provided varied contexts through which pupils could do meaningful tasks and activities. Teachers would then be preparing integrated sequences of lessons based on particular themes, each lasting on an average two to three weeks. Group work was emphasized and students were encouraged to work together to achieve common goals. More creative types of activities were encouraged and the syllabus encouraged the use of drama, role-play, story telling, poetry, songs and games as a means of inspiring students to express themselves while enabling them to acquire language skills indirectly.

Change was also evident in the teaching of grammar. Prior to the 1991 syllabus, a teacher was seen as the repository of a finite amount of knowledge that must be conveyed to his/her pupils at a time identified by the syllabus. The new syllabus however did away with rigidity and required the teacher only to intervene at appropriate intervals to teach the grammatical knowledge which, in his/her professional opinion, will be of most use to the pupils. The direct teaching of grammar was discouraged, in line with the belief that the pupils' assimilation of language is more effectively conveyed through the context, the teacher being a facilitator of the acquisition of language rather than a repository of knowledge (Nair 1992).

The main textbook for secondary schools, produced by the *CDIS*, was *New CLUE* (1991), which like the parent *CLUE (1983)* embodied communicative principles such as the organisation of language teaching materials through the use of themes, the integration of all four skills through the use of tasks and activities; and a thorough exploitation of audio visual materials. .

In primary schools, the sole English language textbook was *PETS* (Primary English Thematic Series)(1991). Produced by the *CDIS*, it exemplified the key principles of the communicative language movement. Like *NESPE* and *PEP*, *PETS* continued to offer a multi media package with complementary pupil's worksheets, teacher's handbooks, teacher's resource folios, big books and audio visual materials comprising ETV programmes, audio tapes, compact discs, picture cards and wall charts. What was changed was that unlike *NESPE* and *PEP*, *PETS* had three novel principles:

1. An integrated approach. Here, each thematic unit would include oral interaction, reading comprehension, writing and /or other language skills.

2. Context. Meaningful context was created by organising language materials through themes.

3. Audio-visual aids. Extensively used and a great variety was offered (Chew 1996).

The teaching of reading was carried out through the principles propagated by REAP. Phonics as an aid to reading was discontinued in favour of the whole book approach as exemplified through the work of Frank Smith.[5] Where oral skills were concerned, they were integrated into reading and writing lessons, usually through task-based activities Oral skills were no longer interpreted as phonics or as lessons in the language laboratory. Language laboratories built in the 1970's were now disbanded in the schools in the 1990's. The teaching of listening, long neglected was now encouraged. It had a regular section in PETS and audio and visual cassettes were produced for listening activities.

The teaching of writing saw a significant change. Traditionally, writing had been teacher-centered and product focused. The teacher would introduce a topic, talk about it, perhaps explain how students could write it, ask the class to write and after the pupils had written their compositions, the teacher would then check, mark, and return the piece of work. The 1990's, however, promoted "process writing" by focusing on the interaction between the writer, the reader, the writer's craft and the content of his writing. The "process" of writing now became more important than the "product". It gave the student a real purpose in writing for an audience. The teacher's role was to train students in revision skills so that students could become perceptive editors of their own work and able to assist others in editing theirs (Seow 1995).

The 2001 syllabus English Language Syllabus

The current 2001 syllabus did not represent a significant change from the 1991 syllabus. While ostensibly it has changed from a "communicative syllabus" to a "language use" syllabus, this is more superficial than real. For one thing, the 1991 syllabus had also made use of Michael Halliday's functional model as a theoretical platform from which to use and teach English.

Another discernible change was the shift to the right, and away from the more "progressive" educational ideas associated with the mid-80's. This can be attributed to the ministerial concern that Singaporeans should be able to "speak and write and make presentations in internationally acceptable English that is grammatical, fluent and appropriate for the purpose, audience and context."[6] The concern for discipline and "standards" was now a national concern and this shift can be seen in the reassertion of the need for formal grammar and standard languages. Reflecting this change of mood, the 2001 syllabus puts a clear emphasis not just on fluency but also on accuracy. Aware of the falling standards of grammar and as early as 1955, the MOE had issued a statement that "the question is not whether we should or should not teach grammar, but rather when and how we ought to teach it. Since then, knowledge of grammar is believed to be essential to effective language use and teachers are encouraged to give pupils "the meta-cognitive edge" (Lim 2000:14). Explicit teaching of grammar once again had a place. Most of the primary and secondary textbooks published in 2001, such as "In Step" and "Stepping Out", have reintroduced form and topicality or pedagogical grammar.

However, where grammar methodology was concerned, it was not to be taught through the structural or grammar translation approach as "in the bad old days" but in context -- through text types. In this way, the Ministry hopes to contemplate some sort of middle ground between product and process approach to teaching grammar. To facilitate this, under each "Area of Language Use", the 2001 syllabus printed lists of text types and their relevant grammatical features. A variety of recommended text types, comprising print, visual and electronic media, which provides students with many models of

language use, suitable for various purposes, audiences and contexts are listed in the syllabus.

Last but not least, an important change was the argument that teachers in primary and secondary schools should have a choice as to the textbooks that they would like to adopt for their respective schools as was the case in the 60's and 70's. Consequently, CDIS was closed down in December 1996 and the task of producing language textbooks was returned to the commercial publishers, whom they felt were now more ready and equipped to produce high quality textbooks. As the publishers would have to compete for their market share, it was argued that they would be sufficiently motivated to produce the best product possible.

Textbooks for primary schools, produced under the 2001 syllabus by commercial publishers, were also communicatively-oriented with task-like activities based on the promotion of communicative fluency. They were not much different from *PETS* or *New CLUE* as they emphasized the integration of skills, contextual teaching, and learner's participation such as group work. Cooperation and group work continue to be emphasized. All the language textbooks for primary and secondary schools include tasks and mini-projects, which require students to work together while learning the four language skills. All the primary English textbooks make use of "themes" (e.g. "hobbies", "adventure", "sea creatures") as the framework by which to organize their linguistic content, despite the fact that the syllabus has pointed the movement away from themes to areas of language use as an organizational framework.[7] Much like *PETS*, the themes used often involved the individual (e.g. my hobbies, my friends, my pets, my family); fantasy (e.g. fairy tales, monsters, witches); and general knowledge (e.g. of animals, weather, sports).[8]

What was different was that each of the four textbooks, while incorporating communicative principles had their own particular emphasis, for example, in the Primary 1 textbooks, *Treks* focused on the teaching of phonics and mechanical skills, *Pals* on

vocabulary, *Celebrate* on children's literature and Instep on a balance of text-grammar and communicative language activities.

In writing pedagogy, process writing continues to have a place despite the current promotion of "genre writing", which is writing based on knowledge of text-structure. However, genre writing is not entirely new because a report of how writing was taught in the 1960's by Han (1966:49) reported a then "state-of-the-art technology": that "not only should the audience be decided upon and message or record be selected, but the writer should know why he is writing - to inform, to instruct, to advise, to persuade, to command and so on, and the writing should be produced for some useful end." All these priorities for the teaching of writing in the 1960's have now returned as important principles in the classroom.

Summary and Conclusion

While innovative changes have been organized under specific periods in this paper, it should be noted that in real life, the "switch" is not instantaneous, as one is likely to assume from the way this paper has been sectionalized, since there is often a merging of the old and new approaches before the latter approach gains ascendancy.

To summarize, our first period, 1959 to 1985, saw a language pedagogy heavily influenced by structuralist ideals. Language was perceived as a collection of well-practiced habits in the oral and written domains. Generally, there was a stress on the explicit teaching of vocabulary, spelling, phonics and grammar. Reading was reading aloud and the teaching of writing was skill-based, with the use of good models as aids. The second period of study from 1985 saw the rise of communicative language methodology and a move towards a thematic and integrated approach. Spelling, word recognition, phonics and grammar was downplayed. In the teaching of reading and writing, there was an emphasis on the "process" rather than the "product". By the turn of the century, however, a functional view of language had emerged and text-types perceived as the best way not just a for lesson planning but also as a strategy for more

explicit teaching of writing and grammar. A primary reason for this turn stems from the decline in recent years of CLT. Jennings and Doyle (1996: 169) state that CLT has been a platform of "unprincipled eclecticism, varying from teacher to teacher." CLT had also "incorporated so many approaches that it was difficult to know what it really was." Where the Singapore planners were concerned, CLT also ran the risk of insufficient focus for structural change and accuracy because of its stress on fluency.

The movement from the communicative syllabus in 1991 to a more moderate syllabus incorporating both communicative and structural (grammatical) components in 2001, indicates a realization that communicative methods may not be suitable at all times and in all situations. Similarly, while grammar has been downplayed in communicatively-based textbooks for almost two decades, the political concern over what has been perceived as "declining standards in written English" (and its impact on Singapore's global competitive ratings) has once again led the way in giving the explicit teaching of grammar a place in the 2001 syllabus. One may add here that change is therefore not just constant but also cyclical and often returns full circle. Often, as in language pedagogy, something that is "new" may be something old that has been restored.

While we have surveyed a history of language teaching methods as revealed in the syllabuses and textbooks of Singapore, it should also not be assumed that what is advocated is widely practiced. There is often a gap between the theoretical and the applied (Chew 1996). This is because for Singaporeans, what is really important in schooling is how they fare in the job market. And what is important for the job market is the marks in the examination. It is the examination which determines which programme and school a particular student is eligible for and more importantly, what and how a subject is really taught. Usually, the examination determines how a subject will be taught in class despite what the syllabus may prescribe.[9] Tan's (2001) research found that experienced teachers strongly endorsed learning activities that enhance memorization rather than that of creativity and cooperation, as embodied in the 1991 and 2001 syllabuses. Student-directed small group discussions that empower learners with

responsibilities and encourage independent learning rarely take place since teachers prefer recitation and seatwork to sharing time and student-directed small group activities.

In addition, real change may be hindered because sometimes, changes have been too swift, too top-down and too short-lived. As a result, its respective objectives have tended often not to be fully-understood and its intended effects not far-reaching enough (AWARE 2001). The industrialist, Senge (1990:57) wrote that "yesterday's solutions become today's problems." One must also be aware that too much change may lead to a "burn-out" and the possibility that a process that is no longer innovatory can turn into a routine.[10] A change is introduced, it lives and dies. It spreads far and becomes marginalized. It takes hold and disappears. Skepticism creeps in and becomes the order of the day.

ELT has undergone significant changes in each period under study in Singapore's history. It would be fair to say that in Singapore's future history, there will continue to be changes as long as there continues to be social-political initiatives in the republic as well as language teaching methodological developments taking place elsewhere in the world. As history has taught us, any syllabus design if taken to extreme will have its own unique set of strengths and/or weaknesses. In the future, we can expect many more language syllabuses to rise and fall. Whatever position language planners and teachers take, they will need to accept the pedagogical consequences of their action. In the end, the hybrid and/or eclectic syllabus will probably result (e.g. the 2001 syllabus can be said to be a hybrid of the communicative and functional syllabus) not simply because of theoretical considerations but because in the day-to-day world of teaching, this will be the compromise which will satisfy most groups. Teachers in Singapore and elsewhere should be aware of this wider perspective before making their daily informed pedagogical decisions based on the real life needs of their students.

1. Only the 1971 Syllabus will be discussed in detail as the 1981 Syllabus was basically similar to it. See Ministry of Education (1981), The English Syllabus for the

New Education System (Pr 1-6, Normal Course, Pr 4-8 Extended Course and Pr4-8 English Monolingual Course) Singapore Ministry of Education.

2. The year 1986 saw the first cohort of "O" level candidates take their examination in English only. By 1987 the Primary One enrollment was only in English schools.

3. ACT was implemented in Primary 4-6 while REAP was implemented in Primary 1 to 3.

4. See for example, Marie Clay's influential book. The early detection of reading difficulties, published by Heinemann in 1985.

5. Smith argues that children become readers when they engage in situations where written language is used meaningfully, much in the way they learn spoken language from the association with people a round them who use speech in meaningful ways See Smith, Frank (1982) Understanding Reading, New York: Holt Reinhardt and Wilson.

6) Deputy P.M. B.G. Lee Hsien Loong, in launching the "Good English Movement" in April 2001 argued that it did not make sense to replace mother tongues by a Singapore English Dialect, which is unintelligible to the rest of the world (Project Eyeball, 6 April 2001, P6)

7) This was advocated because the Ministry Education thought that although themes can provide the context of language teaching and learning, the selection of skills and grammar based on only the theme leads to an uneven coverage of essential grammar items in the hands of an inexperienced teacher or text book writer.

8) In the secondary English language text books, two of the four text books published, are organized by themes while the other two are organized by text types such as "procedure" "Folktale," "letter" etc.

9) Interview with 20 primary and secondary school teachers. See The Association of Women for Action and Research (2001)

10) The Ministry of Education has in recent years been aware of the "burnout" rate among teachers and have taken steps not just to attract but to retain teachers in the service through financial incentive schemes.

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Title

An introduction to Task-Based Language Teaching (Nunan, 2004)

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David Nunan is Director of the English Centre and Professor of Applied Linguistics at the University of Hong Kong. He has worked as an ESL/EFL teacher, researcher, curriculum developer, and materials writer in many parts of the world, including Australia, Oman, Japan, Singapore, Thailand, and the UK. He has published books on language teaching curriculum development, discourse analysis, second language teacher education, language teaching methodology, and research methods in applied linguistics. Dr. Nunan is on the Advisory Board of the Asian EFL Journal

Introduction

This book began life as the second edition to Designing Tasks for the Communicative Classroom. The original volume was written in the mid 1980s, and was published in 1989. At that time, task-based language teaching was beginning to arouse attention. Although it was more than a distant prospect, it was far from a mainstream concept. As with the original book, this volume is aimed at practicing teachers in ELT and applied linguists (teacher trainers, language planners, and materials writers), as well as teachers in preparation. When I began working on this volume, I quickly realized how far the field had come. It was brought home to me that I was embarking on the creation,

not of a second edition, but of a completely new book, and that in consequence, it deserved a new title.

Recently, I completed a study into the impact on policies and practice of the emergence of English as a global language (Nunan, 2002; 2003). Data were collected from a range of countries in the Asia-Pacific region including Japan, Vietnam, China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Korea and Malaysia. In interviews with teachers, teachers educators and ministry officials, and from a study of curriculum guidelines and syllabuses 'task-based language teaching' emerged as a central concept. At the same time, I was involved in preparing a publication proposal for China on behalf of a commercial publisher. I was given a reasonable degree of latitude in putting the proposal together, but was informed that in order to be considered by the Ministry of Education, it had to contain task-based language teaching as its ruling rubric.

These two anecdotes illustrate the extent to which the concept has moved to the centre ground, rhetorically at least. However, it still has a long way to go to become rooted in classroom practice. In workshops and seminars in different parts of the world, I am constantly asked by teachers 'What is task-based language teaching, and how do I make it work?' This book is an attempt to answer both parts of that question. As with 'Designing Tasks', the purpose of the book is to provide teachers with a practical introduction to task-based language teaching along with the theoretical and empirical bases that support it.

In addition to a complete revamping and updating of principles and ideas from 'Designing Tasks', I felt four areas deserved their own chapter-length treatment. These were a model for TBLT that articulated the relationship between tasks and other curricular elements - the empirical basis for task-based language teaching - the place of a focus on form in task-based language teaching, and
assessing task-based language learning.

In order to accommodate these new chapters, the chapters in the original volume

had to be dropped, condensed or otherwise rearranged. The structure of the present volume is described below.

The structure of the book

Chapter 1 defines the notion of 'task' and illustrates the ways in which it will be used. The relationship between task-based language teaching and communicative language teaching is discussed and set within a broader curriculum framework. Ideological assumptions about the nature of language pedagogy inherent in TBLT are also discussed. In the final part of the chapter I look at the impact on the concept on both the learner and on institutional policy and practice.

The first section of Chapter 2 introduces a framework for task-based language teaching. The framework defines and exemplifies the key elements in the model that underlies the rest of the book. The sections that follow outline a procedure for creating an integrated syllabus around the concept of the pedagogic task and discuss issues of lesson planning and materials design. The final section summarises the key principles underpinning TBLT.

Chapter 3 looks at the key elements that constitute a task, namely, task goals, input data, and procedures. The chapter also deals with teacher and learner roles as well as the settings for TBLT.

One notable aspect of TBLT has been an explosion in the amount of research stimulated by the subject. The purpose of Chapter 4 is to provide a summary of this research. One area of particular interest is that of task difficulty. The research covered here provides a basis for the subsequent discussion of task grading.

The place of a focus of form in TBLT remains controversial. In Chapter 5, I examine the nature of the controversy, and spell out where I see a focus on form fitting in to a task-based instructional cycle.

Chapter 6 looks at issues and difficulties associated with the grading of tasks as well as at options for sequencing and integrating tasks into lessons or units of work. This

chapter contains updated material from Chapters 5 and 6 of the original volume, as well as a considerable amount of new content. Task-based language teaching presents challenges in all areas of the curriculum. This is particularly true for assessment, which is coming under increasing scrutiny as it is realized that TBLT cannot be assessed according to traditional methods. In Chapter 7, I look at key concepts, issues and controversies in assessment and relate these to TBLT.

Chapter 8 is devoted to tasks and teacher development. The purpose of this chapter is to look at task construction and evaluation from the perspective of the teacher, and to provide suggestions for introducing tasks in teacher development workshops.

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Title:

Orientations and Motivation in English Language Learning: a Study of Bangladeshi Students at Undergraduate Level

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Abstract

This paper analyzes and determines the various socio-psychological orientations of the undergraduate students of private universities of Bangladesh towards learning English. The study focuses on what is considered as the two most important social psychological variables: attitude and motivation. Domain use is also investigated to know the present linguistics reality of Bangladesh and features importantly in describing the motivational orientations of students. In effect, the research ultimately shows that students focus on English for its 'functional role' (i.e. its utilitarian value) in limited and discrete domain areas where knowledge of English is required. The author contends, therefore, that the Bangladesh linguistic reality impacts these important socio-psychological factors of the learners and ultimately shape their idea about learning 'English'. The investigation also demonstrates that the learners learn English for 'instrumental' reasons as opposed to previous research conducted in Bangladesh, which concluded that 'integrative motivation' as being the dominant motivational orientation for the students to learn English. This study of the social-psychological variables of the students will possibly provide additional insights in better identifying existing

motivational challenges and in taking a more realistic perspective about the ELT (English Language Teaching) situation in the country. Finally, some recommendations on future directions for this research area in Bangladesh have been highlighted.

Introduction

A substantial amount of research has been conducted in the study of motivation in second/foreign language learning. Gardner and Lambert (1959) Clement, Gardner, and Smythe. 1977; Gardner, Smythe, and Clement (1979) conducted extensive research on attitude and motivation and their correlation with linguistic performance of learners. They proposed that the successful learner of a L2 must be psychologically prepared to acquire symbolic elements of a different ethno-linguistic community, and to impose elements of another culture into one's own life space (Khanna & Agnihotri, 1994). However, the applicability of the findings of the research of Gardner, Clement et al (1979) may be questionable in a predominantly and consistently monolingual country like Bangladesh.

The primary purpose of this study is to examine individual and social variables in learning English as a foreign language and to investigate the domains of English of relevance to the undergraduate students of the private universities in Bangladesh. A socio-psychological investigation of the learner is important in both understanding the learning situation and the learners' mindset towards English.

This paper highlights that Bangladeshi students learn a foreign language mainly for its utilitarian value rather than integrative motivation. In this context, the work of Gardner and Lambert is highlighted to show that the very definition of instrumental and integrative orientation is debatable and problematic in regard to the motivation for Bangladeshi students toward English language learning. Whereas Gardner's socio-educational model may still hold true for certain countries, it may not be applicable for Bangladesh, considering the country's linguistic realities including domain usage.

With the present learner-centric teaching process where the teacher is the only monitor, the most effective way to get insights into the learning process is to study the learner's attitude towards learning English language. The learner's attitudes relate immediately to the language-learning situation and the environment as a whole. It is generally agreed that positive attitudes facilitate the learning process, though attitudes do not necessarily determine behavior. After all, attitude is one of the variables which affect behavior. An investigation into learner's attitudes is a means by which language teachers, education planners, syllabus designers and researchers can gain greater insight into the language learning /teaching process. Kachru (1994) mentions, 'Attitude concerning the ontological status of the verities of English is one of the keys to understand the role of English in its world context'.

For an obvious reason adult learners at the university level have been selected. The fact is that young children, especially in schools are more ambivalent in terms of job objective. As well as they may not have a genuine interest in acculturation. It is more appropriate to investigate the attitudinal and motivational level of graduate students, as the issue of psychological maturity comes into the fore. As they are expected to have a better understanding of their future careers, their attitude would obviously be different and that would influence their learning process.

Status of English in Bangladesh: A Brief Overview

The role of English in Bangladesh is purely functional as English is used as an international link language. Unlike India, English is not used as an interpersonal and inter-institutional communication and there is seemingly no possibility of English becoming the *lingua franca* in Bangladesh. But English has been used for years and for different purposes and gradually it is becoming part of the socio-cultural system. As the use of English is increasing day by day in different forms, there is significant evidence of use of English along with Bangla as code-mixing and code-switching (Banu & Sussex, 2001). There could evolve a variety of English inevitably in Bangladesh, like India or

Pakistan where such a kind of deviation 'represents not a failure to control English, but a natural consequence of the social conditions in the immediate environment' (Gumperz, 1964).

Since birth as an independent country, Bangladesh has witnessed an over-whelming importance of 'Bangla everywhere' (the *Bangla Procholon Ain* or Bangla Implementation Act was implemented in 1987), which inevitably affected and limited the use of English in the socio-cultural domain. This provides an adequate 'background to the policy decisions and the current status of English' (Banu & Sussex, 2001). On 19 January 1989, English was introduced as a compulsory language from Class I to class XII with students having to qualify in both English and Bangla in the board examinations. Moreover, at the university level, in addition to the regular courses, English was introduced as a compulsory subject in many disciplines since 90s. Because of faulty language policies since 1972, English was set back and English education suffered tremendously, leaving a vacuum which is yet to be filled. Interestingly, instead of having different political ideologies on the concept of nationalism, all the leaders of subsequent governments of the country, since independence, stress on shedding the so-called dominance of 'imperial English', and assigning new roles to Mother Tongue (*Bangla*) in public life. But English has continued to be an important part of the communication matrix, especially of urban educated Bangladeshis. Professor Zillur Rahman Siddiqui (2003) regrets that 'we lack a definite national policy on language, based on consensus of the people and that is the main reason of the apparent downfall of the overall standard of both English and Bangla' (*Translated by author).* While the government continually tried to establish *Bangla* everywhere, the space and the role of English, though not defined, could not be ignored due to strong presence of English as the language of international correspondence.

Since the enactment of Private University Act 1992, Bangladesh witnessed a significant growth in the number of private universities, especially in the cities. For example just alone in Dhaka city there are already 52 private universities, all of which

are recognized by the University Grants Commission (UGC). Though there was no clear indication about the choice of the medium of instruction, interestingly in all private universities, the medium of instructions is inescapably English. Banu and Sussex (2001) observes "Although the charters of the private university have no reference to the language of instruction to be used, what is interesting is that all these are English-medium institutions….in fact private universities are a natural extension of the English-medium schools". Most of them offer highly specialized courses like Accounting , BBA(Bachelor in Business Administration) with Majors and Minors in Economics, Finance, HRM (Human Resource Management), Management, MIS(Management Information System), Marketing etc., Bachelors in Science & Engineering courses, Environmental Science, MBA (Masters in Business Administration), and so on. In contrast to the deteriorating English standard in the public universities, private universities with well-equipped language laboratories and highly trained teachers are now attracting students in flocks, and thus playing a vital role in elevating the number English speakers in the country. The language syllabi in the private universities are essentially need-based and aim to develop skills of reading, writing, listening and speaking. The English courses are of three credits, and are included as compulsory prerequisites to different core courses. They are designed not only to check the deteriorating English standards, but also to allow the students to compete in the job markets. Students of these universities have to go through basic Communication Skills courses. English courses are taught as a credit courses along with the core courses. The design of language courses in these universities are more or less uniform, and their objective is to enhance students reading, writing, listening and speaking skills. For example, at the American International university (AIUB) all t students have to go through three major Communication Skills courses- *Communication Skill 1*, *Communication Skill 2*, and *Business Communication.*

The first course, *Communication Skills 1* is a remedial English, which helps the students to speak better, as well to recognize and to use basic rules of English language.

The course is taught in a communicative approach and all the modules are interactive in nature. The *Communication Skill 2* is an advanced writing course where students are taught to write different styles of writing, such as descriptive, narrative, expository, comparative and contrastive, cause and effect, essay writing etc. The final course is purely a course of professional correspondence; students learn various types of communicational aspects related to organization and business affairs.

Since, the private-university concept is very recent in Bangladesh and all the English courses are still in the development phase, it is useful to evaluate the motivational tendencies of the students at the university level, in gaining better insight into understanding and advancing their English learning. Therefore, the questions addressed through this research include, 1). To what extent the undergraduate student of Bangladesh are instrumentally or integratively oriented towards English learning? and 2) what is the intensity of use of English in different domains?

Attitudes, Motivation and Second Language Learning

There is a wide variety of factors such as: *age, attitude, motivation, aptitude, amount of exposure, and anxiety etc* in second language learning. These are also responsible for individual differences in learning a second (L2) / Foreign Language (FL). In social psychology, it is a widely accepted fact that learner's individual differences have significant impact on the learner's overall L2/FL performance. That is why the major focus of the recent research in social psychology has been on various social psychological variables like, attitude, motivation, age, aptitude, anxiety, intelligence etc, and their impact on Second Language Acquisition (SLA).Gardner (1985) proposes that second language acquisition is 'truly a socio-psychological phenomenon. It is concerned with the development of communication skills between an individual and members of another cultural community.

The major area of investigation has been done on attitude, motivation, and their subsequent relation to second Language performance (in addition to intelligence).The

main problem, as seems, arises from the very definition of various terms used in social psychological research, especially : *attitude* and *motivation*. It is not always clear in SLA research what the distinction is between attitudes and motivation (Ellis 1985:116). To review the relevant research in this area let us look into the definition for our better understanding the social psychological factors like Attitude, Motivation, Anxiety that this author would like to highlight for this particular investigation.

Stephen Krashen (2002) hypothesizes the 'affective filter' that consists of various psychological factors, such as anxiety, motivation, and self-confidence, which can strongly enhance or inhibit second language acquisition. An input rich environment is required where the learners can be relaxed, motivated and self confident in acquiring the second language successfully. Krashen (2002) contends that learners with high motivation, self-confidence, a good self-image, and a low level of anxiety are well-equipped for success in second language acquisition.

Schumann (1978, 1986) mentions *attitude* as a social factor along with other variables like 'size of learning group', motivation as an affective factor alongside 'cultural shock'. He proposes and lays out the Acculturation model (Schumann 1978, 1986) in which he examines the effects of personal variables such as relative status, attitude, integration, amount of time in the culture, size of the learning group, and cohesiveness of the group on adult language learning. He suggests that the degree of acculturation determines the level of second language acquisition. When an individual chooses to acculturate and experiences success, the motivation to learn the L2 increases. (Oxford & Shearin, 1994). According to Schuman (1978) 'when someone possesses favourable attitudes toward the people of the target language (TL), more precisely toward the TL community, he will desire learning the language efficiently as compared to normal settings.' Further, according to Schumann (1978), 'acculturation is' the major causal variable in second language acquisition, and the degree to which learners acculturate to the TL group will control the degree to which they acquire the TL . He highlighted two forms of acculturation. In the first type the learner is socially integrated with the TL

group, and in the second type, the TL group acts as the reference point. In the former type, the learner's original identity is never at stake. His social integration leads to sufficient contact, and his psychological openness converts the input he receives into intake.

Gardner and Lambert (1972) distinguish between attitude and motivation. They define 'attitude' as the persistence shown by the learner in striving for a goal, where as 'motivation' is seen in terms of the overall goal or orientation. They argue one should not necessarily expect a relationship between the two. However Gardner (in Ellis 1985) suggests that attitudes are related to motivation by serving as supports of the learner's overall orientation. Brown (1981) uses the term 'attitudes' to refer to the set of beliefs that the learner holds towards members of the target language group and also towards his own culture.

Stern (1983:376-7) distinguishes three types of attitudes in second language learning situation : '(a) Attitudes towards the community and people who speak the L2 (group specific attitudes), (b)Attitudes towards learning the language concerned; and (c) Attitude towards languages and language learning in general.' These attitudes are likely to be influenced by the kind of personality the learner possesses - for example whether they are 'ethnocentric' or 'authoritarian'. They may also be influenced by the particular social milieu within which the language learning process takes place. Different attitudes, for instance, may be found in monolingual versus bilingual contexts. (Ellis 1985).

Brown (1981) also makes the distinction between attitude and motivation. He identifies three types of motivation (1) *Global motivation* that consists of a general orientation to the goal of learning a L2; (2) *situational motivation*, which varies according to the situation in which learning takes place and (3) *task motivation*, which is the motivation for performing particular learning tasks. Ellis' view is that global motivation clearly corresponds to Gardner and Lambert's concept of 'motivation' and task motivation 'seems to be consistent to Gardner and Lambert's sense of 'attitude'; but Ellis(1985)

thinks situational motivation is a new concept that does not appear in Gardner and Lambert.

Gardner (1960), Gardner and Lambert (1959), and Anisfield and Lambert (1961) conducted various investigations to find out the relation of learner's attitude and motivation with that of performance. Gardner and Lambert (1959) carried out their investigation in the Montreal area, where they examined the attitude of the English – speaking high school students (who were studying French) toward the French community and the intensity of learning French, as well as their Aptitude. Their study showed that the students, who had an integrative orientation, were more 'successful in second language learning than those who were instrumentally motivated'. Gardner's (1960) follow-up study further confirmed the findings where he extended previous ideas and applied it on a larger sample of English Canadian students. In this study he also found out that parental encouragement has an important role to shape the idea of the learners' attitude towards the target language community. It was found that the students, who had an integrative approach towards TLC, had the parents with integrative disposition. Anisfield and Lambert (1961) investigated students who were studying Hebrew in Montreal. The findings indicated that both the intellectual capacity and attitudinal orientation affect success in learning Hebrew.

Several researchers on these social psychological models of SL learning were done apart from Gardner and Lambert (1972), in Canada, America and Philippines over a period of twelve years (e.g. Gardner and Lambert 1959; Gardner 1960, Anisfeld and Lambert 1961; Lambert, Gardner, Barik and Turstall 1963) which were all linked as a series. These researches depict that apart from Philippines where English was learnt for instrumental purposes, integrative motivation was claimed to be an important variable influencing SL proficiency. However, in each context a distinctive attitudinal basis for motivational orientation was found. For example, in one place, it was on 'awareness of the usefulness of the target language', in other places, it was either 'parental

encouragement' or 'identification with the teachers' or 'sensitivity to other people's feelings.

Other researches depicted that measures of proficiency in SL were highly related to measures of attitude and motivation. But this was not accepted by linguists like Burstall (1975). Working with the teaching of French in primary schools, he found that despite that close link between pupils' attitude and achievement, motivational characteristics of individual pupil appeared to be neither exclusively integrative nor instrumental (Khanna, 1984:249).

Lyczak, Fu and Ho (1976) did not get any significant correlation between achievement and attitudinal variables. Wong (1982) too found that motivational orientation of English-learning Chinese Students had no correlation with their achievement. Khanna's (1983) doctoral research on learner variables in learning ESL highlighted that achievement in English was influenced more by schooling claimed control of English, exposure to English, and use of English among friends, family etc., rather than attitudes and motivation (ibid). Attitudes had significant correlation only with variables of exposure and language use, thereby suggesting that attitudinal variables may have only indirect bearing on achievement in English in India (ibid).

Lukmani's (1972) investigation in contrast to Gardner et al (1979) shows significant correlation between instrumental motivation and performance, 'Instrumental motivation scores correlated significantly with English proficiency scores'. Non-westernized female learners of L2 English in a Cloze test. Oxford and Shearin (1994) prove that apart from the instrumental and integrative there are other social psychological variables which do not categorically fall under this dichotomy; for example receiving intellectual stimulation, seeking personal challenge, enjoying the elitism of taking a difficult language, showing off …et, and they think Gardner's definition rather limits the way motivation is defined in respect to variables. Ellis (1985) also points out that these two kinds of motivation are not mutually exclusive. The research findings of Burstall

(1975) indicate that in pupils' achievement in the NFER primary French project, their performance was closely associated with both the instrumental and integrative motivation.

Gardner and Lambert (1972) have stressed the importance of 'anti-authoritarian' and 'non-ethnocentric' attitudes in acquiring mastery in any FL. They maintained that learners who have strong ethnocentric or authoritarian attitude or have learned to be prejudiced toward foreign peoples are likely to approach the language learning task with a non-integrative outlook.

Gardner and Lambert (1972) thus believed that a learner's motivation to learn an FL will depend on his attitudes and willingness to identify with the linguistic and non-linguistic features that characterize the speakers of the TL (Khanna, 1994). In this connection they coined the ideas of 'integrative motivation' to refer to language learning for personal growth and cultural enrichment, and 'instrumental motivation' for language learning for more immediate and practical goals. Research has shown that these types of motivation are related to success in SL learning (Lightbown and Spada, 2000: internet).

R.K. Agnihotri and A.L Khanna (1998) have highlighted Gardner and Lambert's less narrated 'resentment motivation' and 'manipulative motivation' which concern a further realistic approach in apprehending public attitudes towards the English issue in South Asia. That the system of education compels even the unwilling learner to learn English can be characterised through the 'resentment' motivation. And the power-status issues relate to the acquisition of an SL (which helps the learner manipulate others for personal gains) can be understood by the study of manipulative motivation.

SL learning is an extremely complex process which comprises numerous issues involving the learners and their environment. No single learner variable can solely determine that rate and success of learning. Gardner and Lambert have rightly emphasized the significance of studying each language learning setting in its own right, and thereby suggested that the configuration of variables obtained training in one setting

will not be necessarily valid in another setting. As for example, the South Asian learners learn English for historical, political social and cultural reasons which are radically different from those of South-East Asian or African learners. Khanna and Agnihotri (1982, 1984) and Khanna (1983) thus realised that the Gardner and Lambert distinction of motivational orientation would not capture the motivational complexity in the Indian situation (Khanna, 1985:64). Their studies more or less proved that the Indian learners' reasons for learning English were basically instrumental in character. The absence of integrative motivation according to them was,

> ...because there is no well-defined socio-cultural group with which students may wish to identify themselves and whose behavioural patterns may be called western.
>
> (Khanna, 1985:64)

Hence Khanna and Agnihotri modified Gardner and Lambert's motivational orientations as per the Indian context. They categorized learners' motivational reasons into 'complementary motivation' and 'supplementary motivation'.

The former refers to the motivation to learn English in order to get better jobs or receive higher education; while the latter refers to the motivation to learn English for additive/ornamental purposes, i.e. to read English literature, to see English movies or just to feel superior etc. (ibid). Therefore, it is clear that attitudes towards a foreign language are, by and large, manipulated by the learners' real-life needs/demands, which are in turn controlled and guided by their respective socio-cultural settings.

Gardner and Lambert (1972) introduced the dichotomy of *Instrumental* and *Integrative* component of the attitude and motivational orientation of second language learning situation. *Instrumental* means language learning for a utilitarian value or purpose; in contrast, *integrative* orientation is when the learner takes interest in the TLC

(Target Language Community) and their culture in an open minded way with a genuine interest to become a member of that group.

Gardner and Lambert (1972) in *Attitudes and Motivation in Second Language Learning* postulate the theory in brief:

> This theory, maintains that the successful learner of a second language must be psychologically prepared to adopt various aspects of behaviour which characterize members of another linguistic-cultural group. The learner's ethnocentric tendencies and his attitudes toward the members of the other group are believed to determine how successful he will be, relatively learning the language. His motivation to learn is thought to be determined by his attitudes toward the other group in particular and toward the learning task itself.

Methodology:

Subjects: For the study 94 students (56 male and 38 female) of 19-23 age group (Mean age 20 years) were randomly selected from the American International University, Bangladesh (AIUB). The reason for selecting this university is mainly two fold: firstly, since I have been associated with the institution, as a faculty member in Communication Skills and English Language Teaching since the last five years, this not only gives me a first hand experience of the students' psychology and attitude towards the learning of English, but also makes my stance more credible, while giving me an opportunity to access the students easily and comfortably. The respondents were the native speakers of Bangla and learned English as a foreign language. They were enrolled in the Communication Skills 2 course after successful completion of Communication skill 1 as a part of their core disciplines. The students came from different academic areas (40% from Bachelor of Business Studies, 24.04% from Computer Science, 20.43% from Computer Engineering and 15.53% Electric and Electronics Engineering department). The informants had already received English

language instruction for 13 years (right from class one to class 12, English is taught as a compulsory subject).

Procedure: The questionnaire was divided into two major parts to find out the socio-psychological and socio-linguistics background of the respondents. The first part was designed to elicit the different domains of English and students' exposure. Part 2 was designed to look into the linguistic attitudes and different types of motivational orientation of students. Since, the students come from different academic and socio-economic backgrounds with different levels of proficiency in English, the questionnaire was administered in the mother tongue along with the English original. The purpose and different terms of the questionnaire were explained before the distribution. It was not specified to the respondents that their attitude towards use of English was being investigated. During the completion process of the questionnaire, the researcher was present physically to monitor and also to help the respondents to understand certain parts.

*Semi-structured Interview***:**

Five questions were designed to elicit respondents' opinion on major issues concerning English learning. For the interview 20 students were selected on a random basis from 175 students from different English courses. Interviews were conducted in a separate session and were tape- recorded.

Variables investigated:

In this study, the major focus was on various socio-psychological variables rather than language proficiency levels which were not tested. The questionnaire was adopted from Gardner's AMTB (1985), and more items were added considering the Bangladeshi socio-linguistic and socio-psychological reality in general and in regards to English in particular.

Following are the variables that were assessed using Likert scale (modified 7 point to 5 scale point) ranging from agreement to disagreement:

a. **Exposure and Domain Analysis**: Many items are included to find out the students exposure, patterns of language used, etc. to find out the domain of English in the informants day to day life.

b. Instrumental Orientation: On this scale, there are four items and the respondents are asked to measure their utilitarian reason for learning English; the items indicate the attitude of the learners, where a maximum score (maximum =20) would show their interest for learning English to use it as a tool or utilitarian purpose.

c. Integrative Orientation: The scale includes four items to find out how much the learners learn English with a genuine interest to assimilate with the target language, culture ,community, their way of life, literature etc; this would show their Integrativeness toward the target language. A high score (maximum =20) indicates that a student endorses integrative reasons for studying English.

d. Orientation Index. This sub-test consists of one item. Students are presented with four possible reasons for studying English, two of which stress its instrumental value and other two stress the integrative value. The sub-test is scored dichotomously. Students selecting either instrumental reason are scored 1; those selecting either integrative reason are scored two.

Result and Discussions:

The raw data was fed into the computer and then was analyzed by using SPSSXI.5. The results are discussed below.

Instrumental Orientation Leads:

The respondents were asked to indicate on a five point scale to show how important each reason was for their learning English as a foreign language. The focus was on two types of motivational orientation: *Integrative and Instrumental* following Gardner and Lambert's (1972) definition. Eight statements were designed to find out the dominant reason among the undergraduate students of Bangladesh in general and the students of different Private universities in particular.

Table 1: Instrumental motivation (Frequency Distribution and Mean Score)

	Q1:English For Graduation		**Q2:For Higher Studies**		**Q3:To become knowledgeable**		**Q4:To get High Ranking job**	
Score	Frequencies	%	Frequencies	%	Frequencies	%	Frequencies	%
1	3	3	0	0	1	1.1	0	0
2	3	3	0	0	5	5.3	2	2.1
3	2	2.1	1	1.1	5	5.3	4	4.3
4	8	8.5	7	7.4	15	16.0	16	17.0
5	78	83	86	91.5	68	72.3	72	76.6
Total	94	100	94	100	94	100.00	94	100
Mean	**4.65**		**4.9**		**4.53**		**4.68**	
Overall Mean 4.69								

Q1. Need of English for Graduation
Q2.English will help me to go for higher studies abroad.
Q3.English is important for me because it will make me a more knowledgeable
Q4.English will be useful for me in getting a good and high-ranking job in Bangladesh.

Table 2: Integrative motivation (Frequency Distribution and Mean Score)

	Q1: Behave like Native Speakers		**Q2: Appreciate Literature**		**Q3: Understand Native Life**		**Q4: Emulate Native Speakers**	
Score	Frequencies	%	Frequencies	%	Frequencies	%	Frequencies	%
1	21	22.3	18	19.1	7	7.4	31	33
2	12	12.8	12	12.8	3	3.2	12	12.8
3	18	19.1	10	10.6	6	6.4	15	16
4	26	27.7	26	27.7	27	28.7	18	19.1
5	17	18.1	28	29.8	51	54.3	18	19.1
Total	94	100	94	100	94	100	94	100
Mean	3.1		3.4		4.2		2.8	
Overall Mean =3.38								

Q1.Eng helps me to think & behave like the native speakers
Q2. Must learn the necessary English to understand English novels and story books and appreciate English movies; otherwise my English learning will be useless.
Q3.English will help me to understand better the native English speakers (USA/UK/Aus/NZ) and their way of life.
Q4.I really like to emulate the native English speakers (USA/UK etc.).

Table 1 and 2 show the respondents' clear inclination towards instrumental orientation Whereas, only 18.1% of the informants accept that they learn English '*to think and behave like the native speakers of English*', 30% agree with the statement that '*they must learn the necessary English to understand English novels and story books and appreciate English movies; otherwise their English learning will be useless'*. 54.3% of the students agree that '*English will help them to understand the native speakers and their way of life'*. A higher percentage of the students: 83%, 91%, 72% and 77% agree with the respective statements that they learn English because, '*English is needed to complete the graduation successfully'*, '*for higher studies abroad'*, '*to become a knowledgeable person', and 'to get a good and high ranking job'*.

With the overall mean score of 4.69, *instrumental* leads compare to the overall mean of *instrumental orientation that is* 3.98. A closer look at the mean scores shows that the two highest scoring questions are *English will help me to go for higher studies abroad* (4.9) and *English will be useful for me in getting a good and high-ranking job in Bangladesh (4.68).* Both are strongly instrumental in nature. The investigation confirms Agnihotri and Khanna's(1998) findings that there is hardly any integrativeness in the south Asia. The negligible integrativeness the learners show could be termed as instrumentally integrative. Only one statement that falls under integrative orientation shows an interesting finding *i.e.* 54.3% of the respondents agree that they learn English '*to understand better the native English speakers*' *culture and their way of life*.' Though according to Gardner and Lambert's theory this is integrative orientation. But in Bangladesh's context this could overlap to know other nations' culture through English as a tool to know more about others and could be very much an instrumental orientation for Bangladeshi students. However, the remaining dominant and primary objective is to learn English is for its utilitarian value that means to get a good job, to go abroad for higher studies and to complete graduation successfully. The findings seem to completely reject those of Maniruzzaman and Haque (2000) that claim the integrative orientation as the dominant motivation for the students. The present study further proves that

integrativeness is very much negligible for the undergraduate students in Bangladesh's context. Even a country like India, where English is used and taught as an official second language, Agnihotri and Khanna, Lukmani (1972) show instrumental orientation as the dominant trend in India. In Bangladesh there is no scope and place to use English to interact with the native English speakers, and Bangla solely is used as a medium of interpersonal communication. English is only learnt and taught for it utilitarian value.

Figure 1: Use of English within and outside of family

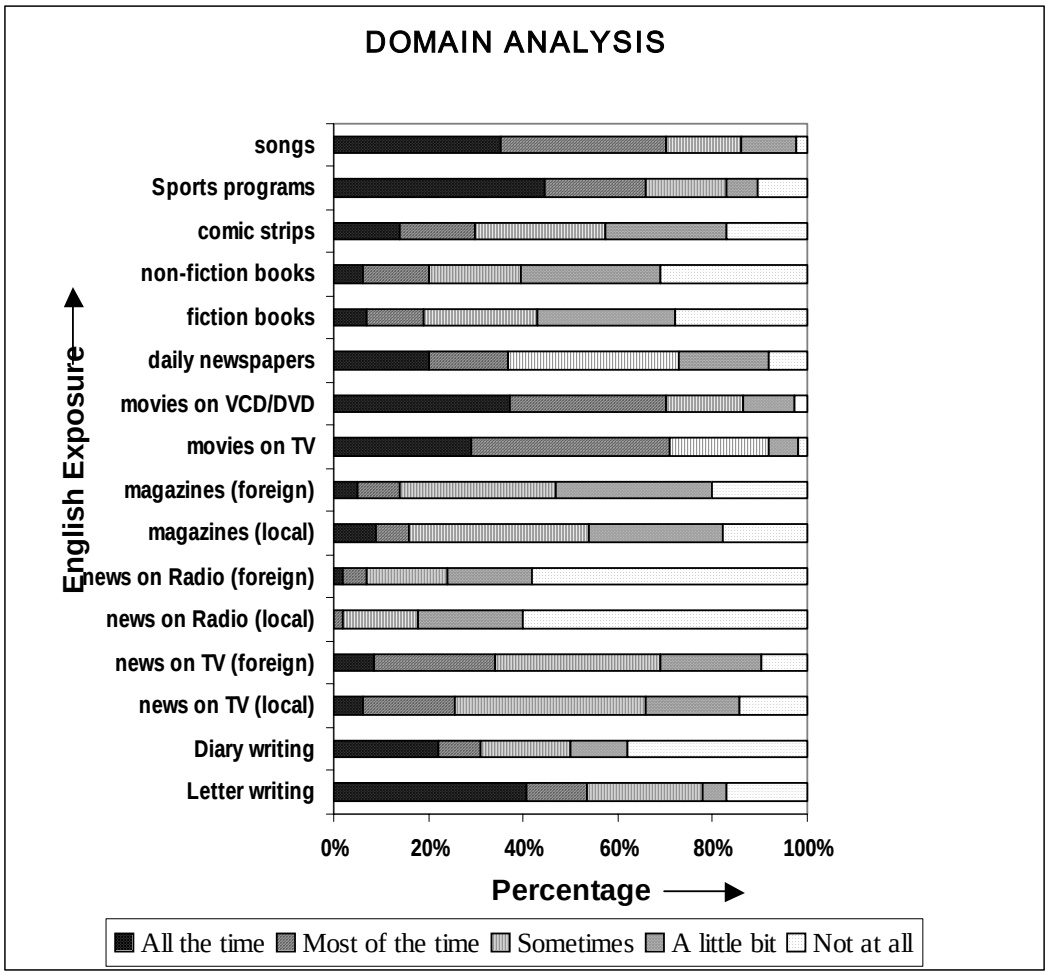


Figure 2 shows that the dominant domain of English usage seems to be watching English movies in DVD/VCD (37% of the informants accept watching movies *all the time)*, Watching Sports program (45% watch sports program *all the time*), and letter writing (only 40% use English *all the time* for letter writing), listening to English songs (35% always). The findings indicate that the respondents hardly read English newspapers, magazine, fiction and non-fiction books; only 36% read English newspapers *sometime*. Only 20% read English newspapers *all the time*. Interestingly 60% do not listen to radio news *at all*, not even a foreign channel (57% do not listen to English news on radio *at all*). One thing is clear that exposure of English through English literature is negligible (28% and 31% never read English non-fiction and fiction books), 38% never writes Diary in English, 18% of the respondents never read English magazines. It is evident that the informants use English only for *entertainment* like watching movies, sport programs or listening to English songs, but they do not take much interest in English books, stories, newspaper or even in reading magazine.

Motivational Orientation:

Table 3 further proves that the students' motivation for learning English primarily is instrumental. Where 73% show inclination to instrumental orientation only 27%, show that they are integratively motivated.

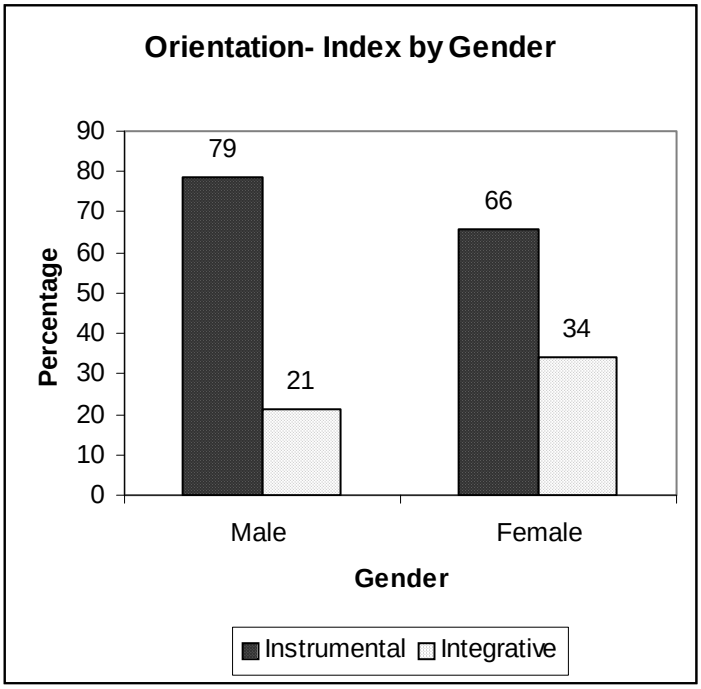
Table 3: Orientational Index

	Frequency	Valid Percent
Instrumental	69	**73**
Integrative	25	**27**
Total	94	100

Figure 3 explains that females are more integratively motivated than males. 21% of the male informants seem to be integratively motivated, whereas 34% of the female informants seem to be integratively motivated (13% more than the male counterpart).

79% of the males show strong instrumental orientation, whereas 66% female respondents show (13% less than the male counterpart) that they are instrumentally orientated.

Figure 3: Distribution of Orientation Index by Gender



N=94 ; Male :56 Female:38

Semi-structured Interview:

20 students from different disciplines were invited to appear for a semi-structured interview to find out students' opinions about following five relevant issues.

a) Reasons for poor performance in English:

When asked to identify the reasons for the apparent fall of English proficiency level:

All of them identified that in the schools and colleges, *English teachers lack competence to teach English.* However, they also identified other reasons along with that,

i.e. tendency for the students to memorize without understanding, limited use of English. Interestingly, 5 students think *excessive use of Bangla* is the main reason for the deteriorating standard of English.

b) Rationale for Learning English:

All the respondents think that English is learnt for its utilitarian value, i.e. getting good job, going abroad for higher study, reading books, traveling etc. Only one respondent claimed that he learns English so that he can interact with the native speakers comfortably.

c) English Course at the university level:

All the respondents believe that they need to continue learning English, even at the university level. When asked the need for English courses at the university level, even after studying for 12 years, all confirmed that *teaching English at the school and college level focused mainly on the Grammatical rules rather than the functional use of English*. All 20 students in the interview, when asked about English courses at the university, express their satisfaction with the English teaching at the university level. Also, when asked to compare with the courses taught at school and colleges, they deemed the university courses as useful and better taught than that at schools and colleges. It shows the instructional factor plays a vital role on shaping their attitude towards English.

d) Learning other Foreign Languages:

15 students think that they need to learn *only English*, no other foreign languages is required. However, the remaining 5 suggests that in the globalization context, learning other dominant foreign languages will ensure a better future career. When asked which are the foreign languages that should be learnt apart from English, they suggested German, French and Chinese. But when asked about Arabic, they categorically rejected the idea. It is interesting to note that, even in a country where 83% are Muslim, students do not think that it is necessary to learn Arabic as a foreign language.

e) From which level English should be introduced.

Almost all respondents suggest that English should be taught right from class one (tertiary) along with mother tongue. But according to two respondents, English may be introduced at class five.

Conclusion

The findings present a consistent picture which establishes that the instrumental motivation is the major motivational orientation for the undergraduate students to learn English as a foreign Language in Bangladesh. This provides a sufficient answer to the research questions addressed, and contradicts the findings of a few researchers (Maniruzzaman and Haque, 2000& 2001), who claimed that integrative motivation is the primary reason/motive for learning English in Bangladesh. Rather the study here is able to show that in Bangladesh, the students learn English primarily for instrumental reasons.

Bangladesh being a predominantly monolingual country where English is learned more as a foreign language, how far one can apply Gardner's dichotomous definition of instrumental and integrative is debatable. Usually, Bangladeshi students do not have a chance to interact in any form with the native speakers of English. The apparent idea of native speaker is gotten mainly from both electronic and print media that may not give an authentic picture of native speakers. Unlike, a multilingual country such as India, where native speakers are frequent because of a blooming Tourism industry, missionary work, NGOs, spiritual seekers and as a part of globalization process, it may not be unusual for the students to interact with the native speakers. But Bangladeshi students seldom interact with the native speakers. Hence forth, the future research is important to define the integrative motivation in a monolingual country like Bangladesh. For a Bangladeshi student, integrative motivation may mean to integrate and becoming part of the English-educated privileged part of the society. A student might want to become a part of English-educated society of Bangladesh and to emulate that way of life rather than becoming a native speaker of English, culturally and linguistically and about whom they

have limited concrete ideas possibly in the first place. For this reason many questions from Gardner's AMTB that are irrelevant were not considered for the present research.

The study proves that English is very much domain specific and English is used only for specific purposes; especially limited and restricted within the academic domain. The reason for the findings can be explained as: Bangladesh being a predominantly monolingual country, *Bangla* can serve most of the purposes, English is learnt only for its utilitarian value. i.e. to get a good job, to built a successful career, and to go abroad etc. There are few places to interact with or to befriend those within the target language community. Many of the informants never had a chance to know the native English speaker or even to have a clear idea about their culture. Their knowledge about the target language community is very much limited to books, novels or English movies. So, an integrative orientation may be harder to foster as an important driving force for learning English.

The study didn't aim to find out the link between varieties of motivational orientations and the language proficiency of the learners. The future study could aim at these findings that could give more insight into the linguistic realities of Bangladesh. Also, the question may address to whether the instructional role can be designed to increase the integrativeness of the learners to a significant level and whether that could help to elevate the English standard of Bangladesh. The study in the end does not reject or undermine Gardner's theory, rather it tries to find out the reliability and applicably of such theory in a strong EFL country like Bangladesh. The results of the present study though show that instrumental orientation is the major driving force for learning English at the undergraduate level, but the presence of Integrativeness also needs to be noted. The mixed findings do not allow one to conclude that in general all students are purely instrumentally motivated. More research in this area needs to be conducted. The language proficiency of integratively orientated students and as well us students with integrative orientation, if investigated further in future research, might give us new insight into Bangladeshi EFL situation.

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Article Title

Jordanian Undergraduate EFL Students' Errors in the Use of the Indefinite Article

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Abstract

This study is an analysis of compositions written by Jordanian first-, second-, third- and fourth-year university EFL students. It aims at identifying the kinds of errors they make in the use of the indefinite article.

Nine types of error were identified, and their frequency computed and then compared across the three levels. These errors are: (1) deletion of the indefinite article, (2) writing a as part of the noun/adjective following it, (3) substitution of the indefinite for the definite article, (4) substitution of the definite for the indefinite article, (5) substitution of a for an, (6) use of the indefinite article with unmarked plurals, (7) use of the indefinite article with marked plurals, (8) use of the indefinite article with uncountable nouns, and (9) use of the indefinite article with adjectives.

Unlike earlier error analyses, native language transfer was found to play a role which is at best minimal. The analysis revealed that all errors, except one, are

independent of the learners' native language. The only type of error which could be traced back to the influence of Arabic, among other sources, was the deletion of the indefinite article. Developmental factors and common learning strategies like simplification and overgeneralization were found to account for the majority of learners' errors. The use of these strategies was evident among the learners of the four levels who were found to do well on certain items and to have difficulty with others.

Key Words:
the zero article, the definite article, the indefinite article, countable versus uncountable nouns, second language communication strategies, article-like morphemes, contracted and uncontracted copula

Introduction and Background

The English article system is one of the most difficult structural elements for ESL/EFL learners, especially for those whose native languages do not employ articles or article-like morphemes. Master (2002) attributes this difficulty to three facts about the article system: (a) Articles are among the most frequent function words in English (Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman, 1999), making constant rule application difficult over an extended stretch of discourse; (b) function words are normally unstressed and consequently are very difficult for non-native speakers to discern, which affects the availability of input in the spoken mode; and (c) the article system stacks multiple functions onto a single morpheme, which constitutes a considerable burden for the learner who usually looks for a one-to-one correspondence between form and function, especially in the early stages of language learning.

Despite the fact that articles are important functional structures, they are hardly crucial communication devices, which is supported by the fact that they are dropped in telegraphic exchanges. Thus, unlike content words, function words are generally overlooked by learners when processing language primarily for meaning. According to Pienemann (1998), the difficulty of the meaning expressed by an article is determined by

the novelty and abstractness of the concept, not to mention learners' changing hypotheses about article usage at different stages in interlanguage development and the potential influence of the native language which may further complicate the task.

Articles do not impede understanding, for in oral communication, they are generally unstressed and almost inaudible. Nevertheless, given the fact that they are among the most frequent words in English, it is of the utmost significance that university students have some control of their usage.

The English articles a(n), zero, and the are quite difficult to acquire not only for ESL/EFL learners but also for children learning English as a first language. Articles are believed to be a source of difficulty for learners (and teachers) of English as a second/foreign language, especially for those whose native languages do not have articles or do have articles or article-like morphemes which are used in ways that differ from English articles (Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman, 1999). In a morpheme study by Brown (1973), the articles a and the came at numbers nine and ten in the acquisition of fourteen morphemes. They were found to be less difficult than the prepositions in and on, regular plural and possessive inflection -s but more difficult than the present progressive inflection -ing, regular and irregular third person singular (e.g. cleans and has), regular and irregular past tense (cleaned and went) and contracted and uncontracted copula and auxiliary be.

The Arabic article system is similar to that of English in meaning; however, form is highly varied. While the Arabic system manifests a binary distinction between the defined and the undefined, the English system exhibits a tripartite distinction. The Arabic defined (marked by the definite article /al/) and the undefined (marked by the absence of /al/) correspond to the English defined (marked by the definite article the) and the undefined (marked by the indefinite articles a(n) and zero). In other words, even though the concept is present in the two languages, indefiniteness in English is marked by lexical items such as the and a while it is marked in Arabic by affixes such as the prefix /al/ and

the suffix -n, both to mark definiteness and indefiniteness respectively (Lyons, 1999). For example, the Arabic and English sentences below are translation equivalents:

Dahara rajulun filbaldeh
Man appeared in town
A man appeared in town.

Despite incessant efforts by EFL instructors to eliminate article errors, these errors have been found to plague the speech and writing of their students all over the world. Being an EFL instructor herself, the present researcher attempts to look into this matter for the purpose of adding to the conclusions drawn by previous research.

This study examines the acquisition of the English indefinite article by a cross-section of Jordanian university students. It has three main objectives: (1) to identify the errors the learners make in terms of their types and potential sources, (2) to compute and compare the relative frequency of these errors to detect any developmental tendencies among the learners of the different levels of proficiency, and (3) to determine any potential differences among the subjects which can be attributed to class level or average length of compositions.

To achieve these objectives, the present researcher seeks answers to the following questions:

1. What are the types and potential sources of the errors Jordanian EFL students make in the use of the indefinite article?
2. Are there any developmental implications in the relative frequency of the occurrence of these errors?
3. Are there any differences in the students' errors which can be attributed to class level?
4. Is there a relationship between the average length of compositions and the number of errors made in indefinite article use?

This study derives its significance from the significance of the topic it addresses and the fact that it attempts to explore a new area in performance analysis, namely, the relationship between the average length of compositions and the number of errors in them, which is hoped to add another perspective to the current literature on the English article system.

Due to the fact that only indefinite article errors are examined, the present study is limited in its scope and generalizability of results to populations similar to the present one. Furthermore, the fact that different students are targeted at each class level may add another limitation posed by these students' potentially different personalities, motivation, and writing abilities, a limitation which would have been avoided if the same students were studied over a four-year period of time. Finally, examining the students' speech would have added further validity to the claims made in this research.

Review of Previous Literature

The literature has a plethora of research conducted on the processes of learning the English articles by EFL/ESL learners. However, this research has been found to focus on isolated features of the English article system (Chaudron and Parker, 1990; Goto Butler, 2002; Jarvis, 2002; Kharma, 1981; Liu and Gleason, 2002; Mizuno, 1999; Yamada and Matsuura, 1982; Yoon, 1993) falling into two areas: pedagogy and its effectiveness and the process of acquisition.

A good number of the studies which yielded important findings (Hakuta, 1976; Huebner, 1979, 1983; Tarone, 1985) were specifically conducted to examine grammatical morphemes rather than article acquisition per se. Only Master (1987 and 1997), Parrish (1987), Tarone and Parrish (1988), and Thomas (1989) specifically studied the acquisition of articles.

To the best of this researcher's knowledge, Master (1987) was the first to point out that articles seem to be acquired differently, depending on whether or not they occur in

the learner's native language. Overall, the acquisition of the definite article the precedes the acquisition of the indefinite article a (Huebner, 1983; Master, 1997; Parrish, 1987; Thomas, 1989). Several studies (Huebner, 1985; Parrish, 1987; Thomas, 1989; Chaudron and Parker, 1990) found an overuse of the definite article, but higher proficiency learners improved in accuracy with indefinite a. Although both Master (1997) and Huebner (1983) referred to the phenomenon of 'the-flooding' in which the is overgeneralized with a dramatic rise in usage, Thomas (1989) found the zero article overgeneralized across proficiency levels.

For learners whose native languages lack articles, researchers (Master, 1997; Parrish, 1987; Ekiert, 2004) reported that zero dominates in all environments for articles in the early stages of language learning. Parrish (1987) suggested an order of acquisition in which the zero article, the definite article, and the indefinite article are acquired consecutively.

Master (1997) concluded that these learners seem to acquire the zero article first although he warns that one cannot tell the difference between the zero article and omission of the article. Master's data showed that zero accuracy is close to 100% for the low-ability level participants, which then drops, and rises to nearly 100 % again for the high-ability level participants. He further reported that the overuse of zero article decreases with the increase in proficiency level, although the overuse of zero article persists more than the overuse of the other articles. Liu and Gleason (2002:5) reexamined Master's data and offered a new interpretation of the overuse of the zero article and underuse of a and the;

> *this overuse of the zero article and the underuse of the at the advanced stage would suggest that the two articles are acquired rather late.*

Liu and Gleason's hypothesis was supported by Young's (1996) data on the use of articles by Czech and Slovak learners of English, for while definiteness was not encoded

by the at the early stages of acquisition, it persisted even at the more advanced stages. However, participants encoded indefiniteness by means of the indefinite article a at all levels of proficiency with rising frequency as acquisition progressed.

Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman (1999) claim that the problematicity of the use of the article system is due in part to whether or not the lexical classification into countable versus uncountable nouns corresponds in the native and target languages. For example, while furniture and equipment are uncountable in both Arabic and English, chalk and information are countable in Arabic and uncountable in English. This mismatch may very well add to the complexity of the learner's task, for he/she needs to learn both the article system and other noun distinctions.

Research findings show similarities in the kind of problems facing ESL/EFL learners, of which some are believed to be more serious for learners from certain language backgrounds. The findings of comparative studies of first and second language acquisition are widely varied. Some morpheme studies (cf., for example, Cook, 1973) report similar stages of development, while others (cf., for example, Larsen-Freeman, 1975) report apparent variability in the order of acquisition of different groups. A third group (cf., for example, Ervin-Tripp, 1974) yet limits the similarity to natural learning situations. Corder (1973) maintains that unlike natural language learning, where learners make and test their own hypotheses about the language, second language learners in tutored situations follow an externally imposed syllabus.

The review of research on the effects of instruction on second language development suggests that instruction has a positive effect on second language learning, the rate of acquisition and learners' ultimate level of attainment. Some even go as far as claiming that certain structures may not be acquired if not taught (Cook, 1973). Certain findings, however, exclude any potential influence on the order of acquisition which is believed to be independent of the kind and amount of instruction the learner receives (Long, 1983).

Articles need to be taught because not only do they carry meaning but using them erroneously often causes misreading and confusion (Wrase, 1982; Rinnert and Hansen, 1986). This is made more plausible by Rinnert and Hansen's (1986) report of significant improvement in article use by more than one thousand learners from different native language backgrounds following a systematic instructional approach using self-developed material. It has been reported that very few EFL/ESL textbooks present a systematic approach or adequate practice to positively affect learners' performance in article usage.

Method and Procedure

The subjects for this study were all students of English at Yarmouk University (Irbid, Jordan) in the second semester of the academic year 2003/2004. The four groups of subjects started their degree in 2000, 2001, 2002 or 2003 respectively, which made them freshmen, sophomores, juniors and seniors at the time of the research.

A total of 209 male and female students, all of whom were between 18 and 23 years of age, were selected for the study. Like all Jordanian students, the ones who participated in this study started learning English as a foreign language in, or before, the fifth grade (currently from the first grade). They were homogeneous in terms of their linguistic and socioeconomic background, educational system, and field of study. The subjects lived in an exclusively Arabic-speaking community and had learned English as a foreign language prior to taking it up as their major field of study at the university.

Since the only course where freshmen students were uniformly asked to write paragraph/essay-type texts in English was Eng 105, an English Language Skills course, subjects who represented freshmen were drawn from the two sections of this course. The rest of the subjects were drawn from a three-year course sequence starting at the sophomore year and ending in the senior year: Eng 202 Writing the Paragraph, Eng 206 Writing the Essay, and Eng 320 Writing about Literature. Class level and average length of compositions are the only two variables.

The subjects were asked to write about one of the following topics: Why do you study English? Yarmouk University campus, violence in movies, car accidents, and my favorite author/story/poet. Only the written work of two hundred of these students was included in the analysis. Nine students' compositions were excluded because their writers failed to indicate their student identification numbers on the answer sheets and, thus, the researcher was unable to determine their respective class level. Table 1 shows the distribution of the sample in terms of gender and class level.

Table 1: Distribution of the Sample

Gender / ***Class Level***	***Male***	***Female***	***Total***
Freshmen *Class of 2003/2004*	17	24	41
Sophomores *Class of 2002/2003*	29	47	76
Juniors *Class of 2001/2002*	26	20	46
Seniors *Class of 2000/2001*	14	23	37
Total	**86**	**114**	**200**
Unidentified	5	4	9
Grand Total	91	118	209

The compositions were all written in 50-minute class sessions. The students were allowed to use their respective choices of an English monolingual dictionary. For every composition, a word count was made and errors in the use of the indefinite article were counted, classified and later analyzed. The types and frequency of these errors were compared to observe similarities and/or differences in the type and number of errors made across the four levels.

The length of the compositions was different across individual respondents as well as across class levels. A word count was performed excluding the instructions and

questions which some of the subjects copied onto the answer sheet. An average word count for each class level was used to calculate the percentage of errors in indefinite article usage. The average length of the compositions for each of the four class levels is shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Average Length of Composition across Class Level

Class Level	*Average Composition Length*
Freshmen *Class of 2003/2004*	227
Sophomores *Class of 2002/2003*	301
Juniors *Class of 2001/2002*	541
Seniors *Class of 2000/2001*	656

The aim of the linguistic analysis of the compositions was to observe errors in the use of the indefinite article which could be interlingual errors caused by the influence of the learners' native language; intralingual errors caused by the influence of the target language itself; transfer of training errors caused by faulty material presentation by teachers or textbooks; second language learning strategies which are the processes by which learners form, test, or modify hypotheses about the nature of the target language; and second language communication strategies by which learners attempt to handle the heavy communication demands facing them.

To achieve the objectives of the study, each composition was read twice, once by the present researcher and another by one of two independent raters. Data from each reading were organized using the following error categories: (1) deletion of the indefinite article, (2) writing a as part of the noun/adjective following it, (3) substitution of the indefinite for the definite article, (4) substitution of the definite for the indefinite article,

(5) substitution of a for an, (6) use of the indefinite article with unmarked plurals, (7) use of the indefinite article with marked plurals, (8) use of the indefinite article with uncountable nouns, and (9) use of the indefinite article with adjectives.

Findings and Discussion

In this section, the researcher presents and discusses the findings of the study in light of its objectives. First, the errors made by the four groups of subjects are identified in terms of their types and potential sources; second, the frequency of these errors is computed and compared to detect any developmental tendencies among the four levels; and third, potential differences among the subjects which can be attributed to class level or average length of compositions are detected.

Types of Errors

Discussed below are the nine types of error the subjects made in the use of the article.

Deletion of the indefinite article

Table 3, below, shows that a large number of errors were made under this category (viz., 67, 51, 20 and 9 errors by freshmen, sophomores, juniors and seniors, respectively). These errors can be attributed to more than one source, the most obvious of which may be native language transfer, for the learners may be giving the equivalent native language structure as the result of their inadequate knowledge of that of the target language, as shown in the examples below:

Yarmouk University has beautiful campus [a beautiful campus].
English is international language [an international language].
My neighbor was killed in car accident [a car accident] near Amman.

where a considerable number of the subjects made the error of deleting the indefinite article a(n) whose use is obligatory with the singular countable nouns campus, language, and accident. While English requires the use of an indefinite article, Arabic shows indefiniteness by not using an article at all.

Due to the aforementioned differences between the two languages, ungrammatical structures are produced. The fact that Arabic does not have a distinct marker for indefiniteness the way English does is probably the cause of the learners' deviation from the target language rule. This assumption is further supported by previous work by researchers like Duskova (1969), Richards (1971) and Bataineh (2002), among others, where the same error was made by learners from this and other language backgrounds that either do not have corresponding article systems or articles altogether.

Another potential source of this error is the strategy of simplification. Learners could be attempting to reduce the learning burden whereby the target language structure (viz., the indefinite article) is simplified into a form which is compatible with the learners' still developing interlanguage system. They may be using the zero article with both singular and plural unidentified countable nouns, which would certainly reduce the system into a more manageable one.

Writing the indefinite article as part of the following element

Although this is by far the most frequent error among the learners of the four levels, it seems to be the easiest to explain. Since it could not be traced to either the native or the target language, transfer of training seems to be the ideal explanation, for very early on in the acquisition process, these learners are presented with the indefinite article a as an inseparable companion to the noun (and later the adjective) it modifies. It is always a book, a pen or a pencil but never book, pen or pencil. By such presentation, learners are led to believe that a book is a single item rather than a two-item noun phrase made of an indefinite article and a noun. This is further worsened by the fact that early material presentation is mostly oral, which may mean that by the time the learner is

exposed to the written form, the misconceived structure has already been imprinted in his/her interlanguage system.

Table 3: Number and Percentage[1] of Errors across Class Level

Error / Class Level	Deletion of the Indefinite article		Writing a as Part of the Following Word		Substitution of the Indefinite Article for the Definite Article		Substitution of the Definite Article for the Indefinite Article		Substitution of a for an		Using the Indefinite Article With Unmarked Plurals		Using the Indefinite Article With Marked Plurals		Using the Indefinite Article With Uncountable Nouns		Using the Indefinite Article With Adjectives		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Freshmen Class of 2003/2004	67	45.6	137	59.3	27	31.4	21	44.7	8	61.5	2	20.0	3	75.0	8	66.7	10	90.9	283	50.4
Sophomores Class of 2002/2003	51	34.7	66	28.6	19	22.1	15	31.9	4	30.8	2	20.0	1	25.0	2	16.7	0	0	160	28.5
Juniors Class of 2001/2002	20	13.6	6	2.6	22	25.6	3	6.4	0	0	1	10.0	0	0	1	8.3	1	9.1	54	9.6
Seniors Class of 2000/2001	9	6.1	22	9.5	18	20.9	8	17.0	1	7.7	5	50.0	0	0	1	8.3	0	0	64	11.4
Total	147	100	231	100	86	100	47	100	13	100	10	100	4	100	12	100	11	100	561	100

[1] The percentage is calculated by dividing the number of errors in each of the nine categories by the total number of errors in that category.

This misconception causes them to write the article as part of the following element almost whenever they happen to observe the English rule of using one with singular unidentified countable nouns as seen in the examples below.

No one can deny that Yarmouk University has abeautiful [a beautiful] campus.
Shakespeare wrote so much he became afamous [a famous] playwright.
Speed is the most common case for alot [a lot] of accidents.

The present researcher herself had made this error a few times in fear of being reprimanded by zealous teachers who would not tolerate the deletion of the article, which seems consistent with Wrase's (1982) warning against too much worry too early about which article goes where claiming that to be counter-productive in writing.

It is worth noting that this error is subsequent to that of article deletion, because once the learner realizes that an indefinite article is required, he/she often fails to treat it as a separate entity from the noun or adjective it modifies and, thus, continues to produce deviant structures.

Substitution errors

The substitution of the indefinite article a(n) or null for the definite article the, of the definite article the for the indefinite article a(n) or null, and of the indefinite article a for the indefinite article an were observed among the students of the four levels, as shown in the following examples:

Yarmouk University Street is a commercial center [the commercial center] of Irbid.

English may be an only language [the only language] of business.

The international language [an international language] is used by people all over the world.

Knowing more than one language makes the person [a person] smart.

The person [a person] needs English for communication.

She broke her arm in a accident [an accident].

He has not a enough time [?] to leave the car.

Table 3 shows numbers as well as the frequency of occurrence of the subjects' errors. The way substitution errors are distributed in Table 3 may appear odd. Compared to freshmen, sophomores, and seniors, juniors made the least number of substitution errors, while seniors erroneously substituted the indefinite for the definite article, the definite for the indefinite article, and a for an.

Juniors aside, sophomores and seniors exhibit a pattern which is best described as puzzling. Freshmen, sophomores, and juniors seem to do a little worse than seniors in the erroneous substitution of the indefinite for the definite article (compare 31.4%, 22.1%, and 25.6% to 20.9%, respectively). This phenomenon, however, may make better sense if one keeps in mind that the subjects of the former levels made more errors in article deletion than seniors (compare 45.6%, 34.7%, and 13.6% to 6.1%). In other words, while freshmen, sophomores, and juniors deleted more indefinite articles, most seniors

recognized the fact that English requires the use of one with singular unidentified countable nouns which may have led them to overgeneralize the rule to instances where it is not applicable.

The fact that the third substitution error, viz. that of a for an, occurred only in one junior's composition and in a totally inappropriate context makes it appear like a nonce mistake or a slip of the pen. In addition to the faulty substitution, he has not a enough time to leave the car does not even call for the use of an article. Furthermore, the use of the sentence he does not have enough time is quite frequent in ESL/EFL textbooks and classroom situations, which lends itself to further support this analysis.

The use of the indefinite article with marked and unmarked plurals

Like the erroneous substitution of the indefinite for the definite article, seniors surprisingly made the largest number of errors in the use of the indefinite article with unmarked plurals, as shown in the examples below:

English is spoken by a people [people] from every nation.
A students [students] who know English have a better chance in life.

Nevertheless, they made no errors in the use of the indefinite article with marked plurals. Analogy or overgeneralization of other target language structures could be offered to explain this error. The learners were probably applying the rules of indefiniteness where it is not applicable.

Furthermore, hypercorrection, or the learners' tendency to erroneously use the article in places where it is not required for fear of making errors, could be offered to explain this type of error. Because they are so often corrected when they drop the article, learners occasionally overuse the article to avoid making the error, especially after they have begun to recognize the need for an indefinite article in certain contexts in English.

The use of the indefinite article with uncountable nouns

This error occurred with larger frequency in the compositions of the freshmen and gradually decreased in the compositions of the other three groups (8 vs. 2, 1, and 1 for freshmen, sophomores, juniors and seniors, respectively). Like the previous error, either overgeneralization or hypercorrection is probably the source of this error.

Young people use an information [information] to imitate the crimes in movies.

The learners could be erroneously extending the use of the indefinite article with singular unidentified countable nouns to uncountable ones on the grounds of structural similarity, or they could be overusing the indefinite article to avoid errors of deletion.

The use of the indefinite article with adjectives

This error is possibly the result of overgeneralization, for once the learner realizes the presence of an English structure where the adjective serves as the head of the noun phrase, he/she may erroneously extend this structure and, thus, use the indefinite article where it is not required on the false assumption that since the adjective is the head of the noun phrase, it is treated the same way the noun is with regard to the use of the indefinite article. Sentences like I will nurse your sick and feed your hungry and I ventured into the unknown are perfectly grammatical in English and, in fact, not structurally different from a sentence like English is an extensive and The buildings are all a classical.

This error could also be explained as a nonce mistake, or one which is caused by learners' carelessness, exhaustion or lack of attention. It has been found that learners usually correct this type of error themselves once their attention is drawn to it. The writer could have easily neglected or even not been able to come up with an appropriate singular noun to complete the sentence. Surprisingly, this researcher finds it hard to come up with an appropriate noun for the sentence. Actually, the best she can do here is use the noun substitute one and ones, respectively.

The Effect of Class Level

The subjects made a total of 561 errors in the use of articles, which are divided into 283 errors by freshmen, 160 errors by sophomores, 54 errors by juniors, and 64 errors by seniors. The analysis of the different types of errors revealed that the learners' performance varied from one item to another, for as students did well on certain items, they had some difficulty with others. Table 3 shows that learners' performance differs significantly from one item to another among the four proficiency levels. Most surprisingly, juniors seem to consistently do better than their counterparts, except in the errors of substituting the indefinite for the definite article and using the indefinite article with adjectives, scoring a total error percentage of 9.6 compared to 50.4% by freshmen, 28.5% by sophomores, 9.6% by juniors, and 11.4% by seniors. This researcher intends to investigate this phenomenon further in future research.

As juniors did better than freshmen, they outdid sophomores in all areas but one (viz., substitution of the indefinite for the definite article) (compare 22.1% to 25.6%). They also outdid seniors in all but the avoidance of three errors (viz., the deletion of the indefinite article, substitution of the indefinite for the definite article, and using the indefinite article with adjectives (compare their 13.6%, 25.6%, 9.1% to the seniors' 6.1%, 20.9%, and 0%, respectively). This phenomenon would not seem so odd if one kept in mind that seniors made the least number of errors in article deletion. The fact that they used more articles explains their making more errors in writing a as part of the following element, substitution of the indefinite for the definite article, and the use of the indefinite article with marked plurals.

The Relationship between Composition Length and Number of Errors

Composition length was not found to have a consistent relationship with the number of errors made. While freshmen, who wrote compositions of an average count of 227 words, made a total of 283 errors, sophomores, who wrote compositions of an average count of 301 words, made a total of 160 errors, juniors, who wrote compositions

of an average count of 541 words, made a total of 54 errors, and seniors, who wrote compositions of an average count of 656 words, made a total of 64 errors.

This result is not consistent with traditional teacher warnings that the more one writes, the more errors he/she is bound to make. In fact, these figures may readily support the researcher's claim that the errors made by the subjects are more developmental than thought in previous research. Although juniors and seniors wrote compositions with almost double the length of those written by their freshmen and sophomore counterparts, their errors were dramatically cut to less than 20% and 23% of those made by freshmen and 34% and 40% of those made by sophomores, respectively.

Conclusion

The results obtained above suggest that the majority of errors made by the four groups are the result of common learning processes, such as overgeneralization and simplification of the English article system. The impact of the subjects' native language was found minimal. The only type of error that could possibly be ascribed to native language transfer, among other sources, is the deletion of the indefinite article.

Although the results achieved in this study are sound and significant, more research is needed. A longitudinal study using the same subjects over the period of their study might prove invaluable for these purposes, not to mention incorporating oral as well as written data in the analysis.

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Title:

Nouns Illustrating Adjective-Noun Conversion in English

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ABSTRACT

This paper reports a study concerned with finding examples used in ordinary everyday English of nouns derived from adjectives through the word-formation process of conversion. The study involved, in the main, a close examination for common adjective-derived noun headwords of two first-rate learner's dictionaries: Hornby's *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English* (edited by Wehmeier (2000)) and *Collins Cobuild English Language Dictionary* (edited by Sinclair (1987)). The

examples collected in the course of the study are, for the most part, listed in the paper according to semantic subclasses determined by the kinds of general meanings (*e.g.*: "ADJECTIVE person", "Person with ADJECTIVE beliefs, views, or attitudes", etc) which the nouns are formed from the adjective bases to express. It is expected that the examples will prove of some value in the teaching of the English vocabulary in second or foreign language situations.

1. INTRODUCTION

This paper is actually the report of a study aimed at finding as many examples as possible of nouns used in ordinary everyday English which are derived from adjectives through the process of *conversion*. The examples were originally required for a section in a teaching text on the English vocabulary that was intended for learners in second or foreign language situations.

As is well known, conversion is the word-formation process whereby a lexical item is simply converted or adapted from one grammatical class to another without an affix. For example, we can talk of the conversion of the adjective *daily* (as in: "We read it in a *daily* newspaper") to the noun *daily* (as in: "We read it in a *daily*"). That the two instances of the word *daily* (the base adjective and the derived noun) belong to two different grammatical classes is only clear from the fact that they are used in different sentence positions. In English, conversion is indeed an important word- formation

process, and adjective-noun conversion is one of its main categories (see, *e.g.*: Francis, 1967; Strang, 1967; Marchand, 1969; Adams, 1973; and Quirk *et al.*, 1985).

2. THE STUDY

The study involved a close examination for nouns derived from adjectives by conversion of two widely acclaimed learner's dictionaries: Hornby's *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English* (edited by Wehmeier (2000)) and *Collins Cobuild English Language Dictionary* (edited by Sinclair (1987)). These are dictionaries that generally indicate which headwords are adjectives and then, where appropriate, which are nouns derived from the adjectives by conversion.

However, it was not always clear from the dictionaries whether the adjective or the noun should be taken as the base, while the other member of the pair was to be regarded as the derived item. This problem often arose where the noun (rather than the adjective) is listed first in one or both of the dictionaries. For instance, in both dictionaries the noun *agnostic* is listed before the adjective *agnostic*; and in one of the dictionaries the noun *adhesive* is listed before the adjective *adhesive*, while it is only in the other that it is listed first as an adjective. It was eventually decided to take the adjective as the base (from which the noun is derived) in dealing with items like *agnostic* and *adhesive* if the pairs have such typically adjectival endings as -i*c* and -*ive* (*cf:* Adams, 1973: 18; Close, 1975: 151). But, in general, it was decided to leave out any

adjective/noun pairs for which we had no way of resolving problems relating to the direction of the conversion.

To enhance the usefulness of our examples of adjective-derived nouns from the two dictionaries, we went on to try and divide them up as much as possible into semantic subclasses on the basis of the kinds of meaning particular adjectives are converted to nouns to express. For example, the adjectives *adolescent* and *fugitive* are converted to the nouns *adolescent* and *fugitive* respectively to express the meaning "ADJECTIVE [*i.e.* : *adolescent*/*fugitive*/…] person", and so they were put in the semantic subclass "ADJECTIVE person"; the adjectives *agnostic* and *radical* are converted to the nouns *agnostic* and *radical* respectively with the meaning "person with ADJECTIVE [*i.e.* : *agnostic*/*radical*…] beliefs, views or attitudes", and they went into the semantic subclass "Person with ADJECTIVE beliefs, views, or attitudes"; etc.

Lastly, it was necessary to leave out some of the adjective-derived nouns found in the dictionaries because they were considered rather uncommon or technical (*e.g.*: *agoraphobic*, *paranoiac*/*paranoid*, *schizophrenic*, *psychic, bourgeois*, *prophylactic*, *emetic*, *demonstrative* (from Linguistics)).

3. THE FINDINGS

In A – M below, our examples from the data are listed according to the various semantic subclasses of adjective-derived nouns in English that we could establish. The number of examples listed for each subclass is roughly proportionate to the total number

of the examples of adjective-derived nouns in the subclass which we could take from the data. Thus the number of examples listed for a particular subclass may be taken as a rough measure of the importance of the subclass (*i.e.* of the extent to which the related adjective-noun conversion pattern may be said to be productive) in non-technical, everyday English – with the more important subclasses having more examples and the less important fewer examples. In cases where an example is a noun with more than one quite distinct meaning, it will be found listed for more than one subclass (*e.g.*: the noun *Chinese* is listed for "The ADJECTIVE language" and "Person of ADJECTIVE nationality or origin").

However, there are some other examples that we did not really succeed in sorting into any of the semantic subclasses. This miscellany of adjective-derived nouns we list together at the end, in N below. It will be noticed that some of the items in this case appear more than once in the list (*e.g.*: *international*, *single*) as they express more than one distinct meaning.

A. *ADJECTIVE person*

adolescent	delinquent	intellectual
alien	fugitive	itinerant
ascetic	homosexual	junior
bilingual	hopeful	notable
black	illiterate	prodigal
celibate	imbecile	senior

clairvoyant	inferior	superior
contemporary	innocent	white

B. ***Person with ADJECTIVE beliefs, views, or attitudes***

agnostic	liberal	revolutionary
authoritarian	militant	romantic
conservative	moderate	subversive
deviant	neutral	utopian
egalitarian	progressive	
independent	radical	

C. ***Person having the disease or condition of being ADJECTIVE***

alcoholic	epileptic	paralytic
asthmatic	lunatic	rheumatic
consumptive	melancholic	
diabetic	neurotic	

D. ***ADJECTIVE person or thing***

female	opposite	possible
male	indispensable	

E. ***ADJECTIVE thing or substance***

eatable (usually plural)	liquid	solid
edible (usually plural)	necessary (usually plural)	synthetic
equivalent	perishable (usually plural)	valuable(usually plural)
hybrid	plastic	

F. ***Medicine or some other substance with ADJECTIVE properties***

abrasive	cosmetic	purgative
absorbent	contraceptive	restorative
adhesive	laxative	sedative
antibiotic	narcotic	solvent
antiseptic	palliative	

G. ***ADJECTIVE colour***

black	grey	yellow
blue	pink	white
brown	purple	
green	red	

H. ***ADJECTIVE publication***

annual	comic	periodical
bi-monthly	daily	quarterly
bi-weekly	monthly	weekly

We may also mention here the related minor subclass of "ADJECTIVE plant" with *annual, biennial* and *perennial* as the usual members.

I. ***ADJECTIVE stage in a competition***

preliminary quarterfinal semi-final final

These nouns are often used in the plural.

J. ***Member of the ADJECTIVE religion or sect***

Anglican	Episcopalian	Wesleyan
Catholic	Methodist	Muslim
Christian	Protestant	

K. ***Person of ADJECTIVE nationality or origin***

African	Egyptian	Japanese
Algerian	European	Nigerian
American	Finnish	Norwegian

Australian	German	Pakistani
Arab	Ghanaian	Russian
Brazilian	Greek	Singaporean
Canadian	Indian	Swiss
Chinese	Italian	Yugoslavian/Yugoslav
Czech	Iraqi	

The nouns in this subclass are usually used to refer to natives or citizens of the nations (or continents) from whose names the base adjectives have been formed (often by affixation). The base adjectives, however, do not normally indicate qualities, but things belonging or relating to, or originating from, such nations (or continents) (as in: *Egyptian books, Indian politics, Japanese cars, etc*). It is also to be noted that *Frenchman/Frenchwoman* and *Englishman/Englishwoman* are used to refer to a man/woman who is a native or citizen of France and England respectively; and *the French* and *the English* are used, respectively, to refer to the French people and the English people collectively.

L. *The ADJECTIVE language*

Arabic	Greek	Polish
Chinese	Hindi	Portuguese
Czech	Hungarian	Romanian

English	Japanese	Spanish
Finnish	Iraqi	Swahili
French	Italian	Swedish
German	Norwegian	

It will be noticed that some of the nouns here (*Chinese, Czech, Finnish, German, etc*) have the same form as those in subclass K above. Thus, for example, *Chinese* means either "person of Chinese nationality or origin" or "the Chinese language". In other words, the adjectives *Chinese, Czech,* etc are converted to nouns to express more than one distinct meaning (3 above).

M. ***ADJECTIVE principle or aspect of something***

basic	essential	inessential
constant	external	fundamental

The items here are usually used in the plural.

N. ***Some other adjective-derived nouns***

automatic (gear)	multinational (company)
automatic (gun)	negative (photograph)
musical (play/film)	neutral (gear)
classic (writer/book)	offensive (attack)
comic (actor)	oral (examination)

commercial (radio/TV advertisement)
documentary (film/programme)
editorial (opinion)
empty (bottle)
exclusive (story)
friendly (match)
inaugural (speech/lecture)
initial (letter)
international (match)
international (player)
memorial (object)
mercenary (soldier)
primary (election)
principal (teacher)
regular (customer)
single (bedroom)
single (record)
single (ticket)
social (gathering)
spiritual (song)
subsidiary (company)
terminal (point)
variable (factor)

These are the adjective-derived nouns that we claim do not quite share in the kind of group meaning that defines each of our adjective-noun semantic subclasses (A – M) presented above. Thus, for instance, an *adolescent* (like a *bilingual, contemporary, etc*) fits into the semantic subclass A, headed "ADJECTIVE person". However, an *international* (listed twice in the subclass here) is not just an "international person" or an "international thing" but an "international *player*" or an "international *match*" – meanings so circumscribed that they cannot be accommodated under the heading "ADJECTIVE person" or "ADJECTIVE thing",

or under some such other group heading. Hence, for the non-native learner of English, the adjective-derived noun in this case usually assumes something of an idiom, as its exact meaning has to be specially learnt: it cannot be fully guessed from the meaning of the adjective base.

4. CONCLUDING REMARKS

As already explained, this paper is the report of a study with the primary purpose of finding as many examples as possible of nouns formed from adjectives through the word-formation process of conversion in English which the non-native learner would generally want to be familiar with. To enhance their value, the examples collected in the course of the study have in large part been listed in the paper (3A – L above) according to semantic subclasses based on the kinds of general meanings the nouns are formed from the adjective bases to express : "ADJECTIVE person", "Person with ADJECTIVE beliefs, views, or attitudes", "Person having the disease or condition of being ADJECTIVE", etc. It is expected that the examples will be found of some use in the teaching of the English vocabulary in second or foreign language situations.

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Title:

Effective EFL Education Through Popular Authentic Materials

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Bio:

Caroline C. Hwang was born in Taiwan. Her first exposure to English during her childhood was overhearing her grandparents from Shanghai occasionally speak the language. Following years of traditional English instruction in Taiwan, she went to the U.S. and began her real acquisition of the English language. She obtained her M.A. in Comparative Literature and her Ph.D. in Applied Linguistics from the University of Texas at Austin. She taught in universities in the U.S. and also worked in England. Twenty years of stay in English-speaking countries has proffered her enormous pleasure in the language and the culture(s). She is eager to share with EFL learners the joy of "living in the English language." Dr. Hwang is currently an associate professor at National Taipei University of Technology.

Key Words

natural language acquisition, authentic, current, exposure, language input

Abstract:

The problem of overemphasizing English grammar created by the examination-driven education system in Taiwan has long been identified, but there are other deficiencies that curriculum planners are not fully aware of. As a redeeming measure, substantial input of authentic materials that are pegged to learners' levels and interests naturally increases their sensitivity to and competence in the target language.

Furthermore, current popular materials, such as clips from mass media and best-selling essays/short stories, have been found most appealing because of their realistic, ready-to-use language and relevance to learners' mindsets and experiences. Once students are hooked on authentic materials, which trigger the process of natural language acquisition, effective EFL education can be realized.

I. Introduction

In Taiwan, a traditional examination-driven education has made middle- and high-school English teachers admired for their ability to explain grammar rules. Many cram schools have made a fortune by doing this as well. As a result, students in Taiwan are pampered by being spoon-fed rules, some of which are obsolete, and at the same time their appetite for acquiring and using English as a natural, living language is spoiled. In general, the students of English have been "indoctrinated" to the point that unless a certain usage is clearly explained, they subconsciously reject it. As they keep pressing "why," teachers take pride in reasoning through decontextualization (Shrum and Glisan 1994:23) rather than striving for genuine proficiency through acquisition and internalization. This situation has created a variety of deficiencies in the English education in Taiwan.

II. A Variety of Deficiencies

1. A Thin and Flat Repertoire with No Range

As the term "communicative competence" has snowballed in popularity in Taiwan's English teaching circle, a proliferation of imported EFL/ELT textbooks have introduced this island to conversational expressions. Jaded with memorization of rules, learners embrace oral training as the sole purpose for English learning. The variety of English styles, i.e. the range between formal and informal usages, is seldom brought to the attention of students. As a result, their English repertoire is thin and flat. Fossilization

in the form of "phrase book English" (Nunan 1999:154), stilted and superficial language used in phatic communication, is prevalent.

2. Pompous Sounding Gibberish

Pursuing advanced academic degrees in an English-speaking country, especially in the U.S., has been a popular trend for students in Taiwan. However, with the deficiency in knowledge of English stylistic variations as well as how/when/where to use the different styles, those who come back to Taiwan with higher degrees from English-speaking countries tend to produce a mixture of slangy and academic English. The mild cases would be awkward pairings/groupings of words and the worst ones could be pompous sounding gibberish. It is because of staying mostly in the classroom and the library while studying in an English-speaking country, that they still lack exposure to the realistic use of English in the main-stream society.

3. "Living in Ancient Times"

College students of English literature in Taiwan arduously study classical English literature. Granted, classical literature is something to be treasured and relished as well as to be read for gaining passive knowledge, but it is nothing to be the base of active communication. This distinction is seldom made clear and consequently these non-native English majors' lexicon and styles in English tend to be out of sync with what is needed for effective modern-day communication. English literature curricula in Taiwan boast of being comparable to those in English-speaking countries, oblivious to the fact that their students are devoid of K-12 (kindergarten to 12th grade) native-speaking English education, where ample contemporary materials are assimilated. In other words, Taiwan's English literature curricula can thus be equated with teaching ballet to an infant who can barely crawl.

III. Examples of Successful EFL Instruction/Learning

1. An Experiment That Merits Attention

Based on a strong personal interest in reading magazines/best-sellers and watching TV while living in the U.S., I experimented with adopting these types of authentic materials, instead of EFL textbooks, in my classes. In retrospect, my own college English speech and writing classes in Taiwan many years ago, which supplied "formulae" but not exemplary models, proved to be largely fruitless. With this awareness of the importance of authentic models, I have made a point to incorporate them into my own teaching. As it turned out, feedback from my students indicated that they felt gratified being treated as mature, intellectual individuals, since authentic materials were made for native speakers of English. This practice of mine could be corroborated by Shrum and Glisa (1994):

> Empirical studies have confirmed the positive results gained by listeners and readers who are given opportunities to interact with authentic oral or written texts. (p. 116)
>
> Videotexts…bring the living culture right into the classroom. (p. 117)

The use of authentic materials is also in tune with "the natural communication task," defined in Dulay, Burt, and Krashen (1982):

> A natural communication task is one where the focus of the student is on communicating an idea or opinion to someone rather than on the language forms themselves. In such situations the speaker subconsciously uses the grammar rules acquired to convey the message. (p. 247)

I further encouraged my students to utilize the vocabulary and expressions they had learned from authentic materials in their own production of English. It is my experience that output-based tasks can activate the input stored in receptive memory and

thus transform knowledge into skills. They were also asked to take in texts by chunks for the purpose of boosting their collocational competence (Hill 1999).

After a few years of exposure and activation as such, my students feel empowered by seeing "the woods" rather than "the trees" as well as by being able to communicate in English on a greater variety of topics. Copious authentic usages come with the great potential to break students' habit of producing Chinese English (a.k.a. "Chinglish"). Better students even ask for more materials of the same nature. At this point, resource-based learning and student autonomy is in place, just like that described in Shrum and Glisan (1994):

> Students process information in meaningful ways, take responsibility for their own learning, and become independent learners. (p. 27)

2. "A Miracle Student"

At one time, I was unexpectedly surprized by the command of English exhibited by one student in my Linguistics class in which none of the aforementioned materials were used. This student, a freshman, out of a total of approximately 180 students (in my three Linguistics classes), was the only one who gave extensive and reflective answers to the open-ended essay questions on his examinations. His smooth and in-depth writing stood out among his classmates' incomprehensible English-words-in-Chinese-structure/expression sentences. Later I found out that this "miracle student" followed the same route of traditional Taiwan's English education as his classmates and had never studied in an English-speaking country. But, for many years he had read English magazines on popular music out of interest. Apparently, the elusive "English Language Environment" is comfortably attainable to learners with this common-sensical idea for language learning.

Hence, the pivotal notion of Krashen's Natural Approach (1983) or the premise of "Back to the Basics" in the U.S. education circle IS an important key to successful

learning. This student has demonstrated that constant pleasure reading of current authentic materials in English afforded him a near-native intuition.

IV. Recommendations and Implications

1. Why Current Popular Authentic Materials?

English textbooks, authored by educators rather than professional writers, tend to carry a preaching and patronizing tone. The authors and their readers are inherently not on the equal footing. The textbook English, written from the perspective of talking to a "foreign" (namely, "outsider") audience, can hardly avoid contrivance. This has been pointed out by Shrum and Glisan (1994):

> Unfortunately, many language textbooks contain poorly motivated and illogically sequenced texts and dialogues that do not reflect real-world language or situations, although they usually contain multiple examples of the grammar being presented. (p. 28)

This problem with EFL textbooks is further evidenced by research in the recently thriving field of Corpus Linguistics. For example, both Mindt (1992) and Kennedy (1998) have stated:

> A comparative study of authentic language data and textbooks for teaching English as a foreign language has revealed that the used of grammatical structures in textbooks differs considerably from the use of these structures in authentic English. (Mindt, p. 186)

On the basis of a comparison between a corpus analysis and the linguistic devices taught in textbooks…there can be a significant mismatch between normal use of English and what is taught to second language learners. (Kennedy, p. 284)

Mindt (1996) has also made such a wake-up call:

> There is obviously a kind of school English which does not seem to exist outside the foreign language classroom. As a result, learners who leave their school surroundings very often find it hard to adapt to the English used by native speakers. Learners who communicate with native speakers constantly have to reshape their linguistic behaviour in those areas of the language which were not taught properly. (p. 232)

The last sentence in the above passage is what I can personally testify to - During the constant process of discovering the main-stream usages of English in the U.S. and in the U.K., I had to UNLEARN a fair amount of the English I was taught back in Taiwan. Nevertheless, even after my twenty years of living and working in English-speaking countries, the earlier years of English instruction in Taiwan was so ingrained in me that it still "haunts" me from time to time.

Granted, carefully written EFL/ELT materials are instrumental in laying a foundation for English learning, but by no means should they be overvalued if the student has a hearty aspiration to achieve near-native proficiency. Authentic materials, on the other hand, teem with stimulating and informative manners of communication that are conducive to interactive learning. In fact, this captivating quality is also essential in L1 acquisition, as depicted by Krashen (1989):

> Reading for genuine interest and pleasure may be the single greatest educational tool available. When the second-grade teacher reads E. B. White's Charlotte's Web to the class, the book often disappears from the school library, from the

> local public library, and local bookstores. Some children read Charlotte's Web fifteen to twenty times and memorize it! (p. 109)

This is exactly what we need-a self-created "English Language Environment." This endeavor is even more strategic in EFL learning, where no built-in day-to-day contact with the language is provided.

Among authentic materials, I prefer current popular ones, because they are superior in relevance to learners' lives here and now as well as in display of easy but realistic, ready-to-use language. These materials include best-selling essays/stories, TV news-magazines, talk shows, etc. One caution to be exercised, though, is that at the introductory stage the humor and way of thinking in these materials have to be universally appealing, because peculiar remarks/antics could cause frustration in less experienced learners. Nowadays Taiwan imports many current award-winning films and TV shows, especially from the U.S. Some of them are acclaimed for their clever, avant-garde manipulation of linguistic/cultural idiosyncrasies, which usually fall flat on students in Taiwan. Therefore it takes discretion and empathy to select appropriate authentic materials that are pegged to learners' levels and interests.

For the same reason, I seldom use novels or poems for students' reading, because most of them feature highly stylistic writings that deliberately twist or even break linguistic conventions to achieve special aesthetic effects. They could be introduced to linguistically matured students, possibly after three years of intensive exposure to relatively straightforward yet delightfully engaging language and styles, free from abstruse vocabulary and convoluted syntax. As for specific contents, teachers need to "shop around" and make selections based on their own and their students' interests, because only interests can lead to a sustainable passion for this practice over the long haul. When learners truly enjoy authentic materials that are pegged to their levels and interests, they could be gradually "hypnotized into" the rhythm and pattern of the target language.

Also, the role of teacher would be transformed into a "coach," providing doses of lexical and grammatical explanations when students encounter difficulties in these areas. Once the students are hooked on these authentic materials, the process of natural language acquisition begins to set in.

2. Examples of Authentic Materials to Use

Books: e.g. *Chicken Soup for the Soul* series, *Don't Sweat the Small Stuff* series, *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People* series

Magazines: e.g., *Reader's Digest, YM, Good Housekeeping, GQ, Time, Newsweek, National Geographic*

Video/Audio:

* MSN Video (MSN provides video clips from NBC news, etc.)
* "Behind-the-Scenes" on cable movie channels
* (Selected) films

The above list mainly consists of U.S. publications, because I am personally more familiar with them. Here I would like to solicit from colleagues in the EFL field appropriate authentic materials from other English-speaking countries.

3. Necessary Pedagogical Support

Although an ardent advocate of language acquisition, I do not discard the teaching of structures, simply because L2 learning is not identical to L1 learning, particularly in the case of late-teen and adult learners. In the U.S. most ESL teachers, overly trusting inductive methods, deprecate the value of any explanation of rules. Many Chinese/Taiwanese immigrant friends of mine complain that English is still nebulous to them after attending years of ESL classes in the U.S. And the discrepancy between native-speaking ESL teachers' perception and their students' expectation is illustrated in

vivid detail in "The Mismatch between an American Instructor's Teaching Practice and Her Asian Students' Learning Strategies" (Min 1999:32). Native ESL/EFL teachers, no matter how well-intentioned, often do not understand that it is far too late to ask their adult students to foster a tolerance for ambiguity.

To make my students comfortable with authentic materials, I do provide necessary pedagogical support for complicated sentences and unfamiliar phraseology. In particular, I call to my students' attention equivalent expressions that are different in syntax or wording/phrasing in English and Chinese. In my opinion, knowledge of grammar can serve as a guide in the beginning and as a reminder, or "monitor" as labeled by Krashen (1985), at a later stage of English instruction. But by no means should it been regarded as the "meat." For maximum effectiveness, "a program of instruction should contain two parallel streams, one devoted to exposing the learner to materials containing a reactively uncontrolled variety of linguistic elements…and the other devoted to a rather carefully developed sequence of instructional content" (Carroll 1974:140-141). In essence, "learning occurs through use of a continuum between subconscious, automatic processes and conscious, analytic processes" (Shrum and Glisan 1994:

V. Conclusion

Ideally, a foreign language classroom should consist of-approximately 70% of abundant exposure (to stimulate subconscious language acquisition) plus 30% of conscious structure and usage explanation; 70% of student-oriented activities plus 30% of the teacher's demonstration. Yet the situation in Taiwan seems to be just the opposite. This is well articulated in Dulay, Burt, and Krashen (1982) and could be redeemed by a fresh attitude:

Learning a second language can be exciting and productive…or painful and

> useless. One's efforts can end in the acquisition of native-like fluency or a stumbling repertoire of sentences soon forgotten…The difference often lies in how one goes about learning the new language and how a teacher goes about teaching it. To be successful, a learner need not have a special inborn talent for learning language. Learners and teachers simply need to "do it right." (p. 3)

With the frenzy induced by the newly installed childhood English programs in Taiwan, the time is ripe for us to "do it right" and change our course of direction away from fragmented English education to a cornucopia of realistic, ready-to-use language that is profuse in current popular authentic materials. Only the latter can trigger the acquisition process and materialize tenets such as top-down strategy and whole-language learning (Shrum and Glisan1994:25). To achieve the desired effect, substantial intake of natural English needs to be implemented at all levels-in elementary, middle, and high schools as well as in colleges. Shrum and Glisan (1994) have provided empirical evidence favoring the early use of authentic texts to develop all-around language skills in young students:

In reading, Vigil (1987) found significant differences in comprehension with beginning language students who read unedited authentic texts. Not only did their comprehension skills increase, but there were also improvements in oral and written language performance. (p. 117)

As a matter of fact, many countries that are advanced in foreign language education have emphasized the use of ample authentic materials. Asian countries, especially those in the East Asia, are yet to catch on to this awareness. Only when EFL education makes a foray into the dynamism of popular authentic materials will it experience the power of being energized and see the effect of genuine communicative competence.

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Title:

Using Contemporary Psychological Perspectives in Re-Understanding Taiwanese EFL Development: Observations and Implications for Tertiary Education

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Bio

Dr. Tiango started his career 12 years ago as an English teacher for elementary school students in the Philippines. Later he joined the Department of Psychology of De La Salle University-Manila, Philippines. Currently, he is affiliated with the Applied Foreign Languages Department of Shu-Te University in Taiwan. His research interests are cognitive psycholinguistics, psychology of learning, philosophical issues concerning language and identity, and cultural postmodernism.

Abstract

The paper argues that EFL teaching and learning in Taiwan can be enriched by integrating contemporary perspectives in psychology that deal with the areas of psychology of learning and language development to help Taiwanese college students in their study of the English language. Specifically, the first part of the paper is a discussion regarding the implications of both the Information-Processing Theory and Social-Behavioral Perspective alongside the author's experience in handling Taiwanese students at the tertiary level. The second part of the paper focuses on the author's recommendations with the hope of improving the plight of EFL teaching in Taiwan and

in developing the general English proficiency of college students. As a whole, the paper argues for the consolidation of EFL language policies, the language curriculum, and teaching strategies within an espoused and viable theoretical paradigm other than focusing on the traditional approaches utilized in the country. This is meant to boost efforts to internationalize the human resources in Taiwan towards national and global competitiveness.

Keywords: EFL, Psychology of Learning, Cognitive Psycholinguistics, Taiwanese EFL Students, EFL Teaching

Introduction

Taiwanese society has put much pressure on itself to develop the EFL proficiency within the country in the hope of gaining more access in the global arena of international trade and commerce (Carey, 1998; Thompson, 2003; see also, Mok & Lee, 2001 for a discussion on the higher education reforms in Taiwan as brought about by globalization). To cope with the demands that accompany internationalization, awareness has been growing regarding the importance of English language study for both social and economic mobility. For some, it is a career-related necessity in order to gain prestige and move up the corporate ladder. For others, it is like mining for gold especially in consideration of what Krashen (2003) calls as the English fever that looms over the country. Hence, it is observable that learning English in Taiwan, as a foreign language, has become a fashionable trend and business other than studying it for scholarly purposes (Liu, 2002; Taipei Times, 2003). Alongside the developments in EFL teaching and learning that have been transpiring all over the country, pervasive issues can also be said to continuously persist. Sadly, these issues haunt Taiwan's efforts in internationalizing the potentials of its human resources (see Huang, 2003b; Huang, 2003c; Thompson, 2003; Taipei Times, 2002; Yiu, 2003; Yun-Ping, 2003). These issues pose a concern, not

only for the parents and students themselves, but the whole educational system as well (Carey, 1998).

Specifically, the tertiary educational system in Taiwan partly carries the burden in internationalizing the potentials of its human resources (Tiangco, 2004). It plays a crucial role in the sense that it is responsible for preparing undergraduate students for future careers and in providing them with the necessary skills to become productive members of both industry and government. It is also responsible for providing continuing education programs such as courses in English for students with a college degree but would like to study the language further without embarking on a formal graduate or post-graduate EFL/ESL degree program. More importantly, the influence of globalization presents a challenge to higher education for it to provide relevant language training and education to promising Taiwanese in preparing them for global-competitiveness. Subsidies are being provided to those interested in pursuing post- graduate degrees in foreign countries. Obviously, all of these reflect the great importance the Taiwanese place on learning English as a foreign language (Baker, 2003).

Although the responsibility should really fall on the Ministry of Education and its general language program as a whole, but pressure is mostly felt at the tertiary level. Such pressure is evident in the increase in the number of Applied Foreign Languages Department in different tertiary educational institutions (Su, 2004). An increase demand for foreign teachers is also evident (Shu-ling, 2003). Moreover, preparing and taking standardized language tests such as the General English Proficiency Test (GEPT) and the Test of English for International Communication (TOEIC) have definitely become a routine for most college students. To every extent it has now even become a burden wherein teachers teach in order for students to pass the said tests (Chang, 2003)

Amidst efforts to create a national bilingual environment in the next few years to come (see, Oladejo, 2003), most Taiwanese students continuously grapple with the intricacies involved with vocabulary acquisition, the grammatical features of English, and the desire and preoccupation to develop an accent similar to native English speakers.

Taiwanese technology, college, and university students are cut-off from the intellectual vibrancy involved in the critical study of the English language. Higher-order language skills are underdeveloped given the predicament that basic skills are not well-formed and largely remain unstable. And yet, high educational demands such as emphasis on tests and the crammed memorization of words are a reality for most students (Thompson, 2003). Little room is provided for intellectual flexibility that allows Taiwanese students to exercise creativity to test their capacity for intellectual reasoning using the English language. Consequently, the prevalent perception remains regarding the disappointing general English proficiency of some Taiwanese college students in spite of the high cost of learning, expensive books, and enrollment at expensive cram schools (Yiu, 2003). Some of these students will later on become the next generation of teachers who are going to handle English courses in different levels, which Oladejo (2003) regards as not competent enough to teach English using the language itself as a medium of instruction. In connection to this, is it still worth pointing a finger as to who is to blame amidst the problems and issues identified?

The paper argues that perhaps a new outlook should be undertaken in Taiwan given the backdrop of the issues presented. Specifically, this outlook aims at a more theoretically grounded approach to EFL teaching vis-à-vis sensitivity to contemporary developments in psychology. The first part of the paper outlines the theoretical implications of the Information-Processing Theory and the Behavioral and Social Learning Perspectives. Within this context, the specific implications of these theoretical standpoints shall be discussed as it can be applied inside the EFL classroom. The second part of the paper focuses on anecdotal observations and recommendations in improving the plight of Taiwanese EFL development at the tertiary level within the framework of the theoretical standpoints presented.

Contemporary Psychological Perspectives and EFL Learning:
Implications to Taiwanese Learners

Background knowledge of psychology plays an important role in facilitating the processes involved in both language teaching and language learning (Bernardo, 1998; Chomsky, 2000; Clarke & Silberstein, 1987; Krashen, 1987; Krashen, 2003; Taylor, 1990; Williams & Burden, 1997). More importantly, knowledge of both the theoretical and practical applications of cognitive psychology to EFL/ESL learning and teaching can definitely yield fruitful results (Barrow, 1990). Hence, it can be argued that psychology has a clear role in facilitating language development and teaching even within the context of EFL learning in Taiwan.

Taiwanese teachers handling tertiary EFL courses, therefore, should be made aware that the study of any language is not bound by a structural linguistic approach that is limited to syntax, phonology, and the memorization of vocabulary words. From a psycholinguistic perspective, it is equally important to understand how the mind acquires and processes linguistic information for use in communication (Deuchar & Quay, 2000). In relation to this, the study of English should not be detached from understanding how the mind is able to think and process information in the first place (Chomsky, 2000; Deuchar & Quay, 2000; Muter & Johns, 1985; Stemmer, 1999).

The Cognitive Psychology of EFL Learning: Understanding the Information-Processing Theory

One of the most important models in cognitive psychology is the information-processing theory, which has grown popular through the years providing a comprehensible outlook towards mental life, cognitive processes, and human behavior (Bernardo, 1998). As far as the behavioral standpoint is concerned, although it still relatively enjoys popularity in usage, it has also come under attack from the seemingly justified criticisms of the cognitive movement in psychology (see, Leahey, 1980 for a detailed discussion on the criticisms regarding the behavioral perspective in psychology). The highlight of the model focuses on the comparisons drawn between the theoretical

conception of the human mind in relation to computers, calculation devices, radio transmission devices, and to communication theory.

The information-processing theory touches on the different aspects of human life, specifically such as the study of memory, learning, transfer of learning, thought-formation, creativity, problem solving and most importantly, language development (see, Medin, Ross & Markman, 2001; Neisser, 1967 for a more thorough discussion on the information-processing theory; see also, Bernardo, 1998 for a discussion on its specific implications to language learning). In regards to EFL learning and teaching, it also provides a viable theoretical framework that clearly and unsophisticatedly describes the process of language learning and its impact to the educational process (Cangelosi & Parisi, 2002; Kern & Warschauer, 2000).

To begin with, the English language, composed of its syntax, phonology and the vocabulary words comprising the language are forms of linguistic information. Linguistic information is processed by the mind just like any other information vital to the survival of an organism (de Saussure, 1959). Therefore, linguistic information used in everyday communication can be understood as information broken down into linguistic signs – both visual and auditory – which are processed by the mind for whatever intended use (Chandler, 1994). The model accounts for the input, processing and output phases involved in generalized forms of learning (see Neisser, 1967). It is best to even begin by saying that language is not simply acquired but instead developmentally learned as an enduring process (Barrow, 1990; Chomsky, 2000; Krashen, 1987). Simply put, the capacity for human language is a learned behavior mediated by cognitive processes. The information-processing theory can be broken down into the following to describe further its salient characteristics: *Sensory/Information Input*, *Processing*, and *Output*.

Sensory/information input. Any form of physical energy or stimulus that stimulates the sensory organs of the human body can be regarded as sensory information (Plotnik & Mollenauer, 1978; Stemmer, 1999). This physical energy or sensory information is then transformed into electrical impulses and transmitted to the brain via the afferent nervous

system. The input phase of the model describes the inward flow of information ready to be processed by the brain. For example, as one read the words on this paragraph, the different lines and markings that compose the alphabet of each word can be called the stimulus or physical energy that stimulates the visual sensory receptors. The eyes receive these markings as a form of linguistic information. Through the auditory sensory receptors, auditory stimulus can also be received as a form of physical energy. The linguistic information that stimulates the visual and/or auditory sensory receptor(s) is then broken down into electrical impulses transmitted by the afferent nervous system from the senses to the brain (Plotnik & Mollenauer, 1978).

Processing. As soon as the information, which is in the form of electrical impulses, reaches the brain, several functions act upon it interdependently (Chomsky, 2000). The processing aspect of the model relegates to a myriad of brain activities meant to act upon the received information in the same manner as how a computer processes information (Neisser, 1967). Examples of processing involves stimulus recognition, encoding in either the short term or long term memory system or in both, perception, memory recall, and other higher mental faculties such as thinking, thought formation, creativity, and problem-solving (Medin, Ross & Markman, 2001; Taylor, 1990). Given the nature of the stimulus received during the input phase and the needed mental function to process the information, reaction time varies depending on what is needed for a particular situation. Persons of different age, sex, cultural, and ethnic background vary in the level of cognitive development as manifested in how they may give meaning to sensory information (Chomsky, 2000). Continuing with the earlier example, the words on this paragraph are linguistic information that can be broken down into smaller elements that are processed by the brain. Stimulus recognition takes place in recognizing the elements that comprise a particular alphabet. When put together these elements are then recognized by the brain as a group of alphabets comprising a word. The processing of information goes beyond mere stimulus recognition. The recognized words are given meaning depending on existing information in the short term or long term memory

system. Consequently, higher mental processes are also utilized such as thinking, analyzing, etc. as part of the process of semantically organizing the stimulus being recognized. Depending on several factors, meaning is then produced in making sense of the paragraph.

Output. The resulting cognitive, affective, and behavioral disposition of a person can be regarded as the output (Neisser, 1967). As the brain processes the information, the end result of the processing phase is carried from the brain to the different parts of the body through the efferent nervous system (Plotnik & Mollenauer, 1978). Examples of such an output range from the production of internal mental/symbolic images to signify understanding or the lack of it, the actual mental manipulation of the said mental/symbolic images towards a desired result, affective dispositions such as anxiety, happiness, or fear as associated with the processed sensory information, and observable behavioral changes and movements displayed by the person (Medin, Ross & Markman, 2001). A mere frown signifies the output phase as a reaction to an inability to fully comprehend the meaning being conveyed in the earlier paragraphs.

Using a computer as a model in further discussing the information-processing theory descriptive of the human mind, linguistic information or any other information is always processed as it is stored in the memory systems. First of all, the long-term memory system resembles the hard disk of the computer and the short-term memory is like the Random Access Memory system (RAM). The goal is to properly store the information and make sure that it is not easily forgotten or lost in the storage place (Medin, Ross & Markman, 2001). Thus, forming a semantic network facilitates in storing linguistic information that is not isolated from other linguistic information (Kern & Warschauer, 2000). The creation of knowledge networks involves the establishment of linkages among individual linguistic information in a way like the structure-mapping of knowledge (see Gentner, 1983). As more linkages are created the semantic network develops towards the full production of meaningful knowledge structures within the mind (Feldman & Ballard, 1982; Gentner, 1983; Siskind, 2000). In other words, a schematic network is created and

developed that facilitates in the communication process and in enabling a person to derive meaning from everyday experiences that enhances learning (Kern & Warschauer, 2000; Kurcz, 1984).

Retrieval of linguistic information from the various memory systems affects the retention of information and even the production of meaning (Neisser, 1967). In the process of retrieving the information, it entails that the linguistic information is used for the production of meaning and understanding as manifested through any process of communication (Medin, Ross & Markman, 2001). Thus, learning is reinforced through frequent retrieval of the linguistic information from the long-term memory system even towards mastery. Opportunities, therefore, should be created to enable learners' frequent use of the linguistic information that they have stored in their memory systems. Through the output phase, the linguistic information is retrieved to enable the learner to interact with one's environment and enable communication.

Applying the Information-Processing Theory Inside the EFL Classroom: Re-thinking the Taiwan Experience

Using the information-processing theory, the very first concern is in developing the ability of the Taiwanese learner to achieve success in the sensory recognition and pattern encoding of linguistic information. These tasks focus on the different phases of the model. In relation to this, cross-cultural comparisons can also be drawn between the model and the Confucian culture of learning evident in Taiwan (see also, Robertson, 2002 for a discussion on the influence of Confucianism on education as evident in Korea). The Confucian saying, "I hear and I forget, I see and I remember, I do and I understand," definitely has a place in discussing certain points in the information-processing theory and in being sensitive to psychological processes characteristic of the Chinese people.

Yeh (2003) observes that Taiwanese EFL students have a stronger visual tendency as learners compared to their capacity for processing auditory information and even in the

display of conversation skills. It should be remembered though that minimum proficiency in the use of any language ought to be manifest in the development of language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. These skills, in fact, complement one another reflective of the mind's ability for holistic rather than compartmentalized language development.

As Swain (1987) argues, successful information encoding in language acquisition and development is often characterized by an approach that develops skills in listening and speaking and reading and writing across the language curriculum. Emphasis on the co-dependence of each skill is important if an attempt is desired towards whole language development. Sadly, it is only in recent years that most Taiwanese teachers have begun to accept the importance of listening and speaking alongside the traditional emphasis on reading (Huang, 2003a; Peng, 2003; Yiu, 2003). It is also worth mentioning that the tendency now is to emphasize communication-centered skills (see, Liao & Chiang, 2003), which can result to the underdevelopment again of the other language skills.

For most Taiwanese EFL college students, reliance on mere listening to a lecture often result to forgetting and even the obvious difficulty in making sense out of what is being heard. On the other hand, more confidence is exhibited during reading exercises. But this confidence does not necessarily reflect success in comprehending a given reading material (Chang, 2003). Through reading, visual linguistic information is processed faster by Taiwanese EFL learners with the aid of a translation device or dictionary. There is a clear attempt to input the information into the mind but the question remains whether they are effectively able to encode and retain the linguistic information in the different memory systems given their dependence on such devices. In fact, there is an aberrant tendency to passively rely on such devices in the mere translation of words without actively engaging students in the production and retention of meaning. The dependency on the dictionary, therefore, has defeated the purpose of allowing it to serve as a secondary reference. The main storage place for vocabulary word building is the mind as developed within the human memory system. I would like to speculate that

perhaps, the students perceive reading comprehension as an activity undertaken through external meaning production as though the dictionary/translation device is the main repository of knowledge and understanding. These devices are aids or tools and these should not be mistaken as the foundations of genuine understanding. Consequently, Huang (2003) observes that most university students in Taiwan find it difficult to comprehend even general texts in English. Furthermore, they are below the 3,000 word threshold for TL proficiency. The idea of, "I see" may result to "remembering" as in the case whenever they see the Chinese translation of the English word that they are studying, but again, it is still different from the development of meaning or understanding.

On the other hand, since listening is an underdeveloped skill, it is often perceived as more difficult. Listening to auditory linguistic information is compounded by the actual presence of a speaker, which creates anxiety on the part of the listener especially when they try to communicate with a foreigner (Tiangco, 2004). Liao and Chiang (2003) observe that this must have something to do with the keen emphasis on grammar during senior high school even for conversation classes. The students are conscious about syntax but less able to express words that supposedly represent their ideas. This approach has hindered the students from being able to freely use words to represent experiences and ideas since the traditional practice is to emphasize grammar usage even during conversation exercises. This also reflects a consistent preoccupation in teaching students textbook English even in listening courses in order to prepare them for the test culture within the country (see, Chang, 2003). As a result, the students are not able to fully develop a foundational TL semantic structure enough to allow them to understand what they are hearing (Teng, 2003). Auditory linguistic information is assimilated into the mind but not much meaning making is undertaken resulting to a difficulty on the part of the listener to complete the communication loop (Tsai, 2003).

From a theoretical standpoint, the paper argues that EFL teaching should attempt at ensuring that both visual and auditory linguistic information are assimilated and well

encoded into the long-term memory system through elaborate rehearsal and that Taiwanese EFL learners should be made aware that the encoded information can be consciously developed into an organized semantic structure. Specifically within the Taiwanese context, Tsai (2003) also asserts the same importance in integrating cognitive psycholinguistics in enhancing both EFL teaching and learning. The following are more specific considerations:

Learning is Developmental: A Response to Rote Memorization

In consideration of Taiwanese EFL learners within a developmental framework, the ratio of inputted information should be slightly less than the processed information and the information retrieved for use and practice in the output phase. Lesson, course, and curriculum programming plays an important role wherein each element should be situated within a framework sensitive to cognitive development. In Taiwan, there is an aberrant tendency to cram information inwards into the mind of the learners without giving them adequate opportunities to use or apply the said words to form meaningful sentences (Tiangco, 2004). Wang (2003) even observes that some students memorize words without even knowing how to pronounce the said words. All the more, it is in question whether these same students really know the meaning and the different context-specific use of the words. A long list of vocabulary words can usually be found on their notebooks, which they attempt to memorize without truly understanding the meanings of the word. As Peng (2003) avers, Taiwanese teachers are notorious for emphasizing rote memorization.

Such an approach only leads to information overload and the eventual experience of having a mental block as an attempt is undertaken to retrieve the information. Just like a computer the mind stalls in such an event resulting to an impediment in the smooth flow of information processing and retrieval. Moreover, such an approach makes the study of vocabulary words isolated from the production of genuine comprehension and understanding since it only develops lower levels of mental processing. Memorization is

important but more scientifically significant is in understanding how the mind actually processes information by creating semantic structures towards the production of meaning (see Vygotsky, 1986; Barrow, 1990). It is pertinent to develop higher-order cognitive processes that cannot be achieved through rote memorization.

As a response, the frequent use and retrieval of the linguistic information through oral and written communication exercises are more important than overloading college students with vocabulary words to memorize (see also, Honeyfield, 1987). The acquisition of vocabulary words is a lifelong process. At the very least, a sound foundation should be established to permit higher order forms of learning. A developmental language curriculum should emphasize opportunities for frequent retrieval of the encoded linguistic information not just through tests but other creative strategies as well not usually encountered in a traditional Taiwanese classroom. As long as the foundations of TL learning are stable, students can advance step by step into higher order learning (Singleton, 1999). It can be observed that some Taiwanese college and university students majoring in English with low proficiency of the TL are enrolled in highly content-based courses even on their freshman year. Other students in their junior or senior year have to grapple with highly-specialized courses such as World Mythology, Linguistics, Principles of Teaching, etc. using thick textbooks in English, which they are not really able to understand. Consequently, they learn these content-based courses with teachers using the native language as a medium of instruction. As this happens, the issue goes back to learning the English language using the Chinese language and its worldviews.

Failure in providing stability in the foundations of language development can result to difficulties in enabling the learner to fully advance in their study of the English language. Such difficulties are clearly manifested in the inability of the learner to achieve success in using skills in listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The proper development of these skills is held back in the process. As these skills are underdeveloped, the learners' confidence judgment in using these necessary skills is also

consequently affected. It is worse when the learners' EFL semantic structure collapses due to high anxiety often resulting to an inability to display even basic proficiency (see, Liao, 1999). A considerable number of Taiwanese EFL learners tend to engage in self-defeating thoughts truly signifying the lack of confidence (see also, Wang, 2003). As also previously mentioned, most of them easily get intimidated with foreign native speakers or peers who display EFL/ESL proficiency, which often adds to the experience of anxiety (see, Cheng, 1997).

Weak language foundations consequently result to inadequate language learning that hinders TL learning advancement. And yet, competitive demands are in place for the Taiwanese to face if they would like better career opportunities through the mastery of English. To cope with such a predicament, the Taiwanese spend more by studying in cram schools, which is phenomenally popular in the country (Liu, 2002). Most of them turn to these privately owned language center for their EFL learning needs wherein the presence of foreign native speakers is highly valued. A perception has been created that successful EFL learning is best achieved through the language centers and not in formal schooling. This shouldn't be and this is a wake up call in regards to the effectiveness of the current strategies being employed within the different formal learning institutions (see also, Thompson, 2003).

Learning is an Organized Activity: Enhancing by Organizing the Memory Systems

Since it was mentioned that knowledge production involves semantic organization, then some housekeeping can prove vital in the learning process. Just imagine a messy room as the memory systems of the human mind and the things scattered around the room as elemental information. Retrieval is definitely going to be difficult if in the first place one does not know where to find the needed information or even determine where to start looking. Therefore, it is salient to organize and to learn strategies in effectively storing and retrieving information (Hong & Huang, 1998). Learning techniques and strategies to improve the retention of the linguistic information in the memory systems

are equally as important as studying listening, writing, speaking or reading (Huang, 1997). These techniques such as mnemonics, elaborate rehearsal and the development of psychological scripts are crucial in ensuring that the linguistic information being studied by the students are permanently stored in the hard disk of the human mind (see, Medin, Ross & Markman, 2001 for a discussion on the various cognitive techniques used for enhancing and organizing the memory systems). Although Teng (2003) noticed no significant difference between Taiwanese EFL students who received listening strategies similar to the techniques mentioned and students who did not receive training in the strategies as measured by their listening performance, it can be argued that memory systems organization does not take place as a one shot deal. Huang (1997), Hong and Huang (1998), and Yeh (2003) have a different set of observations with their Taiwanese research samples in contrast to Teng's (2003) research outcomes. It can be argued then that enhancing the memory system is part of developmental learning that emphasizes consistency and theoretical consolidation across the different courses encompassed by a developmental curriculum.

Asides from this, organizing the different memory systems used to store linguistic information is also important to facilitate in the retrieval process and in minimizing interference among inter-language information. Paying attention to the organization of the encoding-storage-retrieval processes facilitates in minimizing "Chinglish" phenomenon. By means of developing and organizing independent language memory systems such as an English memory system and a separate Chinese-Mandarin or Taiwanese memory system, any linguistic information that is encoded can be filtered for storage in the most appropriate memory system. Thus, bilingual or multi-lingual communication can be undertaken by retrieving information from the particular memory system the information has been stored in. Purposively developing each memory system independent of the other can minimize inter-language problems (Selinker, 1992).

Learning is a Conscious Endeavor: The Role of Metacognition

The metacognitive domain is another important aspect of language development that both Taiwanese students and teachers should be aware of (Yeh, 2003). Metacognition refers to learning about the learning process (Bernardo, 1998; Medin, Ross & Markman, 2001). Taiwanese students should be made aware as to how they process information to enable them to understand how they think (Tian, 2004). By doing so, the students shall be equipped to regulate their own learning and seek strategies that they think best responds to their learning needs as they grapple with the English language. This awareness facilitates in enabling both students and teachers to understand their own learning styles and strategies (Taylor, 1990). Moreover, it helps teachers and students understand individual differences and similarities in the processing of information (Huang, 1997). Developing metacognitive awareness can also be undertaken in relation to the earlier section on, enhancing by organizing the memory systems. Consciousness can be developed regarding the possibility of creating a memory system for English study, which is apart from their Chinese domain knowledge. Theoretically, it should be noted that these memory systems do not necessarily function independent from one another. Metacognitive awareness for this part focuses more on a consciousness of memory housekeeping. It should also be remembered that the application of metacognitive theory is not only for this area alone. There are other applications as well such as awareness of language learning strategies, learning styles, environmental factors that facilitate learning, etc. Specifically, Chen (1998) investigated the area of metamotivation in learning English among Taiwanese students. On the other hand, Chang (1998) studied the different learning styles of Taiwanese students. Hence, helping students develop metacognitive awareness encompasses different applications in the learning process.

Learning has a Heart: Understanding the Affective Domain

The affective domain of language learning is also important (Bernardo, 1998). Emotions have a way of either facilitating or hampering learning (Krashen, 1987). The

presence of emotional anxiety keeps us on our feet ever alert to respond to the external environment. Too much anxiety, on the other hand, significantly blocks the learning process (Taylor, 1990). Anxious learners are not able to assimilate information nor are they able to retrieve the needed information to perform a task (Liao, 1999). Consequently, the presence of anxiety influences the learners' motivation to learn and the very process of learning itself (Krashen, 2003). Su (2004) mentions, learning English ought to be pleasurable in sustaining the motivation of Taiwanese students to learn EFL. If college students often encounter unrewarding learning experiences, it is not surprising that their interest to study is affected in the process. This assertion is definitely applicable to Taiwanese students as also observed by Cheng (1997), Chen (1998), Liao (1999), and Tiangco (2004).

In relation to this, it is important to equally emphasize an atmosphere of collaboration among the students instead of competition (see, Baker, 2003). Academic competitiveness is a trait observable among some students given the demands that Taiwanese parents place on their children. Research also indicates that this push from the parents often result to school phobia and much experience of study-related anxiety (Cheung, 1986). Although competitiveness is a prized trait, the sense of academic achievement among the students should not be devoid of developing a nurturing educational environment. By creating an atmosphere conducive to cooperative learning, the potentials of the students can be better realized. Furthermore, there seems to be a need to re-orient the achievement expectations that parents have towards their children. The teachers, on the other hand, should learn how to connect with their language learners more (Horwitz, 1999).

Behavioral Psychology and Social-Environmental Learning: Implications to EFL Learning in Taiwan

As equally important perspectives in psychology, the behavioral perspective and social learning theory cannot be considered as outdated especially in consideration of its

implications to education (Bustos & Espiritu, 1996). There is a clear use for the behavioral perspective other than its application in the practice of rote memorization, audio-lingual repetition, and the traditional behavioral approach to role-playing. Given that learning can be understood in different ways as reflected in the multiplicity of educational theories, the behavioral standpoint specifically emphasizes conditioning, reinforcement, stimulus response, and the strong influence of both social interaction and the environment as determinants of learning outcomes. In this perspective, the use of language is viewed as a learned behavior (Clarke & Silberstein, 1987; Wolfson, 1998).

Within this framework, weak TL learning can be understood as a form of faulty learning. If a student attempting to learn a particular language fails in doing so, the behavioral perspective views the shortcoming in terms of an inadequacy in the language training being provided or certain learned behaviors on the part of both students and teachers that hinder the learning process. As an example, the association between the linguistic sign and the thing being signified has not been strongly forged. Poor stimulus-response conditioning can also typify students who give the wrong response for a given linguistic stimulus such as saying, “I am fine” when asked, “How is the weather today?” Furthermore, the lack of proper learning reinforcement is another consideration. Students may passively commit grammatical errors in both written and oral communication since some of these errors are tolerated within the learning environment given the absence of a reward or punishment system.

On the part of social-environmental factors that hinder the learning process, poor modeling on the part of the teachers and the lack of a social learning environment that approximates the environment wherein the TL is used are important social learning considerations (Williams & Burden, 1997). As the development of a first or native language is largely a social activity undertaken by the native speakers of the language within their social and environmental context, it proves helpful to manipulate aspects of the EFL learners’ environment to approximate an environment wherein the TL is used.

In connection to this, behavioral modification can be introduced in the learning process to manipulate learning outcomes to achieve desired results (Bustos & Espiritu, 1996). The modification process specifically pertains to undoing or unlearning improper behaviors that hinder the process of language learning. Doing so includes modifying learning conditions such as the educational system and the elements that constitute this system. By working on the elements external to the learners themselves such as the teachers, the learning environment, and the other important aspects of the educational system, the modifications undertaken indirectly trickle down as positive learning outcomes for EFL students (Williams & Burden, 1997; Wolfson, 1998). The following are the specific implications of both the behavioral and social-environmental perspectives to EFL learning in Taiwan:

Social Learning and Emphasizing English as a Medium of Communication

Improving Teacher EFL Proficiency for the Benefit of the Students: A Social-Behavioral Perspective

As Oladejo (2003) observes, since some Taiwanese teachers themselves handling English courses are not communicably proficient enough, not much can also be expected from the students. This is particularly observable among teachers in the rural areas of the country given the unequal distribution of educational resources and learning opportunities in spite of the fact that Taiwan is a relatively small country with a very progressive economy. Although this is the case, it does not necessarily mean that nothing can be done to improve the situation as the Ministry of Education has been seeking ways to augment the current concerns that befall the system.

It can be argued that teachers from colleges and universities in the metropolitan areas of Taiwan display better proficiency compared to their counterparts from the rural areas. In a study that involved selected Taiwanese college and university teachers who belong to different Applied Foreign Languages Departments, Chang (2002) found out

that most of these teachers expressed the readiness and willingness to handle English conversation courses. If this is the case, then it is very important to provide Taiwanese teachers every opportunity to further practice their English communication skills. Regardless of the location – whether urban or rural, the paper argues that more opportunities should be created to strengthen the use of English as a medium of instruction and as a medium of communication among students and teachers not only during EFL classes but outside formal instruction as well.

In connection to this, opportunities should also be institutionalized to provide Taiwanese teachers handling English courses more time to communicate with their foreign colleagues to enhance their English skills. Weekly professional activities such as discussion groups, research forums, and collaborative researches involving the Taiwanese and foreign faculty members are effective strategies for creating such a necessary environment. In the process, the Taiwanese teachers are able to sharpen their English communication skills, which in return shall be beneficial to the students.

Hence, an environment of collaboration instead of individualism is instrumental. As Baker (2003) argues for the importance of collaboration among students, I would like to argue for strengthened collaboration among faculty members even at the tertiary level in spite of individual busy schedules. Furthermore, given the growing cross-cultural and sub-cultural diversity in the foreign languages departments in Taiwan, it is a challenge to make the apparent cultural differences work to the advantage of the department, among colleagues, and especially the students. Although Chinese culture at times perceives the presence of foreigners as a nuisance (see, Bond & Hwang, 1986 for a discussion on the social psychology of Chinese people), the flux of foreign teachers signifies the need to strengthen cross-cultural cooperation. On the part of the Taiwanese/Chinese, mutual cooperation and tolerance can go a long way in providing successful learning outcomes for all the members of the system. On the other hand, foreigners should remember to always exercise sensitivity and even restraint in confronting cross-cultural or sub-cultural idiosyncrasies in the workplace. By developing an organizational attitude and workplace

atmosphere that emphasizes and rewards cooperation, some foreigners need not be looked upon as a nuisance nor should some of their local counterparts be regarded as uncooperative.

Improving the EFL Proficiency of the Students: Re-thinking the "English Only Policy"

and The Use of English as a Medium of Instruction for the Taiwanese

For most Taiwanese tertiary students, the study of English is usually limited to the formal discussions inside the classroom and some occasional extra-curricular activities that require students to speak the language. Students often perceive the classroom as a place for evaluation, which tend to create anxiety especially among those who lack the confidence to speak.

Opportunities to communicate in English outside the classroom can be very beneficial to the students. Particularly, if both foreign and the Taiwanese English teachers make it a habit to communicate with their students using English during informal encounters, then the use of the TL can be reinforced. An EFL atmosphere is strengthened between the students, the teachers, and even perhaps among the students themselves.

Taiwanese teachers handling English courses have a bigger responsibility in reinforcing the use of the TL since they have more opportunities to interact with the students compared to the foreign faculty members. It is equally important to emphasize that doing so is not simply the responsibility of faculty members handling courses that involve oral communication. All faculty members, as much as they can, should be enjoined to develop the skills of the students inside and outside the regular classroom.

Perhaps, this assertion may not be new especially in consideration of the usual, "Speak English Only Policy" that most schools try to implement. And yet, it is in

question whether such a policy does exist among Taiwanese tertiary institutions or whether it is successfully being implemented. The paper presumes that success or non-success hinges on whether both students and teachers truly understand the theoretical considerations and foundations of such a policy other than telling the students that such a policy is being implemented. There is a tendency to pay lip service to the policy without truly understanding its implications to the psychology of EFL development. Therefore, creating awareness, understanding, and advocacy for the policy plays an important role within the EFL educational system. It can also be rather convincing to present to the students that such language learning strategies are actually the application of different theories important in the field of EFL, ESL, and ESP. In relation to the previous discussions, doing so relates to developing metacognitive awareness.

A bolder leap is to consider the gradual teaching of general education courses being taken by students majoring in EFL using English as a medium of instruction. This assertion is not without issues and criticisms. As far as the use of English as a medium of instruction in Hong Kong, Herbert (2002) observes difficulties among students particularly in understanding the textbooks and reference materials used in class.

In Taiwan, the very first concern is in regards to the preparedness of the teachers and second is in relation to the preparedness of the students. This is an attempt worth taking if an eventual shift is foreseen from EFL to ESL. As far as long term planning is concerned, every college and university should start preparing general education faculty members who can teach content courses in English. Adequate teacher training should be allotted for this task alongside the preparation and publication of a simplified English version of the readings and lecture discussions to be used in class. There shouldn't be a reliance on Western developed materials and English books. Instead, a challenge pervades to indigenize English into the Taiwanese culture and not to simply assimilate foreign cultures as its own amidst the country's effort towards globalization. Hence, teaching modules across different subject areas such as mathematics, natural sciences, human sciences, history, etc. should be developed that reflects Taiwanese values and culture.

As Cates (1998) mentions, it is important for the Taiwanese to understand global issues and how language learning can contribute in realizing a better world. In spite of the need to prepare the Taiwanese for globalization, it is an equally important challenge to ensure the strengthening of their national identity as a people and their distinctiveness from the Chinese. Joseph (1999) argues for the need to foster a strong linguistic identity on the part of the Taiwanese people.

Asides from this, repeatedly emphasizing and reinforcing a set of vocabulary words throughout the curriculum are important challenges in developing the EFL program. The purpose is to provide the students frequent exposure to these vocabulary words to reinforce learning. Mastery is the key element given the repeated exposure to the stimulus being learned (Honeyfield, 1987). The students can be afforded the opportunity to read, listen, and speak the vocabulary words not just in one class but in other classes as well. Most importantly, vocabulary words should be connected to the lived experiences of the Taiwanese other than just being dense words decontextualized of true meaning. By doing so, the use of English as a medium of instruction is enhanced since behavioral programming is integrated in the process.

Creating an English Friendly Environment

The educational environment of the Applied Foreign Languages Department ought to be English friendly. Since the main thrust of most of the AFL departments in Taiwan focuses on English teaching and learning, then it is important that the atmosphere itself in the department facilitates in the learning process. An effort should be undertaken to translate more organizational information from Chinese to English or to have a bilingual set-up. If the goal is to create an environment conducive to the TL study, then both intradepartmental and interdepartmental communications should shift towards the use of English as a medium of organizational communication especially for those majoring in this area.

It is also important to institutionalize extra-curricular activities that promote the use of the TL. As mentioned, learning the TL should not be limited to formal classroom instruction. Extra-curricular activities such as student clubs, organizing a newsletter group, organizing a school drama group or theater guild, etc. are all important strategies in creating an EFL friendly environment that allows the students to enjoy themselves. As an example, an acoustic guitar club can be organized for student musicians to learn popular acoustic songs that are in English. Moreover, these students can develop their EFL skills further by eventually composing their own songs and lyrics. Peer English tutoring groups can also be established. Outreach projects such as tutoring a minority or marginalized group or even elementary students can be undertaken by tertiary EFL students.

Re-Thinking the Traditional Role-Playing Activity: A Cognitive-Behavioral Approach

Role-playing is also definitely an important aspect in the development of English language skills. In Taiwan, the traditional role-playing approach usually develops the reading and listening skills of the students involved in the dialogue being role-played. They are usually tasked to either read or act out a conversation script from the book. The problem though with such an approach is that it can be rather mechanistic especially if listening comprehension and high-order processing are not emphasized.

As a modification, role-playing should be more oriented towards the cognitive-behavioral perspective. The cognitive aspect focuses more in developing the problem-solving skills and creativity of the students, which are at times left out in the traditional role-playing approach. For college and university students, I suggest the use of what can be called as Spontaneous Situational Role-Playing (SSRP) with the aim of making the students retrieve previously learned linguistic information through guided free talk among the students themselves or with the teacher. The approach is characterized by describing to the students a particular situation that they are going to role-play. The

students are given the task to think and anticipate the communication patterns accounted for by the situation. This is in contrast to the traditional approach wherein the students have a ready-made conversation script that they simply read out. In the process of utilizing the SSRP, the students develop their own communication patterns by writing down their own script based on a scenario or the situation given by the teacher. There shouldn't be heavy reliance on the conversation scripts found on the books of the students so that the students can be taught to be imaginative by allowing them to make their own scripts.

From a theoretical vantage point, the approach places the students in a situation wherein they need to retrieve previously encoded information and exercise creativity in the transfer of learning to respond to the situation being role-played. Such an approach develops skills in listening, speaking and thinking. More importantly, it enables the practice of spoken language through the use of guided free talk and the enhancement of creativity on the part of the learners.

Recommendations

Based on the earlier discussions regarding the contemporary psychological perspectives and its implications to Taiwanese EFL learning, recommendations are presented for the following areas: a) Curriculum Planning and Implementation and b) Teacher Training.

Curriculum Planning and Implementation

Curriculum planning and development plays a very significant role in the educational process. The mandate of any educational program lies in its curriculum. Hence, the heart of whatever efforts there are to teach students EFL should be consolidated within the language curriculum and consequent language policies (Judd, 1987). A language curriculum provides the over-all direction for the individual language

courses taught in a particular program. More importantly, the language curriculum articulates the end goal of the educational process and the steps by which to achieve success in developing the potentials of the students as language learners.

Often times, tertiary education is left with more autonomy to govern its own curriculum and programs compared to both elementary and secondary education. Less control is exercised over the learning process, which can result to the dissipation of a clear purposiveness within the tertiary educational system of a particular institution. First of all, a language curriculum should be developmental in orientation taking into consideration both language and cognitive development and the present developmental capacity of the language learners. Second, a theoretical paradigm should support and consolidate the language curriculum, language policies, and the teaching strategies. This is meant to provide more organization to the different aspects of the curriculum. Although the selection of what may be considered as the most effective paradigm is a contentious issue, nevertheless, I would like to argue for the viability of the cognitive-behavioral paradigm in understanding the educational process. Third, an indigenized language curriculum should reflect the highest values of Taiwanese society and the values necessary to equip Taiwanese students at the tertiary level to become socially responsible individuals with a sense of national pride ready for internationalization. At the same time, it is also important for the language curriculum to develop their sensitivity to differences across cultures, and yet, strengthen the students' sense of being a Taiwanese who respects and accepts other cultures.

Teacher Training

I firmly believe that at the forefront of developing Taiwan into a society proficient in using the English language are the Taiwanese teachers and not the foreign teachers. As of now, much work has to be done to improve the English proficiency not only of the Taiwanese teachers handling English courses but also the other teachers as well who are handling general education subjects. The role of foreign teachers should be limited to

temporary support and the long-term vision should be geared in developing the full potentials of the present Taiwanese teaching force. I have observed that much of the training undertaken by foreign teachers is for the students. As far as long-term planning is concerned, improving the EFL/ESL competencies of most of the tertiary educators in Taiwan shall pave the way for the emergence of a bilingual/multilingual language system among tertiary schools. First, native teachers outnumber the foreign teachers. Taiwanese teachers have the bulk of classroom time. By using a multiplier effect, foreign teachers who focus on developing the competencies of the Taiwanese teachers are able to indirectly develop the language skills of more students. The full utilization of the professional resources available among educational institutions is a must and more importantly is to instill a culture of collaboration among the foreigners and the native Taiwanese to dispel any form of competition (see also, Oladejo, 2003). EFL learning is a shared responsibility among the teachers handling different courses. Although the burden of teaching English is placed on the shoulders of the English teachers, reinforcement of learning is achieved through a collaborative environment that involves all other members of the school community.

Conclusion

The paper argues that tertiary education has an important role in assisting students acquire, develop, and more importantly to refine their skills in using the English language. Taiwanese students regardless of their major or the discipline that they are pursuing should be given the same opportunities to develop their EFL skills to enable them to become more professionally and globally competitive. In doing so, the author proposes for the use of contemporary perspectives in psychology as a consolidating framework in the development and implementation of the language curriculum. Taiwanese students do not have to spend so much money and time in learning the English language by going to cram schools or business-oriented language centers. The burden of

ensuring optimum language learning and development should be undertaken by the formal educational system. Therefore, a re-orientation of the system presents a clear challenge not only to the administration but all the faculty members who are part of the system as well. Dependency on foreign teachers should not be created but instead collaboration can be instilled in developing the full potential of the Taiwanese teaching force with the vision of enabling them to bring about positive EFL development among the students.

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Title:

Nursing Pre-professionals' Medical Terminology Learning Strategies

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Abstract:

This study is concerned with the learning of medical terminology by nursing pre-professionals in Taiwan. It aims to investigate the use of learning strategies in relation to medical vocabulary use. The subjects under study included 89 Taiwanese college nursing majors. Participants' mid-term scores and medical terminology learning strategy questionnaire were used to inquire learners' use of learning strategies. The results of this study indicated that students in general prefer to use written repetition, verbal repetition, bilingual dictionary strategies. In addition, the students most proficient in medical terminology used various kinds of strategies more often than the less proficient students. Implications of these and other findings are discussed and suggestions are made regarding the teaching of learning strategies in medical terminology courses.

Key Words
medical terminology, bilingual dictionary strategies, L2 vocabulary learning strategies

Abstract

This study is concerned with the learning of medical terminology by nursing pre-professionals in Taiwan. It aims to investigate the use of learning strategies in relation to medical vocabulary use. The subjects under study included 89 Taiwanese college nursing majors. Participants' mid-term scores and medical terminology learning strategy questionnaire were used to inquire learners' use of learning strategies. The results of this study indicated that students in general prefer to use written repetition, verbal repetition, bilingual dictionary strategies. In addition, the students most proficient in medical terminology used various kinds of strategies more often than the less proficient students. Implications of these and other findings are discussed and suggestions are made regarding the teaching of learning strategies in medical terminology courses.

Introduction

Of interest for the present study is the learning of medical terminology by nursing pre-professionals in Taiwan. We are particularly interested in learners' strategy use in the learning of medical terminology. Medical language is the language employed by doctors and nurses in writing medical records and communicating with each other. Doctors need to learn to read and write medical terminology in L2 to complete hospital admission notes, diagnosis, and orders, which, later on, nurses must read, follow in order to carry out nursing interventions and take care of their patients. For these medical and nursing professionals, their first step to access medical language is to learn medical words.

In Taiwan, nursing pre-professionals are required to take the course "Medical Terminology" to meet the demands of their future jobs. Insofar as the researcher knows, the nursing pre-professionals of the nursing college where the researcher is teaching have to take Medical Terminology course from second to fifth year. Every semester, more than

one third of nursing pre-professionals fail their Medical Terminology course. In order to help teachers to overcome the challenge of teaching medical terminology and help nursing pre-professionals learn medical terminology more effectively, the researcher is motivated to explore the learning of medical terminology.

In view of Gylys and Wedding (1983), medical terminology is a specific terminology which is used to achieve the purpose of communication in the health care field efficiently and precisely, such as in writing diagnosis and nurses' notes. Basically, medical terminology has two characteristics. First, except for the one-syllable words, most medical words are made of roots and affixes. The affixes can be classified into prefix and suffix. Any single medical term has at least one root determining its meaning and one or more prefixes or suffixes to change the part of speech or change the meaning of the word. Teachers generally use this specific word formation to help students deal with these words. But, recognizing the word parts used to build medical terms still seems to be a major obstacle to students' learning medical terms. Moreover, using word parts occasionally has pitfalls in guessing word meaning from context. Schmitt (2000) warned when students use word parts as an initial word-guessing strategy, they must be careful to check the surrounding context to see if their guess makes sense. Haynes and Baker (1993) also found that students sometimes made an incorrect guess about what an unknown word meant in a given text, and then stuck with that erroneous meaning in other context even though the surrounding context made clear it make no sense.

Second, medical vocabulary is an open system with a large number of low-frequency words and newly created words. Teaching and learning all the words seem to be an impossible task. Hence, teaching learners' vocabulary learning strategies for inferring the word meanings is more efficient than teaching every vocabulary item encountered. As Nation (1994) suggested, teaching students strategies is especially important when it comes to dealing with low frequency words. Indeed, following Nation, Schmitt also suggested that high-frequency words should probably be taught, whereas learning low-frequency words will require strategies for determining their meaning. Could learners use appropriate learning strategies based on the characteristics of medical

words, such as guessing from context and using word parts when learning medical words? Chamot and Kupper (1989) indicated that high proficiency language learners know how to use appropriate strategies to reach their learning goals. Oxford (1985) asserted that successful learners use a wide range of strategies which are appropriate for their learning tasks. Do high proficiency students use different strategy patterns from those used by low proficiency students as revealed by the above-mentioned studies? To get more insights on the use of learning strategies of successful students, the strategy patterns used by successful and unsuccessful learners are also the focus of attention in the present study.

Research Questions

The primary purpose of this study is to explore the learning of medical terminology by Taiwanese nursing pre-professionals. It focuses on the frequency of use of strategy by nursing pre-professionals in learning medical terminology and to identify the strategies related to success or failure in learning the target. The secondary aim was to describe the strategy use pattern by different proficiency levels.

In brief, this study attempts to seek answers to the following research questions:

1. What are the strategies used most and least frequently by the learners in the study?
2. Which strategies are used most often by the students who are the most proficient in medical terminology?
3. Does the overall medical terminology learning strategy use vary across different proficiency levels?
4. Does the use of six categories of medical terminology learning strategy vary across different proficiency levels?

Literature Review

In order to get more insights on the study of medical words learning strategies, this section will first review two recent studies of L2 vocabulary learning strategies and then studies of individual medical terminology strategies.

Fan (2003) surveyed a sample of 1067 students at 7 institutes in Hong Kong to examine the relationship among frequency of use, perceived usefulness, and actual usefulness of L2 vocabulary learning strategies. The findings of Fan's study indicated that the students used the strategies for reviewing and consolidating their knowledge of known words and perceived them as useful, and that they had a preference for dictionary strategies. The most proficient students depended much more on sources, guessing, dictionary, and known words strategies than the less proficient students. Regarding the discrepancies between frequency of use and perceived usefulness in learning L2 vocabulary, the findings revealed the complexity involved in strategy use. For example, even though students reported using more guessing strategies, they did not perceive these strategies as useful. In contrast, though the students seldom used management strategies, they thought these strategies were useful. Schmitt (1997) conducted a large-scale study in Japan to assess which vocabulary learning strategies the learners actually used and how helpful they believed these strategies to be. Schmitt found that the learners used more repetition and dictionary strategies and considered them more useful than other strategies. Semantic grouping and imagery strategies were less used and regarded the least useful. There was also some evidence that more advanced learners tended to use more complex and meaning-focus strategies than less advanced learners. Whether these findings are supported by the learning of technical terminology in the field of English For Specific Purposes (ESP) needs to be further explored in related research. This is exactly what the current study is going to do.

A number of studies have sought to examine the effectiveness of some specific strategies for learning medical terminology (Fang, 1985; Troutt, 1987; Dunkle, 1983).

Two studies that are relevant to the current study will be reviewed here.

A study by Fang (1985) investigated the success of two medical terminology learning strategies: (1) the analysis of affixes and roots and (2) finding the relationship between sound and script. The strategy 'to analyze affixes and roots' engages learners to analyze word structures. For example, in order to learn the medical term 'endocarditis', the internal inflammation of the heart, learners must learn to analyze this word into endo- (prefix, within), card (root, heart), and -itis (suffix, inflammation). On the other hand, the strategy 'finding the relationship between sound and script' involves attempts to find the relationships between pronunciation and spelling of medical words. Fang's study has provided some initial evidence to suggest that the use of analyzing affixes and roots promotes more medical terminology learning than the method of finding the relationship between sound and script.

Troutt (1987) investigated how method of instruction for college students, keyword versus traditional was related to acquisition and retention of medical terminology in a classroom setting and in individualized learning. Five intact classes containing a total of 120 college students were taught three lessons of medical terminology by one or more of three methods: traditional, keyword in a classroom and key word in individualized learning. The results indicated that the class taught to use the keyword strategy retained significantly more words than the class taught by a traditional method for initial acquisition of medical terminology. However, there was no significant difference between traditional and keyword methods for long-term range retention of medical words at four and eight weeks. No difference was found in medical word scores between a keyword/classroom method versus a keyword/individualized method for either acquisition or retention. This study has provided empirical evidence to present the effectiveness of keyword method for initial acquisition of medical terminology.

Both Fang and Troutt focused on the effectiveness of two strategies, however, two learning strategies alone are not enough for us to get the whole picture of how students learn medical terms more effectively. In order to gain an overall picture of the optimal use of learning strategies for medical terminology learning, studies that deal with all the strategies as a group are a complement to Fang's and Troutt's approaches.

Methodology

Subjects

Subjects in the current study were 89 female nursing majors from two second-year classes at Chang Gung Institute of Technology, Taiwan. Medical terminology is a required subject in this five-year nursing college from second to fifth year, so all of these participants were taking Medical Terminology course. The class met one hour a week.

Instrument

The test for evaluating the subjects' proficiency level in the current study was the Medical Terminology mid-term exam made by nursing teachers in the school. This is a curriculum-specific achievement test, rather than a general proficiency test. There were 50 questions in total in the test. Subjects were required to write medical words on the basis of the English definitions of each test item.

The instrument employed for collecting data on strategy is the medical terminology learning strategies questionnaire developed by the researcher. The categories of medical terminology were based on Schmitt's (1997) taxonomy for studying vocabulary strategies. Subjects were required to answer questions on their strategy use on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 ("never or almost never true") to 5 ("always or almost always true of me.") The questionnaire, written monolingually in Chinese, was made of two sections. Section one contained five questions, the purpose of which was to collect such background information as subjects' English proficiency, mid-term score of medical

terminology. Section two included 42 items grouped into six categories of medical terminology learning strategies:

I. Discovery strategies

1. Determination strategies for discovering new word's meaning by guessing and using reference materials.
2. Social strategies for discovering new word's meaning by asking someone who knows.

II. Consolidation strategies

1. Social strategies for learning and practicing vocabulary, such as cooperative group and interacting with native speakers.
2. Memory strategies, such as grouping, imagery, rhyming, moving physically, and reviewing in a structured way.
3. Cognitive strategies, such as repetition and using mechanical means to study medical terminology.
4. Metacognitive strategies for controlling and evaluating one's own learning, searching for practice opportunities and planning for learning tasks.

The questionnaire was tested and revised following a pilot study conducted on 48 nursing pre-professionals with status similar to the participants in the study.

Survey Procedure

All data were collected after the midterm week of the 2003 spring semester. Before the questionnaire was administered, a brief explanation of the purpose of the study was provided to the subjects. Subjects were advised that responses would not affect their academic grades. Subjects were also told that they had to answer in terms of how well the statement of each item in the questionnaire describes them. The answered questionnaires were collected right after the subjects completed them.

Data Analysis

In order to identify the most and least used strategies, the average mean score for each of the 42 strategies was calculated and rank ordered. Significant variation in mean strategy use across the entire strategies by proficiency (the independent variable) was determined using a one-way analysis variance (ANOVA), as were differences in mean strategy use in the six strategy categories (the dependent variables) as related to the independent variable. A standard post hoc test, the Scheffe, was employed to determine where specific significant differences lay. The probability level of significance for one-way ANOVA is set at .05. After the statistical procedures, the relevant discussion based on the three research questions is presented.

Each subject's responses to the medical terminology test were given scores. A correct answer is assigned 2 points and incorrect answer is given no point. The total possible points were 100. Based on the test scores, subjects were grouped into three proficiency levels. The high-level group refers to those who score higher than 80, and the low-level group refers to those who score lower than 60. Those who score between 80 and 60 belong to the intermediate-level group. Consequently, 36 subjects were defined as high-level learners, 28 intermediate-level ones and 25 low-level ones.

Results

Table 1

Most Used and Least Used Strategies by All Subjects

Item	Rank	Category	Strategy	Mean
29	1	Cognitive	Written repetition	4.34
28	2	Cognitive	Verbal repetition	4.02
5	3	Determination	Bilingual dictionary	3.84
33	4	Cognitive	Vocabulary section in textbook	3.76
32	5	Cognitive	Take notes in class	3.76
8	38	Social(consolidating)	Ask teacher for synonym of new medical word	1.52
35	39	Cognitive	Put medical words on physical objects	1.43
11	40	Social(consolidating)	Discover new meaning from group activity	1.36
34	41	Cognitive	Listen to tape of word lists	1.31
9	42	Social (discovery)	Ask teacher for a new sentence including the new medical word	1.19

In answering research question one, we look at the strategies used most and least frequently by the learners. Table 1 lists the most and least preferred strategies for all subjects. Results reveal that item 29 (4.34, written repetition) has the highest average frequency, and next is item 28 (4.02, verbal repetition), followed by item 5 (3.84, using bilingual dictionary), item 33 (3.76, vocabulary section in the textbook) and item 32 (3.76, take notes in class). The least preferred strategies are item 9 (1.19, ask teacher for a new sentence including the new medical word), and next is item 34 (1.31, listen to tape of word lists), followed by item 11 (1.36, discover new meaning from group activity), item 35 (1.43, put medical words on physical objects), item 8 (1.52, ask teacher for synonym of new medical word).

Table 2 indicates that the most preferred strategies for high-level learners are item 33 (4.53, vocabulary section in the textbook), item 32 (4.42, take notes in class), item 5 (4.25, bilingual dictionary), item 28 (4.19, verbal repetition), and item 29 (4.07, written repetition). The least preferred strategies are item 13 (1.17, interact with foreign medical staff), item 9 (1.17, ask teacher for a sentence including the new medical word),

item 11(1.28, discover new meaning from group activity), item 34 (1.31, listen to tape of word lists), and item 35 (1.36, put medical words on physical objects).

Table 2

Most Used and Least Used Strategies by High-level Learners

Item	Rank	Category	Strategy	Mean
33	1	Cognitive	Vocabulary section in textbook	4.53
32	2	Cognitive	Take notes in class	4.42
5	3	Determination	Bilingual dictionary	4.25
28	4	Cognitive	Verbal repetition	4.19
29	5	Cognitive	Written repetition	4.07
35	38	Cognitive	Put medical words on physical objects	1.36
34	39	Cognitive	Listen to tape of word lists	1.31
11	40	Social(consolidating)	Discover new meaning from group activity	1.28
9	41	Social (Discovery)	Ask teacher for a sentence including the medical word	1.17
13	42	Social(Consolidating)	Interact with foreign medical staff	1.17

Table 3

Most-used and Least-used Strategies by Low-level Learners

Item	Rank	Category	Strategy	Mean
29	1	Cognitive	Written repetition	4.04
28	2	Cognitive	Verbal repetition	3.76
10	3	Social(Consolidating)	Ask classmates for meaning	3.60
4	4	Determination	Guess from textual Context	3.28
5	5	Determination	Bilingual dictionary	3.28
35	38	Cognitive	Put medical words on physical objects	1.52
20	39	Memory	Use new medical word in sentences	1.52
34	40	Cognitive	Listen to tape of word lists	1.40
9	41	Social (Discovery)	Ask teacher for a sentence including the medical word	1.16
13	42	Social(Consolidating)	Interact with foreign medical staff	1.12

The most preferred strategy for low-level learners are, as shown in Table 3, item 29 (4.04, written repetition), item 28 (3.76, verbal repetition), item 10 (3.60, ask classmates for meaning), item 4 (3.28, guess from textual context); and item 5 (3.28, bilingual dictionary). The least preferred strategies are item 13 (1.12, interact with foreign medical staff), item 9 (1.16, ask teacher for a sentence including the new medical word), item 34 (1.40, listen to tape of word lists), item 20 (1.52, use new word in sentences), item 35 (1.52, put medical words on physical objects).

In answering research question three, we looked at nursing pre-professionals' overall strategy use. Participants recorded an overall strategy use mean of 2.59. Thus, strategies are "sometimes used" by all participants. Additionally, the means of strategy use increase according to proficiency levels (means were 2.34, 2.50 and 2.83). Overall strategy use, according to the ANOVA results in Table 4, varied significantly ($F = 8.65$, $p < .05$) across different proficiency levels. The post-hoc Scheffe test showed no significant difference for overall strategy use between intermediate and low levels, but significant differences did occur between high and each of intermediate and low levels. Although variation by proficiency was significant, all means fell between 2.5 and 2.8, the range which Oxford (1990) defines as medium use.

Table 4

Summary of Variation in Use of Overall Strategy

High (N=36)		Inter (N=28)		Low (N=25)		F	Significance
Mean	2.83	Mean	2.50	Mean	2.34	8.65	*p<.05
SD	0.47	SD	0.52	SD	0.44		

A summary of the ANOVA results for the six categories is shown in Table 5. According to Table 5, proficiency level had a positive significant effect for the determination, memory, cognitive and metacognitive categories (all representing positive variation, i.e., more use by more successful students). With the determination and metacognitive strategy groups, the post hoc Scheffe test indicated low-level students (means were 2.64 and 2.12) used these strategies significantly less often than intermediate (means were 2.82 and 2.15) and high-level students (means were 3.11 and 2.87) did, but there were no significant differences in levels of use at the intermediate and high levels. With the memory group, the Scheffe test revealed significantly greater strategy use by the high-level students (mean 2.98) than by the intermediate and low groups (means were 2.54 and 2.32 respectively). With the cognitive group, high-level

students (mean 3.22) used strategies significantly more frequently than both the intermediate (mean 2.95) and low students (mean 2.65) did.

Table 5

Summary of Variation in Use of Strategy Categories

Category		High	Inter	Low	F	Significance
Determination	**Mean**	3.11	2.82	2.64	3.85	*p< .05
	SD	0.72	0.73	0.48		
Social (Discovery)	**Mean**	1.73	1.81	1.98	1.85	
	SD	0.47	0.46	0.58		
Social (Consolidating)	**Mean**	1.79	1.55	1.56	1.29	
	SD	0.71	0.61	0.69		
Memory	**Mean**	2.98	2.54	2.32	9.06	*p < .05
	SD	0.64	0.64	0.57		
Cognitive	**Mean**	3.22	2.95	2.65	6.99	*p < .05
	SD	0.53	0.69	0.54		
Meta-Cognitive	**Mean**	2.87	2.15	2.12	8.08	*p < .05
	SD	0.87	0.92	0.70		

Discussion

This section will discuss the medical terminology learning strategies of Taiwanese nursing pre-professionals, the strategies found to used most often and least often by the nursing students who were most proficient in medical terminology.

In the present study, results indicate that there are major differences in patterns of strategy use among students of different proficiency levels. High-level learners are better at gaining knowledge of a new word; they remember more effectively; they control and evaluate their own vocabulary learning better than low-level learners. However, neither

the high-level learners nor the low-level learners are good at employing social strategies to discover new meanings and learn vocabulary. These social strategies involve asking for clarification or verification, cooperating with peers, and interacting with native speakers of the target language. Since teacher-centered approach is employed by most of the Taiwanese teachers, students rarely have chances to discuss and cooperate with peers. Moreover, very few students have courage to ask questions in class. This behavior might be influenced by the Chinese educational system. Furthermore, in an EFL context like Taiwan, few chances are available for students to interact with native speakers or foreign medical staff.

When strategies used by high-level learners are compared to those by low-level learners, it is found that written repetition and verbal repetition were the most and the second most popular strategies among both high-level and low-level learners. This finding is consistent with Schmitt (1997), which showed that repetition of a word's verbal or written form was used frequently in Japan. This can be attributable to the learning style encouraged by the Asian school system. Asian students are commonly required to memorize vocabulary and grammar through repetition. Compared to Japanese, Chinese are more likely to use modeling and repetition as a means of studying particular skills. The practice of memorization is usually applied in the Chinese classroom so as to help students develop particular language skills through modeling and repetition (Sheridan, 1981). The practice of memorization is also linked to the Confucian tradition of reverence for authority. Thus, the strong preference for the bilingual dictionary can, at least partially, be attributable to Confucian tradition of reverence for authority as well. When students encounter questions or difficulties, they would look up dictionary to find the answer instead of resorting to the authority, represented by their teachers.

Not surprisingly, 'interact with foreign medical staff or native speakers' is relatively unused by both high-level and low-level learners. English is studied as one of many foreign languages and serves little communicative function for students once they finish

the actual course in Taiwan. For most students, their non-native English speaking teachers are their main source of English input. The use of English for any purpose outside the classroom is minimal and of short duration. Hence, very few students use English on a regular and long-term basis to establish social contacts with native speakers.

The lack of use of item 9 (ask teacher for a sentence including the word) by the subjects has also been influenced by their educational system and cultural background. As stated previously, in the Chinese-learning context, Chinese students are expected to listen to adults, not interrupt, sit quietly and listen attentively. As a result, they are reluctant to speak in the classroom even when invited to make comments or ask questions. Thus, when encountering a new word, they would just listen attentively to teachers rather than ask teachers for synonym and making new sentences. Many students believe that if they ask questions in class, there is a high risk of resembling a fool. Some would reflect carefully before participating, in order to be sure their point is valid and useful. Others would rather ask after class in order to minimize the loss of face if the questions seem foolish—their class will not hear them if they ask alone (Scarcella, 1990).

In light of the findings of Yang and Su's study (2003), the main difficulty nursing pre-professionals encountered in speaking is their poor pronunciation. Nonetheless, to the knowledge of the researcher, none of the textbook used in Medical Terminology course in the researcher's school has included an audiotape on which word lists had been recorded to improve pronunciation and aural understanding of the words. Even though nursing pre-professionals have problems pronouncing these medical words, they are not able to find any single tape useful for solving their problems. Obviously, this could explain why item 34 (listen to tape of word lists) is one of the least used strategies by all nursing pre-professionals.

Since the advantages of group work for language learning are not widely recognized, teacher-fronted teaching is still the main focus of classroom of Taiwan. Some teachers are afraid of group work. They feel that they will lose control of the class; they can not monitor all groups at once and students' errors will be reinforced in small groups. Naturally, for teachers who prefer teacher-centered approach, learning medical words is

treated as an activity best achieved individually. The low usage of item 11 (discover new meaning from group activity) could be attributed to this factor.

Conclusion

The study sought to provide valuable information concerning the strategy use of Taiwanese nursing pre-professionals when learning medical terminology and to explore what kind of relationship exists between strategy use and proficiency in medical terminology. Findings of the study revealed that nursing pre-professionals in general prefer to use written repetition, verbal repetition, bilingual dictionary strategies. In contrast, asking teacher for a new sentence including the new medical word, listening to tape of word list, and discovering new meaning from group activity are the strategies least used by learners. Like previous researchers, we found significantly greater overall use of learning strategies among more successful learners and significant differences by proficiency level in students' use of four strategy categories: determination, memory, cognitive and metacognitive. However, neither the high-level learners nor the low-level learners are good at employing social strategies to discover new meanings.

Pedagogical Implications

According to the results of the present study, high-level learners appear to use learning strategies more frequently than low-level learners. Investigating Chinese EFL learners' learning strategies of oral communication, Huang & Van Naerssen (1985) also found that distinguished successful learners were more willing to take risks for employing strategies and practicing strategies than less successful learners were. Learning strategies can be taught as found by some studies (Cohen & Aphek, 1980; O'Malley, Chamot, Stewner-Manzanaraes, Russo, & Kupper, 1985). Here are some tips that teachers have to know when teaching learning strategies. First, awareness of strategy use should be raised. To help students cultivate their awareness of language learning strategies, teachers may introduce them to the wide range of alternative strategies, help

students understand their own current strategies, and assist them to find out the circumstances under which a given strategy can be applied effectively.

Second, it is important for teachers to recognize that some strategies may be more suitable to some learners than to others because of individual differences in strategy choice. If language teachers have a better idea of students' preference of strategy choices, they may teach students to choose some strategies which are more effective for students. Third, Schmitt's (1997) findings suggest that learners naturally mature into using different strategies at different times of their life, so it seems reasonable to introduce them to a variety of strategies and let learners decide which ones are right for them.

Ellis(1994) stated the beneficial effect of strategies may be relative to the kinds of tasks that strategies are deployed in. Effective strategy use may consist of the flexible deployment of the right strategies in the right task. Fourth, therefore, teachers may introduce the learning strategies and demonstrate how to take appropriate strategies to meet students' needs in different learning tasks. Finally, these learning strategies should be practiced in different learning tasks. Only through numerous practices will help students become more familiar with these learning strategies.

Limitations and Future Research Directions

The limitations of the present study are essentially about the recruitment of subjects. First, all the subjects come from the same nursing college. The findings would be more useful if we recruited more students from different nursing college in Taiwan. We need to know the extent to which the specific patterns of strategy use would occur in other nursing college and other cultural settings. Second, also worthy of further investigation is the relationship of year of learning to the choice of individual strategies and combination of strategies. Owing to the unique semester system of the school where the research was conducted, nursing pre-professionals of different year level were not all available at the time of research conducted. To get a whole picture of the trends of nursing pre-

professionals' strategy use, nursing pre-professionals with different years of studying medical terminology should be included in the future study.

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Title:

A Contrastive Study on Disagreement Strategies for Politeness between American English & Mandarin Chinese

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Bio:

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Abstract:

The purpose of this paper is to make a contrastive study of disagreement strategies for politeness between American English and Mandarin Chinese at the private interpersonal level for better EFL/ESL teaching and learning. Five scenarios for disagreement are devised for college students in USA and Chinese mainland to fill in what they would say when they disagree with the higher-status, peers and the lower-status. The discourse completion test (DCT) method is applied for data elicitation. When disagreeing with the superior, Chinese students are found to employ more politeness strategies and address forms than the American students do. In the case of peers, with the increase of social distance, both the American and Chinese students apply less and less politeness strategies. Positive correlation is found between the rates of disagreement and the change of the social distance for the Chinese students while negative correlation for the American students. When disagreeing with the sister, the Chinese male uses the least politeness strategies while the Chinese female uses the most politeness strategies. Female students behave more sensitive to politeness and use more politeness strategies than male subjects do.

Keywords

face theory, politeness systems theory, cross culture comparison, politeness strategies

Introduction

This is a contrastive study of disagreement strategies between American English and Mandarin Chinese from the perspectives of pragmatics and socio-linguistics at the private interpersonal level. It also serves as a pilot study of disagreement strategies from the perspective of politeness on the Chinese mainland. It aims at highlighting the differences of being polite in disagreement situations for EFL/ESL teaching and learning.

Literature Review

At the same time as supporting renewed interest in Grice's Cooperative Principles (1975), the issue of politeness has become one of the most active areas of research in language use (Chen, 2001). Studies from Brown & Levinson (1978, 1987) and Scollon and Scollon (1995) have aroused increased attention in the study of politeness.

The face theory proposed by Brown and Levinson (1978, 1987) serves as the most influential theory on politeness. It plays a leading role in the study of speech acts (Ji, 2000; Hobbs, 2003). Brown & Levinson's face theory contains three basic notions: face, face threatening acts (FTAs) and politeness strategies. They argue that everyone in the society has two kinds of face wants. One is negative face: the basic claim to territories, personal preservers, rights to non-distraction -- i.e. to freedom of action and freedom from imposition. The other is the positive face: the positive consistent self-image or 'personality' (crucially including the desire that this self-image be appreciated and approved of) claimed by interactants. Every utterance is potentially a face threatening act (FTA), either to the negative face or to the positive face. Therefore, people need to employ politeness strategies to redress the FTA. Three factors need consideration when calculating the weightiness of the FTA: power status, social distance and the imposition.

Brown and Levinson (1987) introduce five super strategies for politeness in relation to FTA's: bald on-record, positive politeness, negative politeness, and off-record.

The politeness systems theory advocated by Scollon and Scollon (1995) is also noteworthy in this field. They observe three politeness systems: the deference politeness system, the solidarity politeness system and the hierarchical politeness system. The distinction of the three systems is mainly based on whether there exists power difference (+P or -P) and on the social distance between the interlocutors (+D or -D). The deference politeness system is one in which participants are considered to be equals or near equals but treat each other at a distance (e.g. classmates). In a solidarity politeness system, the speakers may feel neither power difference (-P) nor social distance (-D) between them (e.g. friends). The hierarchical politeness system may be widely recognized among companies, government and educational organizations, in which the speakers resort to different politeness strategies: the "higher" use involvement politeness strategies and the "lower" use independence politeness strategies.

Gu (1990) can be regarded as a pioneer work in the study of Chinese politeness. In his Politeness Phenomena in Modern Chinese, he introduces four maxims on Chinese politeness, which he claims to be very characteristic and almost unique to the Chinese culture. They are the self-denigration maxim (i.e. to denigrate self and to elevate the others), the address maxim, the generosity maxim and the tact maxim. The first maxim of denigrating self and honoring the others is alleged to represent the most eminent characteristics in Chinese politeness. The second maxim of address form shows that the relational aspect of the Chinese self is further defined by prescribed roles in a hierarchical structure.

Within the framework set by Brown & Levinson, many scholars and researchers carry out experiments in their specific culture to test the validity of politeness theory and try to make comparisons across gender and nationality (Hobbs, 2003). Being inherently an FTA, the speech act of disagreement has also aroused much attention (Rees-Miller, 2000; Muntigl & Turnbull, 1998).

Previous Research

The American culture is generally regarded as highly individualism-oriented while the Chinese collectivism-oriented. In an individualism-oriented country, an "I" will take priority over the idea of "we". As Samovar, Porter and Stefani (1998:68) observe, "In cultures that tend toward individualism, …, every individual has the right to his or her private property, thoughts, and opinions. These cultures stress individual initiative and achievement, and they value individual decision making", while in a society like China where collectivism is highly appreciated, a "we" consciousness prevails. Cooperation and concern for others enjoys much popularity. Detours or feigned agreement will enjoy far greater preference than blatant disagreement when one has to disagree with another. An appropriate address form will be employed by the inferior to show his/her politeness to the superior. Liao and Bresnahan (1996) finds that significantly more Chinese students than their American peers use the address form again and again to replace the second person pronoun 'you' when they talk with a person of the higher status.

Researchers on the relation of gender and language claim that women are more sensitive than men to being polite (Brown, 1998). Liao and Brenahan (1996:709) also find that "women are more status sensitive than men". Therefore, it is predictable that women will use more politeness strategies than men do.

The Study

Altogether 82 English native speakers of American college students, including 47 females and 35 males, filled in the English version of the Discourse Completion Test (DCT). They belong to several universities, aging from 17 to 25 and coming from almost all regions of America. The 96 Chinese respondents are all non-English major students at the University of Science and Technology of China (USTC). It consists of 37 females and 59 females, aging from 17 to 23 and coming from almost all provinces of China.

The DCT consists of five scenarios, in which the subjects are expected to disagree with a higher status, three with peers and one with a lower status. When identifying the utterances of disagreement from the responses, the taxonomy from Muntigl and Turnbull (1998) is applied, which recognizes four types of disagreement: irrelevancy claim, challenge, contradiction and counterclaim.

The taxonomy of politeness strategies for disagreement developed by Rees-Miller (2000) is employed for counting and analyzing the politeness strategies. The statistical methods applied in this study are the non-parametric methods of the Chi-square Test and the Fischer's Exact Test. In order to minimize the instrumental errors, two trained evaluators take the responsibility of classifying the responses independently. When disagreements occur, a third competent party is consulted until 100 percent agreement is achieved.

Data Analysis

Address Form

In Liao and Brenahan (1996), it is indicated that when speaking to a person of higher status, the Chinese may use the address form much more frequently than their American counterparts to replace the second person pronoun 'you'. Gu (1990) also details the Maxim of Address Form in Chinese culture. Consequently, it is expected that the Chinese students will employ more address forms than their American peers.

The statistical analysis of the responses to the first scenario supports this argument. In the subjects' responses, only 3 (3.7%) Americans uttered the address form, 'Sir, miss these are definitely my original ideas', 'Ma'am, I promise you that these are mine', and 'No sir, I believe they are mine'. By contrast, 27 (28.1%) Chinese undergraduates utter the address form of lao-shi ('teacher'), jiao-shou ('professor'), or dao-shi ('supervisor') before defending themselves.

The non-parametric analysis proves that Chinese students and American students are significantly different in employing the address form to broach the disagreement. The cross culture comparison reveals that the Chinese students use the address form in a significantly higher frequency than their American peers. The Fischer's Exact Test shows a p-value of 0.0010 for American females and Chinese females, 0.0070 for American males and Chinese males, and 0.0001 for American students and Chinese students. This finding strongly supports the Maxim of Address Form in Gu (1990). Also, it indicates that sex manifests little influence in using address forms since the Chi-square value for female and male is 1.517 with the p-value of 0.2181.

Among the 27 Chinese utterances with address forms, 19 students (70.4%) uses lao-shi ('teacher') with a slight difference between the female (80%, 8/10) and the male (64.7%, 11/17). There are also 6 (22.2%) students who employ dao-shi ('supervisor') and 2 (7.4%) with jiao-shou ('professor'). The address form of lao-shi significantly overshadows other address forms.

Disagreement

In scenario one, both American and Chinese students show high frequencies in employing this strategy. A detailed statistical analysis demonstrates that Chinese males are prominently more inclined to contradictory utterances than Chinese females (Chi-square value 4.586) at the 0.05 level, and than American males (Chi-square value is 5.151 and the p-value 0.0232). The comprehensive analyses on sex and nationality show that male students utter disagreements in an eminently higher frequency than female students with a Chi-square value of 4.38 and p-value 0.364, and Chinese students in a higher frequency than American students (Chi-square 5.069 and p-value less than 0.05).

In situation two, we may find far fewer contradictory statements, which indicates that friends are cherished in both the cultures and the friends' face wants would be the concern of the students when they provide a reply. Still, higher frequencies are

found on the Chinese side of both females (45.9%) and males (54.2%) than their American peers (40.4% for females and 38.2% for males) in expressing their disagreements. The Chi-square test shows no significant differences between the four groups in applying this strategy. Also, the comparisons across gender and nationality fail to identify any salient discrepancies.

The social distance is larger in situation three, which is a deference politeness system according to Scollon and Scollon (1995). The detailed Chi-square test show that significant differences are found between American females and Chinese females (Chi-square value 4.174 and p-value less than 0.05), and between American students and Chinese students with a Chi-square value of 4.423 and a p-value of 0.0355. No salient discrepancies are identified in other groups.

The results achieved in scenario four from the analyses of disagreement best support the arguments in Triandis and Singelis (1998:36) that "East Asian collectivists are especially eager to maintain harmonious relationships while individualists from the U. S. A. are more concerned with clearly giving opinions." The non-parametric analyses show that there exist significant differences in the application of disagreement between American females and Chinese females (Chi-square value 15.701 with p-value less than 0.0001) and between American male and Chinese male (Chi-square value 8.209 with p-value less than 0.01). In conclusion, the comparison across nationality shows salient difference between American subjects and Chinese respondents (Chi-square value 22.109 and p-value less than 0.00001), strongly supporting the common arguments of preference for harmony on collectivism.

High frequencies of disagreement are identified in the students` responses in setting five. The detailed Chi-square tests show significant differences across area.

The Chinese male expresses disagreements to the sister at a significantly higher rate than the American male with the Chi-square value of 5.499 and p-value of 0.190. Similarly, important difference is recognized between Chinese females and American

males with a Chi-square value of 5.572 and a p-value of 0.182. A comprehensive comparison across nationality demonstrates that Chinese students apply more contradictory statement with their sisters than their American peers with the Chi-square value of 9.295 and the p-value less than 0.005. Sex plays no salient role in distinguishing the application of disagreement for the four groups. No significant differences are recognized between American female and American male, between Chinese female and Chinese male, and between female and male subjects.

Politeness Strategies

Concern about politeness being the same, the Chinese students and American subjects show much difference in the application of contradictory statements and politeness strategies. The Chinese behave more sensitively to hierarchical status in applying politeness strategies.

In scenario one, the Chinese students and male subjects use more disagreement than American respondents and female students. Such high rates of disagreements may seem contradictory to the arguments of Brown & Levinson, and Scollon & Scollon on the effect of power on politeness. However, the students' responses make sense since the imposition on the students' positive face is too high. If they do not explicitly express their disagreement, they will have to face the consequences of being dishonest. Taking the higher rates of politeness strategies the Chinese students employed into consideration, the Chinese students' disagreements are mitigated by the politeness expressions.

In the following three situations which include one solidarity politeness system and two deference politeness systems, the American students and Chinese respondents show different trends in disagreement. With the increase of social distance (from friend to classmate to stranger), the contradictory statements from American students are on the rise while the politeness strategies in decrease. To the Chinese students, the results are just the opposite. The rates of disagreement decrease with the increase of social distance.

This significant difference again strongly supports the arguments on collectivism and individualism claimed by Triandis & Singelis (1998:36) that "East Asian collectivists are especially eager to maintain harmonious relationships while individualists from the U. S. A. Are more concerned with clearly giving opinions." The politeness strategies that the Chinese employed decrease with the reduction in contradictory statements.

Chinese female and male behave quite differently in situation five. Though both express disagreements in higher frequencies than their American peers, Chinese females take the first place in the application of politeness strategies, while Chinese males come last. One possible explanation is that unlike the American families in which the older sister or brother treats the younger sister with equal power status, the older children in a Chinese family will consider him/herself as being somewhat superior to the younger sister. It is especially the case with the Chinese male, who has traditionally been regarded as the backbone of the family. In scenario five, the high-rate application of politeness strategies mitigates the damaging force of contradictory statements for Chinese females. This shows a concern for harmonious existence of intimacy and in-group harmony. To Chinese males, who might regard themselves as being superior to the sister, they resort to a high rate of disagreement and low rate of politeness strategies.

Throughout the five scenarios, the female respondents use more politeness strategies and less or similar disagreements than their male counterparts. This supports the arguments on gender and language that the female is more polite than the male. It is in accordance with the findings of Brown (1998) that women are more attentive to the feelings of 'face needs' of their listeners, and thus use speech that is 'more polite' than that of men.

Implications of this Study to EFL/ESL Teaching and Learning

In intercultural communication, pragmatic failure has aroused much attention. People often fail to achieve the communicative goal due to misunderstanding with people

from other cultures. Though being polite is preferred universally, the connotation of politeness might vary across culture and gender. Therefore, researchers need to probe into specific cultures for the exploitation of concrete speech acts and try to identify the different patterns and discourse strategies.

Teaching English in China has long been oriented by the College Entrance Examination, which focuses on grammar and reading. In real-life situation, Chinese students may often fail to communicative effectively with foreigners. Such studies may highlight some differences between Americans and Chinese on politeness during disagreement.

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The English Version of the Discourse Completion Test

Thank you very much for your time and help. Five scenarios are described below in which you are expected to Disagree with the speaker on different occasions. How would you respond? Please write out what you are to SAY in real life scenarios.

Your Age:__ Gender: __Hometown: __

1. Your supervisor questions the originality of the term paper you submit. S/he says to you, "I'm sorry, but I don't think these ideas are yours." However, they are yours. In response, you will say,

" ....."

2. Your friend makes the following comment on your thesis, "I think you should supply more data to support your arguments. You know, your conclusion is a little bit weak." However, you think that there has been enough evidence and the problem is how to give a better explanation of the data. In response, you will say,

" ....."

3. In a seminar class on the effect of modern technology, one of your classmates says, "The so-called modern technology is endangering the environment. It causes too much pollution". However, you believe such problems are only temporary and can be solved gradually. In response, you will say:

" ....."

4. At your friend's party, you mention that you are thinking of taking a certain course next semester. Someone says, "Ah, I've heard of that course. It's difficult and boring". However, you have learned from a friend that the course is very easy and interesting, and you believe in your friend. In response, you will say:

" ....."

5. You are watching the movie Titanic with your younger sister at home. When the ship is about to sink and the first mate calls out, "Women and children first" to get on the lifeboat, your sister suddenly blurts out, "It's really unfair and prejudiced to women: we're no weaker than men. Why should women instead of men go first with the children?" In your opinion, women are, physically speaking, not as strong as men. Your response will be:

" ....."

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Computer Mediated Communication:
The Use of CMC to Develop EFL Learners' Communicative Competence

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Abstract

Moving from the 'focus on form' teaching approach such as Grammar Translation and Audiolingualism, recently more language teachers have noticed the failure of form focusing approach in developing learners' communicative ability in real-life situations and shifted to adopt the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). The CLT approach highlights learners' communicative competence (Hymes, 1972), which is defined as learners' ability to efficiently express what they mean in the target language and successfully achieve communications in real-life situations (Lightbown & Spada, 1999; Power, 2003). In order to do so, learners not only need to acquire the linguistic but pragmatic knowledge of the Target Language (TL) (Hedgcock, 2002). It is suggested that competence, both linguistic and pragmatic, is the knowledge developed and acquired through exposure and use (Kasper, 1997). In other words, without sufficient exposure needed for learners to notice and acquire the language input and chances to use the knowledge, communicative competence is not likely to be promoted.

Unlike ESL learners, who need to use the target language in everyday life for surviving in the target culture, EFL learners generally do not have adequate access to the target language outside of the classrooms and practice what they have learned in the classroom. Learners normally return to the real world speaking their mother tongue as soon as they leave the classroom (Campbell, 2004). In classrooms, although teachers now have adopted approaches that focus on meaning and language use, due to the linier mode of face-to-face interaction, the learning outcome is still not efficient enough. EFL

teachers now urgently need a solution to increase exposure and use of the target knowledge both inside and outside of the classroom.

The purpose of this paper is to suggest the integration of Computer-Mediated Communication (CMC) into EFL learning can increase both input (exposure) and output (use) of the TL that is needed for learners to promote their both linguistic and pragmatic Competence. This paper firstly presents (1). The rationale of the CLT approach and limitations of traditional EFL classrooms to implement it. In the second part, pedagogical benefits of CMC in language learning are presented. (3). principles of using CMC tools in foreign language teaching are presented in the third part, which is followed by (4).the conclusion.

Key Words:
communicative competence, Computer-Mediated Communication (CMC), authentic and interactive learning tasks,

1.Introduction

Moving from the 'focus on form' teaching approach such as Grammar Translation and Audiolingualism, recently more language teachers have noticed the failure of form focusing approach in developing learners' communicative ability in real-life situations and shifted to adopt the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach. The CLT approach highlights learners' communicative competence (Hymes, 1972), which is defined as learners' ability to efficiently express what they mean in the target language and successfully achieve communications in real-life situations (Lightbown & Spada, 1999; Power, 2003). In order to do so, learners not only need to acquire the linguistic but pragmatic knowledge of the TL – target language (Hedgcock, 2002). It is suggested that competence, both linguistic and pragmatic, is the knowledge developed and acquired through exposure and use of the target language (Kasper, 1997). In other words, without

sufficient exposure needed for learners to notice and acquire the language input and chances to use the new knowledge, communicative competence is not likely to be promoted.

Unlike ESL learners, who need to use the TL in everyday life for surviving in the target culture, EFL learners generally do not have adequate access to the TL outside of the classrooms and practice what they have learned in the classroom. Learners normally return to the real world speaking their mother tongue as soon as they leave the classroom (Campbell, 2004). In classrooms, although teachers now have gradually adopted approaches that focus on meaning and language use, due to the linier mode of face-to-face interaction, the learning outcome is still not efficient enough. EFL teachers now urgently need a solution to increase exposure and use of the target knowledge both inside and outside of the classroom.

The purpose of this paper is to suggest the integration of Computer-Mediated Communication (CMC) into EFL learning can not only increase both input (exposure) and output (use) of the TL that is needed for learners to promote their English proficiency but also promote learning motivation, learner autonomy, social equality and identity. This paper firstly presents (1). rationale of the CLT approach and (2).limitations of traditional EFL classrooms to implement it. In the second part, (3).pedagogical benefits of CMC in language learning are presented. (4). Principles of using CMC tools in foreign language teaching are presented in the third part, which is followed by (4).the conclusion.

2. The Rationale of the CLT Approach

Prior to the CLT approach, traditional approaches that focus on structure and form were preferred in language classrooms; however, for its failure to develop learners' communicative skills in the TL, language teachers now have gradually acknowledged the strength of the CLT approach. The rationale of the CLT approach is that the teacher should act as a facilitator to create a student-center classroom and engage learners in

authentic-like and meaningful communications that require meaning negotiations, with the goal to increase comprehensible language input for learners and expect them to generate more output (Huang & Liu, 2000).

2.1. Focus on Meaning and Language Use

Language is used for communication. In real-life communication, we use language to express what we mean (Lightbown & Spada, 1999); however, language is more than a tool for communication, it also represents social and cultural background. Learning merely the target linguistic knowledge cannot successfully engage learners into real-life communications in the target culture; they also need to acquire the target pragmatic competence, the capacity to incorporate cultural knowledge into language use and choose appropriate language in different sociocultural contexts (Bachman, 1990; Hymes, 1972, Kasper, 1997).

Unlike grammar translation or audiolingualism that merely focus on learners' ability to produce accurate language form and structure, the CLT approach emphasizes on learners' ability to efficiently use the target language in different contexts (Lightbown & Spada, 1999). By pairing up learners and involving them into wide range of meaningful interactive discussion tasks, the teacher expect to promote learners' ability to achieve the communicative goal, rather than forming grammatical sentences.

2.2. Create More Comprehensible Input

The other purpose of the CLT approach that involves learners into meaningful communication is to create more comprehensible input (Krashen, 1982); this is based on Long's interaction hypothesis (1983), which holds that when learners are involved in two-way meaningful communications requiring information exchange, they tend to produce more negotiated language modification. Examples of negotiated language modification are comprehension check 'do you understand?', clarification request 'what

did you say?', or confirmation check 'did you say 'the cat'?'. Although learners are not always able to produce comprehensible language essential for a successful communication, by using these strategies in paired interactions, they are able to obtain more comprehensible input than in teacher-student interactions (Lightbown &Spada, 1999) and have more chances to notice the linguistic gap between their non-native like language and the TL. It is proposed that the gap-noticing can often help learners to know what is still needed to be learned and benefit the learning (Blake, 2000).

3. The Limitation-Individual Inequality to Use the TL in Traditional EFL Classrooms

Although the CLT approach attempts to involve learners in more authentic and interactive learning tasks that promote both comprehensible input and learners' language output, due to the nature of face-to-face interaction, teachers still find it challenging to exploit the approach and maximize the learning; this is especially a true case in EFL classrooms. Unlike ESL learners, EFL learners usually do not have the need to use the TL outside of the classroom; generally their only chance to put the learned language knowledge into use is in the classroom. However, for the linier mode of traditional face-to-face interaction, EFL learners generally have limited time and chance to speak and use the TL in traditional classrooms (Campbell, 2004).

In a face-to-face interaction, turn-taking is required; speaking simultaneously is usually unattainable.

The interaction mode is linier: when someone is talking, the other needs to be silent and wait until his interlocutor finish talking; the interaction is bound to be either learners interact with the teacher or a learner interacts with other learners (Hansen, 2001).

Factors of learners' different personalities, learning and response pace, motivation, and language proficiency can all lead to individual inequality to speak up in class or in groups. For example, learners who are shy, slow, or afraid of making errors

may choose to speak less in classroom or group discussions.

Insufficient access to the TL both inside and outside of the classroom certainly is an obstacle to foster EFL learners' language proficiency. Nevertheless, with the advent of computer-mediated communication (CMC) technology, ways of communication and learning have been efficiently changed (Leh, 1999). By using CMC tools such as e-mails, chat rooms, discussion rooms, video or audio conference, users worldwide can easily achieve communication, synchronously or asynchronously, without boundaries of time and space. It is therefore popularly proposed that CMC can be used to compensate the deficiency of interaction both inside and outside of EFL classrooms.

4. Pedagogical Benefits of CMC in Language Learning

4.1. Increase Interactive Communication and Exposure to the TL

By bringing CMC into language learning and teaching, the interaction pattern can be changed. Proponents of CMC suggest that teachers can encourage greater amount of interactions by using CMC tools both inside and outside of the classroom (Blake, 2000; Blin, 1999; Leh, 1999; Warschauer, 1997). Learning is no longer restrained in time and space; rather, through the internet, learners are offered opportunities to communicate and learn collaboratively with learners' worldwide (Kern, 1996; Shield & Weininger, 2004). EFL learners do not need to passively listen to audio tapes alone after class; through the use of the internet and CMC tools, they can easily participate in more interactions by posting and replying messages on discussion boards, writing and replying emails to their keypals, or joining online chat rooms anytime when they feel comfortable or have free time. Learning becomes 24 hours. This new way of learning that engages learners in authentic social interactions can greatly expose learners to the TL and practice what they have learned in the classroom (Blake, 2000; Campbell, 2004; Leh, 1999; Lightbown & Spada, 1999).

4.2. Create Opportunities to Participate in the Target Sociocultural Context

Other than more exposure to the target language, learners can also have more opportunities to take part in the target social and cultural context and learn the pragmatic knowledge, which is very difficult to be achieved in EFL cultures. For example, by using E-mails to send photos, audio or video attachments, learners can introduce their families, countries, and cultures to their keypals; by using microphones and web cameras, learners can participate in online communications that almost resemble to traditional face-to-face conversations although the interaction cannot be as immediate as real-life communications due to transmission time. Nevertheless, through audio or video communications, learners are able to obtain both verbal (e.g. intonation) and non-verbal (e.g. facial expression) cues that are essential factors to develop social competency (Shumin, 1997).

4.3. Promote English Proficiency

In terms of the effect of CMC on language proficiency, many researches have proposed its positive effect on the development of learners' language proficiency. Pennington (1999) suggests the efficiency of electronic writing tools such as word processor that enable learners to easily compose and revise text and check spelling and grammar can promote learners' confidence in their ability to write better and generate more writing products. Web-based communication tools such as emails, web journals, and discussion boards that allow learners to easily give and reply comments motivate learners to actively engage in interactive tasks and promote writing quality. Braine (2004) proposes that involving learners in real-time online interactions with other classmates and the teacher can transform the teacher-centered classroom to be more student-centered. Communicative writing skill can be promoted because learners actively and freely use the target language to express what they mean with other learners. Learners no longer just

passively learn grammatical rules and unable to use it effectively.

In Foto's research (2004), she asserts email exchange can be as interactive as speech interactions although there are less non-verbal and verbal cues. Learners can use new forms of cues (eg. [:)] = smile, [I am ANGRY] = to emphasize emotion) and language (eg. [Btw] = by the way) to achieve speech-like interactions. In her research, EFL learners who were involved in email-exchange learning tasks turned out to have promoted their English proficiency, especially in reading and writing skills.

Hubbard (2004) suggests CMC tools such as internet telephony, audio and video conferencing, voicemail or voice discussion board can all be used to promote learners' speaking proficiency. By engaging learners into tasks of recording speech and sending files to other learners, communicative speaking skill can be a goal to achieve.

4.4. Encourage Motivation and Learner Autonomy

Involving learners in authentic and meaningful interactions with learners worldwide via the internet can also promote motivation for learners to keep learning; this motivation of learning can often support learners to become more responsible and willing to engage in their own learning, which is defined as learner autonomy (Blin, 1999; Lightbown & Spada, 1999;Toyoda, 2001). For example, during the process of collaborative learning where learners focus on meaning exchange, they may actively utilize their language knowledge learned in classroom and check their language output before sending out their messages or emails. The process of checking language output from resources can often cause learning to take place. Teachers are no longer responsible for learners' learning; rather, they act as facilitators to help and shorten the distance between learners and the outside world.

4.5. Promote Social Equality and Identity

Unlike traditional face-to-face communication, online media communication is suggested to be less stressful and more face-saving than face-to-face communication (Hansen, 2001). Learners often feel more comfortable to participate in online discussions than in traditional face-to-face discussion; learners are more willing to express their personal opinion because they are not stared by the whole class (Hansen, 2001). Moreover, in CMC communications, learners have more time to plan and check their language output (Pennington, 2004). For example, learners are allowed to think before they post messages or write emails to they key pals; they are able to check their spelling and grammar from dictionaries and revise anytime they want. For learners who are afraid of embarrassingly making errors in class are more willing to contribute through online communications (Pennington, 2004). Thus, every class member can all have equal chances to practice the target language in the classroom discussion board or online community; individual differences leading to social inequality to speak in traditional classrooms can all be overcome.

Other than having equal chances to practice the TL, learners are also allowed to express their identity; diverse opinions can exist simultaneously and discussions in class can be extended after class.

5. Principles of Integrating CMC tools into Language Learning

The goal of integrating CMC into language learning is to expose learners to as much as language input as possible and motivate them to be more autonomous to the learning. Although language teachers are no longer the center of language classrooms, to maximise the efficiency of CMC in language learning, teachers should carefully consider issues of how to design learning task, monitor learners' learning, and evaluate their language progress.

5.1. Design Language and Cultural-Related Learning Tasks

Most learning activities designed for L2 or FL learning focus on rule drilling; learners may learn the rules but not necessarily acquire them or know how to use them in real-life situations. To transform the learned knowledge into competence, adequate opportunities to put the learned knowledge into use is essential (Kasper, 1997). Teachers, therefore, need to design learning tasks with clear objectives and consider what learning tasks or materials are to benefit students' acquisition of both the target linguistic and pragmatic knowledge (Chapelle & Hegelheimer, 2004). It is suggested that learning tasks and materials should be designed with language and culture-related goals (Opp-Beckman & Kieffer, 2004).

5.1.1. Create Motivation: Collaborative Learning

One important reason to design learning tasks for learners to achieve is to create a motivation. Teachers can involve learners in doing a collaborative project with another learner; for example, the project can be to write a story journal together online. By using the feature of blogs, learners can exploit their imagination, exchange ideas online and keep a story journal together. With a motivation to not only complete the story but make the story interesting, learners are more likely to actively participate in the discussion and engage in the learning.

5.1.2. Control Learners' Learning Progress

The other advantage of designing a learning task with a clear objective is to control learners' learning progress (Hubbard, 2004); without doing this, learners may be lost in the process of learning. For example, if the teacher does not design a task for learners to achieve (eg. to know more about your friend and introduce him/her to the class), learners may feel confused about what is needed to be discussed, learned, and

achieved. Or, they may encounter unpredictable difficulties during the interaction that the teacher did not teach prior to the task.

5.2. Design Tasks with Same Goal but in Different Forms

According to Psycholinguistic aspect, when a new word or phrase is learned by a learner, it is firstly stored in his short-term memory; only when being exposed to the same term several times, the learner is able to acquire the new term and store it into his long-term memory (Moras el., 2001; Nation, 2001). This suggests that merely involving learners in one single task is not likely to promote acquisition and competence of the target new knowledge. When designing learning tasks, teachers should plan several different tasks with the same goal; for example, if the objective is to expect learners' competence to perform appropriate speech act: request, the teacher may need to design tasks with different social contexts that require learners to interact with different or similar interlocutors. Through more exposure and practices from different tasks with similar goals, learners are more likely to acquire the target knowledge.

5.3. Encourage Online Opinion Exchange

To create an environment where interaction between learners can occur to stimulate learning is another goal of using CMC to support language learning. Other than one-on-one email interactions, constructing an asynchronous discussion board to extend classroom discussion is another way to help develop learners' ability to express agreement or disagreement with others' opinion (Opp-Beckman & Kieffer, 2004). When engaging learners in group discussions on a classroom discussion board, the teacher becomes the key to encourage online opinion exchange and give help when learners face communication breakdown (Campbell, 2004). Although the discussion board should be student-centered, teachers still play an important role to monitor learners' interaction and learning progress. For example, if the teacher finds one learner

tends to speak less or does not reply to other learners' messages, the teacher should remind him the importance of giving and replying to comments (Campbell, 2004).

6. Conclusion

For insufficient authentic resources and the need to use the target language, EFL learners generally encounter difficulties to develop communicative competence. Although the CLT approach is now gradually adopted, due to many factors such as the linier feature of face-to-face interaction, learners' personality, learning and response pace, teachers find it challenging to maximize interaction in traditional EFL classrooms.

Researches on Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL) propose the integration of CMC into EFL learning can provide learners more authentic input and more opportunities to participate in the target sociocultural contexts; both linguistic and pragmatic knowledge can be promoted. Moreover, motivation, learner autonomy, social equality, and identity can also be encouraged through the use of CMC inside and outside of the classroom.

Further research of whether EFL learners' communicative competence can be fully developed with the help of CMC tools still needs to be done; however, for EFL learners who desperately need more authentic exposure and the opportunities to use the knowledge learned in the classroom, the use of computer mediated communication tools both inside and outside of the classrooms certainly can benefit the learning and develop learners' communicative competence to a certain extent.

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Title

Leadership in EFL: Time for Change?

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Bio

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Abstract

There continues to be a large discrepancy between what EFL teachers teach in the classroom and what they learn outside of it, which in turn affects our learners' ability to study English. This paper takes a look at how this problem can be solved by increasing the roles of leaders in the field. The role of leaders is discussed, as is what these leaders and teachers must do to improve the state of EFL teaching today in Asia. A specific example of the lack of credible leadership in the Japanese private language school system is outlined, as well as what needs to be changed to better suit the needs of Japanese EFL students.

Key Words

leadership in the field, salient qualities, private language school system in Japan

Introduction and Purpose.

Leadership is an immensely ubiquitous task that requires people with great minds and even greater ambitions to achieve their goals. Every field must have leaders because those who are in a particular discipline constantly rely on leaders to direct them toward a goal that will enhance their work and objectives. The field of English as a foreign language (EFL) teaching is no different. There is an overwhelming need for leadership in the field, seeing as there are few great leaders who make palpable decisions for the immense amount of EFL teachers that exist throughout Asia. The amount of teachers is, however, disproportionate to the knowledge that exists. Many teachers are unaware of how to teach effectively and follow the research done by the leaders in the field.

It is vital that more teachers take the initiative and become leaders, because it is imperative for teachers and students alike to have a guided path to follow. A great disparity exists between the knowledge teachers have and the knowledge they should acquire in order to successfully educate students on how to effectively speak the English language. Many teachers merely wander aimlessly through their work with no dedication or purpose. The problem is rampant in many Asian settings where teachers are paid good salaries to teach, regardless of their experience or familiarity with the subject matter. Research has demonstrated that knowledge both of subject matter and of teaching and learning acquired in teacher education is strongly correlated with teacher performance in the classroom (Berry, 2001). Hence, it makes sense for teachers to have a sound knowledge of subject matter and the pedagogical implications of their teaching.

The leaders who currently exist in EFL are strong and make themselves known through their writings and research. The goal of these leaders is to assist teachers and give them a fuller understanding of the EFL field and the results of their work is manifested on the students who gain the full benefits of new teaching methods, styles and materials in the classes they take. However, it seems the pervading problem is that teachers do not actively seek to read the materials generated by those in a position to

write them, because they are unmotivated, or generally not interested in improving their teaching style. There is no incentive given to teachers to be knowledgeable of current ideas and teaching methods, and therefore, they merely use the same methods and beliefs throughout their careers. As a result, students suffer, due to a lack of innovation on the part of teachers and the schools who employ them.

Leadership affects everyone involved in EFL in dramatic ways. Supervisors, managers, teacher trainers, administrators, head teachers, teachers and students all need effective leaders to facilitate correct instruction and flow of ideas in the classroom. What happens at the leadership level needs to trickle down to the classroom and be reflected in the students who are attempting to gain a sound knowledge of how to communicate in English. However, there seems to be a communication breakdown somewhere between those in a leadership role and the common teacher in universities, junior and senior high schools, and private language schools. The only way this problem of lack of leadership can be solved is by changing the system from within and replacing the problems with tangible solutions. This paper will deal with these questions and problems and offer some solutions that can be applied to solve them.

Leadership skills

Some view leadership as the innate characteristics of the great men and women of history, others as the personal relationships between the individual and the group, whilst others still view it as the process of striving towards common goals and values. Other views of leadership consider aspects of behavior, whether desired and in control of the individual, or driven by a mass of forces in the environment. Leaders in the field of EFL must recognize these skills and strive to continuously evolve and be responsive to context, while working in close conjunction with colleagues, and adjusting their skills to fit the needs of others. The role of leaders is to involve people who have the skills to transform the thinking of others and direct an organization or profession on its desired

course. With the cooperation of others in a team, and those who are bound to be affected by the changes implemented by leaders, the tasks of the leaders are made much easier.

A person demonstrating strong leadership skills in education is one who takes the needs of teachers into consideration when formulating new ideas, activities and materials. A leader who is capable of doing these things will undoubtedly gain the attention and respect of his or her colleagues, who will be willing to work toward a common goal with them. A good leader finds ways to "compromise, cross-reference and find consistency and economy in their work" (Ur, 1988, p. 2). Further, a leader must assume that people can be changed; a tenet that includes teachers and students. A leader possessing the above skills will have the motivation and intensity required to build positive relationships with others and generate change among them: a change which allows teachers to see the need to endeavor to higher goals and ambitions.

One of the most salient qualities a leader must have is to have the courage to "swim upstream on behalf of their beliefs" (Goldberg, 2001, p. 757). This attribute applies to all leaders, and is definitely applicable to teachers, who must struggle to teach in a manner which best suits their students' needs, while following curriculum guidelines set out by administrators. However, teachers who are determined to make a difference in their field will find ways to follow their beliefs and implement new and inventive programs that benefit their students and help the overall advancement of the curriculum and teaching profession in general.

Teachers should strive to develop lessons which are learning-rich, varied and interesting in the main components of each lesson (Ur, 1992). They must also be able to respond to student needs by adjusting their strategies to fit the different learning styles that exist in all individuals. Abilities leaders possess and should instill in teachers include having a dynamic, enthusiastic style, high intrinsic motivation, authenticity, thoughtfulness, emotional integrity, accountability, and be capable of balancing inquiry and advocacy, as well as being able to lead by mandate (Larrivee, 2000; Goldberg, 2001). These are all essential skills that leaders in EFL should own, pass down to teachers at all

levels, and implement regularly so they can be employed in teaching, thus enabling students to reap the benefits of superior methods of instruction.

Educational leaders must have the inherent belief that what they are doing can actually help people. It is a worthwhile skill to realize that under all of the misgivings teachers may have about what they do there is a bedrock belief that what they are doing is good and important and eminently worthwhile (Goldberg, 2001). Not all teachers have to be revolutionaries, trying to change the whole system, but a long journey must start with a single step. The skills a leader possesses are invaluable to the entire field because they give teachers new observations and outlooks on how to cope in the classroom, which is sometimes an arduous task given the contradictory forces at play in any situation, such as differing learning needs and styles. So, the average teacher in a university, junior or senior high school or language school must adopt these skills to improve the situation in which they find themselves.

Leaders need to instill intrinsic motivation in their charges, whether they are teachers or students. Motivation has been proven a key component for teaching second languages successfully (Noels, Clement & Pelletier, 1999). Noels et al. further asserted that the manner in which teachers interrelate with students might be connected with the students' motivation. Hence, if teachers sustain high levels of vigor in the classroom, and provide appropriate information and feedback to learners, then the student is more likely to take an active part in their own learning. Sustaining interest in activities is an essential element of teaching, because learners who are bored find it hard to concentrate (Ur, 1988). Therefore, leaders have to impress on teachers and students the need for motivation both in the classroom and outside of it.

Leaders realize that the learning time for a foreign language in adults is longer than when learning a first language. As a result, learning time has to be organized for optimum efficiency. Programs of study must be organized so that the parts of the "total corpus of knowledge are presented one after the other for gradual, systematic acquisition" (Ur, 1988, p. 5). Conversely, learning a foreign language is similar to learning a first

language, because at first, it is incomprehensible to the listener, but eventually becomes recognizable, and the learner becomes conversant in the language. In order for an individual to successfully learn a foreign language, they must have conscious awareness of learning (Leow, 2001) and "notice" that it is happening (Schmidt, 1990, 1993). These are points that all teachers should be aware of and make use of in their research, materials, and subsequently, the techniques used in the classroom.

Leadership and Decision Making.

Leaders are needed to direct the discipline in the right direction because many teachers are unaware of what is necessary to become a good leader and teacher. These teachers are in need of advice and help in order to fully understand the pedagogic effects on students. Without capable decision makers, teachers and the state of teaching remain stagnant, with no new materials being produced, and no novel ideas and materials being brought to the fore.

Effective leadership involves the correct mix of good judgment and good decision making (Garcia & Stewart, 2000) along with successful dialogue that creates answers to problems. Dialogue is compulsory if effective decisions are to be made in any discipline. This dialogue must exist and run on a continuum from the leadership level down to the teacher. It is only through effective dialogue that decisions will be made which will affect the teaching methods and practices of everyone involved.

What is needed, and what is largely unrecognized by the majority of teachers, are people who can not only conceive of new ideas, but also implement them at a basic level, so all teachers can benefit from their work, which usually comes in the form of new teaching materials or publications. Decisions must be a shared responsibility, made by those who have a direct hand in teaching. Consequently, teachers at all levels must be given the opportunity to make the decisions that will affect their work. Rod Ellis and Penny Ur are good examples of leaders who constantly seek new ways to motivate

teachers and provide new ideas for teachers to invigorate their teaching methods, activities and classes.

However, regardless of the amount of literature and activities produced by these people, the problem remains that the average teacher who works in a language school (and Japanese language schools, in particular) does not have access to these materials or publications. This lack of access may be simply because of little interest on the teachers' part, or because they are not provided the time and opportunity in their positions to seek new information. Therefore, decisions must be made by the teacher trainers, managers, and administrators in language schools to give teachers equal access and ample time to these materials, as they are sure to improve the overall level of teaching in such schools.

Leadership and Change

Change is inevitable in any organization or person. Change is important for all organizations because the world is constantly evolving. With change come certain rules that must be observed to successfully deal with that change. First, leaders who know change is inevitable must learn how to disperse power in an orderly, non-chaotic basis. This must be done at the leadership level and observed throughout the system, down to teachers at all ranks. Organizational learning is pivotal in providing teachers with the necessary skills and knowledge to adapt to multiple changes (Palmer & Watkins, 2000). Learning among leaders and teachers is important, thus, change among the infrastructure of the teaching profession in an Asian setting is needed in order to better serve the students in our classes. Learning must not be left to chance, as it is the fundamental component of what teachers do.

A further rule of change is that it must always begin with the individual (Clark, 2001), and must begin by developing the leadership skills of everyone involved in an organized, intentional way (Clark, 2001). In a similar fashion, leaders in EFL must inspire change in the masses of teachers in order for them to be effective. In Japan, even the teachers who are in supervisory positions do not exemplify leadership skills. The

majority of the time, their jobs involve too much for them to be concerned with directing change and making adjustments in the workplace. Some supervisors and head teachers feel that the exertion of authority over others makes them a leader. However, true leaders strive to fully explain their ideas, plans, policies and strategies to others in meaningful and evocative ways. Leaders must generate change among supervisors, managers, administrators, head teachers and teachers by promoting the good it will do for institutions and students.

The private language school system in Japan

Similar to as in most Asian settings, the private language school system in Japan is first and foremost a business, with the impetus being on making a profit. Consequently, the more students a language school can recruit, the better. The upshot of this is a watering-down effect of teaching practices, which eventually affects the learners. Most language schools in Japan have a notorious reputation for providing quick, epigrammatic lessons. In order for students to benefit from such a system, they must purchase countless lessons and hope they learn something from them. The majority of the language schools in Japan specialize in providing students with short lessons (thirty to forty-five minutes in length) in which teachers use textbooks they have not been trained to use properly. In these schools, teachers are faced with too many lessons (up to eight a day), with little or no paid preparation time, resulting in poor lesson quality and poor student outcomes.

Nevertheless, private English language schools have become immensely popular in Japan, with schools appearing in all parts of the country. Due to their encounters with English in junior and senior high school, Japanese learners of EFL have undoubtedly had much exposure to English by the time they enter an English language school. The Japanese school system is designed to give students English language education from the beginning of junior high school until the end of high school. Essentially, this entails six years of English language education geared toward preparing

students toward a university entrance examination which focuses on the grammatical aspect of English. There have been increasing debates within the country for English language junior high school and high school education to include a communicative element to it, and changes toward this goal are now starting to slowly creep into the system.

The objective of a private foreign language school in Japan is to offer instruction on how to communicate effectively in English. Private language schools in Japan attempt to teach language learners about the English language and the cultural elements that accompany it. However, many teachers in the private language system are not trained or capable to teach in a manner that will facilitate such learning. It is imperative that Japanese learners are conversant in the English language, are able to learn new knowledge structures and aptitudes, and are capable of utilizing correct grammar and the four language skills (reading, writing, listening and speaking). The problem overriding students' ability to learn is that student needs are supplanted by the need to earn a profit. The only way out of wasting not only teacher talent, but also student ability, is for teachers to attempt to change the system from within. Thus, a new generation of leaders is needed at the grassroots level: a level at which teachers can affect change within their own organizations.

Leadership: It's Future in EFL

The future of EFL depends on what has occurred in the past and what is currently happening in the field. There have been great advances made in teaching methods and styles in the past, and there continue to be new innovations which profoundly affect the profession. However, in order for the field to continue moving in the right direction, some changes need to be made that will allow teachers to perform their jobs more successfully and function within the system more smoothly. The private language school in Japan and the rest of Asia is one major form of providing English

teaching services to the public, and is a system in dire need of change if the quality of education provided is to be improved.

In spite of their many failures, private language schools in Japan can be successful ventures if the right attitudes and methods are used in these organizations. The role of leaders in formulating and implementing policies that will affect everyone involved in language teaching is pivotal. Although it is understandable that private language schools are intent on making a profit, there can be compromise within the system. Teaching and learning do not have to be sacrificed for revenue. The needs of our learners should surely take precedence over all other factors. At the core of the problem and the solution are school owners, administrators, supervisors and head teachers, who must make conscious decisions to alleviate the negative images and practices which take place on a daily basis throughout Japan.

If one or all of these important people make cognizant declarations that the system is in dire need of change from the grass-roots level, the rest are bound to listen. Leadership requires courageous decision-making and decisive actions. It is the task of teachers to themselves become leaders to initiate these actions.

With collective and courageous decision-making processes in place, and each individual knowing his or her position in the field, it is possible to work towards common goals and ensure that the best possible education is provided to students. Teachers must enjoy teaching English, and should also take pride in their work, making every effort to constantly improve their approaches to teaching, as well as their attitudes towards it and their students.

Working towards a brighter future

In order to start solving the problems that exist in the language school system in Japan, there needs to be a concerted effort to attempt to make a difference. Teachers need to be made more aware of the ongoing changes in the field of EFL. This can be achieved through allowing and encouraging head teachers, managers, supervisors, administrators

and teachers at all levels to attend the conferences and workshops that are held on a semi-regular basis. As it currently stands, there is very little representation from most language schools at these events, due to the cost of sending personnel to different cities within Japan.

As a result, most schools remain stagnant and are unaware of the new ideas, materials and methods that are constantly being produced. However, if substantial change is to take place, there must be some sacrifices made. Internal workshops held within a school may be helpful for beginner teachers, but do not provide enough information for all teachers to substantially gain from them. It is only through learning from the experts in the field can everyone learn fruitfully, and eventually improve their teaching skills, with noticeable results seen in student behavior and performance in the classroom.

In any profession, an outlook to the future is imperative. EFL is no different, and in light of the drastic need for leaders and concrete action among them, the sooner the better. Clearly identifying expectations for teacher leadership roles and determining how educators will acquire the knowledge and skills needed to assume those roles successfully are critical steps in the continuous reform efforts to improve English language education. A true leader is one who has an implicit vision of the future and believes in shared decision making and power. This shared decision-making and power must be done with all of those willing to take charge of their situation and make a better future for themselves and the positions they are in.

A leader is not a person who stands by idly while others make the decisions, or worse, while the system breaks down in front of them. Leaders must undertake the action to move forward while preserving relationships. Teachers need to be aware of the need to constantly move forward in their profession. By doing so, there can be significant differences made in the field by adding onto the knowledge that already exists.

Making continuous improvement is an elemental part of transforming any profession, and will lead to innovation, new processes and fundamental change. Fundamental change is important for teachers to successfully adapt their teaching styles

to the needs of their students and the ever-evolving state of the nature of teaching English. If continuous improvement is achieved, it will lead to genuine innovation. Planting the seeds of thought and observing these basic ideas will bring about the necessary changes. However, those who are in leadership positions must step up to the forefront and make their beliefs known to everyone, or else there will be no change for the better, and we will be forced to constantly live the mistakes of our past over and over again. Thus, we will not be able to improve our methods in the classroom.

Teacher leaders must possess the rhetoric of reform and the realities of practice and realize that their job and responsibility is to encourage their colleagues to change and to do things they would not ordinarily consider without the influence of a leader (Wasley, 1991). The problem lies therein. For teachers to have the intrinsic motivation to want to take charge and motivate their colleagues to do the same takes a lot of courage. It is difficult to stimulate people to do something they might not feel is worthwhile. However, those who have true vision are capable of doing so. Additionally, teachers who do not see themselves in leadership roles must be full participants in any discussion about leadership because without their cooperation, the roots of change and adjustment cannot be made. Therefore, trust must exist between those who exhibit leadership qualities and teachers who do not, so that frank discussions about the needs of students and institutions can be brought out into the open and dealt with in a forthright manner.

Leaders in EFL must also strive to invigorate others to take steps of their own to lead at their own level. A leaders' task is to create new leaders at all levels. With the appropriate leadership in place at all levels, leaders who understand the needs and wants of students and their colleagues in the field can create a system that works efficiently and appeases everyone involved. This can be achieved by instilling a disposition toward inquiry, which is an essential quality for all leaders to have. The ability to constantly question our approach to teaching is a pervasive trait that will help teachers fully understand the nature of the practice of teaching itself and their role within it.

Because of the increasing need of Asian people to learn and speak English, the nature of the curriculum and the quality of teachers must be constantly upgraded in order to stay current and improve on the methods used in the classroom. To ensure that this happens, the leaders in the field need to continually reevaluate the needs of teachers and the discipline in general. There is no cause too small or unworthy, no plan undeserving of consideration, and no idea so trivial that it should not be at least considered, if it has the needs of students and the field as a whole in mind. Pragmatic thinking is needed by leaders and teachers alike: thinking which allows for realistic solutions to the problems that exist.

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Title:

ELT in India: A Brief Historical and Current Overview

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Bio

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Abstract

ELT in India is vibrant and dynamic today. The context of the whole teaching paradigm has changed totally. This article traces the course of this change, along with the causes and consequences while comparing this with the course of ELT in other contexts where it has always been a first language.

Key words

ELT in India, evolution of ELT, ripple effect, limited success of CLT,

Introduction

Due to its association with the British coloniser, English started life in India as not just a foreign language, but as a much-hated language. From the despised instrument of oppression to the reluctantly adopted lingua franca to the status symbol of the upper

classes to its position today as a second language, English has come a long way. In fact, it won't be an aberration to label it a first language for some echelons of Indian society. Just as the status of the language underwent constant reinvention, the whole ELT paradigm also travelled the complete gamut of modification. In the closing years of the Twentieth century when English began to emerge as the global language, the Indian classroom was transformed because of the change in the environment of the learner. Whereas the earlier surroundings had been acquisition poor with regard to English, suddenly every language user seemed to be jumping upon the learn- English- bandwagon.

The liberalisation of the Indian economy ushered in all kinds of reasons to learn the language. While earlier in the century students who had specialised in English joined either teaching or the civil services, now a whole new spectrum of job opportunities has opened up. There are now call centres that need trainers to equip their employees with communication skills, there are multinationals who have been recruiting marketing staff who needed to be taught spoken English, there are medical transcription centres which need efficient translators and reporters. Those desirous of immigration to the west needed professional help for clearing tests like the IELTS. Hence, the avenues where ELT came to be required in India are unlimited today.

The change was first observed at the social, political and economic levels. Suddenly, English ceased to be the badge of status for the upper crust. Earlier, only the upper classes and a few limited size groups were seen using English in everyday life. The middle class reserved it for official purposes or those social occasions where they wished to leave an impression. The lower classes thought the use of English was beyond them and since the government schools of India made no effort to teach any kind of spoken English, this category of people had no exposure to it. However, around the year 1995, the whole paradigm began to change. The liberalisation of the economy led to the advent of multinationals resulting in many developments like varied job opportunities that demanded a command of English, more English channels on the television, an increasing number of English publications and international lifestyles becoming a tempting option.

Fluctuating and Varied Institutional EFL Developments in India

The developments that have taken place in ELT methodology in the West took some time to reach Indian classrooms. The evolution of ELT in India, as in any other EFL country is linked with factors that are not pedagogic alone. Today, English can not be termed a foreign language in the Indian context, but in times past, it was a foreign language and its teaching had to take cognisance of all factors, pedagogic or otherwise. The two figures tracing the growth of ELT given here are different because ELT pedagogy developed primarily in the West where political and social realities were different and the status of English was fixed whereas, in India, ELT pedagogy depends upon the subtle and not-so-subtle ways in which the status of English keeps changing. No diagrammatic representation can be complete without taking into account the fluid nature of the position of English in Indian society.

Figure one is this author's representation of the development of ELT as a discipline in countries where English is the first language and figure two is the development of ELT in India, it is obvious from the two figures that developments in ELT take time to take root in India. The causes behind this gap are three:

1. Only around the year 1980 did English achieve adequate attention from policy makers, administrators and teachers. Due to its chequered history in the country, its complete importance was realised more than three decades after independence.
2. Apart from a One-year course in teacher training for schoolteachers, no formal teacher training is given to new recruits or practising teachers. There are orientation courses and refresher courses for teachers in general, but no course deals with ELT. It is only recently that the British Council has introduced CELTA and other such programmes; these are quite expensive, teachers do not want to spend money on them and their institutions rarely sponsor them.
3. The examination system is more achievement oriented rather than performance oriented, leading to an emphasis on grades and positions rather than issues of

4. fluency or proficiency. Indirectly, the teacher remains in many classrooms even today, the facilitator of examinations rather than of linguistic or communicative proficiency.

In spite of the slower rate of evolution, English Language Teaching in India has been widening in its approach and methods. The result is that there is an increasing tendency, scope and intent of reaching the end of the ELT cone. At its own eccentric pace, ELT in India is today in step with the rest of the world today. Where the issue of methodology is concerned, ELT seems to be in three transient stages according to the different levels of the paradigm and its demands:

1. The first level is that of the institutions run by the government, mainly primary, secondary and high schools. Since the primary goal of these institutions is to provide education at affordable and subsidised levels to the public, ELT teaching can not be placed at the widest end of the cone for the basic reason that the teachers there do not have much access to latest research and materials for reasons economic as well as geographic. Most of these institutions are the sole providers of education in rural and remote settings where they can fulfil adequately the basic requirements alone. In the urban locales the planning bodies are now moving towards up gradation through teacher training, syllabus modification and improved resources. In another decade or so, this level of ELT should be more communicative in nature with language and literature fully integrated.
2. At the second level are those institutions that are semi-government or are run by private managing bodies, assisted through government funds. These also include undergraduate colleges and postgraduate universities. Growth and development can be seen here in spurts. In some classrooms, teachers have reached the widest end of the cone, are aware of learner needs and adjust methodology accordingly and use a judicious blend of interaction and communication in the class. In others,

an observer feels caught in a time warp with pure talk-chalk lectures that are mostly teacher-centred. The positive observation is that there are practising teachers between these two poles, who are trying to change their teaching practice and are looking at alternate methodology. Just as there is a mixed bag of teaching practice, the institutions also range from indifferent to proactive. While there are places where even a small audio player is not accessible, there are administrators who have invested heavily in state of the art, perfectly equipped language laboratories.

3. The third level comprises pure private sector academies that undertake to make learners proficient English users within a stipulated period, of course by charging a fixed amount of fee. Since time means money for them, they are equipped with the latest materials like interactive, multimedia software. Jobs in the academic area are few and far between, so an increasing number of qualified teachers find their way to these places. The teacher profile gets younger and younger, resulting in increasing amounts of innovation and experimentation where methodology is concerned.

While teachers belonging to the first level are content to remain followers, the second level is being influenced by the third. When learners are in a rush as they need part-time employment or have an IELTS to clear, they often join academies in addition to their undergraduate classes. This creates a ripple effect and the ripples can be felt in three ways:

I. Young teachers who work in undergraduate colleges work part-time at these academies. At the academy, they use the latest teaching aids and materials since the purpose is to achieve fluency at the earliest. At their regular place of work, their teaching methodology undergoes a transformation because they tend to use the interactive, task-based and

communicative methods more than the usual lecture methods used there normally.

II. On taking into account the roaring business the academies are doing, the administrative bodies of undergraduate colleges are coming to realise that a whole untapped market needs to be explored. Along with their regular degree classes, they are gearing up to introduce revenue-earning courses in the field of English proficiency, open to the public. This leads to a spill over effect in the undergraduate classes too as some teachers would be common to both courses and the same campus sees a lot of innovative teaching.

III. Parents of learners form an important component of the teaching paradigm in India. Earlier, any kind of change in courseware or teaching methodology would result in stiff opposition from them[1] and the administrative body would recommend the continuation of age-old practices. Observing the winds of change resulting from the acceptance of the global status of English, parents today encourage innovation and experimentation in the classroom.

After attending interactive classes at the academy, learners search such stimulation in their regular classes too. This is a radical change, especially if one looks into the past. When communicative language teaching was introduced in India in the 1980s, it was a dismal failure for the first few years because of the lack of the right context. This context stands established in India today, so learners are receptive and are actively encouraging more learner-centred classes.

The context of the whole teaching situation started changing around the year 2000. Socio-economic factors played a major role in this change that is dynamic even today. The liberalization of the Indian economy led to the entry of many international brands into the learners' mindset. Call centres, shopping malls and trade fairs, all

need young personnel, fluent in English. There is a mushroom growth of institutes and academies of the third category above, offering the whole range of proficiency in English from clearing the IELTS to speaking fluently. The Internet has played a major role in creating a resource-rich environment by giving a wide range of exposure to English. Becoming web-savvy has emerged as the need of the day and this is possible only through English. These are just a few of the factors that have created a panacea for the deadlock that CLT had found itself in.

Today, in India, a whole new generation is coming up; a generation that travels a lot in countries where English is a first language, works in places where English is the lingua franca and as a result, carries home to other generations the same English as a medium of communication. Hence, the empowerment that Bax [2] looks forward to for teachers in times to come has come sooner due to changes in the context of the complete teaching paradigm. Unless the context is supportive of upgrading English performance of the teacher –which should be inclusive of communicative competence- no teacher training or upgrading of methodology can be productive and fruitful. This is a significant conclusion that can be drawn from the Indian situation.

The results of all the changes listed above stand reflected in the classrooms where CLT is still practised. The whole process of curriculum change is riddled with cumbersome and time-consuming procedures in India, so in spite of the limited success of CLT, it has not been removed from courses. This, in the long run, has been for the better because while on the one hand, the teachers have been able to familiarize themselves with its approach and methodology; on the other hand, the changed and changing context has encouraged its growing success today. Since learners are a part of the whole context, they are aware of the growing need for proficiency, both linguistic and communicative, in English. Today, more and more students take up part-time work (that requires fluency in English) along with their studies, this was earlier an aberration, now is the norm.

The Road Ahead in India: More CA Inclusive

ELT in India has come a long way from year 1880 when only 60% primary schools used English as the medium for teaching. (See Figure I &II) Up to 1940, the grammar-translation method flourished and the spread of English remained confined to education and office circles, yet again in a haphazard manner. By 1970, structural linguistics started making its presence felt in Indian classrooms in the shape of drills and exercises. Around this time, all professional courses began to be taught in English, which had also become established as a library language and a subject for independent study. As compared to its establishment as an autonomous subject in other English-as-first-language countries around 1940, ELT emerged as an autonomous subject in India as late as 1980.

Similarly, the language laboratory also became a part of the ELT paradigm around 1985 as compared to the 1940 of these countries. CALI or Computer Assisted Language Instruction reached most classrooms in 1960 but it came to the Indian classroom around 1985; at present, in some places it has evolved into CALL or Computer Assisted Language Learning. Both CALI and CALL have not been adopted widely due to the obvious constraints of finance and the typically Indian mindset that learning cannot take place without the presence of a human teacher. In the Indian context, Tickoo's distinction between CALI and CALL took on special significance[3]. While it is true that multinationals, call centres and some private institutes are encouraging CALL, it is CALI that has gained wider acceptance.

Communicative Language Teaching reached both regions (India and the West) between the years 1970 – 1980, with the difference that the Indian context was not ready for CLT. Hence, it took around two decades to gain acceptance among learners and teachers. Language-literature integration gained recognition among teachers around the same time. India after 1995 has made up for the slow elephant years by broadening the apex of the ELT cone with a generous mix of so many methodologies that come under the generic category of CA or the Communicative Approach [4].

It is true that mostly this CA is practised in the institutes that belong to the third category above but the ripple effect created is gradually reaching the ELT classroom. Most institutes that target the language users who need proficiency in a hurry or who need to clear certain examinations invest heavily in teaching materials from publishing houses like the Cambridge University Press. Since all materials published in such places of repute are state-of-the-art in terms of methodology, teachers and learners are in a position of maximum benefit. Moreover, teachers at these centres are usually young postgraduates who are receptive to novelty and innovation.

They borrow heavily from their materials and often create a methodology of their own by using combinations of audio lingual or situational or functional or interactive or task-based or communicative -or even the direct method language teaching. All these approaches and methods could be spread through a course or could even be used in one class, depending upon learner response. This pedagogy is still CA (Communicative Approach) oriented even if not restricted to one approach. Again teachers –especially the younger ones- are increasingly moving towards increasing the extent to which lessons are centred around CA.

The most significant impact of this approach is its sensitivity to learner needs and response. This sensitivity is what has been lacking in the academic aspect of ELT in India. The whole academic process is so unwieldy that it fails to respond to learner needs; learner response is too often ignored. The ELT cone of India is broadening at the base today because of factors that have little to do with the ELT classroom in academic institutions. The irony of the situation is that while academicians label these learning centres ‘shops’ or ‘commercial institutes’ it is these establishments that are a major influence behind the changing face of the ELT paradigm in India.

NOTES

1. Richards, J.C. and Rodgers, T.S. 2002. Approaches and Methods in Language Teaching. Delhi, Cambridge University Press. 248. '…*attempts to introduce Communicative Language Teaching in countries with very different educational traditions from those in which CLT was developed (Britain and the United States and other English-speaking countries) have sometimes been described as "cultural imperialism" because the assumptions and practices implicit in CLT are viewed as "correct" whereas those of the target culture are seen in need of replacement.'*
2. Bax, S.2003. 'Bringing context and methodology together'. *ELT Journal* 57/3: 295-296. Bax writes, 'In *my view methodology can – if treated with excessive reverence- act as a brake on teachers. If we are not careful we hinder teachers from developing their abilities to analyse and respond to the context productively. … some teachers do break out of the straitjacket, but why can't the profession empower them to do so? …The teacher is not to be merely 'reactive' to the context – teachers should not only be sensitive to the context, but also provide the key ingredients for language learning such as opportunities for input, output, attention to accuracy, and so on…'*
3. Tickoo, M.L. 2003. Teaching and Learning English. New Delhi, Orient Longman Pvt. Limited. 274-275. Tickoo writes, 'CALI *was mainly an extension of programmed learning which was extensively used alongside language laboratories in the 1960s. It uses linear or branching programmes as a kind of self-instructional support. The learner mainly responds to stimuli on the screen and receives positive or negative feedback or, in the case of a branching programme, some analysis of the wrong response followed by some additional information. Although such a lesson does facilitate a limited amount of self-learning, it does not provide much room for learner*

4. *involvement or interaction…CALL …marks a shift from teaching to learning. Computers with multimedia facilities are now used to offer far more interactive programmes…CALL's reaches have of late been spreading fast with language media centres being seen as an integral part of a well-equipped language classroom.'*
5. Richards and Rodgers. 2002. '*Mainstream teaching on both sides of the Atlantic …opted for Communicative Language teaching (CLT) as the recommended basis for language teaching methodology in the 1980s and it continues to be the most plausible basis for language teaching today, although … CLT is today understood to mean little more than a set of very general principles that can be applied and interpreted in a variety of ways.'* 244.

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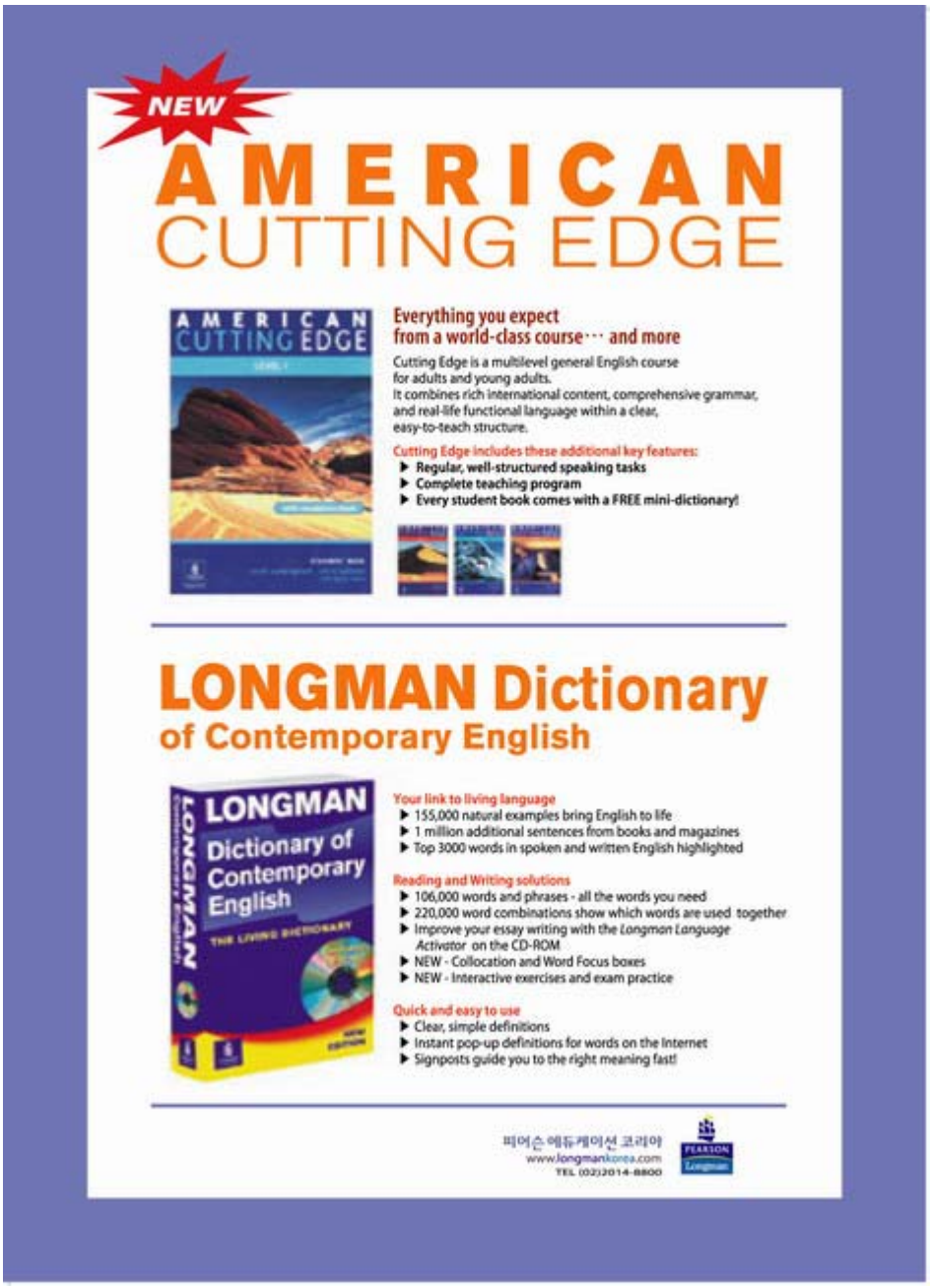

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