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Editorial

Multilingualism has been a key feature in the educational policy of Singapore for some four decades by now. The importance of mastering a second and even a third language is recognised here where there is a diversity of languages and culture, but the language issue has been eclipsed by other more immediate needs such as the expansion of educational facilities to provide a place at school for every child and the development of a curriculum more suited to contemporary needs and demands.

Lately, interest in the learning of languages has revived with the government focusing on the need to produce effectively bilingual citizens and the problems and measures this will entail. Educational policy has shifted toward a greater emphasis on the learning of English as a result of the choice of more and more parents of schools for their children where English is the medium of instruction. However, awareness of this trend and meeting the demands of these parents have not led to a switch to a monolingual situation.

The government has expressed concern about the need to continue with bilingualism, stressing the function of language as a means of preserving and transmitting culture. The best of both worlds, it is hoped, will be the outcome of bilingualism – English for modernisation – the needs of technology and the economy, and an Eastern language, Tamil, Malay or Mandarin – for assimilation of the better elements of Eastern culture and heritage.

Will the schools of Singapore succeed in turning out this ideal person who reflects the best of East and West? How much control of the environment of the child and society will there have to be to meet this objective? Education is only one form of socialization, teachers and schools are one of many agents of socialization which affect directly or indirectly the socialization of the child. A great deal is still unknown about how we become what we are, or about how to manipulate the variables and the input so that a certain kind of human being will emerge. Acquiring the culture does not necessarily follow the learning of the language through which the culture is expressed, though certainly the learning of a second language can open up a new circle of friends, experiences and interests.

Moving on to the actual mastery of a language, we come to a more tangible area as a great deal of research into how languages are acquired has taken place, leading to a better understanding of the factors that influence language learning and the methods that are more likely to be effective. Much too has been written to facilitate language learning. Textbooks and all kinds of materials flood the market, and teachers have a wider choice of books and materials.

However, there are still many areas of uncertainty which await the findings of further research. This issue of our Journal highlights the theme of language. Our contributors have had a free hand in selecting aspects of language that are of special concern for them. As a result, our readers will find a diversity of thought and approach. There is no attempt at a thorough, systematic and comprehensive study of language as such. Most of our contributors have had many years of teaching languages, and their perspective is that of the teacher rather than that of the linguist or researcher. Some of the articles thus discuss the methodology of language learning, including recent research on the subject. Others have preferred to examine the vehicles of language learning such as poetry, reading, drama and textbooks. Others have addressed themselves to the problems and pitfalls of learning a second language. One or two articles deal with some perplexing issues, for example, when should a child start with a second language, and offer some tentative answers. There is a range of subject to suit varied tastes and interests, but the unifying theme is one of concern as to how best to facilitate language learning for the child or adolescent.

Eddie C.Y. Kuo[1]
University of Singapore

Communication and Identity: Macro-Sociological Issues in Multilingual Societies[2]

Sociological Approach to Multilingualism

At the outset, it is important to point out that in this paper, following Weinreich (1953, p.1), Haugen (1956, p.9) and Mackey (1968, p.555), I make no distinction between bilingualism and multilingualism. Haugen justifies this usage by the assumption that the problems involved in bilin gualism do not seem to be essentially different when a third or a further language is added. In other words, multilingualism is merely a plural form of bilingualism. Throughout this paper, therefore, these two terms will be used interchangeably.

A source of confusion of the concept multilingualism comes from the fact that it has been used to refer to the coexistence of two or more languages within a geographical area, a social group, or an individual. Distinctions therefore should be made whether a specific reference is made to a society, a community, a family, or an individual. As a matter of fact, the relationships between the above concepts form an important area in the sociological study of multilingualism. In this paper, my interest is in the societies composed of linguistically heterogeneous populations. Such multilingual communities may or may not involve a large number of bilingual individuals, although inter-group communication involving a *lingua franca*, which is an "other tongue" for at least one language group, seems inevitable.

Traditionally, there are four major approaches to bilingualism – linguistic, educational, psychological, and sociological – each with different assumptions and theoretical foci. While the first three approaches enjoy long and fruitful academic traditions and are supported by an impressive amount of literature, the sociological approach is relatively new and as yet "underdeveloped". This approach however is gaining popularity rapidly both in the fields of linguistics and sociology, evolving into a substantial area of "sociolinguistics", or "sociology of language" as some sociologists prefer to call it (see, for instance, Fishman, 1972a).

In studying multilingualism, the sociologist of language is concerned with both the multilingual community and the multilingual individual. On the micro-level, he is interested in the choice of code by the multilingual individuals in different social domains involving different interlocutors. The focus is on the process of language behaviour in interpersonal relationships under situational constraints. Following basically the tradition of Gumperz, micro-sociological studies of language have been gaining popularity with recent development in ethno-methodology. Such a micro-approach to language is closer to psycholinguistic research and is best described as the social psychological study of language behaviour.

The interest of this paper is in the other type of sociological study of language, the macro-sociological orientation. As a contrast to the micro-approach, the focus here is more on the bilingual community rather than the individual. The researcher strives to investigate and explain the characteristics of a multilingual community in relation to some social structural variables. Macro-sociological studies of multilingualism are exemplified by Fishman's study of ethnic language maintenance in the United States (Fishman *et al.*, 1966) and Lieberson's study of linguistic diversity in Canada (1970).

Methodologically, macro-sociological studies rely heavily on the method of social survey to obtain quantitative data involving a large number of the population for statistical analysis. The measurement of linguistic variables such as language competence and language performance is typically based on self-reports made by the respondents. These data are then correlated with other variables

[1] Eddie Kuo is the Senior Lecturer in the Department of Sociology, University of Singapore.

[2] This is a revised version of a paper presented to the "International Symposium on Bilingual Education" held at the University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong, from 18 to 21 December 1976.

such as social-political structure in the community or social background (e.g. sex, race, religion, socioeconomic status) of the population involved.

Understandably, the problem of the relationship between self-reported language competence and actually observed or measured competence is questioned by both linguists and psycholinguists. Such limitations however are problems common to most social research using survey design. To some extent, such limitations in validity are compensated by the application of highly sophisticated statistical techniques for model building and hypothesis testing, as can be found in some sociolinguistic studies published in *American Sociological Review* (for instance, Lieberson and Hansen, 1974; Angle, 1976) and *American Journal of Sociology* (Lieberson *et al.*, 1975).

While I have no intention of getting into arguments on the merits and demerits of the use of aggregate survey data in sociolinguistic studies, it should be pointed out that the use of such data is necessitated by the focus of the sociology of language on some sociological variables at the macro-level such as social cohesion, national identity, communicative integration, and social stratification.

Macro-Sociological Issues of Multilingualism

Language, as a system of codes, is essential in interpersonal communication, intragroup or intergroup, between individuals who share the same system of symbols. Functionally, language also serves as a rallying point for group identity among those who speak the same mother tongue. Such feelings of language group identity, primordial as they may be, can be highly emotionally charged when contacts with members of other language groups are involved. At the same time, the relationship between language and cultural identity is so close that the learning of a language is often accompanied by a process of acculturation. Thus, while Lambert and his associates (1968) suggest that a distinction should be made between "instrumental orientation" and "integrative orientation" in second language learning, and Kelman (1971) points out the differences between "instrumental attachment" and "sentimental attachment", similarly, we can speak of language serving an "instrumental function" of communication and an "integrative" or "emotional" function of group solidarity.

Applying the concept of such functional dualism of language to the phenomenon of bilingualism, we see that a bilingual is a person equipped with extra facility to communicate with members of the other-tongue group. Such better ability to communicate and to establish contacts with a wider world is instrumental to occupational progress and economic advancement. Moreover, bilingual ability also leads to a better understanding and even certain sentimental association with a culture represented by a second language. This is basically how Lambert and his associates (1968) reach the conclusion that "an individual successfully acquiring a second language gradually adopts various aspects of behaviour which characterise members of another language-cultural group" (p. 473). Bilingualism therefore tends to lead to a lower level of ethnocentrism and more social tolerance.

At the societal level, the coexistence of two or more language groups in a community generally implies the presence of certain communication gaps between people from different cultural language backgrounds. The crucial problem is then how to maintain a minimal level of communicative integration so that society as a whole can function smoothly. Economically, such communicative integration is necessary in the division of labour and efficient exchange of goods and services; socially and politically, it is needed to maintain social cohesion and political stability.

Consequently, societal multilingualism implies the existence of barriers in communication which stem not only from language diversity but also from cultural differences in values, attitudes, etc. Since different language groups in a plural society tend to maintain a certain level of language group identity, societal multilingualism also implies a tendency for intergroup competition or conflict. This also means that the development of a supra-ethnic national identity can be hindered because of competing ethnic loyalties among its diversified population.

A closely related issue is the problem of social stratification and social mobility in relation to language competence and language diversity. For one thing, language group identity is almost always a stratifying factor in a multilingual society. A language group (often at the same time ethnically and culturally distinctive) for one reason or another assumes a dominant position in economic status and social standing in society; other groups are in a subordinate position. While it is well known that, even in a basically monolingual society, the social background of a person can easily be betrayed by his tongue, it is obvious that class stereotype of language groups and language speakers is much stronger and more clear cut in a multilingual society.

Moreover, one language may be more instrumental than others in career advancement and thus social mobility. Consequently, in a multilingual society, all languages can perhaps be equal in law, but never in actual practice. Some are bound to be more equal than others.

All the above issues are related to a language policy, bilingual education being part of it. Political leaders in a multilingual society must look carefully into the language problem as a whole, and formulate a language policy in such a way that social communication can be facilitated, social cohesion and political stability maintained, and national identity strengthened. To the extent that a language policy itself is a political decision resultant from some dynamic processes, both the process leading to the formulation of the policy and its possible social consequences deserve careful investigation by sociolinguists.

In the following, I will further elaborate on two major sociological issues in multilingual societies: (1) communicative integration and (2) national identity. The problem of the language policy will be treated as an underlying factor common to both. Specific examples will be drawn from Singapore society for illustration.

Communicative Integration

Making one of the earliest theoretical expositions of the role of communication in national development, Deutsch (1953, 1966) suggests that language and literacy are important elements in social communication and mobilization, which are in turn basic measures of national development. He persuasively shows that communication is essential to the formation of a people, a community and a nationality, and that the degree of linguistic assimilation is indicative of communicative ability, which determines the level of national assimilation or differentiation. The problem of communicative integration, moreover, tends to be aggravated as economic and technological advancements are forcing people of different backgrounds to come into constant contact with one another.

According to Deutsch (1966), linguistic and cultural assimilation in multiethnic states is a slow process that may involve decades and generations. As a contrast, growth in economy, technology, and societal structure such as transportation and marketing systems can be very rapid. Deutsch sees a great danger in this differential growth pattern in national development. In his own words,

> Much of this economic or technological development may force people into new and inescapable contacts with each other as workers, customers, and neighbours – contacts far narrower, perhaps, than the range of human relations that can be communicated within one culture; but contacts far wider than the relations which can be communicated in the absence of a common culture to outsiders. Linguistically and culturally, then, members of each group are outsiders for the other. Yet technological and economic processes are forcing them together into acute recognition of their differences and their common, mutual experience of strangeness, and more conspicuous differentiation and conflict may result (pp. 125 – 126).

Apparently, Deutsch is pessimistic that mere contacts at the societal level without meaningful social communication may lead to tension and conflict.

The maintenance of communicative integration in a multilingual society depends on either or both of the following factors: (1) a widely accepted *lingua franca* and (2) the extensive practice of multilingualism. Take the case of Singapore for instance. In my recent study of a sociolinguistic profile in Singapore (Kuo, 1976), I found that there does not exist a highly communicative *lingua franca* in this island-state. Rather, there is a complicated set of *linguae francae* in practice. In interethnic communication, Malay, especially its pidginized variant, "Bazaar Malay", is used in the more "traditional sector" in the society. As a contrast, English is the common language among the "more modern" for the more formal and official occasions. Yet for the population as a whole, except for the use of the Malay language in Malay-Indian communication, neither English nor Malay is highly communicable (see Kuo, 1976, for more details). This dual pattern is paralleled by another dual system in the Chinese community, whereby Hokkien is used in the "traditional sector" in interdialect group communication, and Mandarin is steadily gaining status for the more formal or official functions. English and Mandarin are thus High (H) languages, and Bazaar Malay and Hokkien Low (L) languages in Singapore.

Without a widely accepted *lingua franca*, communicative integration in Singapore depends mainly on the extensive practice of multilingualism as the guiding principle of the language policy. While this is obvious even for casual visitors to Singapore, the policy of multilingualism is most

clearly manifested in Singapore's bilingual educational system with four types of language medium schools, and in the availability of various languages, programmes and publications in the mass media (see Kuo, 1978). It is significant that Singapore's bilingualism and bilingual education emphasize the combination of English and one of the other official languages (Mandarin Chinese, Malay, and Tamil). English is therefore being promoted as the major *lingua franca* for a greater role in the future. On the other hand, the availability of mass media messages in various languages and dialects guarantees that most of the heterogeneous population can be reached and mobilized (see Kuo, 1978). Furthermore, competent bilinguals are mobilized to occupy strategic, though not necessarily powerful, positions to play the role of the social broker to facilitate communicative integration in society.

National Identity

For most developing countries in Asia and Africa, the task of nation-building is constantly confronted with the problems of ethnic and linguistic diversity. The presence of competing ethnic/language groups in these new states generally means that the establishment of a new nationhood requires the cultivation of a new national identity. The emerging national identity can be achieved either through an expansion and elevation of an indigenous ethnic/language identity imposing upon other "less" indigenous and usually minority groups, or through the development of a new supraethnic identity treating various ethnic groups as of equal standing. In either case, it is expected that the emergence of a new national identity is not likely to be natural or spontaneous. The crucial problem faced by most new multiethnic states is thus the potential conflict between loyalty to one's speech community and loyalty to the wider national community. The essential question is how the two can be reconciled rapidly and smoothly to facilitate the process of nation-building.

According to Stewart (1968), language planning policies of the new states generally fall into two types of strategies:

1. the eventual elimination, by education or decree, of all but one language, which is to remain as the national language,

2. the recognition and preservation of important languages within the national territory, supplemented by the adoption of one or more languages to serve for official purposes and for communication across language boundaries within the nation (p. 540).

Of these two strategies, the first one clearly aims at eliminating linguistic diversity, and is usually part of a more general policy aiming at eventual assimilation and a "national" culture of all ethnic minorities. This appears to be the strategy being implemented in Malaysia. As a contrast, the second approach is more tolerant of cultural diversity, and usually reflects an official policy of cultural pluralism. This is clearly the policy being adopted in Singapore today.

Kelman (1971) analyzes the problem from a sociopsychological point of view. He points out that sentimental attachments with respective ethnic/language groups in a multilingual society pose a potential barrier to participation in the national system and to the development of a national identity. He however believes that so long as the existing sociopolitical structure is effective enough to satisfy the basic needs of the individual and his ethnic/language community, the resultant instrumental attachment may eventually lead to sentimental attachment to the new state and then to the emergence of a new national identity.

Accordingly, in such new states, language policies ought to be based entirely on functional considerations:

> That is, in selecting languages for various purposes. . ., central authorities ought to be concerned primarily with two issues: (1) how to establish and facilitate patterns of communication . . . that would enable its socioeconomic institutions to function most effectively and equitably in meeting the needs and interests of the population; and (2) how to assure that different groups within the society. . . have equal access to the system and opportunities to participate in it (Kelman, 1971, p. 40).

Again, let me draw the case of Singapore for illustration. In Singapore, English has been adopted as the *de facto* working language (Kuo, 1977), a policy that satisfies both "issues" suggested by Kelman. On the one hand, the use of English promotes economic progress for both society as a whole and its individual speakers. On the other hand, English is a non-native language in which none of the major ethnic groups is at an advantage over the other two. (The same observation can be made with English in India and Bahasa Indonesia in Indonesia.) The use of this "neutral" language helps rule out any substantial interethnic conflict based on the language issue in Singapore.

At the same time, the practice of multi-

lingualism in education and mass media communication, as in other aspects of daily life experiences, serves to neutralize language cleavages as a politically divisive issue. It functions more to assure equality and to avoid conflict rather than to directly encourage national identity, since multilingualism also means continued attachments to ethnic culture and traditional values. Whatever transition (or expansion) is needed from ethnic loyalty to national identity, the leaders of Singapore seem willing and patient to let the process take its slow but steady pace. They can be confident that as long as economic development and political stability are sustained, the emergence of a national identity is only a matter of time – even though a long time.

The role of the language policy in Singapore in relation to nation-building is thus through the cultivation of instrumental attachments in the population leading eventually to new sentimental attachments to the new state, and hopefully to the emergence of a supraethnic national identity. According to Fishman, this is a "state-into-nationality" process of nation-building, involving a transformation from "politico-operational integration" to "socio-cultural integration" (1972b, p. 231). The case of Singapore represents an ongoing experiment that has attracted the attention of many social scientists.

Concluding Remarks

Let me make some final notes to conclude this paper. Firstly, the case of Singapore is presented as an example, maybe a unique one, of multilingual societies. Singapore society is unique in many ways and thus can provide some enlightening insights to other social scientists as well as sociolinguists. At the same time, it is so unique that its experiences should be carefully interpreted and generalized in any attempt to apply them to other multilingual societies. Secondly, there are many more important macro-sociolinguistic issues than what have been discussed in this paper. Many more remain to be explored. Thirdly, although my personal interest is in the sociological approach to multilingualism, I would like to emphasize that the study of multilingualism requires inter-disciplinary efforts from linguistics, psychology, education, anthropology, as well as sociology. Each complements one another, and none is superior to the other.

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Lim Kiat Boey[1]
RELC

Bilingualism in Singapore

In the light of the current emphasis on bilingualism in the Singapore education system, I think it pertinent to bring to the attention of teachers and parents the findings of research and present thinking on the issues of bilingualism.

Most of the studies on the effects of bilingualism in the early period, that is, before the 1960s, were not careful to control such factors as social class, educational opportunities and extent of bilingualism of the groups compared. While noting inadequacies in many of these studies, Lambert (1978) stated: "There was nonetheless an overwhelming trend in the outcomes: the largest proportion of these investigations concluded that bilingualism has a detrimental effect on intellectual functioning, a smaller number found little or no relation between bilingualism and intelligence, and only two suggested that bilingualism might have favourable consequences on cognition" (p. 537).

The reversal in the trend of adverse findings in relation to the intellectual functioning of bilinguals began with the study by Peal and Lambert (1962) in Canada. They compared carefully matched groups of bilingual and monolingual children on verbal and non-verbal measures of intelligence and found that the former scored significantly ahead on both measures. Further analysis of the test results showed that the bilinguals were more flexible in thought and had a "more diversified structure of intelligence" (p. 17).

These findings have been confirmed by subsequent studies in many countries around the world (Lambert, 1978), including one in Singapore (Torrance *et al.*, 1970). In the Singapore study monolingual and bilingual Chinese and Malay children in primary schools were administered the Torrance Test of Creative Thinking. The overall results showed that the bilinguals excelled the monolinguals on originality and elaboration. The studies referred to above have produced evidence that becoming bilingual does not reduce efficiency of cognitive functioning. On the other hand, bilinguals seem to enjoy an advantage in the domain of cognitive flexibility. Apparently, having more than one system of reference to the real world freed the bilinguals from being hidebound by the linguistic system on the one hand and enabled them to manipulate the actual concepts, ideas and things with greater autonomy on the other.

While the findings of the studies referred to above provide reassuring evidence of the advantages of being bilingual, there is also evidence of the problems that may arise when bilingual education is introduced in certain circumstances. In their study of Finnish migrant workers' children, Skutnabb-Kangas and Toukomaa[2] found that the children had poorly developed L1 skills at the start of school, which was in the medium of Swedish, and that although they had average intellectual ability they achieved very low levels of Swedish language skills. At the same time, their Finnish first language skills remained poorly developed.

The investigators have used the term "semilingualism" to refer to the linguistic achievement of the Finnish children. However, semilingualism is not to be regarded as a purely linguistic concept, because although the children's Swedish was considered by teachers and parents to be fluent they could not carry out complex cognitive operations in Swedish. Thus their surface fluency was a "linguistic facade" and semilingualism refers not to the linguistic skills themselves but "to the child's capacity to represent complex cognitive operations through his L1 and L2", that is, to his cognitive functioning in the languages.

In the light of this concept of semilingualism and the differential findings of studies of the relationship between bilingualism and cognition, Cummins (1978) has put forth two hypotheses to provide "a framework for investigating the dynamics of the bilingual child's interaction with

[1] Lim Kiat Boey is the Specialist in Language Teaching Methodology at the Regional Language Centre, Singapore.

[2] Cited by Cummins (1978).

his educational environment" (p. 396). One is the "threshold" hypothesis which states that it is the child's levels of attainment in L1 and L2 which affect his cognitive and academic performance. It is suggested that a child must reach certain threshold levels of linguistic competence before being able to reap the cognitive advantages of being bilingual.

The second hypothesis is called the "developmental interdependence" hypothesis, which states that development of skills in a second language depends on the skills already developed in the first language. Where the mother tongue has been inadequately developed the introduction of a second language may hinder the continued development of the first. This in turn will limit the development of competence in the second language. Where the first language has been highly developed before the child is introduced to the second language, the most efficient means of promoting a high level of functional bilingualism is intensive exposure to the second language. And this can be done at no cost to first language competence.

Cummins (1978) goes on to show how his hypotheses are borne out by the pre- and post-1960s studies of the relation between bilingualism and cognition.

What is the relation of the hypotheses to the bilingual situation in Singapore? There has been a shift in primary school enrolment in recent years, resulting currently in 90 per cent of primary one children attending English medium schools. According to Kuo (1976), there are about 4.3 per cent[1] of the local population who speak English as their first language. Presumably such speakers come from middle class families where the use of language would be highly developed. It is understandable that these English-speaking parents want to send their children to English medium schools where they would have no problems of coping with the language of instruction. But if these children's first language (i.e. English) has been highly developed then they can afford to be intensively exposed to a second language (i.e. Mandarin) by being enrolled in a Chinese medium school. As stated above, it is their best means of acquiring a high level of functional bilingualism at no cost to their first language competence.

What of the rest of the 90 per cent enrolled in English medium primary schools? The majority would be from Chinese-speaking homes and a minority from Tamil- or Malay-speaking homes. Where their first language is well developed, whether it be a Chinese dialect, Malay or Tamil, intensive exposure to a second language in an English medium school will not be harmful, but will develop effective bilingualism. However, for children who grow up in unstimulating language environments and have developed low levels of first language competence, it would seem more helpful to the children to enrol them in Tamil, Malay or Chinese medium schools, so that their first language competence may be further developed before its being limited by intensive exposure to a second language and at the same time impeding their acquisition of the second language.

It may be argued that a Chinese child speaking a Chinese dialect is intensively exposed to a second language anyway when he attends a Chinese medium school, since the language of instruction is not his home dialect but Mandarin. However, it must be conceded that the distance between Mandarin and any Chinese dialect is much less than that between English and a Chinese dialect. With a firmer grounding in his first language, he will at least gain mastery over the cognitive structure of one language. He will thus avoid the pitfall of semilingualism, where he is effective in neither his first nor second language.

The aim of effective bilingualism is admirable but to think it is achievable for the majority is unrealistic. It is imperative and reasonable to expect the top 10 – 20 per cent of Singapore citizens to be effectively bilingual; that is, to have control over the cognitive structure of more than one language. For about 60 per cent the control over two languages will be differential – in one language both productive and receptive skills are highly developed while in the other the receptive skills tend to be better developed. As for the bottom 20 per cent, all we should wish for them is that they can function well in one language, in order to participate as citizens in a democratic society.

The pursuit of bilingualism is important and exciting, but let it not blind us to equally valuable pursuits in education. The pursuit of social development and self-knowledge requires time to mingle and interact freely with others in play and at leisure. The ability to organise oneself and one's own time requires that one has free and unorganised time to plan for oneself. The ability to think for oneself, to read and reflect with enjoyment and profit again requires time to browse and to follow up an interest or line of thinking. Keeping children occupied in school from morn till eve or with a

[1] Mealtime speakers of a language are assumed to speak it as a first language.

succession of tutors through the week is not the best way of educating them. We may succeed in turning them into effective learning machines but I dare say we would like to have happy genuine human beings rather than merely efficient machines in the future Singapore.

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Richard Sloane
Institute of Education

Is There a Best Age to Learn a Foreign Language?

Anyone looking for a hard and fast answer to the question posed in the title will, I am afraid, be disappointed. The evidence is, to say the least, confusing and contradictory. There are, however, a few basic facts to hang on to and it is mainly with these that I want to deal. I propose to argue that age *is* a relevant factor in learning a second language, especially for the 40 plus age group, to take a rather arbitrary limit.

Let us begin, however, by discussing the language learning abilities of children. The first major point here is that it is generally agreed that pronunciation excellence is only achieved at an early age. Why should this be so? There seem to be three reasons: first, perfect pronunciation seems to be one of the primary language abilities which can only be achieved from fifteen months to puberty because of its coincidence with the physical maturation of the brain. Second, achieving good pronunciation is essentially an imitative process and after puberty, embarrassment and/or irritation about imitating foreigners increases, whereas imitation is a source of pleasure for the young child. So adults are inhibited; they have a psychological stumbling-block. Finally, Haugen (1965) said, rightly I believe, that to lose one's accent is to identify completely with another society and way of life and that a foreign accent is the last bastion of the foreigner's original identity.[1] We can see in this point again the problem of psychological adaptability which, in my opinion, is the greatest single barrier to older people in learning a second language.

Now I want to discuss the neurophysiological evidence for language acquisition, bearing in mind, of course, that this is not necessarily relevant for L2 learning. There is no doubt that there is a critical period, extending to puberty, when the child is in a state of readiness for first language learning. It is now that the brain mechanisms that acquire and control language are developed and if the child is not exposed to language then, the innate capacity will atrophy and the ability to learn a language will be lost for ever. The proof for this lies in the few recorded cases of so-called wolf children who never learnt to speak unless they were discovered before puberty and in the cases of the two modern American children, Isabelle and Genie. Isabelle was found when she was six and a half and she covered in two years the learning that normally occupies six years. Genie, on the other hand, was not found until she was nearly fourteen and she is progressing linguistically much more slowly than normal children. She has the ability to learn isolated lexical items but not, it appears, grammar.

Penfield and Roberts (1959) have collected an impressive body of evidence to show that the child's brain has a specialized capacity for learning language which decreases with time and which is innately connected with the plasticity of the brain when young. For instance, injury or a disorder like aphasia can destroy the speech areas in the dominant left-cerebral hemisphere and both child and adult will become speechless. However the child will always speak again while the adult usually won't since, in the child, the speech areas are simply transferred to the right-cerebral hemisphere. So the hardening of the speech centres is relevant.

Therefore language acquisition is certainly regulated by maturational phenomena, there being, for example, an observable synchrony between the motor and language milestones in cases of general retardation. Also variables such as the "mother's ability to cope", loss or absence of either parent, or socio-economic class do not change the age at which children speak. So it seems that "after puberty, the brain behaves as if it had become set in its ways and primary, basic language skills not acquired by that time, except for articulation, usually remain deficient for life" (Lenneburg, 1967, p. 152).

There is some evidence also from bilingual studies. When languages are in contact, the child either learns them simultaneously (infant bilingual) or sequentially (childhood bilingual). Both types

[1] Quoted in Torrey, 1971, p. 252.

attain accuracy and fluency in both languages. This is the natural situation but it does not prove that *all* children would attain such a level. Adults, however, never achieve the same success.

If we accept Penfield's thesis, then, as applying to L2 learning, we have to conclude that the younger we start the better. However, Burstall, in her report on Primary French (NFER, 1974), concludes from her massive study that there is no intrinsic advantage in starting young. She says that it is the time spent on learning, not age, which is the important factor. Stern (1976), however, in his critique of her report, points out that she herself stated that environmental conditions were vital and therefore that there is no reason to suppose that age had anything to do with it. He says, "A purely maturational explanation in favour of older learners would be reasonable only if environmental factors could not account for the relatively disappointing results of the experimental group. Many such environmental factors can, however, be found; they include: the quality of teaching, the rigidity of the teaching methodology, undifferentiated classes at the primary level, lack of transition from primary to secondary school, and inadequate arrangements for the Pilot scheme children at the secondary stage" (p. 291). If I might come down off the fence for a moment, I would suggest that second language learning at the primary level, in spite of the lack of hard evidence, is a worthwhile undertaking provided that Stern's environmental factors are borne in mind and compensated for.

I now want to turn to the differences between the child (L1) and the adult (L2) learner. It has been conclusively proved, first, that older learners have the better memories, a predictable but obviously important point. Second, the child depends on concrete experience, the adult on the ability to use abstractions and inductions so that reading, for example, is useful for the adult. Third, the young child treats language as sound, the adult as sense. And finally, language is not the child's primary conscious goal and he is not aware of the fact of learning. He has four advantages over the adult (L2) learner. He has strong motivation since he cannot play without language; his learning is realistic as opposed to the sterile classroom environment of the adult; he gets more practice in speaking (remember the limited amount of time an adult, or a schoolchild, can speak in a classroom) and his practice is spaced – in other words, he doesn't forget because he is constantly being reminded and reinforced. The differences, then, are fairly crucial but not so important that no spin-off accrues to the language teacher from studies of L1 acquisition.

I would like now to consider the problems adult learners have with an L2. My basic argument, which goes back to the beginning of this article, is that psychological and cultural barriers are crucial for older learners with the linguistic problem of interference also detracting from the adult's ability to use a foreign language successfully. Torrey (1971), in an interesting article, says first that learning a language means accepting a culture and therefore in some degree a personal identity. Or as Pit Corder (1973) says, "The teacher is attempting to extend, to a greater or lesser degree, the behavioural repertoire, set of rules or ways of thinking of the learner" (p. 113). Learning a language means allying oneself with an alien pattern of thought, value and self-expression. There are positive values towards the other culture, for example, if the foreign country has prestige, and negative ones because the culture is not one's own. It is necessary to adopt mannerisms of speech, strange intonation patterns and non-vocal gestures of which many may seem ridiculous or arouse hostility. All these are problems, especially for the older learner. Incidentally, there are plenty of examples of research, carried out with university students, where identification with another culture through the language has either assisted the learner or caused a dangerous split in personality (Torrey, 1971, p. 251). Think how much harder it must be to adopt an alien culture and way of thinking for the first time in one's 50's or 60's.

There are several other factors which may play a part in inhibiting the older learner. These are the length of time the student has been out of a classroom, their feelings vis-a-vis the teacher (whether of superiority or inferiority) and the problem of inhibition when it comes to interaction with other members of the class. This list is certainly not exhaustive and experienced teachers of adults will probably be able to add other factors.

In all fairness I must add two final quotations which could be construed as going against my argument. Carroll (1971) found that with a group of learners mainly in their 30's, learning did decrease slightly with age, but he reports that aptitude was a far more significant variable than age. Finally Wilkins (1972) says, indisputably, "If learning a language is a more difficult thing for the adult, he has a far greater capacity for overcoming difficulties than the child" (p. 187).

As should by now be clear, the evidence is contradictory for the best age at which to study

an L2. Some things, however, are clear. There is plenty of evidence for a critical period of language acquisition and also for the child's phonological abilities. Likewise there is enough evidence to prove, I believe, that creating adult bilinguals can be a heartbreaking business. However, I agree with Jakobovits (1970) when he says that the question of the best age to learn a foreign language is not a real one. All ages have their advantages and disadvantages, even though I do believe that after a certain age, learning an L2 becomes increasingly difficult since the student is liable to become too deeply entrenched in his own system of values, his own conceptical prejudices. Finally on an anecdotal note, speaking from my own experience with some corroboration from other teachers, I would say that students in their late teens and early 20's are the fastest and most efficient learners.

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Marianne Mercer
Institute of Education

Five-Year-Olds Crack The Code

In January 1979 preprimary classes were opened in a number of Chinese medium primary schools. One of the objectives of these classes is to give the five-year-olds a better start on the path to "effective bilingualism" in English and Mandarin. Few would doubt that the earlier the child has an opportunity to listen and to speak in two languages, the better chance he has of functioning confidently and fluently in those languages. These children from truly bilingual homes[1] would seem to be at a distinct advantage here since it is highly likely that they will have already "cracked the code"[2] in both languages. They can approach the task of learning without having to acquire a whole new set of labels for concepts they already possess. So how does the preprimary class hope to compensate for the fact that the majority of children in these classes will have had little or no contact with English? The school can control the quantity and quality of "language time" for the children. The structure of the primary timetable has provided for the former, the latter is the prerogative of the teacher. The children are "exposed to"[3] 50 per cent English and 50 per cent Mandarin. The curriculum guidelines determine what the child learns in the classroom but it is the teacher, through her consideration of how, when and where the child learns his language, who determines the quality and kind of instruction. She does so through her provision, organization and techniques of language teaching combined with her own personality and attitudes. What principles and practice can the teacher employ to ensure that, at least in the classroom, the children have a maximum opportunity to crack the code of English?

The following suggestions are culled from two primary sources: the publications of the Schools Council Communication Skills in Early Childhood Project (Tough, 1976, 1977) and the work of Edie Garvie in her book *Breakthrough to Fluency* (1976). At first glance, these two works would seem to contradict each other as far as principles of learning a second language are concerned. Joan Tough maintains that we should be improving the child's use of speech language by looking to the child's natural motivation for learning to use language rather than by trying to teach him patterns and forms of speech. Edie Garvie stresses focusing sessions with the children when the focus is those very patterns and forms of speech which Tough decries. It would appear to be an argument between the formal approach to language learning and the informal, functional approach to language learning. However a closer look at their materials shows that we are really considering two faces of the same coin. Tough emphasizes the functional, notional aspects of learning a second language at a young age while Garvie stresses the structural strategies that can be used. It would seem that the classroom teacher would do well to try and blend the two approaches. To find out what this implies we need to examine more closely what it is that the two writers advocate.

The Schools Council Communication Skills in Early Childhood Project, working from Leeds University, arose from the experiences of the Preschool Education Project which revealed that nursery and infant teachers had a great deal of interest in but comparatively little knowledge of the development and use of language in young children. The methods suggested in the two publications of the Schools Council project were formulated and tested as a result of the work of approximately 1,500 teachers of young children all over Britain. Part of the work was concerned with teachers of young children learning English

[1] See the case studies in Andersson and Boyer, *Bilingual Schooling in the United States*, 1978.

[2] A term used by Edie Garvie to describe the period after initial orientation into the first language, akin to Tough's adjustment and attunement stage.

[3] This is an unfortunate term in some ways since learning a language is not *just* a matter of being "exposed" to it.

as a second language. The project's first publication guides teachers in making appraisals of children's language used when talking with one another and the teacher as they go about their everyday classroom activities. The second volume, *Talking and Learning,* examines ways in which the teacher can promote the development of the child's skill in using language. The author of both publications is Dr. Joan Tough, the project director.

Edie Garvie's ideas are based on her work in the Bradford Infant Centres where she was helping non-English speaking children of Asian background to acquire some English before entering primary school.

At this point it is important to bear in mind that both Tough and Garvie are working with *immigrant* children for whom English is a second language. Obviously differences exist in how, when, where and why English is used by immigrant children in Britain and say, Chinese children in Singapore. This does not deny the usefulness of their suggestions but does imply that such suggestions need to be reviewed for their adaptability for use with young Singaporean children. For instance, in the preprimary classes, where 50/50 exposure to Mandarin and English is the aim, one can expect few children to come from English speaking homes; therefore there is less likelihood that the children will use English amongst themselves. Immigrant children, on the other hand, will join classes where the medium of communication between most of the children will be English. There is an added problem for the children in the preprimary classes in that both languages of instruction, Mandarin and English, may be second languages.

Tough and Garvie approach the problem of teaching English as a second language in similar ways to some extent. They review the stages of language development in the young child and note the differences between first and second language learning. Tough brings out these differences clearly and recommends that we should be attempting to make use of those conditions which encourage first language learning in the second language learning situation. Garvie (1976) emphasizes that, although the young child has learnt his first language remarkably well under these conditions, as teachers we must be aware that "the learner comes to the learning of his second language as a developed being" and for this reason he must be specially motivated to learn his second language (p. 4). Both authors recognize the problem of "interference" of the first language with the second language and note that this will affect the child's early learning. Garvie explains the situation for the young second language learner well when she describes him as a person who has to be helped to "crack the new code" and later to switch when the need arises (p. 5).

However the strategies for helping the children to do this are tackled by the authors from different viewpoints. Garvie considers the steps of concept development in terms of the second language which she labels Identification, Qualification, Relation, Classification and Manipulation. She sees the young learner working through the five "tions" in all areas of experience where he uses his second language. Tough, in developing her "Framework for Learning a Second Language" considers first why we should *not* be adopting these tactics employed by adult second language learners. Young children, she maintains, have not reached the level of conceptual development that makes possible the kind of thinking and motivation employed by the adult when acquiring a new language. She urges teachers to make use of the conditions which encourage children to learn their first language in the activities of the classroom. She examines the purposes for which children use language in the classroom (and there is no reason to suppose that Singaporean children differ from British children in what they use language for) and concludes that they come under four main headings: self-maintaining, directing, reporting and reasoning. She suggests that the teacher's objectives should be to establish the use of English for each of these purposes, labelling them

1. language for helping the child to become adjusted and attuned,
2. language for self-help,
3. language for joining in activities,
4. language for finding out,
5. language for extended learning.

While accepting that this framework reflects excellently the uses to which the child will put his second language in the classroom, the samples of dialogue supporting Tough's framework (recordings of actual conversations in the classroom) demonstrate that the factors which are required may not yet be present in the Singaporean preprimary class:

a) a teacher who is well versed in making appraisals of children's language and who can grasp opportunities easily for helping children employ certain language in activities,
b) a well-established and tried programme of activities for the children,
c) a teacher:child ratio which allows for frequent teacher:child dialogue.

Edie Garvie, on the other hand, accepts that these conditions are not always possible. She looks more closely at *what* it is we want young children to learn and suggests that since language learning is both a matter of making discoveries and forming habits, that the teacher should be providing "a field of learning" in which there is a certain amount of direction and "focus". It is this idea which is reflected in the curriculum guidelines for the preprimary classes in the form of "Centres of Interest". Garvie herself advocates the centre of interest as a means of focusing on part of the whole language field. Given a centre of interest, or to use Garvie's term a "category of experience", say "My Family", a natural limit is provided for the language to be learnt. A closer examination of Garvie's Language Checklists which arise from the focusing done by the teacher on an aspect of the curriculum or category of experience reveals a structural/functional approach to the analysis of language, which, when combined with Tough's Framework for Learning a Second Language, would seem to produce a very useful checklist of items for the teacher to cover. At this stage however it must be emphasized that on no account should the language that is relevant to a particular activity be sacrificed for the preplanned items that the teacher may have in mind. In other words if the perfect tense is required then it should be used. The child should not be denied the chance of learning it just because he has not "done" the present tense. Practice shows that often a child will acquire whatever language we want, provided that the situation is stimulating enough and the language to be used really relevant to the task in hand. At no point would either of the authors suggest that language learning for young children become so structured as to exclude all those well established infant teaching strategies which revolve around play. Rather through the informal play activities which the teacher makes provision for, she can help the child focus attention on language by talking with him about whatever he is doing. Through more structured activities, such as those suggested by Edie Garvie, specific vocabulary, structures and formulae can be practised.

In her book, *Children's Minds* (1978), Margaret Donaldson explores the changes of thinking that have occurred during this century as to how children acquire language. Research carried out at Edinburgh University in the last ten years is proving that "it is the child's ability to interpret situations which makes it possible for him, through active processes of hypothesis testing and inference, to arrive at a knowledge of language" (p. 38) and that language learning is very closely bound up with all other learning that is going on. We say that children understand before they speak but Donaldson regards this as an oversimplification since the correct understanding of a word on one occasion certainly does not guarantee the interpretation of that word on another occasion. Research carried out at Edinburgh University has shown that, by varying the situation, different levels of understanding in the child can be achieved (thereby questioning some of Piaget's work). Findings such as these would indicate that for the young child who is developing communication skills, it is the language in the situation which is all important. If this is the case for a child's first language, then it must be taken into account when a young child learns his second language, i.e. a child learns language best when it is acquired *through* his activities.

The five-year-old in the preprimary class has to learn to "crack the code" before he can learn later to switch codes whenever the need arises. To help him do this the teacher would do well to try to combine the best of well tried strategies for infant teaching with up to date principles of how young children best acquire a second language with which to learn. In the preprimary class both English and Mandarin will act as vehicles for further learning to take place. This means that the teacher needs to provide the children with the motivation for learning the second language by setting up communicative learning situations in and around the classroom. Any activity, be it creative activities, block-building, playing in the sandpit, or enjoying books in the reading corner, has a potential for dialogue. It is for the teacher to grasp the opportunity to encourage children to use the second language in these activities. With a centre of interest to provide focus for language learning, the teacher can be sure that the children have a chance to become familiar with a limited number of vocabulary items and to some extent a limited number of structures. Five-year-olds *can* crack the code and break through to fluency if they are sufficiently motivated to use the second language. Until the five-year-old has cracked the code, his overall learning progress will be limited. Perhaps, with some of the above ideas in mind, the preprimary teacher will be better equipped to take on the task.

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Judith Lucas and Marianne Mercer
Institute of Education

Day Care:
A Discussion of Language and Related Issues

Rationale

So far two day care centres have been opened by the People's Association to cater for the children of working parents. It is expected that many more such centres will be opened in the future to meet the growing need.

In addition to the problems of organizing and implementing a developmental daily programme and providing adequate and appropriate facilities for such centres, several other concerns necessitate comment and an exchange of ideas from interested professionals. Although Singapore cannot afford to let the decision making process be hindered by divisive and prolonged dialogue, the success of a programme does depend on the clarity of its objectives and the degree to which those objectives are understood and accepted by not only those who implement the programme but also by those who are beneficiaries of it. Clear objectives, in turn, result from constructive discussion and planning.

This paper will consider areas within the scope of competence of the authors and is based on related experience of early childhood education in several countries. Their opinions may not be definitive but hopefully will initiate discussion that will result in a comprehensive, child-oriented philosophy and programme for day care that is an appropriate Singaporean model.

The paper limits itself to the discussion of three topics but this does not preclude other important issues. The topics are language, teacher training and parent involvement. These three areas will be considered with the proviso that the day care programme aims to:

1. promote the total development of children,
2. make adequate provision in terms of staff facilities and equipment to cater for this development,
3. encourage the development and maintenance of positive home/centre relationships in recognition of the fact that parents are the prime influence on the child and
4. organize homogeneous classes in terms of the stage of development as well as the chronological age of children.

The recommendations that follow in each of the areas are based on both accepted child development theory and a knowledge of what is feasible and practical in the Singapore context. In line with the recent report of Dr. Goh Keng Swee and the Education Study Team and recent research in the area of language in early childhood education, it is strongly recommended that at the ages of three, four and five, language be accepted as the medium through which children learn and not as something to be learned in itself. The primary responsibility of a day care programme must be to provide opportunities for the child to grow in the areas of social/moral, emotional, physical, and cognitive/intellectual development.

The acquisition of language is an integral part of overall development and therefore it must be seen as a means to an end. It is through language, i.e., listening and understanding, then communicating orally and later in writing, that children learn to interpret experiences. Research has shown that without vocalization of experience, children's thinking skills are not adequately developed. Thus the choice of a medium of instruction becomes crucial to the effectiveness of the learning programme.

Work in second language situations in other countries highlights the problems and learning constraints that ensue when children are faced with the task of learning in a language other than their mother tongue. A prospective bilingual child's first experience in a formal learning situation, i.e. day care, can closely predict his eventual failure or success in the educational system.

While there are many examples of parents, particularly well educated professionals, teaching young children to speak and sometimes read and write two languages, these are isolated situations where the motivation and skills of the parents and the high aptitude of the children were important controlling factors.

The implications for bilingual education of such examples indicate a need for socio-linguistic research (with control groups) that is cognizant of:

1. the linguistic environment of the sample,
2. the effects of introducing second languages at different ages and stages of development, e.g. particularly cognitive,
3. the effects of different second language programmes and
4. the results of the degree of reinforcement of second language in the home.

The purpose of such research would be to indicate the extent to which children's development is affected by the acquisition of second languages. In addition, the research should show the level of proficiency possible in simultaneous second language learning situations. This research may demonstrate whether the focus should be on language development *per se* or on overall development.

However, although research with sample groups is necessary to provide information that may lead to new directions in the bilingual education of young children, the authors believe that subjecting all Singaporean children to this experience without adequate local data to back up such a decision is unjustified. With these points in mind it is further recommended that children's initial learning experiences, particularly at the three- and four-year-old levels, be in the mother tongue.

In the Singapore context this is possible for children from Tamil,[1] Malay and English speaking homes. However, the case of the Chinese child is not so straightforward. The spectrum of language diversity in the Chinese speaking population means that a variety of situations may exist, e.g. 1) one language/dialect for all members of the family, 2) any combination of languages/dialects (Hokkien and Teochew grandparents, English speaking father, Mandarin speaking mother, etc.). The diversity of familial situations, economic considerations and the availability of suitably trained teachers have necessitated a government policy that precludes teaching through "dialects". Therefore, it is necessary that Mandarin be the medium of instruction for Chinese children.

It is further suggested that, as there is a notable lack of research in this field, the day care centres should be used for case studies of bilingual education with the Malay, Tamil and English groups used as control groups. This study should be multi-disciplinary with relevant government institutions and independent organizations participating. The results may have far reaching implications for Singapore and other countries facing similar problems.

Language – Recommendations

Malay, Tamil and English Speakers – At age three communication should be in the child's mother tongue. Before the fourth year English or other second language songs and finger plays could be introduced to familiarize children with the sound system. The second language could be introduced gradually during the fourth year to those children who have consolidated the vocabulary and structures of their mother tongues. With many children this consolidation might not take place until the end of the fifth year and provision would have to be made for appropriate developmental activities in the mother tongue. These children could be combined with English speakers who were learning Tamil or Malay as a second language.

Chinese Speakers – At age three communication can be in Mandarin if it is supplemented by dialect. The fourth year should be a period of learning and consolidation. The children need to be given *at least* one year to practise structures and vocabulary before having to deal with another second language. It is generally agreed that children are usually in command of the structure of their mother tongues by age five. This period may be prolonged in those cases where Mandarin differs significantly from a child's mother tongue or where there are developmental problems. It is to be hoped that this period of early education will enable the Chinese child to become reasonably fluent and comfortable with Mandarin.

Children with a special aptitude for language as identified by teacher evaluation (NOT TESTING) and who have mastered Mandarin sufficiently may be introduced to English during the fourth and fifth years. Teachers, supervisors and centre staff should be extremely resistant to parental pressure to force English on children before they are ready. It is far better for children to be effectively communicative in one language than ineffective in two or three. There is an inherent danger in the one-day-English, one-day-Mandarin approach. It is that by halving the exposure time to each lan-

[1] At the time of writing, the authors have no recent information on the numbers speaking other Indian languages who might be enrolling in day care programmes. However, it is doubtful if the government can do more than cater for the major languages.

guage, the child's competence in both languages may be restricted. As a result his effectiveness in verbalizing and possibly reasoning could be less than that of a child who has used one language. There appears to be a definite correlation between language proficiency and cognitive development. The child may be able to use both languages but his structures would be too limited for developmental programme requirements. It is believed that a good parent education and involvement programme will ameliorate some of these problems.

There is much talk about LET (Language Exposure Time) when considering the amounts of time allocated to the different languages children have to learn in Singapore. This usually results in a certain amount of the school day being reserved for exposure to English or Mandarin or one of the languages. However LET is not so relevant in the day care situation. The children's day is not segmented into rigid lessons and the atmosphere should be far less formal than the normal school. Adults move freely among the children, talking, helping and guiding. In this kind of learning environment the constant factor should not be *time* allocated to the language but rather the language of the "instructor". Therefore it becomes important for the adult to remain "constant" in his language. In this way children learn, as they do naturally in a bilingual or multilingual home setting, to switch languages, depending on whom they are talking to.

It is debatable whether a poor model of English, say, is beneficial in any way to children's learning of English. It is better that the fluent Mandarin speaker retains Mandarin when speaking to a child rather than resorting to substandard English because it is "English time".

Teacher Training

Teacher training for the day care centres has already begun with trained experienced teachers from the kindergartens undergoing special retraining courses. With the previous recommendations, e.g. language and parent involvement, future courses will need to consider the following:

Selection Criteria A. The number of teachers required will depend on:

1. the number of centres and children,
2. a desirable child:teacher ratio,
3. the language requirements of children – e.g. a) a centre in a predominantly Hokkien area will require more Hokkien speaking teacher volunteers/ Mandarin speaking teachers, b) a centre attended by a majority of Malay speaking children will require Malay speaking aides and a teacher who is fluent in Malay and English.

B. Teachers need to be tested for aptitude and suitability for working with this age range. Extent of experience and formal academic qualifications are less important than personal qualities and attitudes towards children in this age range. Substitute parenting (i.e. mothering), approachability, empathy, the ability to give and receive affection spontaneously and high intergroup sensitivity are relevant qualities.

Training Programme – Skills Apart from fundamental early childhood education and child development principles, teachers need to acquire specialized skills. They must learn how to assess children's progress by using a developmental chart. The chart lists stages of development in the basic areas, i.e. social/moral, physical, emotional and cognitive development, and relates them to chronological age. This skill will assist teachers to plan appropriate activities for all ability levels and to make recommendations on the readiness of children for second language learning.

Another skill is the ability to encourage children to talk about what they are doing without interfering with the learning process. This means teachers must be clear as to the difference between intervention and interference in learning. The dialogue between child and adult plays a vital part in helping children verbalize activities. Without this verbalization, cognitive skills can be retarded. Teachers should be able to design plans, both long and short term, which allow for enough flexibility in the daily programme to maximise learning opportunities as they occur. The key to a good child development programme is flexibility without forgetting the importance of structure for achieving long term goals.

With reference to the section on parental involvement, teachers' sensitivity training would seem to be a necessary component of the course. It is expected, on the basis of an English Proficiency Test, that many of the teachers will also require a compulsory supplementary course to improve their own spoken English. This course should run concurrently with the main course.

Finally provision should also be made in the teacher training programme for helping teachers to accommodate handicapped children. By accommodation is meant training in preparing suitable equipment and activities, integrating children in the classroom, assisting the development of friend-

ships and also providing simple counselling for parents of handicapped children (and perhaps for members of the community who have reservations about including handicapped children in their programme).

Parent Involvement and Education

Educational research and literature throughout the world affirm the role of the home as the primary influence on a child's attitudes towards education, his behaviour and his scholastic success. It would seem, however, that most educators and administrators have traditionally refused:

1. to deal realistically with the results of this research and
2. to develop programmes that include effective parental involvement.

Parents enrol their children in day care centres for convenience and because they feel that the child will profit from the experience. Parents expect the centres to be run by well-trained professionals who share their ideas and expectations about education. However, as few parents are educators or specialists in early childhood education, it is unrealistic to expect parents and teachers to agree on educational programmes. It is, therefore, of the utmost importance that parents have opportunities for observation in the centres, interaction with teachers and guidance in understanding programme objectives and methods. This should not be a haphazard arrangement but a planned, well organized and stimulating orientation. Parents' concerns and questions should not be treated lightly. Suggestions for programme improvement should be duly considered and implemented as appropriate. This has to be an ongoing effort whose leadership is turned over to a parent organization as soon as possible.

Eventually the parent organization could be given the responsibility for the development of the parent education programme. It is hoped that as family members develop skills, e.g. reading stories, intervening and helping children in their activities, a volunteer programme will be developed utilizing these skills. Volunteers in the classroom will, of course, improve the child: adult ratio in classrooms thereby providing more opportunities for child-adult interaction.

The possibility of training parents with particular aptitudes in this area as paid teacher aides should be considered. This approach has proved successful in the American Head Start Programme as a means of conveying, in a constructive and favourable light, the policy and objectives of the centre.

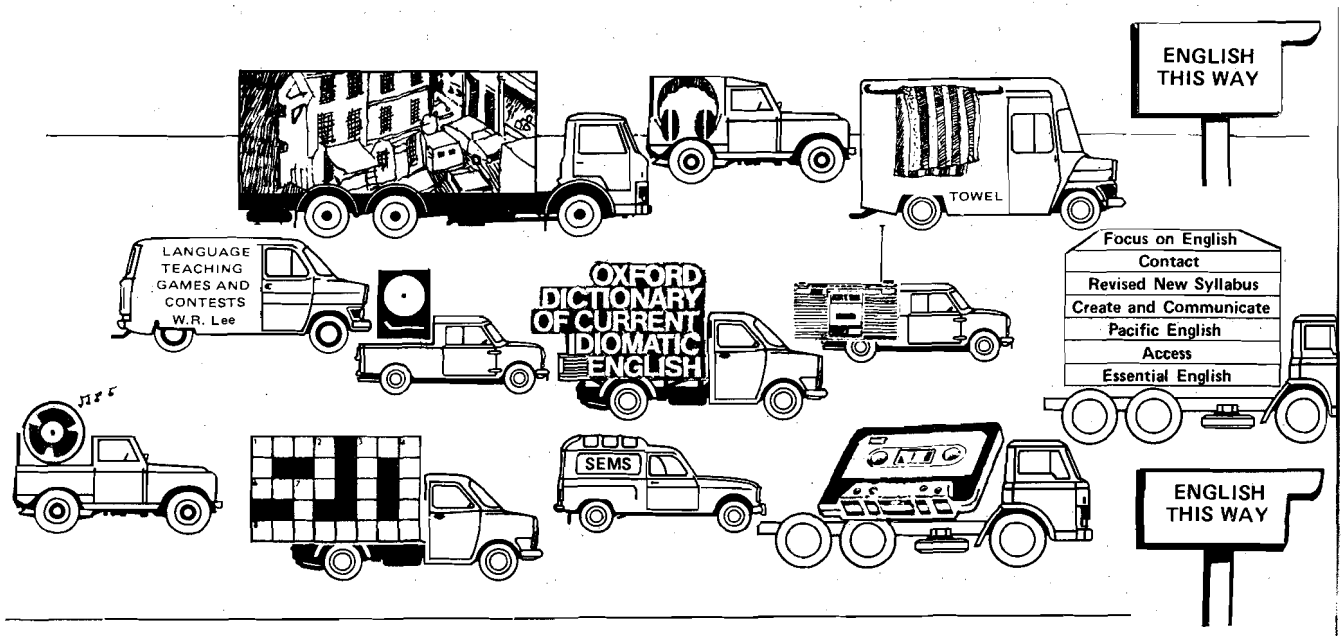
As day care has broad cultural and sociological as well as educational implications, it is vital that the community be knowledgeable to facilitate its effective cooperation. It is difficult to imagine such a programme being successful at all without community support.

Conclusion

Meetings with members of the People's Association and the staff of the National Youth Leadership Training Institute have shown that there is a real concern and desire to have day care centres that cater for the developmental needs of children. There is also an awareness of the immensity of the task and the need for professional dialogue that will assist in shaping the type of programme that will truly benefit the young children of Singapore. The main aim of this paper is to encourage that dialogue. In conclusion, the authors wish to stress that the above recommendations are meant to stimulate constructive discussion and the consideration of alternative approaches in achieving policy objectives.

Christopher Fry and Marianne Mercer
Institute of Education

The Role and Use of Textbooks as a Vehicle for Teaching English as a Second Language[1] in Singapore Schools



In considering the role of the textbook in the context of Second Language Teaching, we are obviously bearing in mind at the same time other vehicles which are intended to propel the learner along on his journey towards proficiency in English. Other vehicles do exist, as exemplified in the illustration above.[2]

Quite a lot has been written already about transportation in the form of instructional media such as television, radio, tapes, wallcharts, dictionaries, films, etc. in relation to Second Language Teaching. Occasionally, for short distances, they are used in schools today. For long hauls, however, the textbook is usually regarded by principals and teachers as a safe stand-by. It is comparatively reliable, economical in terms of effort and well equipped with many parts. This is probably why it tends to hog the road in Singapore just as much as it does in other countries where English is taught as a second or foreign language.

In spite of the dominating position in comparison to other vehicles of instruction, ironically the textbook seems to have escaped evaluation by writers of papers on Second Language Teaching except in brief descriptive or comparative surveys. Moreover, there has not, to our knowledge, been any research conducted on the strategies and techniques employed by both teachers and learners in using the textbooks to further students' proficiency in English.

The particular model we are examining here is the approved English coursebook used in government schools. In Singapore, the textbook is manufactured according to certain specifications proposed by the Ministry of Education. Although there is an amount of flexibility in the size, shape, model, colour and general appearance of the bodywork and interior, the basic mechanical arrangement[3] must conform to certain guidelines before it is approved and granted the seal of road-

[1] No distinction is made here between EL1 and EL2. In practice almost all students learn English as a Second (or Third) Language.

[2] And in the recent exhibition of language teaching materials at the British Council.

[3] i.e. content organisation

worthiness. After all, it is the Ministry of Education who knows the route and who maps out the itinerary for students.

For the travel-sore reader who is becoming tired of our metaphor, let us move on to some more literal features of the typical ESL textbook used in Singapore[1]. In this paper we do not wish to condemn the textbook *per se* as a teaching device. Its advantages include the following:

a) it can be a scheme of work for the teacher,
b) it provides a lot of basic material for lessons which the teacher has not the time to prepare,
c) it is a visual record of progress for both teacher and students and, therefore, it acts as a memory aid,
d) it is convenient in terms of size, weight and ease of handling and transporting.

What we do wish to indicate in this paper, however, is that it should be viewed in perspective and in relation to other teaching aids. We also hope to point out the dangers of overusing it or misusing it as well as to suggest ways of exploiting it to its full potential.

Overusing the Textbook

As the textbook has many advantages, there is a built-in danger that it will be followed by the teacher and the class page by page, lesson after lesson, year after year. The textbook may become a psychological prop or a crutch to the teacher. A false sense of security may be created because he or she eventually becomes unwilling to do anything to supplement the textbook units or to provide variety for the students. It eventually may lead to both mechanical and perfunctory teaching and learning. The English lesson becomes a monotonous routine in which there is neither joy nor interest for either teacher or learners.

The Textbook as Written English

One glaringly obvious but frequently overlooked point is that the textbook is written, not spoken, and that students read it, not listen to it. One may also ask how successfully a coursebook can teach oral English. Therefore, there is an implicit danger that if the textbook is used too frequently, students will be stunted as far as the development of oral skills is concerned.

Some textbook writers have clearly seen the danger here and have included pronunciation exercises plus stimuli for role-playing in dialogues. The pronunciation exercises, however, are written and therefore, read.[2] As for role-playing in dialogues, we doubt whether many teachers actually use these in practice. We have observed that many teachers in Singapore are reluctant to encourage conversation in class, perhaps using group work, because of organisation problems and fear of class disruption.[3]

In any case, it is far easier to set students written work from the textbook. What this written work actually teaches, however, is another question.

Teaching and Testing

If we agree that a textbook is probably more useful in developing written skills than oral skills, then we must question to what extent the typical textbook does just this. Developing skills implies identifying and teaching the skills. What actual *teaching* is present in most coursebooks?

A comprehension passage followed by a set of comprehension questions, vocabulary or grammar exercises with blanks to be filled in by the student, plus grammar conversion exercises (for example, change the verb from x tense to y tense), feature predominantly in Ministry approved textbooks. Although these types of activities may be quite useful for *testing* the acquisition of skills, they do not in themselves *teach* the skills.[4] This distinction between testing and teaching is important. Although we do not deny that tests can be used for teaching purposes in some circumstances, the textbook on the whole provides little explicit teaching in itself. Unfortunately, some teachers rely on the textbook to do this very job of teaching and do little to supplement the printed word except for the odd question or two. It is to be expected that students do not perform as well as we would like them to do in tests: they simply have not been *taught* sufficiently.

[1] We accept that there is a lot of difference between, say, J.B. Heaton's ***Create and Communicate*** (Singapore: Longman Malaysia, 1977) and A.R.B. Etherton's ***Contact: A Secondary English Course*** (Singapore: Longman Malaysia, 1974). However, the underlying principles are the same.

[2] See the later section on speech practice.

[3] The development of oral skills in English, however, is another paper.

[4] Does, for instance, a blank filling exercise on the superlative *teach* the superlative?

We give special attention to this aspect of textbooks, seeing as most are modelled on a grammatical or structural syllabus. What does go for explicit teaching in the grammar section of many coursebooks is highly questionable in some cases. We would define the teaching of grammar as the teaching of English structures and sentence patterns. Many textbooks, however, appear to define the teaching of grammar as the teaching of the specialised terminology used to describe those English structures and sentence patterns. In other words, textbooks frequently focus on a description of English rather than on English itself.

We are all painfully aware of what this results in. Students' minds are swimming with indefinite pronouns, past perfect tenses, subjunctive moods, conditional sentences, adverbial clauses, etc.[1] Our hearts go out to the many students who are very proficient in English expression (and, therefore, in our terms, in grammar) but who collapse at the sight of an exercise such as "Point out any adverbial phrases in these sentences and say which word they modify."[2]

Although we would not like to state categorically that the learning of all terminology is useless (older children sometimes like to analyse language as well as speak and write it and may ask the teacher questions about grammar – as the textbook defines it), we consider that the emphasis in textbooks on the rote learning of linguistic jargon is misjudged. Unfortunately, the insistence on using this terminology in the instructions of school tests and examinations forbids us to persuade teachers to completely ignore it.

Perhaps it is all a question of degree, extent and timing. We shall return to this subject later in a more constructive light.

Although textbooks are usually quite careful in the use of vocabulary in other sections, this consideration is sometimes completely forgotten when the writer provides explanations of the functions of grammatical features. Even the simplest explanations in terms of vocabulary are quite difficult to understand. E.g. "We use the present perfect tense to show our interest in the present or future result of an action already completed." This is really a very difficult concept for Secondary One students to grasp. (This example is from a Secondary One coursebook.)

The exercises following the grammar section are designed to give practice or test the student in his mastering of structural patterns. Teachers should be wary of some of the stimulus or response sentences since some are so contrived[3] that they border on unacceptability. E.g.

Rewrite in the passive:
Tom smokes ten cigarettes a day.
Ten cigarettes are smoked by Tom a day.[4]

Change the following using the apostrophe with the noun:
The tail of the cat.
The pen of Henry.

Also teachers should check whether more than one item is acceptable in the blank-filling exercises, e.g.

Are there_____(*some, any*) people in the room?

Remember that if two answers are acceptable, the teacher will have to explain WHY they are both acceptable and that this may contradict what you have been earlier persuaded by the textbook to teach as a hard and fast rule (e.g. "*some*" is used for positive statements, "*any*" is used for negative statements and interrogative sentences).

Another feature of many textbook exercises is that they are deliberately set to trap students.

Put "*a*", "*an*" or "*the*" where necessary,

for example, is bringing three (or four if we count the absence of an article) commonly confused forms together in the same exercise. This is obviously an open invitation for students to make errors rather than to avoid making them. If this exercise does teach anything, then it is not very prudent teaching.

In general, however, a cursory glance at the sheer space devoted to oral or written exercises in most coursebooks confirms our opinion that textbooks devote far too much time to testing rather than teaching.

Let us now take a more constructive approach to the use of the school textbook while asking the reader to bear a number of points in mind:

a) We are not in this paper suggesting *alternatives* to the textbooks such as preparing one's own

[1] Or is it adverbial pronouns, past perfect sentences, conditional clauses, subjunctive tenses and indefinite moods?

[2] This is a genuine example from an approved textbook. We wonder how many native speakers can tackle this.

[3] In fact, all are random, unconnected, mechanically contrived sentences.

[4] And if he continues to smoke, no doubt the bucket will soon be kicked by him!

aids, using dramatisation, language games or group activities. In so doing, we would be expanding a short article into our own textbook on Second Language Teaching! We are, therefore, concentrating on the *exploitation* of the textbook as a teaching device.

b) The textbook is only ONE instructional aid amongst many and there are other ways to complete the school syllabus in conjunction with the textbook. The textbook is not the syllabus, as laid down by the Ministry of Education, itself. It is only modelled on it. Teachers can, therefore, supplement the textbook with other materials or aids.

c) In general, a coursebook unit may contain more material than teachers can possibly use in the time available. As a result, teachers have to employ some form of selection criteria. As this paper is devoted to the teaching (not testing) of English as a Second Language, we would encourage teachers to select the potentially most useful sections for learning purposes.

d) In lessons where the textbook is employed, teachers should be careful to try and strike a balance between the receptive skills of listening and reading and the productive skills of speaking and writing.

Below is the general core format of Ministry of Education approved textbooks.

1. Reading and Comprehension (plus vocabulary)
2. Grammar plus oral/written exercises. New and/or revisionary topics
3. Speech practice (pronunciation, etc.)
4. Composition

Reading and Comprehension

The reading passage plus comprehension questions are stimuli for teaching, not teaching *per se.* It is that the teacher sees how the other sections of the niques and exploiting the passage and questions in a particular way who will achieve the instructional objectives of the lesson. In so doing, the teacher will have considered not only what these objectives should be but also the best means to ensure that learning takes place. What follows below is a suggested approach to the textbook to teach the students general reading and comprehension skills.

The reading of the text

Although pupils are required to prepare for oral examinations by practising reading texts aloud, this should not be confused with reading for comprehension[1] (extracting information, making inferences, predictions, etc.). By asking pupils to read aloud, teachers are decelerating students' potential silent reading speed. Furthermore, it is doubtful whether students absorb much of the underlying content of the passage when they are concentrating on the articulation of the surface print.[2] This is not to say that reading aloud by pupils in class never has any uses, e.g. with dialogues, materials to be read aloud, etc.

The majority of adults read silently and so it could be agreed that the ability to read silently is the most important skill teachers should be developing in their students. However, there is no reason why a teacher should not occasionally read parts of the text aloud, not only for the sake of adding variety to the lesson but also if he or she realises that there is a section of the text which may introduce the pronunciation of new vocabulary which is phonically irregular.

The macro-skills of silent reading

The primary skills can be summarized as the ability to locate, extract and retain particular pieces of information from particular sections of particular texts in a particular amount of time. Secondary skills include the ability to perceive cause and effect relationships, to make inferences, suppositions or predictions, etc.

Some suggested methods for developing these skills

1. Teach students to locate and extract information rapidly. For a warm-up exercise, instruct students to tell you (in perhaps five or six seconds) where particular pieces of information are contained, e.g.

"Today we are going to read a passage from Unit (Lesson) Ten. Now, quickly, look at the list of contents at the front of the book and tell me what page the unit (lesson) begins at . . . . Now look at page 47. I want you to tell me which paragraph describes . . . ."

[1]We are sure you can all read "When the flig dreened to the nisty strop, it mirented slooply" perfectly fluently without your having comprehended anything at all.

[2]What, when one child is reading aloud, the minds of the other thirty-nine children are dwelling on, we dare not consider.

Teachers could also train their pupils to become familiar with the structure of the textbooks for the purpose of individual study. As some students will be rather slow at this kind of exercise at first, especially at primary level, persuade students to look for information by moving their eyes zig-zag fashion down the page rather than start reading the first line, then the second line, and so on horizontally.

Locating information in a text can start right at the beginning reading stage with children being asked to circle, underline, point at words and phrases which contain certain information. At this stage, children are learning the sub-skills of reading, e.g. that words carry information, that there are relationships between words.

2. Decide yourself which information is important and which is not important. As a general rule, the comprehension questions given at the end of the sections ask significant questions but not always so. Supplement the textbook questions with your own.

3. As students are often instructed to read a passage without knowing for what purpose they are expected to read it, they have no clear idea sometimes as to what information they should retain and what information they should filter out. To overcome this, ask your questions or give directions BEFORE they read particular sections of the text. By this method, students are directed to focus only on what you consider to be important in the text, e.g.

"I now want you to read the fourth and fifth paragraphs and to tell me (a) what . . . . and (b) why . . . . . ."

4. Be very cautious about students' answers. The ability to answer comprehension questions, especially if the answers are a direct quotation from the text, does not guarantee comprehension.[1] Supplement your questions with instructions for students to paraphrase or summarise sections of the text.[2]

5. In general, let the students read the passage in conveniently-sized chunks depending on both the level of your pupils and how the passage can be suitably broken up.

6. Always teach new vocabulary in the context in which it appears. Pupils can frequently deduce the meaning of words from the structural environment and semantic context in which they occur. Do not concentrate so much on definitions or explanations[3] since many words are not easily defined (can you define the verb "wait"?) or if they are, the definitions frequently are as complicated if not more so than the word you are trying to define (e.g. to cause = to produce an effect). Instead encourage the *use* of the words in different contexts. By this means, the contextual restrictions of the lexis will become more apparent.[4] Again, the beginner reader should be taught to acquire vocabulary in this way. In addition visual clues are present in the textbook in the form of pictures.

Grammar

You have two jobs to do here:

a) to teach your students to use English structures and sentence patterns correctly and appropriately,
b) to teach your students the linguistic terminology to help them pass school tests and examinations.

Deal with (a) first.

1. Except for one or two exceptions, we find most textbooks being used in schools sadly lacking in their demonstration of the particular structure being taught in a natural, realistic communicative situation. For some reason, a lot of textbook writers seem to believe that English speakers communicate in random, isolated sentences rather than in dialogues or pieces of continuous prose writing. This is certainly one section of the coursebook which frequently needs supplementing with other teaching materials. If necessary it can be replaced altogether.

The only tip we can give here is to suggest that the teacher sees how the other sections of the unit can assist and combine to help teach grammar in context. For the initial exposure to the new

[1]Try this yourself.

EXTRACT	:	. . . The salt is extraluded by gleep of consumatial heat. . . . .
Question	:	How is the salt extraluded?
Answer	:	(It is extraluded) by gleep of consumatial heat.

[2]You will then also have the bonus of students speaking in connected speech – a rare phenomenon – as opposed to single sentences.

[3]Unless you are training your students to be dictionary compilers.

[4]E.g. "pregnant" – carrying a baby. Therefore, "The fireman went into the building and came out pregnant."!

grammatical topic (at the receptive level), the teacher can refer back to the reading passage at the beginning of the unit to see if the structure can be demonstrated there. Later, the teacher can look forward to the composition section at the end of the unit and see if students can be engineered to use the structure at the productive level.

To summarise, therefore, if all else fails and you really have to rely solely on the textbook, adapt the reading passage and the composition section for the teaching of grammar. Remember, however, that this will again lead to a situation where pupils are restricted to written English unless the teacher can ensure that the structure will also be demonstrated and then subsequently used by students in speech.[1]

2. As a general guideline, when teaching English structures, the teacher will have to focus on

a) form
b) function
c) meaning

We have already indicated that many coursebooks seem to attach little or no importance to *meaning* and concentrate on artificial sentences sometimes dubious in terms of real life occurrence. The teacher should also be wary that the coursebook pays sufficient attention to the *function* of the item. This, in brief, refers to *when* a structure is appropriately or correctly used. Some coursebooks focus far too much on the *form* of the item without bringing out the function sufficiently. E.g., students might be taught that the indefinite article is *a, an* ("put *a, an* before the following nouns") but they do not adequately bring out the function (when is the indefinite article used?) of *a, an* as opposed to the definite article or no article at all.

However, again, use your common sense when bringing out the function of a structure. The demonstration of the item in several linguistic environments is frequently more effective than a pat explanation. Especially at primary level, the functions of grammatical topics can be best dealt with implicitly rather than explicitly and analytically.

3. If you must use terminology such as "indefinite articles," "past perfect continuous," "conjunctions" and the like, then do so at the end of a lesson rather than at the beginning. Commencing your lessons with "Right, class, today we're going to do concessive clauses," (says she, writing it on the board) is hardly going to elicit spontaneous cries of glee and panting expectation and excitement in the most well-motivated class.

When you do introduce the terminology, keep it as simple and as brief as possible. There is no need to go into such detail as the coursebook sometimes suggests. The terms "adverb" or "adverbial clause" are sufficient: you do not have to qualify these as adverbs of manner, time, etc. or concessive, causal, temporal adverbial clauses, etc.

Avoid *defining* the parts of speech, seeing as definitions are so fallible. Traditional grammar may try and convince teachers that a verb is a "doing" word or an action word. (BUT "Swimming *is* an energetic sport.") Or that a noun is a naming word. (BUT "Do it for my sake.")

It is much more profitable, however, for students to recognise the structural characteristics of the parts of speech, e.g. a noun is a word which goes into the slot "Many – s like chocolate" and has the feature of "+ s". Similarly a verb is any word which goes into the slot "Many boys – chocolate" and has the feature of "+ s" or "+ ed".[2]

4. Cut down the number of exercises that students should complete: valuable teaching time is lost here to testing. Before you assign an exercise, thoroughly check the sentences for acceptability in English and see whether alternative answers are admissable. Remember also that although it may appear much easier to set written exercises of this kind than to devise situations whereby your students use the grammar topic in a simulated context using connected sentences, your students may reap the unhappy harvest of being taught to communicate in isolated, artificial sentences.[3] This is surely not true practice in using grammatical structures. The sentences as they stand, however, are mechanical and contrived.

Finally, do not let the sheer quantity of exercises persuade you that the exercises are the most important section of the unit. The quantity is perhaps there simply because they are comparatively easy for the author of a coursebook to write.

[1] Note also inattention to speech may cause the transference of errors in spoken English into errors in written English.

[2] With finite verbs.

[3] If that. Putting one word in a blank does not train a student to produce even one sentence outside the classroom.

Spoken English

Most of the sections examined by us consist of minimal pairs, that is, pairs of words which are identical except for one feature only. An example is "ship", "sheep".

Again watch for errors in the coursebook. One commonly used book which intends in a unit to contrast the "s" and "sh" sounds cites "said"/ "shade" as a minimal pair. The observant reader will notice that this is a bad slip on the part of the writer. The pair should have been "said"/ "*shed*" (with only *one* different pronunciation feature). The pair "said"/"shade" is likely to encourage the popular but *wrong* pronunciation of "said" as /seid/ instead of the correct /sed/.

A more general point but fundamental to the principles and methods of teaching correct pronunciation is the fact that the words are read by the student, as well as listened to. Especially as the coursebook frequently writes in bold print the particular sounds being contrasted in the words, there is a risk that the lesson will become a lesson in phonics (learning to read by associating a symbol with a sound). Although phonics has an important place in the classroom, this is not the time nor place in a section on listening and speaking skills.[1]

In your execution of a lesson on speaking skills, let the textbook be a tool to the teacher but not to the students. Ask the students to close their books so that they can only *listen* to the pairs of words before they are asked to repeat them.

Also extend the lesson beyond the isolated word. The correct repetition of a word in isolation is by no means going to ensure that students will pronounce it correctly in connected speech. Build up from the word into phrases, clauses and sentences – short poems featuring alliteration and assonance (repetition of consonant and vowel respectively) are very useful for this purpose.

As the context frequently neutralises any potential ambiguity ("We saw a ship go sailing by" would never allow "ship" and "sheep" to be confused) choose as far as possible sentences where communication might break down. E.g.

"Pass me the toy_____(ship/sheep), please."

At this stage, the pupils might be instructed to look at the textbook and to indicate whether the word used by the teacher in a sentence comes from the first or the second column.

Remember also that aural and oral discrimination is only a starting point to your teaching. If your students are unable to articulate one of the sounds (and it is usually only *one* of the sounds) being contrasted, you will then have to teach them how to make that sound. The teacher may have to use some form of phonetics reference book[2] in order to find out for himself or herself how a particular sound is articulated and give instructions accordingly.

Compositions

There are many skills involved in the teaching of composition and it certainly involves the production of grammatical and lexical skills acquired previously. In our view, methods of teaching composition – from controlled, to guided, to free – are much more generally apparent to both teachers and textbook writers than methods of teaching, say, grammar and comprehension.

The teaching of composition is a subject which has merited a lot of attention in the last few years simply, we suspect, because of the emphasis on written as opposed to spoken English.[3] One of the advantages of students writing compositions is the fact that it is probably one of the few occasions when students write English in connected sentences as opposed to writing single sentence answers to questions or putting a word in the blank.

In addition to making use of the grammatical structures and vocabulary encountered earlier, students can be encouraged to use sentence connectors which may not have been taught explicitly in previous units. These include sentence adverbials such as "moreover", "in addition", "on the other hand", "however", "as a result", "consequently", etc. which are very important in the cohesion of written discourse.

It is also an opportunity to discuss levels of formality. In general terms, the variety of English used in speech differs from that used in explicit writing. "He did some super things" may be acceptable in spoken English but "He demonstrated some marvellous tricks" would be more acceptable in written English.

Although you should persuade students to use a more formal variety of English in written work as opposed to conversational English, pre-

[1] Consider also the number of words which contain the same sound but are spelled differently, e.g. rough, blood, cup, mother.

[2] Such as J.D. O' Connor's ***Better English Pronunciation*** (London: Cambridge University Press, 1967).

[3] One wonders, however, how many times a teacher or anybody else for that matter has been required to write a composition since leaving school!

paring the composition first ORALLY has great advantages. Firstly, you can circumvent any errors in pronunciation which may transfer into writing.[1] Secondly you can check on the correct use of grammar and lexis. Thirdly, you are giving your students an opportunity to speak in English instead of listening to the teacher or pushing a pen.

To avoid the danger of only informal styles of speaking being produced, you could create a more formal situation in the class whereby a more formal use of language is demanded. One suggestion is for the teacher to behave as a stranger; perhaps a visitor from another planet, a newspaper reporter, an interviewer, or a policeman. In this way, students will be obliged to use language more explicitly and thus more formally. The teacher can first extract the information piecemeal and then ask the students to put it together in connected speech. Hopefully, this way, the errors which may appear in writing will be of a more mechanical nature (spelling, punctuation, etc.) than structural.

One obvious tip: if you do not consider the composition exercise or topic useful, don't use it. Devise another.

We do not wish to dwell any further on the subject of composition[2] because, as stated previously, we consider that in general, coursebooks handle this aspect of developing language skills quite satisfactorily.

Conclusion

In this necessarily brief paper, we have attempted to put the textbook in perspective by indicating that it is but one of many aids which are used in English language teaching.

We have hoped to persuade the reader, and in particular the teacher, or teacher-in-training, that the textbook is not always a valuable teaching aid as opposed to a testing aid, and that where there are defects it should be used with foresight, care and selective discrimination.

We have also given the teachers some guidelines to work with when they make use of a particular section of a coursebook unit.

We should like to emphasise at this point that the important factor in any teaching situation is the teacher, not the textbook or any other aids for that matter. Even the poorest materials can be turned to advantage by the enterprising teacher. In relation to the textbook, we believe that the successful teacher views the school coursebook as a means to an end, not an end in itself.

In conclusion we should like to return to our metaphor used at the beginning of this paper. Using your textbook is like driving a car with yourself as the driver and your students as the passengers. The destination of your students is proficiency in English. As you become more skilled as a driver, so will you become much more familiar with the vehicle you are driving, in this case the textbook. Here are some general tips for the road:

1. The textbook doesn't drive you. You drive the textbook. At all times remember that you are in charge.

2. You are the mechanic. Most textbooks come with the designer's faults which are not always apparent on the assembly line. Check for those faults and maintain the vehicle regularly.

3. Run it in slowly at first until you are familar with its true performance and road-handling capacity. Get to know your vehicle well.

4. Make additions where necessary to help it run more smoothly.

5. There are many obstacles on the road. Try to avoid these by steering well. Don't let your vehicle get out of control.

6. Observe the Highway Code (the practices and principles of getting your passengers safely and surely to their destination). Avoid speeding and overloading.

7. Know your route and the landmarks.

8. Pause for refreshments. You might not fall asleep at the wheel but your passengers in the back might!

9. If you lose your way, seek help and use your common sense.

10. Remember that the textbook is not the only vehicle on the road.

If your vehicle breaks down in some places (or even if it doesn't), consider the merits of other vehicles.

Selamat jalan!

[1] An example would be the failure to pronounce the final /t/or/d/ consonant in past tense usages. This may become a grammatical mistake in writing, e.g. "Yesterday we play football."

[2] It is not intended to describe general methods of composition teaching but to suggest ways of using the textbook.

A. B. Elliott
Institute of Education

Science in English

If we think of ourselves – human beings – as one species in the huge collection of different species of living things, we can observe that we are in some ways similar to other organisms, other animals, other mammals and other primates . . . but in some ways we are strikingly different from these other living organisms. And one of the most important ways in which we are different is that we have a highly developed and efficient means of communication between individuals. This difference may be related (although we cannot say which is cause and which is effect) to the long period of immaturity in human beings, where the young are born helpless and then spend anything from twelve to twenty years in "childhood", during which time they learn and acquire skills and understanding before becoming sexually mature and capable of supporting themselves.

During this period of childhood, through which every adult human being must first pass, the individual progresses from the communicative ability of the newborn infant, which is mediated mainly through touch and perhaps sound, to the extremely elaborate communicative ability of the mature and well-educated young adult, which is mediated mainly through language. When this adult stage is reached, the individual has available to him the entire body of human experience as recorded in recent millenia, and also the total contemporary range of human experience and expectation. Also, in relation to the present and the future it is open to the individual to contribute to and to influence this human experience and expectation by communicating with his contemporaries and with future generations. "No man is an island" – he is a social animal.

The Monolingual Child

We might look at the interactions between an individual and his society, and if, as in so many parts of the world, his society is homogeneous and monolingual we might see the relationships shown in diagram 1. Here we look at one individual human being living in the present. In his life, thinking and activities, there are diachronic interactions in time (contributions from the past and contributions to the future), and there are synchronic interactions with contemporary human beings (both directly and indirectly, and both as donor and as recipient).

During the period of childhood, the individual who grows up in a homogeneous community is simultaneously acquiring the *means* of communication (language expressed through the modes of hearing, speaking, reading and writing) and the *substance* of the accumulated wisdom of the past and the present (the knowledge and habits of his society expressed in its culture, ideals and skills). This wisdom can be communicated increasingly efficiently as the growing child becomes better able to use the spoken language (hearing and speaking) and the written language (reading and writing); and increasingly the child receives communication *from* others. But even in earliest childhood the individual contributes also by communicating *to* his fellow human beings, and ultimately as an adult he will contribute to other human beings, both present and future. His use of language will be the means by which his thought, understanding and innovative proposals can be communicated to others, but it is also of more fundamental importance in that through language he will be stimulated to better thought, understanding and proposals by communicative interaction with these activities in other people. This is particularly obvious in the field of science where the thinkers in the front line of advance are so mutually influential that apical discoveries and theories are often made simultaneously by different workers and must be regarded as products of the total climate of thought of all the workers in the field.

This web of communication which enables man – the social animal – to achieve so much is chopped into sectors by the fact that the world has so many different languages. The adult who has matured in one language community can com-

Diagram 1 MONOLINGUAL SITUATION

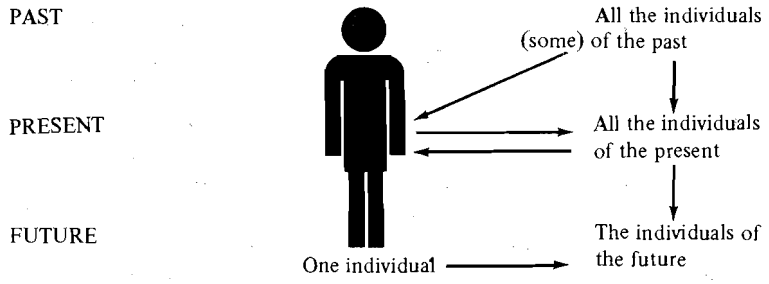
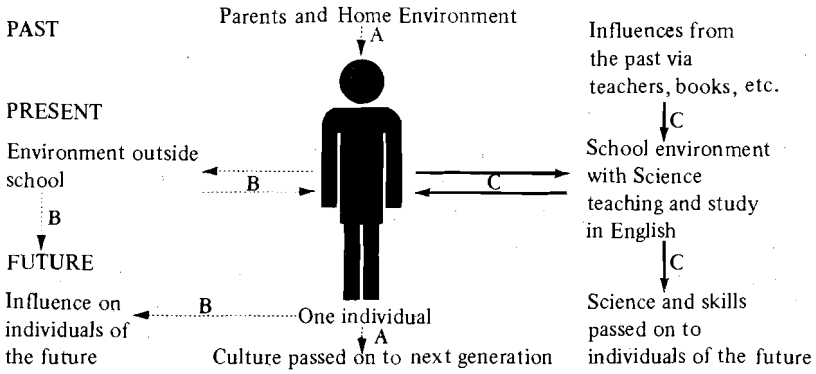


Diagram 2 SINGAPORE SITUATION



municate only with difficulty and through translation with individuals and communities using other languages.

Our concern is with Singapore, where the situation is far from homogeneous, and where two long-established languages – English and Chinese – meet and interact.

It is widely accepted that the normal psychological development of an individual proceeds best if there is close physical and communicative contact with parents, and through the parental language with the cultural heritage. This happens in the home. If this development proceeds normally the individual can then go on from a position of security to investigate the wider world, to meet contemporaries and peers (whose heritage need not be identical), and to acquire further knowledge and understanding. This happens in the world outside the home, and especially in the school.

The Multilingual Child

We can now reconstruct our diagram to show the special Singapore situation as it applies to the majority of our children – those who grow up in a home environment where some language other than English is used.

The diagram (Diagram 2) now begins to look rather complicated. And if all the possibilities, permutations and combinations of language were included it would become *very* complicated. Most children in Singapore are exposed in the formative pre-school and primary school years to three, and often four, languages.

1. Language A in the diagram may be any one (or two) of the Singapore languages.

2. Language B is commonly Hokkien, but may be Mandarin, Malay, etc. We must include too that very mixed argot which is commonly used by children playing together; it has a base of English but is much modified by the other Singapore languages.

3. Language C is English. It must necessarily be English of an internationally understandable variety. It is used by children and adults for studying science, for working in technical and technological situations, and for the planning and execution of all scientific aspects of national development. It is used also in other situations, but it is this use of English for science which is our topic at the moment.

We should note here that this use of English is a decision conditioned by our economic situation, and not a decision enforced by the quality or content of any of the languages in question. The potential exists in all human languages to be the media used for the communication and development of science. For us, the necessity of using English arises from the fact of our economic dependence on trade and industry, and the need for us to have access to and to communicate with people in other countries who use English in the fields of science, technology and industry.

Problems Inherent in Bilingualism

In the complexities of this situation the mere decision to use English for science will not enable us to surmount the difficulties of operating within the framework of Diagram 2. We will need to do some hard thinking about the means we can adopt to ensure that all the channels marked "C" on the diagram are open channels along which truth can be freely communicated from person to person without confusion or misunderstanding. In other connections Singaporeans have often been reminded that "We never get anything for nothing." And this is as true in relation to language as in relation to any other commodity. The ability to use more than one language is an ability which is achieved only at great cost in time and effort. It usually also imposes some limitation on the extent of the lexis and the number of registers available to the multilingual person in each language.

It is easiest for a person to acquire two languages if both are learned during childhood in the period from birth up to about the age of five, during which time the inherent human ability to accept and use language is most manifest. If, as is suggested by psychologists applying information theory, the human ability to identify a language stimulus is a process of successive classification using a binary system, then when two languages are present each identifying process has added to it the preliminary decision as to which language is being used. This need add very little time (or trouble) to the process of using language. On this view it is understandable that the young child can cope with two languages at the time when language is being acquired. It can be observed that the ease with which the young child switches from one language to another is associated with the recognition of the environment and contexts in which each language is appropriate. It may be a source of amazement to the parents that the child does not confuse the languages, but in fact the child's decision is probably simply situationally determined. The language which is used is a response to a person (e.g. grandmother), a situation (e.g. school), an auditory stimulus (the language in which the child has been addressed), etc.

But there is another consideration to be taken into account. At the time (usually about the age of five or six) when the child has accepted and learned the use of the language (or languages) of his environment, he has an ability to *produce* statements using the framework of the syntax of each language. He will later extend his syntactical understanding, but he does possess at this time many of the basic grammatical patterns. He can accept with understanding statements which he has never heard before provided they are grammatically presented. But he still operates with a limited vocabulary. The fluency and accuracy with which he will later, as an adult, express his thought and receive ideas from others will depend not only on the communication being couched in correct grammatical form but also on vocabulary – the numerous and different words which he can draw on for his own expression, and which he can comprehend when offered by other people. We must ask ourselves whether the truly bilingual adult has at his command twice as many words as his monolingual friend, or whether, since in the nature of things his bilingual situation will have led to each lexical item having had only half as much reinforcement, he will tend to forget (in both languages) a proportion of the words which he hears and uses less frequently. If this is so, then his capacity to communicate in each language will be reduced by the fact of his ability to use two languages rather than one. We may take the view that some loss of *quantity* in each language is acceptable in order that communication, using a slightly restricted vocabulary, may be possible in *both* languages. But we should not delude ourselves that we can ever get "something for nothing" – command of a second language to such an extent that the total vocabulary is double what would have been available had the same number of years been spent in using only one language.

In real life, of course, we cannot make an experiment on any one person. But we do have many individuals whom we can observe who have become, to varying degrees, bilingual. What we usually see is that the bilingual person tends to "specialise" in his use of language. He may have one language which he uses in talking with his parents, another language when he talks to his children, and perhaps another language still which he uses when he is at work. The professional man

may often be observed to discuss his professional activities in one language, and his cultural history in another. While such a dichotomy may be purely pragmatic, it must inevitably interfere with full interaction between the two aspects of his life. His situation has been likened by some writers to that of a tree whose branches have been cut off from its roots. There is some cause for concern if this is indeed happening.

The highest level of organisation of language is discourse – the logical and allusive presentation of ideas in sequence. It is a moot point whether the ability to organise linguistic discourse is a prerequisite or a concomitant of intelligent thinking. The question of whether bilingualism affects the ability to order discourse is, on either ground, an important one. It has been suggested by linguists that "vocabularies canalise thought", and that language must be accepted in its role as "a mediator of human behaviour". It might be that bilingualism bestows benefits by opening up new canals with new mediators of behaviour, so that there would be gain here to offset some of the disadvantages which are so obvious. But research still needs to be done, and we do not yet know the answer to this nor to many other related questions.

We can, however, get down to ground level again, and look at some of the problems which are in practice associated with the teaching of science in English in Singapore.

The Need to Speak Before Writing

When, in some countries, it has been considered necessary for scientists to be able to study their subject at an advanced level in English, it has sometimes been suggested, and even put into practice, that they should learn to use English only in the modes of reading and writing, and without learning to hear and speak. This is indeed possible. We have all heard the amusing stories of the "Chinese scholars" from Europe who have learned to read Chinese, but cannot understand one word of the spoken language. It must be a laborious and therefore undesirable experience. In any case, since English is a "phonetic" language, albeit imperfectly so, there can be little question that it is wise for us to base our use of English first on an ability to hear and speak and then later on an ability to use the written language. It might perhaps be argued that we should place more emphasis on the spoken word in our earlier studies of science, since there are two advantages attached to this – a saving of time, and an avoidance of some later difficulties, mispronunciations and confusions. A thorough familiarity with the two words "daily" and "diary" before they are seen in print will lessen the confusion between them. This argument will hold only if the speech to which young children are being exposed is reasonably correct. A speech error which comes to mind is the tendency (following the open syllables of the Chinese) for Singapore speakers of English to leave out (or perhaps to leave unaspirated) the consonantal endings of words. This leads to "minus" being pronounced as "minu' ", "freeze" as "free' ", etc. Dependence on speech as an introduction to English can be effective only if teachers are prepared to be meticulous in avoiding such errors as this in their own speech. If we look at our two diagrams, and consider the problems inherent in teaching science and technology in English to the student depicted in the second diagram, we can imagine that the nature of the difficulties experienced will vary. At primary level the pupil lacks chiefly the basic framework of the English language; at tertiary level his difficulty is more with the plethora of long technical words which he has to comprehend. Let us consider, since it will have a bearing on both extremes, the situation of the pupil entering secondary school in the context of the second diagram. He has a home language and perhaps one or more other languages in which he has been accustomed to operate his daily activities. In English he has a small vocabulary, and a relatively small ability to discuss life's experiences. There are problems which will face both him and his teacher.

Extrapolating from an Existent (or Non-Existent) Base

A good teacher, given a monolingual situation, would naturally base his teaching on the foundation of the knowledge which his pupil brings with him into the classroom, extrapolating from the experiences of daily life to the generalisations of science. If he tries to apply this method in teaching the bilingual or trilingual child, he will immediately face difficulties in that the child has the experience of life but lacks the English words to describe his experience. Linguistically the teacher is in danger of extrapolating from a non-existent base. This becomes very obvious if textbooks based on a typical English child's experience are used. Such books, for example, commonly introduce the mathematical concept of sets by talking about a team of football players (which a Singapore child would understand) and a flock of sheep (which a Singapore child would probably

not understand). The idea of the flock of sheep which does help the European child to understand the nature of a set, is nothing but a hindrance and even a factor inducing despair to the Singapore child. If we suggest that such examples should be omitted, this is not to say that no information about the foreign environment should be taught. The tropical child needs to be told about snow, just as the child in northern zones needs to be told about tropical islands. The argument is that the basic examples should be drawn from the child's own experience, and should be examples which he is capable of describing in English words. A pleasing example of just such a use of the Singapore-based example was provided by the Singapore teacher who explained to his pupils that distilled water could be seen inside the lid of the rice cooker.

The Vocabulary of Textbook Instruction

The very language used in instruction in the textbook may present difficulty, and this is particularly so with imperatives (commands) where the child reader of the book is told to "consider", "compare", "evaluate", etc. Lacking a clear understanding of what each command really means he hopefully "does something", and at the same time he begins to develop the habit of sliding over the difficult word and extracting only an imprecise meaning, thus becoming careless instead of meticulous in his reading and thinking. This is a problem which can be tackled on the individual level by preliminary (and it must be admitted rather time-consuming) preparation. A more general solution might be sought by controlling the extent of the vocabulary used. For example, "pick", "choose", "select", and "identify" are sufficiently close in their meaning for us to consider deliberately using one and eliminating the other three from lower secondary texts.

The Framework of Logical Discourse

Even more important than the "command" words of textbook instruction are the words which form the logical framework of English – the words which connect phrases and clauses and which lead the reader with expectation from one item of the discourse to the next. At their simplest these are the little conjunctive words such as "and", "or", "but", etc. Those with logical implications and more complex functions which connect the thought of one discourse item to the next are more difficult to explain and to use; such words are "if", "as", "so", "because", "since", "although", "however", etc. A monolingual child enters secondary school with a good stock of these words, for he has heard them used since infancy: "*If* you do that, it will break!", "You didn't eat your meat. *So* you can't have any cake!", etc. The multilingual Singapore child may of course have heard and become accustomed to quite a large list of these words. But it is equally likely that he will have only a very small number of them which he can use normally and easily – perhaps less than ten of them.

But the discourse of science depends absolutely upon these words. Considering only those connectives which relate entire sentences to each other, it has been found (Winter, 1971) that in a large corpus of scientific writing, there was on average one of these connectives for every eight sentences. So in every eight sentences there were two sentences which were logically related to each other by a word of this type. Analysis showed that if the connective words were classified, then the connectives which denoted logical sequence were the most numerous group, and provided about one third of all the examples. The next most frequent – the connectives signifying contrast – provided about one quarter of all the examples. The other types of connectives followed in the order shown below:

Types of Connective	Examples
Logical sequence:	thus, therefore, yet, hence, so, etc.
Contrast:	however, in fact, yet, nevertheless, etc.
Doubt:	probably, perhaps, possibly, etc.
Addition (non-contrastive):	moreover, similarly, also, etc.
Expansion:	for example, especially, etc.

The two words which head the list are of pre-eminent importance. In the study quoted "thus" accounted for 11% of the total use of such connectives, and "therefore" accounted for 9%. Although the remaining words of this type are used with less frequency they each supply a significant modicum of meaning. If we exclude these words from our writing we immediately find ourselves limited to simple statements of fact. Any attempt to explain how one happening is related to another, to make comparisons, to try to match things, to project thought into the past or the future, requires the use of these words. The bilingual or multilingual Singapore child entering secondary school is faced with textbooks written in English which use these words liberally. The scientist's nature is to think and write logically, and to connect his discourse with such words. In one lower secondary textbook examined – a textbook which appeared to be simply and well written – there were more than sixty different such connective words used.

If the pupil does not understand these words he is not worried. He does not even stop to wonder. He simply takes hold of the two factual items offered to him, and pays no more attention to the connection between them. Any reader can try the experiment for himself. Simply take a paragraph of reasoned discourse and strike out all the connecting words of the type shown above. The passage will still appear sensible. It will make a series of statements. But looking at the words crossed out the reader should be able to see that what has been lost in removing them is the scientific meaning of the passage and the mutual interdependence of the statements in it. Here is an example: "As the angle of incidence increases so the emergent beam increases in strength." Now eliminate "as" and "so". The passage still reads sensibly: "The angle of incidence increases. The emergent beam increases in strength." But without the connective words the concept of the relationship and the information that the two changes happen "in parallel" has been lost.

If this problem is tackled by attempting to improve pupil understanding, it must be acknowledged that these words are peculiarly difficult to teach, and full understanding normally comes only with frequent use. If the problem is tackled by simplification of the format in which science is presented, the teacher and the textbook writer face uncomfortable decisions in having to sacrifice some scientific exactitude in order to achieve pupil understanding.

Vocabulary of Science

The various sciences have each generated their own huge vocabulary of nouns, adjectives and verbs, which have been adopted by scientists to express exact identities and procedures. They are frightening enough to the English speaking non-scientist. How much more frightening are they to the student who is a beginner in both science and English!

It has been sometimes suggested that students should be given the meanings of English stems and prefixes, which are usually based on Latin and Greek roots. This is at least a scientific approach to the problem. One linguist who advocated this method made a list of 14 English words whose roots and prefixes would provide the key to no less than 14,000 scientific words (Brown, 1964). As an example, the first word on his list was "precept" in which ,"pre-" means "before" and "-cept" is from the Latin verb "capere" meaning to "take" or "seize". It can be seen how knowledge of this word and other prefixes could be of help to the student in understanding such words as "intercept", "accept", "capture", etc. The same principle is applicable to many words in the secondary science textbooks. Thus the knowledge that "chlorine" is so called because it is a "green" gas can help the student to accept the more difficult word "chlorophyll" which is the "green colouring in plants.

Despite the awesome number of scientific terms which exist in English, they are usually logically derived. They are frightening, they are a burden, but ultimately and especially to the tertiary student of science, they do not present such a fundamental problem as the frame-words of discourse. The difficulty which the scientific terms pose is a difficulty in naming, whereas the connective words discussed above, which are necessary for the understanding of discourse, pose a difficulty in expressing and understanding concepts. There is a chance (and a danger) that the industrious student may memorise the nouns and verbs of science and present apparently correct factual answers to questions, while still not understanding the arguments and ideas of science. It is for this reason that mere lack of descriptive vocabulary must be considered to be less serious than poor understanding of the structure of discourse.

Only some of the problems associated with the teaching of science in English in a multilingual situation have been outlined above. There are many problems which must be faced by scientists, linguists and teachers in Singapore, as in any such

multilingual community. Rigorous thought is needed, and it is suggested that we might approach the problem with the following searching questions:

1. How can we limit and grade the vocabulary with which we communicate scientific knowledge?

2. How can we frame the precise concepts of science in terms which are at the same time true and also comprehensible?

3. How can we stimulate innovative scientific thought within the limitations imposed by the constraints of our English competence?

With the last question we return full cycle to the comments at the beginning of this article. The language which we need for the teaching and understanding of science is not merely the means of describing, giving instructions, reporting procedures, and communicating facts. What we need is the communication of ideas. Only if we can find language which is understood by both parties to the exchange can the ideas in the mind of one scientist be communicated to another. And only by the use of this sort of communication, from mind to mind, can we hope to advance and develop in the field of science.

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P.D. Reynolds[1]
University of Hong Kong

"Perfectionism" and ELT Objectives

This paper examines the influence of one tendency in the teaching of English as a second/foreign language on the achievement of English Language Teaching objectives. The tendency is denoted "perfectionism" in the paper, i.e. the tendency among teachers of English to impose a standard of ideal "correct English" on all students.

Stated objectives of learning English as a foreign/second language are listed according to various documents, notably the UNESCO/FIPLV Study of 1975 and the SEAMEO/RELC Report of 1972. The most common objectives are isolated.

"Perfectionism" in the teaching of English is further described and illustrated, mainly with reference to Hong Kong. Its causes are examined. The paper points out how this tendency acts as an obstacle to the achievement of selected objectives. It raises questions about the validity of the objectives and the possibility of modifying the tendency among teachers.

Rational curriculum planning always includes mention of "objectives". In theory, the establishing of objectives is the first, and most important, step in planning any course of study. "All organized activity must have as its motivating and guiding force the attainment of some predetermined objective or objectives. The current purpose or purposes of the organization must be the yardstick against which all requirements and accomplishments are measured and evaluated" (Hooper, 1971, p. 125). What are the objectives of English Language teaching and learning in the present-day world, particularly in Southeast Asia?

Rivers implies that a "welter of slogans" such as "international understanding, intellectual training, cultural enrichment, interpersonal communication, a feeling for language" are often proposed to the trainee teacher as objectives for his language-teaching task (Rivers, 1968, p. 1). But she concludes that a present-day language course is directed at the following four objectives, "teaching more about the nature and functioning of language, teaching students to communicate in a foreign language, developing understanding of the people with whom one wishes to communicate, and teaching students to read all kinds of material fluently in the foreign language" (p. 11). Brooks categorizes objectives more broadly: "For an authentic language course there are different kinds of objectives that claim attention, and these include the personal and the national, the utilitarian and the aesthetic" (Brooks, 1964, p. 108).

We can subsume both sets of objectives for studying English as a foreign language under two more general ones. The first is more academic and is directed at the language itself. The other is more instrumental and is directed at acquiring some kind of competence in the language as a prerequisite for gaining a further objective. The first objective could not justify national effort and expense involved in having large sections of the population involved in language study. In Hong Kong, for instance, about a quarter of the school time-table is slotted for the study of English as a second language. This objective could not justify the painful hours spent by millions of young children all over Southeast Asia in studying English when these hours could be devoted to something of more immediate use to themselves and the community (Reynolds, 1976). Objectives for this mammoth task must be found outside the language itself. They are para-linguistic. They are rooted, not in the discipline of English, but in a particular society and its needs. So it is the second objective, apparently, that governs and justifies the widespread study of English as a second language today.

Are the objectives set by national institutions responsible for decisions in the field of foreign-language instruction (UNESCO/FIPLV Study, 1975) consonant with this second general objective? This paper will list objectives stated either explicity or implicitly, beginning with Hong Kong, going on to other Southeast Asian countries and

[1] P.D. Reynolds is the Senior Lecturer in Education at the School of Education, University of Hong Kong.

then noting objectives mentioned by communities in other parts of the world.

Hong Kong has no explicit language policy, but its policy may be deduced from various documents. A major educational policy document states:

> Hong Kong is a commercial and industrial centre which has reached a high level of technical and professional sophistication and has established close contacts all over the world. It is undeniable that Hong Kong, if it is to maintain its progress, will continue to need people at all levels in commerce, industry and the professions who are at home in English as well as in Chinese. For these practical reasons, the standards of Chinese and English must be maintained, and indeed, if possible, improved, and parents are likely to demand that they should be.
> (Hong Kong Government, 1974, p. 7)

From this official statement it appears that English is to be studied to subserve the needs of commerce, industry, technology and the professions. It is to be ancillary to Hong Kong's economic needs. This demands competence in the four language skills. The suggested English syllabuses for primary and secondary schools make no direct mention of the social objectives they are intended to attain, but they spell out in detail the means of acquiring the four skills, consonant with the policy stated in this Government White Paper. On the basis of oral proficiency and minimum literacy, students are to develop ability to learn other subjects through the medium of English *(Suggested Syllabuses,* 1973). The syllabus for the secondary stage of education is not very well co-related with that for the primary stage, but it repeats the theme of competence in the four skills within the range of structural patterns prescribed *(Provisional Syllabus,* 1975).

The official statement of objectives for English-language study may be compared and contrasted with objectives as envisaged by those doing the actual teaching. These are derived by a survey of English-language teachers taking the post-graduate teaching certificate course in the School of Education of the University of Hong Kong (Reynolds, 1974):

a) Hong Kong is a British Colony so it is necessary to master the main official language. Public business is transacted in this language.

b) There is a high correlation between mastery of English and socio-economic status.

c) English is used as a medium of instruction in schools and universities; it is necessary to master it in order to grasp the content of other subjects.

d) Textbooks are written in English.

e) Owing to the scarcity of places in local universities, students want to study in universities in English-speaking countries. Mastery of English is one key to success here.

f) Hong Kong is an international port. Desirable jobs are more easily obtained if one has mastered an international language.

g) Promotion in government departments and in businesses is dependent on mastery of English.

h) English is a "status" language. Letters in English to government departments and commercial firms will get a quicker response than those written in Chinese.

i) There are numerous teachers, university lecturers, instructors, commercial superiors, etc. who do not understand Cantonese. It is necessary to learn English in order to communicate with them.

j) It is good to master an international language in order to develop an international outlook suited to today's world. With the increasing number of Hong Kong tourists going abroad, the population is becoming more aware of needing means of communication with non-Chinese speakers.

k) People in Hong Kong are becoming more westernized, and mastery of English is both a vehicle of this westernization and a symbol of it.

l) It is good to study another language for its own sake.

As may be seen, these objectives envisaged by practising language teachers reflect the pragmatism of official policy. In places they particularize this policy, but they are geared more to the needs of the learner than to the general needs of society. The possibility should be noted of the objectives of individual learners and teachers differing from national objectives and frustrating the attainment of the latter.

Extending the examination of objectives to other Southeast Asian countries, we find that some countries have clearly stated objectives while those of others have to be deduced from public statements made on the teaching of English as a

second language. The following data relies on reports from members of seven Southeast Asian countries participating in a regional seminar for English teaching in Singapore (Report, 1972).

Indonesia: The directive of the Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia No. 096/1967 states that the general aims and objectives of the teaching of English at the secondary school level in Indonesia are as follows:

a) to accelerate the process of national development,
b) to facilitate the maintenance of friendly relations with other peoples,
c) to promote national foreign policy and
d) to lead the student to a working knowledge of English in all of the four language skills: reading, aural comprehension, writing and speaking, in descending order of importance and priority.

Specifically, the student's achievement should be at a level which will enable him to:

a) comprehend the contents of textbooks and reference material used in institutions of higher education, of which about 90 per cent are written in English,
b) understand lectures given by foreign instructors and professors and communicate with foreigners, including foreign students,
c) take satisfactory notes on lectures presented in English and describe Indonesian ways of life to foreigners and
d) exchange information orally with his foreign instructors and professors and with other foreigners in general.

Khmer Republic (now Kampuchea): . . . it is every school's duty to do its utmost to help equip students with practical and sound knowledge of one of the current international languages, namely English, in order to enable them: 1. to use books or documents written in that language whenever they find it necessary to do so in order to consolidate their knowledge of some particular school subject, 2. to further their studies abroad and 3. to communicate with other peoples of the world. These are the general objectives of the English programmes.

Malaysia: Our educational programmes are geared towards producing pupils bilingual in both Malay and English . . . . The English programmes in Malaysian schools integrate the oral, reading and written skills in the language, veering towards reading-comprehension, reference and note-taking skills at higher levels, especially in the fields of science and technology.

Philippines: The Filipino continues to get most of his education using a foreign language as the medium and it is to have him competent in the language that the English instructional programme focuses on. The programme has as its overall objectives the following: a) to equip the learner with adequate language skills in listening, speaking, reading and writing in English to enable him to undertake instruction in the various curriculum areas using that language as the medium of instruction, b) to develop those skills to a point where the individual can use them to pursue knowledge on his own and c) to enhance the communicative competence and performance of the learner to a level where he can use the language correctly, efficiently and independently in oral and written communication.

Singapore: In Singapore English is generally the language of banking and commerce, science and technology. This, coupled with the current stress on technical education, science and mathematics, has made English very important as a functional tool in Singapore's plans for technological and economic development.

In the English medium schools, the general aim of teaching English is to help the student to organize and express his knowledge logically and effectively. Hence the need to encourage creativity. However, it has to be borne in mind that, for many students in the English medium schools, English is a second language as they come from diverse home backgrounds where English is not used. But these students do have the advantage of more exposure to the language than those in the non-English medium schools.

In the non-English medium schools the aim is limited to the acquisition of good English for specific purposes, as the second language learner is handicapped by the lack of exposure, limited classroom time and negative transfer. Some non-English medium schools have begun to treat EL2 not only as a subject but also as a medium for teaching mathematics and science.

Thailand: Thailand has as great a need to learn English as any country in the world. The reasons for this are obvious – English has a prestige value, is a means to better jobs and is a necessity for a scholarship abroad. These considerations, how-

ever, though important in themselves, relate to only a tiny proportion of the vast effort of teaching, and learning, English in Thailand. In this latter sense, English is a means of communication for business and commerce and liaison and diplomacy outside the boundaries of the country.

English is nevertheless essential at all higher levels of education, since most important texts are in English, and students must have a knowledge of English at least as a "library" language. In fact the difficulties of teaching one skill to the exclusion of others are well known, and what happens in practice is that English, as a living language and as a means of communication, is being taught throughout the country.

Vietnam: In the handbook on the high school curriculum in Vietnam published by the Ministry of Education in 1971, the inclusion of English in the high school programme is aimed at providing the students with the basic knowledge of the foreign language in the skills of speaking, reading and writing, and at giving them a general knowledge of the culture of native speakers of English.

As may be seen, the general tone of the objectives for Southeast Asian countries, like those of Hong Kong, is utilitarian. The most common objectives to be culled from the above list are:

a) communication, both general communication with foreigners and particularized communication subordinated to the needs of, e.g. university studies, commerce, banking, science, technology,

b) a medium for learning other school subjects, e.g. mathematics, science,

c) a library tool, i.e. a tool for information-retrieval from printed material, and

d) a means of enabling students to study further abroad.

Extending the examination of national objectives to countries outside Southeast Asia we find there is a different, less utilitarian, stress. The following objectives are selected from a project carried out under the supervision of the Secretary General of the Federation Internationale des Professeurs de Langues Vivantes for UNESCO (UNESCO/FIPLV Study, 1975):

Sweden: A tool of communication between populations who have not that language as their mother tongue.

Egypt and Korea: To ensure international communication, particularly in the field of science.

India: English is called a "library language".

Libya: To enable greater self-expression in order to expound the Arab contribution to human culture and civilization.

Greece: To enable pupils to understand speech at normal speed, to enable them to speak the language intelligibly, to enable them to read with ease and understanding, to enable them to express themselves in writing, to give them insight into the culture of the foreign country.

Switzerland: Slow learners – mainly oral communication; lower secondary school – oral and written communication; upper secondary school – literature, culture.

Denmark: For the children who leave school at the age of 15 or 16, the objective is an oral command of the language giving them a means of communication. For those passing on to secondary education, a wider basis for further studies is given. The order of objectives for foreign language instruction is: (a) oral communication, (b) culture and literature, (c) written communication.

Ecuador: The learning objective, communication, is not divided into oral and written, but into receptive and productive skills. The receptive skills are developed first.

Finland: The foreign language teaching for slow learners is more or less restricted to the receptive field. In upper secondary schools, written language has a more important place because of the requirements of the final examination. The teachers of foreign languages are advised to bear in mind the aims of general education.

Federal Republic of Germany: Emancipation, education for peace and international understanding are included in the learning objectives of foreign language teaching.

Great Britain, Ireland, Finland and Jamaica: The requirements of the final examination have an effect on teaching and establish the unofficial but actual learning objectives which are often more "traditional" than the new learning objectives that have been modified so as to be more relevant for communication.

As may be seen by comparing this list of objectives with that for Southeast Asian countries,

general communication and cultural understanding is stressed more than specifically utilitarian considerations. However, both lists confuse immediate objectives, e.g. speaking the language with intelligibility, with ultimate objectives, e.g. international communication. The final item on the list hints at one obstacle to attaining social objectives, namely, examinations.

Even granted that clear objectives have been established by educational planners which are justifiable in terms of a particular society's needs, the battle for a rational curriculum is only half-won. There are a number of other variables in the teaching of language, any one of which may deflect or distort efforts to attain the objectives (Mackey, 1965). This paper selects one of these variables, the teacher, and concentrates on a teacher attitude denoted here as "perfectionism".

"Perfectionism" in ELT may be described as a tendency on the part of teachers to pay a disproportionate amount of attention to bringing students' language standards up to a level of real or imaginary "correct" English. L.A. Hill warned against this tendency in connection with speech training (Hill, 1967, p. 80), but it is found in other aspects of language training as well. It has the following characteristics:

a) Formal written English is the proposed norm, for speech as well as writing.

b) Up to date usage is suspect.

c) It is prescriptive as regards grammar and usage.

d) Imaginative and innovative use of words is disallowed.

e) The only acceptable pronunciation is Standard English.

f) "Correctness" is dogmatically interpreted with reference to a narrow range of spoken and written English.

g) Teaching efforts are directed towards having students reproduce "correct" written and spoken English.

h) It concentrates on form to the exclusion of content.

i) The methods used to have students acquire correct forms of grammar and usage are based on rational explanation (the "reasons" given often not conforming to the linguistic facts).

j) It is disinclined to allow alternatives, e.g. in word-meanings.

To take just two illustrations. (And the "perfectionist" teacher would disallow this since it has not got a subject nor a finite verb even though it ends with a full stop.) The stated aim of a language class may be "communication in English". The student may write: "Three childs came into the room." He has achieved the aim: he has communicated clearly with the reader in English. Yet the teacher ignores the communication and pounces on the word "childs". The student's attention is directed from the substance of the communication to some peripheral item. The native English-speaking adolescent may say: "Give't'im." The teacher will make the L2 adolescent painstakingly enunciate: "Give it (spit out that 't') to him." He makes the L2 adolescent speak in a way which his native language peer finds a bar to communication, if anything.

What are the causes of this tendency? We must hark back to the first general objective given for language learning in this paper, the academic one. The study of English by L1 learners as an academic discipline casts its shadow over the learning of a language for some para-linguistic purpose. In an era prior to mass education, the language was studied by native speakers for its intrinsic interest. It was studied by native speakers already competent in some particular form of it. The substance of the language was subjected to various exercises, e.g. parsing and analysis, which were intended to give mental training to students. They were trained to speak in accordance with the norms of a socially prestigious dialect and in accordance with real or imaginary rules of logic. This first language approach laid the ground-rules for studying it as a second language. In spite of subsequent objectives laid down for the L2 learner, the teacher relied on the prevailing methods of language teaching intended for the L1 learner because these were the methods he was brought up in himself. Although there is a certain amount of window-dressing in L2 teaching methodology, the fact remains that L2 teaching is still geared to the academic objectives of the L1 learner. This is reinforced by the use of textbooks intended for the L1 learner. Many a present-day teacher of English as L2 may be recognised in the description given of the 18th-century grammarian (Postman and Weingartner, 1966, p. 49).

Other causes may be more briefly dealt with:

a) *LOCALIZATION:* The localization policies of Southeast Asian countries have ensured that most teachers in the region are L2 speakers. The teacher's intuitive grasp of the niceties of English as a living language is inadequate. The mind needs certainty, so he concentrates on those few areas of apparent certainty in the language,

and ignores the vast areas on which genuine communication is dependent. He cannot accept what Sweet calls "the arbitrariness of language" (Sweet, 1964, p. 69). He seeks the same kind of certainty to be found in mathematics and other non-linguistic subjects. He cannot accept a state of ambiguity. The less he feels confident about his own mastery of English, the less he can remain poised between alternatives and the more dogmatic he becomes. For him it is an "either-or" situation: he rules out "both-and".

b) *TEACHER TRAINING:* Teachers can teach only what they know and graduate teachers of English have studied English at the undergraduate level as an academic discipline, not as a means to attain a further objective. They study courses such as "Structure of English", "Linguistics", "Translation" (*University of Hong Kong Calendar, 1977-78*). Their status depends on their understanding and knowledge of this discipline, so that when they return to secondary school they tend to teach language as a discipline. Secondary schools set the tone for primary schools and graduate teachers have more prestige than non-graduate ones, so that methods used by graduate teachers in secondary schools are imitated in primary schools. A year of professional training can do something to change their attitudes, but cannot offset three years of undergraduate studies and thirteen years of primary and secondary education.

c) *EXAMINATIONS:* The demand for uniform and easy evaluation reinforces the perfectionist tendency in teachers. It is difficult to test language ability centrally with reference to para-linguistic objectives, since there are so many variables present. It is easier to pay attention to the language itself, especially to those features of it that have a superficial objectivity and are the grist of multiple-choice marking. In practice, the teacher must teach to examination requirements.

d) *DOMINANCE OF PRINT:* Although most English curricula pay tribute to the primacy of oral English, the teaching is print-oriented. The printed word gives an assurance to the teacher and the student that the spoken word does not. It is very difficult to organize testing of oral English because of the lack of native speakers and the impossibility of ensuring exact uniformity between different examiners. Time cannot be spared for extensive individual oral practice with each student whereas the whole class can do written work together. The varied registers and dialects and spoken usages confuse teachers and learners. Written English sets the standard for spoken English in consequence.

e) *INFLUENCE OF PARENTS AND EMPLOYERS:* The expectations of linguistically naive parents and employers exercise an influence on the teacher. They are inclined to criticize the teacher whose students produce obvious grammatical errors, but not the teacher whose students make no significant communication in English. A study showing that the written ability of Hong Kong school leavers has little relevance to employment demands incidentally reveals that employers are ignorant of what type of English is most useful in their particular businesses (Webb, 1974).

f) *TEACHERS' IGNORANCE OF OTHER SUBJECTS:* If English is to be taught as an instrument for use in other particular areas, the teacher of English must have knowledge of these other areas, such as commerce, banking, science, technology, as well as knowledge of English. Most English teachers are teachers of general English and do not have knowledge of the special areas in which English is supposed to be instrumental. Language, of itself, is a contentless subject. The teacher with no specialized knowledge of another area of learning is driven to provide content in the form of knowledge about the language.

A realistic language policy must take into account what "English" in Southeast Asian schools actually is. Not "English" as a language, but "English" as a school activity taught in the classroom by a certain type of person, subjected to various conditioning and restraints which lead to certain attitudes. It seems that this activity is fairly uniform throughout Southeast Asia in spite of different cultures and different official objectives. I have visited classrooms in various Southeast Asian countries and noted little to differentiate the content and teaching approach. It is textbook-centred. Often identical textbooks are widely used such as the *Longman Structural Readers* and the *Oxford Progressive Readers.* I have seen the same *Scientific Reading Associates'* reading kits used in Hong Kong and Zamboanga. *English 901* is used in Indonesian and Malaysian classrooms. The activity itself seems self-contained, determined by teacher attitude, impervious to the broad objectives of educational planners.

What course of action remains? We may decide that it is impossible to change this activity, e.g. to remove the causes leading to "perfectionism", and must continue with "English" as before.

This involves abandoning society-oriented objectives. Or we may decide that it is possible to change teacher attitudes and bring them in line with stated objectives. This involves a massive re-training programme. Or we may decide that it is impossible to change teacher attitudes but that stated objectives should not be abandoned. This involves a radical re-structuring of English teaching. We must abandon the traditional subject, "English", and introduce in its stead a new subject directed towards society's objectives. We may call it "Communication" or "Learning Medium" or "Library Science" or "Foreign Study Preparation", but it will not be the same as "English". It will omit much of present English content and will include new material.

These proposed solutions are radical but they avoid the artificiality of English teachers mouthing official objectives only to dismiss them in practice and educational planners laying down broad objectives *in vacuo*.

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Clive Scharenguivel
Institute of Education

The Sea around Us: Experiences in Creative Drama

— a series of five lesson plans on a common theme —

Singapore is an island consisting of a mainland and about fifty small islands around it, yet most pupils take the sea for granted. The sea for them, and for many people here, is a place for swimming and recreation only. The general objective of this series of creative drama lessons is to help pupils to appreciate the sea, its value and importance for the economy of the country, its importance to the people living in the neighbouring islands, and also to make pupils aware of the dangers and threats of the sea to fishermen and sailors.

More significantly however, these creative drama activities are aimed at developing the imagination of the pupils and providing situations for movement and particularly language flow. They would thus help pupils to develop the ability to think and speak extemporaneously and achieve a proficiency and fluency in English.

The decision-making and problem solving activities in these lessons may be used in many practical ways. In the lesson on the castaways on the island, for example, pupils may discover for themselves how to survive on the island, how to build a hut or shelter, whether to explore the caves, how to protect themselves against wild animals, etc. Pupils will realize that there are various alternatives or choices to be made in solving a problem. For example, in learning to survive on the island, they have to decide whether to build the hut in a certain place on the island, which has some advantages, or to build it in another part which has other advantages.

As a long term objective, these activities may also help pupils to appreciate literature, and perhaps music, written about the sea. This would stimulate and motivate pupils and serve as a springboard and catalyst for pupils to attempt other creative activities like creative writing and art. Through experiencing the joy of creativity and using their whole being – sensory, motor and intellectual abilities – pupils would make significant progress in expressing themselves competently and fluently in English and at the same time appreciate the value and importance of the sea.

It is assumed that teachers who try out these activities in the classroom are aware of the principles and objectives of creative drama or educational drama. For teachers who are unfamiliar with this form of drama, a definition and a brief note may be necessary.

Creative drama or educational drama is informal drama which is created by a group of pupils; its dialogue and action are extemporised rather than written and memorized. It is an educational medium which allows the pupil freedom to explore and experiment and, "through searching and coming to terms with his experiences, make decisions and moral choices in the framework of play of a dramatic kind" (*Syllabus for English*, 1971).

One of the main reasons why creative drama is generally still not taken seriously and accepted by both parents and educators in Singapore is that the term "drama" is generally associated with theatre training and acting on the stage. This misconception has caused parents and teachers who are ignorant of the values and objectives of creative drama to frown upon the activity as a waste of time. This prejudice will persist until teachers are made to realize that the main purpose of creative drama is to produce a well-balanced personality, NOT an actor, and that

1. the pupil's personal experience of "doing" is the main value of creative drama;

2. the pupil's personal development rather than the satisfaction of an audience is the goal;

3. it is the act or process of creating rather than the end product that is important;

4. creative drama is a viable and extremely useful tool for teaching English as a second language since it provides abundant opportunities for pupils to express themselves in imagined or real-life situations.

See the Guidelines on Educational Drama in the *Syllabus for English – Pr. III and IV* for further guidance.

The teacher trying out the lessons should realize that the "journeys" taken in the activities mentioned in the five lessons are imaginary trips and that the teacher or leader should invite and accept suggestions and ideas from the pupils themselves.

THE SEA AROUND US

Lesson 1 **At the Seaside**

Suggested Materials Music: *La Mer* by Debussy. Pictures of caves, coves, etc.

Motivational Activity Oral discussion.

"It's so hot today, how about a picnic on the beach?" The preparation could involve the imaginary packing of lunch boxes, and all items pupils would like to bring for the picnic, e.g. towels, swimming costumes, fishing rods, etc. When they are ready to leave, the teacher could play the music by Debussy, in order to stimulate their imagination and evoke an interest in the improvisation.

Main Activity "We are now at the seaside. What would you like to do?"

Mime and improvisation Through oral questioning and motivation, the leader or teacher could encourage the pupils to do the following activities: swimming, making sand castles, collecting shells, fishing, playing with a beach ball, writing their names in the sand with their toes or with sticks. The leader should encourage all the children to participate in the activities. The leader may either take the children through all the activities or suggest some of them and encourage the pupils to choose which activity they wish to do. The leader could also suggest that they have a sand castle competition. When interest sags, or if they get boisterous especially in the games on the beach, the leader could suggest that they all have their lunch.

"Now, let's take a walk along the beach. Look at that cave over there! Shall we explore it? We had better not go too deep inside, as it could be dangerous." To focus on specific sensory processes such as seeing, hearing, smelling and touching, and on specific emotions such as fear, caution, curiosity, the leader could suggest, "Isn't it wet and dark? Can you feel the slimy walls?" Or "Listen, can you hear anything?" Or "Do you know where that water is coming from?" The leader will allow the children to "explore" the cave for a while. Then he will suggest that they get back in the sunshine. "It's time to go home now. Pack your things, change back into your clothes. Hurry now, otherwise we'll miss the bus. Oh, look, the fishermen are returning with their catch! We won't be able to see what they have caught. However, next time we shall return to this beach and perhaps we shall ask them to take us fishing with them. Let's go now. Wave to them."

Evaluation The leader will encourage pupils to discuss activities they did in the lesson. They will also be encouraged to ask questions on the intent, the structure, the effectiveness and the worth of experience.

Suggested Follow Up Activities

Art: Draw or paint a picture of the seaside. Include some of the activities that we did there.

English: Reinforcing the language items .... past tense, e.g. What did you do at the seaside? How did you make the sand castle? What did you see in the cave? etc.

Science: What do you call that cone-shaped formation hanging from the roof of the cave? .... and what do you call the similar formation mounting upwards?
Do you know how they are formed?
Let's find out. Etc.

Lesson 2 **Going Fishing**

Suggested Materials

Pictures of a "kelong"
a fishing net or pictures of one
pictures of fishermen employed in various activties– mending their nets, hauling in the nets, sorting the fish, etc.

Motivational Activity

Before the children set out on today's activity, the leader will show them the pictures of fishermen, fishing boats, fishing nets, "kelong", and encourage them to talk about the various methods employed by fishermen in catching fish. Slides or a film strip of the fishermen at work in a "kelong" could also be shown to the children to stimulate and motivate them in the discussion.

Main Activity

"Do you remember in the last lesson, we watched the fishermen returning with their catch? Let's return to the seaside to see them at work. Don't forget to bring your hats to protect your head from the heat of the blazing noonday sun. Here we are at the seaside. Can you see the men? There's a 'sampan' returning, and look, here's an old fisherman mending a net. Some of us can help him."

Here, the leader should encourage the pupils to explore, experiment and improvise various activities, e.g. helping to drag the "sampan" to the shore; hauling in the nets; or sorting out the different fish; some children could be the wholesale dealers who arrive early to buy different fish in large quantities to sell at the market; some could be helping to dry the nets, etc.

Some pupils could play the role of the fishermen so that groups of pupils could be employed in various activities. The leader could then draw their attention to the "kelong" which is out in the sea.

"I wonder whether they have caught or trapped many fish in the 'kelong'? Shall we ask that old fisherman whether he will allow us to visit the 'kelong'? We must hire several 'sampans', because there are so many of us." (Here, several activities can take place – getting permission from the head fisherman, deciding the number of boats to hire, hiring the "sampans", and getting into them. As none of these boats have motors in them, there will also be opportunities for the children to take turns to row the boat to the "kelong".) "Are you all set? Let's go."

"Well, here we are at the 'kelong'. Be careful, the 'sampan' is rocking a lot. Tie the boats to the wooden posts so that they won't

float away. Go up the narrow wooden steps very carefully. Are we all here? Now, remember, a 'kelong' is only a rough shelter, some of the planks and floor boards are simply laid across and there are many gaps in between. So be very careful and don't fall in."

As the leader had aroused their interest and told them about the "kelong", the children playing the roles of the fishermen at the "kelong" would have looked up some information about the "kelong" and how the fish are caught in the entrapment. The other children would be encouraged to ask questions or improvise a situation, e.g. helping the fishermen to haul in the nets, fishing with rods from the platform, or helping to sort out the different fish, etc. The teacher could then draw the pupils' attention to the time, and the children thank the fishermen and return to the shore.

Evaluation

Children will be encouraged to discuss the activities and ask questions. The leader will also discuss with the class the effectiveness and the worth of the experience.

Suggested Follow Up Activities

The natural follow up for this "lesson" will be to ask the children to draw a picture of a "kelong" showing the fishermen catching the fish or some aspect of their visit to the "kelong". This may lead to some children constructing a simple model of the "kelong". Children will be encouraged to do further research on this very important method of catching fish, and to discover for themselves other methods and compare them with this one. The children at this level are already acquainted with some of the methods of catching fish from their geography lessons.

Lesson 3 **Shipwrecked!**

Suggested Materials

Pictures or paintings of shipwrecks,
e.g. *Wrecked and Saved* by Anthony Paul Morlon
Music: *Hebrides Overture* by Mendelssohn
Literature: *David Copperfield* by Charles Dickens

Motivational Activity

The leader will play the music by Mendelssohn, and stimulate a discussion on the mood it conveys. The pictures and the chapter on the *Shipwreck* from *David Copperfield* will also help to motivate their interest and guide them in the improvisation.

Main Activity

From the discussion, the children will decide for themselves the various roles – the captain, sailors, radio officer, etc.; the kind and size of the ship they are in; the time of day; the cause of the shipwreck; the cargo of the ship; where the ship is going to; etc . . . . thus dealing with and answering the questions – *Who, When, What, Why, and Where.*

The teacher/leader will create the appropriate atmosphere by playing Mendelssohn's music. This will help children to imagine the storm arising, and visualize the waves dashing against the sides of the ship and on the rocks. The leader may step in to stir the imagination of the pupils through suggestions and oral questions, e.g. "The storm is getting worse. Shall we ask the captain to send an S.O.S. signal? Look at the dark clouds in the sky," or "There's a huge wave coming . . .

Watch out everybody!" Or "There's an explosion in the engine room down below . . . Someone please help the poor engineer . . " etc. The climax of the music will also help the children to enact the disaster and create the hysteria experienced by the passengers.

The main activities and improvisation will be developed by the children themselves, and the leader will leave the decision, whether to abandon ship or not, to the captain and the crew. Perhaps they may decide to save the passengers by lowering the life boats. This will lead to other quick decisions to be made . . . . whether women and children should be saved first . . . . which could lead to chaos and hysteria resulting in some of the lifeboats being capsized . . . . The ship could also be completely wrecked . . . . The leader will leave the children to improvise the whole scene for themselves, *develop their own outcomes* and reach their own conclusions.

Evaluation

The leader will encourage the children to discuss the various activities and the effectiveness of the improvisation.

Suggested Follow Up Activities

Literature: The improvisation will be an impetus and an excellent motivation to widen the pupils' knowledge and enrich their experience in reading literature about shipwrecks.
The leader could arouse their further interest by introducing them to poems and stories written about the sea and shipwrecks, e.g.
The Wreck of the Hesperus by Henry W. Longfellow
Old Man and the Sea by Ernest Hemingway
David Copperfield by Charles Dickens
Youth and Gasper Ruiz by Joseph Conrad

Creative Writing: The leader could also encourage the children to write their own account of the storm perhaps from different angles or viewpoints, e.g. as a passenger, as a witness, as the captain, etc. The children may also wish to write a poem.

Lesson 4 **The Castaways on a Strange or Uninhabited Island**

Suggested Materials

Music: "Play of the Waves" from *La Mer* by Debussy
Literature: *Robinson Crusoe* by Daniel Defoe, *The Cay* by Theodore Taylor

Motivational Activity

The leader could guide the children to this activity through a discussion of the lesson on *The Shipwreck,* and further arouse their interest in the topic by introducing them to two novels of shipwrecked people. The leader will not read the stories to them, but will use them as a means of stirring their imagination and stimulating their interest.

Introductory Mimetic Activity

To assist the children to "get into" the situation, and to link this with the lesson on *The Shipwreck,* the leader will play *The Hebrides Overture* by Mendelssohn, and allow the children to develop their own ideas of *how* they were cast on the deserted island.

Main Activity

To create the atmosphere from the stormy music of *The Hebrides,* the leader will play *"Play of the Waves"* from *La Mer* by Debussy. This will help to create a contrasting peaceful setting and mood. To en-

courage character observation and sensory and emotional awareness, the leader will offer suggestions and ask questions, e.g.
"We are now washed ashore on this strange island. Shall we take count of people who have survived? And what of supplies? Have we managed to save any useful things – matches, knives? Is anyone physically injured? What kind of island is this? Are there any inhabitants? What do you suggest we do now? *How are we going to survive on this island?"* The questioning will be used to spark off the children's imagination. The leader will avoid dominating the scene. The leader will encourage the children to develop their own ideas through the enactment of the situation. The activity provides excellent opportunities for the children to solve problems and make their own decisions, e.g. How to build a shelter? Where to build the shelter? What do we use to build it? All these will not only require common sense, but also a knowledge of science and geography.

The leader will encourage the children to break up into groups, so that all the children can involve themselves in various activities: building a shelter, hunting for food, exploring the island, looking for fresh water, lighting a fire, collecting dry wood, etc. The leader will leave the children to improvise the whole scene and reach their own outcomes, e.g. the children may decide to stay on the island and not look out for ways to be rescued.

Evaluation

Through oral discussion, the children will talk about the effectiveness of the improvisation, and the leader will guide the children to discover for themselves the ethical and moral values, such as co-operation, working together for a common goal, learning to survive, etc.

Suggested Follow Up Activities

Geography: The children's attention may be directed towards the physical features of land forms: lagoons, creeks, lakes, rocks, hills, etc.

Creative Writing: Write a story or a poem on your adventures.

Lesson 5 The Singapore Harbour

Suggested Materials

Photographs of Clifford Pier showing ships anchored in or near the harbour.
A film strip or slides showing various activities, e.g. loading and unloading of cargo; the different ships, from "sampans" that provide transportation for the people living in the neighbouring islands to the large steamships and passenger liners.

Motivational Activity

Applying the principle – from the general to the particular and from the simple to the complex – the leader will begin by discussing the ways by which children come to school. "How do you come to school?" "What are some of the other ways?" "What about the children living on the islands off Singapore?" (There are no secondary schools on these islands.) "Where do they 'disembark'?" The leader then encourages children to discuss the various activities that take place at the harbour. To stimulate their interest and stir their imagination, the leader will show them the photographs and the slides. After a brief discussion the leader will say, "Let's visit Clifford Pier."

Main Activity

"Here we are at the harbour. Look at the flags and names of ships in the harbour. Can you tell the countries they are from?" The children will decide on the roles they wish to play, and get themselves involved in the various activities. The following are some of the roles that the children could play:– customs officers who check the luggage of the passengers; the merchants and owners checking the loading and unloading of cargo; the stevedores who are employed for this work; the import and export businessmen who buy wholesale goods; captains and sailors who come on shore leave; the tourists and the many passengers who have come to visit Singapore, etc.

To stimulate further interest, the leader could then suggest that it is now a special holiday, e.g. National Day. The harbour would be decorated with buntings, the ships would also be decked with decorations and streamers and there would be a festive air and excitement in the harbour. The leader will announce that the Tourist Promotion Board is giving free or cheap trips around the Singapore harbour. This will give the children the opportunity to "tour" the harbour, and observe the activities at the wharves, the godowns, docks, etc. As in the previous activities, the leader will suggest that some of the children be involved in the activities at the wharves, the docks, etc. This would provide lots of opportunities for all the children to participate, and also provide situations for movement and language flow.

Evaluation

The children will discuss the effectiveness of the lesson and the leader will encourage them to make observations and suggestions for improvement.

Suggested Follow Up Activities

Geography: From this lesson, children may be motivated to carry out projects and research work on docks, harbours, the shipping routes, activities in or near our harbour.

Creative Writing and Drawing: Children may write a composition, draw a picture of the harbour, or write a dialogue between a tourist and a customs officer, or between a reporter and some of the passengers who have been on the tour around the harbour.

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James Madden
Institute of Education

Creating Successful Language Learners

Teachers often know a lot about teaching but very little about learning. For our brighter pupils this may not matter so much, as they will continue to learn in spite of us. But for the pupils of lesser ability, those whose aptitude for learning in classrooms is low, who may not even like learning, for these pupils to learn effectively, it is essential that the teacher create situations in which the pupils will learn almost in spite of themselves. In an international survey[1] of the teaching of French as a foreign language (Carroll, 1977), it was found that there was little correlation between the pupils' level of achievement and the teacher's university qualifications in French or whether or not he had lived for some time in a French-speaking country. The level of achievement correlated highly, however, with the teacher's understanding of language learning processes and with his skill in creating good learning situations. In another investigation[2] into what factors influenced the success of the pupil in individual school subjects, it was found that the principal factor affecting pupil achivement in all subjects was the home environment. Except for second language learning. Here it was discovered that the skill of the language teacher was of prime importance. From these two examples, it would seem that the language teacher has both a greater opportunity to affect his pupils' success and a greater responsibility for their failures.

Where do we look, then, for information on language learning that will help us in our classrooms? There has been a lot of research into how people learn their mother tongue, but very little on second language learning in classrooms. In the 1950s and early 1960s, language teachers turned for salvation to the linguistic scientists, even though the latter protested that their interest was in building a theoretical model and that their theories were not directly applicable to classroom learning. Over the last ten years, language teachers have shifted their attention from "input" to "output". In other words, the primary focus is not on what the teacher will do and the resources he will use, but instead on what the pupils will do to prove that learning has taken place. Once the teacher has defined exactly what "behaviour" he wants from his pupils only then can he decide on effective methods and techniques to help them reach these goals.

A Canadian, H.H. Stern, (1975) took pupils who were very successful at learning second languages and attempted to identify those qualities which contributed to their success. He produced the following list. The important thing to note as you read this list is that, although these qualities are affected by individual ability and personality, all of them can be developed in the classroom by a skilful teacher. In fact, many of them will not happen at all unless the teacher sets out deliberately to foster these knowledges, skills, and attitudes in the learners.

The successful language learner

1. knows how to go about learning.
2. knows effective ways for learning a language.
3. is able to draw inferences and discover rules for himself.
4. always searches for meaning.
5. is self-monitoring.
6. has a positive attitude towards the target language and culture.
7. wants to develop an ability to communicate in the target language.
8. is active in learning.
9. is willing to practise in class.
10. is willing to communicate in real-life situations.

[1]This survey of 30,000 pupils in ten countries was conducted in 1975 by the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement, which has its headquarters in Sweden, and was supervised by Professor Carroll, Kenan Professor of Psychology at the University of North Carolina, USA.

[2]This investigation was conducted by Dr. Richard Wolf of Columbia University, New York, USA, who discussed it with me during his visit to New Zealand.

Let us look at each point and its implications for the language teacher. *The successful language learner*

1. **knows how to go about learning**
2. **knows effective ways for learning a language.**

There is ample research to demonstrate that learners who have had the objectives of a learning task explained clearly to them will be better at learning that task than learners who have had no explanation. Knowing where you want to go is a pre-requisite for deciding how you want to get there. In the past, teachers have spent little time, if any, on explaining to the pupils exactly what learning they were expected to master and why. They have spent even less time in discussing how best to learn. Obviously, for the teacher to develop this knowledge of how to learn in his pupils, he must first know about learning himself. How many times have we said, "Learn those words for homework?" What is the best way to "learn those words?" How will the pupils know when they have "learnt the words?" What exactly must they *do* to prove that they "know those words"? What should happen inside the learners' heads when they are learning vocabulary or grammar, when they are writing compositions or answering comprehension questions? One of our main aims should be to teach pupils *how to learn a language,* so that they can continue to grow in language competence outside of the classroom when we are not around to tell them what to do.

The teacher's best aid is a well-informed learner who

3. **is able to draw inferences and discover rules for himself.**
4. **always searches for meaning.**
5. **is self-monitoring.**

Learners do best what they do most. Besides a knowledge about grammar, the pupils need an ability to use grammar correctly while their attention is focused on the meaning of what they want to say. But they also need "grammar-learning skills" to be able to generalise for themselves from the evidence presented. Any "rule" that a pupil works out for himself will be much better remembered than one he is given by a teacher.

But the pupil will only discover rules and search for meaning if the teacher sets up activities where he is required to do these things. At all times, the pupil should be asked to say, write, do something that will prove to the teacher and to himself that he understands what he hears or reads or is expressing. Pupils need tasks to measure their learning against. They should share with the teacher the responsibility for assessing their progress, and not sit back and wait for the teacher as the supreme fount of knowledge to tell them whether their work is good or bad. If they are involved in evaluating their own learning, then they can be motivated by powerful inner feelings of success rather than by external teacher-originated rewards like marks.

The successful language learner

6. **has a positive attitude towards the target language and culture.**

This is a long-range motivation, which in Singapore seems to be translated in practical terms as "pass your exams, get a good job, earn more money."

The successful language learner

7. **wants to develop an ability to communicate in the target language.**
8. **is active in learning.**
9. **is willing to practise in class.**

Whether the pupil is active in learning, whether he can communicate in the target language, will depend first of all on how much opportunity he has to communicate actively in class. Although having the opportunity is essential, this by itself will not produce learners who want to participate in class. We all like doing what we are good at. The learners must therefore be successful when they take part, and this success must be recognised by the teacher and be obvious to the pupil concerned. Success is the greatest motivating factor.

The successful language learner

10. **is willing to communicate in real-life situations.**

This may depend on how out-going the pupil's personality is. However, it also grows directly from the points made in the preceding paragraph. Unless the pupil has built up his self-confidence in the language through frequent successful performance in the classroom, he is unlikely to want to try communicating with that language outside of the classroom.

To sum up, teachers need to know about learning and how different sorts of learning are best produced. They should be aware of exactly what behaviour they are attempting to develop in their pupils and what evidence they will look for in what the pupils do. The pupils should be aware, in simple and appropriate terms, of what they are learning and why, and the teacher should

not only make them aware of how to learn effectively but also develop their learning skills. This emphasis on the process of learning will lead to greater success for the pupils in class, which in turn will increase the pupils' confidence and desire to participate. And all of these factors together can add up to our principal aim – pupils who want and are able to use the target language in their daily lives, and, what is more, who can continue to grow in language competence after they have left school.

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Marcia P. Liu
Institute of Education

Language Learning through Songs and Poetry

"How do you expect me to teach poetry when my class can't even read a simple sentence?"

"I wish I had time for poetry or songs but I have to cover the syllabus."

"Pupils do songs in their music lesson."

"Besides I can't sing, and it would disturb the teacher next door."

"I can't use poetry because I teach English as L2."

"I can't teach poetry because I only take the class for English / comprehension / composition / history / maths."

Comments and questions like the above are heard frequently when poetry is mentioned to teachers. Although both "poem" and "song" are four letter words, must they be banished from the classroom or set aside for very restricted use? This article will argue that poems and songs can and should have a very important place in the language teaching programme.

Pupils do songs in their music lesson.

The value of songs in language teaching has been recognized for some time but for various reasons many teachers are reluctant to make singing an integral part of the language lesson. It is obvious to us all that we remember words and phrases most easily when they are set to music (a fact TV commercial and "Sesame Street" writers are well aware of). When a word or a grammatical structure is used in a song, it may be learned better and faster than through drill or language exercise. Certainly time spent in singing will be a more pleasant activity for the majority of the pupils, and may offer a very desirable change of pace in the lesson. As these various benefits are so easily obtained, it is only sensible that songs should be a standard and frequent activity in both primary and secondary level language lessons.

A teacher can make use of songs in two ways. The first is rather random as far as language items are concerned. You just teach songs you think the children will like, and/or songs they should know. You do a brief explanation, perhaps, of what the words mean, and then you listen carefully to ensure correct pronunciation as the children sing.

On a more systematic basis, however, you choose (or adapt) songs to introduce or reinforce specific selected vocabulary items, grammatical structures or pronunciation. For example, present tense and possessive pronouns are absorbed as children sing (to the tune of "Here We Go Round the Mulberry Bush") "This is the way we wash our hands / brush our hair / eat our rice / come to school" etc. Pictures or drawings on the board can be used to indicate subject changes for I / he / she / you / they, with the correct pronoun. "On a cold and frosty morning" becomes "at six o'clock in the morning" and this line also can be varied if the teacher wishes to include time review. Present continuous verbs will be reinforced with "London Bridge is Falling Down" in its original version or by singing "What is (Kok Seng) doing now?" The last line can either repeat the question with contraction and pronoun, "What's he doing?" or, perhaps prompted by a picture, it can supply the answer. Alternatively, to give more practice the reply comes in its own stanza, "Kok Seng is eating now . . . That's what he is doing."

While secondary school pupils would undoubtedly be insulted if asked to sing such simple songs, the same approach can be used with different materials. A tape by a singer or group the class knows can teach a song like "If I were a carpenter and you were a lady, would you . . ." – a far more effective teaching method for subjunctive and conditional than the usual drills. Both standard records and those prepared specifically for language learning can be used, and there are many books on the subject, a few of which (available at the Regional Language Centre) are listed below.

I can't sing.

There are very few of us who truly cannot sing. Almost everyone can croak out enough of a tune to teach it to children. Perhaps it's more a matter of losing our inhibitions. But if you are one of the very few people who absolutely cannot carry a tune (even in a bucket, as the saying goes), have someone do a one finger piano recording on tape, play it a few times in class, and let the children go to it. Using familiar tunes like "London Bridge" avoids the problem but can be very limiting after a while.

It disturbs the class next door.

So does having the whole class chant in unison as they "read" aloud. No one complains about this kind of noise. (They should. What the children almost inevitably learn in this activity is very poor non-English intonation, rhythm and even pronunciation. They are comprehending very little, if anything, and more importantly, they are not learning how to do *silent* reading – the only kind that matters.) We need to recognize the fact that unless language is taken in only three of its aspects – comprehension, reading and writing – language classes by definition must involve noise as children practise speaking. Speaking may well be the most important aspect of English for the majority of our pupils when they leave school, and it is in many ways the hardest skill to teach in the classroom situation. Through songs and poems, children are given oral practice which they need so badly. As they are repeating sentences which have been set to fit a particular rhythm pattern, they are far more likely to be learning correct intonation and stress patterns than they are when the class is set to reading prose passages aloud.

Just as children presumably have learned to ignore this kind of noise from the class next door, so too they can learn to tune out singing. One would hope that their own lesson would be so interesting that they wouldn't even hear it. Teachers of course can always check with neighbour teachers to see if one time would be less disturbing than another. The class should not have to move to a special room, as songs should be an ordinary part of regular class work.

How do you expect me to teach poetry when my class can't read a simple sentence?
I can't use poetry because I teach English as L2.

Both of these objections are based on the assumption that poetry is hard to understand. This is a common belief which has arisen out of unsuitable selections for literature classes as well as the genuine obscurity of some poets. But just as literature doesn't have to be Literature, so too a poem doesn't have to be a Poem. Teachers shouldn't think that all poetry needs to be "taught." There is a vast number of poems which are simple and direct in language and content, which can just be read. In fact, a beginning or poor reader may well be less intimidated by a poem than he is by a paragraph of prose because there may be fewer words, and he hasn't yet learned that poems are supposed to be hard. The pleasure we all find in rhythm and rhyme patterns also may be enough incentive to pull him over a few bumps in language. While we are always being cautioned that poems should not be treated as comprehension exercises, in fact reading skills are much the same no matter what we are reading. Poems like the following are simple in vocabulary and structure and provide every bit as much language practice as do reading passages. They may also be a great deal more interesting than much of the material in current texts. (There are innumerable poetry books for teachers and pupils to take poems from. A few are listed below, and the National Library, bookshops and school libraries will provide more.)

My Favourite Word

There is one word –
My favourite –
The very, very best.
It isn't No or Maybe,
It's Yes, Yes, Yes, Yes, YES!

"Yes, yes, you may," and
"Yes, of course," and
"Yes, please help yourself."
And when I want a piece of cake,
"Why, yes. It's on the shelf."

Some candy? "Yes."
A cookie? "Yes."
A movie? "Yes, we'll go."

I love it when they say my word:
Yes, *Yes,* YES! (Not No.)

–Lucia and James Hymes

Although doctors no longer wear hats or make house calls, this poem will easily carry readers along with its energy. It could be used in a vocabulary lesson, to reinforce past tense, or as

pronunciation to stress correct vowel sounds in "sick", "quick", "pill", "bill" (rather than "seek", "queek", "peel", "beel").

Miss Polly had a dolly who was sick, sick, sick.
So she phoned for the doctor to be
quick, quick, quick.
The doctor came with his bag and his hat,
And he knocked at the door with a rat-tat-tat.
He looked at the dolly and he shook his head.
Then he said, "Miss Polly, put her straight to bed."
He wrote on a paper for a pill, pill, pill;
"I'll be back in the morning with my bill, bill, bill."

– *Anon.*

The next poem could be used for vocabulary (adjectives, parts of the face) or as an excellent *th* pronunciation exercise: note repetition of "*th*ink", "*th*ings", "tee*th*" with the voiceless *th*, and "*th*eir", "*th*ey", "*th*e" with voiced *th*.

Mice

I think mice
Are rather nice.

Their tails are long,
Their faces small,
They haven't any
Chins at all!
Their ears are pink,
Their teeth are white,
They run about
The house at night.
They nibble things
They shouldn't touch
And no one seems
To like them much.

But I think mice
Are nice.

– *Rose Fyleman*

"The Folk Who Live in Backward Town" could be used for an imaginative essay, art work and oral discussion, or even as a preposition exercise if given to pupils with blanks to fill in.

The folk who live____ backward town (in)
Are inside out and upside down.
They wear their hats____ their heads (inside)
And go to sleep____ their beds. (beneath)
They only eat the apple peeling
And take their walks____ the ceiling. (across)

– *Mary Ann Hoberman*

A teacher-in-training once said that the following poem would only confuse the pupils. Obviously it wouldn't be suitable for primary one, but older children enjoy it because they are pleased that they can see the joke. It is also good for phonic sounding out of nonsense words.

Eletelephony

Once there was an elephant,
Who tried to use the telephant.
No! No! I mean an elephone
Who tried to use the telephone.
(Dear me! I am not certain quite
That even now I've got it right.)

Howe'er it was, he got his trunk
Entangled in the telephunk;
The more he tried to get it free,
The louder buzzed the telephee.
(I fear I'd better drop the song
Of elephop and telephong!)

– *Laura Richards*

While the next poem has more vocabulary which may need explaining – bother, misbehaves – the rhythm, rhyme and alliteration are easy to enjoy, and the familiar situation could spark off a lively oral English or composition exercise on brothers and sisters.

Brothers

I had a little brother
And I brought him to my mother
And I said I want another
Little brother for a change.
But she said don't be a bother
So I took him to my father
And I said this little bother
Of a brother's very strange.

But he said one little brother
Is exactly like another
And every little brother
Misbehaves a bit, he said.
So I took the little bother
From my mother and my father
And I put the little bother
Of a brother back to bed.

– *Mary Ann Hoberman*

Each teacher and each class will have different selections, and teachers will make use of the same poem in different ways – for reinforce-

ment of language structures, for pronunciation practice, for vocabulary introduction or review, for comprehension, for discussion, for composition – the important thing is that children be allowed to enjoy a variety of accessible poems.

I'd like to do poems but I have to cover the syllabus.

This objection overlooks the fact that poetry *is* the syllabus, along with oral language and reading and writing. The *Syllabus For English Primary One and Two* through *Five and Six* has a recommended scheme for English that allots one third of the total time for "enrichment" activities. (See Foreword.) For some reason these activities are seen as expendable by many teachers. If "serious" activities such as language drills and exercises were achieving totally satisfactory results, one could not fault teachers for interpreting the syllabus so narrowly. The fact that language results are not seen as being satisfactory suggests that we may need to rethink the classroom activities.

I can't use poetry or songs because I only take the class for . . .

As has been stated earlier, songs or poems can be the basis for any kind of activity from reading to writing to speaking to grammar review to spelling. Nor is it only the English or literature teacher who can utilize them. History classes might enjoy

Ancient History

I hope the Romans
Had painful abdomens.

I hope that the Greeks
Had toothache for weeks.

I hope the Egyptians
Had chronic conniptions.

I hope that the Arabs
Were bitten by scarabs.

I hope that the Vandals
Had thorns in their sandals.

I hope that the Persians
Had gout in all versions.

I hope that the Medes
Were kicked by their steeds.

They started the fuss
And left it to us!

– *Arthur Guiterman*

While some of the vocabulary in the poem is difficult, the idea is clear, and one the children may have some sympathy with. Science teachers might make use of "The Microscope".

Anton Leeuwenhoek was Dutch.
He sold pincushions, cloth, and such.
The waiting townsfolk fumed and fussed
As Anton's dry goods gathered dust.

He worked, instead of tending store,
At grinding special lenses for
A microscope. Some of the things
He looked at were:
mosquitoes' wings,
the hairs of sheep, the legs of lice,
the skin of people, dogs, and mice;
ox eyes, spiders' spinning gear,
fishes' scales, a little smear
of his own blood,
and best of all,
the unknown, busy, very small
bugs that swim and bump and hop
inside a simple water drop.

Impossible! Most Dutchmen said.
This Anton's crazy in the head.
We ought to ship him off to Spain.
He says he's seen a housefly's brain.
He says the water that we drink
Is full of bugs. He's mad, we think!

They called him *dumkopf,* which means
dope.
That's how we got the microscope.

– *Maxine Kumin*

For maths, Carl Sandburg has given us

Arithmetic is where numbers fly like pigeons in and out of your head.
Arithmetic tells you how many you lose or win if you know how many you had before you lost or won.
Arithmetic is seven eleven all good children go to heaven – or five six bundle of sticks.
Arithmetic is numbers you squeeze from your head to your hand to your pencil to your paper till you get the answer.

etc.

Even sports and P.E. are represented, for instance in *The Sidewalk Racer and Other Poems of Sports and Motion* by Lillian Morrison (available from the National Library).

Photo Finish

Two track stars ran a race
and neither knew defeat.
Both perished at the tape;
they called it a dead heat.

The Knockout

The shortest fight
I ever saw
Was a left to the body
And a right to the jaw.

As we frequently remind our teachers-in-training, anyone who teaches in English teaches English, and we all need to take as many different approaches to our subjects as possible.

There is, however, another aspect of the complaint voiced above which I'd like to call to the attention of any administrators and/or schedule planners who may have read along this far. All schools have scheduling difficulties and perhaps problems of too many teachers in one subject and not enough in another; but the dividing up of classes' English time among more than one teacher does not work to the children's advantage. Even an area as seemingly mechanical as spelling can only be taught in a meaningful way by a teacher who can relate spelling to the other English activities which the class is doing. In secondary school, pupils can benefit immensely by having one teacher for both English and literature so that these subjects can be integrated. It makes little sense for the English teacher to search frantically for new composition topics ("My Favourite TV Programme" or "An Interesting Relative") when there are so many topics which come logically out of literature reading and discussion but which three periods a week allow no time to follow up. It is to be hoped that in the near future, scheduling will be done for academic rather than administrative reasons.

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*The place where the book is available is shown within brackets. RELC is the Regional Language Centre, Singapore.

J. B. Heaton
Visiting Professor in Education,
Institute of Education

Communication in the Classroom

Preparing a functional language course for teachers

Research into interpersonal interaction outside the classroom has usually sought to draw attention to the complexity of communication. Such complexity is also apparent in the classroom, where communicative behaviour at first seems so rich that it can scarcely be handled by an observer. However, because the classroom offers a more formal speech situation than most ordinary speech situations, it has been used by several linguists recently in their attempts to provide a descriptive system capable of coping with the various forms of discourse. Whereas "in day-to-day conversation, complex rules pertain . . . . . within the classroom the mechanisms are much more apparent." (Sinclair, 1975) Moreover, although in ordinary speech situations outside the classroom people constantly monitor their language at the subconscious level in order to avoid misunderstandings and intuitively apply self-correcting devices, inside the classroom a far more conscious and deliberate monitoring of communication takes place. For example, in a typical classroom situation, the teacher frequently checks to find out if the pupils understand what is being communicated to them. In addition, he prompts the pupils, corrects their responses, and repeats and re-phrases statements, constantly exerting different kinds of control over the classroom talk.

A useful term for referring to such use of language in the classroom is metacommunication in the sense used by Stubbs (1976): i.e. the type of communication used to check whether messages have been received and understood. Such metacommunication is highly characteristic of much teacher talk, accounting for a significant proportion of teachers' communication with pupils. Furthermore, both teacher and pupils have specific expectations concerning such use of metacommunication in teaching. Consequently, it is largely (though not exclusively) with metacommunication that the teacher-training materials which will now be described are concerned.

The materials constitute the first attempt to devise a relevant training programme aimed at preparing Chinese medium teachers of mathematics, science, physical education, art and music in primary schools to teach their subjects in the medium of English. These Chinese medium teachers had previously completed their teacher-training course in Chinese at the Teachers' Training College and had all attained at least a minimum level of proficiency in English, though few could speak English with any degree of fluency and even fewer used English in their daily lives. At the beginning of the present programme, almost all these teachers complained of being ill at ease when handling ordinary classroom communication in English, often feeling that their position was threatened as a result of being unable to use language effectively to monitor their teaching.

Consequently, in addition to a component comprising English for mathematics, science, etc., a component on metacommunication is now included in all the re-training programmes and relevant materials have been specially prepared. These materials, which rely heavily on role-playing and simulation exercises, concentrate on the specific language functions related both to the different kinds of metacommunication in the classroom and to communicative behaviour in school situations in general.

The following outline describes briefly the contents of the twelve units in the course, indicating the various language functions identified for detailed treatment and practice.

Unit 1: Introductions in the classroom and related language functions involving the identification of individual pupils.

Unit 2: Making polite requests in the classroom, giving orders and formulating general rules of behaviour, conduct, etc.

Unit 3: Establishing attention signals and controlling pupils' attention.

Unit 4: Questioning in the classroom (as part of a general teaching strategy): i) *Yes/No* questions, ii) *Or* questions, and iii) *Wh* questions. After

dealing with the different types and purposes of questions in the classroom, this unit gives practice in various techniques of questioning and simplifying questions to conform to appropriate content and language difficulty levels.

Unit 5: Handling pupils' responses: accepting, correcting and rejecting pupils' answers. This unit also examines strategies for delaying answering questions or for commenting on a pupil's response in order to consider the topic a little longer or check the facts.

Unit 6: Repeating and re-phrasing questions and answers as well as reporting class discussions and comments.

Unit 7: Telling pupils how to do things and giving written instructions. This unit seeks to develop the ability to simplify and clarify instructions and concludes by providing practice in filling in forms.

Unit 8: Giving and refusing permission. (Note that asking for permission rarely elicits a simple *Yes* or *No* response from the teacher. Invariably, the teacher requires more details or further explanation, and even then the permission given is often qualified.)

Unit 9: Using different types of questions to monitor the various levels of the pupils' understanding of what is being taught: recall, comprehension, application, invention and evaluation questions. (Question tags are also practised in this unit.)

Unit 10: Warning pupils and giving advice.

Unit 11: Giving reasons and explaining: cause and effect. (Like the other units, this unit concentrates on the language functions required for helping and monitoring classroom management rather than attempting to teach the functions necessary for handling knowledge related to particular subjects.)

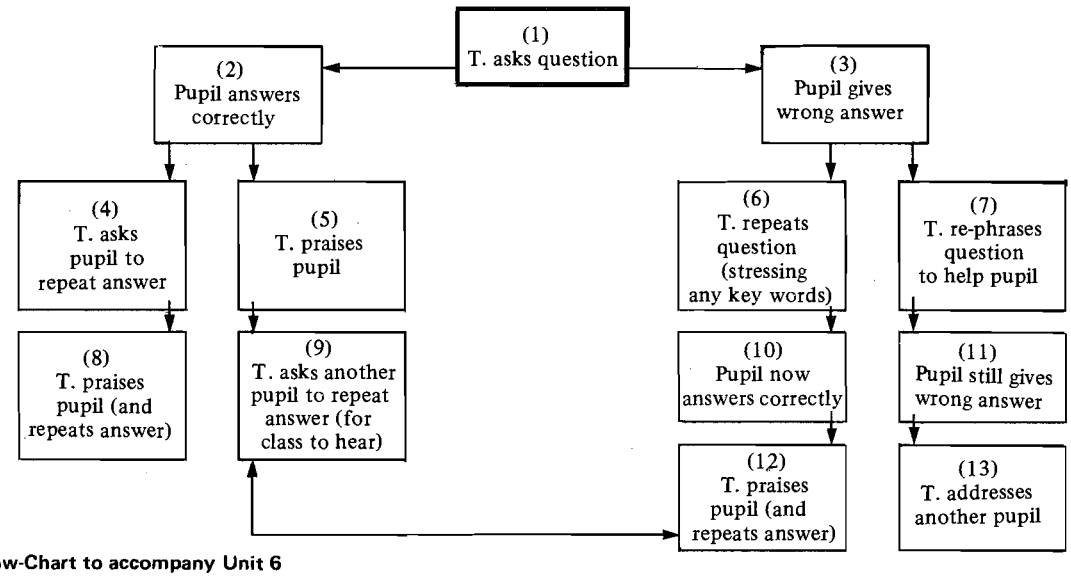
Unit 12: Stating intentions, making suggestions, expressing degrees of probability and speculating about future happenings.

Although examples of the various functions have been categorised here, it must be remembered that familiarity with the full context in which a function occurs is usually essential for interpreting that function. It is thus not always possible to determine what communicative function is being performed outside the context a particular utterance actually occurs in. For example, the utterance "Did you hear what I said, Eng Boon?" may be a request for information, an attempt to gain the attention of the pupil, or even a warning. Indeed, several important studies in Britain have shown that, though aware of the full context of a particular function, even native speakers of a language may misinterpret the various communicative functions being used. For example, when a working-class pupil hears the command "Would you please be quiet!", he may interpret it as an ordinary request which he has the option of accepting or refusing since the commands he is accustomed to hearing at home are expressed only in the imperative.

Furthermore, a particular utterance may have more than one function, thus serving several purposes simultaneously. For example, the utterance "What did Rani do a moment ago?" may serve to establish attention, to monitor a pupil's response (to check that he has understood), and even to warn a pupil not to be inattentive in future – all at the same time. In most cases, however, an utterance has clearly a primary function: hence the attempt to identify and isolate the various functions for teaching purposes in the programme described.

The practice material in each unit of the course ranges from highly structured exercises such as dialogue re-arrangement, the completion of dialogues and written texts (i.e. cloze passages), the correction of ungrammatical statements, and the simplification of questions to role-playing and classroom application exercises (involving such tasks as the writing of rules, reports and letters). Important exercises which occur in every unit include practice in listening comprehension, reading aloud and asking questions. An attempt has also been made to include provision for the teaching of those sentence structures and grammatical items most appropriate to the particular function on which the unit was based. For example, Unit 1 immediately suggests the teaching of spatial prepositions, Unit 2 imperatives and the position of adverbs, Unit 4 interrogatives, Unit 5 reported speech, Unit 7 the passive voice and the modals *should, ought to* and *must,* etc. In a similar way phonological points are picked up in the units wherever appropriate, particularly features of stress and intonation (e.g. the various intonation patterns in *Yes/No* questions, *Wh* questions and question tags; main stress in such patterns as *"Do* be quiet." "Can *a*nyone tell me?" "Can *you* tell me, Rani?" "That's *al*most right," etc.).

Perhaps the most important feature (and in many ways the unique feature) of each unit is the



Flow-Chart to accompany Unit 6

flow-chart which accompanies the key dialogue and serves to introduce the function to be practised. Flow-charts are used throughout the programme to provide a visual outline of the situation being practised in the key dialogue. Each flow-chart shows clearly how particular "speech acts" may combine to form a "speech event" (Hymes, 1967). The various alternatives which may take place after each speech act are given, and the student is able to see immediately the outline of the event and the situation in which it is developed.

In some cases, there may be a large number of possibilities after a certain speech act. It can never be claimed, therefore, that a flow-chart is capable of showing all the possibilities in a speech event: clearly, almost anything may happen. It is argued, however, that each flow-chart in the programme shows the most common alternatives which can be used. Moreover, by providing the student with the bare outline of the event and situation in simple visual terms, a flow-chart makes him much more aware of what may take place in a typical classroom encounter. The use of flow-charts seeks to avoid the rigidity normally associated with classroom dialogues and drills by showing that real-life communication with pupils is rarely a matter of providing a stimulus to elicit a fixed response. Since there is considerable freedom of choice in what can be said at any particular point in the flow-chart both by the teacher and by the pupil, various routes through the flow-chart are possible and thus different conversations will be produced by different groups of students or different circumstances. The conversation produced from a flow-chart is determined entirely by the roles and the needs of the students participating in the dialogue.

The example which follows shows how flow-charts are used to make students more fully aware of what is taking place in interpersonal interaction in the classroom. After listening to the dialogue and answering the questions which follow, the student is required to listen to the dialogue once again and to trace the speech acts through the flow-chart.

Key dialogue

T: What is the chief cause of waves in the world's oceans? (PAUSE) Rohan.
P: The moon, sir.
T: No, the moon causes tides. What causes *waves*? Can you remember?
P: The wind.
T: Good. *What* causes waves, Yit Cheong?
P: The wind.
T: Yes, Waves are mostly caused by the wind blowing across the surface of the ocean.

Answer the following questions about the dialogue.

1. What is the pupil's first answer to the teacher's question?
2. What word does the teacher stress when he asks the question again?
3. Why does he stress this word?
4. What is the chief cause of the waves in the oceans of the world?

Now listen to the dialogue once again and look at the flow-chart. Follow the dialogue through the

flow-chart, inserting the missing number in each blank as you listen.

1, 3, _, _, 12, _, 12.

The student is later instructed to construct his own conversation (working in pairs or small groups), following given numbers through the flow-chart. In this way, the conversation is controlled for practice purposes, yet at the same time the student has considerable freedom in saying what he wants to say in the way he wants to say it. This is far removed from the typical dialogue practice found in language laboratory materials.

1. You ask what causes tides. One pupil says that it is the weather and another pupil says that the moon and sun cause tides. You want the pupil to say that it is the gravitational force (or pull) of the moon and sun which causes tides.

1, 3, 6, 11, 13, 1, 2, 5, 9.

2. You ask why gases can be compressed and a pupil answers that they have no volume. The correct answer is that they do not have definite volumes. In other words, different amounts of air can occupy a given space.

1, 3, 7, 10, 12.

Etc.

The material which has been described here constitutes only a beginning and is in the form of a preliminary draft. It is hoped that much of the material will be refined in the light of feedback from working through the programme with students and teachers. Even at this early stage, however, it does indicate an urgent need for language tests which will measure much more precisely the communicative competence of students and teachers about to undertake training or retraining programmes. Such tests in themselves may well result in the formulation of more precise statements of objectives that combine communicative competence and classroom teaching skills. Finally, further classroom research in this area may eventually provide some of the answers to questions regarding not only the extent to which different teachers differ in their use of metacommunicative functions in the classroom but also the extent to which these functions are realised in different ways in different languages.

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Muhammad Ariff b Ahmad
Institut Pendidikan Singapura

Masalah-masalah Pengajaran Bahasa Melayu sebagai Bahasa Kedua

1. Mukadimah

1.1 landas bincang: Sebelum membincangkan masalah-masalah pengajaran bahasa Melayu sebagai Bahasa Kedua dan mencari jalan bagaimana hendak mengatasi masalah-masalah itu, baiklah rasanya kita melihat dahulu: apakah yang dimaksudkan dengan "bahasa kedua" itu. Mungkin ada baiknya kalau kita tinjau juga: apakah tujuan seseorang itu mempelajari "bahasa kedua" tadi. Dengan demikian akan dapatlah kita tentukan landasan tempat kita bertitik-tolak membincangkan masalah-masalah itu seterusnya.

1.2 yang dikatakan "bahasa kedua": Bahasa Kedua menurut anggapan ahli-ahli bahasa, seperti yang dinyatakan dalam monograf UNESCO on Fundamental Education, ialah bahasa atau bahasa-bahasa yang diperoleh atau diketahui atau dikuasai atau dipelajari seseorang setelah atau selain daripada bahasa ibunda (mother-tongue)nya. Seorang Melayu, umpamanya, bertutur dalam bahasa Inggeris; maka bahasa Inggeris itu adalah bahasa kedua kepadanya, kerana bahasa itu bukan bahasa ibundanya.

Tetapi, masalah-masalah bahasa kedua yang hendak kita bincangkan sekarang bukanlah bahasa kedua yang dinyatakan oleh monograf UNESCO itu; kerana di Singapura, di sekolah-sekolah di Singapura ini, kita punya konsep sendiri tentang bahasa kedua itu; yang bertentangan denga konsep bahasa kedua menurut ahli-ahli bahasa tadi.

Di Singapura, yang kita maksudkan dengan bahasa kedua ialah salahsatu daripada tiga bahasa rasmi Singapura (bahasa Melayu, Mandarin dan Tamil) yang dipilih untuk dipelajari di sekolah-sekolah yang bahasa medianya bahasa Inggeris. Bahasa Inggeris pula diwajibkan menjadi bahasa kedua bagi pelajar-pelajar yang belajar di sekolah-sekolah yang bahasa medianya salahsatu daripada tiga bahasa rasmi tadi.

Keadaan ini memungkinkan bahawa bahasa kedua bagi seseorang pelajar di Singapura ialah mother-toungenya sendiri, kalau kebetulan bahasa media sekolahnya bahasa Inggeris. Anak-anak Melayu, misalnya, adalah mempelajari bahasa Melayu sebagai bahasa kedua (ML2); pun demikian halnya dengan anak-anak India yang mother-toungenya bahasa Tamil.

Dalam pada itu bukan tidak ada anak-anak orang India yang bahasa ibundanya bukan Tamil – mungkin Urdu; mungkin Hindi atau lain-lain bahasa di India yang tidak diakui sebagai bahasa rasmi di Singapura – telah memilih bahasa Melayu menjadi bahasa keduanya, untuk dipelajari sepanjang waktu sekolahnya.

Tidak kurang juga anak-anak keturunan Tionghoa yang bahasa ibundanya adalah dialek-dialek keturunannya, yang terasa kekok atau keberatan untuk mempelajari bahasa Mandarin itu sebagai bahasa keduanya. Merèkaitu mengambil bahasa Melayu menjadi bahasa keduanya. Ada pula antara anak-anak Tionghoa yang telah mencuba mempelajari bahasa Mandarin sebagai bahasa kedua hingga ke darjah primary 5 atau 6, tetapi kerana mereka selalu gagal dalam peperiksaan bahasa Mandarin itu lalu memperubah fikirannya, mengambil bahasa Melayu menjadi bahasa keduanya mulai dari darjah primary 6 atau menengah 1.

1.3 tujuan mempelajari bahasa kedua:

1.3.1 Selain daripada hendak menambahkan pengetahuan dan boleh bertutur dengan orang-orang asing dalam bahasanya, pelajar-pelajar bahasa kedua itu bertujuan juga hendak mempelajari falsafah dan kebudayaan bangsa yang bahasanya dipelajari sebagai bahasa kedua tadi.

Pelajar-pelajar bahasa kedua itu mengharapkan supaya menerusi kesusastraan bahasa keduanya itu mereka akan dapat meneliti pemikiran dan kehidupan bangsa itu, kemudian membandingkan telitiannya itu dengan falsafah dan kebudayaan mereka sendiri.

Dengan berbuat demikian pelajar-pelajar itu akan dapat mencapai tujuan terluhur dari kajiannya itu, iaitu memperbaiki dan memajukan kehidupannya sendiri menerusi perbandingan tadi.

1.3.2 Tetapi, apa yang menjadi tujuan pengajaran bahasa kedua bentuk kita, bentuk Singapura, seperti yang dinyatakan dalam para 2 dan 3 uraian 1.2 tidaklah sejauh itu. Kita cuma maukan satu pencapaian tujuan jangkadekat. Tujuan mengajarkan bahasa Melayu sebagai bahasa kedua itu ialah untuk melengkapkan pelajar-pelajar kita hari ini supaya menjadi rakyat Singapura yang bilingual di masa depan.

Dengan demikian, bahasa-bahasa vernacular di Singapura akan tetap terpelihara, selaras dengan pemeliharaan yang kemas terhadap tradisi dan kebudayaan rakyat yang berbilang bangsa di sini.

Oleh itu maka eloklah kita bataskan bincangan kita pada peringkat ini: setakat membincangkan masalah-masalah yang dapat menolong kita mencapai tujuan yang dinyatakan dalam uraian 1.3.2 ini.

2. Masalah-masalah

Tentulah banyak masalah-masalah pengajaran bahasa kedua itu yang minta diperhati dan diperbaiki secara sertamerta atau secara beransur-ansur.

Ada antara masalah-masalah itu yang bersifat sementara, seperti: masalah tempat belajar yang berpindah-pindah, tidak kekal setempat; masalah tentang kekurangan buku-buku teks, atau tentang buku-buku teks yang kurang sesuai; masalah tentang persiapan-persiapan pelajaran dan penyediaan bahan-bahan pengajaran dan sebagainya. Oleh kerana kebanyakan masalah-masalah sementara itu bersifat administrative, saya, percaya hal-hal itu dapat diselesaikan dalam satu dua peringkat pertadbiran, dan tidak memerlukan satu bincangan hebat dan serious menerusi tulisan ini.

Dan, yang hendak saya kemukakan menerusi kertas ini ialah beberapa masalah basic yang perlu diperhatikan sungguh-sungguh, yang saya fikir akan menjadi masalah yang kekal berlarut-larut sepanjang masa pengajaran bahasa itu selagi ia belum diselesaikan.

2.1 situasi pelajar-pelajar: Oleh kerana keadaan-keadaan seperti yang diterangkan dalam para 3 hingga 6 uraian 1.2 itu berlaku, maka kelas bahasa kedua itu mungkin dipenuhi oleh pelajar-pelajar yang terdiri daripada anak-anak Melayu belaka. Mungkin kelas itu mempunyai lebih separuh anak-anak Melayu dan selebihnya anak-anak bukan Melayu; atau mungkin pula keadaan sebaliknya. Malah, boleh jadi juga, kelas itu dipenuhi oleh anak-anak bukan Melayu tetapi mereka datang dari pelbagai golongan dialek Tionghoa dan dari pelbagai keturunan orang-orang India yang bukan Tamil; juga dari lain-lain golongan minoriti yang bahasa ibundanya tidak dianggap sebagai salahsatu bahasa rasmi di Singapura ini.

Kecuali kumpulan pertama iaitu kumpulan anak-anak Melayu belaka itu, 3 kumpulan pelajar yang lain adalah bercampur-aduk. Kumpulan-kumpulan itu dipenuhi oleh pelajar-pelajar yang datang dari pelbagai latarbelakang kehidupan yang berbeza-beza bahasa ibundanya; yang tidak sama keadaan *socio-culture*nya; yang berlainan pula media pemikiran dan sistem linguistiknya.

Kecamukan dan kelainan suasana tadi pastilah, sekurang-kurangnya, akan menghalang kelancaran pengajaran bahasa kedua itu. Pun, kekacauan-kekacauan itu boleh pula menyebabkan adanya *aptitude* pelajar-pelajar yang berbeza-beza terhadap bahasa kedua itu; dan ini boleh mengakibatkan timbulnya sikap kurang sihat yang boleh menghalang kemajuan pengajaran bahasa kedua itu, kalaupun ia tidak menggagalkan sama sekali.

2.2 pengaruh socio-culture: Bahasa adalah langsung hubungannya dengan pemikiran masyarakat; dan pemikiran masyarakat itu biasanya terbentuk menerusi sistem kebudayaannya. Cara orang-orang berfikir dan mengonsepkan sesuatu biasanya sejalan dengan – kalau tidak terpengaruh oleh – sistem kebudayaannya itu. Sebab itu: pertumbuhan dan perkembangan suatu bahasa itu tidaklah sama dengan pertumbuhan dan perkembangan bahasa-bahasa yang lain.

Jadi, dengan sendirinya, *socio-culture* itu sentiasa mempengaruhi pelajar-pelajar bahasa kedua itu. Dan, masalah-masalah *socio-culture* ini haruslah diuraikan dengan cara yang bijaksana kalau kita maukan pengajaran bahasa kedua itu berjalan lancar.

Mungkin seseorang pelajar bahasa kedua itu kaya dengan jumlah bilangkata Melayu, tetapi selagi ia atau mereka itu masih kuat terpengaruh atau berfikir secara *socio-culture* keturunannya, maka bahasa Melayunya akan masih mengalami kacau-bilau juga. Akan ada-ada saja yang janggal; yang ganjil atau yang tak kena, dalam bahasanya itu.

Mari kita ambil kata *"hariraya puasa"* sebagai misal. Apakah konsep *hariraya puasa* itu? Bagi orang-orang Melayu, *hariraya puasa* itu adalah hari pembayaran zakat selepas mereka berpuasa wajib sebulan Ramadhan sebagai pembersihan diri (jiwa) dan hartanya selama setahun (hijrah);

atau sebagai hari perlakuan ibadat rukun Islam yang keempat.

Dalam kebudayaan orang-orang Tionghoa tidak ada amalan membayar zakat; yang ada pada mereka ialah pemberian "ang-pau" dalam sambutan "tahun baru" nya. Oleh kerana ada iras-iras kesamaan lahiriah dalam sambutan-sambutan *hariraya puasa* itu dengan cara mereka menyambut "tahun baru" nya, maka asosiasi itu mendorong orang-orang Tionghoa mengonsepkan *hariraya* itu sebagai "tahun baru".

Bagaimana kita boleh terima bahwa *hariraya* itu dikonsepkan sebagai "tahun baru", kerana *hariraya puasa* jatuh pada 1 Syawal (bulan kesepuluh) dan *hariraya haji* jatuh pada 10 Dzulhijjah (bulan keduabelas), dan tahun hijrah tidak berubah pada kedua-dua *hariraya* itu? Nyatalah *hariraya* itu bukan tahun baru!

Demikian pula kedapatan juga perbezaan-perbezaan pengonsepan yang disebabkan oleh pengaruh *socio-culture* itu pada kata-kata seperti: *puasa, sembahyang, kenduri, rezeki* dan lain-lain. Pun, kedapatan perbezaan konsep pada ungkapan-ungkapan seperti:

orang kecil = kanak-kanak (Tionghoa); orang yang tidak berpangkat (Melayu),
sakit hati = dukacita (Tionghoa/Hokien); marah; merajuk (Melayu)

dan lain-lain lagi; barangkali ada beribu-ribu patah perkataan lagi yang seperti itu.

Cuba kita lihat pula kertas soalan Bahasa Kedua (Melayu) tahun 1973. Perhatikan soalan nomor 2 = pemahaman karangan di mukasurat 3 dan 4. Soalan 2 (c) di mukasurat 4 itu berkata: *Dalam pembunuhan itu, senjata yang digunakan oleh si pembunuh ialah (1) pisau belati (2) pedang (3) besi tajam (4) keris.*

Dalam potongan karangan (di mukasurat 3) yang dijadikan sumber soalan itu tidak ada kedapatan nama salahsatu senjata yang disebutkan itu; tetapi calon-calon boleh mendapat *clue* daripada ayat ini: *"Tidak syak lagi orang (pembunuh) itu memegang sejenis senjata yang bermata dua yang tajam dan bilahnya berkeluk-keluk".*

Anak-anak Melayu yang walaupun belum pernah melihat keris dengan mata kepalanya sendiri, tetapi menerusi *socio-culture*nya – barangkali dengan mendengar kisah-kisah pertarungan purba; barangkali dengan melihat komik-komik Melayu – mereka tidak ragu-ragu lagi akan dapat mengasosiasikan *"senjata yang bilahnya berkeluk-keluk"* itu dengan *"keris".*

Tetapi, bagi pelajar-pelajar bukan Melayu yang tidak ada pengalaman – kalau ada pun sangat kurang – *socio-culture* Melayu, pastilah tidak semudah anak Melayu tadi untuk yakin bahwa jawaban 2 (c) itu ialah "keris". Apalagi kalau mereka itu terpesona oleh latarbelakang potongan cerita itu. Nama-nama seperti Ben, Choleng, Sidro dan Clarita yang mewataki cerita itu bukanlah nama-nama Melayu yang umum; pun *"pulang dari balai dansa di luar bandar hampir waktu subuh selalu-selalu"* bukanlah amalan yang tipikal dalam *socio-culture* Melayu. Hal terkahir ini boleh menyebabkan pelajar-pelajar bukan Melayu itu sama-sekali tidak menyangka bahwa si pembunuh (mungkin Sidro) yang bukan Melayu itu telah membunuh mangsanya dengan menggunakan senjata orang-orang Melayu purba; KERIS.

2.3 aptitude bahasa: Keadaan sosial yang tidak seimbang dan pengaruh-pengaruh langsung atau tidak langsung *socio-culture* yang tidak sama itu menimbulkan *aptitude* (kebolehan = bakat + minat) bahasa pelajar-pelajar itu berbeza-beza.

Seorang pelajar yang tidak luas pergaulannya oleh bendungan *socio-culture* yang tertutup mungkin kurang atau tidak dapat langsung peluang memajukan bahasa kedua yang dipelajarinya itu, jika dibandingkan dengan pelajar-pelajar yang lebih terbuka dan lebih liberal penerimaannya terhadap unsur-unsur *socio-culture* luar.

Seorang pelajar yang datang dari masyarakat golongan ekonomi taraf rendah pun akan lebih banyak mengalami kekurangan kalau dibandingkan dengan yang datang dari golongan mewah. Pelajar itu mungkin tidak dapat langsung apa-apa bantuan daripada alat-alat pengajaran bahasa keduanya, seperti: buku-buku bacaan tambahan; alat-alat pandang-dengar atau lain-lain yang mungkin boleh didapati oleh pelajar-pelajar golongan mewah.

Pengalaman pahit demikian itu akan lebih segera menimbulkan rasa bosan pelajar-pelajar itu untuk berusaha memajukan pelajarannya. Apabila graf bosannya meninggi tak dapat tiada graf *aptitude* bahasa pelajar itu semakin merendah; akhirnya timbullah sikap yang *negative* – berserah bulat!

Betapakah sikap guru-guru mengadapi sikap *negative* para pelajaranya itu? Fikirkanlah!

2.4 media pemikiran: Kebanyakan cara pelajar bahasa kedua melahirkan fikirannya tidaklah langsung seperti cara penutur bahasa itu berfikir. Fikiran itu biasanya dilahirkan melalui cara pindahbentuk (transform) – dilahirkan dalam cara bahasa ibunda atau bahasa pertamanya, kemudian

barulah dipindahbentukkan ke bahasa kedua pula. Cara pelahiran fikiran jalan jauh begini bukan saja melambat dan membazirkan, tetapi juga menampakkan satu pelahiran bahasa yang kaku, tak licin, janggal dan dagang; kadang-kadang tidak tepat pula.

Hal ini bukanlah hanya melibatkan pelajar-pelajar bukan Melayu saja, tetapi setengah-setengah pelajar Melayu juga. Kebanyakan mereka bercakap Melayu di rumah; tetapi bahasa yang digunakan di rumah itu bukan bahasa Melayu yang standard. Mereka bertutur secara bercampuraduk, membujur lalu melintang patah. Jadi, apabila mereka dikehendaki berbahasa Melayu yang standard secara teratur, maka setengah-setengahnya terpaksalah melahirkan fikirannya dengan cara bahasa sekolahnya (bahasa Inggeris) kemudian memindahbentukkan fikiran itu ke bahasa Melayu (bahasa keduanya) pula.

Dan, bahasa yang dilahirkan menurut cara di atas itu kelihatan seperti bahasa terjemahan. Setidak-tidaknya cara demikian itu telah melahirkan frasa-frasa yang janggal atau dagang, seperti:–

> Mamat *sudah dapat demam selsema* (frasa Inggeris)
> tetapi dia sudah pergi *tengok doktor* (frasa Inggeris/Tionghoa)
> ini buku *saya punya* (frasa Tionghoa)
> buku itu *ditulis oleh saya* (frasa Inggeris)
> ia telah pun *dibaca oleh awak/kita semua* (frasa Inggeris) dan banyak lagi.

Pelajar-pelajar yang tidak bebas daripada berfikir cara Inggeris berkata-kata dengan gurunya dengan kata *"awak"*, misalnya: "Bolehkah saya berjumpa *awak* lepas waktu sekolah, nanti?" Tanpa mengendahkan nilai-nilai rasa dan keperihalan keadaan menurut semantik Melayu, pelajar itu menggunakan kata "awak" sebagai gantinama gurunya; kerana berfikir secara Inggeris kata "you" boleh digunakan sebagai gantinama diri kedua, termasuk guru, ibu-bapa atau sesiapa saja yang dalam keadaan diri kedua.

Media, pemikiran demikian itu juga menyebabkan pelajar-pelajar lebih mudah menyatakan *"bagaimana bapa begitu anaknya"* iaitu kepindahan idea dari kata Inggeris: *like father like son;* atau menyatakan *"membunuh dua ekor burung dengan sebiji batu"* iaitu kepindahan idea dari kata Inggeris: *kill two birds with one stone.* Padahal, dalam pemikiran Melayu idea pertama itu sudah dilahirkan dalam peribahasa *"bapanya borek anaknya rintik"* dan idea kedua dalam *"sekali mengorak pura, dua tiga hutang langsai"* atau *"sambil menyelam sambil minum air"*.

2.5 ***masalah-masalah linguistik:*** Ada tiga golongan linguistik iaitu linguistik sains, linguistik artistik dan linguistik praktikal. Linguistik sains ialah kajian analatikal terhadap pelbagai aspek linguistik yang melibatkan sarjana, ahli-ahli bahasa dan linguis. Linguistik artistik ialah kajian mengenai nilai-nilai estetika bahasa yang melibatkan para sastrawan. Dan, linguistik praktikal ialah kajian dan bincangan terhadap penggunaan dan pengajaran bahasa yang secara langsung melibatkan guru-guru bahasa.

Oleh kerana kelainan sistem linguistik bahasa ibunda pelajar-pelajar itu dengan sistem linguistik bahasa Melayu, maka tentulah banyak masalah-masalah linguistik itu telah menimbulkan kekacauan-kekacauan bahasa dalam pengajaran bahasa kedua (Melayu) ini. Hal-hal demikian, walau betapa kecil sekali pun, haruslah diperhatikan dengan teliti dan diselesaikan dengan jalan linguistik pula.

Guru-guru, umumnya, mengajarkan bahasa kedua ini adalah untuk mencapai 4 kemahiran/kecekapan bahasa yang tertentu, iaitu kecekapan mendengar, memaham, membaca dan menulis (mengarang). Mungkin, oleh sebab terlalu tertumpu kepada pencapaian matlamat itu, kadang-kadang di luar kesedarannya, guru-guru kurang memerhatikan aspek-aspek linguistik seperti fonologi (kajibunyi); morfologi (kajibentuk); semantik (kajimakna) dan struktur bahasa, umpamanya.

2.5.1 *tentang fonologi* Guru-guru, nampaknya, tidak keberatan menerima sama seseorang pelajarnya menyebut "sa+ye" atau "sa+ya" untuk kata yang sama maknanya dengan "aku"; menyebut "ba+pe" atau "ba+pa" untuk kata yang sama maknanya dengan "ayah"; atau sebagainya.

Penerimaan secara kurang teliti atau di luar kesedaran guru itu telah menyebabkan kita mendengar beberapa orang calon peperiksaan oral menyebut "ru+meh" untuk "rumah"; menyebut "su+deh" untuk "sudah"; menyebut "da+re-" untuk "darah" dan sebagainya.

Penerimaan sebutan sewenang-wenangbegitu, boleh menimbulkan anggapan orang yang tidak tau bahwa tidak ada bunyibahasa yang standard bagi bahasa Melayu; padahal bahasa Melayu adalah seperti lain-lain bahasa juga, punya hukum bunyi-bahasanya yang standard (baca The Malay Sound System – Yunos Maris M A).

Sebutan-sebutan janggal oleh pelajar-pelajar bukan Melayu itu adalah disebabkan oleh jumlah dan sifat fonim serta sistem fonologi bahasa ibundanya tidak serbasama dengan fonologi Melayu. Keadaan itu bukanlah sesuatu yang bukan

masalah dalam pengajaran bahasa kedua (Melayu) ini.

Ada bahasa-bahasa yang tidak punya fonim /l/ atau /r/. Tidak syak lagi, bahwa tanpa latihan yang sungguh-sungguh, pemilik bahasa itu akan sukar untuk menyebut kata-kata "lari"; "lori"; "rela"; "luru"; "ular" atau sebagainya. Pun, pendengar mungkin keliru samada mereka mau menyebut "beli" atau "beri"; "kali" atau "kari"; "balu" atau "baru" dan sebagainya.

Kelainan bentukbunyi bahasa Melayu yang *disyllabic* dengan bahasa-bahasa Tionghoa yang *monosyllabic* itu boleh menyebabkan pelajar-pelajar dari keturunan Tionghoa sukar menyesuaikan bunyi setengah-setengah morfim Melayu, misalnya:

penyesuaian /b/ + /ny/	(banyak) akan disebut *ma*+nyak; (bunyi) akan disebut *mu*+nyi atau bu+*ngi;*
penyesuaian /t/ + /d/	(tadi) akan disebut ta+*ti;* (tidak) akan disebut ti+*tak;*
penyesuaian /d/ + /t/	(datang) akan disebut *la*+tang, dan berbagai-bagai lagi.

Wawancara wakil RTM (Radio dan TV Malaysia) dengan wakil-wakil penduduk Kampung Baru Kelapa Sawit di Johor, yang disiarkan menerusi TV Malaysia pada 20 Mei 1974 adalah contoh yang mutlak buat keterangan-keterangan di atas.

2.5.2 *tentang morfologi* Walaupun sistem morfologi bahasa Melayu ini adalah merupakan proses-proses pengimbuhan, pengulangan/pergandaan dan pemajmukan, tetapi masalah-masalah yang timbul dalam pengajaran bahasa kedua ini kebanyakannya mengenai setengah-setengah pengimbuhan dan pemajmukan itu.

Boleh dikatakan tidak ada masalah-masalah yang mengenai pengulangan/pergandaan selain daripada pelajar-pelajar harus mengingati banyak pasangan kataulang itu, seperti mereka mengingati banyaknya penjodoh bilangan.

Kekeliruan-kekeliruan tentang pengimbuhan itu kerapkali terdapat pada penggunaan:–

akhiran "i" atau "kan"	=	menaik*i* atau menaik*kan;* melalu*i* atau melalu*kan*, dll
akhiran "an" atau "kan"	=	masak*an* atau masak*kan;* juluk*an* atau juluk*kan*, dll
awal+akhiran "ke + an"	=	*kes*am*aan* atau *pe*-*nya*maan;
atau "pe + an"	=	*kes*egar*an* atau *pe*-*nye*gar*an*, dll

Kadang-kadang terdapat juga kecanggungan penggunaan fonim-fonim nasal pada awalan-awalan *me* atau *pe* yang tersyarat oleh konsonan-konsonan penentu pada katadasar; yang biasanya digunakan sebagai:–

(me) pe+ϕ+KD	=	me+makan; me+radang;	pe+makan pe+radang
(me) pe+m+KD	=	me+m+bantu; me+m+parang;	pe+m+bantu pe+m+parang
(me) pe+n+KD	=	me+n+datang; me+n+tarik;	pe+n+datang pe+n+tarik

Demikian pula pada penggunaan (me) pe+-ny+KD dan (me) pe+ng+KD.

Berdasarkan ciri-ciri pemajmukan ramai orang masih berbalah untuk menerima sesuatu satuan perkataan itu sebenarnya katamajmuk atau bukan. *Jawatankuasa; setiausaha; tanggungjawab; matahari* dan sebagainya adalah diterima sebagai katamajmuk. Tetapi, *suratkhabar; rumahsakit; kapalterbang* dan yang sebagainya masih diragui oleh banyak orang.

Kata-kata seperti *jejatas* (jembatan jalan atas); *jabanah* (jalan bawah tanah) mungkin dapat dianggap sebagai katamajmuk, tetapi bagaimana dengan *jejambat* (jambat-jambat)? Kalau dilihat kemorfologiannya pastilah ia termasuk dalam katagori kataulang; sama kemorfologiannya dengan tamu-tamu =*tetamu;* tangga-tangga =*tetangga* atau laki-laki = *lelaki.*

Bagaimanapun, oleh kerana masalah-masalah morfologi itu hanya merupakan masalah kontent pelajaran, tidaklah sukar mengatasinya asal saja ada usaha mau mengatasinya.

2.5.3 *tentang semantik* Pengajaran tentang semantik ini biasanya dijalankan menerusi pemahaman makna-makna perkataan dengan mengenal perkataan-perkataan seerti/seiras; perkataan-perkataan berlawan dan perkataan-perkataan berbilang makna. Dan, cara pengajaran yang berkesan ialah dengan memberikan kepada pelajar-pelajar pengalaman menggunakan perkataan-perkataan itu.

Kata-kata *"soal"* dan *"tanya"* selalu dianggap sebagai perkataan seerti; tetapi kalau kita

temui seseorang dan berkata kepadanya, "bolehkah saya *bertanya* kepada awak?" Orang itu akan menyambut kita dengan penuh hormat dan tampak kesediaannya hendak menjawab. Cuba kita tukarkan kata "tanya" itu dengan kata "soal" – "bolehkah saya *soal* awak?" mungkin reaksi orang itu adalah kebalikan dari yang mula-mula tadi.

Mengapakah reaksi itu bertentangan, padahal kata "tanya" dan "soal" itu seerti? Sekurang-kurangnya nilai rasa, katagori bahasa, keperihalan keadaan dan lain-lain aspek semantik telah bertindak untuk menampakkan bahwa "tanya" dan "soal" itu hanya sama pada *content*nya tetapi tak sama pada *expression*nya.

Lardo menerangkan bahwa pertalian antara *content* dan *expression* amat erat; apabila tidak demikian menyimpanglah makna perkataan itu; dan penyimpangan itu tersebab oleh kebudayaan. Jadi, kebudayaanlah: dengan menggunakan rumus-rumus aspek-aspek semantik tadi, telah menjadikan bahawa "tanya" dan "soal" itu adalah perkataan seiras; bukan seerti.

Tanya ialah pencongkelan maklumat untuk mendapat tau sesuatu yang belum diketahui; tetapi *soal* ialah pencongkelan maklumat untuk mengetahui samada yang disoal itu tau atau tidak terhadap maklumat yang telah diketahui oleh penyoal.

Demikian pulalah halnya kalau kita hendak menentukan yang mana *"jatuh"*, yang mana pula *"tumbang"*; seterusnya yang mana-mana pula: *gugur, runtuh, roboh, rebah* dan yang sebagainya; atau kalau kita hendak menentukan makna: *angkat, angkit, angkut, jinjing, bimbit, bimbing* dan seterusnya.

Tentang perkataan-perkataan yang bertentangan makna, atau *perkataan berlawan* itu, nampaknya, ramai guru-guru yang menggunakan konsep Inggeris; atau lebih mudah mereka memelayukan kata-kata Inggeris itu, misalnya:

tinggi lawannya *rendah*(*)
cantik lawannya *hodoh*(*)
emak lawannya *bapa*(+)
putih lawannya *hitam*(+)
menangis lawannya *ketawa*(#), dan sebagainya.

Contoh-contoh itu ialah yang paling lumrah digunakan untuk pelajaran tersebut. Kalau kita pakaikan nilai semantik di atas tadi maka kita akan dapati: pasangan-pasangan *tinggi-rendah* dan *cantik-hodoh* itu benar perkataan berlawan atau bertentang, kerana masing-masing menegatifkan lawannya dalam bentuk positif.

Tetapi kalau kita perhatikan pasangan kata *emak-bapa,* apakah sama kedudukannya dengan pasangan *tinggi-rendah* itu, misalnya? Apakah kalau bukan "emak" dia pasti "bapa"? Apalagi kalau diukur dengan nilai rasa dan keadaan sosial: apabila "emak" lawan "bapa" . . . . . entahlah! Pun demikian dengan pasangan *"hitam-putih"*. Kalau dikatakan, "Baju itu *tidak hitam"*, mungkinkah baju itu putih? Tak mungkinkah ia merah, atau hijau?

Kalau orang berkata, "Kerana lelucon itu tidak menarik hatinya, orang itu *tidak ketawa"*. Dapatkah kita anggap orang itu menangis?

Akhirnya, tentang penggunaan kata-kata yang berbilang makna. Perhatikan makna kata "tawar" dalam 4 ayat di bawah ini:–

(a) Air sungai itu masin di kualanya tetapi *tawar* di hulunya.
(b) Harga kasut itu tetap, tak boleh di*tawar* lagi.
(c) Perempuan dianggap sebagai racun, tetapi dialah juga pe*nawar*.
(d) Mamat telah di*tawar*kan suatu jawatan tinggi di Brunei.

Betapa pun, masalah-masalah semantik ini, seperti juga masalah-masalah morfologi tadi, adalah masalah *content* yang tidak sukar diatasi.

2.5.4 *tentang sintaksis/struktur bahasa*
Struktur bahasa Melayu yang paling basik ialah mendulukan yang *diterangkan* dan mengemudiankan yang *menerangkan,* misalnya:

baju merah	(bukan: merah baju; atau merah punya baju)
anak saya	(bukan: saya anak; atau saya punya anak)
ini buku saya	(bukan: ini saya buku; atau buku saya ini)

atau sebagainya.

Tetapi, oleh kerana pengaruh bahasa lisan (dalam bahasa Melayu terlalu banyak jenis bahasa lisannya seperti dialek daerah; bahasa pasar; bahasa dagang dan sebagainya) yang tidak standard, maka kedapatanlah struktur-struktur dagang dalam bahasa Melayu. Tetapi kerana kerapnya digunakan dalam pertuturan sehari-hari, maka struktur-struktur dagang itu pun lekat pada bahasa: seolah-olah ia telah diterima umum.

Perhatikan frasa *"goreng pisang"*. Frasa ini bertentangan dengan struktur yang diterangkan dalam para 1 uraian 2.5.4 ini. Sepatutnya ia disebut *pisang goreng,* kerana ia sebentuk dengan frasa-frasa: ikan goreng; ubi goreng; mi goreng; nasi goreng; tahu goreng, atau dalam bentuk lain-

nya: pisang rebus; pisang salai; pisang bakar atau yang sebagainya.

Oleh kerana bentuk struktur *"goreng pisang"* itu tak dapat juga dikatagorikan ke dalam kumpulan: pengat pisang; keripik pisang; belebat pisang; jemput-jemput pisang; kek pisang; aiskrim pisang atau sebagainya, maka nyatalah frasa "goreng pisang" itu tidak berbentuk struktur Melayu.

2.6 masalah sukatan pelajaran: Sebenarnya sukatan pelajaran bukanlah satu masalah, kerana ia memang berguna. Sekurang-kurangnya dia dapat memberi panduan kepada guru-guru supaya pengajarannya tidak menyeleweng. Tetapi, mungkin ada setengah-setengah guru yang menganggap sukatan pelajaran itu sebagai suatu pegangan yang tak boleh tidak; mesti diikuti satu persatu dengan tertib.

Kalau sukatan pelajaran itu dianggap sebagai satu arahan tunggal untuk menentukan "mesti buat begini dan jangan buat begitu" nescaya ia akan mengekang kemajuan pengajaran guru-guru. Guru-guru lebih tahu tentang situasi pelajar-pelajarnya; guru-guru lebih tahu apa yang harus diajarkan, kalau dibandingkan dengan sukatan pelajaran itu. Jadi, peranan sukatan pelajaran itu ialah sebagai *co-pilot;* sebagai teman berunding ketika guru-guru itu menemui masalah-masalah tertentu yang minta diselesaikan. Jangan tepuk dada tanya selera; atau mengambil keputusan yang beraja di mata bersultan di hati saja.

Sebab itu, guru-guru haruslah mempunyai pandangan yang liberal terhadap sukatan pelajaran itu. Penyesuaian antara kehendak-kehendak sukatan pelajaran itu dengan keadaan sekitar dan latar-belakang pelajar-pelajar haruslah dilakukan oleh guru-guru sebijak mungkin. *Adjustment* pada tentang-tentang yang harus patutlah dibuat supaya pengajaran guru-guru mencapai matlamat yang paling hampir kepada tepat.

3. cara-cara mengatasi masalah

Walaupun masalah-masalah yang dikemukakan tadi tampak berfasal-fasal, tetapi antara suatu hal dengan yang lain adalah berkait-kait. Sebab itu cara mengatasi masalah-masalah itu pun tidaklah mesti dilakukan bersendiri-sendiri. Barangkali dapat saya kemukakan beberapa saranan untuk mengatasi masalah-masalah itu secara menyeluruh.

3.1 Memahami keadaan pelajar-pelajar sebelum memulakan pengajaran haruslah dibuat. Sekurang-kurangnya guru harus memahami latar-belakang bahasa ibunda dan latar belakang *socio-culture* pelajar-pelajarnya. Pengetahuan itu penting untuk menolong guru membuat perhatian khas terhadap individu atau golongan pelajar-pelajarnya.

3.2 LARDO mencadangkan supaya guru-guru bergaul dalam masyarakat pelajar-pelajarnya supaya dapat menggunakan sifat-sifat kebudayaan masyarakat pelajarnya itu untuk kelancaran pengajaran bahasa matlamatnya. (taktik: kayulah yang memecahkan kayu)

Keadaan guru-guru kita memang sudah tergaul dengan masyarakat pelajar, kalau kebetulan pelajar-pelajar kita terdiri dari kumpulan satu. Tetapi, untuk pelajar-pelajar dari kumpulan dua, tiga dan empat; saranan Lardo itu boleh menyelesaikan masalah pengaruh bahasa ibunda dan pengaruh *socio-culture.*

Mungkin 3 atau 4 hari pada tiap kali cuti penggal persekolahan guru-guru boleh mengadakan perkampungan dengan pelajar-pelajarnya untuk mempelajari keadaan *socio-culture* timbal-balik. Guru mempelajari *socio-culture* pelajar-pelajar dan sebaliknya. Dalam perkampungan itu biarlah guru-pelajar sama-sama masak, makan, bermain dalam bahasa matlamat.

3.3 APTITUDE bahasa para pelajar mungkin dapat diperbaiki dengan mengadakan lebih banyak kemudahan-kemudahan belajar cara formal atau tak formal, dan memberikan lebih banyak peluang pelajar-pelajar menggunakan bahasa keduanya itu.

Kutubkhanah khas mungkin menolong pelajar-pelajar mendapatkan banyak pengetahuan tentang *socio-culture* bahasa yang dipelajari; dan mengambil bahagian dalam kegiatan-kegiatan bahasa seperti peraduan-peraduan mengarang; bercakapitah; bersyarah dan berbahas boleh mengayakan pengalaman mereka dalam bahasa keduanya.

3.4 MENERUSI pemesraan *socio-culture* bahasa yang dipelajari dan menerusi perbaikan *aptitude* bahasa itu, media pemikiran pelajar-pelajar akan lebih mirip kepada cara bahasa keduanya itu.

3.5 PENGALAMAN linguistik pelajar-pelajar dapat diperbaiki dengan memberikan pengalaman linguistik yang tepat kepada guru-gurunya. Dan, pengalaman itu boleh diperoleh menerusi kursus-kursus singkat; seminar-seminar tak formal; bengkel-bengkel berkala dan berbagai-bagai kegiatan lagi.

Jabatan Bahasa Kedua, Kesatuan Guru-guru

Melayu, dan Kementerian Pelajaran mungkin boleh sama-sama menganjurkan kegiatan-kegiatan itu, untuk kepentingan-kepentingan karyawan kita.

4. penutup

Oleh kerana pengalaman saya mengajarkan bahasa kedua Melayu (ML2) ini agak berbeza sedikit daripada guru-guru lainnya, iaitu saya mengajarkan ML2 kepada orang-orang dewasa bukan-Melayu yang telah lulus peperiksaan Menengah Empat (Singapura) atau Tingkatan Lima (Malaysia) sedangkan guru-guru mengajarkan ML2 kepada pelbagai golongan yang saya nyatakan dalam paragraf 3 hingga 6 di uraian 1.2, di Menengah-menengah I hingga IV, maka masalah-masalah *socio-culture* yang kita temui pada pelajar-pelajar kita adalah berbeza juga.

Saya percaya masalah-masalah ini dapat dibincangkan menerusi bengkel-bengkel seminar kalau kita ada minat hendak mengatasi masalah-masalah itu untuk kebaikan pengajaran kita.

Abbas b Mohd Shariff
Temasek Junior College

Perkembangan ke arah masuknya anasir-anasir lain ke Bahasa Melayu

> Dengan akulturasi, suatu kebudayaan menerima unsur-unsur kebudayaan asing ke dalam dirinya. Ada dua macam pengambilan alih unsur-unsur. Secara adoptasi dan secara adaptasi. Yang pertama mengambil alih mentah-mentah tanpa diubah, seperti bagaimana adanya dalam kebudayaan yang memberi. Yang kedua, menyesuiakan unsur asing itu dengan jiwa atau lingkungan kebudayaan penerima. Yang pertama merupakan akulturasi yang tidak berhasil. Yang kedua adalah proses akulturasi yang berjalan baik, di mana masyarakat penerima aktif dalam proses itu. Unsur-unsur asing diintegerasikan kedalam kebudayaannya sendiri dengan jalan mengolah atau mengubahnya (*Gazalba, 1974*).

Jika dikaji tentang anasir bahasa lain yang diadaptasi dan diasimilasikan dalam bahasa Melayu akan nyata terdapatnya bahasa yang ada hubungan ke-keluargaan dengan Bahasa Melayu dan ada juga yang tidak. Bahasa-bahasa yang sekeluarga dengan bahasa Melayu mempengaruhi bahasa Melayu melalui akulturasi seperti bahasa-bahasa lain serta juga pengaruh pemakai bahasa daerah yang secara tidak sedar melakukan peminjaman secara dialek (dialect borrowing) dan kemudian unsur itu dianggap sebagai kepunyaan bahasa peminjam. Sebagai contoh dapatlah kita lihat beberapa bahasa daerah Indonesia yang kata-katanya diterima ke dalam bahasa Melayu seperti: tanpa, buruh, jago (Kata-kata Bahasa Jawa); konco, heboh, kelam, lepau (kata-kata bahasa Minangkabau); kelum, kolot (kata-kata bahasa Sunda).

Mengenai bahasa yang tidak mempunyai kekeluargaan dengan bahasa Melayu pengaruhnya adalah akibat pertembungan kebudayaan seperti yang dinyatakan di atas dan juga pengarah penutur-penutur dwibahasa yang secara tidak langsung memperkenalkan kata-kata asing, sehingga mendapat tempat setelah melalui perubahan untuk menyesuaikannya menurut suatu bentuk baru. Bloomfield (1967) mentakrifkannya sebagai peminjaman secara kebudayaan (cultural borrowing) apabila kata-kata Sanskrit, Arab, Portugis, Belanda dan Inggeris digolongkan dalam perbendaharaan kata-kata Melayu.

Tanggapan tentang: ugama, syurga, raja, permaisuri, sukma, putra, guru, dan lain-lain lagi adalah berasal dari bahasa Sanskrit, unsur-unsur kebudayaan Hindu yang sudah integrasi ke dalam kebudayaan masyarakat pribumi di rantau ini.

Mengenai kata-kata: akhirat, masyarakat, anasir, khayal, ilmu, jasmani, insaf dan lain-lain dari bahasa Arab yang diadaptasi dari kebudayaan Islam.

Kata China juga menyusup masuk dan membayangkan pengaruh kebudayaan China seperti dalam kata-kata: cawan, kuih, teh, dacing, tahu, loteng dan lain-lain lagi.

Arus migrasi yang digerakkan oleh bermacam-macam sebab seperti: perkembangan pelayaran, soal ekonomi, penyibaran ugama, serta kolonialisma dan peperangan ideologi telah mendorong berbagai-bagai bangsa pendatang mencuba nasib di daerah Asia Tenggara ini. Dengan kedatangan orang-orang luar ini kebudayaan pribumi menerima perubahan akibat asimilasi dengan unsur-unsur kebudayaan baru.

> Dengan penemuan unsur-unsur baru ini, difusi dalam masyarakat (intra society diffusion) dan difusi antara-masyarakat (inter-society diffusion) berlaku.
> Pedagang, pelaut, pendita, ulama sering tanpa disengaja atau disedari berlaku sebagai alat difusi. Individu-individu itu membawa unsur-unsur kebudayaan daerah atau bangsa kedalam masyarakat lain. Penyebaran itu dapat jauh sekali. Kita di Indonesia dan Malaysia banyak mengambil alih unsur-unsur kebudayaan yang berasal dari China, India, Portugis, Belanda, Inggeris, Arab dan lain-lain. Banyak dari unsur itu datang ke dalam masyarakat kita sebagai barang-barang

[1]Dr. S. Gazalba, Nota Kuliah Ilmu Kebudayaan. Universitas Nasional Jakarta, Indonesia 1974.

dagangan. Pelaut Melayu, suatu ketika dalam prasejarah, sampai di Madagaskar membawa unsur-unsur kebudayaan. Pendita membuka sekolah dan rumahsakit di tengah-tengah masyarakat bersahaja. Ulama dalam dakwahnya mengajar suatu suku bersahaja menutup aurat (berkpakaian) kebersihan, tulis-baca dan lain-lain. Demikianlah pedagang, pelaut, pendita dan ulama itu melakukan difusi. Jenis difusi ini biasa disebut orang sebagai "penyusupan secara damai "(penetration pacifique). Pedagang dan pelaut melakukan penyusupan itu tanpa disengaja atau disedari. Tetapi pendita dan ulama dengan sengaja. Kedua-duanya bersuasanakan damai *(Bloomfield, 1967, h. 444).*

Penyusupan secara paksa berlangsung dengan berlakunya kolonalisma dan imperialisma. Penjajah Inggeris telah berkuasa di daerah Singapura, Malaysia dan Brunei dan kolonialisma Belanda pula bertapak di Indonesia. Dengan penyusupan ini terjadilah difusi kebudayaan Barat hingga memberi kesan yang nyata pada wajah kebudayaan penduduk-penduduk di rantau ini. Balatentera Dai Nippon juga berada di daerah ini selama tiga tahun setengah, telah mencuba untuk menyusupkan pengaruhnya, tetapi masa pendudukan mereka yang singkat tidak membolehkan penyusupan secara ekstensif (meluas).

Dari difusi ini berlakulah satu bentuk perubahan kebudayaan akibat dari "culture contact" yang berperahan dalam "cultural change" yang biasanya diistilahkan sebagai akulturasi.

Kebudayaan Barat telah melalui proses akulturasi dan integrasinya dalam kata-kata berikut: bangku, baju, atom, gas, hotel, jenderal ekonomi, sosial, agen, lampu dan lain-lain.

Seperti dinyatakan, hasil pertembangan dengan kebudayaan lain mengakibatkan proses peminjaman berlaku didalam berbagai bentuk. Masyarakat penerima akan berhadapan dengan benda-benda, cara-cara dan konsep-konsep baru. Oleh kerana timbulnya keperluan untuk memperkenalkan tentang yang baru itu proses peminjaman dalam berbagai bentuk dan cara berlaku: dalam bentuk perkataan, dalam bentuk rangkaikata, dalam bentuk simpulan bahasa dan juga bentuk-bentuk nahu. Unsur-unsur yang dipinjam itu ada yang mengalami perubahan dan ada yang tidak. Perubahan-perubahan yang berlaku pula berbeza-beza. Ada yang berubah dari segi sebutan sahaja dan ada pula yang berubah dari segi makna dan seterusnya berbagai perubahan yang lain.

Menurut Dr. Tham Seong Chee (1977) dalam pertumbuhan bahasa Melayu ada empat ciri yang jelas kelihatan, seperti:

1. Proses ganti mengganti kata-kata menurut perubahan masa. Misalnya:

a) Semasa pemerintah Belanda di Indonesia, istilah "amtenar" (pegawai sivil) sering digunakan. Istilah ini mendapat ganti daripada perkataan "gawai" (kerja, aktiviti, perkhidmatan) berasal dari Johor yang berbunyi "pegawai".

b) Perkataan "belasting" (cukai) juga sering digunakan pada suatu masa dahulu yang kini digantikan dengan istilah yang lama berasal dari Hindustan, iaitu "cukai".

2. Penerimaan kata-kata berdasarkan bentuk linguistiknya yang mudah disebut. Kata-kata seperti "cukai" dan "pegawai" lebih mudah disebut daripada kata-kata "belasting" dan "amtenar".

3. Meluaskan erti menurut berbgai bidang semantik dengan berlakunya perubahan linguistik seperti kata "pimpin" (lead) yang dapat diluaskan pengertianya dengan penambahan tertentu untuk menjadi "pemimpin" (leader) dan "kepemimpinan" (leadership).

4. Mengasimilasi dan mengadaptasikan bentuk-bentuk linguistik yang baru dalam perbendaharaan kata bahasa Melayu (h. 14-15).

Nota Rujuk

Bloomfield, L Language. London: George Allen and Unwin, 1967.

Tham Seong Chee. Language and Cognition: An Analysis of the Thought and Culture of the Malays. Singapore: Chopmen Enterprises, 1977.

[1]Dr. S. Gazalba, Nota Kuliah Ilmu Kebudayaan.

Mohd Taha Jamil
Institut Pendidikan Singapura

"Imejeri dalam Puisi-puisi Chairil Anwar"

Chairil Anwar, tidak syak lagi, adalah penyair Indonesia yang terkemuka. Melalui puisinya dia telah menaikkan taraf Kesusasteraan Moden Indonesia ke peringkat universal. H.B. Jassin, pengkritik Indonesia yang agung itu menggelarkan Chairil Anwar sebagai 'Pelopor Angkatan '45'.

Chairil adalah pendorong utama dan juara bagi Angkatan '45. Terdapat lebih banyak penulisan yang telah dibuat mengenai Chairil Anwar berbanding dengan pengarang-pengarang Indonesia yang lain. Hingga kini puisinya masih lagi menjadi tumpuan utama perdebatan-perdebatan yang hangat.

Kegagahannya sebagai seorang penyair menurut pandangan Prof. A. Teeuw terletak 'dengan tidak syak lagi pada satu penyatuan antara manusia dengan pujangga, satu identiti antara penulis dengan puisi.'

Chairil Anwar dilahirkan di Medan, Sumatera pada 26 Julai 1922. Beliau berasal dari keturunan Minangkabau. Pada masa mudanya dia telah disifatkan sebagai seorang muda yang bijak dan sangat gemar dengan buku. Chairil dapat menguasai bahasa Belanda, Inggeris dan juga Jerman.

Beliau telah menghabiskan masa mudanya 17/18 tahun di Medan. Chairil menuntut di sekolah Belanda bagi kanak-kanak bumiputra H.I.S. dan kelas-kelas tahun pertama dan kedua M.U.L.O. iaitu Junior High School.

Chairil berasal dari keluarga yang mewah juga kerana di dapati hanya sedikit saja bilangan orang-orang yang mampu menuntut di sekolah Belanda. Beliau terpaksa berhenti sekolah kerana ayahnya tidak mengirimkan wang. Masa persekolahannya itu digantikan pula dengan masa buatnya membaca buku-buku dari aneka jenis.

Pembacaannya yang luas telah membawanya ke satu dunia bahan-bahan pembacaan yang baru: Timur dan Barat. Di Jakarta kenalannya meliputi sebilangan besar golongan individu dari semua peringkat masyarakat. Chairil pernah tidur di bawah jembatan-jembatan di Jakarta bersama bung beca dan kupu-kupu malam dan juga dengan ahli-ahli politik yang besar seperti Hatta dan Sjahrir.

Kerja tetap tidak menarik perhatiannya dan dia telah memilih hidup 'berkeliaran'. Beliau tetap menjadi seorang non-conformist dalam penuntutannya terhadap pembebasan dari sebarang rupa penindasan dan ketidakadilan dalam masyarakat.

H.B. Jassin mempunyai suatu kumpulan yang terdiri daripada hampir kesemua sajak-sajak hasil karya Charil Anwar di dalam bukunya yang berjudul 'Chairil Anwar Pelopor Angkatan '45'.

Kumpulan sajak-sajak Chairil yang pertama ialah: *'Deru Campur Debu'*, yang kedua *'Kerikil Tajam dan Yang Terampas Dan Yang Putus'*, dan *Tiga Menguak Takdir* (kumpulan bersama).

Cuba kita lihat kesan-kesan imejeri dalam puisi-puisi Chairil Anwar. Dia membandingkan dirinya dengan seekor binatang liar yang sedang bersendirian dalam sajak yang berjudul 'Aku'.

Aku

Kalau sampai waktuku
kumau tak seorang pun merayu
tidak juga kau
tak perlu sedu sedan itu!
Aku ini binatang jalang
dari kumpulannya terbuang
biar peluru menembus kulitku
aku tetap meradang – menerjang
luka dan bisa kubawa berlari
berlari
hingga hilang pedih dan perih
dan aku akan tidak peduli
aku mahu hidup seribu tahun lagi.

Sajak ini melahirkan perasaan keseorangan yang pahit, sakit dan pedih. Meskipun begitu kita dapati Chairil menunjukkan keghairahannya yang tidak dapat diganti untuk terus hidup. Sajak ini seolah-olah menunjukkan bahawa maut akan datang dekat kepadanya dan dia pula memekik 'aku mau hidup seribu tahun lagi'.

Gambaran mengenai maut banyak terdapat dalam sajak-sajak Chairil Anwar. Dengan secara

tidak langsung sajaknya yang pertama telah diberi tajuk 'Nisan' dan sajak ini ditujukan kepada neneknya yang telah meninggal dunia.

Nisan

Bukan kematian benar menusuk kalbu
keredhaanmu menerima segala tiba
tak ku tahu setinggi itu atas debu
dan duka maha tuan bertakhta.

Seterusnya dalam sajak-sajaknya yang lain gambaran tentang maut, kesepian dan kekakuan keadaan sekitar menimbulkan suatu macam efek ngeri keatas kita sebagai pembaca. Sila rujuk sajak-sajaknya yang berjudul 'Hampa' 'Kesabaran' dan 'Kupu Malam dan Biniku'.

Semasa ia muda Chairil Anwar memiliki kehausan yang melampau untuk memperolehi pengalaman. Padanya hidup adalah dahsyat tetapi dia mencengkaunya sebagai suatu tenaga hidup. Dengan nafas yang sama dia cuba menjahanamkan dirinya dan dia memang sedar akan hal itu. Sila rujuk sajak-sajaknya iaitu 'Kenangan' dan 'Perhitungan'.

Di dalam sajak 'Rumahku' kita akan dapati semacam perasaan takut dalam diri Chairil terhadap karya yang mungkin akan lenyap. Dia sedar akan kenyataan bahawa pada suatu hari nanti dia tidak akan mampu menulis lagi.

Rumahku

Rumahku dari unggun-timbun sajak
kaca jernih dari luar segala nampak
ku lari dari gedung ibarat malam
aku tersesat tak dapat jalan . . . . . .

Demikian juga halnya dengan sajak 'Kawanku dan Aku'. Suatu macam perasaan ketegaran dan kekakuan bergetar dalam sajak-sajak tadi. Beginilah imejeri yang ngeri dalam sajak-sajak ciptaan Chairil Anwar mengungkapkan perasaan yang cuba berundur dari dunia ini:

Selamat Tinggal

Aku berkaca
bukan buat ke pesta
ini muka penuh luka
siapa punya?
ku dengar seru-menderu
dalam hatiku
apa hanya angin lalu?
lagu lain pula
menggelepar tengah malam buta
ah!
segala
segala
segala tak kukenal
selamat tinggal!

Tetapi agama dan desakan untuk menemui Tuhan kadang-kala datang dalam beberapa ketika dalam hidup seseorang. Demikian juga halnya dengan Chairil Anwar. Sedang dia bergelumang dengan segala macam kepayahan dan berusaha untuk berundur diri, dia bermenung dan bertafakur, 'Di Masjid':

Di Masjid

Ku seru saja dia
sehingga datang juga
kami pun bermuka-muka
seterusnya ia bernyala-nyala dalam dada.

Imejeri tentang keagamaan dan ketulusan hati dapat dilihat dalam sajak 'Doa' di mana Chairil memanggil Tuhan, mengaku akan kebesaran Tuhan dan akhir sekali dia menyerah seluruh dirinya kepangkuan penciptanya.

Doa

Tuhanku
dalam termangu
aku masih menyebut namamu
biar susah sungguh
mengingat kau penuh seluruh
cahayamu panas suci
tinggal kerdip lilin di kelam sunyi
Tuhanku
aku mengembara di negeri asing
Tuhanku
di pintumu aku mengetuk
aku tidak bisa berpaling.

Tidak lengkap pembicaraan tentang imejeri dalam puisi Chairil Anwar tanpa menyentuh sajaknya yang paling unik iaitu 'Cintaku Jauh Di Pulau'. Inilah satu-satu sajak yang representatif yang identik dengan segala sesuatu mengenai Chairil, hidupnya, cita-cita, cinta, kesenangan dan juga kepayahan dalam dirinya.

'Cintaku Jauh Di Pulau'

Cintaku jauh di pulau
gadis manis, sekarang iseng sendiri

Perahu melancar, bulan memancar
di leher kukalungkan oleh-oleh buat si pacar
angin membantu, laut terang, tapi terasa
aku tidak 'kan sampai padanya

Di air yang tenang, di angin mendayu
di perasaan penghabisan segala melaju
ajal bertahkta, sambil berkata:
'Tujukan perahu kepangkuanku saja'.

Ambon! Jalan sudah bertahun kutempuh!
Perahu yang bersama 'kan merapuh!
Mengapa ajal memanggil dulu
sebelum sempat berpeluk dengan cintaku?*!

Manisku jauh di pulau
kalau 'ku mati, dia mati iseng sendiri.

Demikian beberapa catitan imejeri dalam sajak-sajak oleh Chairil Anwar. Dia pertama mula telah membandingkan dirinya dengan seekor binatang liar yang sedang bersendirian. Dia menjalani hidup dengan begitu payah dan menempuh kegetiran yang amat sangat sehingga segalanya di anggap menekan dan mencekik hidupnya. Kehidupan menjadi penuh kekakuan dan keras kejang. Tidak berdaya lagi dia melaluinya dan berusaha berundur dari kenyataan hidup dan kehidupan itu sendiri.

Begitu simbolik sekali sajak pertamanya iaitu 'Nisan' dan maut sering sahaja berligar dalam pengungkapan sajak-sajaknya. Sebelum ketibaan maut, imejeri tentang sesuatu yang mengerikan sering menjadi dasar sajak-sajak penyair agung ini. Juga kedapatan tentang ketakutan bahawa dia tidak mampu menulis lagi dan dia akan kehilangan karya-karyanya. Akhirnya Chairil sebagai seorang insan yang lemah menyerahkan dirinya kepada Tuhan dan merujuk kembali kepada agama. Permintaannya kepada Tuhan untuk hidup seribu tahun lagi tidak makbul.

Sekian.

Book Reviews

Eight Short Stories and Nine Short Stories

Ong Teong Hean
Singapore: Pan-Pacific Book, 1978, 90 and 88 pages respectively.

Ho Poh Fun Mount Vernon Secondary School

Ong Teong Hean's *Eight Short Stories* and *Nine Short Stories* provide the prose sequel to the two volumes of verse he edited last year, *The Eternal Echoes.* As a matter of interest, the two volumes of verse were enthusiastically received last year, despite some flaws in the editing. They cater to new needs brought about by the recent focus on literature in English, and they offer to schools for the first time in years, in the original and in translation, a smattering of world literature besides the traditional fare. Amongst other things, students encounter the pioneering efforts of local poets, and have the chance to read the works of two famous translators of oriental literature, Arthur Waley and Ezra Pound.

As a sequel in prose to *The Eternal Echoes, Eight Short Stories* and *Nine Short Stories* feature two stories from Singapore, two stories from the United States, and one story each from the following countries: Britain, Burma, China, France, Hong Kong, India, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, South Africa, Thailand and West Africa. The works of well known and lesser known writers are featured – Alphonse Daudet, Anton Chekov, O. Henry, Lu Hsun, Ryunosuke Akutagawa, Rabindranath Tagore, S.T. Hwang, Zawgyi, Lee Kok Liang, Chandran Nair, Chris Morgan, Shon So-Hee, Abioseh Nicol, James Matthews, Harold F. Dixon, K. Surangkhanang and Meng Yi.

Of the seventeen short stories in the two-volume anthology, nine are third person narratives, and eight are first person narratives. The study of the conventional short story may best be begun by a reading of *The Donkey Cart,* with its points of rising and falling action fairly clear. For interesting studies of climax and anti-climax, the following stories may prove useful: *The Last Lesson, The Man from Kabul, The Ransom of Red Chief, When I See Hui Lan Again, As the Night the Day, The Bet* and *From Alkaid Ascending.*

In many of the stories, readers may discover the use of concrete description to accomplish humour, satire, irony or symbolic meaning. How scenes stir up reader interest and how narrative passages prepare readers for crucial moments in the story can also be studied. *From Alkaid Ascending* provides an excellent example of a narrative passage which prepares readers for that "willing suspension of disbelief" toward the close of the story. In stories such as *The Nose, The Incident, The Emergency* and *The Park,* readers can observe how author/narrator intrusion helps to clarify issues and guide reader response.

The story likely to be most easily comprehended is Meng Yi's *When I See Hui Lan Again.* The simple narrative style, setting and the sentiments expressed in this translation from the Chinese will appeal to the children of our local immigrant population. The most difficult of the stories is likely to be Lee Kok Liang's *Birthday.* High in objectivity, and presented with a steely hardness, the narrative, based more on implication than on direct exposition, although admirable by adult standards, may be judged too sophisticated for the majority of students in the lower secondary school.

Because of the diverse cultures represented in the stories, a different cultural orientation may be expected in the reading of each text. The simple black and white illustrations, one for each story in the anthology, provide a means of perception of the various cultural settings and the poses and attire of the leading characters. Readers, however, will be baffled when they chance to compare the illustration for *The Ransom of Red Chief* with the reproduction on the cover: the illustrated characters seem to have lost their cheerfulness on the cover!

Although not specifically labelled, a number of exercises accompanying the texts provide for comprehension of plot, theme, point of view, character, setting and style. There are also exercises that cater for language use, the reader's personal response to the text, the discussion of social

themes, and the promotion of creative writing. These exercises make high demands on lower secondary students from the average classes, but they are likely to advance awareness for that thing called "form", which a proper response to literature entails.

Non-standard instances of language use can be expected in Asian writing, but the translated version of K. Surangkhanang's *The Grandmother* (derived from *Asian Pen Anthology)* contains more than the usual store: sub-standard forms too exist. There is certainly ambiguity in the structure and meaning of the opening sentence from that story:

> Watched ever carefully, with kindling sticks placed one by one from the woman's side, she sat there and put them on top of the old sticks which were almost burnt.
>
> (*Eight Short Stories,* page 7)

In another sentence, "so" should precede "tired":

> Phew kept it up for a long time, scolding her children with the intention of directing spite at her mother, until she was tired that she had to stop.
>
> (*Eight Short stories,* page 18)

Forms of sub-standard English are acceptable in dialogue if the intention is to capture strains of native Thai speech. Their use becomes questionable, however, when even the language of the omniscient narrator in narrative passages is affected. Pertaining to language use, the translated version of the same story from the recently published *Asian and Pacific Short Stories* adheres more to standard English than the version from *Asian Pen Anthology.* If Ong Teong Hean had selected the more recently published version in place of the one he derived from *Asian Pen Anthology,* the semblance of authenticity would have been sacrificed for something more pretentious, but the language in use would not mislead weak students in the average schools, many of whom cannot distinguish a structural error when they read one.

Upon closer examination, some introductory passages to the texts and the exercises following are found to contain language flaws. The wrong use of past participles for adjectives can be seen in Examples 1 and 2:

Example 1

> When death comes, it is almost a welcomed relief from the rigours of a poverty-stricken life.
>
> (*Eight Short Stories,* page 7)

Example 2

> In 1901, he founded a reformed school at Bolpur, Bengal, which he made his life-work.
>
> (*Eight Short Stories,* page 70)

In the above examples, faulty addition can be seen in the -ed ending of "welcomed" and "reformed". In Example 3, the determiner for "familiar tale" is non-standard; "the" would have been closer to standard English use:

Example 3

> The unhappiness of the girl in the story reads like a familiar tale of a person who is the poor victim of cruel circumstances.
>
> (*Eight Short Stories,* page 23)

When language flaws appear on the printed page, the excuse is often that they are typographical errors.

In Example 4, are the omission of a determiner for "old peoples' home" and the wrongly-placed apostrophe in "peoples' " typographical errors?

Example 4

> Do you think that old people should be put in old peoples' home to be cared for by nurses?
>
> (*Eight Short Stories,* page 22)

If typographical errors are the order, here are two more:

Example 5

> What does this comparison tells us about the boy's feelings?
>
> (*Nine Short Stories,* page 57)

Example 6

> He may take the role of one of the characters and, though using the third per-

son, makes us see the deeds and situations through the eyes of this one particular character . . . .

(*Nine Short Stories*, page 88)

In Example 5, s should have been omitted in "tells"; in Example 6, the verb "makes" reflects an error in co-ordination. Example 7 cannot be dismissed as a typographical error, however, "is" ought to precede "able"

Example 7

The writer can be god-like, assuming divine omniscience, and write his tale as though he knows all about his characters and able to represent their inmost thoughts and feelings . . .

(*Nine Short Stories*, page 88)

The insertion of words redundant in sentences is amongst the other language flaws found in the anthology.

Verdict: The stories are fine, but mind the language!

Get That Job: A Job-Hunter's Guide

Mary Tay Wan Jee and Tan Kin Hiong
Singapore: Eastern Universities Press, 1979. 217 pages.

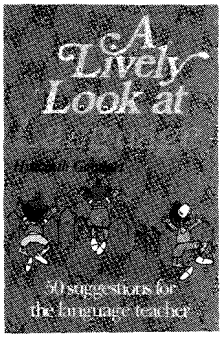
David Lochmohr Prescott Institute of Education

The Introduction states that this book has been developed from a course – *English for Job Situations* – held at Nanyang University Language Centre. The book has been developed from the course materials with adaptations, extensions and revisions made in the light of teacher and student feedback and the authors' own experiences and experiments. Much, therefore, is promised; it is all too infrequent that an "educational" book is developed out of the work of its authors incorporating the views and opinions of those for whom it is intended. *Get that Job* will not disappoint on these counts.

A systematic layout is adequately described in the *Introduction* together with a clear explanation of the way the book is intended to be used given its organisational method. Suggestions are provided for using the book in both self-study and classroom situations. The authors have sensibly recommended ways in which parts of the book may be used in isolation from the complete course and the instructional methods they have found, or have envisaged, to be useful and/or necessary.

Importantly each chapter is similarly divided into four parts; *General Guidelines, Vocabulary, Grammatical Explanation, Exercises.* The *General Guidelines* contain much information; in fact all that could reasonably be expected in such a book is included. For instance the *General Guidelines* in the third chapter are virtually a complete guide to *Job Interview* presentation, etiquette, application and assessment, and this is typical of the coverage in all chapters. The *Vocabulary* explanations are detailed and helpful, forthrightness and clarity are notable. The *Grammatical Explanation* section is refreshingly handled and the material included is confined to the language most likely to be used by the job applicant; explanations are kept to a minimum and are generally uncomplicated. The *Exercises* are varied and should suggest many extension possibilities to the teacher or student who likes to adapt material to individual needs.

This book then appears as a well conceived, well presented publication having the strengths of practicality, flexibility and relevance to the local scene besides providing an impressive amount of information and advice. The authors are to be congratulated on their work; the book is warmly recommended.



A Lively Look at Language

Gaudart, Hyacinth
Kuala Lumpur, Singapore, Hong Kong:
Federal Publications, 1979. 154 pages.

Desmond P. Pereira Institute of Education

That learning is consistent with pleasure has been recognized for decades. Yet visits to classrooms in Singapore and Malaysia may not reveal more than a small proportion of classes where enjoyment is an ingredient of the learning process. This should not be understood to mean that most classrooms in this region are deadly dull. Fun and liveliness are the order of the day in most schools, either with the teacher's co-operation or at the teacher's expense, but such enjoyment is incidental. Few teachers attempt to use pleasure as motivation for learning. This is especially regrettable where language teaching is concerned.

Science teaching has its built-in motivation in the form of apparatus and interesting experiments. Comparable to science are art and craft, home economics, music and physical education. Geography too has its attractions – colourful maps and pictures. However, in the case of mathematics, history and, above all, language teaching, arousal of interest needs greater effort and ingenuity on the part of the teacher.

Examination-centredness is sometimes blamed for the uninspired language lessons one often encounters in the classroom, but a look at textbooks concerning the teaching of English as a second language and as a foreign language will show that most advocate teaching based on pattern drills, substitution tables and the like. Even those which prescribe the situational method go in for drills in which the situations are often artificially and painfully contrived. Of course, there are books on language games, but the very nomenclature arouses suspicion. Games can only be occasional supplements to "real" lessons, in other words, pattern drills, substitution tables, etc.

In this state of affairs, the book under review comes as a breath of fresh air. It makes no apology for its aim to "eliminate boredom and tedium from the classroom" and its premise is "if a pupil enjoys his lessons he is even more inclined to learn." This is far from heresy where the theory taught to teachers-in-training is concerned. But the theory is more often honoured in the breach than in the performance, because, I suspect, deep down in the hearts of most teachers in this region is the notion that learning must be accompanied by pain and effort, up to date research notwithstanding.

The rationale provided by the author for her book is that teachers who are told to be innovative are not given ideas about how to be innovative. Her book is meant mainly "to throw out ideas that teachers could adapt to suit the needs of their pupils as well as their own teaching styles." It says much for the author's honesty that she admits that her suggested approach is not a panacea for the lack of verve among some teachers of language. "Very shy teachers who shun contact with their pupils and those who prefer to maintain a wall between their classes and themselves would be advised to be sceptical about the suggested methodology."

Some of her foundation ideas are innovative, though not revolutionary, as for example, her suggestions for the use of classroom space. Her ideas involve dramatization, games, the use of materials and teaching aids, singing, verses and jingles and, most evident, the utmost exploitation of the school's resources and even resources outside the school. But nowhere is the use of expensive equipment recommended, the tape-recorder being the most sophisticated piece of apparatus prescribed.

One suggestion which arouses my scepticism lies in her system of group work. Groups are to be formed on the basis of ability. The reason given is that, while good pupils are conducting their own discussion, "the weaker pupils are also put under pressure to come up with a report and will be forced into language activity." But I have my doubts whether weak pupils will "come up with a report" without a leavening of brighter pupils or

without prompting by the teacher.

The book also makes a claim that the methods employed inculcate not only language skills but also social skills and attitudes such as co-operation, initiative, creativeness and leadership qualities. However, I feel that these qualities may only be developed in the pupils by the suggested methods if they already possess them at a certain level to begin with. For example, the author advocates that a teacher conducting an oral discussion should, after he has made his point, make himself as unobtrusive as possible, even leaving the classroom for a few minutes. This would only be feasible if the pupils have already had some training in responsibility. It must be the policy of the school as a whole. The language teacher can hardly succeed in this method if every other teacher favours an authoritarian class management. Thus I find the author's approach idealistic, but not impractical if the conditions are favourable.

The book's main apparent weakness is an absence of grading. It is mentioned that "most of the lessons are aimed at an average class." An average class of what level? The remedy for the teacher would be to do what the author suggests, that is, to adapt each idea for his particular class level and level of ability of the pupils.

The book was designed for use in schools in this region. This is reflected in the personal and place names mentioned. But many of the features bear unmistakable signs of their western, specifically British, origins, even though they have been adapted for local use. Since the book is aimed at pupils learning English as a second language, that is, Malay, Chinese and Indian pupils who speak their own languages at home, some activities bearing local cultural features would have made the book more appealing to its target audience.

As it was written more specifically for Malaysian teachers, a Singapore teacher who uses it may be taken aback by a few of the place names, and the use of such terms as "headmaster", "blackboard" and "manila cards" instead of the equivalents in vogue in Singapore – principal, chalkboard and vanguard sheets.

Lastly, the methods advocated cannot help but evoke a comparison with the P.P.P. (Primary Pilot Project) practised in some Singapore schools recently and lately discontinued. If the P.P.P. was abandoned because it produced pupils who, though more articulate orally, were poor in written language, will not the adoption of the approach recommended in the book under review lead to similar results? Just as the more desirable features of the P.P.P. could have been retained without its counter-productive overall effects, the approach spelled out in the book may with profit be combined with more conventional methods. Like the P.P.P. methods in language teaching this book is likely to improve oral communicative skills and initiative rather than written language and organization of facts. It is up to the teacher who adopts it to use it judiciously. The weakness inherent in the methods is likely to be amply compensated by the benefits they would confer on a classroom situation which cries out for enlivening and variety.