THE ORTESOL JOURNAL

Oregon Teachers of English to
Speakers of Other Languages

Volume 16 1995

The ORTESOL Journal

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In this Issue

Articles in lhis issue of the ORTESOL Journal rcRcct the diversity of inlercsls and experiences of TESOL professionals.

- Terry Camacho-Dickey examines the ESL needs of Mexican immigrants in rural Oregon. She dCllcribcs barriers to ESL course participation and suggests ways in which ESL curricula and class formats can be adapted to better suit these students. She also providcl suggestions for the removal of logistical barriers to ESL participation.

- Diane Tehrani writes about how different languagCll mark defanitencss and the problems that this poses for studenls learning to use the English dcfanitc article. By examining how some languages do and do not combine possessive determiners with defanitencss marking, she describes a technique for students to help minimize their overuse of the English definite article.

- Coleman South explores the relationship between University ESL course grades and academic course grades. His research contributes to an explanation of why there arc stronger relationships for some groups than for others. He concludes with suggestions for further research in this area.

Also in this issue:

- Teaching Notes: Kay Davis describes a reading and writing for college course in which she uses summary writing extensively to bridge the gap between the teaching of writing and students' interests in writina for their own major. She reports that indirect benefits of the course also include improved writing for research papers and short-answer tests.

- Research Notes: Nariyo Kono reports on her research in progress regarding cultural expectations in the classroom. She explains how using a card sort procedure reveals that American learners of Japanese and Japanese language teachers and students make different assumptions about teachers.

- Review: Marjorie Terdal reviews a new book by David Crystal called *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of the English Language*. In the review she describes the book's organization and recommends it as a resource to libraries, ESL of'acca and others with an interest in the English language.

- Review: Vidya Rangachari reviews *Talking Shop: A Curriculum Sourcebookfor Participatory ..tfdull ESL*. Shehighly recommends the book for teachers in adult education who arc looking for creative ideas and arc willing to be flexible in their curricula.

- Review: Peggy Dame reviews *Approprlau Methodology and Social Context*. She describes how the author approaches some of the questions that wc often aslc ourselves. Of major importance is the appropriateness of methodologies in various settings. She describes some of the answers and the questions that remain.

-The Editors

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Developing ESL Programs for a Rural Community: A Needs Analysis of Latino Immigrants in Jefferson, Oregon

Terry Camacho-Dickey
Oregon State University

An infonnal survey of community leaders, educators and Latino immigrants (potential ESL students) In the rural community of Jefferson, Orego11 ide11tijied several factors which may be relevant to the success or failure of ESL programs there. Findings of particular interest relate to the differe11ces betwee11 the perceptions of the potential students atul those of community leaders with respect to appropriate class content/fonnat and barriers to participatio n in ESL classes;· the immigra11ts reported a desire for broad language skills which will allow them access to the social a1ul economic mai1rstream of American life in a way that the traditional "survival" English training suggested by commmrity infonnmrts ca1mot. Although this is a prelimi11ary investigation with a very small sample, the results utulerscore the importance of involving target students in a careful needs assessment as the first step in program plam1ing.

Terry Camacho-Dickey is a graduate student in the master's program in Adult EducationffESOL at Oregon State University. She has a background in survey research in public health epidemiology and a special interest in the Mexican-American population.

Introduction

Oregon's Mexican-born population now constitutes the largest immigrant population in the state ("Background check") and includes a significant number of residents who speak English poorly or not at all (U.S. Census Bureau, 1993). In response to this and other demographic changes of recent decades, Oregon has developed extensive ESL programming in community colleges and elsewhere.

Understandably, the greatest impact of these programs has been felt in the major population centers, in areas with large concentrations of immigrants, and/or in academic settings where immigrant students prepare for postsecondary education in American institutions. However, there are now significant and growing numbers of Latino immigrants living at some distance from the state's educational centers: 1990 census figures indicate that nearly two thirds of Oregon's Hispanic-origin residents live outside of the state's urbaniud areas, with 33 in rural locations (U.S. Census Bureau, 1993).

The present study focuses on the ESL needs and resources of one group of rural-living Latino immigrants, namely those in and around the small town of Jefferson in southern Marion county. The purpose of the study was to eHmine the particular ESL needs of this immigrant population with reference to the language instruction resources available to them. This is a preliminary investigation only; the author hopes to refine and expand the research in this same community in the near future.

Method

The data for this preliminary investigation come from interviews with local informants, including school and church officials, leaders in both the Anglo and Latino communities, employers, providers of ESL services, and potential ESL students. This last group consists of 13 individuals, young, mostly male, Latino agricultural workers with very limited English proficiency, who attended a weekly recreational evening at a local church. The participants filled out a two-page Spanish-language questionnaire which included questions about the kinds of topics they would like to see addressed in ESL classes, situations in which they needed spoken or written English skills, obstacles to taking

part in classes, and preferences for class schedules. The questioMaire was administered informally, with those who had limited Spanish literacy receiving help from their friends, and, in order to allay the fears of any "undocumented" immigrants in the group as to how their answers might be used, no personal information such as occupation, area of residence, etc. was requested.

Findings

Target Population

Latino conununity leaders in Jefferson report that most Latino residents here are permanent, although there is also a migrant population during the harvest season. Most of the year-round residents are families with school-age children. Reflecting the state and national patterns, most of Jefferson's Latino population works in agriculture, and many, if not most of these individuals have only a few years of fonnal education in the small Mexican villages from which they come.

Current Needs and Resources

All infonnants and all potential-student respondents expressed a strong sense of the need for ESL instruction for Latinos in this area; the potential students, who were a bit wary when first presented with the questioMaire, became very enthusiastic when they reali?.ed what it was about, and several of them pressed me for information on "when classes will begin." And, there seems to be a real potential for providing the desired instruction in this community: despite some tensions between Anglo and Latino residents, there is evidence of community support for programs which meet the needs of all the residents and help to integrate the community. Leaders of a local civic group which is actively involved in incorporating Latino residents and interests in its agenda provided extensive support for this study and expressed interest in its potential for improving ESL services in the area. Local educators are also very much aware of the language-training needs for Latinos in the community, and they offer a variety of ESL services for both migrant and immigrant school children. Other attempts to accommodate language differences in the community include bilingual signs and notices around town, Spanish-language

masses at the local Catholic church. and after-school Spanish classes available for both Latino and Anglo children.

ESL classes are available to area residents at both Chemeketa and Linn-Benton Community Colleges. although each of these institutions is about 15 miles from Jefferson and thus potentially inaccessible to those without their own transportation. Cbemeketa has a satellite campus in Stayton, another nearby rural town, but recent attempts on the part of the two colleges to provide outreach ESL programs in Stayton and in Jefferson itself have been unsuccessful, either failing to attract and/or to keep enough students to continue. Thus, despite a widely perceived need. community support, and potential sponsoring institutions, the need for language instruction for these residents remains unmet. As one community leader put it, •we get fairly good sign-ups. then attendance drops off, sometimes ends; I just don't know why. • It is indeed a puzzling and frustrating situation, and one which gives rise to questions about what barriers to delivery of instruction exist either in the target population itself or in the setting. content, or format of traditional instructional offerings. The remainder of this report will focus on these questions.

Barriers to Delivery of ESL Programs

In response to queries about barriers to successful ESL programs. informants and survey respondents in this rural community identified three main factors: practical/logistical problems. attitudinal problems. and problems related to the content and format of traditional ESL offerings.

Practical problems are those familiar to most ESL instructors. including students• work schedules which use up all daylisht hours six or even seven days a week in the spring, summer and early fall months and which may leave workers too tired for evening classes; lack of transportation to educational centers in Albany and Salem; lack of child care; the marginal nature of many immigrants' lives which make it inevitable that various problems will interrupt regular participation in any nonessential activity. One Jefferson informant sugeestcd addressing this latter problem by offering short. self-contained classes lasting only two or three weeks, rather than attempting to impose the standard Anglo school tenns on the students' overly full schedules.

The idea is certainly worth considering, but it is not the stated preference of the survey respondents in this study: all but one who answered the item about desired class length chose the longest option, "more than six weeks."

Attitudinal issues cited by Latino community leaders as interfering with participation in ESL classes include: lack of expectations of young Latinos ("kids don't set their sights high enough--tbey'tljust take any job"); parents' fears that learning English will result in the Americanization of their children and a loss of parental control and native culture, including its language and its values; perception of English as a symbol of a foreign and oppressive people. These attitudes may help to explain the experience reported by a local employer who said that they had discontinued their worksite English classes because employees "would not use English after learning it"; this reluctance, whether from negative attitudes about the language and its culture or from fear of making mistakes, precludes attaining the kind of proficiency and confidence in the language that can only come from practicing and using it. Potential students were not asked about these attitudinal issues, an omission which should be corrected in a more comprehensive study of this population.

The third type of barrier identified in this study, the content and format of instructional offerings, is the least often discussed but, perhaps, the most easily addressed by ESL professionals.

Foremost among this group of barriers is an apparent discrepancy between the perceptions of the potential students and those of the community leaders and educators regarding the nature and scope of English language skills which the immigrants need. Both Anglo and Latino community infonnanta emphasi7.ed the need for instruction in "survival" English and English for use on the job; while potential students also expressed interest in language training for job-related needs, their primary concern was to master the English language in a way that would allow them to become more fully integrated into the community in every respect--i.e., they want to become proficient English-speakers. They showed virtually no interest in the traditional "survival" English options listed on the questionnaire (e.g., options such as English about legal and financial services, English for obtaining health care services, etc.); in fact, both my own observations in the

community and the testimony of some suivey respondents suggest that these immigrants have rather quickly developed strategies for managing these essential tasks, such as finding Spanish-speaking providers, memorizing a few all-purpose language chunks, using nonverbal communication, etc.

This perceived need for broad English skills was evidenced also in the potential students' responses to questions about the situations in which they need English the most: two of the respondents wrote in answers such as, •for everything," "all the time." Thus, the potential students perceive their language needs as broader in scope than do the community leaders and educators who are likely to be infiuential in the planning of language programs.

To the extent that beginning classes focus on learning words and phrases that only allow students to function in a single setting, students with broader goals may become frustrated and lose interest quickly. One Latino informant reports that some immigrants in this community complain that they "didn't learn anything" in the ESL classes they have taken; she suggests that this may reflect, in part, the failure of teachers to understand the scope of language skills desired by the immigrants and the resulting tendency to offer quick and easy language chunks rather than a broad foundation of language skills. Similarly, the comment of one potential student translates, "[an ESL course] is very important for the people who want to get ahead, because to speak two languages is good.• Being able to ask the price of bananas in the supermarket is not what is needed by those who •want to get ahead.•

A second factor related to the appropriate content and format of ESL classes has to do with the relative or total lack of Spanish literacy among some members of the target population. To the extent that most ESL classes assume a knowledge of the alphabet, phonics, and principles of grammar in addition to a familiarity with school-based reading and writing practices, these classes are ill-suited for Latino immigrants without literacy skills in their native language. ESL professionals familiar with the Latino immigrant population note that this is especially troublesome when classes include a mix of literate and nonliterate students: the latter will quickly fall behind their classmates and are very likely to give up in discouragement. There was evidence of just such a mix in the small group of potential students who

responded to this study's survey. and this may account for the expressed fears of three of those respondents that English instruction might be -too difficult- for them.

Class setting may be a problem also, although there is no consensus on what is needed: one educator suggested that the lack of formal schooling of most Mexican immigrants makes it difficult for them to learn English in a traditional classroom setting; another, however, claimed that the current, somewhat informal approach to adult education fails to meet the immigrant students• expectations for formal relationships and procedures in the classroom. On a related issue, two informants believed that gender-segregated classes should be offered to accommodate the unwillingness of Latino men to risk making mistakes with women present; however. only one of the potential student survey respondents said he would prefer an all-male class. Thus, while the findings of this study do not tell us what setting would work best for the target student populations. they do underscore the need to test our stereotypes about Latinos before we use these preconceived notions as a basis for structuring classes for them.

Related Studies

Although there is a paucity of research regarding the specific ESL needs for Latinos in the U.S., certain of the findings of this study are supported in the literature. The overall need of language minority populations for ESL instruction is well documented: it has been estimated that *S6%* of the Hispanic population in the U.S. is functionally illiterate in English (De La Rosa. 1989), and in the major population centers, tens of thousands of applicants are turned away from already-filled classes (McKay & Weinstein-Shr, 1993). The need for language instruction as a means of entering the social and economic mainstreams of American life is supported by the testimony of McKay and Weinstein-Shr' s (1993) Mexican subjects that their low socioeconomic standing was related to their inadequate English skills and by Klassen and Burnaby's (1993) Latin-American immigrant subjects• recognition that they needed English to succeed in the job-training programs lhat could advance their careers.

More work has been done on identifying the barriers to ESL instruction for lhe Latino immigrant. Practical barriers of the type

identified in this study are noted by McKay and Weinsteio-Shr (1993), Hayes (1989), and by Terdy and Bercovitz (1989). Hayes also provided evidence of attitudinal problems of low self-confidence and/or expectations, and Wallerstein (1984) cited the fear of assimilation associated with participation in English classes. Auerbach' s (1993) work addressed the issue of inappropriate class format, noting that the currently fashionable self-directed learning may be difficult for students who are not accustomed to that kind of freedom or independence. Klassen and Burnaby (1993) referred lo the development of nonlinguistic survival strategies noted above, and make the interesting point that the immigrant students they studied had developed strategies for dealing with nearly every aspect of American life except the ESL classroom. McKay and Weinsteio-Shr (1993) confirmed the discrepancy noted here between students' goals and those of ESL providers: for example, providers of classes aimed at job-related language may encourage students to quit when they are offered anyjob, interpreting this as success, white the students want to learn enough English to make themselves eligible for a better job; or, well-intentioned teachers may teach English in the context of American parenting skills, ignoring the fact that their immigrant students have an adequate, but different, repertoire of their own parenting skills.

Lack of literacy in the native language is given major prominence in the literature on barriers to participation in ESL programs. Lack of access to registration procedures, inability to apply standard learning strategies involving reading and writing, omission of Spanish literacy placement assessments, and embarrassment or discouragement among the less literate students are all cited as reasons for nonparticipation of immigrant Latinos in ESL classes (McKay & Weinstein-Shr, 1993).

Finally, Hayes (1989) noted that immigrant Latinos are a heterogenous population with respect to many of the factors affecting participation, and it may be necessary to provide different instructional approaches for various subgroups within a given Latino population.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Thedata presented here do not represent a systematic or large-scale investigation and must be viewed as suggestive only. Nevertheless, the fact that these preliminary findings are congruent with certain

observations in the literature and the fact that they represent a beginning step in eHmining a significant and complex area of need in ESL delivery warrant some attention to the clues they offer.

Probably the most important finding of this study is its demonstration of the need for a serious and thorough needs analysis in preparation for structuring ESL classes that are relevant and appealing to Latino immigrants in rural areas like Jefferson. Discrepancies between the opinions of well-positioned infonnants and those of survey respondents with respect to the kinds of classes needed, along with the historical pattern of program failure in this area argues for a broad-based survey of potential students regarding their goals, learning styles, and attitudes toward instruction. Such a survey would need to include oral interviews with those who lack L1 literacy and should attempt to overcome the problems associated with asking for occupational and personal data. It is only by gathering the appropriate information from those whom we would serve that we can avoid the self-defeating practices described by Auerbach (1993) as ones in which "experts determined curriculum content for learners and specified objectives based on the needs of the dominant social or economic order," and move toward plaMing programs based on the needs of the learners (p. 543). An instructor at a highly successful ESL program in Woodburn, who begins every class by asking students (via a bilingual interpreter) "What do you want? What exactly?" operates on the principle of "really paying attention to what they want and need, then trying to deliver it." Knowing what students want and need ahead of time might make it possible to meet those needs even more effectively.

Meanwhile, the results of this very preliminary investigation also suggest that we carefully consider the following issues as we try to meet the ESL needs of Oregon's Latino immigrant population:

1. Curriculum Content: To meet potential students' stated goals of becoming fully integrated into the community linguistically, socially and economically, we need to offer a serious curriculum; it should focus on broad language skills and be directed toward the goal of substantial English proficiency for students. The findings of this and other studies suggest that many of the traditional •survival English" curricula are inadequate for this adult student population. Professionals

may need to develop syllabi that meet the particular needs and goals of this population.

2. Logistics: ESL instruction must be creatively tailored to accommodate the logistical problems inherent in the students' lives; i.e., it must be planned to fit with students' work schedules, in accessible locations, perhaps with provisions for child care. ESL programs may work best when offered at the workplace (with or without sponsorship by the employer) or in conjunction with school or family activities. Classes may need to be concentrated in the winter months and supplemented with home study materials for those times when other obligations make class attendance difficult.

3. format of Classes: Experimentation with settings and instructional styles may be required to find the format that is most compatible with these students' needs and learning styles. As a start, instructional methods and materials must honor the students' allegiance to their native culture and language and recognii.e their existing knowledge. Providers need to develop a knowledge of the students' culture, their learning styles, and their attitudes toward the host culture in order to create a comfortable learning environment and to lessen the apprehension students feel about using the language. This may involve the use of bilingual instructors rather than the "English only" approach, assessment of native literacy and provision of native literacy training where needed, the use of Latino-culture materials, and a sensitive treatment of issues relating to cultural and socioeconomic differences between the students and native speakers in the community.

4. Community Involvement: The interest of small communities such as this one in meeting the needs of their language-minority populations should be tapped. Involvement of both Anglo and Latino community leaders in ESL programming can contribute considerably to the success of the program while furthering the aims of those who seek to improve ethnic relations in their communities and of the immigrants who wish to become more fully integrated into the community. Possibilities may exist for volunteer efforts to supplement professional offerings.

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APPENDIX A

Spanish Language Questionnaire for Potential Students

Como estudiante en la Universidad Estatal de Oreg6n, estoy recibiendo entrenamiento en la enseiianza del ingl6s como segunda lengua y otras habilidades. Actualmente trabajo con otras personas aqu(recopilando infonnaci6n acerca de cu1Ues cursos podrfan ser utiles para hablantes del espaiiol que viven aqul.

Al contestar las siguientes preguntas usted nos bani saber qu6 tipo de curso le interesaria llevar y c6mo organizarlo. Usted no tiene que escribir su nombre en este cuestionario, s6lo queremos saber ctWitas personas estarfan interesadas en los cursos que podamos ofrecer. Nosotros estarilimos en la mejor disposici6n de compartir con usted los resultados obtenidos en una futura reuni6n en el verano.

Muchas gracias por su ayuda.

1. 1.Cu1U de los siguientes programas le interesad'a a usted7 (Marque [.I] todos los que le interesen.)

_Una clase de ingl6s general en comprensi6n auditiva y conversaci6n

_Una clase de ingl6s general en lectura y escritura

_Una clase en ingl6s para llenar fonnularios para pedir trabajo

_Una clase en ingl6s acerca de servicios financieros y legales

_Una clase en ingl6s para aprender acerca de los servicios de salud

_Una clase para aprender ingl6s que pueda utili7.ar en su trabajo

_Una clase para ayudarle a obtener la licencia de conducir

_Una clase en ingl6s para prepararlo en la obtenci6n de la ciudadanla estadounidense

_Una clase en ingl6s para mejorar sus babilidades en matematicas

_Una clase para ayudarle a usted a que le ensene a sus hijos a leer y escribir en ingl6s

_Una clase en espaiiol para aprender a leer o escribir mejor

_ILe gustarfa que se le ofreciera algdn otro tipo de clase? 1C wtl?

___

___

cuU de las clases mencionadas anteriormente le interesarii m'57

___

2. 1,Cuin frecuentemente podrfa usted asistir a clases7

S6lo de vez en cuando
_S6lo una vez a la semana aproximadamente
___ Dos veces a la semana
_Mis de dos veces a la semana

3. Cuintas semanas piensa usted deberii tomar un curso?

_S6Jo una semana
_Dos o tres semanas
_Cuatro o seis semanas
_Mis de seis semanas

4. 1,Qu6 hora del d(a serla mas conveniente para usted'l

_A cualquier hora
_S6lo en las mananas
_S6lo en las tardes
S6lo en las noches
S6lo los fines de semana
_No tendril(tiempo

S. 1,Por cuinto tiempo ha estado usted en los Estados Unidos?

_Menos de seis meses
_De seis meses a un aiio
_De uno a dos aiios
_De tres a cinco aiios
_De cinco a diez aiios
_Mils de diez aiios

7. ;,Qu6 situaciones evitarlan que usted tomara un curso'l

_Estoy demasiado ocupado
_No me gusta estudiar
_No estoy interesado en aprender ingl6s
_No tengo quien me cuide los niiios
_Pienso que serfa demasiado dif(cil
_No se suficiente ingl6s
No conozco a nadie en el curso
_l,Tiene usted alguna otra razon?l?______________

___

___

6. 1,Alguna vez ha lomado clases de ing16s en los Estados Unidos?

_No
_S{, una vez
_Sf, rms de una vez

8. (Hombres:) 1,Le gustada una clase de ingl6s s6lo para hombres? _Si _No

(Mujeres:) i,Le gustada una clase de ingl6s s6lo para mujeres? _Si _No_

9. 1.En qu6 situaciones necesita usted usar conversaci6n y comprensi6n auditiva en ingl6s7

Nunca necesito hablar o entender ingl6s
_Cuando voy de compras
_Cuando voy al doctor o a la clfnica
_En mi trabajo
_Cuando hablo con los maestros de mis hijos
_1.En que olra situaci6n? 1,Cuil?

10. 1.En qu6 situaciones necesila usled leer o escribir ingl6s?

_Nunca necesito leer o escribir ingl6s.
_Para leer el peri6dico
_Para escribir cartas
_Para leer cobros y notificaciones
_Para seguir instrucciones
_Para llenar formularios
_En mi trabajo
_En alguna otra situaci6n7 *cmi1*____________ ——

11. i,Tiene usted alguna otra sugerencia para organizar los cursos de ingl6s u otros cursos en Jefferson o Talbot?

1MUCHAS GRACIAS POR SU AYUDAI

APPENDIX B

Enelish Tramlation of Potential Student Questionnaire

Iam a student at Oregon State University, rece1vmg training in teaching English and other skills to people who speak a language other than English. Iam working with some other people in Jefferson to discover what classes or programs might be useful to the Spanish-speaking people who live here.

By answering the questions below, you can let us know what kinds of programs, if any, you would like to see in Jefferson and how they should be organized. We don't need your name on this form; we only want to see how many people are interested in the kinds of programs we might be able to offer. We'll be happy to share the results of this survey with you at another meeting, later in the summer.

Thanks so much for your help.

1. Which of these programs would interest you? (Check all that interest you.)

__A general class in speaking and understanding English

__A general class in reading and writing English

__A class to learn English for job applications

__A class to team English about legal and financial services

__A class to team English about health care services

__A class to learn English to use at your job

__A class to help prepare you to get a driver's license

__A class to prepare you to become an American citizen

__A class to improve your math skills

__A class to learn to

_A class to help you help your children team to read and write English read or write Spanish better

_Some other kind of class? What kind? ______________________

____

____

Which class interests you the most? ________________

2. How often would you be able to attend a class?

_Only once in a while
_Once a week or so
_Twice a week
_More than twice a week

3. How many weeks do you think a class should go?

_Only one week
_2-3 weeks
_4-6 weeks
_More than 6 weeks

4. What time of day could you attend a class?

_Any time
_Mornings only
_Afternoons only
_Evenings only
_Weekends only
_I could not attend any time

S. What kinds of things might prevent you from taking a class?

_rm too busy
_I don't enjoy classes
_I'm not interested in these things
_I don't have child care
__I think it would be too hard
__I don't know enough English
_I wouldn't know anyone there
_Another reason? What?

____

____

____

6. How long have you been in the U.S.?

_Less than 6 months
__6 months-1 year
_1-2 years
_3-S years
_5-10 years
_More than 10 years

7. Have you ever taken English classes in the U.S. before?

_No
_Yes. once
_Yes. more than once

8. (Men:) Would you prefer a class for men only?
_Yes _No
(Women:) Would you prefer a class for women only?
_Yes _No

9. In what situations do you need to speak or understand English?

__I never need to speak or understand it
_When I go shopping
_When I go to a doctor or clinic
_For my job
_When I talk to my children•s teachers
_Another situation? What?

10. In what situations do you need to read or write English?

I never need to read or write it
_To read the newspaper
_To write letters
_To read bills and notices
_To read directions
_To fill out forms
_At my job
_Another situation? What?

10. Do you have any other suggestions about organizing English classes or other kinds of classes in Jefferson?

Thank you very much for your help.

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A Teaching Technique for the Definite Article in English

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Si11ce the la11guages of 110l1-11ative speakers do not sig11al definite11ess and itulefiniteness i11 the same way English does, their usage of articles is oft1t11 haphazard. To help studellts move toward con'ect usage, they must be encouraged to indicate deflnilel1ess or i1uleji11lte11essfor every nou11 in English. Thefact that definiteness atul ituleji11ite11ess do 11ot occur al the same timefor a11y 11ou11 may pennit non-native speakers 10 check their nouns. To do this, a non-native speaker ca11 check his or her use of the byfirst taking it off; second substituti11g a possessive pronou11 for the defl1Jilearticle the. If ü makes se11se, the will be dropped. A11 incorrect se11te11ce which cm1 be used to illustrate this is •/ saw him change 111£ lane.• 1his would become the con'ect se11tence •l saw him change bJI. la11e.•

It seems that processing of abstract to concrete in English is boulul up with use of articles. /11 communication, movement is continually from abstract to concrete which is sig11a/ed by itulefi11ite to definite articles. Because this is true, students mu.st be encouraged to ilulicate in their speech a greater level of generality as contrasted with the definite items they are speaking about.

Relevallt literature of L2 article acquisition (Hild, 1990,· Tarone &: Parrish, 1988) l1ulicate areas of misusage and methodology which target u.sage rather than competence as the most relevant faclor. This study proposes a technique to help alleviate the problem of using particular for general reference common to almost all ESL students. Material is presented illustrating overusage of definite articles by advanced speakers. It is then shown that since these articles violate certain contextual requirements of shared k11owledge, e11tailme111, or ge11eric reference, tile over-specification may be deactivated through

individualizing the contat. Through examples and data this paper describes how in different circumstances such as uniqueness by dejinitio11, given social group, prior uttera11ce, and specified order or rank in a set, possess ive delenni11ers can serve as a check on the required presence or absence of the definite article. Reference is made to differences amo11g languages with regard to explicit indication of definiteness and semantic or lexical domains in which possessivefonns occur.

This paper first reviews the usage of definite articles in several languages and describes the 11ature of learni11g the articles. Second, implication for teachers of the grammar of definite articles and the process of learning them are described. Third, a solution is proposed a11d applied to several examples. Finally, results of some testing of students to see if the proposed teaching tech11ique has a11 effect on improving usage is given as a co11cludi11g remark.

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A Brief Review of Article Problems in Various Languages

It would be expected (Oller, 1971) that learners with native languages without articles-Chinese, Indian, Persian, Russian, Thai, and Vietnamese-would have great difficulty in learning the articles in English. They might, like Chinese speakers, omit necessary articles, insert unnecessary ones, and confuse definite and indefinite articles. In Persian, suffixing indicates the presence or absence of the definite category. It tends to be syntactic for direct objects rather than pragmatic or semantic. In Vietnamese a certain classifier denotes the definite category but it is not used with all words. *011e* is used for unclassified (indefinite) as it is in the Indian languages. Sometimes checking for count/noncount helps but mistakes are frequent like "I'm tired so I'm going to the bed." Turkish has no definite article but direct objects are different in fonn according to whether or not they are definite in meaning. This encourages Turkish speakers to use *the* with all definite direct objects in mistakes like "The librarian controlled the my ticket" and "I like the Cambridge."

Difficulties Japanese speakers have in mastering English articles have been explained (Fukumocbi, 1982) through the concept of simplification (Bertkau, 1974) which means that a learner *simplifies* a noun phrase, especially a complex one, by eliminating a functor word like an article. Most errors are due to omission since L1 has no *the* article, especially in cases like "Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra," "Louvre Museum," and "NCAA." Furthermore, since proper nouns do not take articles, omission seems to be an overgeneralization of the rules in the second language. Though Fukumochi stated that Japanese rarely overuse the definite article, mistakes like the following show that they make the kind of mistake we are considering: "I entered the course of Tobaaakuen School" for one of the courses, and •1saw the movie caUed Orpheus.• Fukumochi suggested that since the acquisition of the definite article seems not to parallel that of the indefinite, they should be treated separately in second language acquisition. She also suggested that since Japanese does not have articles, problems stem from the arbitrary usage in English itself.

Surprisingly, an Arab scholar (Johani, 1982) came to the same conclusion although Arabic does have a definite article. He claimed that the most frequent error of omission of definite articles is not due to interference from Arabic so much as due to the target language, false analogy, and confusion. Errors made will include those like "The poor area of Tennessee Valley" and "the principals of league of nations." Arabic has no indefinite article and the definite article has a different range of usage. The prefix "al-" refers back to an indefinite noun previously mentioned and/or unique reference, e.g., "the sun" or "on the floor." The most common problem arises from interference from the Arabic genitive construction: "John's book--"Book John," "A man's work"-"Work man," "The teacher's car-"Car the teacher,• "This is book the teacher," and "This is the key door." Besides this, definite articles are used for "in bed,• "at dawn," "on Thursday," "for breakfast," "days of the week," "some months," and many names of towns, cities, and countries, e.g., "We live in the India" and "We had a flat in the Khartoum. "

For Hungarian learners of English, article errors are about 20% of the total errors made for advanced students according to Stephanides (1974). Since the definite article is more frequent in Hungarian, Hungarian learners of English tend to use the definite article with uncountable nouns referring to abstract notions like "The time is money," "The life is hard," and "The iron is metal." And because individualized/nonindividualized meaning is expressed by definite, indefinite, and zero articles in Hungarian while English has no overt marking for such meaning, a sentence like "O book is on the table" conveys that there is a book on the table and not something else while lo convey roughly the same meaning in English requires one of two structures •There is a book on the table• or "There are 0 books on the table."

Beyond these languages without articles and different ranges of article usage lie the European languages which generally have definite articles but like French, Hungarian, Italian, and Spanish take the definite article with possessives, e.g., "The my cousin is in Portland" and Spanish and Italian which take the definite article for generic or general sense, e.g., "after the breakfast.• Most of the European

languages also use the definite article with professions, e.g•• "'She is studying to be the teacher."

But it is just this concept of possession coexisting with definite in a number of languages that makes it attractive as a solution to the problem of overusage of the defmite article. If the idea is there and it is substitutable, dropping of the mistaken definite article in favor of possession would seem easy. Overusage of possessives is almost never a problem except for using too many or stylistic considerations. Use of possessives, at any rate, would not be ungrammatical. A possessive determiner would also be more palatable than the definite article in many cases.

Yet it isjust the fact that possessive co-occurrence with the definite is explicitly signified on the surface in some languages that suggests that these two features, i.e., +Def and +Pos, do not automatically co-occur in human conception and in fact they do not co-occur in English. Possessive does not occur with indefinite or definite articles in English but it does occur with both in at least one other language, i.e•• Hungarian. In fact, the absence of any overt determinative word, i.e.• :r.ero, has a very definite structural meaning. Possessive determiners cannot co-occur with definite and indefinite articles in English. Thus if you can use a possessive, you will omit the article.

hnplications for Teachers of the Grammar of Definite Articl

Crucial to definite article usage is its relational nature (Russell, 1903). The word *the* in the singular is correctly employed only in relation to a class-concept of which there is only one instance. Thus, the definite article, unlike *a* and *the* quantifiers, provides a method of denoting one single term by means of a concept. A definite description may be such that either an existence condition or a uniqueness condition fails to hold. A definite noun is a defined noun, a noun whose precise signification is known. The meaning of it is not necessarily specific. Reeves (1977) classified the five contexts requiring definite articles as common knowledge. part-whole relationship, previous mention, post mention, and physical stimulus.

1. *Common knowlMge* is unique to the universe. general education including musical instruments. citizens of a certain country, restricted group of family. friends, colleagues. Examples would be "The earth revolves around the sun,• "He plays the piano,• "The Saudis wear flowing robes,• and "The grandparents visit in the summer.•

2. *Part-whole relationship* refers to an item which belongs to a larger whole of like items such as "the leaf of a tree.•

3. *Previous mention* or anaphora is sometimes called "the second mention" article such as "I bought a book: the book • • •" It is a backward-looking reference. Particularity is behind anaphoric *the.* Particular references aro definite. They share some features with specific references: both aro known to the speaker. Unlike specificity. particularity is also shared by the hearer and presupposed by the speaker or else he has to provide the particularizing information to prevent a breakdown of communication.

4. *Post mention* or catophora is when the noun phrase is modified by an adjective or a relative clause like •the party in power• or "the man who lost his shadow.• *Eldest* is also catopboric modification as are modified phrases like "the Washington Post" newspaper. The determinative definite article *the* points forward to a right adjunct of its noun. This can be seen most easily in the case of restrictive wh-adjuncts but is equally true for all closely appositive right adjunct structures including relative clauses, prepositional phrases, substantive clauses, participles, and infinitives. For example:

the man whom I met
the meeting of a man by me
the fact that I met a man
the man being met by me
the man for mo to meet

All of these are transforms of "I met a man" or its passive.

Related to post mention is the genitive which can be either specifying or classifying (Zandvoort, 1962). That is. it either refers to "a particular person or thing• or denotes "the class or kind to which the

person or thing denoted belongs." The specifying genitive can be replaced with the prepositional phrase with *of,* which cannot be done with a possessive pronoun •my boot• is not the same as •the book of me" although it is with the variant "the book of mine" and the like, so it seems that the classifying nature breaks the grammatical bridge to definiteness syntactically while the specifying nature makes it grammatical semantically. The classifying genitive is like a descriptive adjective or noun used as a modifier. Simply belonging to anyone or anything usually establishes definiteness, e.g., "the best of Portland," "the leg of the table,• "the grandmother' s armchair,• "the girl's dress• -"the dress of the girl," •a girl's dress"--"the dress of a girl."

S. Physical stimulus (gesture) locates an object in a shared speaker-listener arena such as "Do you see the plane in the sky?"

These five contexts appeared to Krasben (1982) as a fairly complex set of rules which cannot easily be retained consciously in memory. For this reason he concluded that article usage does not improve with monitoring since they are *acquired.* Yet, of course, we know that children of the age of about three or four can manage to represent and refer to the range of definite and indefinite in English and can point out that, having just slid down the sloping side of a low wall, "I know where a slide is.•

Learners routinely violate the five contexts described by Reeves (1977) as requiring definite articles in three ways. First they may assume listeners share a common view, egocentric reference; second, they may fail to identify a sufficient referent, missing restrictive modifier; and third, they may identify an item too broadly, generic reference.

The first violation, egocentric reference, appears to be firmly psychological. A speaker should not violate the listener's range of reasonable expectations when a definite expression is used. It should be easy for the listener to locate the particular referent for it according to previous conversational content or general knowledge. Egocentric reference involves the assumption ofjoint knowledge/given information and use of a definite article when it is not warranted.

Certain research (Maratsos, 1976) indicates a developmental stage for learning the definite article in English as a first language in which egocentric definite responding is quite common. Between the ages of three and four, definite and indefinite reference is established. Four-year-old girls seem to do slightly helter than boys who may continue to have more definite or egocentric response. Visibility of an object seems to bring out relatively high levels of egocentric response. Three-year-olds fail to make egocentric definite responses in great number. Their less definite reference is attributed lo a slightly weaker referential and representational competence.

The second violation is missing restrictive modifier which could be a missing relative clause, prepositional phrase, or an adjective. It seems as though cases 1 through 14 (see Appendix A) suggest such restrictive or defining modification like a relative clause is missing. In other words the head nouns are specified by the presence of the definite article but restrictive modifiers are missing. To correct the sentence "I saw him when he changed the lane" an *of* phrase could complete the specifications, i.e., "I saw him when he changed the lane of the highway" in which *the lane* becomes a member of a category *highway.*

The third violation is generic reference which could take definite article, indefinite article, or plural form of the noun: the tiger — tigers — a tiger.

The tiger is a dangerous animal.
Tigers are dangerous animals.
A tiger is a dangerous animal.

In the sentence "I saw him when he changed the lane" the speaker seems to be associating the individual lane with the whole of the lanes on the highway, i.e., *the lane* rather than by identifying the place where the action occurred.

The definite article has two basic uses: particularizing and generalizing (Johani, 1982). While the generic article picks out a member as representative of a class, the definite article talces the members of the class as a unit. Therefore in the first two violations above, i.e., egocentric and clausal/phrasal modification, the problem

is basically related to restrictive modification and could be corrected by asking *Which* (lane)? The third violation is a more general problem concerned with the usage of articles as a whole-either definite or indefinite, which includes the zero article.

Many texts treat articles under the headine of count-noncount assuming that students do not know or comprehend rules for pluralizing nouns. This works to some degree because languages collect things differently. What for one language is plural is considered singular in another, e.g., *people* or *group*. Actually definite or indefinite articles can be used with both count and noncount nouns, and generic and specific. Context becomes all important as a speaker or writer chooses a definite or indefinite article based on the situation and the two principles of article usage: entailment, which may be implicit like *the collar* (of a coat), or explicit like a prior mention or relative clause.

So since the article, like the direct object pronoun *it,* is a structure very important in establishing cohesiveness in discourse through maintaining clear reference, we are considering not only the sentences but context. The issue we are taking up here specifically is the overusage of the definite article, a problem which is referred to variously under the names style-shifting in interlanguage (Tarone, 1985), underdifferentiation (Stephanides, 1974), or egocentrism (Maratsos, 1976).

The reason non-native speakers have difficulty in learning the articles may be because the nouns of their languages seem close to concrete sense experience (Hewson, 1972). This is indicated by the bare noun without articles. In order to master English articles which always intimately identify nouns as approaching to or withdrawing from the listener by means of the indefinite and definite articles respectively, the learner must master nouns which make possible a more and more generali?.ed or abstract grasp of reality. For example, the use of a possessive detenniner such as *his* for a mistaken definite article in a sentence like •He has a headache and he takes *the* pill• eas the non-native speakers' movement from concrete to abstract usage by moving signification back toward concrete reality. Interlanguage as yet unaccustomed to such signification will benefit from what is essentially

a case consideration, a dative which indicates to whom a concrete reality refers.

Proposed Solution and Its Application to Examples

Beyond asking *Which* (lane)? or for an *of phrase* for the first and second violations noted above, what I'm proposing is a greater use of possessive determiners by ESL learners for generic, the third violation.

By giving the specified word an antecedent with a possessive determiner the sentence becomes grammatically correct. By using the possessive determiner--one single term denoted by means of a concept, either something mentioned previously or a relative qualification, it becomes a concept itself like *a* indefinite. This means that if there is more than one of a particular noun and a particular one is unspecified, an indefinite article will apply. Por example, in a sentence like "He cannot solve the problem before another comes," there is more than one of the particular noun *problem* for which an indefinite article will apply. The posive *his* connects the *problem* to the referent *he*.

By proposing to use a possessive determiner the idea is to individualize, a term used by both Stephanides (1974) and Johani (1982), the context much as an indefinite article does so in "Once upon a time there was a king." Indefinite articles individuali.zc as in the example and classify as in "The earth is like a ball.• Thus to bring the nominal back into the realm of first mention or introductory sense this would more properly be represented as an indefinite article ora generic [O + plural] featu.

I saw him change the lane.
I saw him change his lane.
I saw him change lanes.

Such substitution seems to work in a specifying (specific) determination:

A visitor came to see the president yesterday.
His visitor came to see the president yesterday.

but not in non specifying as is illustrated in the second of the following two sentences.

I need a book on the articles.
•I need my book on the articles.

It does work, however, with set phrases like "Stay for your breakfast," "Let's go by our car," and "He is in his class."

The articles may be arranged on a scale of definiteness (Johani, 1982) on which the indefinite and definite articles constitute the least and most definite marker respectively, the middle ground between the two ends occupied by the generic use of articles (see Table 1). With the exception of proper names, which occur on the definite end of the scale, in terms of definiteness, nouns which collocate with the zero article are indefinite.

Table I

Scale of Definiteness

a/an indefinite	a/an generic	the generic	the definite
	0 zero generic		
	my/your/his/ her/its our/their possessive determiner		

The z.ero article is used with nouns which refer to indivisible concepts. In other words *the* and *a(n)* single out the noun as countable, whereas 0 reveals it to be mass and abstract, continuate. Zero article is used for nouns that are mass (break, honesty, wine), proper, unique (paradise, man/woman), limited sphere (for family or country), emotion (come brother), proper with general reference (Monday), names of institutions(parliament, school, recurring events), syntactic (catch fire, give ear, send word, take care), prepositional group (at ease, at first, by day/night), in possessive case or possessive adjectives, book titles, names of newspapers (Guide to American English). Articles are replaced by demonstratives, possessives, and other words like *most, certain, some,* etc. All detenniners, e.g., *this, my, John's,* are used with definite noun phrases. Thus, it is appropriate they be replaced by *the.*

I want to borrow the book.
I can/wilt have a book.
I want to borrow a book.
A visitor came to see the president yesterday.
He had a visitor yesterday.
His visitor came to see the president yesterday.

By using the possessive determiner, an underlying proposition of possession makes that thing first particular/individual or more generic and then specific. And since it is individual, it cannot be definite. Individualization is expressed by the indefinite article. "Seeking to own" makes it particular enough to identify it for the listener. This individualization which posits a lhing *to* or *for* someone functions like a dative under which possession is subsumed. This is true in part-whole expressions where the definite article functions as a possessive pronoun.

She has a pain in the stomach. (cf her stomach hurts)
He bad a bird in the hand. (cf • • . in bis hand)

The definite article functions as the introducer of definite entities . that are uniquely identifiable to participants in communication (Johani, 1982). By offering the chance to omit an article entirely would give some satisfaction to those from languages without articles

or those who are confused about where to use them. Those who feel that individualized meaning is expressed by lack of an article will be consoled to know that a possessive pronoun will fit and be grammatical in English in many cases.

Results of a Study of Article Usage Among Advanced ESL Students and Some Concluding Thoughts

Six students at the advanced or fifth level of grammar in the ESL program at Portland Community College were from Arabic, Chinese, Hindi, Mexican, Persian, and Polish native language backgrounds. After thoroughly reviewing the five contextual uses of the definite article, students were asked to choose a definite article *the* or a possessive pronoun in a set of 24 prompts which contrasted the two (see Appendix B). Students were then instructed that a possessive pronoun could replace an indefinite article but not a definite one. They looked at the prompts and again made their choices.

Two native speaker colleagues agreed that eight of these sentences, i.e., numbers 2, *S,* 7, 14, 1S, 22-24, could take possessive determiners while the others could not. The scores of the six non-native speakers were 63, SB, 54, *SO, SO,* and 38 the first time they marked the sentences. After knowing that possessive determiners could replace an indefinite or a zero article, the scores were 7S, 71, 67, *S4, 46,* and 46. That is a move from an average mean of S2. 16 to 59.83 or a 7.77% increase, on average.

Students were then asked lo correct definite article errors taken from student papers, i.e., examples 1 to 14 in Appendix A. Three students corrected only number 12 and a third student made no article correction at all. The Polish student added definite articles for "the garage sales" for number six, "the Bible study" for number seven, and "the other things" for number 10.

In my experience in teaching the articles in the five years that have elapsed since this original study• the most important feature of teaching the definite article is to remind students not lo omit it. The definite article is just one half of the continual process by which English speakers signal thinking from general to particular and show which

direction their thought is moving. This underlies contextual considerations of common knowledge, part-whole relationship, previous mention, post-mention, and physical stimulus. Thinking of students must be checked by practicing with questions about listener knowledge such as •What/which cat?• or •What/which bowl'r Secondly students can be encouraged to monitor definiteness. Once students understand the importance of the definite article to the thinking process, they attend more carefully to using it correctly.

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APPENDIX A

Examples 1-14 illustrate the nature of the problem. Examples 15-38 seem to be phrasal illustrations. The problem of set phrase omission of definite articles in time or place phrases such as "last/next week, month, or year" or "to/at school, class, prison, or work" is perhaps that they function as adverbs of time and place rather than noun phrases.

1. I saw him when he changed *the* lane. (in driving)
2. *'lhe* movement should be a little faster.
3. He has a headache and he takes *the* pill.
4. He cannot solve *the* problem before another come.
5. This is the Oregon Bar referral that you have *the* number.
6. I also like to go to garage sales but I don't know *the* place to go.
7. After my friends and I finished Bible study, we went to *the* bowling center.
8. Tet is the Vietnamese new year. All members of family gather in their parents house to greet and wish their parents live for long time. Then they shoot *the* firecracker and have a big dinner.
9. Do you like *the* snow? I think it's very nice but Ws very dangerous for the drivers.
10. I am young and i like to go in *the* shops to see clothes and other things . . .
11. But I think I'll get a job soon because after New Year's Day, many company in my state open for application; so it is easier to get *the* job, ... After I have *the* job, I am looking for . . .
12. I am still a worker, that is I am lucky to keep *the* job, but may not longer. Because the company business slow down. Fiend, How is your State, is it easy to get *the* job in it. if essy to found a job I will to your State. I may need your held, would you keep to look *the* job for me.
13. At this time it (the painting) hangs on *the* wall of the Gulistan Palace.
14. Some magazines and newspapers was very popular. If you bought *the* newspaper at earlier, you couldn't seen any newspaper were appeared in the afternoon.
15. They're tired from *the* work. (people coming to evening classes)
16. I wanted to eat *the* lunch. (while eating it)

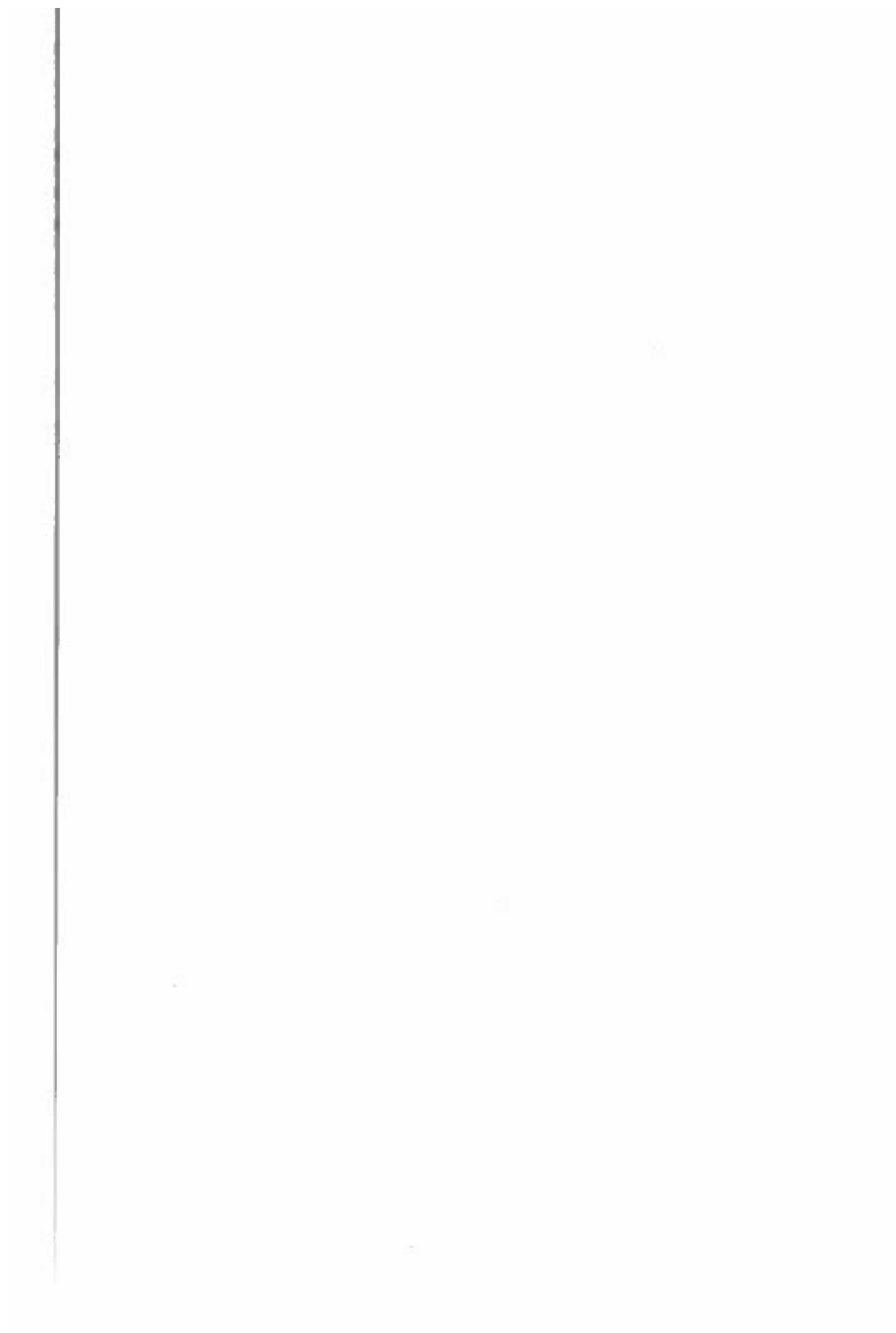
17. They'll put me in *the* jail. (for jail)
18. They will feel very easily during lhe first 2 year in *the* college.
19. I hope you attend *the* class this time.
20. • • • in *the* evenings I come to school.
21. I am still taking *the* English class.
22. I have spent a lot of time here, studying English in *the* afternoons and working in *the* mornings.
23. I'd like to write letter to you from *the* class.
24. I live here for 3 years and I worked in *the* hospilal as (CNA) means nursing assistant.
25. Nice to lalke to you on *the* paper.
26. Right now we just know together by *the* letter.
27. I just realize that here the live is very expensive, so when *the* winter finish I will work.
28. My ENNL class is very interesting. I learned grammar and writing. My instructor said that *the* grammar is most important to writing.
29. Monday I missed *the* classes because I got cold.
30. . . . I began doing that *the* last Friday.
31. What are you doing in *the* day and night?
32. I love watch movie, listen *the* music, swimming, eat many kind of *the* food . . .
33. . . • I am twenty, and I love *the* music, *the* life, basquetball, swim . . . food
34. We can see *the* snow • • • (lalking about seasons in Oregon)
35. Diane told me this afternoon you weren't in *the* class.
36. I have decided to leave *the* next month, the 20th Febnaary. I have to spend a night in London because I don't have *the* flight London-Venice lhe same day.
37. • • • but I like to visit new places and maybe *the* next summer I'm going to . . .
38. Studying more English is necessary in our new country. It's very important in communication and in *the* job.

APPENDIX B

Definite Article Usage Prompts

Directions: Read the following sentences and circle the articles or possessive pronouns which seem to complete the sentences better.

I. The/Its water is an article of trade in Venice.
2. The/Its water is bad in Venice.
3. I dislike the/my snow.
4. I dislike to walk in snow.
S. I like to lie on the/my grass.
6. We can't live without the/our air.
7. We can see birds high up in the/our air.
8. The/Our rain comes from clouds.
9. His mother forbids him from the/his staying out late on school nights.
10. Soldiers march on the/thejr bellies.
11. The/Our appearances can be deceptive.
12. The/Our prices are always rising.
13. Beavers build the/their dams.
14. I like to rise early in morning.
IS. I work during the/my day.
16. Stay for the/your breakfast.
17. Let's go by the/our car.
18. Children go to the/thejr school.
19. He is in the/his prison.
20. He is in the/his class.
21. I also like to go to garage sales but I don't know the/thejr place(s) to go.
22. He wants to wash the/its collar.
23. A hemlock died the/its year after Ward transplanted it.
24. The/His day before he sailed was sunny.



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The ESL-Academic Performance Relationship

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The number of i11ternatio11al stude11ts in the U.S. grows each year, as does the importa11ce of those stude111s to ma11y colleges a11d u11iversities. Predlctl11g their academic success is difficult a11d ESL petfonnance is generally 1101 used as a predictor. This research conducted at Portla11d State U11iversity shows: (a) thatfor some groups of students-e.g., females, Asiatts, and those who have taklm more tha11 11E11glish as a Seco11d La11guage (ESL) classes--ESL grades could be reliable predictors of grades for thefirst two years of academic study a11d (b) that the grades of internatio11al studlmts who do not take ESL classes begi11 sig11ificantly higher tha11 those of fonner ESL studellts but drop over a two-year period, while those of fonner ESL stude11ts remain level. Weaknesses in the predictive value of ESL grades are discussed a11d recomme111/atio1ts for further research into the ESL-academic perfonnance relationship are made.

Admissiotis offices and university departmellls need reliable predictors of academic success, and ESL teachers and administrators 11eed to k11ow how well their programs meet foreign students• needs. The relatiotiship between ESL petfonnance and academic petfonnance has been completely overlooked by most researchers, yet investigations imo this relationship might contribute a great deal toward helpitlg universities predict the likelihood of academic success of international students who are non-native speakers (NNS) of English. Teachers and administrators in utiiversity intensive English programs could also use the results of research into this area to evaluate how well their curriculums, programs, and teaching methodologies relate to the academic success of their students.

In order to help advance the previously stated goals, this study explored the connectio1is between the ESL peiformance (predictor variable) and the academic peifonnance (criterion variable) of imernational students at Portland State University (PSU) i11 Portla11d, Oregon. It also correlated the ESL students' peiformance in the la11guage skills areas (reading, writing, spealcinglliste11ing, a1ul grammar) with academic inifonnance. Finally, it compared the academic peiformanc e of students who had taken ESL classes to that of NNS i11tematio11al students who were not required to take ESL courses because of their TOEFL scores.

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Description of PSU's ESL Program

Structure and Policies

The program is part of the Department of Applied Linguistics and has four levels, each consisting of four components: granunar, reading, writing, and speaking/listening. Reading and writing classes at each level often have the same instructor, and students are required to take them simultaneously.

PSU requires NNS undergraduate students to achieve a score of at least 525 on the TOEFL before admission to academic study. Those who score lower are tested by the ESL program and placed in levels based upon the test results. An undergraduate who has passed the highest level of ESL may be allowed to begin academic courses with a TOEFL score of SOO and the recommendation of the ESL program coordinator. Also, a student may be allowed to take an academic course--usually of a less-verbal nature (e.g., math, music)--while in level four of ESL.

Goals of ESL Instruction

There are several teaching targets in this ESL setting. One is to help students achieve a TOEFL score that will admit them to academic study. Another is to prepare them culturally and academically for a stay in the U.S. Students are trained to be active in the classroom and take responsibility for their own learning through group work and presentations.

Speakingnistening classes in particular emphasim learning about American culture. Texts and classroom activities are directed toward this goal, and activities outside the classroom provide cultural experiences. In the upper levels students might attend a college lecture class and take notes as well as hear guest speakers in their classrooms, learning how to outline, abbreviate, engage in structured discussions, and comprehend a variety of accents and dialects in both recorded and live voices.

In this program, there is not a Jot of emphasis placed on academic content or functions, except in writing.

Literature Review

In the literature search the author looked for studies that: (a) compared the academic performance of ESL students with that of NNS non-ESL international students to detennine if college and university intensive English programs might in some way help their students academically and (b) studies that correlated students' ESL performance to their later academic performance. In an extensive search of the literature, only a few studies were found. They are separated below into the two search areas, and within those, according to the results of the investigations.

ESL Performance Correlated to Academic Performance

Significant positive results. Wardlow (1989) CN = 327) and Zirpoli, Hallahan, and Kneedler (1988) <N = 19) found ESL grades significantly related to later college performance. Wardlow, in fact, declared them as predictive as prior academic achievement in the students' home countries. Woodbridge (1986) <N = 49) discovered that overall ESL GPAs as well as those for each component (reading, writing, etc.) correlated significantly with first year college grades.

No significant results. Rosberg (1983) (N = 263) found no clear relationship between ESL and academic perfonnance at a community college, but 54% of his subjects did not graduate.

Academic Performance of ESL Versus Non-ESL NNS Students

No significant results. Mason (1971), one of the first researchers to look at whether the academic performance of ESL students differed from that of non-ESL international students, compared college grades and scores on a post-first semester English test for 15 ESL students and 9 non-ESL foreign students and found no significant difference. He did not correlate ESL and college grades. On the basis of these small

samples and without giving explicit data he concluded that intensive English programs have no real effect on content course performance. This study was used by Mossback (1977), along with two others he reviewed, to conclude that general ESL courses are "largely a waste of resources" (p.318).

Bostic (1981) <N. = 154) found no significant difference between the academic performance of groups with and groups without ESL training. Dunn (1990) <N = 274) discovered no significant difference in academic performance between any of four English for Non-Native Residents (ENNR) groups and one control group. She stated, however, that the control aroup was not ideally matched in English ability to the others. Neither Bostic nor Dunn compared ESL perfonnance to subsequent academic achievement level.

Significant negative results. Perry (1989) compared university OPAs of groups who had and groups who had not taken ESL courses in a study that combined two universities and found that the non-ESL group had a significantly higher mean OPA than the ESL group. Although his investigation used a large population- 196 at one school and 376 at the other-the actual differences in the means were small, according to the author (.11 and .26), and few variables appeared to be controlled. He did not calculate correlations between ESL and academic grades.

Shilling (1987) <N. = 37) found that ENNR students who had the fewest years of prior English language training obtained higher college OPAs than did those with the most years of such training. She admitted, however, that she encountered many problems in gathering data.

Conclusjons from the Review

Boyer and Sedlacek (1988) observed: "Despite the extensive literature on international students, much remains to be learned about the variables related to their academic success" (p. 219). This review shows a dearth of research into the ESL-academic performance relationship.

Hypotheses

Based on the research reviewed and thejustifications given below, the following hypotheses were fonned.

1. ESL GPAs will correlate significantly and positively with academic GPAs. Additionally, a research question closely related to this hypothesis was posed: Wilt the ESL and academic perfol'DWlce of students be the same for all language skill areas (reading, writing, listening/speaking, and grammar), or will some language skills correlate more closely with academic performance than others?

2. Because a mathematics major, for example, needs less language skill and proficiency-active or passive, oral or written--than does a business major, ESL GPAs wm correlate to academic GPAs more strongly for students in more-verbal majors than they will for students in less-verbal majors.

3. There will be no statistically significant difference between the mean academic GPA of fonner ESL students (the ESL group) and the mean academic GPA of other F-1 visa NNS students who have taken no ESL classes (the non-ESL group).

Method and Procedures

Data were used from 169 undergraduates (ESL group, n :;;::: 77; non-ESL group, n • 92) with F-1 (study) visas. These were students: (a) whose first language was not English, (b) who had completed at least one full-time quarter of academic study at PSU, (c) who had not attended high school in the U.S. or other English-speaking countries, (d) who had taken either no ESL courses or more than three, and (e) who had *not* obtained the equivalent of a bachelor's degree in any country.

Grades for both ESL and academic courses were chosen as the measure of perfonnance for the study because of their ready availability, their ease of correlation, and the dubious value of comparing scores on a variety of standardi7.ed and non-standardi7.ed tests. It was also decided that academic grades for the ESL subjects'

first quarter, first year, and second year of study would be compared to their ESL grades.

To examine the effects of potential moderator variables (factors that might affect other variables), both ESL and non-ESL students were divided into groups by gender, the verbal nature of their majors, age, nationality, previous English-speaking college experience, and--for ESL studenls--the number of ESL classes taken.

Subgroup Divisions

Major fields of study. In order to substantiate or refute hypothesis number 2, students were divided into field-of-study subgroups as follows:

More-Verbal	Less-Verbal
Business & Management	Architecture/Environmental Design
Education	Computer & Information Sciences
Foreign Languaaes	Engineering
Letters	Health Sciences
Psychology	Life Sciences
Public Affairs	Mathematics
Social Science	Visual/Performing Arts other than Theater
Theater	

About 40% of both ESL and non-ESL groups were majoring in business and 30% of each in engineering and computer science.

Gender and age. The proportion of female students in both groups was slightly more than one third. About half the students in both groups were 24 years of age or older.

Nationality. Eastern Asian students accounted for 60% of the ESL group and *58*% of the non-ESL group. Middle-Eastern students accounted for 35% of the ESL group and 19% of the non-ESL group. Other nationality groups were omitted here because of their small number.

Prior English-speaking college experience. About one-third of each group had previously studied in a cotlege where English was the language of instruction.

GPA Calculation

Calculations included grades for repeated classes (D or F) and also the higher grade received on the second attempt. This was done for two reasons. The first was pragmatic: there was no acceptable reason to pick one over the other. Second, the combination of these grades would, in the researcher's opinion, be a more accurate measure of perfonnance than would the use of either one by itself. Point values were also assigned to pass/no pass (P/NP) arades-2.S for P; l for NP. These figures were based on the averages of all passing (A-C) and non-passing (D-F) grades received by the subjects for their graded classes.

In order to answer the research question posed with the first hypothesis, each student's composite ESL and component--grammar, reading, writing, and speaking/listening-grades were averaged. (Twelve students had not taken a granunar class, so had only four ESL GPAs.) Three academic GPAs were calculated: at the end of the first quarter (Qtr), the first year (YI), and the second year (Y2). YI and Y2 averages were cumulative. ESL and academic grades were also averaged for all subgroups.

Both sets of the subjects' grades--ESL and academic-fonned fairly normal bell curves.

The Statistical Tests

Pearson Correlation Coefficients (Pearson !) were calculated for individual ESL and academic grades, t-tests were performed on academic GPAs between subgroups within ESL, and !-tests were run on academic GPAs between the main BSL and non-ESL groups and between the subgroups of each. A probability level (p) of .OS was chosen as a desired level of statistical significance.

Results and Discussion

Hyoothesis l

The first hypothesis-that ESL and academic GPAs would correlate significantly and positively-was supported for both YI and Y2. Composite ESL grades as well as those for grammar and writing components correlated positively and significantly with academic GPAs for Y I and composite ESL and writing grades correlated significantly with Y2 GPAs (Table 1).

Table l

ESL-Academic GPA Correlations:
All ESL Students

Group	!!	OIA ESL	Grammar	Reading	Writing	Spkg/Lstg
Qtr	77(65)	.13	.18	-.06	.14	.07
J!. =		*.28*	*.J6*	*.62*	*.22*	*.S4*
Y I	73(61)	.31*	26*	.07	.31*	22
ll. =		*<.OJ*	*.04*	*.S7*	*<.OJ*	*.07*
Y 2	44(32)	.33*	.17	.06	.41*	24
ll. =		*.03*	*.33*	*.68*	*<.OJ*	*.12*

NOTES: (a) In tables l-13, the!! for grammar GPAs is shown in parentheses; the D for other components and composite GPAs is the first number listed, and (b) In all tables, * indicates statistical significance.

The research question posed regarding the relationship of academic perfonnance and performance in separate language skills was not answered conclusively because of dramatic differences in correlations among the ESL subgroups and whole ESL group, although the largest number of significant correlations (as well as the highest correlations) indicated that ESL writing grades were strongly related to academic grades.

While reading grades consistently showed the strongest correlations within some aroups, there were far fewer significant correlations than there were for writing--6 versus 17.

Overall, speaking/listening grades showed the weakest relationships and the fewest significant correlations. Generally, large contrasts between ESL-academic GPA correlations were found within some subgroups.

Gender. Male students• composite ESL, writing, and speaking/listening GPAs correlated weakly but significantly with Yl grades. Conversely, women students• correlations were weak for YI but quite strong for Y2. while none of the men's for Y2 were significant (see Tables 2 and 3).

Table 2

ESL-Academic GPA Correlations:
Male Students

Group	n	OfA ESL	Grammar	Reading	Writing	Spkg/Lstg
Qtr	49(41)	.16	.05	-.04	.17	.06
I!. =		.27	.77	.80	.24	.67
y 1	46(38)	.39*	.17	.14	.35*	.31*
II.=		< .OJ	.J2	.J6	.02	.04
y 2	29(22)	.25	-.08	-.02	.27	.23
II.=		.20	.71	.93	.15	.23

Table 3

ESL-Academic GPA Correlations:
Female Students

Group	n	OJA ESL	Grammur	Reading	Writing	Spkg/Lstg
Qtr	28(24)	.06	.28	-.03	.02	.14
fl =		.75	.18	.86	.91	. 47
y 1	28(24)	.18	.34	.08	. 10	.16
I?=		.37	.12	.70	.63	.42
Y 2	1S(12)	.62*	.6S*	.64*	.66*	.42
I?=		.OJ	.02	.OJ	<.OJ	.J2

Age. Students 24 and older had no significant correlations. On the other hand, students under 24 years of age showed several moderate-to-strong and significant relationships. Composite ESL and writing GPAs correlated significantly with all academic GPAs for the younger students, and the writing-Y2 connection was strong enough to account for nearly half (!:2=45%) of academic GPA variation . Grammar and Y 1 grades showed a low but significant correlation, and speaking/listening GPAs correlated significantly with both Y I and Y2 GPAs (see Tables 4 and S).

Table 4

ESL-Academic GPA Correlations: Students
24 Years and Older

Group	n	O/A ESL	Grammar	Reading	Writing	Spkg/Lstg
Qtr	39(30)	-.14	.04	-.26	-.09	-.14
Il=		.38	.82	.12	.59	.38
Y t	39(30)	.ts	.1S	-.04	.18	.02
2.=		.36	.44	.82	.27	.89
Y 2	30(22)	.24	.13	-.O1	.33	.13
2.=		.20	.56	.96	.07	.50

Table 5

ESL-Academic GPA Correlations:
Students Under 24 Years

Group	!!	O/A ESL	Grammar	Reading	Writing	Spkg/Lstg
Qtr	38(3S)	.48*	.31	.30	.48*	.31
2. =		<.01	.07	.07	<.OJ	.06
Y I	34(31)	.54*	.37•	.28	.SI*	.43*
/Z=		<.OJ	.04	.I/	<.01	.OJ
Y 2	14(12)	.57*	.31	.36	.67*	.SS*
/Z =		.OJ	.33	.21	<.01	.04

Nationality. No correlations for Middle-Eastern students were significant. All of their positive correlations were quite weak (see Table 6). For East Asian students, however, there were 10 positive, significant correlations. Composite ESL and writing grades both correlated moderately with academic grades for all three periods. Also,

grammar GPAs correlated moderately with both Y1 and Y2 GPAs, reading correlated moderately with Y2 GPAs, and speaking/listening grades correlated lower but still significantly with Y1 grades (see Table 7).

Table 6

ESL-Academic GPA Correlations:
Middle Eastern Students

Group	n	GPA ESL	Grammar	Reading	Writing	Spkg/Lstg
Qtr	27(21)	-.12	.02	-.29	.18	-.17
p =		.56	.92	.14	.37	.39
Y1	26(20)	.21	-.12	-.04	.28	.OS
p =		[illegible]	[illegible]	.87	[illegible]	.82
Y2	17(12)	.12	-.SS	-.ts	.16	.12
p =		.64	.07	.57	.55	.66

Table 7

ESL-Academic GPA Correlation:
Eastern Asian Students

Group	n	GPA ESL	Grammar	Reading	Writing	Spkg/Lstg
Qtr	44(39)	.32*	.21	.24	.36*	.25
p =		.04	.19	.12	.02	.IO
Y1	42(37)	.43*	.41*	.23	.40*	.37*
p =		<.0J	.0J	.14	<.0J	.02
Y2	24(20)	.4S*	.SO*	.43*	.56*	.20
p =		.0J	.02	.0J	<.0J	.35

38(28)	-.06	-.10	-.28	.02	-.08
	.71	.63	.09	,90	.64
37(27)	.20	.09	-.10	.20	.17
	.24	.66	.54	.29	.32
22(14)	.23	-.30	-.09	.34	.22
	.30	.29	.70	.12	.32

Number of ESL classes. Students with fewer than 12 ESL classes had no significant ESL-academic GPA correlations. Conversely, students who had taken more than 11 ESL classes showed the largest number of positive and significant correlations of any subgroup (Tables 8 and 9). These results imply that there is something academically beneficial in a protracted period of time spent in an intensive English program.

Table 8

ESL-Academic GPA Correlations:
Fewer than 12 ESL Classes

Group	n	OJA ESL	Grammar	Reading	Writing	Spkg/Lstg
Qtr 2 =						
Y 1						
e.=						
Y 2						
e.=						

Table 9

ESL-Academic GPA Correlations:
12 or More ESL Classes

Group	!!	01A ESL	Grammar	Reading	Writing	Splcg/Lstg
Qtr	39(37)	.39*	.36*	.36*	.33*	.29
R. •		.02	.03	.02	.04	.07
Y 1	36(34)	.52*	.43*	.St•	.52*	.32
lZ. –		<.OJ	.OJ	<.OJ	<.OJ	.06
Y 2	22(20)	.51*	.56*	.51*	.62*	.34
/!.. =		<.OJ	.OJ	<.OJ	<.OJ	.J2

English-speaking college experience. Relationships between the ESL and college grades of students without this experience were not significant (see Table 10). But subjects who had previously studied at institutions where English was the language of instruction had strong correlations between composite ESL arid writing grades and their YI and Y2 grades. Additionally, their reading GPAs correlated strongly and speaking/listening GPAs moderately with Y2 grades. The
grammar-Y2 correlation was strong but not statistically significant, possibly because of the small n (7) in that category (see Table 11). The findings here, combined with those of the less-than-12/12-or-more subgroups, indicated that a period of time spent in an English language university environment of any kind might help prepare students for academic study in the U.S.

23(17)	.24	.38	.14	.26	.12
	.26	.14	.52	.24	.59
23(17)	.60•	.44	.39	.s2•	.so•
	< .0J	.08	.07	.OJ	.02
11(7)	.63•	.59	.66•	.64•	.38
	.04	.16	.03	.03	.25

Table 10

ESL-Academic GPA Correlations: Students with No Previous English-Speaking College Experience

Group	n	O/A ESL	Grammar	Reading	Writing	Spkg/Lstg
Qtr	54(48)	.ts	.10	-.08	.14	.13
/! =		.30	.50	.55	.31	.34
Y 1	59(44)	.22	.18	-.04	.21	.IS
/! =		.13	.26	.77	./4	.30
Y 2	33(27)	.21	.06	-.ts	.31	.21
/! –		.25	.78	.42	.08	.25

Table 11

ESL-Academic GPA Correlations: Students with Previous English-Speaking College Experience

Group	n	O/A ESL	Grammar	Reading	Writing	Spkg/Lstg
Qtr						
J!. =						
Y I						
e–						
Y2						
e. •						

Djscussjon: Hyoothesis 1 findinas. The significant correlations between ESL and YI and Y2 grades versus the lack of any between ESL and Qtr grades most likely indicates a period of adjustment when ESL students first begin academic study. Perhaps this period could be shortened or eliminated by more exposure to academic content and style

in the ESL program. However, if one looks at these data combined with the findings for hypothesis number three (ESL versus non-ESL students), a conclusion could be drawn that while ESL students have a rough start in academic study, they adjust well over their first two years.

If all component GPAs had correlated with academic GPAs as well as writing did, composite ESL grade correlations would have been fairly strong. The nature of the writing classes may explain at least part of that strong connection. Personal writing is emphasized at lower levels; at upper levels students research, write, and revise as they wilt in college courses. The writing is process oriented.

Based on both intuition and personal experience, the researcher did not expect to see strong correlations between either ESL grammar class or speaking/listening class GPA and academic GPA, particularly since so much time is spent on culture content. rt seems that performance in ESL reading classes, however, should be strongly related to academic success. Although the significant reading-academic GPA correlations were higher than those of other components, there were relatively very few: the only consistent and strong correlations were in the subgroup that had taken more than 12 ESL classes. ResuJts in Table 1 indicate no meaningful relationship between ESL reading grades and academic grades for the group as a whole.

An explanation may lie in the reading material used by most teachers in PSU's program. Most readings used are more literary than scholastic. Reading materials other than literature that are used include newspaper and magazine articles, stories of local and regional history and characteristics, essays, and ESL textbook readings.

Literature and popular reading have a valid place in language learning; but the lack of academic registers and the difference in content between, say, fiction and poetry on the one hand and college texts on the other could cause schema, register, and vocabulary weakness in college study. Dubin (1986) stated:

> Lack of attention to text-type characteristics in ESL/EFL reading courses could result in giving learners only a fragment of the knowledge they require . . . for their special needs

> • • • Sometimes • . . ESL/EFL teachers who come from a background in humanities or social sciences are unfamiliar with scholarly or nonacademic/nonfiction sources beyond their own • • • specialimtion. However, their intennediate-advanced level students frequently major in sub-fields of science and engineering. Jn their search for relevant science-related articles . . . teachers might utiliz.e • • • popular culture magazines • • . But these popular sources for science topics are quite different from scholarly or even nonacademic/nonfiction sources in . . • textual features. Moreover, it is the latter which appear on "required" reading lists for academic courses. (pp. 154-155)

She goes on to list the different characteristics of three types of texts--academic, nonacademic/nonfiction, and popular culture--and described the typical features of textbooks, which:

> • . . frequently organize the selections for reading by the rhetorical features contained within them, or under headings such as analyzing through classification, illustrating ideas by using examples, explaining by means of comparison and contrast, expanding ideas through analogy, explaining through process analysis, proving a point by analyzing cause and effect relationships and exploring ideas through using definilions. (p. 138)

Of 169 subjects in this study, *54*% were majoring in technical (less-verbal) fields, and most of those who were not were in the School of Business. Few of these students will be exposed to more than a couple of literature courses in university study, but all will have to read substantial amounts of academic and technical material.

Hyoothesis 2

Hypothesis two-that ESL-academic grade correlations for students in more-verbal majors would be stronger than those for students in less-verbal areas--was supported. Table 12 shows six positive and significant correlations for students in more-verbal majors, while Table 13 (students in less-verbal majors) shows no significant correlations.

Table 12

ESL-Academic GPA Correlations:
More-Verbal Majors

Group	n	01A ESL	Grammar	Reading	Writing	Spkg/Lstg
Qtr	35(30)	.26	.45*	.11	.29	.16
ll.=		./4	.OJ	.55	.09	.35
y 1	32(27)	.37*	.53*	.16	.41*	.20
rz.•		.04	<.OJ	.39	.02	.26
y 2	17(13)	.Sl*	.54	.44	.S9*	.34
ll. =		.04	.06	.08	.OJ	.J9

Table 13

ESL-Academic GPA Correlations:
Less-Verbal Majors

Group	0	0/A ESL	Grammar	Reading	Writing	Spkg/Lslg
Qtr	42(35)	.02	-.04	-.14	.01	-.00
ll.=		.90	.83	.37	.97	.98
y 1	41(34)	.29	.11	.OS	.25	22
ll. =		.06	.SS	.74	.J2	.J6
y 2	27(21)	.26	.04	-.OS	.32	.20
ll.=		.19	.87	.82	.JO	.33

<u>Discussion : Hyoothesis 2</u>. To the researcher, these findings indicate that intensive English programs perhaps need two tracks: one for students who will be majoring in less-verbal areas and one for those who will be majoring in more-verbal areas. Many ESL students complain about how much time they are required to spend in intensive language programs and what they perceive as the irrelevance of so

much of the programs' content. The language needs of a student who majors in computer science are much different from those of a student who is majoring in psychology.

Hyoothesis 3

This hypothesis was that there would be no statistically significant difference between the mean GPAs of ESL and non-ESL students. For the whole group, this was supported only for Y2. Statistically significant differences were found at the Qtr and YI (Table 14).

Table 14

Academic GPA Differences Between
ESL and Non-ESL Students

Group		n	Mean	SD	
Qtr	- ESL	77	2.74	.559	
	non-ESL	92	3.00	564	.003*
1st Yr	- ESL	74	2.68	.SSI	
	non-ESL	92	2.93	.499	.003*
2nd Yr	- ESL	44	2.71	.450	
	non-ESL	63	2.82	.612	.259

The differences in correlations from Qtr to Y2 were caused by the ESL students' grades remaining nearly the same (a drop of about 1% from Qtr to Y2). while those of tho non-ESL group declined by about 6%. This pattern may suggest a favorable relationship between intensive English study and long-term academic success.

Conclusions

Some guarded conclusions can be drawn from the findings of this study. The first is that there appears to be a strong relationship

between ESL-course and academic performance. Another is that there are variables that somehow affect this relationship. It is not clear which of these variables have the most influence, but it seems that number of ESL classes taken, gender, and nationality are important, since grade correlations within those subgroups showed the greatest disparities.

Another possible conclusion is that a combination of cultural orientation, re.ding and study skill development, academic content, and English language training is the best preparation for successful study in the U.S. The difference in GPA patterns, for example, between the students with the most time and those with the least time spent in the ESL program as well as the pattern of academic grades for the ESL versus non-ESL groups indicate that this ESL program somehow helps students academically.

Overlap of ESL Subgroups

This overlap is perhaps the biggest weakness in the study. Although the correlations between ESL and academic grades indicate that ESL grades are good predictors of college perfonnance for certain groups--women, Eastern Asians, those who took 12 or more ESL classes, those who are in more-verbal majors, and students younger than 24 years of age-the situation is more complex than that.

All but 3 of the 27 women were East Asian, nearly two thirds of them took 12 or more ESL classes, and 57% were in more-verbal majors. Conversely, more than half the male students were from the Middle East, about 60% of them took fewer than 12 ESL classes, and two thirds were in less-verbal majors. Because of these overlaps it is difficult to determine which variable(s) might have had the strongest influences. For example, if most female students were from South America instead of East Asia, would they still show strong ESL-Y2 grade relationships?

There is a need for further studies that: (a) correlate ESL and academic grades at or near the end of college study to evaluate long-term relationships, (b) compare degree-completion rates (perhaps the greatest test of academic success) between ESL and non-ESL students, (c) use larger subgroup samples, (d) compare ESL and non-ESL

students over a longer time period, and (e) use subgroups with more internal variation to determine which variables most affect the predictive value of ESL grades.

Since ESL programs vary in focus, approach, content, and methods, a large study across several universities would also bo desirable.

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TEACIDNG NOTES

Summary Writing

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Kay Davis is an instructor in the English Department at Clackamas Community College where she teaches writing and composition to both native and non-native speakers of English. Her research interests include the effect of both cognitive and affective learner characteristics on second language learning.

Writing instruction for intermediate and advanced English as a second language students poses many problems. One of the problems is that many sludents feel that they are either too advanced for "another ESL class" or that the time spent in ESL is taking away from time which could be spent studying their major. The dilenuna for the ESL writing instructor is compounded by comments from other faculty members about the need for better and more writing instruction for ESL students (Vann, Meyer, & Lorenz, 1984). The ESL writing instructor is caught trying to mediate between the students' desire to study their majors and the faculty's demands that students be able to compose coherent essays. To alleviate the doublebind that ESL writing instructors are often caught in, I decided to try something that serves both the students' desires to study their major and the faculty's demands that students write better. I have my students write weekly summaries of self selected articles from current publications.

My ESL class is entitled "Reading and Writing for College." And, as the title implies students are expected to do a fair amount of both. Most students in the class are high, intermediate, and advanced ESL undergraduate foreign students enrolled in regular college classes; a few students are immigrants trying to improve their English skills, and a couple students hold college degrees from their own country and are trying to improve their TOEFL scores.

Over the past year I began to experiment with the idea of weekly summaries. These summaries are graded on a point system, with six points maximum for each summary. For the first two weeks of class, I supply the students with copies of articles of general interest, such as education, families, or health. Each article is one page in length. Students read the article at home and write the summary to bring to class. I also read the article and write a summary on an overhead transparency. In class, I put up and read my summary as lhe students read theirs and compare their summary to mine. These summaries are also graded on the 6-point scale. If they so choose, students may rewrite their summary after they have determined what and where the problems and differences are. The rewritten summaries arc then submitted for grading.

Articles must be a minimum of one page in length, but many students select longer articles. One student, admitted into a graduate

program in education, selected primary source material to help prepare her for her graduate studies. Summaries are restricted to a maximum of 12 sentences with both the author and the title of the article incorpora within the first two sentences. Correct bibliographic information in MLA reference style must also be included at the end of the summary. In addition to writing the summary, students are re.quired to select *S* (minimum) to 10 (maximum) words from the article to define and use in sentences. This assignment helps students develop the vocabulary specific to their own needs and their own major. Students are re.quired to submit the article or a photocopy of the article with their summary so I can also read it before reading the summary.

As a third source of summaries, throughout the term students are re.quired to write 8 to 10 weekly summaries on the same topic. Bach summary is worth six points. Summaries which receive one or two points may be rewritten, but failure to use the MLA reference style for bibliographic infonnation after midtenn results in a zero. The final assignment for the term is a five- to eight-page abbreviated research paper based on the summaries. The summaries and final paper give students practice in using references, MLA reference style, quotes, interpreting words and ideas, and avoiding plagiarism. This past year students wrote on a variety of topics: the California condor, multicultural education, teenage smoking, nutrition, the changing face of nursin1, and study skills, to name a few.

To give students additional practice and to encourage students to read at the text level, not the word or sentence level, additional articles are supplied approximately four more times throughout the term. These additional articles are practice articles only and, as such, the summaries are not graded. Students have 15 total minutes to read each article and write the summary. Summaries are then read out loud and compared to others in the class. I also participate in this exercise, but do not volunteer to read my summary first.

The weelcly summaries provide students with relevant reading and writing. Students are encouraged to select current articles in their major from popular magazines such as *Newsweek, 1ime,* or *U.S. News and World Report.* The article selection also helps students become familiar with ideas and trends in their field of study and forces students

to read for overall comprehension. Students report lhat the summary writing bas made an improvement in their reading comprehension. An additional benefit is that this summary writing technique can be used as a study method in other classes. Indirectly, students are also prepared for transition to the required writing sequence of WR 121. 122, and 123 or 227 as well as other classes where writing assignments are made. I have found that the length restriction on the weekly summaries has helped students in writing short essay test answers. Overall, students have responded favorably to the weekly assignments, especially once they realire that they choose the weekly reading and vocabulary. The handout for summary writing is included in Appendix A.

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APPENDIX A

Summary Writing

Definition

A summary is a short and carefully written account of the main ideas of a book, article, or oral presentation.

Characteristics

A summary:

- must be written in your own words, not the words of the author.
- covers the whole selection or article.
- is short (a precis is approximately one third the length of the original text).
- should keep the same tone as the original.
- should not express your personal opinion. A summary should deal only with the facts as presented by the original author.

Additional Notes

We usually refer to authors by only their last name in academic writing.

Introduce the summary by referring to the author and/or the title of the text, e.g., "In Brown's article, he discusses current research on the AIDs virus." By giving credit to the author when you use his/her name, you avoid plagiarism.

Plagjarism

Plagiarism is using someone else's words and ideas and passing them off as your own. Plagiarism is illegal and unethical; don't do it.

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RESEARCH NOTES

A Cross-Cultural Study of Classroom Culture in a Foreign Language Setting[1]

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[1] This paper is part of the author's master's thesis and was presented at a Regional Conference of Asian Studies on the Pacific Coast (June 16, 1995) as a work in progress.

Introduction and Background of the Study

Many teachers who have taught in multicultural classrooms have noticed that there are sometimes cultural differences in what students expect of teachers. Nieto (1992) has argued that because both teachers and students can have culturally different beliefs and values about the nature of the teacher-student interaction, it is very important for teachers to know students' different cultural backgrounds. However, differences in cultural expectations are often difficult to notice since beliefs about the process of teaching often form such basic epistemological frameworks within each culture. As Mezirow (1990) has commented, part of the learning process (for both students and teachers) in multicultural classrooms is becoming aware of and being able to make decisions about our unconscious habits of expectations. Therefore, as Nieto argued,

> research of this kind is important if we are to grasp how children from *different cultural backgrounds* [italics added] respond to teachers' behaviors and what teachers can do to change *the unconscious messages* [italics added] they may be unknowingly sending to their students. (p. 118)

Being a Japanese language teacher, I have sometimes experienced and worried about the possible effect of cultural differences. The purpose of this study is to compare American students' and Japanese teachers' expectations of what makes a good Japanese language teacher. Although the study is still in progress, this paper will describe general aspects of the research project and discuss preliminary results.

Research Method and Procedures

First, a convenience sample of SO American students and 12 Japanese teachers completed aquestionnaire containing five open-ended statements related to what makes a good Japanese language teacher. For example,

A good teacher should/should not be:____________., or
A good teacher should/should not do: ____________

Subjects were encouraged lo make up to five responses to each sentence. This produced about 1,000 descriptions. These included isolated words and phrases containing both adjectives and verbs. Second. the data were then reduced by considering only those words or phrases that were repeated by more than one person and by using Roget's thesaurus (Morehead, 1985) to combine synonyms. This process reduced the original data to 39 words or phrases related to what makes a good Japanese language teacher.

Next, 156 subjects in two Japanese language programs were asked to categorize and rank the descriptions. The subjects included 13 Japanese teachers in two Japanese programs, 12 Japanese students who were enrolled in the teaching Japanese practicum class from one of the programs, and the 131 students (96 American students, 35 international students) taking Japanese language classes in the two programs. The subjects in the two programs individually categori7.ed the 39 key words. Each subject was given a stack of 39 cards (each card containing one key word or phrase) and was instructed to sort the cards into piles that they felt were similar in some way. Subjects could use any criteria and between 2 and 10 categories.

I used three primary data analysis procedures to examine if there were any cultural differences in how the subjects organi7.ed or ranked the various descriptions: multidimensional scaling, hierarchical cluster analysis, and rank order analysis. The INSCAL multidimensional scaling (MDS) (Dunn-Rankin, 1983) and hierarchical cluster (Dillon & Golstein, 1984) analyses produced visual maps of the relationships among the 39 descriptions (see Figures 1 and 2). Separate maps were created for the teachers and students in each program and also for the teaching Japanese practicum students. The results of the hierarchical cluster analysis were superimposed onto the MOS maps and each map was examined to determine possible meaning for each of the spatial dimensions. For example, in Figure 1 (the American maps) •interact with students," "listen to students," and "know each student's level & character" were on the right extreme edge of the maps. In contrast, •open," "caring,• and "positive" appeared on the left extreme edge of the maps. This suggested that this dimension possibly represented •professional factors" vs. "personality factors• and that the descriptions were distributed in the space according to these criteria. Possible

strongest, most parsimonious interpretations for each individual map were selected and the maps for the different groups were compared.

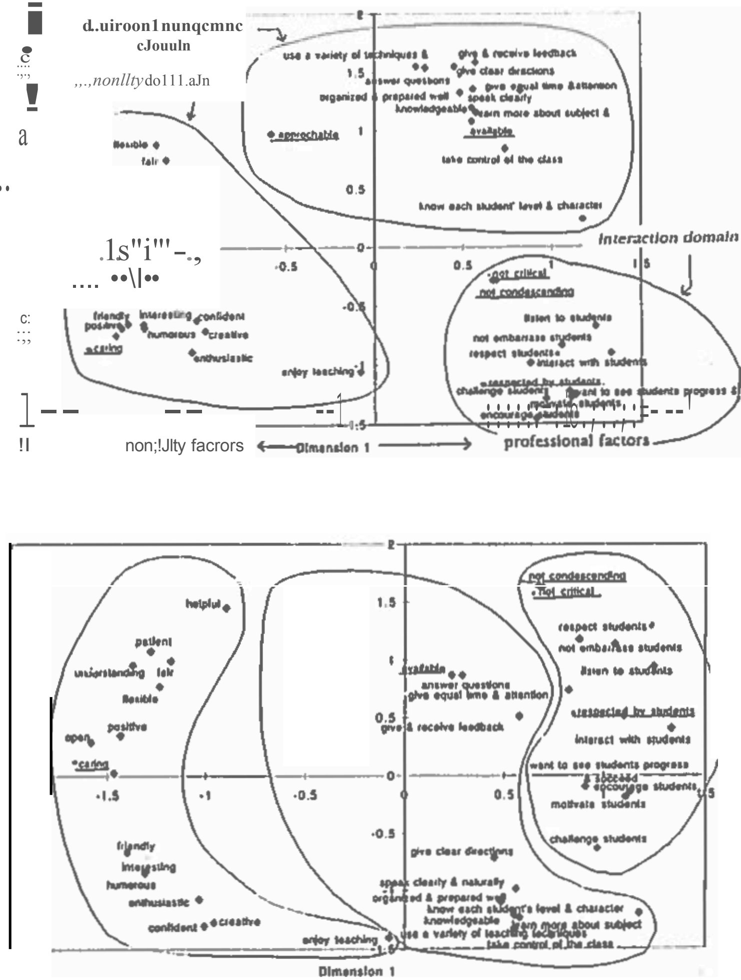

figure 1. American maps.

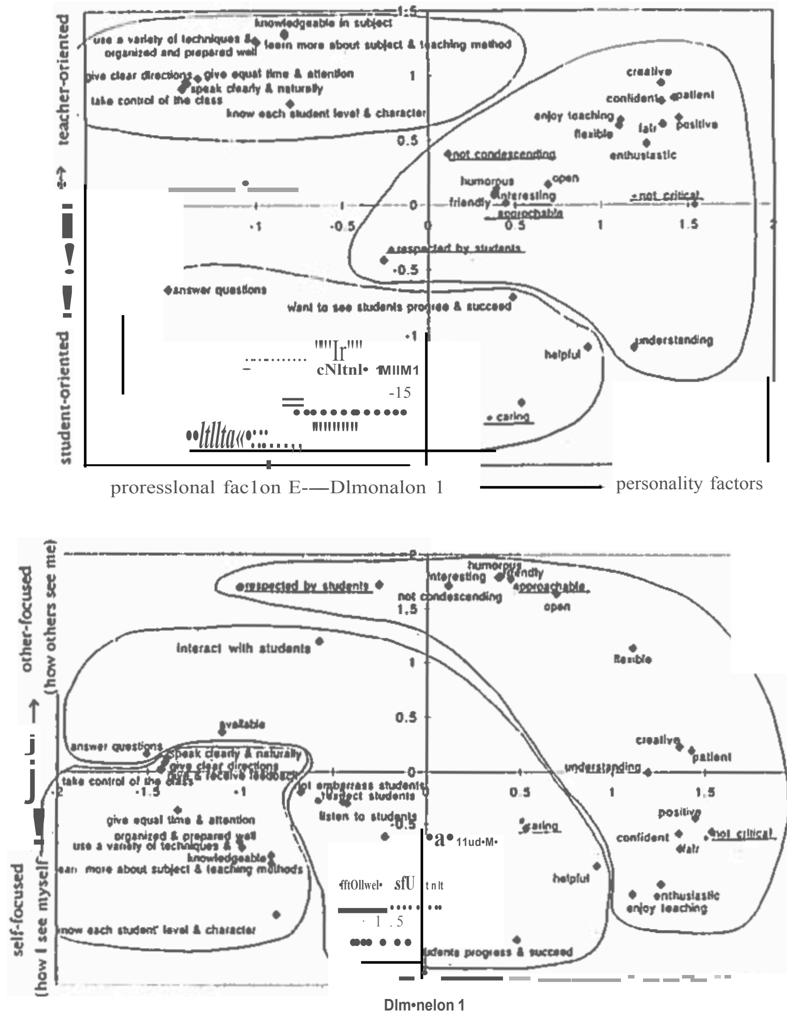

Figure 2. Japanese maps.

Results

The American maps (Figure 1) were produced by 96 American studenls and the Japanese maps (Figure 2) were produced by 2S Japanese subjects (12 teachers and 11 students). Both the American and Japanese maps bad three dimensions. That is, each group used the same number of criteria in sorting the descriptions. Similarly, the results of the cluster analysis showed that each group sorted the descriptions into the same three categories: personality, interaction, and classroom management domains. The MOS procedure uses space to represent the subjects' judgments of similarity. The more often people sorted any two words together, the closer they appeared within a map's space. For example, the item "interesting" was very close to the item "humorous" in the personality domain in Figure 1 because many of the participants sorted these two cards into the same pile.

Although both sets of maps had the same number of dimensions and categories, the represented meanings of the dimensions and the categories were quite different. The Americans sorted "approachable" and "available" into the management domain, whereas the Japanese considered "approachable" as a personality trait, and "available" as an interactional matter. On the other hand, the Americans put "caring" into the personal trait category while the Japanese regarded it as one of the concepts related to interaction. It would seem that the Japanese subjects tended lo consider caring as an important interpersonal *skill,* while the American subjects tended to consider it more as an individual personality *trait.*

In addition, the Americans sorted "not critical" and "not condescending• into the interactional category, whereas Japanese sorted these words into the personality domain. It seems that Americans felt that being too critical or too condescending should be avoided because of their effect on the interaction, while the Japanese subjects saw these as undesirable personality traits in their own right. •Respected by students" was also classified differently by the two groups of subjects. Again, the Americans classified it as being related to interactional issues, while the Japanese classified it as being related to personality. This may sugi:est that the American subjects believed that "respect• is

something that you have to cam through skilled interaction, whereas the Japanese subjects believed it is as a result of who you are socially.

Besides the content differences, the dimensions for each map also appeared to be slightly different. Both American and Japanese sets of maps had •personality factors vs. professional factors• as dimension 1. However, for dimension 2, the American maps appeared •structured teaching style vs. interactiooal teaching style,• whereas the Japanese maps displayed •teacher-oriented vs. student-oriented.• Similarly, the last dimension for the Americans was •responsive vs. proactive," whereas for Japanese the final dimension was •other (how others see me) vs. self (how I see myself).• Both of these dimensions may reflect differences in cultural orientation, whereas Americans emphasized the importance of interactional issues, Japanese subjects emphasized issues which reflected the importance of social roles. This would be consistent with the Socratic vs. Confucian educational values of each society.

Conclusion

MOS and hierarchical cluster analyses showed some similarities and differences in the judgment criteria of American and Japanese participants. Although there were some similarities, there were also some important differences in expectations. Some of the differences seeme.d to be culturally rooted and language teachers might be aware of these as potential problems in the classroom. As a follow-up, I plan to interview the subjects about their interpretations of the maps. In addition, some other variables such as age, gender, living experience in Japan or the U.S., or school differences will also be examined.

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BOOK REVIEWS

The Cambridge Encyclopedia of the English Language. David Crystal. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995. Pp. vii + 489. $49.95.

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Marjorie Terdal is Associate Professor in the Department of Applied Linguistics at Portland State University. Her research/teaching interests include ESL/EFL teaching methods, second language acquisition, and evaluation.

In this book, David Crystal carefully examines the history, structure, aod varieties of the English language as it is used throughout the world. Clearly written and beautifully illustrated, this volume is without doubt a valuable resource for libraries, professional language educators, and anyone interested in knowing more about the English language.

The book is divided into six parts, each covering a different aspect of the study of English as a language: beainnina with a fairly comprehensive account of the history of English; then discussing vocabulary, grammar, spoken and written systems of English, and varieties of English; and concluding with a brief section on learning about English. Each part is further divided into chapters with clearly marked subheadings, providing a useful tool for readers seeking particular information on a specific area.

Although Crystal is British, a former professor of linguistics at the University of Reading, this book will appeal to American readers as well as British. Many of the illustrations and references are American. There is a concerted effort to acknowledge the wide range in the use of English around the world. In fact the chapter on World English is the most comprehensive I have seen outside of publications devoted exclusively to the topic. By including a chapter on World English, Crystal acknowledges the importance of English as both an international and an intranational language and the validity of different varieties of English.

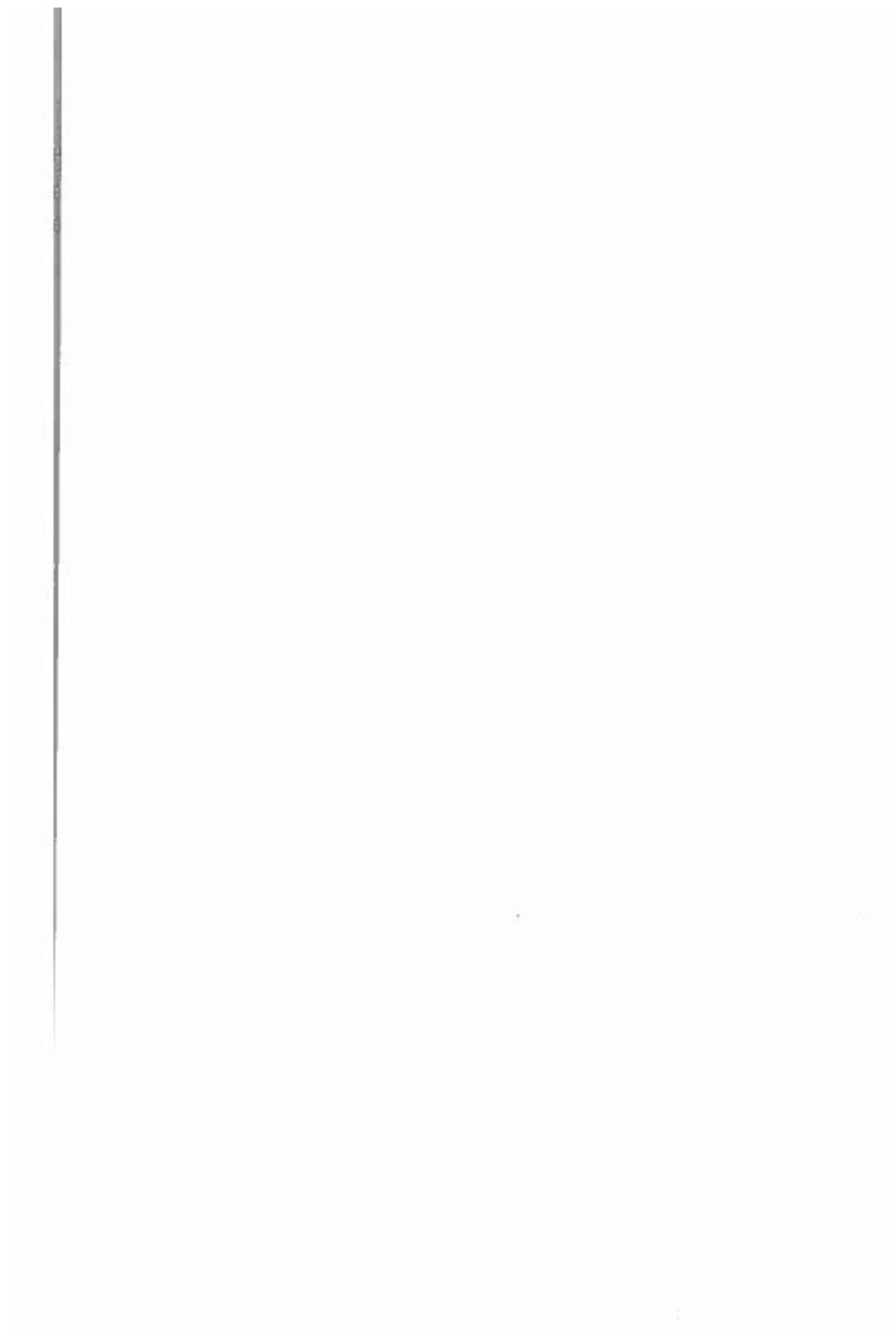
As one would expect in an encyclopedia covering such a vast area, many topics are covered quite briefly, such as the two pages on gender variation or the two pages on language disability. But the last chapter does include four pages on corpus linguistics, a fairly recent way of compiling large collections of written or spoken data in order to analy?.e language more systematically.

Throughout the book, written text summarizing key concepts and issues is interspersed with photographs, drawings, quotations from other sources, and numerous tables. ORTESOL authors Jim Nattinger and Jan DeCarrico are cited at length in two chapters for their work on lexical phrases. Of interest to the layperson is a list of nearly 200 equivalent lexical items in British and American English, and another

list of the top 10 first names for girls and boys in both England and the USA from the 1700s to the mid-1980s. One page in the chapter on the sound system includes a colorful photograph of cereal boxes to illustrate the use of sound associations in advertising. On the next page are samples of poetry by and for children and a cartoon from James Thurber, all illustrating the appreciation of the sound symbolic power of words. The same chapter includes a more academic discussion, with diagrams showing how English consonants and vowels are articulated.

Appendices include a glossary with more than 1,000 linguistic terms briefly defined, ranging from acronym and affix to voiceless and mro article; a list of abbreviations such as EAP (English for Academic Purposes) and phonetic symbols; a bibliography of all the references cited in the text as well as suggestions for further reading; addresses of journals and societies, including TESOL and IATEFL; and an index of authors and topics.

This would be a superb reference book for school libraries, ESL offices, and classrooms for teachers and students to consult. It would also be a beautiful coffee-table book to share with visitors who ask what you do when you say you are a linguist or a teacher of English to speakers of other languages.



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Talking Shop: A Curriculum Sourcebook for Participatory Adult ESL. Andrea Nash, Ann Carson, Madeline Rhum, Loren McGrail, and Rosario Gomez Sanford. McHenry, IL: Delta Systems, Inc., 1992. Pp. 70. $10.50.

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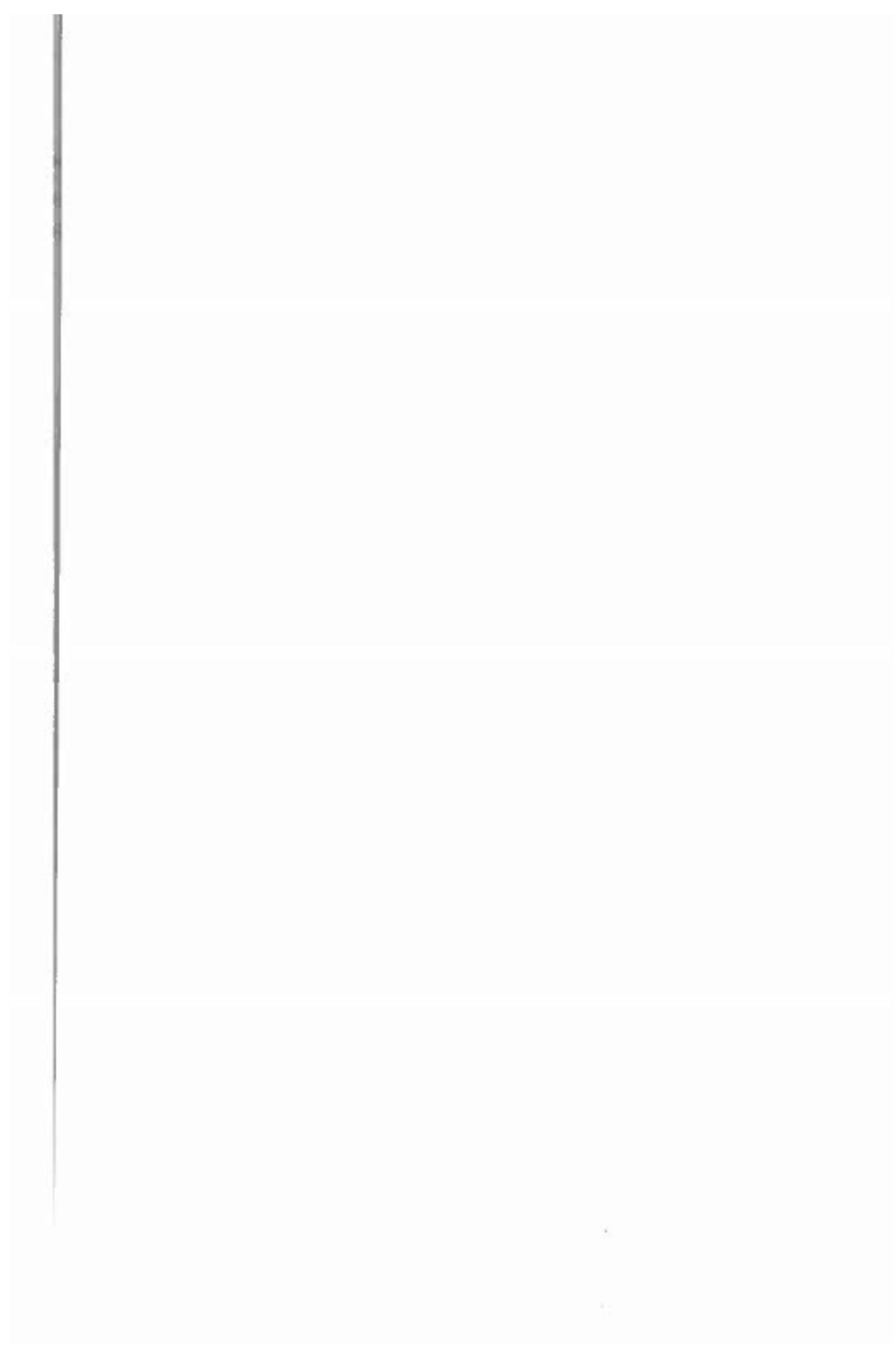
Vidya Rangachari is a graduate student in the TESOL program at Portland State University. Her interests include devising specific tasks for non-native speaker/non-native speaker interaction that facilitate their second language acquisition.

Tal/ci11g Shop is a book that *does* not subscribe to the notion that learners should ho excluded from the shaping of the curriculum. Written in a simple and direct style, this particular sourcebook delineates the collaborative efforts of a group of teachers involved in community-based adult education programs in the Boston area. Broadly classified under four major categories, each category in the book brings to light the participatory approach that is an integral component of the program. The students and the teachers actively participate in the process of creating a curriculum that is of considerable relevance to the learners. The language learners themselves are basically immigrants and refugees who may not share a native language but have significant experiences and issues in common.

The first unit of the book focuses on the description of emotions and feelings in English, through the use of photographs. The second unit enumerates the different types of discrimination that immigrants encounter on a regular basis, due to their race, gender, and socio-economic status. The next major section deals with literacy issues within the family and opens up avenues for integrating the needs of both the parents and the children involved in the dynamic process of learning a language. The final unit provides useful suggestions on ways to incorporate the native language (if it is shared by all the students) in the L2 classroom and also emphasizes the advantages of modifying the traditional roles of teacher and learner.

By advocating the use of language as a vehicle for social uplift and reform, the authors reveal their strong belief in the Freirian approach to learning. The problems and concerns of the students are not relegated to the background once they enter the classroom; instead, the issues are brought to the forefront by being debated and discussed in the 1..2. The three-pronged Freirian approach of Problem-Posing, comprising *listeni11g. dialogue, and action,* is implemented regularly for the benefit of the students. Since the teachers usually have no prior awareness of the' topics to be discussed, their course syllabi evolve along the way. Such an approach does not translate into a lack of objectives and goals for the language classroom; it merely serves as an effective way to teach the different skills by guaranteeing a greater degree of personal involvement on the part of the learners.

This sourcebook may not appeal to those ESL teachers who do not favor using the students' native languages in class. However, according to the authors, learners frequently display a propensity to take more risks in English "because they know that, if they get stuck, they can still express themselves in their own tonpe" (p. 47). Also, the extent of dedication and the type of time commitment involved in the successful implementation of such a program may be a major deterrent in itself. But for those teachers who are willing to invest time and effort to further the cause of adult ESL literacy, this book offers a wealth of innovative ideas and useful information.



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Appropriate Methodology and Social Context. Adrian Holliday. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994. Pp. 237. $16.95.

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As ESL professionals we may be teaching a group of Asian immigrants in a community college in the United States, consulting in a teacher training program in Sri Lanka, or perhaps designing curriculum at a university in Japan. The mission is ostensibly the sa: teaching English to students whose first language is not English. However, the contexts-the students, the classrooms, the program goals, the cultures--are quite different. How docs one make a decision about what is appropriate? What is an appropriate methodology, an appropriate classroom exercise, or an appropriate text?

Holliday's book, *Appropriate Methodology and Social Context,* may be a place to start looking for answers. He argues for the need to look beyond SLA research and discourso analysis to the socio-political contexts in which English is being taught in order to make principled decisions about language teaching. This social context includes the national culture, for example, bow Saudi Arabian or Chinese culture might affect student behavior in the classroom. But more important and less frequently discussed are the broader macro-cultural influences of the ESL profession itself and academia in general. It is these influences, powerful and pervasive, that have convinced Holliday of the need for a systematic methodology that guides teachers, program planners, textbook writers, and teacher trainers to question, observe, reflect, and adapt their approaches to English language education.

Holliday describes the two main cultures of the ESL profession: the BANA culture (Britain, Australiasia, and North American) and the TBSEP culture (Tertiary, Secondary, Primary) of the rest of the world. The DANA language programs tend to be private, even if affiliated with universities, have a functional orientation understood by both student and teacher in terms of why students are studying English, and have small class siz.cs. In contrast, TBSEP language programs tend to be part of wider, *public* educational systems, have a subject matter orientation in much the same way as, for example, history or biology, and often have very large class sii.es. It is the BANA culture that is producing the methodology, research, teacher training models, and curriculum and the TBSEP culture that is the recipient of this *technology transfer*. Not only does an asymmetrical power relationship exist, which creates its own set of problems, but tho ethnocentric assumptions about language learning and teaching clash as they meet up

against the assumptions of the other culture. Unfortunately, because of the power imbalance, the recipients in the TESEP culture often feel inadequate as methods and curriculum do not work, while the experts from BANA culture often think in terms of trying to overcome this resistance.

A related macro-culturai influence is that of academia in general. ESL, a relatively new field, leans toward an *lntegrationlst* paradigm of education in which subject boundaries tend to be blurred, pedagogy is skills based, discovery oriented and collaborative, expertise is directed at pedagogic and classroom management skills, and work relationships are horizontal. This paradigm most closely fits elementary and secondary school education, at least here in the United States. However, in the academic settings of the TESEP culture, which lean toward a *collectlonist* paradigm, subject areas tend to be clearly defined, pedagogy is didactic and content based, expertise is based on mastery of subject matter, and relationships are vertical. Many of us in the profession have felt the tension between these two paradigms in our own culture as the ESL field tries to assert itself professionally on university campuses only to find that ESL's *lntegrationist* orientation is perceived as lower status by the *collectionist* university culture. It is not difficult to extrapolate from this tension a much greater difficulty as the ESL paradigm from the BANA culture tries to assert itself overseas.

One of the current greatest sources of conflict arises with the popularity of the communicative approach, that is, its popularity in the BANA culture. Holliday does some rather interesting intellectual maneuvering in this area as he admits to his own cultural biases and asserts that the communicative approach does in fact have the greatest builtin flexibility and potential to be culturally sensitive. He argues that there are two versions of the approach. There is a •weak" version in which classroom activities are prescribed as focusing on oral production, using pair work or group work, allowing only English in the classroom, and being learner-centered. This he does not perceive as easily transferrable to other cultures nor necessarily desirable. There is also a •strong• version in which the abilities and expectations of those participating in the learning process are respected; their needs and realities are met. Communication can occur between the student

and written discourse, students can work as individuals or in small groups, mother tongue can and should be used to help students understand what is happening, and the process can be seen as •learning-centered.• This redefinition of the communicative approach makes it acceptable to Holliday as a starting point and then requires the systematic methodology of inquiry and adaptation referred to earlier in order to make it culturally sensitive.

The methodology Holliday argues for is echnographic action research. We know action research to be what a teacher can do in her own classroom by asking questions, making observations, interpreting results, and then taking action to modify the activity, curriculum, or goals. The research is qualitative as opposed to quantitative and conducted by the practitioner in the classroom rather than by the researcher in a moro controlled setting. Holliday adds the descriptor, ethnographic, borrowed originally from the. field of anthropology, because the research he is advocating requires asking questions about culture. His methodology, which he outlines only briefly, includes observing not only student reactions but also reactions of the wider academic community and society. All cultural reactions become input for making decisions about what is most appropriate for the educational setting. He cites numerous case studies from all over the world of curriculum projects, teacher training workshops, and classroom teaching efforts, which illustrate where successes and failures can in part be attributed to adherence or resistance to this kind of research. Holliday recognizes a final irony in his proposal for ethnographic action research. This irony is that it is a BANA conception and is generally not acceptable as a research technique in the TESEP academic culture which prizes quantitative research with more prescribed procedures.

So, does this book provide us with the answers to the questions we posed before we read the book? Yes and no. We can say yea because it certainly stimulates us to think about important social and political issues in our field. And it provides a public forum for some of our more private musings: a sense of a wrongness of one pervasive methodology which does not seem *suitable* in many contexts; a need to reconcile the feeling that the spread of English is a form of imperialism with the acknowledgment that as the language of science, medicine, and technology it needs to be learned; and a suspicion that the *field* of ESL

may need to look outside of itself for answers even if that makes its boundaries blurrier. We can say no because we are left with a sense of the *observer's paradox* that as a member of a culture we can never quite escape the influences that culture has on our powers of observations, our methods for making decisions, and our final sense of what appropriateness really is.

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INFORMATION FOR CONTRIBUTORS

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The ORTESOL Journal, a professional, refereed publication, encourages submission of previously unpublished articles on topics of significance to individuals concerned with the teaching of English as a se.cond or foreign language, especially in elementary and secondary schools, and in higher education, adult education, and bilingual education. As a publication which represents a variety of cross-disciplinary interests, both theoretical and practical, the *Journal* invites manuscripts on a wide range of topics, especially in the following areas:

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