

ELT-36

ESP in the Classroom: Practice and Evaluation

Milestones in ELT

Milestones in ELT

The British Council was established in 1934 and one of our main aims has always been to promote a wider knowledge of the English language. Over the years we have issued many important publications that have set the agenda for ELT professionals, often in partnership with other organisations and institutions.

As part of our 75th anniversary celebrations, we re-launched a selection of these publications online, and more have now been added in connection with our 80th anniversary. Many of the messages and ideas are just as relevant today as they were when first published. We believe they are also useful historical sources through which colleagues can see how our profession has developed over the years.

ESP in the Classroom: Practice and Evaluation

The papers in this 1988 volume emerged from the International Conference on English for Specific Purposes, Colombo, Sri Lanka, 1–5 April 1985. An overall conference theme was how to create links between English teaching and the world of work. In addition, papers address a wide range of topics relating to the future of and varieties of English; course and materials design; teaching methodology; testing; and administration. The first contributor in the opening 'Viewpoints' section is the science fiction author, Arthur C Clarke, who presciently writes about the coming future of online communications and 'data banks', and advantages of being able to read in English, *the* world language. In contrast, Braj B Kachru issues a call for teaching the pragmatics of world Englishes, and for 'Western' teaching methodologies to be treated with scepticism.

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ESP in the Classroom: Practice and Evaluation

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ESP in the Classroom: Practice and Evaluation

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Introduction

These papers emerge from the International Conference on English for Specific Purposes, Colombo, Sri Lanka, April 1–5 1985. The Conference grew out of a successful collaboration in ESP project work on a nationwide basis in Sri Lanka between the Ministry of Higher Education's ESP Unit and the Asia Foundation embracing English in technical education and the Universities. Specific concerns we hoped the Conference would explore included the role of ESP in EFL situations where English, though not a medium of education, is becoming increasingly important as an international language for the world of work; ways of strengthening links between employers and national language training programmes so that specific and national needs can be better attained through productive relationships; and ways of making ESP in the classroom, given recognised practical constraints, more real-work related, more interesting, more communicative, more effective, and better tested.

The target audience for the Conference was Sri Lankan tertiary education English teaching staff, but representatives from nearly all key ELT institutions in Sri Lanka attended, together with representatives from the world of work and invited international guests. Priority was given to ensuring that the world of work representatives included senior personnel from both public and private sectors, with national and international perspectives, and their inputs were carefully structured into the programme through presentations, review panels, and workshops.

With the task of looking at all themes in a practical work-related way, certain approaches to ESP teaching received repeated mention by Conference contributors, who wanted materials to be more interesting and based on real life activities, and topics not necessarily to be too discipline-related. It was felt strongly that methodologies — and materials — needed to be creative and problem-solving in nature; and attention was drawn to the significance of socio-cultural factors affecting learners for ESP programme design and implementation.

The Conference began by presenting several state-of-the-art and forward-looking viewpoints. Dr. Arthur C. Clarke, the eminent scientist and author, noted in his keynote address that although spoken English might become less important in the future as a result of

developments in communications networks and computerised data banks, because the very coding of these data banks was likely to be in English this alone could determine the linguistic pattern of the next century. Braj Kachru then drew attention to the importance, in the context of the rapid expansion of English as an international and intranational link language, of studying the pragmatic successes or failures of institutionalised non-native varieties of English as these become ever more widespread and vigorous, and susceptible to research in their own right, not only for linguistic but also for sociocultural, psychological and educational issues. A. T. Dharmapriya, reviewing English in Sri Lankan tertiary education, highlighted the need for increased co-ordination in ELT/ESP programme design and research, and stressed the positive and constructive collaboration now taking place between educators and the world of work in this context.

The Conference then addressed specific themes. Peter Strevens, in his paper on the Learner and Teacher of ESP, emphasised the correct identification of language needs for ESP learners, spoke of increased professionalism for the teacher, and pointed out that the teaching of ESP could be seen positively as a professional challenge requiring flexible attitudes, approaches and added effort. On the same theme Esther Ramani showed how a conceptualisation of the learner which focused not only on the perceptions of the target learner group but also on those of the professional community of which they would ultimately form part led to a user-based sociocultural approach to course design and methodology. Dick Chamberlain then urged that recognition by ESP teachers of their learners' essentially human characteristics, such as creativity, problem solving habits, and the need to relate to others, could help guide them towards the full development of potential in making ESP courses and teaching more interesting and enjoyable.

Turning to Methodology, and continuing with the overall Conference theme of forging close links with the world of work, Thomas Huckin suggested that ESP courses should take the form of team taught and team designed case studies, with a focus on developing varied problem solving attitudes necessary for learners once established and working in their professions. This practical approach to course design and classroom methodology was underscored by Tom Hutchinson, who stressed the importance of recognising language learning both as an active thinking decision-making process and a powerful emotional experience. Alan Mountford then put his own question mark on conventional ESP course design by asking for more humanistic ESP materials based on topics of real-life general interest to students, with a task-based activity oriented methodology.

Commenting on Testing and its Administration in ESP, J. Charles Alderson noted the present trend towards performance testing with test tasks which are closely related to real work tasks, and urged practitioners to take testing much more seriously in the light of increasing evidence of the powerful influence tests have on learners

and learning. Ian Pearson, analysing the washback effects of testing, and the narrowing distinctions between teaching and testing, pointed to the increasing potential use of selected communicative language learning activities in the classroom as interesting test items in themselves, with such use reinforcing both communicative language teaching and testing. On ESP programme administration in general, Christine Tan described how the English Language Centre of a large Singapore Polytechnic achieved its status, negotiated organisational matters with management, related to the world of work, and implemented its own staff development programme.

With reference to materials production and use in ESP, Lakshmie Cumararatunge first showed, in her case study, some of the difficulties in conducting a practical needs analysis outside the country and revealed, in tune with affective issues previously raised, sociocultural and job-related facts important for syllabus and materials design. Robert Baumgardner and Ray Tongue, in a dissection of authentic Sri Lankan newspaper materials, examined ways in which local varieties of English can help in training towards internationally acceptable standards of written English, thus providing an example of the research into institutionalised non-native varieties mentioned earlier by Kachru. Finally Baumgardner, Chamberlain, Staley and Dharmapriya exemplified many of the points made during the Conference in their EST case study. Derived from a large scale national needs analysis for student engineers, the course philosophy led to a programme which called for learners to interact through a series of creative problem solving decision-making activities balancing needs and wants with the use of materials designed to catch interest and provide a challenge.

Thanks must be expressed to the sponsors who made the Conference possible: the British Council, the Asia Foundation, the Sri Lanka Foundation Institute, the Sri Lanka Ministry of Higher Education and University Grants Commission, and the British Overseas Development Administration; and to the very many contributors in workshops and panels whose participation enriched the proceedings so greatly; and finally to Mr Ray Tongue, who so generously and diligently helped proofread the papers in the present volume.

Dick Chamberlain
Robert J. Baumgardner

Viewpoints

The role of English in the 21st century

Arthur C. Clarke

I don't think that we English can take much credit for the fact that our language has become the chief medium of international communication. It merely proves that we were the world's most successful pirates, and beat out all the others. It's pure luck that we aren't speaking French, Spanish or Dutch right now. It's very bad luck that we aren't all speaking Latin, but you can blame Luther and Henry VIII for that.

I'm not quite sure whether it's good or bad luck that our biggest colony, after it threw us out, stuck to English — more or less — as its official language. Though even so it's now rapidly switching to Spanish in some of its major cities, like Miami and New York . . .

However — and I feel rather sad about this — spoken English may become less and less important in the future, with the explosive development of communications networks and computerised data banks. Well before the 21st century — only 15 years away — the information revolution made possible by the ubiquitous microchip will have transformed our lives. Already it is possible for anyone sitting at a video display unit to gain access to gigantic electronic libraries, and to request automatic searches for any specific subject.

The other day I came across the case of a scholar who'd spent his entire working life prowling along the dusty shelves of the British Museum Library, digging out all the references to some obscure subject like Attila the Hun's laundry lists, or Gladstone's winning poker hands. When the electronic index was available, the search was repeated. In fifteen minutes, the computer had located twice as many references as the poor scholar had found in his whole lifetime.

There are now thousands of electronic data banks in existence, covering every field of human knowledge. Indeed it's difficult to see how some professions — like Law and Medicine — can possibly continue to function without computerised storage and search facilities. I've not seen the statistics, but I strongly suspect that most of the megabytes entered every day — maybe every hour — will be coded in English. This alone may determine the linguistic pattern of the next century.

At the moment, these data banks are only accessible through the telephone system, and hence at considerable expense when intercontinental connections are involved. But the cost will decrease rapidly as global communications develop; anyone in the United States can

already operate independently of the telephone system, using only a computer and a satellite dish about two feet in diameter.

For many years I've been talking about electronic educators — the successors to the pocket calculator. The first primitive versions are now coming on the market, and these new instrumentalities — for want of a better word — do not concern only specialists. Soon everyone will be using these for such humdrum activities as looking up flight schedules and movie times, announcing births, weddings and deaths, checking facts from encyclopaedias and *Who's Who* (which will always be up to date) and exchanging instantaneous electronic mail. This sort of thing will require the ability to read English, and to type — or rather keystroke — it accurately. Spoken English may become less essential.

But it will always be highly desirable, and let me close with a story from the early days of the telephone. It's a famous legend in the prehistory of the Bell System.

A linesman had just installed the first telephone ever seen in a remote area of New Jersey, and when he'd finished, a farmer came up to him and asked anxiously, 'Can I talk through it in Italian?'

The linesman looked at him with annoyance. 'You should have asked me that before', he said. 'Now I'll have to put in a third wire — and it will cost you another fifty bucks'.

I think the lesson is obvious. If you know English, you won't have to pay extra.

ESP and Non-Native Varieties of English: Toward a Shift in Paradigm

Braj B. Kachru

This paper focuses on the non-native institutionalized varieties of English and their relevance to the methodology and materials on ESP. The presuppositions of current ESP texts and contexts are critically discussed from the perspective of the localized uses of non-native Englishes and their registers. An attempt is made to answer questions concerning issues such as: acceptability, norms and functions of non-native varieties (e.g. Sri Lankan, Singaporean, Indian); pragmatic success and ESP; ESP and localized 'verbal repertoire'; the use of nativized features of English in the instructional materials. A number of suggestions are given for shifting the current paradigms of ELT/ESP. It is claimed that the present research on pragmatic success and failure of ESP has ignored important context-bound and code-bound variables of the institutionalized varieties. Some fresh data is provided to support the above claims. The paper also raises several linguistic, methodological and pedagogical issues.

Introduction

At the outset this paper warrants a cautionary note concerning the issues I propose to address. I shall essentially focus on those issues related to English for Specific Purposes (ESP, see Strevens 1977a) which concern us, for instance, as Sri Lankan, Indian, Nigerian, and Singaporean users of institutionalized non-native varieties of English. I shall, therefore, approach the concept of ESP from a perspective which to my knowledge has so far been ignored.

However, I shall begin with a digression concerning my understanding of the concept ESP. In ESP texts generally three basic assumptions are made. These relate to the appropriateness of language corpus; formal organization of the corpus at various linguistic levels: phonetic, phonological (e.g. Flood and West 1952); lexical (e.g. Anthony 1976; Cowan 1974; Flood 1957), syntactic (e.g. Dubois 1982; Huddleston 1971; Lackstrom *et al.* 1972), and discorsal (e.g. Widdowson 1971); and the relationship between the formal features and the functions of the texts in terms of the profession, participants, and so on. Thus we have courses on English for academic purposes, English for science and technology,

English for business and economics, and English for vocational purposes, to give a few examples. The 'specific purpose' of such materials, we are told, determines the type of texts, the organization of the features of the text and contextual appropriateness of the texts. The list of such text materials is overwhelming.¹ One can hardly quibble about the pedagogical usefulness of this concept. However, pedagogical acceptance does not mean that all the descriptive and methodological (and if I might add, functional) issues have been answered. These issues are being discussed and questioned in the fast-growing literature on ESP. Robinson (1980), for example, presents 'the present position' of the field, and in a provoking paper Swales (1985) raises some basic ethnomethodological and attitudinal questions. However, the conceptual (I would like to avoid the term 'theoretical' here) and applied research on ESP seems to have avoided addressing issues vital for understanding the uses of English across cultures (Swales (1985) is an exception). And even in studies which present 'common sense about ESP' (e.g. Brumfit 1977), the vital methodological and pragmatic issues concerning the non-native varieties of English and their relevance to ESP are left untouched.

ESP: some presuppositions

In available literature on ESP, and in resultant pedagogical materials from the Western countries, two basic presuppositions are made. These concern the text and the uses and users of the text. These presuppositions determine the conceptualization of the field of investigation and its methodology in several ways: the selected texts are typically those written by native speakers of English. In terms of the users of the texts, it is believed that the interlocutors are primarily of two types: native speaker-native speaker, and native speaker-non-native speaker. The typology of the ESP contexts is highly restricted. It includes, for example:

- native interactional contexts,
- native register-types,
- native speech functions, and
- native pragmatic settings.

Finally, in terms of the language use, there is a certain attitude about the varieties and subvarieties of English, specifically about the non-native varieties, institutionalized or non-institutionalized. In this paper, I propose to bring the dimension of the institutionalized varieties to the deliberations on this topic.

Non-native varieties and ESP

What do I mean by the institutionalized non-native varieties of English? In several earlier studies² a distinction has been made between the institutionalized and performance varieties of English.

This distinction becomes clearer if the diffusion of English is viewed in terms of three Concentric Circles: the inner circle, the outer (or extended) circle, and the expanding circle. The first circle represents the native varieties (e.g. American, British, New Zealand); the second circle represents the institutionalized varieties (e.g. Indian English, Nigerian English, Philippino English, Sri Lankan English); and the last circle represents the non-native performance varieties (e.g. Egyptian English, Japanese English).

By introducing the non-native Englishes into this discussion one is opening, as it were, a Pandora's box. A number of daunting questions must be answered before the non-native Englishes are recognized as areas of research for ESP, and before suggestions are made for appropriate texts for teaching. As an initial step, one has to answer questions such as the following.

First, the ontological question: What is the status of the institutionalized varieties and how acceptable are these varieties as 'standard' varieties of English? Second, the attitudinal question: Have the localized varieties been recognized in the language policies of non-native English-using countries? Third, a functional question: What is the role of such varieties as codes of communication? Fourth, a pedagogical question: What, if any, are current uses of such varieties in the instructional materials for the teaching of English? Fifth (a question concerning linguistic creativity: What do we mean by localized linguistic innovations, and what criteria may be used for determining whether such innovations should actually be incorporated in the pedagogical texts? The sixth question takes us to the contextualization of such innovations: What are the pragmatics of such innovations, and what are the functions of such innovations in various socio-cultural contexts? And, finally, an often asked vital question with wider attitudinal and linguistic implications: What will happen to English as an international language if divergent varieties are accepted, encouraged, and recognized as viable models for teaching?³ I shall attempt to address these questions in turn.

Acceptability and non-native Englishes

The term 'acceptability' is very elusive; it does not always entail a formal criterion for language acceptance or use. If used in a formal sense, the term conveys the meaning of correctness according to a certain standard, that of a dictionary, of a manual or of a prescriptive grammar. But that is not the only use of this term. In its general use, it expresses a language attitude, and implies various types of appropriateness.

With respect to innovations in non-native Englishes, the attitudinal response often determines the acceptance by the users of each variety in the Inner Circle. Without pondering on any formal or functional reasons for non-native innovations, the reaction often is 'as a native

speaker I would not use this' (lexical item, construction or whatever).

This attitude is even shown toward some sub-varieties of native Englishes, for example toward Black English in the USA, or toward regional and some class-based varieties in Britain (see, e.g., relevant sections in Ferguson and Heath 1981, Trudgill 1984).

How is acceptability determined? The following seem to play an important part in determining acceptability: one's own attitude toward a variety; the perception of others toward one's variety, and attitudinally-determined functional allocations of a variety, (for example, the reactions toward the use of basilect in Singapore, bazaar or Babu English in India, and Nigerian pidgin in Nigeria.)⁴

Now, returning to the non-native varieties, the issue of 'acceptance' seems to have been divorced from the pragmatic and functional contexts. That English has localized uses, and English has interactional uses with (mostly) other non-native speakers, these two important facts of language use are not well-recognized. In my view this non-recognition of pragmatic context has created a serious gap between the researcher's concept of language use and linguistic behavior, and the language needs of the users of institutionalized varieties of English.

National language policies and non-native Englishes

The lack of pragmatism in methodology and the evangelical zeal of the specialists is not restricted to the 'outsiders' who are either indifferent to, or not familiar with, local situations (see Maley 1984). It is surprising that the national language policies and educational policies of the nations with institutionalized varieties of English have not, until recently, recognized the uses of English for intranational purposes. This pragmatic fact is not, therefore, reflected in language planning, teacher training, and curriculum design. The Anglophone nations (e.g. India, Kenya, Malaysia, Nigeria, Singapore, Sri Lanka) have, until very recently, adhered attitudinally to an external norm of English English. The nations which were under the American influence (e.g. the Philippines, Japan) have generally followed the educated American model.

But, having said this, one must add an important caveat here. The language policies and the actual language performance show a serious conflict. The perceived norm rarely matches the language behavior. In Sri Lanka, where traditionally the standard of English teaching was very high, certainly before 1950 — this preference for an imitation model of English English was questioned (see Passé 1947). During the post independence period, this view has been well articulated by Fernando (1977) and Kandiah (1981). Dissanayake in his several papers (particularly in Dissanayake and Nichter (forthcoming)), focuses on this question from a literary perspective.

It is encouraging, however, that recently in the minds of some educators this conflict between an endonormative and exonormative

model is being resolved, and the earlier 'linguistic insecurity' is now in less evidence (see Kachru, e.g. 1985:215–216). This shift toward the realization of actual language behavior is evident in the following ways: 1. the identification of a variety with regional modifiers such as Sri Lankan English, Indian English, Nigerian English, or Singaporean English without serious connotations of stigma; 2. the recognition of reasons for such identification in terms of national identity, educational realism, and localized functions of English; 3. the recognition of English in the language policy of a given country such as Sri Lanka or India as a 'link' language for intranational purposes.

Non-native Englishes as codes of communication

A functionally and pragmatically important aside is appropriate here. Whatever external (or even internal) attitudes are present about the institutionalized varieties, and whatever descriptive labels are used for them, in reality the localized varieties of English are actually used by most of the users of English in these nations. The segment of population that uses external models comprises such a small percentage of the total population that for our discussion we might as well ignore it. If I might take an extreme case, the administrative network of the Indian subcontinent has been held together by the users of various types of Babu English (Widdowson 1979), and in Nigeria by Nigerian Pidgin. The code of the elite has generally been the localized educated variety.

In the functional network, the localized varieties of Indian English or African English have developed typically local registers, for instance, for agriculture, for the legal system, and for the localized speech functions. This linguistic (and pragmatic) fact was recognized, for example, by Wilson over thirteen decades ago (Wilson 1855:i) concerning the use of what may be called ESP in agriculture in the Indian subcontinent. He observed

Ryot and Ryotwar, for instance, suggests more precise and positive notions in connection with the subject of the land revenue in the South of India, than would be conveyed by cultivator, or peasant, or agriculturist, or by an agreement for rent or revenue with the individual members of the agriculture classes.⁵

Three decades later, suggesting an 'Indian supplement to the English dictionary', Whitworth (1885:vii–viii) remarks:

The words of Indian origin will be by far the most numerous, as it is usual, when new objects and ideas are met with to call them by the names they already possess. But this is not always done, and no one can make much acquaintance with India without hearing of alienated and unalienated land, permanent and annual settlements, inferior and superior holders, twice-born classes, right-

hand and left-hand castes, village headmen and village accountants, governors and district officers; then references are frequently made to the solar race, the lunar race, the serpent race, even such words as 'month' and 'year' have different meanings in India and in England; and there are many names which, though their component parts are familiar English, yet express things unknown in England such as 'bell music', 'black buck', 'carpet snake', 'dancing girl', 'egg-plant', 'fire-temple', 'prayer-wheel', 'slave-king', 'sacred thread' . . .

Before I provide further examples of these registers and styles, let me go back to the question of localized 'verbal repertoire' in English, and the uses of such repertoire in the intranational contexts. The uses of English for intranational communication raises a host of complex issues which have generally been left unanswered in methodological literature on ESP. One can, for example, think of questions such as the following:

1. What is meant by communication, and the levels of communicability?
2. What determines pragmatic success and pragmatic failure of English in its international uses?
3. What role do the varieties within a variety play in local/national/regional communication?
4. What role does the context of situation play in communication, and what role should localized context-dependent innovations play in the pedagogical materials?
5. What accommodation does a native speaker of English have to make for participation in communication with those speech fellowships which use localized varieties of English?
6. What insights have we gained by research on intelligibility and comprehensibility concerning intranational and international uses of English?
7. What attitudinal and linguistic adjustments are desirable for effective teaching of localized varieties?

These questions may sound rather broad, but it seems to me that they are directly related to any serious discussion on ESP in the international context, particularly since they have been swept under the rug in the prolific literature that has been published on this topic during the last twenty years. Unfortunately, a large body of such publications is primarily motivated by commercial goals whose proponents have found it convenient not to encourage discussion of these more basic issues.

Pragmatic success and ESP

The underlying assumption for ESP is that, ideally, it contributes to maximum pragmatic success in the contexts of language use. It entails a hierarchy of encounter-types in which linguistic interaction has been

observed and described. The research (see Smith [forthcoming], particularly the chapter by Candlin) on what may be termed interactional aspects of language has as yet been given very limited attention.

In such research there still is no awareness of the non-native contexts in which varieties of English have been used for at least a century in distinctly localized encounter-types. The competence of such users of English varies from local educated varieties to a form of pidgin. Such localized interactional contexts also show an extensive use of 'mixing', and use of discourse types which presupposes bilingual or multilingual competence.⁶

The concepts situation, context, and attitudes are vital for understanding the issues and variables related to pragmatic failure or pragmatic success in the use of a variety of English as has been shown, e.g. in Chishimba (1983). In ESP-oriented research we find two problems: ethnocentrism in approach and neglect of intranational motivations for the uses of English. In functional terms, there is something wrong with such an approach. In the Outer Circle, the international roles of English are highly restricted: the domesticated (or localized) roles are more extensive. There is, of course, nothing wrong with high proficiency goals. But with such goals we unconsciously cultivate language attitudes which have psychological, social, and educational implications. And, in some cases, such goals take us away from linguistic and functional realism.

Pragmatic success, then, is determined by the context of encounter, and the participants in the encounter. We should, of course, expect maximal pragmatic success in 'survival registers' or 'survival ESP': e.g. seaspeak, aviation, diplomacy, and so on. In registers of law or medicine, we must investigate the localized strategies of lexicalization, mixing, switching, and lectal change.

This pragmatism and shift in the paradigm is well articulated in Swales (1985:223) who, like J. R. Firth, argues for 'local knowledge' and '... for renewal of connection with the textual environment, and for greater attention to the tasks that specialized environments require of their occupants'. He rightly feels, that 'we have given text too great a place in nature and believed a thick description of a text is the thickest description of them all'. The question is, in doing so, and by ignoring the 'conventions of conduct' and 'localized pragmatic needs', are we actually producing, to use Clifford Geertz' term, 'thin descriptions' which have less pragmatic validity?

The phenomenal spread of English, the diverse users of the language in world cultures, and the development of world Englishes make it imperative to view concepts like 'communicative competence', 'pragmatic success', and 'pragmatic failure' and ESP from a realistic perspective of current world uses of English. One has to consider several aspects in order to provide functional bases to such concepts. These aspects include, for example,

- (1) Variety specific ESP: The formal characteristics of ESP can be

distinguished in terms of their uses in the three Concentric Circles. The pragmatic success or failure in, for example, doctor/patient interaction, or teacher/student interaction is determined by the cultural background and linguistic repertoire of the participants. When we talk of legal English and the discoursal and other strategies associated with it, we seem to use an idealized notion of 'legal English'. In reality the situation is different. In South Asia, legal English has localized subvarieties which may be distinguished in terms of the hierarchy of courts and lawyers who practice in such courts, the supreme court, the high court, the lower courts, the district court, the moufusil court, and so on. At each level, a specific type of language is used with its characteristic lexicalization and other features. An idealized variety of legal English does not guarantee pragmatic success, nor does research on the legal English of the USA or the UK provide useful insights for understanding the legal Englishes of South Asia, South-east Asia, or West Africa.⁷

Let us consider the South Asian situation: South Asia gives us a repertoire of legal Englishes, which have distinct characteristics in the following respects:

- the level of the court,
- the type of legal document, and
- the participants in the legal interaction.

This concept does not apply only to legal English, but also to other ESP types (e.g. administration, banking, newspapers).

(2) Typology of ESP: A typology for ESP should take into consideration parameters such as the following:

1. What is the functional range of the ESP types with reference to intranational and international uses?
2. Who are the participants in the situations?:
 - (a) users of one variety and/or
 - (b) users of several varieties?
3. What is the language competence of the users on the cline of bilingualism?
4. What are the distinctive characteristics of the verbal repertoire for the participation in the interaction?:
 - (a) H(igh) varieties,
 - (b) L(ow) varieties,
 - (c) mixing of varieties,
 - (d) bi- or multi-dialectism or multilingualism?
5. How are the codes used in the interaction viewed by those who are 'outside' the speech fellowship, and by those who are 'within' the speech fellowship?
6. What formal features of the ESP must be learned by the members of the speech fellowships who are essentially 'outsiders'?

7. What are the implications of the formal innovations on the materials production and the curriculum?⁸

The repertoire of a specific ESP (e.g. legal English) clearly shows that the burden of pragmatic success and pragmatic failure does not rest only on the non-native learner; it rests on the native speakers of English, too. Particularly, those users who desire to establish successful communication with the users of other varieties, native or non-native.

If the international uses of English are viewed within this context, it has several consequences: theoretical, applied, methodological, and pedagogical. In theoretical terms, one has to reconsider the notion 'speech community' for English, as I have stated elsewhere (Kachru 1985). One has to view the world Englishes in terms of speech fellowships. The defining context and acceptance of linguistic innovations must be related to the pragmatic context of each speech fellowship. This is particularly important in the case of institutionalized varieties of English. The applied aspects include, for example, research on lexicography, discourse strategies, interactional sociolinguistics, and attitude studies.

The methodological aspect becomes important since one has to raise questions about the universal validity claimed for language teaching or language learning methods. The present tendency that the Western methods should be sold to the non-native users with an evangelical zeal is suspect (for a stimulating discussion, see Maley (1984) and Phillipson and Skutnabb-Kangas (1986)). It is particularly suspect since commercialism and ethnocentrism seem to determine such hard sell. What is more frustrating is that the survival rate of such 'methods' does not seem to be more than a decade. It is sad that often these methods are promoted without much familiarity with the intranational contexts in which the non-native varieties of English are actually used.

Finally, the pedagogical aspects. This takes us to the educational policies, teacher training programs, and language in the classroom, and language use out of the classroom. One can develop each category into a full paper. The above discussion is just to provide a bird's-eye view of the issues involved.

Let me now turn to two issues specifically related to one localized variety. First, the question of the use of nativized linguistic features in instructional materials, and second, the divergence of nativized varieties and the future of English as an international language. I shall discuss these in the two following sections.

Localized linguistic characteristics and instructional resources

I will interpret the term 'instructional resources' in a broader sense: both for pedagogical materials and other supplementary published resources to which a student may be exposed. At the lexical and collocational levels, let us consider the localized characteristics of ESP

in the caste system in intercommunal (Muslim vs. Hindu) interactions and in politics. Consider the following lexical sets:

Lexis related to caste

The lexical item 'caste' may be followed by basis, -brotherhood, -dinner, distinction, domination, -elders, -feast, -feeling, -following, -less, mark, -proud, -sanctity, -union, -vermin, -waif, -well. The lexical item 'caste' may be preceded by high, inter-, low-, lowest-, out-, professional-, sub-, upper-.

Note also the following modes of address and reference used in the context of caste: highborn, high caste, twice born, upper caste, casteless, low-caste, lower caste, untouchable.

Lexis related to local rituals

Rice eating ceremony, turmeric ceremony, naming ceremony, aroti-time, bath milk, car festival, shagan ceremony, brother-anointing ceremony, rain bringing ritual, vinayaka-festival.

The localized innovations at other levels have been illustrated in several studies. I will not elaborate on this point here due to the limitations of space. However, the localized innovations must be distinguished with reference to the cline of bilingualism and the sociocultural contexts of use as has been done, for instance, in the case of Singapore, Malaysia, India, and parts of Africa which use English.

In the case of Sri Lankan English, the need for such distinctions has been well illustrated in Kandiah (1981). Consider, for example, the illustrations given by him: sil (a Buddhist religious observance); asweddumize (a process used by farmers in paddy fields); basket woman (a woman whose behavior is rough); rice puller (an appetizer, eaten with rice). The items 'junction', 'under', 'is too much', 'put a telephone call', and 'put a catch to' are used with typically local meanings. The localized innovations, then, have a code related dimension and a context related dimension. These are two basic aspects which any research on ESP cannot neglect.

There is also the question of motivation. One distinguishing feature of the institutional varieties, as opposed to that of performance varieties, is that English is not used with an integrative motivation with the native speakers of English, but essentially with an instrumental motivation. The instructional materials clearly show such contextualization of English in the local sociocultural context.

However, a point which has not generally been well appreciated is that the integrative motivation is of a different type: the integration is not necessarily sought with the native users of English, but English is seen as a vehicle of integration within the sociopolitical context of the nation, or a wider region comprising several nations (e.g. South Asia, West Africa). In other words, English provides a link among the

culturally and linguistically diverse groups. This is clearly evident in Singapore, Nigeria, India, and other nations. English thus becomes a language of national integration, political awakening, and cultural unification, and the linguistic code is turned against the native speaker; a colonial language is nurtured and retained as a tool for emancipation, and more important for national resurgence. The native (localized) linguistic resources are additionally used for an approximation of localized discursual strategies of various types (see Kachru 1982a and 1983b); for lexicalization from local languages see Kachru (1983a); and for creative texts (e.g. short stories, poems) by local creative writers in English (see relevant sections in Bailey and Görlach 1982 and Kachru 1982b).

Localized varieties and English as an international language

I will indulge here in self-plagiarism and repeat some points which I have discussed in earlier papers. The question is: Does the recognition (and the use of) localized varieties of English necessarily mean that such recognition will have adverse effects on the international intelligibility of English? If that happens, the argument that English is an international (or universal) language is defeated.

The question has three aspects. First, the pragmatic aspect: We need international intelligibility for those users of English whose linguistic encounters entail international interaction and communication. The need for such communication is generally combined with adequate motivation for achieving intelligibility, comprehensibility, and pragmatic success. Those users of English whose functions do not entail such encounters need not, functionally speaking, aspire to proficiency in exonormative models. Equally important, native speakers of American or British English, who have extensive encounters with the users of a particular non-native variety should be encouraged to familiarize themselves with the characteristic features of the variety, and should show some awareness about its repertoire range. It is difficult to imagine an expatriate to be linguistically comfortable, for example, in Singapore without some familiarity with the basilect and its uses, interactional and creative. The same applies to the varieties of Indian English and Nigerian English.

The second aspect is that of implementation. I will not discuss this aspect here since this discussion forms part of several earlier studies, particularly Kachru (1985). However, one should point out that, unlike French, standardization and codification have very complex implications for English. Even if one recognizes the need for such international standards, one is at a loss to provide practical steps for such codification, other than the ones I have briefly discussed above in the context of acceptability.

The third aspect brings to the debate a variety of interrelated issues.

Let me consider some of these here. In most of the nations of South Asia or South-east Asia, English has a long tradition of use as a language of politics, education, administration, and literary creativity. The identity with the language is deep, and its functional range and depth is considerable (see Kachru 1982). It would be unnatural to expect that the language would not be 'shaped' and 'moulded' according to the local needs, and develop its variation due to the influence of local languages and literatures, culture, and uses. The result of such deep-rooted local functions is that the intranational uses have been institutionalized. Additionally, in regional writing in English, the nativization is consciously used for creative purposes, as has been shown in, for example, Chishimba (1983), Lowenberg (1984), Nelson (1984 and 1985), and Magura (1984).

The intranational roles show a cline in use and a large number of users seem to engage in constant lectal shift, involving acrolects, masolects, and basilects, depending on the participants in a linguistic interaction. Again, evidence of this is found in Singapore, Nigeria, the Philippines, and Sri Lanka, to give just four examples.

Toward a shift in paradigm

The pragmatics of world Englishes clearly show that in research on ESP, particularly for relevance in the Outer Circle, there is a need for a shift in the paradigm. There is also a need for change in the methodology and in the collection of appropriate empirical data. One also has to change the attitude toward the varieties of English and their users. What types of change can one suggest? The following are illustrative.

1. Recognition of the functional usefulness of the concept of verbal repertoire, and a description of such a repertoire with reference to its societal meaning;
2. Recognition of the levels of pragmatic failure due to the inappropriate selection of the code. The non-recognition of localized lectal range has already resulted in various types of problems in English using countries such as Singapore, Nigeria, and India;
3. Acceptance of localized innovations in ESP and the subvarieties within ESP (e.g. legal, administrative, advertising) as part of the pragmatic needs of the users;
4. Recognizing the creativity in regional literatures in English as an extension of the local literatures and of 'literatures in English'. Such recognition will make it easier to select local texts for instructional purposes.

This recognition is not desirable only for functional reasons. It is also vital for several psychological and sociological reasons. This attitudinal

change means accepting a hypothesis of code difference as opposed to one of code deficit. This is an important distinction since as teachers we are concerned with language-using human beings, and not merely with figures and percentages.

The last point brings in another dimension of non-native varieties of English which has traditionally not been considered as one of the concerns of ESP methodologists: the literary creativity in localized Englishes. Such contact literatures have certain textual and functional characteristics which set them apart as a body of writing in English. These texts need both linguistic and contextual explanations for a person who does not belong to the speech fellowship. Does this entail expanding the boundaries of ESP research? Perhaps it does. Contact literatures raise many theoretical and descriptive questions which are only recently being considered (see Kachru 1983b and 1986; Smith forthcoming; and Thumboo 1985). The writers of such texts are bilingual or multilingual, but not necessarily bi- or multi-cultural. They are using English in contexts which give it new linguistic and cultural identities (see Nelson 1985). In this non-native creative use of English a distinctive ESP has developed which is not identical to British, American, or Australian writing in English. Consider, for instance, the creative writing of Singapore writers, Kripal Singh, Arthur Yap, and Cathrine Lim, or Sri Lankan writer Punyakante Wijenaikē, or Indian writer Raja Rao.

In Kripal Singh's poem *Voices*, Arthur Yap's poem *2 mothers in HBD playground*, and Cathrine Lim's short stories *The Taximan* and *The Mother in Law's Curse* various linguistic devices are exploited to maximize pragmatic success in textual terms. *Voices* essentially uses mixing of codes, and Yap contextually 'legitimizes' the use of mixing and the strategies of basilect. The lexicalization and basilectal constructions nativizes the text beyond the scope of a reader not familiar with the linguistic reality of Singapore. Consider, for example, the following linguistic features: jamban ('toilet bowl' in Malay), toa soh ('drive in a car' in Hokkien), ah pah ('father' in Hokkien), what boy is he in the exam?, I scold like mad but what for, sit like don't want to get up, and so on. Lim provides convincing examples of code alteration appropriate to the functions and roles in Singapore.

The Sri Lankanness of Wijenaikē's English, as Dissanayake and Nichter (forthcoming) have shown, is expressed through various linguistic and cultural exponents; her 'food idioms', her 'hot/cold dichotomy' and her use of silence as a speech act, are potential means for conveying cultural and linguistic meaning. This meaning is missed if the text is divorced from the context in which it functions. We see the same stylistic experimentation in Raja Rao's novels *Kanthapura* and *The Serpent and the Rope* (see Parthasarathy (forthcoming), Kachru (1983b) and Dissanayake (1985)).

It is through such devices and experimentation that in non-native literatures the H(igh) variety and L(ow) varieties are used as resources

for creativity in English. There is, of course, a linguistic dilemma in this. If we evaluate such creativity in terms of the contexts and models of the Inner Circle, the innovations in the Outer Circle are considered 'deviant', therefore resulting in pragmatic failure. If we view such experimentation from the perspective of a Singaporean, Sri Lankan, and Indian creative writer, it is clearly an appropriate use of the stylistic devices, it maximizes pragmatic success.

What we need, then, is to extend the monolingual (traditional) stylistic norms of creativity in English, and to evaluate such Singaporean, Sri Lankan, and Indian texts with reference to new norms, and extended, linguistic, cultural, and interpretive contexts. In other words, recognize that functionally these non-native users of English have evolved a culturally and linguistically appropriate ESP.

Let me provide an illustration from English in advertising in Japan, which according to the three Concentric Circles belongs to the Expanding Circle of English. The pragmatic success of the Japanese innovations in this register must be seen within the context of Japanese attitudes to English, and their 'consuming passion' for English vocabulary (see *Asiaweek*, October 5, 1984:49). There is, therefore, a 'social meaning' in the following 'deviations' (innovations):

1. Kanebo cosmetics: 'for beautiful human life'
2. Tokyo Utility Company: 'my life, my gas'
3. Shinjuku Station Concourse: 'nice guy making'; 'multiple days autumn fair'; 'planning and creative'; 'let's communicate'.

Now, it is rightly said that 'to the English speaker they [vocabulary items] may be silly, childish, or annoying. Sometimes a double meaning makes them unintentionally funny. But the ubiquitous English of Japanese ads convey a feeling to a Japanese' (p. 49).

More important is the following observation concerning the psychological effects and commercial motivations of these phrases. I cannot resist the temptation of presenting the original quote here.

To produce one such phrase requires the expensive services of an ad agency as sophisticated as anywhere. A creative director gathers the team and concepts are tossed about, a first-rate copywriter works on the theme, a lengthy rationalisation is prepared for the client, a decision eventually made to launch. Cost: maybe millions of yen. Everyone understands that it is substandard English. Explains a copywriter at Dentsu: 'yes, of course we know it sounds corny to an American, even objectionable to some. But what the foreigner thinks of it is immaterial. The ad is purely domestic, a lot of market research has gone into it. It evokes the right images. It sells.' For product names, English words that seem dismayingly inappropriate to the foreign listener are sometimes chosen. The most frequently quoted example is a very popular soft drink called 'Sweat'. The idea of using a body secretion as an

enticing name for a fluid to drink out of a can is just as unpleasant to a Japanese as to an Englishman, but 'sweat' conjures a different image: hot and thirsty after vigorous activity on the sporting field. The drink's 'Pocari' in Hongkong. Some English words enjoy a fad season. Currently very much in are 'life', 'my', 'be', and 'city', the last-named suffering from the phonetic necessity to render the 's' before 'i' as 'sh'. My City is a multi-storeyed shopping complex in Shinjuku where you can shop for my-sports things to take to your my-house in your my-car. 'New' remains popular. If no suitable English word exists, nothing is lost, coin one. Some, indeed, are accidentally rather catchy: 'magineer'. Others elicit only sighs. 'Creap' is a big selling cream powder for coffee. 'Facom' was perhaps not such a felicitous choice considering the open back vowel for Japanese. Currently in season are words ending in '-topia', presumably from 'utopia'. There was a 'Portopia', a 'Computopia' and a 'Sportstopia'. The brand new Hilton Hotel boasts a splendid shopping annexe called the 'Hiltopia'. (Emphasis added; Asiaweek, October 5, 1984).

This is a very pragmatic statement, and clearly demonstrates that the norms for 'English in advertising' are context bound and variety dependent. This fact about non-native uses of English has yet to be recognized by the specialists in ESP. The advertising agencies in Japan seem to have seen the linguistic light.

There is another aspect of the use of multicores (or lectal range) which touches us all as parents, teachers, students, and academic administrators. I am thinking of the varieties of English and their use in the classroom. The primary focus of such research on English, has been the linguistic behavior of the speech fellowships in the Inner Circle. It is the native context of the language functions, complexities of linguistic interaction, language attitudes, and interpretation of language use in the professions that has been the focus of attention. The Englishes of the Outer Circle, unfortunately, are still not part of this research activity.

The paradigm must change in another sense, too. We have to discard the exclusive use of the deviational approach and evaluate the pragmatic success (or failure) of various codes with reference to the types of interaction and encounter within the intranational uses of English. The deficiency hypothesis, interlanguage hypothesis, and exclusively error-oriented approaches do not capture the sociolinguistic realism of the Outer Circle.

All the bees are not out of my bonnet yet. A number of points remain which are specific to ESP. In developing ESP we must adopt a pluralistic approach since English functions in pluricultural sociolinguistic contexts. This means a shift from the monomodel approaches to a polymodel approach. As a result one would have to significantly modify

one's approach to teacher training, curriculum development, and materials production.

Conclusion

The issues I have raised have wider and deeper implications. They touch delicate attitudinal chords of users of English internationally, and do not necessarily conform to traditional ESL/ELT paradigms. It seems to me that the consequences of not facing the pragmatic context of international Englishes are serious. The issues involved are linguistic, sociocultural, psychological, and educational. In his Presidential Address, delivered to the Linguistic Society of America in 1973, Dwight Bollinger emphatically told us that 'truth is a linguistic question' (1973:539-550). The research of the last two decades has shown that linguistic issues do have educational, social, and psychological implications. And having seen that, we must pay heed to Bollinger's warning that 'a taste of truth is like a taste of blood'. Once the issues have been raised, it is the responsibility of the profession to explore their implications.

What is needed in research on ESP, then, is to provide a pragmatic basis to such research in terms of the world-wide uses of English, both internationally and intranationally. Swales (1985) has drawn our attention to these issues. It is essential that the professionals in ESP/ELT reconsider the earlier paradigms of methodology, and their applications to the regions where institutionalized non-native varieties of English are in use.⁹

Notes

1. In three randomly selected catalogues of publishers for 1985 I found the following titles advertised: Cambridge University Press, *English for Science and Technology*, L. Trimble; Pergamon Institute of English, *Bank on Your English*, (M Pole et al.); *English for Negotiating* (J. Brims); *Developing Reading Skills in ESP* (includes volumes on biological sciences, physics, or medicine, telecommunications); *Seaspeak* (includes a Reference Manual, Training Manual, Teacher's Guide and Workbooks, Self Study Course); *The Language of Seafaring* (P. Strevens); *English for Maritime Studies* (T. Blakey); *English for Harbour Personnel* (E. Joyce); *English for Aeronautical Engineers* (C. Sionis); *Hotel English* (P. Binham et al.); *Restaurant English* (P. Binham et al.); *English for International Conferences* (A. Fitzpatrick); Prentice-Hall, *English for Adult Competency* (A. Keltner et al.); *Basic Adult Survival English* (R. Walsh); *Headlines* (P. Karant); *English for Academic Uses* (J. Adams et al.); *Scitech* (Karl Drobnic et al.); *English in Context: Reading and Comprehension for Science and Technology* (J. Saslow); *Computer Notions* (L. Rossi); *The Computer Book* (M. Abdulazia); *Language From Nine to Five*; *Developing Busi-*

ness Communication Skills (K. Rielmann). I did not have the courage to open the more ambitious catalogues of Macmillan, The Regent Publishers, and so on.

2. See, e.g., Kachru and Quirk 1982 and Kachru 1985.
3. For various viewpoints on this question see Kachru 1976 and 1985, Prator 1966, Quirk 1985, and Smith 1981 and 1983.
4. There is no need to labor the point that no language or variety of a language is intrinsically deficient. The attitudinal and functional acceptability of a language is an external matter, educational or social. The formal reasons which may contribute to such acceptance relate to the lexical stock of a language or variety, and to its register range and style range. True, these factors contribute to the intellectualization of a language and its functional efficiency in various contexts. The larger such resources of a language or variety, the greater is its effectiveness as a language for specific purposes. There are, of course, other factors too which determine acceptability: academics, teacher trainers, academic administrators, the media, social pressure, and so on.
5. For references to such studies see bibliographies in Bailey and Görlach (1982), Kachru (1982 and 1983a) and Smith (1981).
6. In recent years there has been extensive theoretical and empirical research on this topic. For a detailed discussion and references see the chapter entitled *On Mixing* in Kachru (1983a).
7. For a detailed discussion of legal English see Mellinkoff 1963, also see Bhatia 1983 for the characteristics of legal texts.
8. A number of other issues emerge which have been discussed in Kachru (1983a and 1985), Kachru (1985a and 1985b), Smith 1981 and forthcoming.
9. This is a revised version of an invited paper presented at the International Conference on English for Specific Purposes, organized by the Asia Foundation, the British Council and the Ministry of Higher Education, Colombo, Sri Lanka, April 1–5, 1985. A slightly modified version of this paper will appear in the proceedings of the conference.

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ESP in Sri Lanka: A Perspective

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The transition from an ESL to an EFL situation in Sri Lanka

English has had a close and sustained association with the life and society of Sri Lanka for nearly 200 years. Going back to relatively recent history during the eight years from 1948 — the year of independence — to 1956, English was the official language of the country. Having this status it continued to be the language of administration and of business, the language of education in the better urban schools, and also the language of tertiary and further education. That small but significant minority which reaped the benefits of an English medium education became the envy of the more numerous vernacular-educated group because of its distinct advantage in having easy access to high office in the country, and also to an elevated social status. For this minority English was not a second language in the true sense, though admittedly it was not their native tongue.

In 1956 as a result of a growing wave of nationalism, English lost its position as official language of the country, and Sinhala was adopted instead. This change set in motion the series of events that led to the present decline in standards of English in Sri Lanka. While Sinhala displaced English as the language of administration, both Sinhala and Tamil relegated English to the position of a second language where the medium of education was concerned. All these changes were in the right direction, and true to the aspirations of a people of a newly-independent nation. However, the mistake lay in the neglect of English even as a second language.

Earlier, when it was the official language, a pass in English was necessary for a candidate to be awarded the Senior School Certificate. When Sinhala became the official language, this requirement was withdrawn and a candidate could obtain the General Certificate of Education (Ordinary Level) — equivalent to the earlier Senior School Certificate — without a pass in English. This discouraged both the teaching and learning of English and the neglect was especially felt in the rural areas.

The decline in standards of English was also reflected in the poor standard of trainees in Teachers' Colleges, and of undergraduates

studying English in the Universities. Thus the problem of finding qualified teachers, and along with it a drop in teaching standards, began to seriously affect the English teaching/learning situation in the country.

While the standards of English continued to decline in this manner, the need for more and more English by a larger proportion of the Sinhala/Tamil-speaking population began to be felt, especially from 1977, when an upsurge of development activities started to take place in the country.

The Sri Lanka government, furthermore, is dedicated to the cause of promoting science and technology in the country. In a recent inaugural address at a workshop for National Science and Technology Planning and Co-ordination in Sri Lanka (March 14, 1985), the President said that Science, 'an integral part' of the life of the nation', . . . has to be part of our upbringing from the cradle, to the elementary school, to the high school, to the university and to our research . . .

All this activity requires a substantial number of employees at different levels who need to be equipped with essential occupational and managerial skills. In the training of such personnel, equipping them with the ability to work in English is of paramount importance since something like 70% of the activities discussed above take place in a semi or wholly English-speaking environment. Thus a situation exists now in which, although English is no longer the official language of the country and there is less immediate compulsion to learn it, the actual need for the language is great. This presents a very real challenge for the ELT/ESP teacher.

English in Sri Lankan education today

In the past, English in the Secondary school was directed towards the study of English language and literature at University level. But today English in tertiary education has mainly a service role for work and study. Unfortunately, the secondary school curriculum has been slower to change accordingly, with the result that there is now a lack of co-ordination between the English in the secondary school and English beyond school — in both tertiary level education and the world of work. The focus of ESP in Sri Lanka, therefore, has up to now been at tertiary level. Two main areas can be identified here: the Universities and the Technical Colleges, though ESP courses are also given in both public and private sectors by organizations such as the Sri Lanka Institute of Development Administration, the Institute of Workers' Education, and the National Apprenticeship Board. ESP is not a new phenomenon in Sri Lanka (see de Sousa 1979).

English for specific purposes in the universities of Sri Lanka

The present system

There is no doubt that there is a growing need and interest in ESP in the nine Sri Lankan Universities. Most of the arts and humanities courses are conducted in the Sinhala or Tamil medium, but because of the shortage of texts in these media, students need English for reference, research, and ultimately for post-graduate education. The most acute need is probably in the fields of medicine, engineering, agriculture, and science, where courses are mainly conducted in English. This particularly affects students from rural areas, with little previous exposure to English, who may, for example, find that some second or third year lectures in applied science or agriculture courses, given in English, demand a grounding in study skills in English for listening, reading, and writing. These students will also have a deferred need for English for occupational purposes.

English programmes in the Universities

All Universities recently introduced six to seven week intensive English courses for new entrants, after which they offer individually designed English programmes. Some Universities have even made English compulsory at certain levels. But the only fully fledged ESP Programmes are run at the Universities of Moratuwa, Peradeniya, and Colombo. The first two concentrate on English for science and technology, linked to engineering, architecture, and National Diploma in Technology courses, with English syllabuses developed after careful needs analyses, involving healthy interaction between subject and ELT staff.

The third programme, run at the University of Colombo, has a similar needs-based design and concentrates on English for law.

English courses at the Open University

The young Open University of Sri Lanka offers several English courses: the most well-known being the Professional English Course conducted during weekends at various nation-wide centres. Most of the students are people in employment, or those preparing for employment after secondary school or further education: the range covers would-be executives; clerks; stenographers and technicians. With a strong professional orientation, the course consists of a grammar base and English for communication, and includes an oral component in its examination. In addition, the Open University conducts an English for Science and Technology course geared to students with a more specific science background.

Surveying the University ELT/ESP situation in general, the demands for English call for more co-ordination within and between

Universities. Such co-ordination could, for example, encourage the sharing of resources and experience in terms of needs analysis, syllabus design, and materials preparation where courses serving similar disciplines are taught. A further need is for increased integration for ELT staff with subject staff in order to improve the effectiveness of the ESP 'support' service for the students, and thus enhance their performance. Finally, while Universities have well-qualified ELT staff, better motivation could be gained by according them recognized status within the academic community, and providing opportunities for further training, promotion, and salary increases to match experience and qualifications.

English for specific purposes in the technical colleges

Manpower training through technical colleges under the Ministry of Higher Education in Sri Lanka

Institutionalized Technical Education, introduced in 1893, now plays a key role in meeting Sri Lankan manpower requirements through its twenty-two technical colleges and five affiliated technical units, which make up the 1985 infrastructure. Nearly a hundred commercial, technical and agricultural courses are offered, ranging from craft to Higher Diploma levels, many with short-term options.

English in the technical colleges

Fully realizing the importance of teaching English as a part of manpower training, the Ministry has provided English components for the majority of these courses, and initiated an English for Specific Purposes Programme, noting the identifiable needs and time constraints of the trainees.

The English for Specific Purposes Programme

This programme embraces all the technical colleges in Sri Lanka. It is the most centrally co-ordinated ESP programme in the country, and has developed since 1978 with Ministry and British Council KELT Advisory support. It features an extensive staff development scheme. In 1979 it held a fact-finding seminar for all technical college staff which revealed that the following matters needed urgent attention:

1. *Teacher Motivation* — Teachers were not fully aware of their role as teachers of English in technical colleges; there were no career prospects or training opportunities; there were no organized professional meetings; and there was no co-ordinated English programme.
2. *Student Motivation* — Students were keen to learn English but poorly motivated by English classes in the technical colleges; the subject had low priority and was not compulsory; student attendance was low.

3. *Timetabling* — Two to three hours only were allocated to English per week; often not at optimum learning times.
4. *Lack of Equipment and Resources* — Technical college libraries had mainly literature-based irrelevant books in English. Duplicating facilities and OHPs were almost non-existent in some colleges.

Action was taken on these matters as the Programme developed.

Counterpart training for the ESP Programme

It has often been the experience in developing countries that projects initiated with foreign collaboration die a natural death if the counterpart training aspect of this collaboration, vital to maintain projects after the aid is withdrawn, is neglected. The ESP Programme thus initially placed high priorities on counterpart training and indeed on the establishment of a solid staff development programme.

Staff development for the ESP Programme

The training strategy for English teachers in technical colleges was a twofold one. First a series of local annual residential in-service courses was organized, with UK consultants, covering major areas of ESP from needs analyses to evaluation. Secondly, each annual seminar was followed by small-group regional and institute-level workshops, to discuss issues raised (with the administration, where possible). Observation of classes, with guidance, was also initiated. These seminars proved extremely valuable to the ESP Programme, because they helped to build up loyal and committed staff who began to feel professional pride in their work, and because of the co-ordination work involved.

Overseas training for staff

A scheme of overseas scholarships to Britain was also arranged for all permanent English teachers at the colleges; one year Master's degree programmes for lecturers and three-to-four month programmes for Instructors. About 90% of the permanent staff have now been trained under this programme, which was a worthwhile investment: many teachers are now actively participating in ESP Programme materials writing projects and overall co-ordination, including seminar planning.

Preparation of syllabuses and materials

Needs-based organizational syllabuses were prepared for the different ESP courses in the colleges, with a communicative orientation. Close interaction took place with employers; and the syllabuses prepared in draft, first at Craft level, were later discussed as working papers at

seminars for teachers, converted into teaching syllabuses, and then used as bases for materials writing. Some syllabuses, such as the National Diploma in English, were completely revised.

Once new or revised syllabuses had been prepared, a materials writing programme was established, since the policy was to prepare local materials rather than use published ESP courses. Teams of teacher-writers were built up, and courses are now being worked on in this way, with Ministry co-ordination.

Books and equipment

Books and equipment for the ESP Programme have come from three sources — the Ministry has provided OHPs, photocopiers, roneo facilities, and cassette players, the British Council has provided books and core equipment through its KELT support project, and the Asia Foundation has provided further book presentations. Recently the Ministry purchased a complete video package, now housed in the ESP Unit.

Collaboration with other organizations and with the world of work

As indicated, the ESP Programme has close links with foreign agencies such as the British Council, the Asia Foundation, and the VSO, which have contributed staff, equipment and books. The Programme has also maintained — indeed continues to strengthen — its links with the world of work in Sri Lanka, through needs analyses research, practical training programmes, and even permanent jobs for trainees resulting from employer/Programme collaboration as courses develop. A case in point is the pilot Secretarial Practice Course, run at one Colombo technical college.

Establishment of the ESP Unit in the Ministry

As the ESP Programme developed, this Unit was established in the Ministry of Higher Education, and the first counterpart of the Programme is now the Head of Unit. The Unit is the administrative and professional nucleus of the Programme, advising, co-ordinating, supervising, and researching courses, assisting with examinations, preparing materials and implementing staff development. Since they are located in the Ministry, the Unit staff are close to the policy makers, and can administer central programmes and but regionalize as needed; they can also deploy Ministry resources effectively. In the near future, the ESP Unit, through its programme, will be required to provide new English programmes in the colleges; these programmes were proposed by the Asian Development Bank as part of their recent project to upgrade technical education in Sri Lanka, and to play a strong role in the new National Technical Teacher Training College.

Concluding observations

These are limited to the Ministry ESP Programme, though they may relate elsewhere. Basically, the achievements of the Programme over the last six years have been considerable, in spite of certain difficulties. These may be summarized as: (1) *shortage of permanent ELT staff*, leading to heavy reliance on visiting staff; though these are brought into ESP Programme activities, they are in other full-time jobs, and so are often tired and overworked; and (2) *lesser degrees of compulsion with minimal timetabled hours for English*, for many courses. On the positive side, steps are in hand to increase permanent staff recruitment, and student motivation is generally improved. The Programme has its best payoff in colleges with strong supportive Principals and subject staff, and in courses where English has been made an examinable subject. Finally, the overall support given to the Programme by the Ministry, the ELT consultants, the various collaborating agencies, and the college staff has been instrumental in achieving the present successes.

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Teacher and Learner

The Learner and Teacher of ESP

Peter Strevens

The Bell Educational Trust

Introduction

The introduction of courses in English for Specific Purposes produces problems for learners, problems for teachers, problems of methodology and materials, and problems of assessment and testing. These problems can be solved, but to solve them requires more teachers, better teachers, better training, new materials and new tests.

In order to make a success of ESP, the teachers have to view ESP as a normal, acceptable challenge; they have to understand as fully as possible the nature of the language teaching and learning process; they have to be able to observe and recognize the learner's progress and to diagnose his problems; they have to be familiar with the widest possible range of alternative teaching techniques; they have to know which response to select at any particular time in order to meet the particular learning requirements of a given student. Above all, they have to possess an informed optimism and to know that success is possible; the teachers need to exercise professionalism based on training and experience.

The ESP learner and his needs

The two main dimensions of ESP are for study, and for an occupation; learners for whom ESP is appropriate are either engaged in studying a particular subject in English, or are following a particular occupation for which they need English, or both. But there is a further distinction to be made between on the one hand those who already know the subject in their own language or who are already employed in their occupation but use only their own language, and on the other hand those whose learning of English is part of, or parallel with, their academic studies or part of their occupational training. In short, the distinction is between English which is instructional and English which is operational.

The difference is an important one, especially when it comes to the preparation of ESP teaching materials. It is obvious that providing instructional ESP materials — about the chemistry of dye stuffs, for

example, or about the control of flame temperature in gas welding, or about the communication by ship's radio to helicopters of messages concerning search and rescue activities — is appropriate when the learner is a student of colour chemistry, a trainee welder, or a trainee ship's officer. But those same instructional materials will appear quite different, and altogether too elementary, to a student who is already an industrial chemist, a master welder, or a ship's captain. What such experienced students require is operational ESP materials, where the knowledge, the concepts, the instruction and the training are taken for granted, and where it is the ability to function in English which is being imparted.

The learner comes to an ESP course with at least three kinds of expectations:

- *cultural-educational*;
- *personal and individual*;
- *academic/occupational*.

The first of these is the product of the learner's own background. He will usually assume that the way in which people learn and are taught in his society, and particularly the way in which he himself learned and was taught, is the way in which he will now learn and be taught in English — and indeed that this is the way in which anyone *ought* to learn and be taught. Therefore if the ESP course is different from the learner's past experience, the ESP teacher may have to educate the learner into accepting a novel experience.

The second kind of expectation concerns the learner's view of himself as a learner, his expectations of success, his optimism or pessimism about the ESP course in terms of what he expects to learn. Here there is often a great difference between ESP as part of study or occupational training, where the learner is geared to being in the process of obtaining his education, and ESP for those who are already subject specialists or are experienced in a particular job; such students, often returning to the task of learning after a break of some years, tend to have a low opinion of their chances of learning English. Part of the task of the teacher is to change the learner's expectations— and above all to encourage the learner by providing him with a touch of success.

The third set of expectations, those which are academic or occupational, are the ones most commonly expressed in advance, when a needs-analysis is carried out. The learner usually has at least a rough idea of what he wishes to be able to do in English. Often this rough idea is accurate; but it can also be quite wrong. The error can be in either direction — either grossly inflated, as in the case of the businessman who hopes to achieve skill in negotiating contracts in English but will devote only 100 hours to the English course, or grossly inadequate, as in the case of the middle-aged oil tanker captain who does not believe that he will learn English at all, and is staggered to observe his own success when he begins the unfamiliar task.

The least difficult conditions, then, are probably for those young students whose English is being learned at the same time as they are receiving their academic or occupational training and who are still in the unbroken stream of their personal education; the most difficult conditions are for those middle-aged learners, already competent in their own subject or occupation, who have to return, perhaps unwillingly, to become a student of a language, a role in which they have no expectations of success. But success is possible, right across the spectrum, if the teachers approach these problems correctly.

The following list illustrates the range of possible ESP courses; there are hundreds of other potential needs.

1. German physicists, specializing in the physics of low temperatures, who wish to learn English solely in order to read the papers (published in English) of an international conference on low temperature physics. (No speaking or writing required.)
2. Fire brigade officers from Afghanistan who wish to be able to attend a course in Britain on advanced techniques of fire fighting. (Little reading or writing required.)
3. Fishing boat crews from Bahrain (particularly the mechanics or 'engine-minders') who spend time in Britain observing the construction of the fishing vessels in which they will work on their return.
4. Norwegian secretaries who need to be able to deal with telephone enquiries and correspondence in English.
5. World Health Organization medical officers from many countries who are preparing to work in tropical Africa, where English will be the language of their contact with nurses, technicians and perhaps their patients.
6. French aircraft engineers from the Concorde supersonic aircraft factory who are working in an Anglo-French partnership, shuttling between Toulouse and Bristol.
7. Algerian specialists in artificial insemination who need English to work with cattle breeders and agriculturalists from many countries.
8. Immigrants to Britain who get jobs in a bus factory and find that all the working and safety instructions are in English, as are the fire regulations, the trade union arrangements etc.
9. The managing director of a Greek shipping firm who opens an office in London and becomes involved in commercial and legal negotiations in English.

The ESP teacher

Who is the ESP teacher? Almost always he or she is a teacher of General English who has unexpectedly found him/herself required to teach students with special needs. The experience is often a shock! Sometimes the shock is unpleasant, because so many elements are

unfamiliar or puzzling. Sometimes the shock is a pleasant one, because the teaching is so directly relevant to the needs of well-motivated learners. Most often the shock is a mixture of the welcome and the unwelcome.

Two areas in particular can cause real difficulties for teachers unaccustomed to ESP. The first and most serious difficulty is one of different attitudes, particularly between those of literature and science, (C. P. Snow, the novelist, referred to this distinction as 'The Two Cultures', and there is no doubt that for a few literary people it is a matter almost of conscientious objection to being involved with science). The difficulty is one-sided; teachers of maths and science, engineers and biologists, do not complain of the attitudes of teachers of literature, and they certainly do not fear them. But some teachers of literature actually object to the outlook and attitudes of science. That view of literature which concentrates on the reader's emotional response to a poem or a novel and which regards analysis as likely to destroy the very cause of the response itself — this view does not fit easily with a pragmatic, objective, analytical, unemotional outlook upon science and technology. A teacher of ESP must be able to suspend and overcome anti-scientific attitudes, since he is neither being prevented from appreciating literature in his personal life, nor being required to become a scientist in his work. Rather he is being required to extend the range of his professional activities into a new kind of language teaching.

The second area of difficulty for teachers lies in the gap between the *learner's knowledge* of the special subject and the *teacher's ignorance* of it. Except in the rare and fortunate case where the ESP teacher actually does have specialist knowledge of the subject, there is no escaping this gap, so that the teacher has to accept it and come to terms with it. Three techniques can be recommended to the ESP teacher:

1. *Become familiar with the ESP course materials*

Of course every teacher should always be familiar with the materials to be used in class. But in this instance the familiarity must extend also to understanding exactly the ESP intention of each text and exercise. The course-books will have been written, almost certainly, in a collaboration between a teacher of English and a subject specialist. The course writer will thus have been aware of the main difficulties and unfamiliarities facing the teacher, and will have dealt with most of them in the accompanying teacher's notes.

2. *Become familiar with the language of the subject*

Remember the experience of the professor's secretary, the hospital almoner, the reader of *Scientific American* or of the *New Scientist* — in short, the educated layman who from interest or necessity accepts and becomes familiar with the language of a subject, though without pretending or seeking to become a specialist in the subject itself.

3. *Allow students to put you right!*

Do not be above letting the students correct your solecisms in the subject (not errors in English; the teacher will not normally commit errors of grammar, for example). Then you will be in a stronger position to help the students with their mistakes in the language.

The most important requirement is that the teacher should regard success with teaching an ESP course as a professional challenge. There are today a number of specialized schools of English which concentrate on ESP and which may have to deal with twenty or thirty different ESP subjects in a year. The staff of these schools take pride in conducting the necessary needs-analysis, designing an appropriate syllabus, preparing suitable materials, meeting and getting to know the students, teaching the course and devising and administering appropriate tests.

Such professionalism is not easily achieved. While every good teacher of English is potentially a good teacher of ESP, he or she needs special help and training. The teacher who is new to ESP needs advice, help and support from those teachers who already have the necessary experience. Ideally, ESP flourishes on the concept of a team of teachers, and with a collaboration between them and subject specialists. But the essential point is that becoming an effective teacher of ESP requires *more* experience, *additional* training, *extra* effort, a *fresh* commitment, compared with being a teacher of General English.

Methodology and materials

The greatest single difficulty in this regard is that there are not enough suitable ESP materials. This is true partly because ESP is young, compared with General English; but it reflects also the experience of most ESP teachers, who find that almost every fresh group of students requires fresh materials, or at least some re-alignment of materials previously used for broadly similar students.

The question 'What kind of methods and materials should be used in ESP?' has no direct answer. For one thing, there are a great many different kinds of ESP and the methods and materials in use for a particular kind of ESP must be appropriate to that kind. For another, any given ESP course might suitably be taught with a wide range of methods and materials. There is here an important point to be made about language teaching in general; great variety and interest in the presentation of the teaching improves the effectiveness of learning. EFL today possesses a vast array of different methodological possibilities. So ESP — being relatively young and not burdened with a tradition or narrow orthodoxy, such as that which often stifles General English — can and does select its own methods and techniques as it needs. Just as important, ESP does not have to employ any particular method or technique that already exists, if the requirements do not point in that direction. Consequently the conventional school classroom

categories of dictation, essay, translation, precis, grammatical explanation, etc. do not necessarily have to appear in an ESP course — although any of them may appear, if they are suitable.

The methodologies of ESP conform to the same model of the language learning/teaching process as does any other form of language teaching. That is to say, the basic teaching activities are these:

- Shaping the input
- Encouraging the learner's intention to learn
- Managing the learning strategies
- Promoting practice and use

Shaping the input, for ESP, means that the learner's experience of English is the English of his special purposes. In principle, no English needs to be presented to the learner which is *not* part of the English of his special purposes. But equally, English that is part of his special purposes needs to be provided in profusion.

Developing a Course in Research Writing for Advanced ESP Learners

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Background

In this paper I shall use the Indian Institute of Science in South India as a context for developing a particular conceptualization of the advanced ESP learner, and try to show how this concept translates into a methodology.

About sixty five percent of the Institute's students are Ph.D registrants working towards a doctoral degree. They are, on the whole, highly motivated scientists, but given their research preoccupations, resent doing courses in English unless their usefulness is immediately apparent. Service English departments all over the world will be familiar with this situation and with the need to evolve relevant courses.

Inadequacy of former courses

The courses for Ph.D. students offered at the Institute till recently were based largely on the formal and stylistic requirements of technical writing, and drew their theoretical inspiration from register analysis. The students saw these courses as only marginally relevant and were under-involved. My own dissatisfaction led me to look at available ESP courses such as Ewer and Latorre's work (1969), but these were clearly unsuitable as they were aimed, like most ESP materials, at the undergraduate learner. I realized that to capture the interest of our Ph.D students, I had to conceptualize their needs in terms of their professional preoccupations.

A conceptualization of the advanced ESP learner

The advanced ESP learner specializing in science has a distinct identity in that he is a potential member of a scientific community which has its own perceptions, not only about how science is done but also about how science is communicated. As part of his Ph.D programme, which is a process of recruitment into this community the ESP learner needs a course which will enable him to tap and strengthen his perceptions

about communication in science, and to use these perceptions in communicative activities which are meaningful to him. The rest of this paper describes an experiment to evolve such a course and discusses the implications of this approach for ESP course design.

The course

1. *Logistics*

- Number of students: 21 from 7 specialist disciplines
Duration of course: 28 hours (2 hours per week for 14 weeks)
January to April 1983.
Number of teachers: one
Level of learners: all Ph.D. registrants but research experience varying from 7 months to 2 years.
Proficiency in English: intermediate to advanced level.

2. *Pre-course interaction with specialist departments*

Before the course began, informal discussions were held with representative scientists to:

- (a) identify what they see as the central kinds of communication in science;
- (b) determine their views on the courses in English that research students would most benefit from;
- (c) get their samples of scientific communication, such as scientific papers, research proposals and reviews.

It emerged from these discussions that the scientific article published in a primary journal is a crucial act in the growth of scientific knowledge. Because of the high value attached to publication, any English programme which confronted the researcher with the demands of professional publication, and provided practice in transforming private research into a public account, would be useful.

The question then was how could these perceptions of scientists translate into a methodology?

3. *The methodology*

The methodology evolved, as the teaching progressed, as a set of procedures responsive to developments in each lesson.

Centrally, two strands of activities emerged:

- peer discussions, to articulate and make publicly available the learners' knowledge of the conventions of scientific communication
- writing tasks which deploy and refine this knowledge.

The strategy used to initiate group discussion is a handout of questions related to some aspect of the publication process or to different components of the scientific article, such as the abstracts, the introduction or the results section. These questions are generated by the teacher, but are based on consultation with specialist colleagues; the handout is more a stimulus for group discussion than a set of final categories.

The writing activities which form the second strand of the methodology are done individually. For example, learners write the abstract of a paper with publication in view. This abstract, or different versions of the same abstract, are collectively assessed, improvements are suggested and the revision process is initiated. Here is a typical sequence of classroom procedures (spread over several class hours):

- peer discussion of a handout of questions;
- oral presentation of groups' views voiced by the spokesman of each group and summarized by the teacher on the blackboard;
- presentation by the teacher of a handout based on the blackboard summary;
- frontal discussion of the handout between the teacher and the full class;
- individual writing of a part of a scientific paper (in or out of class);
- presentation of selected individual writing on OHP for peer discussion and assessment. This discussion is led by the teacher;
- consolidation by the teacher of suggested improvements;
- individual re-writing, incorporating suggestions;
- submission of revised piece to the teacher for individual feedback.

4. *Constitution of groups for peer discussion*

Groups were constituted on the basis of the broad area of specialization of the students. Thus students specializing in life sciences constituted one group, those in physical sciences another group and so on. This arrangement, however, is not without its problems. One unresolved issue is the dilution of specialist preoccupations that such grouping entails. Another issue which needs to be empirically investigated is whether conventions of scientific communication are uniform across disciplines. There is some evidence (Day 1979, Swales 1981) that this may be so, but in the absence of more substantive studies, this is very much a live question.

5. *Language form*

One aspect of the course that should be mentioned is that there are no revision or practice activities on predetermined language forms deriving from the register, needs or error analysis, which was the basis of my earlier courses. But attention to language form comes about naturally in the discussion of individual written work and is similar to the incidental correction discussed by Prabhu (1983). Such correction is part of the editorial process familiar to scientists. Learners acknowledge the need for grammatical conformity in published work. To ensure the grammatical accuracy of final drafts, a checklist of language points is provided for use in the revision process.

Analysis of a lesson transcript

To show what the classroom interaction is like, excerpts from a lesson are discussed in this section. The peer discussion stage has been chosen

for illustration, both because of its inherent interest and its determining role in the methodology. Appendix A gives a description of the participants, and Appendix B is the handout of questions they discussed. The following is an excerpt from the transcript:

- B So abstract qualifies the title of the paper . . . it just tells you a little more than what the title of the paper does, and or. . . .
- P Or is it that if I read the abstract I will have a glimpse of what you have done in the paper . . . that means I need not . . . go through fully . . . I can immediately say whether it is useful to me or not and then. . . . 5
- B That's right.
- R Yeah that is — reading the abstract one should be able to know whether he is interested — really interested in that paper. 10
- P Plus . . . we can have a . . . documentation, proper documentation of. . . . Instead of having the entire article . . . the abstract could be documented . . . and. . . .
- R Ah . . . that is. . . . There are some things called keywords, so usually one has to put those keywords also in the . . . abstract . . . although . . . in some of the abstracts I have seen that after the abstract they again mention the keywords. 15
- P That's true so that. . . . 20
- R Because . . . on the basis of that usually they document it finally . . . but I think abstract . . . an ideal abstract would be such . . . that it would . . . sort of give you what the work . . . was about . . . and what has been done there
- B Salient features and something . . . outline . . . giving . . . a brief overview of what they are exactly coming out with . . . technically . . . what. . . . 25
- R Another thing . . . would be . . . that other reasons why abstract would be required is for the services which are known as abstracting service or abstract service. After giving the name of the paper they do mention a stanza of the abstract, sometimes it is different from the abstract that has been written in the paper itself, because those abstracts are rather solidly written — then they rewrite . . . rewrite the whole abstract once again . . . and . . . but . . . those . . . particularly in that INSPEC Abstract . . . that is again IEEE publications, if you go through the abstract, generally it would give you the idea whether you are interested in that paper or not, if you are . . . you have been working in that field 30 35 40

- it will give you the idea whether you will need that paper to refer at all or not . . . whether it contains some result — or things or that sort . . . that . . . those would be the requirements. You should say something because you are doing the literature survey right now (to T). 45
- T For me, as you said, that is the purpose . . . like . . . after looking at the abstract I should be able to find out that this is the paper I'm looking for right now and help me on that.
- R That is any area identified for research. 50
- T Sometimes the abstract doesn't help, like it doesn't discuss any . . . any result of any kind.
- B Sometimes misleading . . . because it just says that 'a new method has been developed to do this' but it may not be entirely new it may be just a small something which, maybe 55
sometimes the people who write may not wish to bring out that a small change has been made in the existing method . . . so he has to go through the paper
- R No . . . that is always there, what happens is sometimes. . . 60

Discussion of analysis

1. What emerges quite clearly from the interaction is that the participants do have their own perceptions of the conventions of scientific communication. Even the youngest and most reticent student has some idea of the function of the abstract and what it should contain (lines 46–49 and 51–52).
2. The interaction reveals that there are differences in the level of knowledge in the group and that in the case of at least one learner (R), this knowledge is quite sophisticated. He not only knows what should go into an abstract (lines 15–18) but also why. He is aware of the central role of the abstract in the information retrieval system in science. He is also aware (lines 28–35) that secondary sources such as the Abstracting Services use a different version (indicative abstract) of the abstract which heads a research paper (informative abstract).
3. The transcript also bears out that learners' perceptions develop as a result of their interaction. For example, B begins with a weak idea of the abstract (lines 1–3, but is able to articulate a fuller and more useful statement of the abstract in lines 25–28).
4. It is interesting to see in the transcript an articulation of the problems a researcher faces because of ineffective communication. Such problems arise both from incomplete information in an abstract (lines 51–52), and from overprojection of a piece of research

(lines 54–59). The frustration of a researcher is a more powerful argument for effective communication than anything an English teacher might say!

5. Finally, the interaction shows that learners use their knowledge of each other's research to allocate speaking turns. R invites a contribution from T (lines 44–45). In the absence of the specialist knowledge that these students share, the teacher's attempts to draw out a quiet student may not be as effective.

Determination of writing tasks

How can the knowledge which emerges from the peer discussion be deployed in activities which refine and extend it? The interaction just analysed has been used in the following writing tasks:

- composing an informational abstract and transforming it into an indicative one;
- identifying the keywords in an abstract written by a colleague and seeing whether they match the author's list of keywords;
- ensuring that the keywords which would facilitate indexing are included in the abstract;
- ensuring that the conventional requirements of an abstract are met.

Due to space restrictions the public interaction on written work cannot be included here.

Evaluation of the course

An end-of-course questionnaire filled in by the students revealed that they enjoyed the course and found it both interesting and useful. The students who had been registered for research for only a few months felt that the course was premature for them, as their research was not yet ready for publication. In the future, perhaps students can be encouraged to take the course when they feel ready to publish. Research supervisors who were informally interviewed also reacted positively to the course and felt that their students had benefited from it.

Implications

Definition of Learners' Needs

Munby's principle of syllabus design (1978) is the culmination of an approach to identifying the ESP learner's needs in terms of the formal and functional aspects of target language use. Practising scientists, however, perceive both their repertoire and their needs very differently from the linguist or discourse analyst. I think that, especially for the advanced adult learner, we should move to a more user-based approach to needs analysis, which would be in tune with an ethnographic concept of the learner as a member of a particular speech community.

Further, the methodology should facilitate the individual learner's discovery of his own needs. In the approach outlined in this paper, the individual learner confronts the differential research experience and publication profiles of his peers and can begin to perceive what he needs to know or do to become a publishing member of his community, and thus attain full membership.

Motivation

In ESP programmes generally, the problem of motivation has been tackled by using texts which reflect either the structures, notions or content of specialisms. It is debatable whether such matching operations have resulted in enhanced learner motivation. The strongest motivation for the advanced ESP learner comes from his community's publish-or-perish culture which can be imported into the English classroom. To generalize, purpose-orientation in the target community's terms is likely to lead to better motivation than purpose-orientation in the linguist or discourse analyst's terms.

Methodology

Several applied linguists such as Allwright (1981) and Widdowson (1983) have persuasively argued for a more central role for methodology both in ELT and ESP. Prabhu's advocacy of a procedural syllabus (1983) also reflects the same concern for a 'teaching methodology' solution rather than a 'teaching content' solution to language teaching. I would like to add that an ESP methodology for advanced learners must employ procedural activities which reflect the experiences of the target community. Bondi (1963) points out the importance of informal communication in science and Joseph (1986) has shown that private discourse among scientists is central to the creation of scientific knowledge and that it supports and facilitates public discourse. The peer talk which emerges from the methodology described in this paper is functionally similar to this private communication. Further, creating classroom time for 'exploratory talk' as a preparation for final drafts (Barnes 1976) brings into play certain cognitive functions of language use, which have been devalued in ESP by its focus on text-book science in public communication.

Materials

ESP has been a materials-based concept in that its underlying principle is a simple and direct correlation between descriptions of scientific text and learners' language needs. By focusing largely on text-book science, rather than journal science, ESP materials do not reflect either the complexity or the systematicity of professional communication in real-life communities. There is a need to take account of materials generated by both practising and potential scientists, whose work is less likely to distort the real nature of scientific communication, and to evolve courses based on those materials.

Conclusion

To summarize, I have defined the advanced ESP learner as a professional-in-the-making and have tried to show how this conceptualization translates into a methodology. Further, I have discussed some of the implications of such an approach for course design. I would like to conclude by agreeing with Swales (1984) that we need to give 'greater attention to the tasks that specialized environments require of their occupants' and that 'both prudence and responsibility may require us to give greater attention to Research English and to the business of its creation'.

Acknowledgements

The author is grateful to Michael Joseph for several perceptive insights on the approach described in this paper, and to Vanamala Viswanatha for comments on the first draft.

Appendix A

Description of participants

Number of participants:	4			
Identification (by initial letter of name):	B	P	R	T
Duration of PhD. registration:	1 year & 6 months	7 months	1 year & 6 months	7 months
Area of research:	Antenna	Avionics	Numerical Electro magnetics	Radar Signal Processing
No. of papers published:	Two accepted for publication	Two	None	None

Appendix B

Questions for peer discussion

1. What is an abstract?
2. What purposes does an abstract serve? What are the different reasons for which an abstract is required?
3. What role does the abstract play in the publication process?
4. In your view, what would you consider to be a good abstract? List the features.

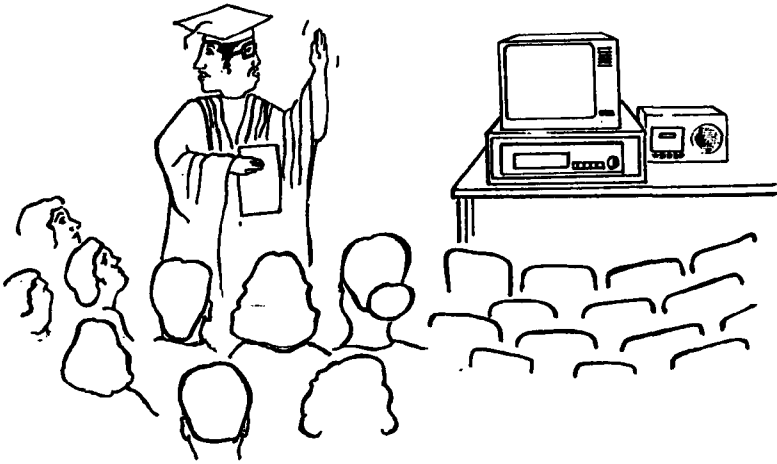
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The Teacher-Centred Learner

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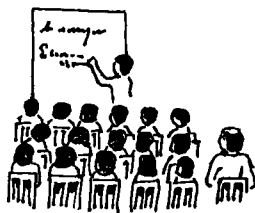
The theme of this paper is the importance of treating the learner of English as a human being, especially if he or she is learning English for Specific Purposes. I want to go further, and stress that this learner should be treated not just as a human being, but as a human animal. There is nothing insulting about this, because whilst as a species we may be technically clever and philosophically brilliant, we have in no way lost our animal property of being physically active (Morris 1978). A very great deal of our interpersonal communication is transmitted through our wonderfully diverse body language, and not a little of this depends upon emotional states associated with our biological make-up. And if we accept this, then it becomes easier to argue, as I propose to do, that the human learner must necessarily be teacher-centred. Indeed in a classroom situation, it must be the living human teacher who occupies the centre of the stage, and on whom attention should be focused — 'should' not 'is', because there are many cases where the teacher does not deserve this centrality, does not understand how to exploit it, or, lost in admiration of communicative language teaching dictates, spends all his time managing, organizing, preparing, withdraw-

ing, and forgetting that there are quite possibly forty tired, bored, confused, hungry, thirsty, sexually alert, curious, playful, imitative, gesture-making, friendly, insecure, rhythm-conscious, manipulative human beings captive in the classroom. These human learners — learners of English, the immediate relevance of which may often not be apparent to them — need to be motivated, or they will quickly become absentees, or cast their attention elsewhere. This usually has a more alarming effect in schools or colleges — in Western industrialized societies, where patterns of authority may not be as traditionally stable as they mostly appear to be in developing communities. In these cases keeping discipline is a major factor, which may considerably affect teacher behaviour.

For the purposes of this paper, however, I am going to focus solely on ESP learners in developing countries. I want to develop now the argument that, before an ESP teacher can be fully learner-centred, he or she needs to be aware of how very teacher-centred learners actually are — or want to be. To do this, let us look at two teacher profiles; first what I will call the Messianic teacher, secondly what might perhaps be called the Catalytic teacher. . . .



MESSIANIC



CATALYTIC

The Messianic teacher is, to all intents and purposes, the guru stereotype. Such a teacher, by sheer charisma, or by extent of recognized subject knowledge, is able to attract and control unlimited 'disciples' inside and outside the classroom. Let us not forget for a moment that much of this charismatic force may depend on a natural magnetism, on charm, authority, voice tone, etc. and is therefore very much a human attribute, or that the Messianic teacher can be found far more widely than one might suppose if one were to think that only

people with powerful personalities fall into this type. He or she can be found in those situations where social, and hence educational, traditions favour the acceptance, often without question, of the word of established (elder) authority, leading to the perpetuation of a deep gulf between learners and learned. This means that there are all too many cases of classrooms where a teacher can enter, give forth orally or in writing, and leave without any establishment whatever of a dialogue between himself and the learner (Freire 1969). Nor, necessarily, does he need to, because it appears that one of the gravest variables in education — one of the gravest unknowns — remains the amount learned without, or in spite of, the teacher (Strevens 1984). While this lack of dialogue may be less serious, possibly, in subject areas where a body of knowledge does have to be transferred, it would seem to be much more serious in the essentially interactive case of learning a language.

The Messianic teacher may thus reinforce neophobic conditions, in which there may be a fear of the new (Morris 1967), and in which a passing down of what is thought to be 'good' leads to a resistance to change because change usually involves coming to terms with the unfamiliar. The Catalytic teacher belongs to a somewhat contrastive camp. This welcomes new ideas (neophilic) and is prone to change. The Catalytic teacher does not enter the classroom simply to transmit information or culture. He or she tries to establish contact with the learner, to create a dialogue between learner and teacher in the course of which principles, facts, customs and even syllabuses may be openly questioned. There will be exchange, and perhaps modification. The teacher does not in this situation behave as a custodian, but acts instead as a catalyst, probing, stimulating reactions, and adjusting to newly agreed attitudes. It is not the purpose of this paper to align with either of the two stereotypes discussed above, for each has virtues and each may be necessary for the development of a successful teacher of ESP. What I want to stress is the centrality of the teacher, whether Messianic or Catalytic, in the eyes of the average learner. As a human being, armed with role powers and potentials, he or she still stands far ahead of any machine, however much man may strive to discover artificial intelligence (Steiner 1983).

If we look now at some features of an ESP learner, remembering always to see him first and foremost as a human being, we can appreciate just how powerful the human teacher's centrality and potential is. We can also appreciate how much this can be utilized for productive purposes in the classroom, because ESP learners do undoubtedly have many characteristics which teachers who are aware of them can readily exploit. The features in the matrix below are sometimes contradictory, because of changing needs or wants in the course of the educational and maturing process. For example, a learner can be motivated (in educational terms) while at the same time being goal-oriented (i.e. wanting to be successful in life).

SOCIAL/TRADITIONAL
authority-centred
rule, creed or ideal bound
family-centred
environment-conscious
possessive
traditional
change resistant
egocentric
urban

BIOLOGICAL
imprinted
rhythm-conscious
imitative
parent-fixated
laughing
smiling
crying
exploratory
curious
playful
opportunist
musical
dancing
nest-building
insecure
sexually aware
visual
graphic
procreative
change-making
problem-solving



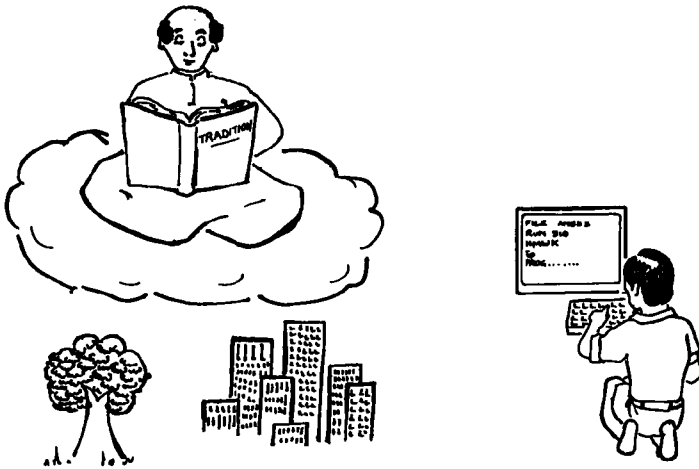
ESP/WORK
teacher-centred
goal-oriented
motivated
money-conscious
possession-conscious
adult or maturing
technology-conscious
serious
nationalistic
speciality-oriented
internationally-aware
job-centred
creative

EMOTIVE
enthusiastic
impressionable
obedient
reactive
friendly

This profile matrix lays stress on the human attributes of the learner. Some items in the four categories are obviously interchangeable, but taken as a whole they add up to a very malleable, responsive, sympathetic and interactive individual being. They may exist in differing degrees in different individuals in different societies, but an ESP teacher aware of them, and thus aware of his or her own potential influence, can really be thankful, for the ESP learner is ready and willing to learn, to question if encouraged, to work and to solve

problems. But there has to be an acceptable degree of catalysis. If we take only the biological block in the matrix, we can perhaps realize that the human teacher has it made for him. Young humans are parent-fixated, or by the time they come to do ESP at least adult-peer group fixated. They have a longer rearing process than any other animals, and are hence deeply human-conscious. They have a sense of rhythm and a sense of sound. They are naturally ready to smile or laugh, to show their basic needs for security, and to react sensitively to other humans.

Above all, they are in the job market, or will eventually be, and thus the entire resources of the environment and the world of work can be capitalized on. The subject field can, therefore, provide a wealth of material for the teacher yielding facts, visuals, interest, travel and research together with an almost unlimited corpus of language. All this can be investigated orally or in writing, by listening, by tasks (exploratory-curious). It can be acted (sound, vision, rhythm) or goal-oriented, creative, and problem-solving; and can eventually lead to an enriching, varied, and enjoyable learning experience. The human teacher must be fully aware of his or her own centrality in this process, as the catalyst or director, breathing life into the syllabus. And in so doing, the teacher too may well learn something about the constantly shifting values in the world community, often perceived differently by different generations, as humanity changes its environment.



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Methodology

Achieving Professional Communicative Relevance in a 'Generalized' ESP Classroom

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The design of any pedagogical curriculum should be dictated primarily by the long-term needs of its students. Although the learning process itself proceeds in bit-by-bit, cumulative, 'bottom-up' fashion, it should be purposefully guided toward some ultimate goal or standard. And it is we educators and program planners, not our students, who are responsible for deciding what these goals should be. In this paper, I wish to argue that the primary goal of any national English language teaching program today should be professional communicative competence. Students graduating from a Sri Lanka university, for example, should be ready to go on to the next stage in their lives, be it in the work force or at a post-graduate institution overseas, and function effectively in English. Whether one can achieve that goal with each student is doubtful, but that at least should be one's aim; and it should guide the way one thinks about the entire curriculum, from beginning to end.

The growing importance of English

English, as noted in a recent issue of *U.S. News and World Report*, is now used as a first or second language by more than 745 million people around the world (*U.S. News and World Report* 1985). It has become the worldwide *lingua franca* not only of diplomacy, aviation, tourism, and pop culture but, more importantly, of science, technology and commerce. The driving force behind today's increasingly global economy is the explosion of technology. But technology itself depends on information, and this information is most often conveyed in English, both *internationally* and often *intranationally*. Take Japan as a case in point. English is neither an official nor semi-official language in Japan, yet it is a required subject in school and is used as a basic technical

language in industry. At Sony Corporation, for example, manuals, instructions, test reports, specifications, and other technical documents are written in English even when they are not intended for circulation in English-speaking countries (Stevenson 1984). Mitsui Corporation boasts that 80% of their 9,500 employees can speak, read and write English (*U.S. News and World Report* 1985). A cross-sectional study of engineers and managers from many other Japanese companies found that they wrote, on average, two documents in English per week. In fact, 44% of their writing was done only in English and another 34% in mixed English and Japanese; only 22% was done in Japanese alone (Stevenson 1984). Japan's technological and economic success may not be entirely due to its widespread use of English, but it is hard to imagine Japan or any other country today achieving such success without the use of English.

None of this should come as any great surprise. I think students themselves, the world over, are aware of the growing importance of English for professional careers. A recent study of Singaporean and Indian university students, for example, found that over 94% of the 512 students surveyed were studying English because they felt they would need it in their careers (Shaw 1981). They foresaw dramatic increases in the use of English in the future, not just in international contacts but even more so in social and business transactions with their fellow countrymen. I found similar attitudes among Brazilian university students during my recent stay there, just as I have found in other countries. More and more students from all over the world are coming to the United States for university studies, not only to take advantage of the country's abundant educational resources (particularly in science and technology) but also to work intensively on English. Right now the number stands at about 340,000 and it is likely to double by the end of the century.

The need for an exit examination

It seems to me that one could take good advantage of these facts in designing an ESP program here in Sri Lanka. We know that there is a need for Sri Lankan professionals (scientists, industrial managers, academicians, businessmen, government officials, etc.) to be proficient in English. And we know that Sri Lankan students know this. There should be no impediment, then, in principle, to making professional communicative competence in English the ultimate goal of the program. The first step in implementing such a goal, it seems to me, is to follow a suggestion put forth by Charles Alderson and Alan Waters (1983), namely, to put into place a professionally/oriented exit examination and let the 'washback effect' do the rest. Students will study to the test, and teachers will teach to it. It is of course much easier to talk about such a test than it is to actually devise one, and I leave it to the testing experts to wrestle with this challenge.

Communication in the World of Work

One thing is clear, however. A good test of professional communicative competence will demand far more of the student than the TOEFL exam, Michigan Test, or any other standard academic test of English. To expand on this point, and to develop the remainder of this paper, I will focus on the ESP area I feel I know best, that of science and technology. At school or university, whether in the United States or overseas, the science or technical student can usually get by with just being able to read textbooks and follow lectures in English. These are complex skills, to be sure, but so are all the additional skills the working professional has to master that the student does not have to worry about. Many technical professionals have to read not only books but technical reports, manuals, memos, journal articles, proposals, contracts, letters and a variety of other written documents in English. To do this, they need a repertoire of reading skills, from scanning to intensive, critical reading. This is especially true of managers, who are often under pressure to make decisions in a hurry and therefore must absorb information selectively and quickly. Many technical professionals around the world, as I suggested earlier in my comments about Japan, also must do a considerable amount of writing in English, in a variety of genres. And in so doing, they should be able to adjust their style to different readers, who might vary in their knowledge of the subject. Writing a sales letter or proposal for a non-specialist reader is a completely different and often more difficult task than writing a technical report for a fellow specialist.

Communication in the working world also relies heavily on the use of spoken language. Oral communication is especially valuable in decision-making and creative research environments, where the flow of information is often unstructured if not chaotic. It is faster and often more convenient than written communication (e.g. over the telephone, at meetings) and it facilitates immediate feedback and clarification. In the United States scientific research depends a great deal on the rapid give-and-take of conversation. A friend of mine, who recently participated at the SALT talks as a technical adviser for the American negotiating team, describes this research environment as follows:

Traditional European science (and most Soviet science) is very autocratic, with a professor at the top and a relatively subservient staff. In such an arrangement, listening is the major skill required. U.S. science is much more democratic, involving extensive and numerous informal creative interactions, many of which are verbal. While one may learn by listening, advances come from exchanges, and verbal skills are essential. Informal skills may be more important than formal presentations, but the latter are required to demonstrate competence (thereby justifying the right to participate in the less formal banter).

This style of doing research may be an American idiosyncrasy but, given the importance of American science on a world scale, scientists from other countries should at least be prepared to deal with it. Good conversational skills are essential. This same comment holds true for overseas students in the United States. When they first arrive, they usually have inadequate oral skills and, as a result, are simply left out of the creative process. It may take them a year or more to attain the level of idiomatic fluency one needs to keep up. As for other technical professionals, they too should have a good command of spoken English, especially if they are involved with international business, attend international meetings, or are in contact with foreigners in any other way. Spoken English can also be useful as a link language for communicating with fellow countrymen whose native language differs from one's own.

In sum, to be communicatively competent in English, a technical professional should be proficient in all four skills, including speaking and writing. This being the case, the exit exam required of university graduates in Sri Lanka or in any other developing country should test all four skills, not just reading and listening comprehension. Such a requirement, of course, will create a demand for training in all of these skills. The question then becomes, how does one provide such training?

Using case studies for 'Generalized' ESP

Assuming that the exit exam will be a test of acquired competence rather than of learned performance (see Hutchinson and Waters (1980) and Krashen (1982) for discussion of the distinction), and that training will therefore be aimed at producing genuine competence in students, I suggest that case studies be devised that allow students to simulate communicative activities in the 'real world'. I do not mean the sort of role-plays and games that teach students simple social routines. These have their uses at lower levels but are too simple for university students. Rather, I am referring to elaborate problem-solving situations that can occupy an entire class for many class periods. The case-study approach has been used in medical schools, law schools, and business schools in the United States for many years with great success, and is now being applied in other domains, including ESP and technical communication courses (Barton and Barton 1981, Hackos 1984, Piotrowski 1982).

In the case-study approach, the instructor typically turns the class into one or more 'companies', with each student being assigned a particular role consistent with his or her academic background. A civil engineering student, for example, might be cast in the role of staff engineer while an accounting student might be the budget manager. The instructor then presents the class with a realistic, complex, ill-defined problem that has many possible solutions, none of them ideal. The students must work together in their respective groups and attack the

problem; in many cases it is desirable to have the groups compete against each other. In the course of addressing the problem, they can be required to perform many different kinds of realistic communicative activities, all in English; listening to a briefing from a guest lecturer, writing proposals, writing memos and letters, gathering information from the library, talking to outside experts, participating in meetings, reading technical reports, giving short oral presentations etc.

Team teaching

Of course, to make such an exercise work requires considerable knowledge on the part of whoever sets it up. Since most English teachers lack the technical knowledge that would be appropriate to setting up a simulation for, say, engineering students, they would probably want to turn to a faculty colleague or an industry colleague to help them out. In fact, team-teaching arrangements like this have generally proven to be most effective in these situations (Dudley-Evans 1984, Hackos 1984). The technical colleague can provide the technical information necessary to set up the game, can monitor the students' attempts to solve the technical problems, and can evaluate the proposed solutions from a technical perspective. The English teacher can make sure that each student is required to perform certain communication tasks, can monitor each student's performance, and can provide corrective feedback when the game is over. Furthermore, the English teacher can play the important role of non-technical manager, forcing students to translate their technical language into the equivalent in ordinary English.

Normally the case study will be offered as part of the English course, with the technical instructor helping out as adviser. In classes with students from a variety of disciplines, one could consider using a variety of technical advisers. It is also possible to incorporate the case study into a technical course, but this requires very elaborate planning and an unusually co-operative technical instructor. For one thing, he should be willing and able to give his students complex, ill-defined technical problems that force students to engage in fuzzy problem-solving.

Although English teachers are often hesitant to initiate a team-teaching project with the technical faculty, the technical faculty themselves often are most receptive to the idea, provided that:

1. the subject matter of the simulation is within their area of expertise and is of importance to their students,
2. they feel sufficiently competent in English to participate fully,
3. it does not demand too much of their time.

The English teacher, in turn, should be willing to learn about, and get involved in, the subject matter of the simulation and not just serve as a paper grader. In the real world, communication is as important as technical work; indeed, they are very much interdependent. If the

English teacher is subservient to his technical colleague in a case study, it will lead students to conclude that communication is not very important in the world of work and will defeat a major purpose of the exercise.

Problem solving

As I have emphasized elsewhere (Huckin and Olsen 1984), technical disciplines are fundamentally and essentially problem-solving ones. The problems they address in the real world, however, are different in kind from those that students typically deal with in the academic world. Academic problems are usually neatly laid out for the student by the professor, they are usually well-defined, and they usually have one correct answer. Real world problems, by contrast, are often disordered, ill-defined, and open to many possible solutions, none of which may be totally correct. Working professionals, therefore, must learn to define problems, to explore various solutions, to make trade-offs, and to prioritize and optimize. All of this requires communication — with managers, with clients, with technical experts, perhaps with government officials, etc. By contrast, the student in a typical engineering course can usually shut himself off from the world, so to speak, select his equations, and reach for his calculator; he does not have to engage in fuzzy problem-solving and he does not have to communicate except to tell his professor what answer he got. Clearly, if such a student is to make a smooth transition into professional life, he has much to learn — not only with regard to communication skills but with regard to problem-solving skills as well. I claim, with Hackos, Flower, and others, that these two kinds of skills go together and should be taught together, with communication seen as a form of problem-solving (Flower 1981, Hackos 1984).

Higher-order reasoning

Some years ago William O. Perry did a study of intellectual development among university students in which he described three basic stages of development (Perry 1968). In the first stage, called dualism, the student believes in absolute authority and thinks there is only one correct answer to any problem. The engineering student described above is at this stage of development. The second major stage is that of multiplicity, where the student goes to the opposite extreme and believes that all proposed solutions to a problem are equally worthy. Obviously such indiscriminate acceptance of the first solution that comes along will not be well received in the real world either. Only when students have reached the third stage, that of higher-order reasoning, will they be able to function competently as working professionals. At this stage, they know how to investigate a complex problem, analyze a variety of possible solutions, and select the best solution based on the best evidence. This in turn allows them to form sound arguments and engage in persuasive communication.

Argumentation

A university-level ESP curriculum, as I said earlier, should aim to prepare students for life in the working world. Therefore, it should give them instruction in higher-order reasoning skills and it should give them opportunities to practise these skills. Case studies do just that. They confront students with complex technical problems and complex communication problems. To solve such problems, students must do more than traditional lower-level ESP activities such as describing an object or stating a definition; they must lay out arguments, build a case, persuade skeptical readers. Of course argumentation itself will vary in effectiveness depending on who it is aimed at. An argument that succeeds in winning over a technical audience may have little or no effect on a non-technical audience, and vice versa. Working professionals know this and have to live with it, and so students should be made to know it too. In a team-taught case study of the type I am advocating here, the student is exposed to both types of audiences. Not only does the English teacher play a non-technical (managerial) role, but other students in the class, if they are from other disciplines, will also be a non-technical audience for that particular student. This is still ESP, because it is aimed at giving the student the communication skills he is likely to need in his particular future field of work. But it is a generalized or wide-angle form of ESP, because those skills are so diverse and wide-ranging.

Some teachers may feel that this approach is too difficult for their students, that they will not be able to keep up. Certainly it will be a challenge to them; they may have to struggle at the beginning. But that, I feel, is as it should be. For one thing, it conforms to the communicative philosophy of language teaching, as epitomized by Brumfit's 'deep-end strategy' (Brumfit 1978). The student is placed in a situation where his linguistic needs exceed his linguistic resources. He is thus driven to seek help from the language teacher and, which is perhaps even more important for the development of communicative competence, to develop strategies that allow him to engage in communication despite linguistic shortcomings. It also fulfils the requirements for optimal input according to current second language acquisition theory as postulated by Krashen (1982). Specifically, it:

1. provides a large quantity of comprehensive input, since the primary focus is always on meaning rather than on form;
2. is interesting and relevant for the learner, since it is explicitly based on communication patterns in the real world;
3. is not grammatically sequenced;
4. does not produce anxiety in students, since there is no insistence on grammatical correctness;
5. provides tools for obtaining additional input, since the student must learn how to gather information instead of just being given it (this is where the English teacher has a particularly important role to play).

Some constraints

There are, of course, a number of constraints on this approach. These are due mainly to the fact that it is so different from the traditional approach to language teaching. Some students, for example, may oppose it on the grounds that it does not provide a large amount of traditional, direct, highly-structured classroom teaching. Such students should be made to understand that learning a language is simply not the same thing as learning physics, chemistry, world history or other subject matter. Learning a language — unless one is a theoretical linguist — means learning a set of skills, not learning subject matter *per se*. And one learns by doing. An appropriate exit exam to test these skills, as argued above, would do much to reinforce this point. So long as students are within a year or two of graduation, they will generally find the approach relevant and useful. First-year students, and especially those about to enter the university, would benefit more from an EAP course emphasizing reading and lecture comprehension skills.

Traditionalist administrators may oppose this approach unless they are first convinced that the ELT curriculum needs an overhaul. Input from the world of work could help here. Surveys of industry managers, government agency heads, working scientists and engineers, and other professionals can be fairly easily carried out; indeed, these make good communicative exercises for students themselves to do. Administrators will also want to see some measurable results from this new approach. Here again the exit exam will play a major role, as will feedback from the working world.

English teachers themselves, if they are used to traditional methods of instruction, may be apprehensive about adopting the approach I recommend. For one thing, it will require a considerable investment of time initially to set up the program and to orient oneself to the subject matter of the disciplines involved. Those who have tried the approach, however, find that this investment pays off with improved student performance. Teachers may also worry that shifting from a teacher-centred methodology to a learner-centred one will cause them to lose control of the class. While the students do take on more responsibility and are expected to show more initiative under this approach, the teacher can play the role of higher-level (i.e. non-technical) manager and still remain in charge, with the students ultimately reporting to him or her. But there are options available here, and actually many English teachers (myself included) prefer to play a role more like that of a coach or adviser, say as the company's editor of publications.

In the event that these constraints prove insuperable in particular situations — and as Holliday and Cooke (1983) remind us, every ESP course is part of a larger ecosystem — then it is possible to use certain features of this approach without adopting it in its entirety. For example, instead of teaming up with a technical colleague, the English teacher could run a case study on his own, as Flower (1981), Piotrowski (1982), and others have done. This is more convenient in certain

respects in that it eliminates co-ordination problems. But since the English teacher lacks technical credibility, the exercise — even if it is based on authoritative information — may have to be restricted in scope and may therefore tend to focus more on the superficial aspects of language use and less on the deeper aspects (i.e. argumentation, persuasion). Or, if one prefers for some reason not to run a case study of any kind, one could still build class exercises around problem-solving and argumentation. If the problem is sufficiently complex, it will not only engage the students' interest but will also involve them in higher-order reasoning; most important of all, it will focus the student's attention on meaning rather than on form, thus assisting genuine language acquisition. In any case where the English teacher is 'going it alone', opportunities to get helpful suggestions from technical colleagues or from working professionals should not be overlooked.

Conclusion

The hallmark of ESP instruction is its attempt to appeal more directly to the students' interests outside the English class than is normally done in traditional ESL/EFL instruction. In this paper, I have argued that the ultimate interest of university students is to be able to move on into the working world and function well in a professional capacity. Increasingly, proficiency in spoken and written English will be a requirement for this role. University English teachers and curriculum planners, therefore, should be training students in these skills by giving them challenging, meaningful, genuinely communicative exercises. The case study, in my view, epitomizes such an exercise. More than any other, it elicits complex problem-solving behavior on the part of students and thus promotes the development of communicative competence. In the working world, general communicative competence is as important as technical communicative competence. I therefore propose 'generalized' ESP as the most relevant and useful type of ESP course for advanced undergraduates, and suggest further that it should influence the way we view lower-level English courses as well.

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Making Materials Work in the ESP Classroom

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A great deal of time, effort and money has gone into the development of ESP materials. Complex systems have been devised for analysing learners' needs, so that materials can be made as relevant as possible. But however relevant materials may be to the learners' target needs, they must still be made to work in the classroom. They must be effective not just as representations of language use, but effective instruments of language learning. Needs analysis can tell us a lot about the nature and content of the learners' target language needs, but it can tell us little or nothing about how to attain that target competence. For this knowledge we must look not to the analysis of language use, but to the observation of the processes of learning. We need in other words to consider not only target language needs, but also learning needs.

Unfortunately whereas language needs are readily observable, we cannot see how someone learns. We cannot construct a neat checklist on which to itemize the learning needs, as we can with language items. It must be admitted that we still know little about how people actually learn. But what we do know is that it is a subtle and complex process, which cannot be reduced to discrete constructs. For guidance in making ESP materials relevant to learning needs, we must look to theoretical models of learning and to our own intuitions as teachers and learners. This paper will set out some basic principles of learning which can provide a reasoned basis for the interpretation of ESP language needs into an effective ESP methodology.

Fundamental principles of learning

Learning is development

Learners are not empty vessels waiting to be filled up with new knowledge. Learning is a developmental process in which learners use their existing knowledge to make sense of the flow of new information. Picture the mind as a kind of network similar to the molecular structures you see in chemistry laboratories. New atoms of knowledge can only be fitted into the network, if the necessary connections are

already there. Learning, in other words, is a process in which learners use their existing knowledge in order to make the new information meaningful. It follows from this that learning will only take place if learners have the necessary existing knowledge. If the teacher does not first determine what knowledge learners already possess, so that this can be activated in the learning of the new knowledge, teaching will be inefficient and may even be totally ineffective in a situation where the learners do not have the necessary knowledge to make the new information meaningful.

Learning is a thinking process

It is not enough for learners to have the necessary knowledge to make things meaningful. They must also use that knowledge. This carries two implications for materials and methodology:

1. The teacher should help learners to become aware of what they know and how it can be used.
2. Tasks and activities should oblige learners to think — to use their cognitive capacities and their knowledge of the world to make sense of the flow of new information.

Learning is an active process

It should be apparent from principles 1 and 2 that the learner be seen not as a passive receiver of knowledge but as an active participant in the learning process. However, it is important to make clear what we mean by the term 'active'. We can distinguish two kinds of activity:

1. *Psycho-motor Activity* — i.e. the movement of hand, eye or mouth to produce or receive communication signals.
2. *Processing Activity* — i.e. the activity in the brain whereby the learner tries to make meaningful what is heard, read, spoken or written.

In more traditional approaches to language teaching, such as the Audiolingual Method, no such distinction was made. It was assumed that activity meant only psycho-motor activity. Hence the prevalence in the Audiolingual Method of language laboratory drills. But, in fact, of the two kinds of activity it is the processing activity that is the important one. Activity should be judged not in terms of how much the learners speak or write, but how much they have to think and work things out for themselves.

Learning involves making decisions

Since learning is an active developmental process it follows that it is an active thinking process in which learners use existing knowledge to make new information meaningful. Throughout this process the learner is making decisions — deciding what is meaningful and what is

not, deciding what knowledge will be useful in the solution of a problem and what will not, deciding what is correct and what is not. The making of decisions is central both to communication and to learning. Every time you open your mouth you are making decisions about what to say and how to say it. Language learning, therefore, depends on the making of decisions. The crucial question is 'who makes the decisions?'. In the traditional classroom the teacher made all the decisions. Indeed it was essential for the teacher to make them in order to avoid all possibilities of error: you cannot make decisions without running the risk of being wrong. If the learner is seen as a thinker, this implies that the learner should be the decision-maker. Tasks and activities should, therefore, give learners the opportunity to make decisions. But it should be recognized that giving such opportunities bestows on the learner the right and the opportunity to be wrong.

Learning a language is not just a matter of linguistic knowledge

The role of existing knowledge in learning has been emphasized. We should, however, note that it is not only knowledge of language that enables us to learn a language. The second language learner brings to the classroom a complex mass of conceptual and factual knowledge. This presents probably the most fundamental problem of second language teaching and learning — the mismatch between the learners' cognitive/conceptual capacities and their linguistic level. When we learn our mother tongue, language and concepts develop in harmony. In second language learning they are completely off balance; the second language learner is, in effect, conceptually and cognitively mature, but linguistically an infant. This problem is particularly prominent with ESP students, who frequently have a knowledge of the subject matter well in excess of the teacher's knowledge. The important point to note is that language teaching must respect both the conceptual/cognitive and the linguistic levels. Materials which are aimed at a low language level must not assume a low cognitive/conceptual level. The maturity, knowledge of the world and thinking capacities of the learner must be respected. Indeed they should be actively built on to aid the development of language knowledge. Language learning does not have to be just about language. A great deal of language is learnt incidentally while working on problems of a non-linguistic nature. Full use should, therefore, be made of the ESP learner's subject and general knowledge as a vehicle for language learning.

Second language learners are already communicatively competent

Although in the previous section it was stated that second language learners are linguistically infants, this is not to say that they are communicatively infants. They may not know the specific forms, words or possibly some of the concepts of the second language, but they know what communication is. They know that language serves different

purposes, that it takes different forms in different situations, that some words are appropriate in some situations but not in others. They are, in effect, communicatively competent, because through their mother tongue they are communicators. The learners' knowledge of communication should be respected and exploited through simple techniques such as prediction.

Learning is an emotional experience

Learners are thinking beings, but they also have feelings. Just as the cognitive capacities are engaged in learning, so too are the affective qualities. Second language learning is, in fact, a highly stressful activity, because it strikes at the heart of our psychological security. Partly this is a result of the inter-relationship of mother tongue and conceptual/cognitive development which has already been noted. We feel we really know something when it is in our mother tongue. In a partly known second language, however, we are never completely sure that we have understood or have made ourselves understood. This naturally breeds a sense of insecurity.

Another factor which makes second language learning a disturbing experience is the close relationship between linguistic performance and public 'face'. ESP students in particular must feel the dual frustration of not being able to express knowledge about their subject specialism in the second language and of feeling that the world judges their subject knowledge on the evidence of their poor linguistic performance.

The good teacher will try to minimize the negative effects of the learner's emotional reactions to learning and will instead try to boost the positive emotions. This might involve:

- using PAIR and GROUP work to minimize the stress of speaking in front of the whole class.
- structuring tasks so as to enable learners to show what they **do** know rather than what they **do not**.
- giving learners time to think and work out answers.
- putting more emphasis on the process of getting the answer rather than the product of the right answer.
- making interest, fun and variety primary considerations in the design of tasks and activities, not just an added bonus.

The cognitive and affective sides of learning have been dealt with separately, but it is important to see the links between the two. In order to learn something, the learner must think about it, but in order to think about it, the learner must first WANT to think about it. The cognitive engagement which is so important to learning is dependent on the primary emotional reaction to the thing to be learnt. It is this link that demonstrates the power of motivation both to generate and to inhibit learning. Motivation, which can be regarded as the willingness or unwillingness to engage in learning, indicates the inseparability of the cognitive and affective sides of the learner.

Learning is not systematic

Here we meet another of the paradoxes of language learning. We learn by systematizing knowledge into patterns or networks, but this will not proceed in accordance with any pre-determined system. This obviously has considerable implications for syllabus design, since the whole purpose of a syllabus is to systematize the language knowledge to be learnt. But a good syllabus will acknowledge that setting out knowledge in a systematic way will in no way produce systematic learning. The learners must create their own internal system. An external system may help to make patterns clearer, but that is all it can do. We must get right away from the erroneous belief: 'I have taught; therefore, they have learnt'. Learners will learn only when they are ready and able to do so.

Learning needs should be considered at every stage of the learning process

The title of this paper is *Making Materials Work in the ESP Classroom*. Ideally, however, materials should not need to be made to work. Learning needs should be built into the whole course design process from needs and analysis to the actual lesson. It should not be a matter of designing materials according to views about language and then grafting a methodology on to them. Methodological considerations should be a determining factor throughout the whole learning process.

Conclusion

ESP has been strongly focused on making materials relevant to target needs. This has meant a heavy emphasis on relevance to language needs. But the concern of the ESP teacher and learner is not with language **use**; it is with language **learning**. Need analysis may act as a compass in telling us where we want to go, but in determining our route to that target we must be guided by principles of learning. This paper has presented nine simple but important principles to guide the ESP teacher. They are not a definitive statement of how learning takes place, but materials and methodology which observe these basic principles will not go far wrong.

Factors Influencing ESP Materials Production and Use

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The ESP movement has been in existence for some twenty-five years, with the most serious and interesting developments occurring in the last fifteen years or so. Its origins are not the concern of this paper, though they have to do with the changing patterns of requirements for English in the emerging Third World, and a growing recognition that the English learnt at the secondary level of education was insufficient for the socio-economic and educational needs of students at the tertiary level of education. Thus ESP developed with the emphasis very much on a renewed and more critical sense of what constitutes the purpose of learning a foreign language.

In pedagogic terms the prevailing view was that language teaching at the tertiary level — particularly if directed at science and technology students — had to be different in style and content: that more of the same methods as used at secondary level would only lead to much the same levels of achievement, or lack of it. In other words, what was required was a distinctive approach reflected in different types of material, together with particular modifications or compensations in teaching methodology. More significantly, as the needs for English were articulated by institutions and institutional heads very much in terms of English being auxiliary to some other primary professional or academic purpose (i.e. as a means of achieving something else, and not as an end in itself), very real pressures of time, manpower, materials and scarce resources required ESP practitioners to seek as cost-effective ways as possible of devising new approaches. The movement was rapidly serviced by emerging Departments of Applied Linguistics in British universities, with ideas of how to frame new approaches to materials design, syllabus construction, and the identification of learning purposes or needs. New approaches to language description aided this process and, fuelled by money for ESP teaching posts and a crusading spirit on the part of those who occupied them, there emerged a discrete area of ELT, in which ideas very soon outstripped experience and expertise. Publishers spotted a rich market, and first generation materials, e.g. Pittman (1960), Close (1965), Herbert (1965), Ewer and

Latorre (1969), et al., gave way to a second generation series of ESP textbooks, e.g. *Focus* and *Nucleus*, supplemented in the last seven or eight years by *Reading and Thinking in English*, *Skills for Learning* and many others.

So much for a thumb-nail sketch of the history of ESP. I want now to consider three facets of its development that have influenced ESP materials production and use.

The first problem in the development of ESP centres around a debate about purposes, which has been fairly continuous over the last ten years. But *whose* purposes, and articulated by *whom*, for whom? What distinguishes general purpose English teaching from ESP is the 'way purpose is defined, and the manner of its implementation'. To quote Widdowson (1983):

In ESP 'purpose' refers to the eventual practical use to which the language will be put in achieving occupational and academic aims. As generally understood, it is essentially . . . a *training* concept: having established as precisely as possible what learners need the language for, one then designs a course which converges on the need. ESP . . . seeks to provide learners with restricted competence to enable them to cope with certain clearly defined tasks. These tasks constitute the specific purpose which the ESP course is designed to meet. GPE, on the other hand, . . . has to be conceived in *educational* terms . . . (and) seeks to provide learners with a general capacity to cope with undefined eventualities in the future.

This of course begs a number of very large questions, not the least of which is the accessibility, for scrutiny and analysis, of the supposed purposes learners have for learning the language. Questions of reliability of data (gathered by what means? — questionnaires, intuition, formal analysis of job contexts), homogeneity of the data as applied to groups, and the translatability of such data into pedagogic practicability, all arise. The problems of definition and data acquisition become acute when the notion of learning purpose becomes, in the context of academic institutions, political, by which I mean the problem of the place of English in relation to other subjects on the curriculum.

So-called 'service English' programmes in universities and technical institutions where English is not a medium of instruction suffer greatly from the ambiguities of this concept. In general terms, the more specific the nature of the training context¹, the more predictable and prescribable language learning for communicative purposes can be. But once one moves outside limited occupational areas and into educational institutions, where the notion of ESP as a training concept merges with larger *educational* aims which nevertheless are still subsumed under the heading of ESP, serious problems of perspective and definition can occur. One frequently encounters the situation that what is acceptable

to the ESP practitioner, *qua* analyst, is unacceptable (in terms of being a sufficient motivating reason for studying the language) to the ESP customer, *qua* learner. It is the problem of 'your specific purposes are not mine'.

The second facet in the development of ESP is the claim by practitioners that ESP is the best example of communicative language teaching. From the earliest days the preoccupation with purposes has focused attention on language use in particular occupational or academic situations, and how our greater understanding of the way language operates communicatively can be incorporated into language teaching pedagogy. A great deal of ESP thinking and practice developed as a reaction to the structuralist-behaviourist dominated methodology of the 50s and 60s, which manifestly failed, as a methodology, to help learners communicate effectively in social, educational and occupational settings. The crop of distinctions introduced by Widdowson into the ELT vocabulary — usage and use, signification and value, text and discourse, cohesion and coherence and so on — drew attention to the need to redirect system-learning towards meaningful communicative behaviour — 'how the language user demonstrates his ability to use his knowledge of linguistic rules for effective communication'. The great achievement of ESP is that it has forced these issues into the forefront of thinking and debate about ELT — what constitutes communication, how one defines communicative competence, how a communicative approach is reflected in materials, and above all methodology. However, it is the case, unfortunately, that much ESP practice has become overburdened by its own ideology. Preoccupation with the learner has not necessarily led to learning-centred teaching; awareness of communication as an end has not guaranteed that the means will lead to communicative ability.

One of the reasons for this is the third facet of the development of ESP which I want to draw attention to: the over-preoccupation with ESP materials writing and production. This has come about not only as a result of the zealotry of ESP practitioners, rich in ideas about what is, or is not, relevant and useful for learners, but also as a result of the pervading concern with specifying learning purposes that cannot be met *other than* by the development of custom-made teaching materials. I am not saying that such a preoccupation has been wrong, but rather that it has been diversionary from what I will point to a little later as the central issues of ESP — the teacher and his or her capabilities, the learner and his or her interests, and concern for the language learning process. It is often claimed by ESP practitioners, however, that only through the development of original teaching materials in relation to the context of learning that particular pedagogic priorities and processes can be made clear and explicit. And it is proper that materials should be viewed in this way — as scripts deriving from a view of what is possible and desirable in methodological terms, for particular groups of learners. But it is equally true that a great deal of ESP materials

production in recent years has derived from quite different sources of inspiration.

One source has been a view of the learner and his need to learn the language, and the language that he needs to learn. Needs analysis reached a peak of descriptive power and complexity with the publication of John Munby's *Communicative Syllabus Design* in 1978. As a concept, it has always been central to the way of looking at ELT that has characterized ESP. But needs analysis as a factor — if not the main factor — in materials development has been a concept very narrowly interpreted, often coincidental with a sponsor's view of what the needs of a student are, and very much concerned with what has been called 'target communicative behaviour'. 'Needs' is a very ambiguous term, and while sponsors' views are undeniably important, needs as felt by the learner, i.e. their wants or wishes, may well be in conflict with them. Teachers' needs and learners' needs — as well as teaching needs and learning needs (which are not the same thing) — must also be considered. The concept is inherently rich and complex. Nevertheless the classic approach to ESP has tended to identify 'needs' with the language of the target situation, which in university settings is taken to be the language of the subjects particular students are following, and with a particular sub-set of language skills, usually reading skills. Hence teaching materials tend to be both subject specific and skill specific. Indeed a long-standing practice is to construct teaching materials from texts taken directly from the target situation in the interests of 'authenticity', despite the fact that such texts may adversely affect the role of the teacher by demanding too high a level of specialist knowledge, and indeed they may affect the role of the learner too, by making linguistic demands beyond his or her interlanguage competence. Furthermore, in exploiting this sort of material, reference is frequently made to descriptions of language use that derive from discourse analysis — speech acts, or rhetorical functions, as they have been called. Such procedures are justified on the ground that they reflect the sequencing of, say, scientific thought patterns as manifest in the rhetorical organization of scientific discourse. The point is not that such procedures are not justified — in certain circumstances they are — but they have become superficially highly emulatable, and have taken over the teacher, as it were, in dangerously limiting and misleading ways. A new kind of structural drilling (ways of expressing definitions, or classifications, or deductions) has become common. The applied linguist's analytical view of language *as* communication has come to dominate a situation which calls for the teacher's synthesizing view of language learning *for* communication.

If needs analysis and discourse analysis have been powerful influences on ESP materials development — both for good and ill — I want to turn now to consider pragmatic factors that should, I believe, influence ESP materials choice and use, and ultimately guide both the ESP teacher and the materials designer in producing materials.

Coincidentally, they cover just those factors that Munby explicitly excluded from consideration in devising his needs analysis instrument. The 'socio-political, logistical, administrative, psycho-pedagogic, methodological constraints upon the implementation of the syllabus specification' (Munby 1978). As Hutchinson and Waters (1984) put it:

Although analysis of the target situation may guide when we decide *what* to teach, *how* we teach it and *what materials* we use to do so must be decided by reference to the constraints and potential of the teaching-learning situation.

ESP materials production and use: constraints

1. *Institutional factors*. By institutional factors I mean certain 'givens' in the teaching situation. I shall consider just three:
 - (a) *time allotted on the timetable for learning English*. In most tertiary level instructions I know of, this amounts to two or three hours per week for one or two years, about sixty to ninety hours per year. For English major students this may rise in the second and subsequent years to nine hours per week or more, carefully compartmentalized in discrete courses. Such time allotment reflects, particularly in the former cases where most students are concentrated, the *true* importance attached to English language learning rather than the *imagined* importance we, as ESP practitioners, think it has, or institutional heads say it has.
 - (b) *Classroom or learning conditions*. For example, the size of classes (conventionally between 30 and 50); equipment, or the lack of it, OHPs, tape recorders, video etc; noise levels — whether rooms have windows, air-conditioners etc. Another factor is:
 - (c) *Attitudes to English language teaching by institutional heads and staff*. Under this I include the status of English on the curriculum, how it is viewed as an *enabling* subject, whether it is 'to develop reading skills to enable students to read reference works in their subjects' (the rationale in most universities), or whether it is part of a 'General Studies' department, having educational value together with Maths or General Science or the L1, but little or no specific bearing on the rest of the curriculum (the rationale in most Technical, Agricultural and Vocational colleges in Thailand). These three factors should have a major bearing on *decisions* about not only what to teach and why, but what materials we choose and how we teach them.
2. *The teacher factors*. Again I will identify just three of these.
 - (a) *Teachers' own competence* (or capacity) and confidence in using English. Teachers of English in Thailand, for example, are very conscious of deficiencies in their own ability. This they attribute to poor training, the lack of English Language use in society, the

relatively low status assigned to English institutionally. Their own temperamental diffidence and the fear of losing face add to this. Allowing for shortcomings in teachers' competence (which include the 'affective variables' I have mentioned) should be a major factor in materials production, and is partly the reason why many teachers are terrified of so-called 'authentic' materials: they don't understand them.

- (b) *Training of ELT and ESP teachers, and competence of teachers.* Most pre-service teacher training in Thailand, and probably in other countries in our region, is sadly deficient in developing professional skills. For example, about 4% of a four-year teacher training programme in a Teacher Training College in Thailand is devoted to the development of specific professional skills which teachers are going to need daily for the next 40 years of professional life. Small wonder teachers revert, in methodological terms, to teaching the way they were taught.
- (c) *Attitudes to language and learning.* Many teachers of English (aided and abetted by institutional heads) still view English as a subject on the curriculum like history or biology with its own body of knowledge (i.e. grammar) which is what has to be taught (i.e. lectured on). Thus learning (and learning styles) tend to be equated with subject teaching, i.e. teacher dominated, devoted to dispensing facts about the language, public exam oriented, etc. Attitudes to subject specific language use are equivocal: as far as it can be 'popularly understood' they are not averse; as soon as actual samples of technical, scientific or educational discourse are presented to be taught, teachers tend to reject it as 'not their business'. Again these three factors should have a major bearing on not only what materials to use, but how they should be taught.

3. *Learner factors.* Learner perception of what English language learning is all about is a crucial consideration, which client-oriented methods of needs analysis have tended to ignore. What is *valued by language learners about language learning* is often at odds with institutional values. Hence we have the situation in which the aims and objectives of an ESP programme are directed towards the acquisition of reading skills in specific subject areas, whereas the learner population values English language learning mainly in order to be able to speak the language in social contexts. This is embarrassing. It is not enough to say, as Hutchinson and Waters (1984) do, that

The apparent problem of a mis-match between learners' needs (or *wants?*) and sponsors' needs should be confronted and seen as a beginning of communication and negotiation and therefore as an essential foundation for a communicative approach in ESP.

The negotiation tends to be one-sided. Teachers readily agree that 'reading skills' are what need to be taught (the teaching of which, it is often assumed, does not make such strenuous demands on proficiency, energy, methodological expertise etc); and sponsors (the policy makers) require ESP practitioners to conform to their wishes. But what is valuable for the learner (in psychological terms 'knowing' a language is often equated with being able to communicate orally) tends to be ignored. Other factors contribute to this. *Anxieties about learning and learning styles* which require pair and group work, are frequently difficult to overcome, especially with large groups, when the teacher is required to be less directive and more participative. Both teachers and learners are often unclear about what is expected of them in more learning-centred approaches which ESP and communicative language teaching encourages. The lack of exposure to English accessible to learners (in terms of linguistic level and subject interest) outside the classroom additionally supports the impression that English has little or no place in the educational process (libraries are full of books that are unread — some might say unreadable). In short, learners are frequently disillusioned about and resistant to learning English at the tertiary level. What is presented to them as relevant and appropriate often turns out to be boring and difficult. What they most value is hard to achieve, with teachers who are reluctant to dare to try new approaches, using materials which relate more to students' interests and motivation on both cognitive and affective levels, because they are deemed to lack educational seriousness.

I have considered these factors at some length, not because they are not known or appreciated by ESP practitioners, whether they are L1 native speakers or foreign experts, but because the various paradigms and procedures that characterize ESP have, to my mind, insufficiently catered for them. What many ESP materials lack, it seems to me, is compatibility in coming to terms with the various factors in the ESP situation I have mentioned. They are text book solutions imposed, without modification, on teaching-learning situations. To quote Hutchinson and Waters (1982) again:

Many ESP materials appear to ignore basic aspects of sound educational practice. . . . The demands and restrictions of the learning situation are frequently overlooked, with inevitable effects on motivation and learning. . . . Much effort has been expended in attempts to make ESP academically respectable at the expense of what is pedagogically appropriate.

And not only is there a degree of incompatibility; there is also a lack of creativity, as they go on to point out in the same paper:

The main cause of low student interest in ESP materials is that they are too often uncreative: the scope of the language activities they attempt to engage the learners in is limited, and their knowledge content is largely unexploited.

One of the main reasons for this situation, I believe, has been the view that when the teaching of English is auxiliary to some other professional purpose, the relevance and appropriacy of teaching materials must derive from the language of the target situation, whether or not there is any evidence that the student's interest in his or her area of study or work as a motivating purpose will automatically carry over into the ESP classroom. At the training end of the ESP spectrum, with adult, in-work learners with limited time available, this may be true and the procedure pedagogically justifiable. But in *educational* institutions, at the tertiary level in particular, it is much more questionable whether the ESP/EST paradigm can be made to work effectively to secure learning achievement. And the reason for this, in my view, is because in situations where concurrent education is not in English, the *dependent* nature of ESP — dependent on exploiting other areas of activity, academically defined, with already existing purposes — is not wholeheartedly accepted by learners as sufficiently motivating to learn English. There is ample evidence that students in technical colleges do not enjoy learning technical English with its heavy vocabulary load and that first year students at university find subject-oriented, study skills courses boring.

While the fault may lie in the uncreative nature of the materials used, I think there is a more fundamental objection to such ESP materials. While they frequently do not take into account all, or any, of the pragmatic factors I have mentioned, they are actually seen by learners, I believe, as irrelevant to their purposes. What really works with first and second year students in Thai universities is not *Foundation English*, or *Reading and Thinking in English* or *Skills for Learning*, et al., but a set of task-based activity-oriented units designed to promote spoken fluency, designed around topics like Travel and Tourism, Studying Abroad, People and Entertainment, and so on. This is still ESP, in my view, but not as traditionally conceived. It is a more humanistic version of ESP that recognizes and caters not only for the teacher and learner factors I have suggested, but also the crucial factor of developing, in the *time* available, some oral fluency in relation to topics that actually interest learners, and that this is the most worthwhile thing that can be done.

ESP — and ESP materials production and use — has been guilty of over-optimism. On the one hand, with regard to what ESP teachers can handle, in difficult teaching-learning situations, in relation to students whose interests and motivation are frequently quite other than what the recent tradition would have us believe; on the other hand, with regard to what sponsors and clients have been allowed, indeed encouraged, to expect in the way of achievement. To develop reading skills to enable learners to read textbooks and journals in their own subject areas is setting a goal far beyond what, in most situations I know of, can be achieved in practice. Professional ethics should dissuade us from stating such large aims, and encouraging belief in

them, for the sake of the ESP teacher, the learner, the client, and ultimately the profession.

I said earlier that much ESP practice has become over-burdened with its own ideology. In the meantime, the communicative language teaching movement, which has grown out of ESP, has renewed concern for the teacher and his or her capabilities, and the learner and his or her interests, and in what constitutes effective learning. Further materials writing for ESP should do the same; in other words move away from the 'killing fields' of needs analysis, discourse analysis, notional-functional grammars and syllabuses, and all the academic trappings of conventional ESP, towards good pedagogy, founded on a clearer appreciation of the ecology of educational systems within which English language teaching is constrained.

Notes

1. e.g. a course for NATO fighter pilots cited by Hutchinson and Waters (1984).

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***Evaluation and
Administration***

Testing and its Administration in ESP

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Introduction: testing in teaching

Until very recently testing has been a neglected area of work within language teaching and applied linguistics. Although the influence and possible importance of language tests was acknowledged, this was usually done rather grudgingly. In general, applied linguists have concentrated much more on materials writing, syllabus design and teaching methodologies which have been seen as being both more interesting areas for investigation and experimentation, and more appropriate areas for the introduction of change. Consequently, perhaps, developments in language testing have dragged behind developments in teaching and in materials design to such an extent that complaints have frequently been voiced that the tests and examinations have constituted a restraint on the possibility of development in other areas like methodology and textbooks.

However, there is increasing recognition that this state of affairs need not apply. Instead of viewing the tests negatively as a conservative restraint on development, we could acknowledge the fact that tests have a powerful influence on learners and learning. This influence will be negative if the test is bad, but it can be positive if the test represents a worthwhile goal for our students. In other words, tests have considerable potential for innovation.

Developments over the past five years or so point to an increasingly innovatory role for tests and indicate that testing is being taken much more seriously. Gone, I hope forever, are the days when it was believed that testing was not the province of materials writers, syllabus designers or language teachers, that testing was mainly concerned with numbers, and that questions of test content, test method, test assessment and test interpretation were beyond the pale of applied linguistics.

Testing is far too important to be left to testers: it is the legitimate concern of all involved in language teaching.

In the light of this, it is rather sobering and perhaps depressing to note the minimal attention paid to testing within ESP. Both my own personal experience of a variety of ESP projects and of training a large number of ESP teachers from all over the globe, as well as a survey of

the testing and the ESP literature, convince me that virtually no attention has been paid to the question of testing within ESP courses, or to the implications for test development of that set of approaches to language teaching which we know by the name of ESP. Language testers, with very few exceptions, have ignored the ESP challenge, and there are very few papers, articles or books discussing testing in ESP. ESP practitioners, too, have ignored the innovatory potential of tests, and have concentrated exclusively on bringing about change in curricula, syllabuses and classrooms either by materials writing or by teacher training. This paper is intended to contribute in a small way to changing this, by encouraging ESP practitioners to take testing more seriously and, indirectly, by encouraging testers to take ESP seriously.

The role of tests within ESP

Tests, and particularly pass/fail examinations, are often crucially important within ESP. Indeed, the test is often the only reason why a student is taking an ESP course. When an ESP course is being offered as a service course to other areas of study, as frequently happens, for example, at university level, often the only reason students have for taking the course is to pass the examination in the language required by the academic system, before they are allowed to graduate as engineers, doctors, lawyers or whatever. Here the examination is a hurdle to be overcome by hook or by crook. In this situation, the test serves as a strong motivating force and is quite likely to influence teaching. It is therefore particularly important that the test measures abilities and knowledge relevant to the student's current academic or subject study or to his or her future employment.

A related use of tests is to decide whether a student already has 'sufficient English' to be exempted from a course in English offered within his degree structure. In such a case, the test acts as a sort of reverse placement test. The test needs to be constructed in such a way as to ensure that the right students are exempted and that only those who really need the course are required to do it.

In both cases, however, a good test will relate to the students' reasons for learning (or being required to learn) English and a poor test will ignore these reasons. As an anecdotal aside it is interesting to record here the fairly frequent requirement for university students to pass a test of English before being allowed to receive their degree. The rationale for this is the supposed fact that it is impossible to become a good (and therefore qualified) professional in whatever sphere, be it engineering, medicine, business studies or whatever, without a relevant knowledge of English. Yet experience tells us that there are many students who have fulfilled their university and professional requirements in all respects but have difficulty learning English. For them the English test is a major hurdle. If they have qualified in all other respects, how can the English requirement actually be justified? The

problem here would seem to be less one of the validity of the test than one of the value of the test requirement.

A further powerful reason for an ESP test is the need to certify learners as competent in English for particular employers or receiving institutions. In this case, the test amounts to a passport to a job, to further study or to travel. Presumably a good test will have to take account of the needs of those institutions who are receiving the students. These might be professional bodies like Institutes of Engineers or Colleges of Doctors, or they might be employers, teaching institutions, governmental bodies or sponsors for overseas travel.

The above examples serve to underline the important role that testing plays in ESP, partly as a motivator for the students and institutions and partly as a justification for the existence of the course. It can be seen that the qualificatory nature of the test offers tremendous potential for those seeking to innovate within educational or professional systems.

It is worth adding at this point the consideration that to be influential within a system, a test need not necessarily be a compulsory component in qualification or graduation. If the test is sufficiently prestigious and recognized as relevant to social or professional needs, then it might become so desirable to pass the test, even if it is not compulsory to do so, that students will put themselves forward for it. (Such is the hope of the National Certificate of English designed for the Ministry of Education in Sri Lanka.) Thus, with or without compulsion, a test that measured a student's ability to meet the communicative demands (specific or general) of defined or definable target situations would be likely to be of considerable value and hence of influence. If a particular test could be designed that indicated a person's ability to function as a bank cashier or travelling salesman in a foreign language, as a user of foreign language technical manuals and instruction leaflets, a reader of foreign language recipes, a doctor operating in a foreign language setting, or a postgraduate student in a non-native language medium, such a test or set of tests would be very useful.

Aspects of ESP test design

There are three aspects to ESP test design which it is important to consider. One, suggested by the above list of possible target groups, is the question of test content, and of its specificity or otherwise. A second is the issue of test method — of how the assessment might be carried out. A further issue is that of test validation: how are we to know that the tests we have produced are valid? I shall take these in reverse order.

Test validation requires that we can produce evidence to show that our test measures what we claim it measures. In the case of the bank cashier, we need to be able to show that our test does actually measure a cashier's ability to perform adequately in that defined target situation. This means either that we need some way of observing bank cashiers in action, and of judging the adequacy of their performance, so

that we can then compare our test results with the performance, or that we need some way of knowing, either *a priori* or from an analysis of our observation, what it takes to perform adequately as a bank cashier. I believe that at present we do not have such ways of knowing or observing, and therefore we have no way of knowing whether our tests are valid from a content, construct or face validity point of view. The likely implication of this for test design is that our ESP tests might have to be performance oriented — that is, they will have to be attempts to test language use — and they will have to be direct, rather than indirect, tests of such use. (A direct test of writing ability, for example, would be some writing task whose product was subjectively judged by assessors; an indirect test might be a multiple choice test of paragraph organization, or an error-detection task.)

This brings us to the second issue, that of test method. It is likely that ESP tests will, insofar as they are tests of use and of language production, have to involve some element of subjective judgement of performance. Of course, this presents the problem of the training of examiners, and a likely reduction in reliability, but this is in line with recent developments in language testing. In fact, in order to take full advantage of their innovatory potential, ESP tests must take account of the most recent developments in language testing. These developments include a reduced emphasis on the importance, or at least primacy, of statistics and statistical evidence for validity, and along with this an increased concern for test content, test method, and the opinion of outsiders (lay people) in test development (face validity). They also include a greater closeness between testing and teaching, such that we are beginning to recognize that there is little difference in design between a test and an exercise. This means that the typologies of exercises that have been developed for use in teaching materials are entirely relevant for the development of test techniques (test method). Indeed, test developers are increasingly looking to the most innovative textbooks for ideas on test method, and it may be that, in the future, textbook writers might look to tests in a positive way for examples of possible exercises and tasks. Language testing is beginning to show an increased use not only of authentic or realistic texts, but also, crucially, of authentic purposes for language use. In other words, the tasks that students have to carry out on tests increasingly reflect the sorts of things they might have to do with language in the real world. Hence the increased interest in performance testing, an acceptance of the inevitability of subjective judgements and of the need for training to ensure a modicum of reliability. This has also led to an increased suspicion, and even abandonment, of multiple-choice tests and the development instead of formats requiring short answers (so-called short-answer questions) which might be more realistic, less tricky and potentially more valid.

All these developments in language testing methods need to be taken account of in the development of influential ESP tests.

The content of language tests too is of crucial importance. It was suggested above, when referring to examples of plausible ESP tests of bank cashiers or overseas doctors, that an analysis of the target situation and the communicative demands such situations place upon participants might help us to determine the content of the test. To oversimplify, all the test designer apparently has to do is produce a needs analysis of the specific target situation in order to identify the test content. Indeed, this is the position taken by Carroll (1981) who asserts that the identification of communicative needs is at the centre of ESP test design. He advocates the use of John Munby's (1978) Communicative Needs Processor to identify such needs.

Interestingly, the same volume of papers (di Federico 1981) presents the results of a workshop (Sesso 1981) where participants attempted to draw up a needs profile for an apparently very restricted group of people: Social Science students studying reference materials (textbooks, manuals, articles) in English in university libraries and/or in private study in Italy. Although this needs analysis is wholly non-empirical, being based on the intuitions of the seminar participants, it is none the less instructive to consider the results of the deliberations (whilst asking oneself 'how could they possibly know or indeed verify all this information?'). I reproduce below in full that section of the needs profile dealing with so-called 'language skills' which such a body of students would have to master in English:

- Deducing the meaning and use of unfamiliar lexical items through:
 1. Understanding word formation
 2. Contextual clues
- Understanding explicitly-stated information.
- Understanding information in the text, not explicitly stated, through making inferences.
- Understanding conceptual meaning, especially:
 1. Quantity and amount
 2. Definiteness and indefiniteness
 3. Comparison and degree
 4. Time
 5. Means, instrument
 6. Cause, result, purpose, reason, condition, contrast
- Understanding the communicative value of text/utterances with and without explicit indicators in respect of the following micro-functions:
 1. Scale of certainty: certainty, probability, possibility, nil certainty, conviction, doubt, conjecture, disbelief;
 2. Scale of commitment: intention, obligation;
 3. Judgement and evaluation: approve, value, conciliate, disapprove, complain, allege, accuse, condemn;

4. Suasion: persuade, propose, advise, recommend, advocate, order, direct, compel, oblige, prohibit, disallow, predict, warn, caution, instruct, invite, allow, grant, consent to, authorize;
 5. Argument: state, inform, report, declare, assert, emphasize, maintain, argue, claim, question, request, deny, disclaim, protest, oppose, refuse, reject, disprove, negate, agree, assent, endorse, ratify, disagree, dissent, dispute, repudiate, concede, admit, withdraw, retract;
 6. Rational enquiry: proposition, corollary, substantiation, proof, assumption, conclusion, generalization, demonstration, explanation, classification, definition, exemplification.
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- Understanding relations within the sentence, especially: long premodification and postmodification, especially postmodification by prepositional phrase.
 - Understanding relations between parts of a text through lexical cohesion devices, especially: lexical set/collocation.
 - Understanding relations between parts of a text through grammatical cohesion devices, especially: reference, comparison, substitution, ellipsis, logical connectors.
 - Interpreting text by going outside it: using exophoric reference: 'reading between the lines'; integrating data in the text with own experience or knowledge of the world.
 - Recognizing indicators in discourse for: introducing an idea, developing an idea, transition to another idea, concluding an idea, emphasizing a point, explanation or clarification of point already made, anticipating an objection or contrary view.
 - Identifying the main point or important information in a piece of discourse, through: verbal cues, topic sentence, in paragraphs of inductive and deductive organization.
 - Distinguishing the main idea from supporting details, by differentiating primary from secondary significance, the whole from its parts, category from exponent, statement from example, fact from opinion, a proposition from its argument.
 - Extracting salient points to summarize: the whole text, a specific idea/topic in the text, the underlying idea or point of the text.
 - Selective extraction of relevant points from a text, involving: the coordination of related information, the tabulation of information for comparison and contrast (in the mother tongue).
 - Basic reference skills: understanding the use of: graphic presentation, viz headings, sub-headings, numbering, indentation, bold print, footnotes, table of contents and index, cross-referencing, card catalogue.
 - Skimming to obtain: the gist of the text, a general impression of the text.

- Scanning to locate specifically required information on: a single point, involving a complex search; more than one point, involving a complex search; a whole topic.
- Transcoding information presented in diagrammatic display, involving: conversion of diagram/table/graph into writing (L1), interpretation of comparison of diagrams/tables/graphs in writing (L1).

Despite the apparently exhaustive nature of this list, the sad fact is that it would be relatively easy to identify gaps in the so-called language skills listed here. Indeed, it is likely that no two analysts would come up with the same description of the needs of this (or other) student groups. It should be clear that it would be an extremely difficult task for a test constructor to attempt to cover all the items even on this imperfect list. If he cannot for practical reasons test mastery of each item, and must instead make a selection of the most important items, how is he to judge which are the most important items? The needs analysis gives absolutely no indication of importance. It might be possible to gather data on the relative frequency of occurrence of these skills, yet frequency, difficulty and importance to learners, and communicative effectiveness are three quite separate categories which would certainly not be indicated by simple frequency checks. It is, I suggest, well-nigh impossible to make any principled sampling of these skills. We are thus driven to question the practical value of a Munby-style needs analysis in test production, quite apart from the theoretical objections to this form of identification of target situation needs. However useful it may eventually prove to be to characterize ESP language use needs as precisely as possible, a Munby-type analysis is likely to lead to an unusably long list of language items.

The Munby model has been criticized (Davies 1981, Mead 1982, and Porter 1983) not only for being impractical, but more seriously for providing no theoretical justification for the inclusion of particular skills, for presenting categories which other analysts claim can be divided into further categories whilst at the same time also including categories which can be conflated into one. In addition, although the model might be relevant to a homogeneous group of learners, it says nothing about how we can identify the common 'needs' of a heterogeneous group of test candidates. Moreover, since the model says nothing about the relationship of all these skills and micro-skills, we have no principled way of sampling in order to identify test content, and no way of generalizing from students' performances on our tests to their possible performances on parallel tests or in 'the real world'.

Perhaps the most important problem of the model is that it is largely linguistic or sociolinguistic, rather than psycholinguistic. It takes no account of the difficulties that students have when processing or producing language, for example the problems overseas students experience when reading academic textbooks or attending lectures.

And it ignores what the learner himself brings to the language learning and language processing situation, namely his language knowledge (in mother tongue as well as the target language), his communication abilities in general, and especially his content, subject and background knowledge, which interact with linguistic ability to facilitate or make difficult various language use tasks.

In short, a needs analysis on Munby lines is simply inadequate for our purposes, but this does not rule out the possibility or value of an analysis of target situations which is empirical, psycholinguistic as well as linguistic, defensible on theoretical grounds and which can provide for the practicalities of test development, like the need for some measure of reliability, and the observance of validation procedures.

In fact, of course, the issues I have been discussing above in relation to testing are equally applicable to ESP course design. Although course design and testing are subject to different constraints, of time, of practicality, and of the need for validity and reliability on the one hand, and the question of how to select or devise the means to achieve particular ends on the other hand, the need to consider the students' purposes in learning the language is common to both endeavours. However, when discussing testing (rather than course design) I need to distinguish between two different sorts of tests; achievement tests and proficiency tests. The former are rather different from the latter as regards their relationship to a syllabus and thus to target situation analysis. An achievement test is intended to measure what has been taught through a syllabus. Its validity is crucially related to the content, and arguably methodology, of the course. Thus, a valid achievement test consists of an adequate sample of that course. Achievement tests are relatively simple to construct, in that the problem is merely one of sampling, guided by the syllabus. Thus if one teaches ESP, one clearly has to test ESP. If the ESP course is highly specific, then the test also has to be highly specific. What is in doubt in such situations is less the validity of the achievement test than the validity of the syllabus itself. Does the syllabus adequately relate to the target situation, however that is identified?

With proficiency tests the situation is different, in that they do not, by definition, have syllabuses. The validity of a proficiency test cannot be established by referring to an existing course or syllabus, but other, external criteria of the sort I have alluded to above need to be established and measured. Proficiency tests need to create their own syllabuses, presumably by some form of target situation analysis. In this respect, proficiency tests and course design face similar problems.

There have recently been developments in proficiency testing which have tried to use some form of needs analysis — the Professional and Linguistic Assessment Board Test of the British General Medical Council (PLAB), the ELTS or English Language Testing Service administered by the British Council, and most notably the TEEP, the Test of English for Educational Purposes, produced by the Associated

Examining Board, in the UK. These were all tests based in part on an analysis of the communicative demands of their various target situations. The development of these tests was, however, constrained by practical realities. All are proficiency tests and as such needed to establish a syllabus for the test content. It was insisted by those responsible for the development that a proliferation of specific sub-tests for defined sub-groups was simply impractical for administration purposes. The intention from the beginning was to create one specific purpose test to cover a wide range of possible situations, and therefore the analysis of target situation needs was designed to discover the maximum possible common ground across sub-groups, rather than to look for differentiated needs. Nevertheless, attempts were made to produce specifications for test content based on needs analyses. Experience quickly showed, however, that other considerations, like item analysis and efficiency, face validity, administrative and procedural problems all led to a rapid compromise of the supposedly principled basis for test construction. This in turn leads to a more general questioning of how, for test purposes, we can determine what our students eventually need to know or do.

ESP tests: specific or general?

One major problem alluded to above, which is faced by developers of proficiency tests, is how specific should their test be? Should they define one target situation which all their potential testees have in common, or do they need to distinguish between different target situations? Take the example of proficiency tests designed to establish whether overseas students have sufficient command of English to enable them to study academic subjects in the UK or the USA. (Examples of tests intended to do this are the TOEFL, the Michigan test, the Davies test and the British Council's ELTS test.) Should there be one test for all students, or do we need different tests for engineers, doctors, lawyers and linguists? Do the target situations of these sub-groups of testees differ substantially from each other, or are there sufficient elements in common to justify one test only? Even if the different sub-groups proved upon analysis to be clearly differentiated, would we need differentiated tests in order to measure students' abilities to cope with the communicative demands?

The answer to this important question is not easy. It depends in part upon one's theory of language use. One theory has it that there is a unitary competence underlying all language behaviour, which is central to a wide range of different language use situations. In this view, differentiated tests would be unnecessary; all we would need are tests of the underlying competence, which might be identified variously as grammatical competence, or sociolinguistic competence, or pragmatic competence. Believers in this theory would argue that performance in such a competence test would predict performance in a whole variety of target situations.

A different theory, implicit in the Munby model of needs analysis, is that different skills are required in different situations. In this view, ability in one area would not easily be predicted by performance in a different area; so the ability to comprehend engineering lectures in English would not necessarily entail the ability to follow conversation in a cocktail party or to understand a political party broadcast on television.

The major problem with this latter view is that every language use situation is arguably ultimately unique, which would imply the need for one test for each testee, for each separate situation in which he/she might find him/herself. Clearly this is not only theoretically impossible — since a test is essentially a comparison of one performance with at least one other — but also highly impractical. However, if totally specific tests are impractical, where on the scale towards total generality do we decide we must differentiate among target situations?

The fact is that we simply have no means of deciding at present how specific a specific test must be. There is a range of competing arguments to be considered — on the one hand, the practicality, economy and convenience of having only one test for all target situations, and on the other hand, the danger of injustice to particular sub-groups of students who might be required to take an inappropriate test which gives misleading information about their abilities. As we have seen, we are unlikely to find an answer from needs analysis. Perhaps the only answer, ultimately, is from an extensive research and test validation project which would develop a series of specific and general tests for a defined purpose, such as that of screening overseas students for study in the UK and USA, and then attempting to determine empirically which test best predicted future performance, and whether particular tests significantly disadvantaged some sub-groups.

Where now?

This research is clearly beyond the capacity of most test developers, ESP course designers and language teachers. What are they to do in the meantime? Because we have no immediate answer to a particularly thorny question does not mean that we should carry on doing whatever takes our fancy until the experts have solved the problem. There is still a professional responsibility to do what we can demonstrate to be best for our students and for the course and test objectives. We should, above all, be fully aware of the consequences of whatever decision we take, be it in test design or course design. We should not only be clear about our reasons for taking particular decisions (realizing that there are no easy decisions), but we should also attempt to gather as much information as possible on the effect of our tests and courses. Gathering such information — evaluating, in effect, our tests and our courses — could actually help in answering the questions I have posed.

The need for ESP courses has arisen from a dissatisfaction with the

results of English for No Particular Purpose (ENPP). Implicit in ESP is a claim that ESP courses are more effective because they are more appropriate for learners. The same claim appears to hold for ESP tests, namely that they yield more relevant and valid information about testees than do general purpose tests. Both these claims remain assertions, however, until backed up with satisfactory evidence that ESP courses and tests are in some sense more effective than the alternatives. For this reason, ESP has perhaps a greater need for evaluation of course design, methodology and student learning. ESP should therefore take testing and evaluation more seriously than it has done in the past.

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Tests as Levers for Change (or ‘Putting First Things First’)

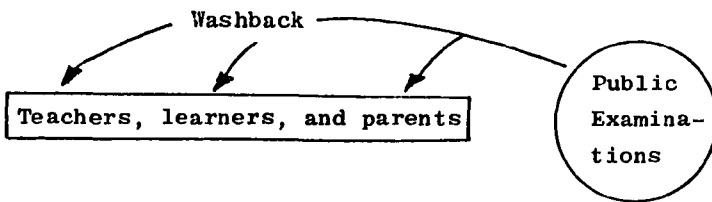
Ian Pearson

Ministry of Education, Sri Lanka

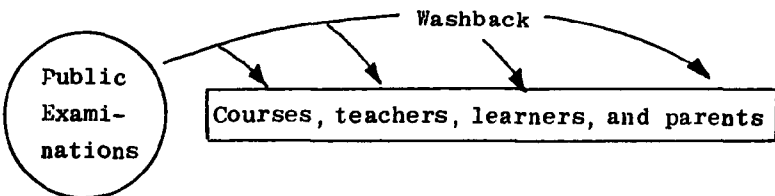
This paper re-examines the washback effect that public examinations (and other tests) can have on the teaching and learning of a foreign language, reviews current ideas on the place of testing in the teaching-learning process, and finally suggests that it is often very fruitful for the classroom teacher to treat tests as teaching-cum-learning activities and teaching-cum-learning activities as tests. Particular reference is made to Sri Lanka, where a considerable amount of work is being done on developing new public examinations and on encouraging the use of new kinds of formal and informal classroom tests.

The washback effect of public examinations

It is generally accepted that public examinations influence the attitudes, behaviour, and motivation of teachers, learners and parents, and, because examinations come at the end of a course, this influence is seen as working in a backwards direction — hence the term ‘washback’:



A moment's reflection makes it clear, of course, that the direction in which washback actually works must be forwards in time:



Perhaps the most obvious British examples of the forward-thrust of washback are the many courses that are designed, produced, and taught in direct response to the Cambridge Proficiency and First Certificate examinations. Whether or not this kind of washback effect is detrimental or beneficial to the learning process is rather less easy to see, and this point merits a closer scrutiny.

Negative washback

1. The general view seems to be that washback is more likely than not to exert a negative influence. This in turn implies that examinations may well fail to reflect the learning principles and/or the course objectives to which they supposedly relate. A clear account of a serious mismatch of this sort is given by Madsen (1976). Writing about the school-leaving examination in Ethiopia, he reports that in the late 1960s it was decided to replace the 'precis-essay' approach with 'objective' tests. However, it was felt that the new examination

would 'prove largely ineffective' until specialist training in English on the elementary level was carried out, plus in-service training, and an institute was set up which would provide supervision, advice, and help to teachers, utilizing teams of TESL experts, as well as existing facilities, including radio, television, and teacher-training schools.

Apart from in-service training, these recommendations were not carried out, and in Madsen's view it was this that soon led to the new objective examination becoming 'petrified' so that

when strict behaviourism began to give way worldwide to cognition and more integrative evaluation, the tightly-controlled and largely discrete-point objective test remained unchanged . . . Teachers in the upper grades were inclined to model instruction on the now sacrosanct objective examination. . . . the backwash effect on the schools became just as devastating as that produced by the earlier precis-essay examination.

Notice that the argument here is not that the 'devastating' backwash effect of both 'precis-essay' and 'objective' examinations resulted from some inherent quality of the testing techniques themselves. Rather, the effect is seen as due to the fact that both types became 'petrified' and therefore 'sacrosanct'. Whether or not we agree with this analysis, it is certainly true that public examinations are noticeably conservative and slow to change.

Unsurprisingly, the Sri Lankan experience with objective, multiple-choice test items has been similar to the Ethiopian one. Objective, multiple-choice tests were introduced in Ethiopia in 1969, and in 1985 they still constitute the bulk of the Ordinary Level examination in

English. It is also accepted that teachers spend very large amounts of time 'practising' and talking about such items, leaving far too little time for anything else. However, this does not mean that the problems that are inherent in such conservatism pass unnoticed.

2. In very many circumstances it is quite simply impossible (and probably also inherently undesirable) to make frequent changes to public examinations. Constant evolution, improvement, and development would demand exceedingly high levels of teacher skill, training, and confidence, would need large teams of highly skilled materials developers, in-service trainers, and examination writers, and would involve the expenditure of relatively immense sums of money.

In Sri Lanka, for example, the period since 1950 has seen the change from English as a medium of instruction to English as a Foreign Language, a general expansion of the school system, a long-term shortage of teachers, a lack of facilities for basic teacher training and for in-service training, a serious loss of experienced teachers to other professions and to jobs overseas, plus many other problems related to the teaching and learning of English. As in so many countries, there is a general shortage of money and expertise, not least in the area of education.

Positive washback

1. The idea that tests and examinations can influence teaching and learning beneficially is seldom made explicit. However, in 1968 Davies (in Allen and Davies 1977) concluded that those who were asking for a 'Spoken English' examination for West Africa wanted it to

exercise a strong influence on spoken English in secondary schools, encouraging the teaching of the subject and acting as a goal for that teaching [and] to raise the standard of spoken English throughout West Africa.

Davies also clearly envisaged the beneficial influence of a 'good' new test as extending beyond the immediate secondary school context to both primary schools and teacher training colleges.

2. More recently, and in much bolder spirit, Johnson and Wong (in Read 1981) have argued that the 'Scaling Test of the Junior Secondary Education Assessment System', introduced in Hong Kong in 1982, would

lead to syllabus revision, the design of new textbooks with different goals and objectives from those currently in use, and as a consequence new classroom methods and techniques which stress the use of authentic English in a purposeful and interactive way.

This is a far cry from the package of interdependent changes envisaged in Ethiopia, where, Madsen claims, the failure to implement *all* the necessary related changes explains the ultimate failure of the new examination. In Hong Kong, the examination is regarded as the all-important factor which will eventually cause the rest of the system to change. This really is a case of putting first things first.

3. In 1983, the Ministry of Education in Sri Lanka began a large-scale project to design new public examinations in English. From the start, the single most important goal has been to use these new examinations as 'a lever for change': they should persuade the teachers and their learners that the new objectives and the new courses that are appearing must be taken seriously. The success of the examinations will then in large measure be assessed by the influence that they exert on classroom attitudes and activities.

However, giving the examinations such a dominant role in the whole scheme means that it is now vital, as never before, that the washback effects be beneficial, and that they encourage the whole range of desired changes. This, of course, begs the question of how tests exert an effect at all. More fundamentally, we can ask what the place of testing in the teaching-learning process can or should be. It is this issue that is taken up in the next section.

The place of testing in the teaching-learning process

As a basis for surveying the relationship between tests and teaching-learning, we can take commonly used labels and distinctions relating to the *uses* of tests, to different *techniques* of testing, and to the *effect* of tests on the learner (see, for example, Heaton 1975, Ashworth 1982, and Allison and Webber 1984).

The uses of tests

1. Four major uses of tests relate primarily to learners:

- to assess proficiency (not necessarily relating to a course at all);
- to measure achievement (following a course or course component);
- to diagnose difficulties (preceding a course or course component) and
- for placement of students into suitable classes (preceding a course).

On the face of it, only external, formal Achievement tests seem likely to exert a strong influence on the substance and content of what happens in the classroom. The classic example is obviously a school-leaving examination such as the British or Sri Lankan Ordinary Level examination for the General Certificate of Education. However, all tests are likely to have some impact, including much more informal,

teacher-produced 'progress' tests. Heaton (1975), for example, argues that

The class progress test is a teaching device, its backwash effect on teaching and motivation being important features. A good progress test should encourage the student to perform well in the target language in a positive manner and to gain additional confidence. Its aim is to stimulate learning and to reinforce what has been taught.

Again, diagnostic tests should, by definition, affect the content if not also the manner of teaching, and courses are sometimes developed in direct response to a Proficiency test (as we now see happening in Sri Lanka with one of the new examinations for the National Certificate in English (NCE)).¹ Finally, placement tests may determine not only the starting point within a course, but also which course materials are used and the style in which they are taught.

2. Another use is more usually referred to as evaluation, when the effectiveness and efficiency of the course and/or teacher performance is assessed. Here, the washback effect is engineered, so that test results can help teachers, syllabus constructors, and the writers of course materials to change and develop both themselves and their materials.

3. Finally, there is the use of test results to find out about the test itself and to explore the effects that the test is having in the classroom. For example, studies of the results of the Sri Lankan G.C.E. Ordinary Level examination in English as an International Language show that the examination fails to recognize modest but still real levels of achievement (because it is too 'difficult'), encourages many pupils and possibly some teachers to ignore writing (because a 'pass' is still possible even when the Writing Section is not done), encourages teachers to focus upon matters of form rather than on helping their learners to acquire communicative ability (because form is what the examination focuses upon), and discourages teachers from paying attention to the spoken language (because the examination ignores it). The washback effect of these findings has been a Ministry of Education decision to develop a new examination which as far as possible will have only beneficial effects.

Different Techniques of Testing

Some of the differences between language testing techniques reflect different ideas about WHAT should be tested, while others reflect different opinions as to HOW the testing can best be done. However, one distinction that seems to be of special significance is that between tests of performance and tests of knowledge.

1. *Performative and non-performative tests*

Recent thinking is represented by Allison and Webber (1984), who see performative tests, including communicative tests, as concerned with

what language learners 'can do', rather than what they 'know', and with testing the learner's abilities . . . as 'directly' as possible, using 'realistic' tasks.

Non-performative tests, therefore, would presumably focus upon 'knowledge' and would do this in an 'indirect' and 'non-realistic' way.

The decision about whether to test performance or knowledge (or, indeed, whether to test both) is important for two reasons: first, it can exert such a strong washback effect on learners, teachers, syllabus writers, and course writers, and, second, the distinction between performance and knowledge relates quite as much to teaching-learning as to testing. Clearly, testers, syllabus and course writers, and teachers all face the same two fundamental questions: 'What does learning a foreign language involve?' and 'Which kinds of classroom activity are most likely to lead to successful learning?'

2. *Testing and the learning of a foreign language*

From the point of view of washback, a 'good' test should do two things: it should encompass all areas of the syllabus, and it should directly reflect the accepted view of what teaching-learning involves. For example, the result of ignoring, or giving only token place to, the testing of speaking is apparent in Sri Lanka and in many other countries: pupils and teachers tend to ignore the teaching and learning of speaking skills.

From the point of view of performance and knowledge, three views are possible: testing and teaching-learning should both focus only on performance, or only on knowledge, or on both performance and knowledge. This, however, is not the place to argue for or against any one of these views, and the only immediately important point is that, by definition, a 'good' test and 'good' teaching-learning will both directly reflect whichever view is adopted.

If there is a mis-match, a bad test may have a detrimental effect on a good course and a good test will exert a beneficial influence upon a bad course. In all cases, however, the great problem is how to be sure that either the course or the test is in fact good. In the third, and final, section it will be suggested that one way to shed at least some light on this question is to consider tests in terms of their potential as teaching-learning activities, and vice versa. However, before that we should briefly consider the effects that tests can have upon learners.

The effects of tests on learners

Tests are often said to increase the amount or improve the quality of learner motivation, to stimulate learning on particular occasions, and to reinforce previous learning (see, for example, the quotation above

from Heaton). However, even if tests can do all these things, such effects are less immediately obvious than some more concrete and therefore more easily observable effects. As examples we might list, in no particular order:

- many learners enjoy tests, especially when they can do them well and can therefore get a good 'score' or 'mark';
- tests can very easily be either frustratingly difficult or boringly easy for at least some learners in any one group or class;
- learners want to know the 'results' of a test as soon as possible, and become frustrated and annoyed if these results are delayed or withheld;
- if given the chance, learners will happily ask each other for help;
- learners complain very quickly if they feel that their scores, marks, or grades for a test are unfair or fail to match their own assessments of themselves and each other;
- some tests provoke much more discussion than others;
- learners tend to ignore corrections written on their test papers by the teacher or by the other learners;
- learners often appear to look forward to tests as a way of finding out or demonstrating how well they are progressing, or in order to seek some reassurance that they are keeping up with their peers.

The fact that such reactions to tests are very similar to those that can be evoked by many types of teaching–learning activities suggests that the two kinds of activity may have a lot in common. Indeed, in the next section it will be claimed that the only really useful distinction between the two lies not in the nature of the activity but only in the use to which this activity is put.

The distinction between testing and teaching–learning

Although tests are usually regarded as being distinct from other classroom activities, the reality seems to be that almost any activity can be used either for testing or teaching-cum-learning purposes. The main differences seem to be primarily a matter of difficulty and the circumstances in which the activity is carried out.

There is a sense in which any learning activity needs to have a testing edge to it — if it does not, then presumably it lacks both a basis for learners to interact with and anything very much to be learned. The secret of successful teaching is the ability to provide sufficient challenge, but not so much that learners are demotivated by the presence of too many unknowns. In other words, it is a characteristic of a 'good' teaching–learning activity that it is neither *too easy* nor *too difficult*. Interestingly, this is true of large-scale tests taken as a whole, and especially true of formal examinations, but it is not true of their

individual constituent items or components: a good test may well contain many parts that are too easy or too difficult for a given candidate. However, there are other ways of distinguishing a test.

The defining characteristics of tests

There are many occasions when learners clearly feel that they are being tested. This is obviously true of formal public examinations, but many relatively informal activities are also felt to be tests. If we ask what makes the activity into a test, we find that characteristics include:

- learners may not consult one another during a test;
- a mark or grade of some kind is given and recorded;
- the results may well be reported to others (parents, head teachers, ministries, and so on);
- learners within a group are being compared or ranked; and
- the results are often used for purposes such as placement, promotion to another class, or selection for employment.

In addition to such arbitrary and almost coincidental aspects of tests, certain other features are especially characteristic of non-performative tests:

- the response can very often be marked objectively;
- the response is frequently very brief and may even be a matter of no more than marking a choice on an answer-sheet;
- the test items are a sampling of discrete points.

However, it seems in the end that any and every test or kind of test, no matter whether performative or non-performative, is only a test because we choose to treat it as one; both types can equally well be treated either primarily or exclusively as teaching-cum-learning activities.

Performative tests and teaching-learning

Disenchantment with non-performative, objective, techniques has largely been due to the fact that, as Ashworth (1982) points out, they are good at measuring factual knowledge but not at measuring original expression. Thus, as more and more emphasis has been laid upon the importance of learners acquiring communicative competence, so less and less place has been found for the familiar objective techniques: factual wh-questions, blank-filling, multiple-choice questions, true-false statements, and matching tasks of various kinds. It is then most striking that the new communicative testing techniques that are appearing seem to be inspired primarily by the new teaching-learning materials. However, by no means all learning activities have been translated into tests.

In Sri Lanka, it is well recognized that the learning of English as a foreign language must extend well beyond knowledge of and control over the formal systems of the language to include communicative

skills. This understanding, then, underlies and integrates recent and present work on syllabuses and materials, teacher-training, and testing. At the same time, there is an explicit intention to use tests, including public examinations, as levers which will persuade teachers and learners to pay serious attention to communicative skills and to the teaching–learning activities that are more likely to be helpful in the development of such skills. The use of tests as a deliberate backwash-generating device has its limitations, however.

Very many of the learning activities that one might want to use as tests are clearly either impracticable and/or very difficult to assess with a degree of reliability that would be regarded as sufficient for large-scale public examinations. As Partington (1982) has said:

the criteria themselves are subjective and intuitive: measuring candidates' performance would be like trying to measure the length of a piece of elastic with a rubber ruler.

It may well be, therefore, that in many circumstances we shall need to make major compromises between what would be ideal, what is practicable, and the need for a substantial measure of reliability. Nevertheless, in essence there is no reason why any communicative learning activity should not be usable as a test. An initial spelling out of possibly useful testing-cum-teaching-cum-learning techniques of a more communicative type is to be found in 'NCE — The National Certificate in English: A Teacher's Guide' (1985).¹ Here, practical and financial constraints can be seen to limit testing to a small sub-set of teaching–learning activities.

Non-performative tests and teaching–learning

The various objective testing techniques have always been used in teaching–learning activities, though their use is far less common now than it was previously. Thus, for example, in a book on classroom teaching–learning activities, Allen and Valette (1977) devote only four pages out of 400 to the use of multiple-choice questions.

One possible explanation for this lack of interest in objective testing techniques is that they have not been seriously adapted for teaching–learning. However, if it is true that they are particularly relevant to testing knowledge, and if we believe that many if not all learners need to grasp such 'knowledge' as a part of acquiring communicative competence, then perhaps we should look again at some old-fashioned techniques.

The work now being done in Sri Lanka on testing includes a serious study of dictation, cloze, C-tests, and the repetition of heard utterances. The claim is specifically made (again, see the Teacher's Guide referred to above) that these activities can all be carried out in the classroom in such a way that they can also function as effective, stimulating, and enjoyable learning activities.

Good tests and good teaching–learning activities

The ideal is clear: good tests will encourage the use of beneficial teaching–learning processes, and will be more or less directly usable as teaching–learning activities. Similarly, good teaching–learning tasks will be more or less directly usable for testing purposes, even though practical or financial constraints limit the possibilities. Obviously, it will be necessary to compromise in both directions, and it is in this light that one must view present work on test development in Sri Lanka.

Notes

1. Copies available upon request from the Curriculum Development Centre, Division of English, 255, Bauddhaloka Mawatha, Colombo 7, Sri Lanka.

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The Organization and Administration of an ESP Unit: A Case Study

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Background

Ngee Ann Polytechnic (NP)

One of the two polytechnics in Singapore, Ngee Ann Polytechnic (NP), conducts professional training in Engineering, Business Studies and Computer Studies just below degree level for some 8,500 undergraduates preparing to take up future jobs at technician and middle management levels in government and statutory bodies and in business and industry. With a campus covering 29 hectares of land, the Polytechnic has just reached the last year of its second five-year (1981–85) Expansion Project.

NP conducts three-year full-time courses for Singapore–Cambridge General Certificate of Education Ordinary (GCE-O) level holders and two-year full-time courses for Singapore–Cambridge General Certificate Advanced (GCE-A) level holders leading to a Diploma in:

- Business studies
- Building management
- Environmental engineering
- Electrical engineering
- Electronic engineering
- Shipbuilding and offshore engineering
- Computer studies

Student input to NP

Students generally enter NP to pursue full-time specialized studies after completing their GCE O/A Level examinations with at least a Grade 7 in English Language or a Grade 6 in the General Paper. Linguistically, there have been two distinct groups of students following the same courses of study at NP — those from the English stream and those from the Chinese stream.¹ Over the years, the pattern of 70% Chinese stream students to 30% English stream students has gradually changed to the present ratio of 30% Chinese stream students to 70% English

stream students, and by 1987 all students will have come from English-medium schools.² Most of the EL2 students and a high proportion of the EL1 students come from non-English speaking backgrounds. I shall elaborate further on this when considering some of the problems which the ELC faces.

Use of English in Singapore

NP graduates are employed in a variety of jobs in Singapore where English is sociolinguistically important. It is one of the four official languages and the language of work. A wide variety of English is used in Singapore ranging from the acrolectal variety of the highly-educated in formal situations to the mesolectal variety of some executives and officials to the basilectal variety often heard in shops, restaurants and social gatherings.

English Language Centre (ELC)

The English Language Centre (ELC) of Ngee Ann Polytechnic teaches English to students in five departments and the Centre for Computer Studies. At present over 3,000 students attend English classes at the Polytechnic. Set up in 1972 as a support unit, the ELC grew rapidly with the expansion of the then Technical College from servicing three departments to six and from four full-time lecturers to its present strength of 43 academic staff. In 1983 the English Language Unit was upgraded to the English Language Centre.

Before the establishment of the support unit for teaching English, the language lecturers were attached to two departments, and individual lecturers planned and taught General English lessons that had a more or less departmental bias. Student motivation to learn English was not high in those days. Although there were English examinations, the passing grades were generally low.

Over the years, the ELC has developed an ESP programme aimed at helping NP students acquire a good command of English to cope with their studies and to perform effectively in their future jobs.

In considering the ELC's function in NP, the following questions are of special interest.

- What exactly is the role of the ELC in NP?
- What is the ELC's English programme?
- What factors enter into the organization and implementation of its programme?
- What problems are there in its organization and administration?
- What resources does the ELC have?
- What is the measure of the success achieved?

In this paper I shall answer these and related questions which must also face service units elsewhere charged with similar responsibilities.

ESP rationale

The English Language Programme at NP is an ESP programme, geared to the needs of the students of the various departments, focused on specific communicative skills and implemented within existing constraints. The teaching/learning of the whole of the English Language, or General English, or the English grammatical system (call it what you may), cannot be a sound basis for a practical approach to language teaching at NP because:

- it is not what is urgently needed;
- it would not be attainable;
- it would not be economical;
- it would not be motivating.

The need for an ESP programme at NP was recognized in stages,³ and is now generally accepted for the following reasons.

Aims and objectives of English courses

English is the sole medium of instruction and the official medium of communication in NP.

In order to benefit optimally from their courses of study, NP students need help in English for Academic Purposes (EAP) to:

- understand lectures,
- take notes/make notes/make summaries,
- write assignments, workshop reports, examination answers,
- interact with peers, workshop instructors, tutors, lecturers and other people on campus.

To meet the language requirements of their future job situations, NP undergraduates receive training in English for Occupational Purposes (EOP), i.e. in the following areas:

- job applications and interviews
- letters
- memos
- minutes
- reports
- use of the telephone
- oral presentations
- giving and understanding instructions.

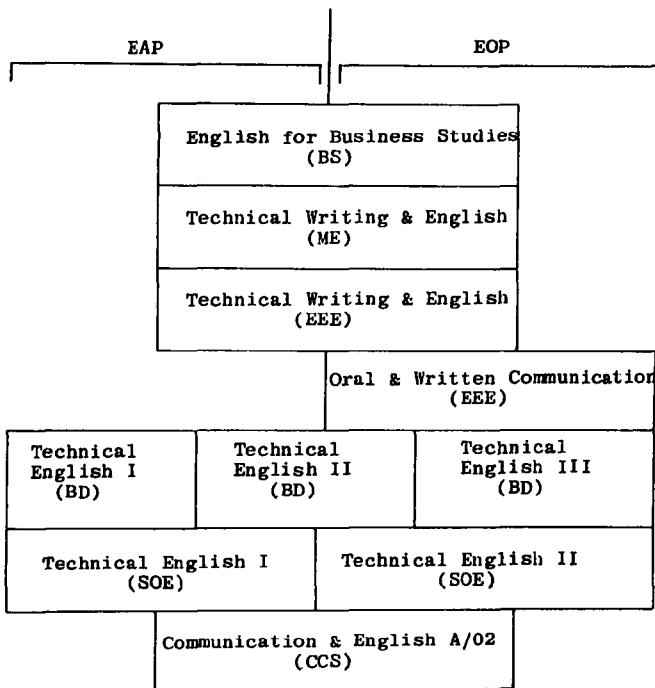
In Singapore, where English is used in various social domains outside the home, the job-holder needs a certain degree of general oral proficiency for social interaction. The more formal the social occasion and the higher the educational or social status of the group involved, the more educated is the variety of English spoken. To meet these needs, NP students are helped to develop general oral proficiency.

English courses offered by ELC

The ELC is primarily involved with students in their first year of study, when they require the greatest assistance in adapting to a new learning environment and in meeting the language demands of their new courses, and in their final year when the students will soon face the task of obtaining and coping with employment. Hence first year courses tend to concentrate on EAP and third year courses on EOP. Where there is only a first year course, or where departments provide three-year courses, the English programme consists of a judicious balance of EAP and EOP.

Within the framework of an ESP programme, the ELC conducts the following courses for the students of the various departments.

ESP Courses for the Departments



- BS - Business Studies Department
- BD - Building Department
- EEE - Electrical & Electronic Engineering Department
- ME - Mechanical Engineering Department
- SOE - Shipbuilding & Offshore Engineering Department
- CCS - Centre for Computer Studies

Organization and administration

General

The Polytechnic is highly organized, with its well-defined structure and hierarchy of command, its decision-making and moderating bodies and its departmental advisory committees and external examiners. In this organizational set up, the ELC as a support centre reports directly to the Deputy Principal (Academic) and through him to the Principal. It submits bi-monthly written reports on the work and problems of the Centre to the Senate (academic planning body) and Council (supreme governing and executive body).

The ELC has its own internal organizational structure. Job descriptions of the various levels of staff and their differing roles guide everybody in their areas of responsibility and their working relationships with colleagues. Regular staff meetings and the use of a department communication system are important in the administration of the Centre.

Course organization and administration

Because of the large number of classes in each English course, we have to work in teams. Course coordinators consequently have to be appointed to ensure a certain degree of uniformity among the classes of each course. Each course coordinator is responsible for the following main duties.

- Preparing the syllabus (and updating it);
- Preparing a general scheme of work for the teaching team;
- Preparing class and laboratory materials for all members of the teaching team;
- Arranging for the materials to be printed and stored in a systematic way (pigeon-holes) or printed in book form to facilitate storage and distribution;
- Preparing AVA materials (e.g. transparencies, tapes, videos);
- Setting/moderating examination papers;
- Coordinating and moderating marking of examination scripts;
- Submitting one set of the course work complete with teachers' notes, general schemes, etc. to the Centre's Head and two sets to the Library for students' reference.

Members of the teaching team are allocated to assist the Course Coordinators in some of the above jobs.

This system of course coordination helps all lecturers involved to work towards the same course objectives, using the basic materials prepared. It is important that the programme is a coordinated one as all students on the same course have to sit for the same examination paper at the end of the year. The system is helpful to new and old staff alike. It fosters team work and ensures continuity of course design.

Course design and materials preparation

In designing courses to meet student needs, the ELC staff:

1. Identify the needs by studying:
 - The situations in which NP students/graduates have to use English;
 - the nature of the English used in these situations;
 - the weaknesses of the students;
2. Specify the objectives of each course in behavioural terms;
3. Design/write the syllabuses;
4. Produce appropriate teaching materials, exploiting the context/content of technical subjects where relevant;
5. Review the courses and materials in the light of: student attainment; feedback from students, teachers and department staff; new policies and development in LT; newly published materials and employers' views; and
6. Revise the syllabuses and course materials, drawing up supplementary materials for special remedial work or self-access learning.

Materials production

The bulk of the teaching materials used in the ELC is adapted from books, or written by the ELC staff. The unadapted use of published materials is impractical because of the need to tailor courses to the specific requirements of the departments, and the need to revise materials regularly in response to changes in the department curricula.

Materials writing can be undertaken in two ways:

- a) It can be undertaken by the Course Coordinator or a chosen staff member, whose work is circulated among the teaching team for comments, and is subject to final vetting by the Head.
- b) It can be undertaken by a whole team and the results submitted to the Course Coordinator, who will put together the work of the team and then submit it to the Head for approval.

Examination marking system

The ELC has evolved and implemented a rigorous system of marking examination scripts to ensure fairness, accuracy and standardization. Marking has to be coordinated when there are several markers involved. For the English and Technical Writing Paper, there are about 1,500 candidates from the Mechanical and Electrical and Electronic Departments. Detailed marking schemes and model answers are prepared and the Examiner/Coordinator conducts a marking coordination meeting to standardize marking, during which markers compare their marking of sample examination scripts (photostat copies) and

agree on a common scheme. The Examiner/Coordinator checks and moderates subsequent scripts submitted by each marker. Marks are subject to departmental moderation.

Consideration of some problems

The problems faced in organizing and administering an ESP programme are complex and interrelated. The following is a consideration of some of them:

Range of student abilities/grouping

As I have mentioned earlier, NP students mostly come from homes in which English is not the medium of communication.⁴ NP students have completed 10 to 12 years of instruction in English as a first or second school language (i.e. EL1 or EL2).

The initial language ability of the students ranges from:

1. A small percentage with an 'A' level pass in the General Paper or a distinction in EL1 at GCE 'O' level, i.e. students who have attained the acrolectal level of language proficiency,
to
2. Quite a significant proportion of those with Grades 6 and 7 in EL2/EL1 at GCE 'O' level, i.e. students who have reached only the lower mesolectal level of proficiency.

Thus the range of initial student ability in English is very wide and NP student needs are complex. Based on our experience, we would quantify the gap between students with a pass in GCE 'O' level EL1 and those with a pass in GCE 'O' level EL2 as three years of English classes.⁵ This gap is bigger in extreme cases.

In such a situation, classes of mixed ability levels can be very difficult to manage, for students who find the lessons either too easy or too difficult will not benefit from them, and can be a nuisance to the rest of the class.

For many years the ELC did not see eye to eye with some of the departments which advocated mixed grouping on the grounds that students learn from their peers, and that weak students grouped together benefited little from one another. The ELC, on the other hand, could not achieve much success teaching a group with extreme and very mixed abilities in English.

However, a compromise has been reached on this problem. A large group of students of mixed language ability for a department lecture is subdivided into several small groups of near homogeneous language ability for the teaching of English.

Class size

The norm for an English class is twenty. Classes may actually vary between 17 and 36, depending on the larger departmental groups which are subdivided for English classes.

The ELC has fought hard for a reasonable class size. A decade or so ago, English staff lectured to 150 students and taught classes of 40 to 60 students. Persistent negotiation with the departments and the administration, the glaring evidence of the students' weakness in English and the support of certain enlightened external examiners and Polytechnic heads have resulted in the present situation of smaller groups for language teaching.

Since the aim is to improve the students' skill in using English, it is vital to ensure that they have the opportunity to practise speaking and writing English for communicative purposes. The lecture method is not conducive to this purpose. The present class size enables students to have reasonable opportunities for oral and group activities, and lecturers to correct a reasonable amount of individual students' written work.

However, the old argument over English class size rears its head every now and then: why should English classes be of tutorial size when other subjects are taught in much larger groups?

Time allocation

In NP, the amount of time provided for students to learn English varies from department to department. For example, one department with a relatively large number of students with lower mesolectal command of English allows only 93 hours in the first year for teaching EAP and EOP skills. Another department with a comparatively higher proportion of students with acrolectal or higher mesolectal level in English proficiency schedules 124 hours in the first year, 124 hours in the second year and 93 hours in the third year for learning English. It can be seen that the time allocated for teaching English is inadequate in some cases.

As English is a service subject, both the students and the departments quite understandably give their diploma subjects greater priority in terms of time and attention. The students cut down the time they spend on reinforcement work in English when they find the demands of their diploma subjects to be heavy, and this is often the case since most of them have classes for more than 30 hours per week.

Nature of the task

The nature of language teaching/learning in fact hinges on grouping, class size and time allocation. Unlike the teaching of factual subjects, language teaching involves the development of communicative skills and the formation of right utterance habits in the learners. At the tertiary level, it further involves the unlearning of unacceptable habits previously acquired.

It is obvious that learning a skill demands much more of both the teachers' and the students' time, attention and patience than learning a factual subject. In teaching communication skills, physical coverage of

the facts of the language is far from adequate. Also students have different speeds of skills acquisition. Hence in the determination of class size, the grouping of students and the allocation of class hours, language lessons should not be treated on the same level as facts-teaching/learning subjects. Unfortunately, this problem is not readily appreciated by those who are not trained in ELT.

Need for a different approach

The fact that students still need so much help in English when they have completed ten years of English in school is no longer surprising to language teachers in higher institutions, but it does pose some severe problems. English lecturers have to try to get their students to learn in a few semesters what they have failed to learn in ten years at school. Moreover, lecturers have to take into consideration the language use and usage their students have already been taught but have not learnt, yet they cannot merely re-teach these areas. Hence a different approach is needed in order to keep students motivated.

Besides providing language training and practice through classroom sessions based on functional syllabuses, i.e. Stern's (1981) L Approach or the approach based on linguistic analysis, ELC lecturers team-teach with specialized subject lecturers of one technical department. Thus in the Report Writing and Specifications course, the department staff lecture on a specialized topic, the students write a report on it and the English lecturers, working closely with the department, help the students to understand the lecture, make effective notes and correct the English in their reports.

The Centre also sets students various learning-through-actual-practice projects based on surveys and interviews, as well as conducting mock job-interviews based on actual job-vacancy advertisements. At these interviews, students are asked not only general questions by the English lecturers but also technical questions by the specialized subject lecturers (i.e. the P or Psychological Approach — the experiential approach).

In addition, the Centre offers various supplementary informal English learning programmes to sensitize students to higher standards of fluency and accuracy; these include:

- producing an 'Improve Your English Bulletin' which deals with actual mistakes made by NP students and the correction of these errors to reinforce classroom and laboratory work;
- displaying carefully-selected authentic and interesting materials on notice boards to promote informal learning;
- making available to students various audio and visual language programmes for self-access learning;
- providing out-of-class simplified classics and other readers;
- helping to conduct various activities (e.g. language games and drama) during the Polytechnic's 'Speak English' campaign.

Besides the regular courses, the ELC conducts a pre-sessional Intensive English Course for newly-enrolled students who have been identified as having a low proficiency in English. Pre-course and post-course tests results have shown that this helps the weaker students to close the gap between them and the more able. It also helps students from non-English backgrounds to approach their studies in an English-medium institution with greater confidence.

Catering for student wants

While student needs must be catered for as fully as possible, student wants may also have to be considered. Often what the students want may not be what they need or can afford to have; they may, for instance, *want* to acquire oratorical skills when they *need* to learn to describe an object/process in the simple present tense or to pick out the main points of a text in their first year. Where students have expressed coherently what they want or do not want, e.g. where they find certain objectives irrelevant or certain materials too simple, difficult or boring, the ELC has taken action and modified its syllabuses and courses. There is also provision for individual teachers to choose their own materials and methods in the weekly work plans prepared by the Course Coordinators. However the ELC tries to win the students over into accepting that certain areas of what they perceive as their needs are really not their needs. In this way, the ELC increases the common area of student wants and needs and thus boosts student motivation.

The administration's involvement

The Polytechnic's positive policy on language learning is unquestioned. Remedial language teaching has always been a part of its curriculum. The Administration may in some respects show more overt support for the ELC's work, e.g. the present administration is placing the onus of more effective teaching/learning of English both on the departments through the teaching of their subjects, and on the ELC through its formal language programme.

Recently an English course was launched to improve the English of some of the staff in the technical Departments. The English Curriculum Committee's efforts have been intensified to raise the standard of students' English through various projects, e.g. research on the extent to which Department staff take English into consideration when marking their work.

Public/employer expectations

It is quite common to find the public/employers expecting excessively high standards of language accuracy from students and graduates. While a proportion of our students and graduates have a very good command of the language, others who have come from the non-English streams have lower language proficiency.

On the one hand, it is vital that the public/employers are fully aware of the gap in language attainment that can exist between students from different language backgrounds. They must be prepared to accept realistically a variety of English related to the situation, the user and the uses of the language.

On the other hand, it is important that NP keeps in view prospective employers' expectations of their employees' standard of English. Through the Polytechnic Survey of Graduates in Employment, the ELC has a more accurate basis for designing its EOP courses, e.g. many employers have expressed strongly the view that they would like to see Polytechnic graduates perform better at job interviews and the ELC has taken pains to prepare NP students more adequately for this requirement.

What is desirable vs. what is attainable

With the problems and constraints in teaching English, the ELC has to achieve a balance between what is desirable (both in terms of areas covered and the levels of sophistication achieved) and what is attainable.

Management and interpersonal skills

Where there is conflict between the ELC's needs and the departments' needs, e.g. allocation of hours for language teaching, more often than not the ELC's needs are not accommodated. Sometimes even appeal to higher authorities may have no effect, e.g. the reduction of a two-year curriculum to one-year in one department. Under these circumstances the ELC has to make the best of an unsatisfactory situation.

Sometimes, negotiation with a department may result in a concession, e.g. one department agreed to the ELC's proposal to conduct a 45-hour EOP course for its students in the final year in place of eliminating the second year English course.

Occasionally a department may object to a certain aspect of the ELC's syllabus, e.g. the setting of cloze questions and the teaching of information transfer. In standing firm on these professional matters, the ELC has sometimes to bear the consequence of a strained relationship with the department it serves. Working parties comprising ELC and department representatives on English have helped iron out specific areas of disagreement. Establishing an effective dialogue with the departments serviced demands much management and interpersonal skills on the part of the ELC.

ELC resources

Staff

Strength

The ELC has a total staff strength of 43. The present establishment

consists of a Head, a Deputy Head, 1 Principal Lecturer, 2 Senior Lecturers and 38 Lecturers. The Centre has support staff comprising a Secretary and Clerical Officer, 3 Technicians-cum-teacher-aides and 2 Laboratory Attendants-cum-housekeepers. The academic staff is made up of 75% local and 25% expatriate staff.

Recruitment

Staff are recruited locally through advertisements in the papers. The present staff members are largely Singaporeans and Malaysians. For the past three years, the Centre has not recruited expatriate staff from the UK and the US as qualified applicants were forthcoming from the region. Expatriate staff used to form 50%–70% of the language lecturers and were generally recruited from the UK through the services of the British Council.

At present, the minimum qualification of an English lecturer is a relevant honours degree or a relevant general degree with two years' relevant teaching experience. The starting salary is S\$1,600 (approximately US\$715). Increments are given for further acceptable post-graduate qualifications and years of experience.

Allocation of staff to the ELC is based on:

- Manpower projections submitted by the Centre, calculated according to an agreed norm;
- Submission of manpower requirements by the Polytechnic to the Ministry of Finance;
- Re-distribution of staff allocated by the Ministry to the Polytechnic to individual departments by the Administration.

Induction

On appointment, staff without a teaching qualification must undergo an induction programme with the Education Technology Centre (ETC). The ETC introduces new staff to various aspects of life in the Polytechnic, familiarizes them with the theory and practice of teaching and trains them in the use of various AVA's.

The ELC has a complementary internal induction programme. New staff are briefed by the Head or senior staff and given a file containing documents related to their work in the ELC. In their probationary year, they are attached to senior staff who help them to settle quickly and effectively into their jobs.

Workload

The normal workload for lecturers is 18–20 teaching hours. Course Coordinators are given a slightly lighter workload and so are senior lecturers who take on administrative responsibilities. All staff are required to be on the premises during the core hours 9–4, but they often have to work beyond these hours to fulfil teaching, student consultation, and committee and other duties.

Appraisal

New staff are observed in the classroom/laboratory in their first year as well as being carefully monitored in their general performance before being confirmed in the service at the end of one year.

There is an annual review of staff for promotion to higher grades and the award of normal increments, and recommendations by the National Wages Council. Staff with potential for higher posts and staff whose performance is unsatisfactory are very carefully monitored. Promotion of staff is guided by a formula in terms of number of Principal Lecturers to Senior Lecturers to Lecturers.

Expatriate staff can have their contracts renewed on the recommendation of the Head. Contracts are normally for a three-year period.

Development

Staff development takes various forms, i.e.

- NP's induction programme;
- learning on the job;
- attendance at talks, seminars, short courses, and
- the ELC's five-year Staff Development Programme of local and overseas training for certain staff members.

Under the staff development programme, a number of lecturers have been able to further their training by attending full-time or part-time courses. So far four lecturers have obtained their MA's from Birmingham University, one from the University of Lancaster and one from Aston. In addition, several staff have received professional training from local institutions such as the Regional Language Centre. Apart from their teaching duties at NP, lecturers regularly undertake teaching assignments with outside organizations such as statutory boards, companies and the National University of Singapore.

Allocation/time-tabling

The Head of the ELC decides on the allocation of staffing resources. Based on the departments' requests she assigns staff to teach various courses. As far as possible the same staff teach in one or two departments. Some departments prefer ELC staff assigned to their courses to be confined to their departments to facilitate time-tabling, consultation and attendance at departmental meetings. The ELC tries to accommodate their wishes.

The actual time-tabling of English classes is not carried out by the ELC. A time-table committee chaired by a department lecturer with representatives from all departments and Centres plan and work out the time-table for the Polytechnic's Engineering departments, based on agreed principles and procedures for time-tabling.

Facilities and equipment

The ELC's offices and staff rooms occupy one floor of a teaching block.

Its six 32-booth AAC Tandberg language laboratories and a modern recording room are installed on another floor. Each laboratory is equipped with OHPs, video recorders and TV monitors. Other AVAs are available for use, e.g. cine projector, slide projector, portable tape recorder and fast copier.

One laboratory is being used for self-access learning, and houses, besides the usual laboratory facilities, two micro-computers. This room can also be used for reading and for individual or group work which can be video-recorded.

Funds

Where does the ELC get its funds? The ELC has two main votes:

- Teaching materials
- Maintenance of equipment

Requests for money for these votes are submitted by the ELC to the administration, based on agreed norms. The administration submits the Polytechnic's budget proposals annually to the Ministry of Finance. Funds approved and allocated to the Polytechnic as a block vote are redistributed to the various departments and Centres according to their respective requests.

Apart from the recurrent expenditure on teaching materials and maintenance of equipment, the ELC put in a special request for capital expenditure for its five-year project for Language Laboratories (1980–85). The sum was approved and enabled the Centre to replace two laboratories which had given over ten years of service. One of these laboratories had been installed with a loan from the Asian Development Bank. In the last two years, the Centre has been allocated another sum of money as part of the Polytechnic's five-year Expansion Project for equipment and furniture (1984–85). This enabled the Polytechnic to install another Language Laboratory in 1984. The remaining sum from the fund will be used to replace an outmoded laboratory which will soon be reaching its tenth year of service. These laboratories have been installed to meet the increase in laboratory hours required as a result of the trebling of the student population during the last 5 years. Laboratory utilization has been high — above 75%.

Status of English/ELC in NP

The ELC has developed with the overall expansion of NP.

The status of English is reflected in the following policies in NP.

1. English classes are compulsory for all 'O' level students except those exempted by the ELC (30%) and the small number of 'A' level classes.

2. The English examinations are an integral part of the departments' curricula.
3. Students must satisfy a 75% attendance requirement in English, as in other subjects, before they are allowed to sit the sessional examinations.
4. In the annual examination, English is taken into account for promotion purposes and for the award of distinctions.
5. The ELC is represented in examination meetings.
6. The ELC is represented in Senate.

However, the ELC is not on a par with the departments. Its status is that of a support unit. It does not conduct courses for students of its own and it does not award diplomas in English. Depending on the circumstances, English may take on more or less significance, and the ELC's recommendations may be accepted or ignored, e.g. in decisions concerning borderline passes, continuing with or abolishing a course.

In general, the Polytechnic as a whole has been positive towards English and supportive of the ELC. There has been greater willingness in recent years to approach the Centre for help in matters involving English and greater readiness to accept the ELC's advice. This greater respect and rapport has probably come about as a result of:

- the ELC's efforts and contributions over the years;
- the good relationships that have developed between the ELC and the departments;
- the support and encouragement given by top management;
- recognition of the importance of English in Singapore;
- opportunities for staff to work together in a rapidly expanding Polytechnic.

Future

There is the continuous task of self-renewal and upgrading of work in the ELC in:

- syllabus re-design and curriculum redevelopment,
- replacement and upgrading of the ELC's equipment.

The Centre has the following plans for developing its role in the near future.

1. Under the newly established Centre for Continuing Education, it will conduct courses for students with Grade 7 to resit their GCE 'O' level English.
2. Discussions are being held with the British Council to explore the feasibility of conducting the RSA and Oxford-Arels Communicative examinations which are orientated to Singapore's needs.
3. The ELC has undertaken to participate in a UNDP-sponsored

ESP project with the National University of Singapore and other tertiary institutions.

4. The Centre aims to build a Materials Resources Pool.

Conclusion

Those of us involved with teaching ESP know the complexity of its problems. However, the job has to be done. With support from all concerned, a fair measure of success can be achieved.

Notes

1. According to the bilingual policy in Singapore, students in English medium schools offer EL1 (English as a first language) at 'O' level and their mother tongue (Chinese, Tamil or Malay) as the second language. Students in the Chinese stream offer EL2, English as a second language. English is the language of science and technology, of commerce and industry. Parents look on it as a means to higher education and a good job. The mother tongue is meant to provide the cultural ballast of Asian values and sustain the younger generation's awareness of their ancient cultural roots.
2. The closure or conversion of Chinese-stream schools, i.e. schools using Mandarin as the medium of instruction, is the culmination of a trend of declining enrolments. Given the choice to send their children to schools in the Tamil, Malay, Chinese or English streams, parents have been increasingly exercising their preference for English-medium schools. As a result, first the Tamil and then the Malay stream had to close down, and by 1987 the last batch of Chinese-stream students will have graduated, thus leaving only one stream in the system.
3. The following events and circumstances have influenced the ELC's development of its ESP programme:
 - the 1974 RELC Seminar on English for Special Purposes;
 - the input of qualified and experienced language teachers with training in materials design;
 - the two-year attachment to NP ELC of a KELT Adviser, Tony Dudley-Evans;
 - the on-going training of staff in ELT.
4. This is supported by official statistics. See the article 'The Joint Campus: The Importance and Limits of Bilingualism' in *The Mirror*, 5 January 1979, Singapore.

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Materials

An EOP Case Study: Domestic Aides in West Asia

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Introduction

Every year over 10,000 women leave Sri Lanka to take up employment as domestic 'aides' in West Asia (Korale 1983). As they have no knowledge of English or Arabic, one of the major problems they face is the communication barrier; hence the need for a language course for domestic aides. A preliminary survey revealed that there was greater demand for an English course than for an Arabic course, because English-speaking domestic aides could obtain quicker placement, higher wages and better working conditions.

At the outset it was evident that domestic aides needed a learner-centred course catering to their occupational needs in the host country. It would also have to be a course of 'high surrender value' (Johnson 1982) with speedy and relevant learning. A needs analysis was, therefore, a logical and necessary starting point for such a course. For as Johnson observes:

... it enables us to discriminate between various learner types, and to produce syllabus inventories (and courses) specifically geared to their needs.

In this paper I will focus on the sources, procedures and parameters used to identify the learners' needs. Reference will also be made to how this information can be applied in designing a syllabus.

Identifying the learners' needs

The data-gathering methodology followed a multi-dimensional approach, using a variety of independent measures designed to collect both qualitative and quantitative data. The main thrust of the data-gathering process was to gather as much information as possible from women who had already worked as domestic aides in West Asia and to investigate and experience the reality of the workplace through participant observation and field study.

The investigator's role is not one of a detached observer. He must develop a real 'feel' for the workplace so that he can understand the experiences, tensions and frustrations which affect communication there (Jupp and Hodlin 1978).

Sources and procedures: the questionnaire

A mother-tongue questionnaire was administered to a sample of thirty women presently working as domestic aides in Kuwait. This was the chief instrument for collecting quantitative data and was also the most formal of the measures used.

The structured interview

This was one of the most effective of the data-gathering procedures used, because it generated both qualitative and quantitative data. It was administered to a sample of forty-six people, comprising returnees (women who had returned to Sri Lanka after completing their contracts), domestic aides presently working in Kuwait, employment agents in Sri Lanka and in Kuwait and employers in Kuwait. The purpose of conducting structured interviews with the three main links in the Middle East migratory flow — recruit, agent, and employer — was to validate the information already given and to gain another perspective.

The format of the structured interview used with recruits was the same as the questionnaire. The format used with agents and employers differed slightly in the structuring of some of the questions. The interviews, however, often went beyond the structure designed for them. Some aides gave detailed job descriptions with their daily routine and recipes of popular dishes.

Informal interviews

In Sri Lanka informal interviews were conducted with government officials who handled West Asian migrations, airline staff, travel agents etc. In Kuwait, discussions were held with the staff of the Sri Lankan Embassy, airport officials and bank officers. Some of the information obtained through these discussions went beyond needs assessment into areas such as organizing an EOP course for domestic recruits. But other information such as their communicative needs en route and at the bank were directly related to syllabus design.

Field study and participant observation

From the point of view of situation analysis and developing a real feel for the workplace, this was perhaps the most useful of the data-gathering procedures used. Kuwait was selected for this purpose because it employs nearly 34% of the Sri Lankan domestic aides working in West Asia (Korale and Karunawathie 1981). Over a period

of two weeks it was possible to observe three aides at work in their households and a few others attending to children in a park. Visits were also made to some of the settings where domestic aides would use the target language such as the airport, bank, post office, employment agency, bazaar etc. At the Sri Lankan Embassy it was possible to go through the complaints files of employees and to sit in on interviews granted by embassy officials to both employers and employees. Here, it was soon discovered, the tensions and frustrations of the workplace are of a nature and magnitude hardly ever experienced elsewhere such as deportation, attempted suicide, imprisonment, absconding, pregnancy, rape, sexual and physical harassment amongst other things.

Job advertisements

Forty-four job advertisements collected over a period were analysed for age of participant, country of destination, job category and language requirement. This was the final source of data.

Parameters

1. The Learner

Through these formal and informal measures, information was collected on a variety of parameters. In the first instance it was necessary to establish who the learner is and what her characteristics are. Information was therefore sought on age, literacy in the first language, proficiency in the second language, learner expectations and attitudes towards the second language. Information on the last two parameters was obtained through questions such as:

- Is it necessary to know a foreign language to do this job?
- What language(s) is/are necessary?
- What are the special advantages of knowing English?

All sources indicated very positive attitudes towards English. In response to the question 'Why do you want to learn a foreign language?' domestic aides gave reasons such as, 'to speak to other nationals' and 'to get higher pay'. These indicated that they were aware of both the integrative and instrumental value of English (Lambert *et al.* 1968). But even more valuable were responses such as 'so that I can take down a telephone message' or 'so that I can read instructions on household appliances' which gave clear indications of the learners' course expectations.

One important learner characteristic which surfaced during investigations was that in most cases the aide acquires a reasonable command of Arabic in about five to six months. This was to have a direct bearing on course design.

2. *Situation and Communicative Activities*

The next important issue which had to be examined was what the learner would need to do in the foreign language. For this purpose it

was necessary to obtain a detailed job description and a target situation analysis. Several questions in the questionnaire and the structured interview were directed towards this end. At the data-gathering stage, the aide's situation was not strictly defined in terms of Van Ek's (1975) components of role, settings and topics. In order to facilitate data-gathering, twelve situations were listed, and subjects were asked to indicate in which of these situations they needed to use English. They were also asked to supply details and to suggest additional situations. The situations as listed were a combination of setting and communicative activity (Munby 1978), e.g. 'to explain an illness to a doctor'. In some cases only the settings were listed, i.e. where the communicative activities were highly predictable (e.g. 'at the post office'), where it was not possible to predict the activities, or where it was necessary to establish priorities. In these last two cases it was believed that subjects themselves would supply details, e.g. 'en route/airport'. Under this scheme subjects provided very useful details of the type of communicative activity, medium, topic and even language functions which they hoped to perform, e.g.

- 'to read the menu'
- 'to fill in the disembarkation form'
- 'to identify different counters at the airport'
- 'to ask for help if my sponsor does not arrive with a visa'.

In order to establish a hierarchy of priorities I took the percentage of subjects who considered a particular situation useful. Three situations emerged as high priority. They were 'to speak to master/mistress'; 'to understand my duties'; and 'to explain an illness to a doctor'. On the other hand two situations which would normally be considered high priority were shown to be considered unimportant by the sample. They were: 'to make purchases at a shop' and 'at the post office'. At the interviews it was mentioned that a domestic aide's necessities were usually purchased by the employer, who also attended to her mail and her salary remittance.

One of the interesting features that surfaced during the research was the difference in perception that domestic aides, agents, and employers had about some of the situations in which English was necessary. These differences are largely coloured by the attitudes of these three categories of people. For example, 88% of the domestic aides thought that asking directions was a situation where English would be necessary, but none of the employers and only 36% of the agents thought so. While domestic aides like to have the freedom to get about, both employers and agents wished to discourage this for socio-cultural reasons. A similar discrepancy was evident with reference to the need for English in order to obtain travel documents.

Several data-gathering strategies were directed towards obtaining a detailed job description. Since the term 'domestic aide' is an umbrella term for housemaid, kitchen help, child-minder and housekeeper, it was

necessary first to establish which category was the most wanted. Although the content analysis of newspaper advertisements showed housemaid was the category most in demand, data collected from domestic aides and in field observation showed that there was, in fact, little job specialization, and women selected as housemaids ended up helping in the kitchen and minding the children. In regard to syllabus design, therefore, emphasis would have to be placed on the language skills needed for understanding and performing the duties of a housemaid, while incorporating some of the duties of kitchen help and child-minder as well.

The priority job type having been established, extensive data was collected on the nature of the duties and the equipment used. Here, participant observation and field study helped to supplement information collected from other sources. Although there was general conformity in the data supplied by different sources, it needs to be mentioned that some of the more unpleasant and difficult duties were reported only by domestic aides interviewed on the job.

Within the immediate job situation, the other important dimension on which data was sought was the highly sensitive area of the problems and pressures faced by domestic aides while in employment. The purpose of seeking this information was to include in the course the language skills needed to cope with these problems. As in the case of the situations where English is needed, here too it is evident that each of the sources of information looked at problems from their own perspective. Only one area, salary, was indicated as a problem by all three categories. Working hours, food and illness were listed by agents and domestic aides, whereas pregnancy was given by agents and employers. There were also 'problems' which were specific to each group. Domestic aides complained of sexual and physical harassment and verbal abuse, and of not being permitted to go out or to talk to anyone. Agents mentioned culture shock, loneliness and resistance to discipline, whereas employers spoke of theft, disobedience and lack of training. In applying this information to a course, the designer will have to select only those problems which are generally applicable such as wages, working hours, illness etc. The information generated through the question on 'problems' has also shown that the course should include some information on certain socio-cultural aspects of West Asian countries.

3. *Medium*

For purposes of syllabus design it was necessary to establish whether for a certain communication activity '... the required medium of communication is spoken or written or both and if the type of command is receptive or productive or both' (Munby 1978). At the data-gathering stage subjects were asked to rank the four skills in order of necessity. Subjects gave first place to the receptive and productive command of the spoken medium. In the written medium, they felt that the

productive command was more important than the receptive. These preferences need to be reflected in the general syllabus design. Based on a study of the communicative activities that domestic aides needed to participate in, it was then possible to specify the language skill/s needed for each of the items listed in the syllabus, e.g. understanding directions on use of household appliances:

- spoken-receptive
- written-receptive

4. The Target Level

The final parameter on which data was gathered was on the level of competence needed in the second language. This was identified mainly through a study of situation and discourse during the field observation. It was perceived that the required dimensions of language (Munby 1978) are low because the domestic aides' use and exposure to English is highly restricted; while the degree of error tolerance is very high, the general level of English in Middle East countries is low. However, in the written-productive skill, error tolerance is low because domestic aides should be able to write their home addresses on letters and complete forms accurately. Target level is important because it will determine the level of proficiency that the programme will try to deliver (Richards 1984).

Limitations and constraints

One of the main limitations of the data-gathering process was the absence of contact with the prospective learner. The target group was defined in terms of women already employed. This procedure would not furnish accurate information about the participant's entry behaviour in English and her attitudes towards English. In order to estimate entry behaviour, employment agents were asked what percentage of their applicants knew English. Their estimate was 15%. On the other hand, 20% of the domestic aides said they knew English well and a further 62% said they had some knowledge of English. In the face of contradictory data, the investigator's estimate is that about 50% of the target group would have some exposure to English and of them about 20% would have a knowledge of English ranging from elementary to intermediate.

As for attitudes, given the data previously mentioned, we cannot expect the target group to be so fully convinced about the need for English as the women already employed. However, they too would be motivated to learn English because it would get them a quicker placement and a higher salary.

Secondly, the field observation was limited to Kuwait, which is just one of about eight West Asian countries recruiting domestic labour from Sri Lanka. 86% of the domestic aides interviewed were also from

Kuwait. The data gathered, therefore, mainly reflected the Kuwait situation. However, the information gathered from employment agents would reflect the situation in all labour-recruiting countries.

Thirdly, there was the problem of locating returnees in Sri Lanka. Because there is a social stigma attached to domestic labour in West Asia, women are unwilling to admit that they have worked there. Some of the information they gave was also not very accurate because they tended to gloss over their West Asian experience. The field study was, therefore, vital to set the record straight.

Finally, it must be mentioned that the whole process of data-gathering on the subject of immigrant domestic labour in a West Asian country was an extremely difficult one, especially for a female researcher. The sample of employers interviewed remains very small (five) because people are unwilling to talk about their domestic aides. They feel it is an infringement of their privacy. The nature of the work place also makes it almost impossible for an investigator to walk in and observe participants at work.

What next?

Having obtained information about the learner and her communicative needs, it now remains to apply this information in subsequent phases of curriculum development, such as the formulation of objectives and the specification of content. Here too, the course designer may come up against numerous constraints which may obstruct the inclusion of all identified needs. Here the needs analysis is a useful measure for establishing which needs are the most pressing.

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The Problems and Potential of Exploiting the English Language Press as an Aid to Language Teaching in South Asia

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It is a truism that a language is inextricably linked with the way of life of the people who use it, with their value system and with their social behaviour, with their culture, in all possible interpretations of this word. The culture and the language of a community are so fused that each shapes and refines the other and is in its turn shaped and refined by the other. Where a language is divorced from its own cultural matrix and wedded to another one, where a language is used to fulfil certain important functions in a society where it is not indigenous, that is to say when it becomes a second language, it is bound to change and to develop features which are different from those of speakers of the language as a mother-tongue. This is a natural, inevitable process. It has happened to the English language in many parts of the world, notably in Asia and Africa. Well-established and extensively-described varieties of English in Asia include Indian English, Philippine English and the English of Singapore and Malaysia.

A great deal of attention is now being paid in the sociolinguistic literature to these 'new Englishes'. Certain features of these new varieties of English occur in widely-separated parts of the globe. Other features are idiosyncratic and may owe their appearance to the influence of the mother-tongue, or to cultural characteristics of the society in question.

The English language may be called upon to perform a number of roles in these Asian countries. In Singapore, for example, it is increasingly becoming the main medium of intercourse between the members of the numerous linguistic groups which make up that heterogeneous society. In India, among other roles, it serves as the 'link language' between the northern and southern parts of that country. In fulfilling these *intranational* requirements, it could be argued that the local variety of English is probably the most appropriate and the most

communicatively effective medium to use. In creative writing in English in these societies, too, many people believe that an author abandoning the local variety of English and attempting to produce a native-speaker model runs the risk of depersonalization. Kandiah (1981) avers that such a switch:

‘is bound to have fatal consequences. The system that these writers turn so casually away from is interwoven with the very pith and marrow of their unique symbiotic lives. For them to shake off the distinctive forms and rhythms of the everyday speech which express the system is, thus, to debilitate themselves, to cut their writing off disastrously from the very source of its life and vitality, impoverishing it and rendering it artificial, sterile, anaemic’.

One of the most important reasons, however, for the teaching of English all over the world, including Sri Lanka, is related to the status the language has as the principal medium of international communication. When English is being used as an *international* medium, there is widespread agreement that a single standard of universal application in written English is to be aimed at. We might call this ‘utilitarian’ type of English ‘International Written Standard English’ (IWSE). In a study paper written in 1978, Doric de Souza expressed the desirability of uniformity in the following words:

‘Standards of English in utilitarian written English are uniform and universal. . . . We should enforce the standards of written English without permitting any local variants’.

De Souza goes on to claim that local variants ‘do not in fact occur’ in this sort of English. If that is indeed the case at the present time (and certain writings we have seen during our stay in Sri Lanka seem to some extent to contradict this view), can we be sure that this position will be maintained unless action is taken to that end?

We should like at this point to suggest that consideration be given to a proposal that International Written Standard English should be taught in Sri Lanka as a separate component of the English programme in the Advanced Level, pre-university classes, and perhaps at the university level also. In a sense, this is the sort of ESP course which everyone needs who is going to use the language for international communication of any kind. It may be worth pointing out that it is not only diplomats, scientists, academics and public administrators who need to be proficient in this variety of English; in the world of commerce and business, too, many cases have occurred where the use of written English deviating from the accepted standard in the promotional material has adversely affected the market position of a product. This particular mode of expression has got to be learnt by any user of it. It may have been easier for us as native speakers of English to learn it than for speakers of other mother-tongues; nevertheless, learning it was a task which we had to undertake.

At the European Common Market headquarters, where one of us worked before coming to Sri Lanka, the improvement of the officials' competence in International Written Standard English (and International Written Standard French, incidentally) was one of the major tasks of the Training Division. The officials concerned, most of them, had an excellent command of written English, communicatively effective, often idiomatic and colourful, but deviant in various ways from International Written Standard. The courses we designed, ESP courses in what we termed Administrative Writing, had as their objective the elimination of these deviations, and proved to be a most sought-after component of the language training programme. The situation, and the solution, are similar in many countries where English is a second, rather than a foreign, language; courses in Singapore and Malaysia for senior civil servants are further cases in point.

We should like now to turn to the main issue which we wish to treat in this paper, namely the use in the teaching of English of material taken from newspapers, and to the material of this sort available in Sri Lanka. The newspaper is potentially one of the most valuable and powerful aids to the teaching of English which we as teachers have at our disposal. It offers numerous advantages as a teaching resource for the language classroom (see Blatchford 1983, Salama 1974, Scott 1984, Todd 1969, and Vigo Sanges 1983). This point has been recognized in recent years by at least four quality publications in Britain. ELT materials based on the unaltered content of 'The Times' (Elliot and Strutt 1984), 'The Economist' (Pilbeam, Ellis and O'Driscoll 1982), 'The Observer' (Harrison 1984), and 'The Financial Times' (O'Neill 1976) are now available. Numerous other publications which exploit newspapers as ELT materials have also appeared on both sides of the Atlantic (see Baddock 1984, Fredrickson and Wedel 1984, Land 1981, and Maingay 1983). All these publications are, however, too expensive for exploitation on a wide scale in Sri Lanka. But English-language newspapers published locally are available.

These newspapers are relatively cheap and easily accessible; they offer both authenticity of language and immediacy and relevance of content. A single issue encompasses a wide variety of topics and themes, both local and international, for development in the classroom. Does the use of local newspapers here in Sri Lanka for the teaching of English present any problems?

Clearly, one major problem arises at the outset; this relates to the sort of language which the newspapers here contain. It seems to us that there is an important difference between the situation here and that in other parts of South and Southeast Asia. In India, for example, while it is true that most provincial newspapers exhibit localized forms which deviate, often widely, from International Written Standard English, there are also newspapers which adhere very closely to that standard — 'The Times of India' and 'The Hindu' to name but two. In Singapore and

The following extract is from a leading article which appeared in *The Island* and illustrates these two usages in LNE:

If the outcome were not so tragic what transpired at the Coroner's Court yesterday at an inquiry into two deaths at the Fisheries Ministry would have been comic. But two deaths are no laughing matter even if they have been the result of a gun going off accidentally in the hands of a security guard who had received (1) no training for his job except saluting, on the admission of a colleague who had given (2) evidence at the inquest.

The incident had taken place (3) at the Fisheries Ministry's office complex at Maligawatte and it is not clear whether the security officer concerned is an employee of the Ministry or a private security firm. But whoever the employer, the employee is typical of the new tribe of security guard who has emerged in recent times. In the good (or is it the bad?) old days these people would have been called Watchers. But in our brave new times they have been christened 'security guards' by a mentality which seems to feel that dignity of labour is brought about merely by changing the nomenclatures of the employed. For all their high falutin new title, security guards continue to be poorly-paid and compelled to work all kinds of odd hours under the most trying circumstances.

Some of them are not armed but when they are, their situation is exemplified by the wretched young man at Maligawatte who had been (4) responsible for two deaths merely because somebody had thrust (5) a gun into his hands and expected him to carry it without any training at all. It is high time that the government kept a tab on the mushrooming security firms in the country and saw to it that they are run on more systematic lines. It might be that the authorities do not care to enforce any code of ethics in respect of security firms because the better known are owned by former Police high-ups. It might well be that it is the smaller firms which are guilty of carelessness but it is time that the country's security firms are brought firmly into line. A recent news report said that private security firms had been (6) declared essential services by the Government under Emergency regulations. But a close reading of the report indicates that Government's real concern is with fire-fighting equipment being installed in all establishments. This is certainly an urgent imperative given the times, but it is necessary that much more should be done as far as private security firms are concerned.

There are six occurrences of the pluperfect in this excerpt. The first usage *a security guard who had received no training* is IWSE — the man had received no training before he took up his position as a security guard and before the incident. The second usage, on the other hand, is not IWSE. In *the colleague who had given evidence* the temporal sequence of events is not clear. This would read *the colleague who gave*

evidence in IWSE. In the second paragraph also, the time sequence is ambiguous in the third occurrence *The incident had taken place*. It is not clear here what other past event this preceded. In the third paragraph three pluperfects occur. The first occurrence (4) *had been responsible* would read *was responsible* in IWSE as it does not refer to an action before a past action. The second occurrence (5) is IWSE, the gun having been thrust into his hands before the incident took place. The last occurrence of the pluperfect (6) in the third paragraph is also IWSE usage, *firms had been declared*, since it is the indirect speech form of the present perfect.

Further examples of this variation can be found in the following passage:

All government departments, banks and other state institutions in Jaffna flew the Lion Flag to celebrate independence. The flag over the Jaffna railway station had been removed (7) about two hours after it was hoisted by some unknown persons. There were no other incidents.

Daily News

The pluperfect (7) in *The flag over the Jaffna railway station had been removed two hours after it was hoisted* would read *the flag was removed two hours after it had been hoisted* in IWSE since the hoisting preceded the removing. The LNE sentence is, in fact, an inversion of IWSE. Further examples of this usage are found in the following excerpt:

Northern terrorists have shot at a Sri Lanka Air Force Helicopter. None of the soldiers who travelled in the helicopter have been injured, but the helicopter was slightly damaged. The helicopter which was engaged in surveillance of the Northern seas, had detected (8) a boat sailing from across the Indian Maritime Boundary towards Sri Lanka. When the airmen flew low to inspect the incoming boat, the terrorists fired. The Security men in the helicopter had fired back (9), injuring the occupants of the boat but the boat had been taken (10) by the occupants towards India.

Sun

Of the three occurrences of the pluperfect in the above passage, only the eighth *had detected a boat* is IWSE. The ninth and tenth occurrences would be preterite forms in IWSE.

One last example of the preterite/pluperfect variation in LNE comes from a recent front-page article in *The Island*:

The Indian Foreign Secretary Mr Romesh Bhandari had yesterday told (11) the leader of the Opposition, Mr Anura Bandaranaike and SLFP leader and former Prime Minister, Mrs Sirima Bandaranaike that his visit to Sri Lanka had helped break (12) new ground on the ethnic issue. *The Island* learns Mr Bhandari had also

informed (13) the Opposition Leader and SLFP leader that the Government's response to the whole issue was very receptive and that talks far (sic) had gone (14) much better than expected. Indian High Commissioner, S.J.S. Chatwal was also associated with the talks Mr Bhandari had with Mrs Bandaranaike and Mr Bandaranaike separately at their Rosmead Place residences for approximately 45 minutes each.

The Island also learns that the Foreign Secretary had explained (15) the Indian Government's view on the whole issue and the reasons behind India's concern. India's concern, according to Mr Bhandari, is the stability of the region. Mr Bhandari had informed (16) the SLFP leaders what was expected of them to help solve the issue. The leader of the Opposition, Mr Anura Bandaranaike, when contacted by *The Island* declined to disclose details of the meeting but said SLFP co-operations (sic) had not been sought (17) to solve the crisis, though Mr Bhandari expressed his views on what was expected of the SLFP, he said. Asked for the SLFP's response to the meeting, Mr Bandaranaike said: 'We will wait and see the outcome of Government's reaction. The ball is in their Court'. 'We will watch the situation. We are very very wary over what had so far been done (18) by Government' Mr Bandaranaike added. Mr Bandaranaike further said that similar visits had been made (19) earlier but in the final analysis no results had been achieved (20).

There are ten occurrences of the pluperfect in the above article. In IWSE, only five of these would occur. The eleventh pluperfect would read *Bhandari yesterday told*; there are not two past events referred to in this sentence. Occurrence (12) *had helped break* is IWSE as it is the indirect speech form of the present perfect. Occurrences (13) and (15) would also be in the preterite in IWSE. Occurrence (14) *far had gone* is also IWSE indirect speech. Occurrence (16) *had informed* would read simply *informed* in IWSE. Occurrences (17), (19) and (20) are also indirect speech usages of the pluperfect and IWSE. Occurrence (18) *had so far been done* is interesting in that it is quoted direct speech. In standard spoken English, this would be *has so far been done*, i.e. this is a use of the pluperfect in place of the present perfect.

The use of the pluperfect for the preterite is probably the most confusing of all variant verbal usages in LNE. It is often difficult to conceptualize the correct time frame in which actions have taken place, and therefore difficult to interpret them semantically. If used at the beginning of an article as in the first sentence of the fourth passage, or at the beginning of a conversation (as it often is), the reader or listener is often expecting more to follow, since one common use of the pluperfect in IWSE is to signal two actions — one of which temporally precedes the other in the past. Psychologists in these cases would say that 'closure' has not taken place, i.e. the utterance has not been

completed (see Brown 1980 and Stevick 1982). This can be a source of confusion in both writing and speech.

It seems to us that the use of the pluperfect for the preterite in LNE appears most often when the pluperfect occurs near a time adverbial or a present tense (simple or perfect). Otherwise, the preterite tends to occur. It is clear, however, that this usage is not random, and much more detailed work needs to be done to describe this very interesting linguistic variation, which occurs in both spoken and written Lankan English.

A further variant usage involves conditionals. In all instances in the data of the so-called past conditional, it was found that in LNE the preterite is used for IWSE pluperfect, in other words the exact converse of the previous usage. Examples of this can be found in the following two passages:

COL. HENRY STEEL OLCOTT, the American born pioneer of Buddhist education in Sri Lanka passed away in Adyar seventy eight years ago and grateful and lovable Buddhists annually remember him on February 17 and bestow merit on him for the inestimable services he has rendered to Buddhism, Buddhist education and culture. If Col. Olcott did not set (21) foot in Galle in 1880 we may have sunk deep into abysmal depths, therefore the Buddhists of Sri Lanka owe a lasting and deep debt of gratitude to Colonel Olcott for his yeoman services to regain the lost religious and cultural heritage of Lanka.

Weekend

A third explosive device was located by the Police before it exploded and deactivated. If this device went off (22) many people living nearby would have been killed or injured.

Sun

Occurrences (21) and (22), respectively, would read *If Colonel Olcott had not set* and *If this device had gone off* in IWSE. A further example of this usage occurs in the first sentence of the passage on security guards previously cited: *If the outcome were not so tragic what transpired at the Coroner's Court yesterday at an inquiry into two deaths at the Fisheries Ministry would have been comic, where were* would read *had been* in IWSE.

A similar pattern also occurs in the present conditional in the following excerpt:

Despite all these I still continue to work with the UNP, as the CWC will be left with no one to negotiate on behalf of the plantation workers, if the CWC broke away (23) from the UNP.

The Island

Here a slight confusion lies in the two possible alternatives: *the CWC would be left if the CWC broke away* or *the CWC will be left if the CWC breaks away*.

We could cite numerous additional examples involving tense/aspect variations in LNE and IWSE, but this goes beyond the scope of the present paper. Briefly, we have found:

1. The present perfect used for the preterite (see (i) the second sentence in the first paragraph of the passage about security guards *But two deaths are no laughing matter even if they have been the result of . . .* (ii) the passage on Colonel Olcott . . . *for the inestimable services he has rendered to Buddhism, Buddhist education and culture and (iii) the second sentence in the excerpt on Northern terrorists firing on an Air Force helicopter *None of the soldiers who travelled in the helicopter have been injured. . .*).*
2. the pluperfect for the present perfect (example (18) mentioned earlier *We will watch the situation. We are very wary over what had so far been done by Government*).
3. the preterite for the present perfect (*The next five years should also be one in which reconstruction and maintenance of the existing infrastructure like water, roads, sewage etc. which went into a stage of hibernation since 1956. . .* (*The Island*).
4. the simple past for the past progressive (see the second sentence in the excerpt on Northern terrorists firing on an Air Force helicopter *None of the soldiers who travelled in the helicopter have been injured. . .*).
5. could for can (*all Lake House photographs taken by our staff photographers both published and unpublished could be obtained at the Photo Service Reception Centre . . .* *Daily News*) and would for will (*He will inaugurate this campaign by declaring open 27 campaign branches in the electorate and he would also address meetings in all these branches today. . .* *The Island*).

We have also found numerous examples of LNE deviation in reference (see the example sentence in (3) above where *one* would read *ones* in IWSE), grammatical cohesion, and textual coherence.

To return now to the question posed earlier, whether Sri Lankan newspapers could serve as pedagogical models in the ELT classroom, we should like to claim that there is indeed justification for using material taken from the newspapers cited in the teaching of written English in this country. This lies in the presumption that the writers of the newspaper material we have quoted will have come from a similar educational background to that of the students we have in mind in preparing this paper, students whose manner of expression in English will be broadly similar to that of at least the younger members of the journalistic profession. When remedial language teaching materials are being designed, the starting-point should be the degree of proficiency that the students have achieved and the kinds of difficulties which they have. We submit that the sort of remedial programme we

are proposing would meet this requirement. We apologize for using the term 'remedial teaching', which is not very fashionable at the moment; we mean 'remedial' simply from the point of view of International Written Standard English.

In order for these newspaper materials to be used to the best advantage, what is needed is a careful comparison (i.e. a contrastive analysis) of the syntax, and perhaps the rhetorical features, of the English found in them with those of International Written Standard. In the carrying-out of this study it would be valuable to adopt the distinction made by Corder (1981) between errors and mistakes. In Corder's interpretation, mistakes are unsystematic performance features and are thus of little interest to the sort of study we are proposing. Errors, on the other hand, are systematic and throw light on the writer's underlying grammatical system. It is, of course, the comparison of the two systems which would provide the language material for the exercises we have in mind. Such exercises would focus on a comparatively limited range of features of written English. Because he is dealing with the narration of events which have taken place, the reporter makes very frequent use of the preterite and pluperfect tenses. As we have seen, this is a major area of deviation between LNE and IWSE. Other areas which may require attention seem to be conditionals, reference, grammatical cohesion and textual coherence. The types of exercise available are quite numerous; paragraph rearranging and proof-reading exercises seem particularly well suited to the teaching task described, together of course with report writing.

Are we entitled to hope that remedial exercises of this kind will have the desired effect? It is our belief that we are. For one thing, such exercises will alert the learner to areas of difficulty of which he may not be aware himself. Since writing allows time to reflect before one commits oneself to a particular choice of linguistic form, this greater awareness of problem areas should enable the learner to monitor his own performance and to filter out most of the differences between his own utilitarian writing style and that of International Written Standard English.

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Materials Case Study: National Diploma in Technology — Engineering

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Introduction

The National Diploma in Technology (Engineering) is a two-year, technician-level, English-medium course of study conducted at two Sri Lankan institutions — Hardy Technical College and the University of Moratuwa. The majority of students who follow the course are educated in the vernacular and have studied English as a subject up to the Ordinary Level only; the NDT(E) course is therefore their first English-medium course of study. In the two months prior to the beginning of the academic year, students are given a 120-hour pre-session Intensive Course in English, which is conducted at the University of Moratuwa. In this two-month course, basic technical English is taught, including a substantial listening comprehension component in order to prepare students for initial lectures in English. After this joint Intensive Course, approximately two-thirds of the NDT(E) students remain at the University of Moratuwa for their first year of study, while the remaining one-third receive first-year training at Hardy Technical College in Ampara. In the second year all students study at the University of Moratuwa.

The University English Language Service Unit at Moratuwa often received complaints from subject lecturers that second-year NDT(E) students were not proficient enough to study or work effectively in English. Upon preliminary study, it was found that first-year English courses at Hardy Technical College and the University of Moratuwa had little in common and that neither was adequately geared to the academic and professional needs of students. As a result, research was initiated by a joint team from the two institutions for the purpose of coordinating the English programmes by providing a single, relevant course which was based on a thorough needs analysis.

The needs analysis

The joint team/course designers used several instruments of both a formal and an informal nature to assess the needs of the target group. These instruments, primarily questionnaires, were supplemented by a varied programme of meetings and discussions.

Questionnaires

Questionnaires (based upon the work of Dr Cyril Weir, then of the Associated Examining Board, Aldershot) were given to students and teaching staff at both institutions (76 student questionnaires and 42 staff questionnaires). The course designers sat with the students to assist them with the questionnaire so that the data would be as accurate as possible. The team also took care to discuss the questionnaires thoroughly with the subject staff concerned to ensure that they did not view the research as an encroachment on their time and work, or an unnecessary intrusion into their own disciplines.

Observation of subject lectures

In addition to administering the questionnaires, the course designers sat in subject lectures, tutorials and practicals in order to observe real classroom situations. This provided them with valuable information about the level of comprehension required in lectures, the speed of delivery of lectures, the rhetorical features typically used in Sri Lankan lectures, and the kinds of diagrammatic representations commonly given on the blackboard or in handouts.

Informal meetings with subject staff and students

The course designers also met with NDT(E) subject staff on an informal basis. These meetings produced valuable discussions regarding the basic English language skills lecturers expect of students. Samples of student work were made available. The course designers also met and discussed the NDT(E) programme of study with students, both individually and in groups. These meetings were invaluable in that they provided a forum for the subject lecturers and students to provide input into the new course. In addition the meetings established a vital connection between English and subject area staff.

National apprenticeship board

In their third year, NDT(E) students are required to do in-plant training which is supervised by the National Apprenticeship Board. During this year of on-the-job training, students are expected to maintain daily diaries and to submit periodical reports. The course designers met a number of NAB officers who supervise and monitor the students during this training period. Thanks to their co-operation, opportunities were provided for the course designers to go through field books, notes, diaries, and reports actually made by students, and to discuss NAB requirements.

In interpreting the information gained from these various sources, the joint team looked for general, overall trends in the input data. Only the questionnaire lent itself relatively easily to quantitative analysis. From the whole bank of input data, very clear patterns emerged about both academic and professional student needs. These will be discussed in detail in Section Four.

Criteria for the selection of materials for the NDT(E) course

Once the needs analysis was completed and the results analysed, the choice of instructional materials for the course had to be made. After careful consideration, the joint team decided to opt for locally-produced materials for the 90-hour first-year diploma-level course conducted at the two different institutions. This decision was taken for the following reasons:

1. The difficulty of finding suitable published technician-level materials which catered to all the identified needs of the NDT(E) students. The shortcoming of much of the published material reviewed was that it had been written with a wider target group in mind (understandably for commercial reasons) and therefore was not fully relevant to local needs.
2. The high cost of purchasing imported materials.
3. The belief of the course designers that the writing of materials is a very important aspect of teacher training. It ensures that teachers will become more involved in the work of the course and will as a result teach the course materials with more understanding and confidence. This is especially important in Sri Lanka where the majority of teachers have a literature background.
4. The belief of the course designers that locally-produced materials incorporating local themes would be of more interest to Sri Lankan students.
5. The course designers were fortunate in having two British VSOs, one Engineer and one Graphic Artist, as part of the materials writing team.

The design of the NDT(E) course and its objectives

On the basis of the results of the needs analysis, a course design was developed. The specific sequence of materials is described in the following section. In this section the paper focuses on the nature of the course philosophy and the learning objectives of the course, which it is important for both teacher and student to be fully aware of.

Course philosophy

The NDT(E) course is based upon three main principles. First, it follows an integrated-skills approach, which requires proportionate attention and practice to be given to speaking, reading, listening and writing in all or most project and activity work. The same skills-based approach also takes account of basic organizational skills. Second, the course seeks to develop cognitive skills in the student, by offering problem-solving tasks that demand reflection, choice, selective analysis and simple decision-making before solutions can be found. Third, course methodology incorporates extensive use of teamwork, in recognition of

the importance of this factor in a work context. Thus, no matter how much individual ability may contribute to a given task's successful completion, students have to come together, pool ideas and interact during the stages of problem solving. In accordance with the third principle, it can be expected that student confidence and fluency in using English will increase in the context of team efforts.

The General Aims of the NDT(E) Course are:

1. To encourage and promote oral interaction and communication in English by students when they are participating in experiments of a general, practical kind, leading to an overall awareness of what it means to write a report. Students will be trained not just to do work on their own, but to do this work as part of a team. The concept of a report and its structure will be extended to include simple journal or diary entries, and small projects requiring elementary conclusions and recommendations to be made.
2. To train students in observational, information-gathering and analytical skills appropriate for technician engineers in the course of practical assignments.
3. To strengthen and encourage students' general knowledge, spirit of enquiry and creativity with inputs from a broad but relevant and interesting range of audio-visual sources.
4. To develop extensive and intensive reading skills through the use of reading comprehension texts to accompany most of the experiment, audio-visual or project-based inputs.
5. To encourage purposeful problem-solving activities through data manipulation and discussion in the course of task-based projects.
6. To develop students' confidence in their use of English by regular practice in giving and responding to instructions, asking questions, giving explanations and making a variety of oral statements in report-back sessions. The tasks and experiments are planned as far as possible in a natural, participatory situation in which weaker students need not be nervous, nor abler ones contribute more than their fair share. In carrying out these activities students can draw on subject knowledge as well as English.
7. To develop the students' personal information-storing and locating skills.
8. To help the students develop techniques for producing accurate written English which sets out data and comment in an organized, logical and sequential way as required in the course of a technician engineer's work on both a routine basis and through special projects.

Vocabulary

Many of the experiments and projects in this course draw upon a wide

range of technical words and formulae. These often anticipate that the student will have access to a still wider range, since the topics themselves are selected for their relevance, for example to the fields of Civil, Mechanical or Electrical engineering. No apology is made for this. In some cases glossary suggestions are made, but as much for teacher as student. The point is clear: teachers of ESP are not teachers of Engineering, or whatever subject happens to be their students' discipline. They can talk with their students and with the subject teachers and consult their dictionaries concerning specific vocabulary items, but they are probably ill-advised to try to teach them. These points will be touched upon again in the following section on the materials themselves.

Course structure

The course structure is designed to introduce student (and teacher) to problem-solving, task-based, work attitudes in a gradual manner. Thus initial tasks are set on simple classroom-based practical experiments, requiring both individual and team approaches. Wider, more demanding topics follow, with local and international settings, though here it should be noted that the 'core' of the course is firmly centred around the topic of Sri Lankan hydro schemes (see Appendix I).

A variety of exercises accompanies the course units, ranging from multiple choice questions to tasks which involve role-playing or simulatory activities, with a problem-solving focus wherever possible. Thus, for example, students are asked to think constructively about cost-effectiveness of transporting goods and preparing land, studying the data provided; to decide on basic civil, mechanical and electrical engineering questions in given practical situations; and to analyse inter-departmental activity in a simple process of engineering production.

No system of language grading has been adopted for the course. Instead the kind of natural English used in the topic context has been used throughout, and practice is done with selected functions, such as predicting, recommending, analysing, introducing, setting out and explaining problems.

The course materials

The first stage in writing the course materials was to consider how best to create situations in which the students would be encouraged to communicate with others while practising certain features of English which they would need in their studies, in in-plant training and eventually in their job. The materials also had to be flexible enough to cater for the different proficiency levels of the students. The result is a course which requires the students to gather, manipulate and analyse information presented in a variety of forms while working either individually or in pairs and groups.

In the selection of the input materials, consideration was given to certain aspects of the students' studies and methods of working in the field of engineering as well as the restrictions on the availability of materials in colleges and likely levels of technical knowledge of lecturers and instructors in English in these institutions.

In the first set of six units, the different aspects of writing up reports on experiments are covered. In the introductory unit the students are first of all made familiar with the expected general layout of such a report and then given the holistic task of reorganizing a jumbled report. In the following units, students carry out simple experimental surveys requiring a minimal amount of equipment, and then, using graded example reports as models, write their own reports on these surveys (see Appendix 2).

Whilst working on these units it is hoped that the students will begin, to develop more confidence in using English when performing and writing up experiments in their main subject areas. This greater confidence can be encouraged if the teacher monitors what the students are doing and saying, and where appropriate directs the attention of the students to their errors.

Interest-based materials have been included in the course through the incorporation of film inputs in five of the units. These are supported by modified versions of the film texts and relevant pictures and diagrams. The films are all short (around 20 minutes) and so can be shown twice in a one-hour lesson if desired. Each input is used as a basis for lessons which feature problem-solving mini-projects which students could encounter later in the world of work.

In the next series of units students follow the steps taken when installing a micro-hydro scheme, including the selection of site, penstock pipe, turbine and generator, as well as looking at the economics of power supply. This project was chosen because it includes aspects of all three engineering fields being studied by the students (civil, mechanical and electrical), because it is relevant in Sri Lanka as there are about 120 of these schemes in the country, and because of the vast hydro-electric projects (the Mahaweli Programme) now in the final stages of completion (see Appendix III). Macro-hydro projects are also investigated in these units, and the similarities to micro-schemes are highlighted.

In most of these units, students are required to solve initial problems using selection criteria based on tables, diagrams, graphs and written information. They are then asked to explain their reasons for making choices. In order to complete these tasks satisfactorily, students are constantly required to communicate with one another.

The last units of the course concentrate on the writing of apprenticeship journal entries. The work in these units is based on a set of descriptions of typical work situations, situations in which the students could quite conceivably find themselves during their in-plant training.

In an English course of this type, ground is covered that is seldom

touched upon in other parts of the students' technical education, and which helps to prepare them for work at a professional level. With the inclusion of professionally-related materials in the English course, both students and subject area staff alike are more likely to appreciate the relevance of the English programme. An ESP course of this type also strikes a balance between student needs and student wants: the course content is technical; the course methodology, on the other hand, ensures maximum speaking practice, which any needs analysis will reveal ranks high among student wants.

But are teachers going to welcome into their classroom materials they might feel to be unintelligible to them because of their technical content? Of course there is no definitive answer to this question. However, teachers often discover when using the materials that it is not necessary for them to understand every technical word or mathematical calculation. The English teacher here is not a disseminator of technical information. Instead, he or she can concentrate on assisting the students when they have problems in expressing their ideas either orally or in writing. This reorientation of classroom activities may take some time for both the students and teacher to get used to, but eventually it should create a more productive teaching/learning environment. The success of such a course naturally depends also on the extent to which the teacher welcomes a task-based, problem-solving approach, and makes determined efforts to implement it, because such an approach necessarily lays more stress on the teacher as manager and monitor than as guru. It is hoped that using this course will help the English language and subject area teacher, at least in part, to feel that their particular interests are both fully considered and welded together.

Appendix I

Preface

FACTS AND FIGURES

- UNIT 1 *Introductory Unit*
- UNIT 2 *An Experiment on Height and Weight Relationship*
- UNIT 3 *A Survey of Family Sizes*
- UNIT 4 *Analysing Technical Writing*
- UNIT 5 *A Cost Efficiency Analysis*
- UNIT 6 *Revision*

GENERAL — TECHNICAL INTEREST

- UNIT 7* *Harbour Construction*
- UNIT 8* *Storm Warnings*

HYDRO-PROJECTS — SMALL-SCALE

- UNIT 9 *General Background and Hydrology*
- UNIT 10 *Civil Works*
- UNIT 11 *Turbines*
- UNIT 12 *Electrical Power*
- UNIT 13 *Economics and Running Costs*

HYDRO-PROJECTS — LARGE-SCALE

- UNIT 14 *At the Power Station*
- UNIT 15 *The Urban Consumer*
- UNIT 16 *Revision*

TECHNICAL INTEREST

- UNIT 17* *Safety*
- UNIT 18* *Process of Engineering Production*

JOURNAL ENTRIES

- UNIT 19 *A Building Design Task*
- UNIT 20 *Consultants to the CEB*
- UNIT 21 *Samudra and Partners*
- UNIT 22 *Plasti-Comps Ltd*

JOB-ORIENTED INTEREST

- UNIT 23* *Paper*

* Units 7, 8, 17, 18 and 23 have film/video inputs.

Appendix II

Unit 5

A cost efficiency analysis

To the student:

In the final unit of this FACTS AND FIGURES section, you are given certain data on different ways of transporting goods and preparing land in Sri Lanka, as well as notes on the advantages and disadvantages of each of these modes of transport. Using this data you can write your own conclusions.

1. Look at the table below. It gives some approximate figures for the transportation of goods in Sri Lanka. Then look at the notes which list some advantages and disadvantages of these modes.

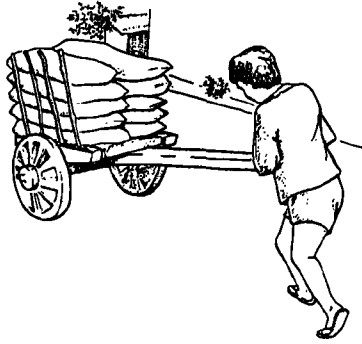
MODE	CARRYING CAPACITY	DISTANCE	COST (RS)
HAND CART	340 kg	very short	20 per full load
BULLOCK CART	1 tonne	short	14 per tonne per km
LORRY	10 tonnes	$\frac{\text{short}}{\text{long}}$	$\frac{18 \text{ per tonne per km}}{10 \text{ per tonne per km}}$

Notes:

Advantages and disadvantages of different modes of transportation.

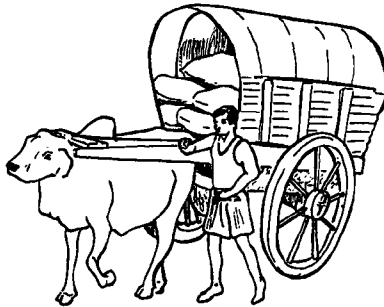
Hand cart

Very limited distance — provides a lot of employment — cart is cheap to buy — very slow.



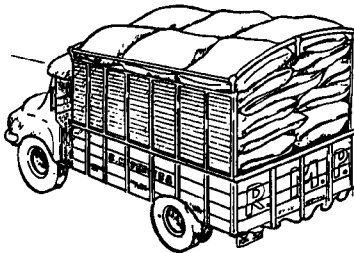
Bullock cart

Not as limited in distance — slow — provides employment — more expensive to buy but still relatively cheap.



Lorry

Any distance over a minimum of a few miles — fast — increases imports (fuel and lorries) — expensive, so only a few people can afford them — needs technical maintenance.



Task 1

Write down in the grid below relative advantages and disadvantages of these modes of transport. Some of these have been entered for you already. Refer to the data and the notes provided above.

	HAND CART	BULLOCK CART	LORRY
A D V A N T A G E S	cheapest to buy	cheap to buy	
			most cost efficient
	most labour intensive?		
			expensive to buy
D I S A D V A N T A G E S		travels over short distances	
		slow	
			needs technical maintenance
	smallest carrying capacity		

You can do this in groups or pairs. You may find that you disagree on some points, but you should generally try to reach a group consensus on what you think are advantages or disadvantages.

NOW WRITE THE OUTLINE CONCLUSION STARTED FOR YOU. TRY TO COMMENT ON CARRYING CAPACITY, DISTANCE AND COSTS.

Conclusion

From the data and notes provided, a number of advantages and disadvantages can be seen for different modes of transporting goods in Sri Lanka . . .

2. Look at the table giving figures for the preparation of land. These figures come from research done in Sri Lanka in a rural area. Then look at the notes which give certain advantages and disadvantages of the different modes of land preparation.

Preparation of One Acre of Land

MODE	TIME TAKEN	WORK HOURS	COST (RS)
12 Men.	2 days (2x8 hrs)	192	720
2 pairs of buffalo	2 days (2x8 hrs)	32	600
1 two-wheel tractor	2 days (2x8 hrs)	16	600
1 four wheel tractor	$\frac{1}{2}$ day (4 hrs)	4	850

Notes:

Advantages and disadvantages of different modes of land preparation.

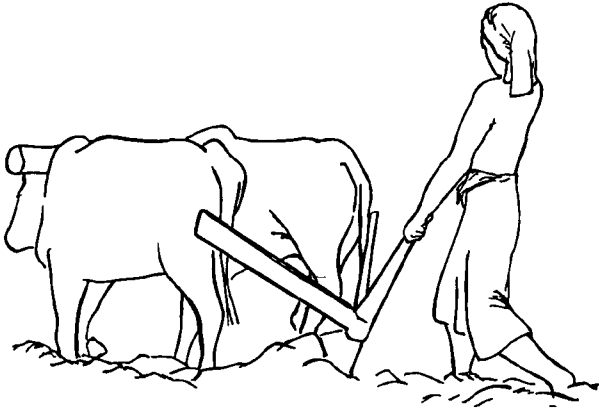
Manual preparation

High labour demands at certain times only — inconsistent employment — during this period, labour supply is insufficient therefore crop planting delayed — causes lower crop yields — income for farmer is less — provides employment.



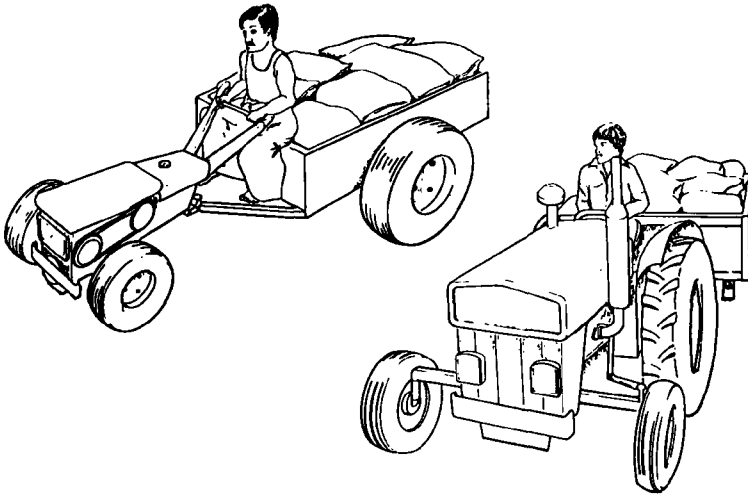
Buffaloes

Only 40–70 days work per year — rest of the year they graze and do not work — ploughing tends to be shallow.



Tractors

Cut land preparation time — allow plants to be planted at the correct time (soon after start of monsoons) — deep ploughing — also used for transportation of crops — increase Sri Lanka's imports (fuel and tractors) — cannot be used in small fields or terraced fields in hilly country — expensive to buy — two-wheel tractor much cheaper.



Task 2

Write down in the grid below relative advantages and disadvantages of the methods of land preparation. Some of them have been entered for you already. Refer to the data and notes provided above.

	MANUAL	BUFFALO	TWO-WHEEL TRACTOR	FOUR-WHEEL TRACTOR
ADVANTAGES		cheap method	cheap method	
				fast
	gives employment			
DISADVANTAGES	not cheap			expensive method
	slow			
	insufficient labour at times			
		shallow ploughing		
				expensive imports

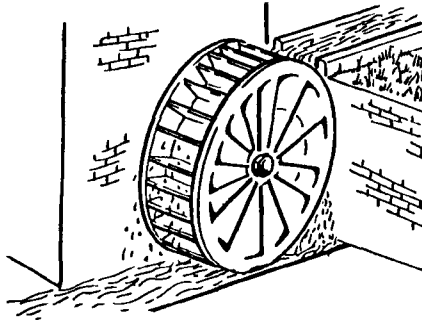
You can do this in groups or pairs. Reach a group agreement on the advantages and disadvantages.

NOW WRITE THE OUTLINE CONCLUSION STARTED FOR YOU. TRY TO COMMENT ON RELATIVE COST, TIME REQUIRED, EMPLOYMENT, IMPORTS, INCOME, MOST SUITABLE METHOD.

Conclusion

From the data and notes provided, a number of advantages and disadvantages can be seen for different methods of preparing land. The cheapest method is . . .

Unit 9

Hydro-projects — small scale general background and hydrology

Water power has been used for hundreds of years throughout Asia, Europe and parts of Africa to drive a variety of industrial machinery, from grain mills through forge bellows and trip hammers to pumps and textile mills. The fall of running water was converted to mechanical shaft power by a water wheel with either a vertical shaft or horizontal shaft. We can call these the first power stations. All the water wheels used only a low head of water up to a maximum of 6 or 7 metres. Their chief limitation for machinery was their low rotational speed.

Modern water turbines invented in the nineteenth century gave much higher speeds and allowed the use of higher heads of water and thus the extraction of greater potential energy from the same quantity of water. With the invention of electrical generators, energy could be transmitted more efficiently to wherever it was needed.

The best geographical areas for building small-scale hydro-power schemes are those where there are steep rivers flowing all year round, such as the hill areas of countries with high year-round rainfall, e.g. the Andes chain, the Himalayas, or islands with moist marine climates, such as the Caribbean islands, the Philippines, Indonesia and Sri Lanka.

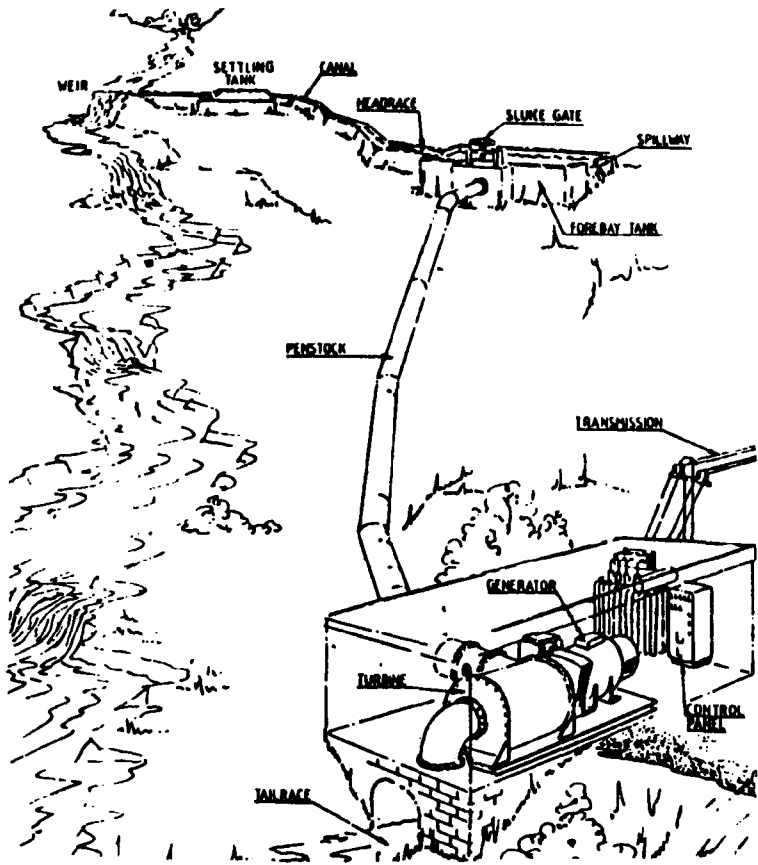
Figure 1 (below) shows a typical micro-hydro installation, where water from a river is diverted into a canal before running down through the penstock pipe to the turbine.

Questions

Are the statements below true or false?

1. Running water has been used to provide power for many centuries in many parts of the world.
2. The invention of generators enabled more energy to be produced.
3. Sri Lanka is not geographically suited to hydro-power schemes.

Fig. 1.



Note

The two main factors affecting the availability of water for micro-hydro installations are the annual rainfall for the area and the catchment area supplying water to the river. Rainfall figures can be used when considering the former. The latter can be done from large-scale maps or by surveying.

Task

In this task you will select the most suitable area for a micro-hydro scheme, taking into consideration the annual rainfall and the catchment area.

Work in pairs

One member of the pair, using Table 1, should select the best areas, according to the amount of rainfall throughout the year. The other member, using Table 2, should select the best areas according to the average water flow rate of the catchment area.

After this has been done, each pair should work together and choose

the best of the three areas for the siting of a micro-hydro installation. They should then write a paragraph recommending the use of one area for the siting of the scheme and also explaining why that particular area rather than one of the other two was chosen.

Table 1 Average monthly rainfall of some stations in the Nuwara Eliya District (in mm).

Station	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
Ginigathena	115	108	213	334	761	941	703	676	569	689	397	194	
Watawala	112	109	197	296	702	911	713	656	536	646	364	217	
Hanguranketa	366	184	123	187	126	54	58	62	84	212	284	386	

Now add up the total rainfall for each of the three stations. Then decide which station(s) are the best for the siting of a micro-hydro scheme.

Table 2 Catchment area and average flow rate of some stations in the Nuwara Eliya District.

Station	Catchment area (sq.km)	Average flow rate (l/s)	Required flow rate (l/s)
Ginigathena	2	240	150
Watawala	1	100	150
Hanguranketa	6.5	210	150

Decide whether or not the water flow rate at each station satisfies the scheme's requirements.

Language guidance

You may find some of these expressions useful when writing your recommendations:

I (would) advise you *to choose* . . . (infinitive)
them

I (would) recommend your *choosing* . . . (-ing form)
their
our

It is important that we *choose* . . . (simple verb form)
you
they

It is necessary for you to *choose* . . . (infinitive)
us
them

I recommend *the choice of* . . . (noun form)

I think that we should *choose* . . . (simple verb form)

NOW WRITE YOUR RECOMMENDATIONS.

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The following books and articles were consulted in the writing of both the NDT(E) course and the present paper.

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Appendix

The primary resource for Units 9–13 has been *Micro Hydro Electric Power*, Holland, Ray. 1983. Intermediate Technology Development Group, 9 King Street, Covent Garden, London WC2 8HN, UK.

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Dr Arthur C. Clarke is a world-renowned writer, lecturer and underwater explorer. He has written over sixty books, including, *2001 — A Space Odyssey*, *2010 — Odyssey Two*, *Childhood's End*, *Rendezvous with Rama* and *The Fountains of Paradise*. Dr Clarke currently resides in Sri Lanka.

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Tom Hutchinson has taught EFL in England, Germany and Yugoslavia. He currently works at the Institute for English Education at the University of Lancaster. He is author of *Project English* (OUP 1985), a course for lower secondary schools, and co-author of *Interface: English for Technical Communication* (Longman 1984). Since 1982 Mr Hutchinson has been closely involved with the development of ESP in Sri Lanka.

Prof Braj B. Kachru, born in Kashmir, India, now resides in the USA. He is Professor of Linguistics and English at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. He was Head of the Department of Linguistics from 1969 to 1979 and is currently Director of the Division of English as a Second Language. Prof Kachru has published extensively on various aspects of non-native varieties of English and on Kashmiri language and literature. His books include *The Other Tongue* (Pergamon 1983) and *The Indianization of English* (OUP 1982).

Alan Mountford is at present English Language Officer at the British Council in Bangkok, Thailand. He has previously worked with the British Council in Saudi Arabia and Iran, and before joining the Council worked in Burma, Turkey and Ethiopia. He is the author of two textbooks in the *English in Focus* series published by Oxford University Press and co-editor of *English for Specific Purposes* (Longman 1978). Mr Mountford's current interests lie in the development of systems and methods for in-service teacher training of secondary school teachers.

Ian Pearson is a KELT Adviser on Testing and Evaluation in ELT to the Ministry of Education, Sri Lanka. His main concerns are the

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Bevil W. Staley worked as an aero-technician in Britain, Germany and France for eight years before studying to be a lecturer in English. Since then he has taught ESL in Papua New Guinea and Sri Lanka. He is currently studying for an MA in Applied Linguistics at the University of Lancaster where he is specializing in English for Specific Purposes.

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Christine Tan is currently Head of the English Language Centre of Ngee Ann Polytechnic in Singapore. She is the author of numerous articles on ELT in the RELC Journal and Occasional Papers and co-General Editor of Longman's *Quest* series. Mrs Tan's interests are in the administration of ESP programmes.

Ray Tongue retired at the end of 1984 after a long career in the British Council throughout the course of which he was involved in ELT programmes in Africa and Asia. He held senior posts at the Regional Language Centre, Singapore, the Central Institute of English and Foreign Languages, Hyderabad, and the Institute of Language in Education, Hong Kong. During the first half of 1985 he served as Chief Adviser to the Higher Institute for English Education in Sri Lanka. Mr Tongue is author and co-author, respectively, of two seminal works on non-native varieties of English, *The English of Singapore and Malaysia* (Eastern Universities Press 1974) and *Indian and British English* (OUP 1979).

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