INNOVATIONS IN THE TEACHING OF GRAMMAR
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The purpose of the paper is to explore some of the problems non-native ESL teachers encounter in teaching grammar and to suggest the general direction which could be followed in the development of new textbooks and teacher training courses to make the teaching of grammar more effective.

The place of Grammar in the ESL Programme

Grammar teaching is a topic that is hotly debated. It is not my intention to enter into polemics concerning the necessity of teaching grammar. Since the grammatical system underpins the language, there can be no doubt that grammar has to be taught and mastered at some stage or other. In this connection I should like to refer the reader to four articles, three of them published this year and one in late 1984. They will serve to give perspective to the role of grammar in the curriculum. They are:

(i) 'The Status of Grammar in the Language Curriculum' by Jack Richards in *RELC Anthology Series 14: Communicative Language Teaching* pp 64–83 (1985);

(ii) 'Making Informed Decisions about the Role of Grammar in Language Teaching' by Marianne Celce-Murcia in *TESOL Newsletter* Vol 19:1. pp 1, 4 & 5 (Feb. 1985);

(iii) 'Making Grammar Work more Creative or the Sad Tale of Grammarella' by Tom Hutchinson in *World Language English* Vol. 4:1 (Oct., 1984);

(iv) 'Learning Grammar' by William Littlewood in *Institute of Language in Education Journal* Vol. 1:1 pp 40–47 (late 1985).

The four articles complement one another and taken together will offer proof, if proof be indeed necessary, that grammar has still a very important place in the language curriculum.

The main body of the paper will focus on the following:

(a) Some recently published reference and pedagogical grammars;

(b) Some of the limitations in textbooks currently used, particularly in the teaching of grammar;

(c) Teaching language awareness—an area for textbook writers and teacher trainers to consider;

(d) Grammar teaching in the communicative classroom.

Reference and Pedagogical Grammars for ESL Teachers

It is interesting to note that publishers are becoming aware of the growing demand for books on grammar and the teaching of grammar. Two recent additions are *A Comprehensive Grammar of the English Language* by Randolph Quirk et al (1985) and *A Very Simple Grammar of English* by Celia Blissett and Katherine Hallgarten (1985). The former is a monumental piece

of work which can be regarded as definitive. The latter is a very small but useful book and is probably one of the most helpful books for teachers who want to present the basic patterns of English. The essential information is presented in the form of tables supported by natural examples and short, simple explanations (in red) which stress meaning and use. On the other side of the Atlantic, *The Grammar Book: an ESL/EFL Teachers' Course* by Marianne Celce-Murcia and Diane Larson Freeman (Newbury House) is also worth mentioning as a pedagogical grammar.

Some of the limitations in textbooks currently used

Linguistic Science and Language Teaching was published more than two decades ago and parts of the book are now definitely out-dated but some of the criticisms against traditional grammar are still valid. The authors identify the flaws of traditional grammar as follows: (1) unclear categories, (2) heterogeneous criteria, (3) fictions, (4) conceptual formulations and (5) value judgements, (6) inaccurate phonetics and (7) confusion of media. The English language course-books currently used in Hong Kong contain sections on grammar. While not all the weaknesses mentioned above are found in our textbooks, there is still much room for improvement in respect of presentation, exercise types and introducing the communicative use of the items taught. The following examples will illustrate this. I shall deal first with the presentation aspect of the present progressive and the present perfect. This will be followed by a discussion on the exercise types used for consolidating what is taught.

In most textbooks, presentation is in the form of examples followed by a summary of grammatical rules. Sometimes rules are given first, followed by examples. The examples are often in the form of isolated or uncontextualised sentences. Seldom are new grammatical items presented in authentic texts which provide an extended context. Since ESL students have more often than not an implicit faith in rules which they use as a crutch or an 'infallible' guide, it is imperative that the rules given be helpful and accurate. Unfortunately, even in the most popular textbooks some of the rules given are not only unhelpful but misleading.

If students are to profit from a textbook presentation of a grammatical structure, several factors have to be considered:

(a) The form of the structure;
(b) The meaning of the structure;
(c) The situations in which it can be used appropriately;
(d) The communicative use of the structure.

The first is often the main focus of attention in textbooks. The others, especially (d), are often not given attention in textbook presentation. Let me illustrate by giving some examples. Suppose we take a familiar tense—the present progressive (more popularly known as the present continuous). When the present progressive is first introduced in a coursebook, it is usually presented through a series of pictures showing action in progress with the captions given underneath, e.g. John is running. Jane is opening the door,

etc. Sometimes a single picture is used and different people are shown performing different acts. The rule is given that the tense, or more accurately 'aspect', is used to describe action in progress or in textbook terms 'action which is continuing'. One could not say that the sentences are incorrect. The present progressive is often used to describe actions in progress. Naturally, students are later puzzled to find another rule which says that there are a number of verbs which are not normally used in the progressive, e.g. want, mean, understand etc. In this connection it may be useful for textbooks to introduce at an appropriate stage the conceptual difference between 'stative' and 'dynamic' verbs avoiding however, actually using the two terms which may be familiar to students of linguistics but are less likely to be familiar to the local language teacher. A further complication arises when students have to learn that the simple present is often used for describing 'action in progress' in certain contexts, e.g. a football commentary, or when describing steps in a demonstration. I use the word 'complication' intentionally because at a summer course on language teaching methodology organised by the English Language Unit, a graduate teacher teaching upper forms asked me to explain why the simple present and not the present progressive should be used in an exercise in which the particular sentence was one extracted from a football commentary. She obviously believed that the rule that the present progressive is used for action in progress was inviolable in all cases.

Let me return to the original point about the presentation of the present progressive through a series of pictures or a composite picture. The danger is that what is learnt is only the correct form of the tense. Firstly, although they are 'correct sentences as isolated linguistic units of random occurrence', they are not examples of language use. Moreover the problem is compounded when teachers decide to create a more vivid impact by giving a demonstration. This results in the use of language that has reality only in the classroom setting but never (or rarely) in real-life situations. The following is an example:

Teacher (draws a tree):   What am I doing? I am drawing a tree. Class, I am drawing a tree.

Teacher: Draw a house near the tree, Jack. What are you doing?

Jack: I am drawing a house.

Teacher (to class):   What is he doing?

Class: He is drawing a house.

The presentation does not teach students the communicative value or use of the structure since in real-life situations one does not ask what a person is doing when he is performing an action in plain sight. The only exception I can think of occurred once when a former colleague found a friend on all fours sweeping the floor with one hand and then the other. The situation was odd enough to make her ask; 'What are you doing?' Back came the explanation, 'I am looking for my contact lens.' Such bizarre happenings are, of course, rather rare in real-life. A more natural situation would be the following:

Peter: All set to go? My car's outside. Oh, where's Jane?
June: She's still in her room. She's probably combing her hair or powdering her face. You know how fastidious she is about her appearance.

Let me deal with the question of teaching technique and that of presenting the communicative use of the tense in turn. In some of the more recent methodology books on teaching grammar, several devices are used to obviate difficulty. Pictures which are blurred or out of focus are used to make students guess what the people in the photographs are doing. An alternative device is to show pictures with certain parts erased, i.e. a picture of a man playing a cello with the cello missing. Students say what they think the people are doing. Thus 'I think he's playing the cello. She's playing the violin. They are playing basketball' etc. A third technique is to show pictures of people miming and students have to say what they are doing. This could be made more realistic and interesting by making students play the miming game. This could be adapted to suit different levels. (See Maley's *Drama Techniques in Language Learning* pp. 122–125 for a useful example.) A fourth device is to adapt the popular communication game 'Find the Difference' to make students do pair work in which each will question the other on details in the pictures given. Each picture has the same background and number of people (say, a man, a woman, and some boys and girls etc.) each doing a different activity. Student A asks Student B, 'Is the man in your picture reading a book?' Student B answers, 'No, he is writing a letter. What is the man in your picture doing?'

Although the above activities make the presentation or practice of the tense more interesting and realistic they are still rather limited in directing students' attention to the many functions or communicative uses of the present progressive.

In most textbooks the different 'uses' of the present progressive are presented at different stages. The tense or rather aspect of tense is defined as being used to describe:

(a) something happening at the moment,
(b) something true at the moment but not always,
(c) present plans for the future,
(d) a temporary habit, usually with the adverb 'always' and conveying annoyance.

The rules are only helpful up to a certain point. They are not sufficient to sensitize students to the various communicative purposes of the present progressive. Even if we focus mainly on the first 'rule' (a) given above there are still gaps in textbook or grammar book presentations. Consider the following sentences:

1. 'Sir, he's cheating' or
2. 'He's playing dumb'.
   (The speaker is pointing out something that is happening to another person who is unaware of it.)
3. I'm getting too fat for my clothes.
   (Here the speaker is making a statement about something that is changing.)

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4. He's painting the garage.
   (More context is required. It could be in answer to an enquiry concerning the whereabouts of another person. It could imply that the person described has finally come round to doing the task. It could also be similar to (5) below.)
5. I'm looking for the receipt you gave me.
   (Here the speaker is explaining what he is doing because the listener is unsure.)
6. The dog's scratching the door.
   (The speaker is directing someone's attention to it and suggesting indirectly that prompt action should be taken, in this case, opening the door to let it in.)
7. Boss to secretary, 'Are you typing my speech?'
   (More context is required. It could mean 'You'd better be doing it now.' or if she is typing it, the question is a genuine question and it may be followed by a remark like 'I'll get someone else to type this memo.')
8. To clerk, 'I'm working at home today.'
   (Implied message: 'Don't expect me at the office and don't let me be disturbed.')
   I might add that the above is a genuine example.

The above list is certainly not exhaustive but it provides examples of different communicative uses which the student will not learn without proper guidance, yet it is precisely in this area that textbooks and even the popular reference grammars are 'weighted in the balance and found wanting'.

Let me go on to another point. Consider the following conversations in the classroom setting:

(a) Lesson in progress
    Teacher (to boy talking with another student): 'What are you doing?'
    Boy: 'I'm talking.'
    Teacher: 'You are cheeky/That's very cheeky of you.'
    Boy: 'Sorry, sir.'

(b) Teacher (to student bending down): 'What are you doing, Tom?'
    Tom: 'I've dropped my pencil.'

or

(c) Teacher: 'What are you doing, Tom?'
    Tom: 'I dropped my pencil.'

(a) requires no comment; (b) and (c) however need some elaboration. Why is the present perfect used in the former and the past tense in the latter? In (b) the probability is that the child has not yet found the pencil, i.e. the dropping of the pencil is still relevant in present time. In (c) the child has found the pencil and he will probably hold it up to show the teacher as he responds. In this case the dropping of the pencil is not relevant in present time.

It is therefore necessary to have the context of situation: who is speaking and who is listening, the purpose of each speaker and the physical location.

What is crucial in the selection of the tense is the *meaning* the *speaker* wants to give. This is often missing or at least not sufficiently emphasized in textbooks or grammar book exercises.

When one has to make a choice between two tenses, it is the actual situation and the perceptions of the speaker and the meaning he intends to convey that are crucial. Textbook rules stipulate that the present perfect should not be used with an adverbial of past time or when the context is clearly that of past time. The term 'current relevance' is also used in connection with the choice of the present perfect. Students often find such rules conceptually difficult. In doing a written exercise in which one has to use either the simple past or the present perfect, the student is expected to read the whole sentence. 'He (read) three books last month' and decide on the basis of the adverbial 'last month' to use the past tense. Alternatively, if he encounters the following:

'He _____ (read) from books up to now.'

He is supposed to use the present perfect because of the cue 'up to now'. It is doubtful if such exercises can really help students to master the use of the two tenses since it involves a deliberate search for linguistic clues and then making a decision based on the clues. This is several degrees removed from real-life when one makes a decision based on one's perception of the situation and not on linguistic clues previously provided. Certainly such exercises will not help students to respond spontaneously as in the examples involving Tom.

On a recent teaching practice supervision visit, I found a teacher trying to demonstrate one use of the present perfect by performing an action and commenting, 'I have closed the door.' She continued by instructing a student to do another action and asking the class, 'Has she closed the door?' etc. Quite apart from the fact that such a question-and-answer chain would be unrealistic in real-life as one does not describe the obvious, the choice of tense was unfortunate. As Jack Richards points out in his article 'Introducing the Perfect; An Exercise in Pedagogic Grammar' in *TESOL Quarterly* Vol. 13:4 pp. 495–500, the simple past tense would be more appropriate. It is not difficult to devise an activity for pair work in which the present perfect would naturally be used. Students could be asked to sit back to back. Student A would give directions about drawing a picture and student B has to draw the picture. Thus student A says, 'Draw a tree at the bottom corner of your paper.' Student B does this and then says, 'I've dont it.' In this case the use of the present perfect would be justified.

I have dwelt on the subject at some length because helping non-native ESL teachers to acquire sensitivity to language use as opposed to mere knowledge of rules and language forms should be the major concern of grammar books. This should also be an important aspect in teacher training courses when the subject of grammar teaching is taken up. Both my colleaque, Margaret Falvey and I have come to the conclusion after years of experience in teacher training that *developing language awareness in ESL teachers should be a very important component in TESL methodology*

courses. Most training courses already include a component on language awareness but fall short of dealing with the problems described above. The kind of language to which I refer is one which enables the teacher to utilize this awareness in a monitoring or evaluative process during lesson planning and in the classroom. Teachers may go into the classroom with a whole repertoire of techniques for pair and group work or even communication games to arouse the students' interest, but unless the teachers are sensitive to language use as opposed to usage, their teaching will be less effective.

Let me come now to exercises. Textbook exercise types are often manipulative drills which give context-free practice. Moreover they are often sentence-based exercises which lead to cognitively undemanding activities. Even when the exercise consists of a connected text, the content is sometimes neutral and pedestrian. Consider the following:

> Example: Complete the following sentences by giving the past tense of the verb in brackets.
> John _____ (visit) his uncle in the New Territories yesterday.

This is even less attractive than the exercise I mentioned earlier. Presumably the adverbial 'yesterday' is *intended* to act as a cue for the student to complete the sentence by filling in the blank with 'visited'. If the purpose is to give students practice in *using* the simple past tense, then the exercise does not achieve its purpose since all that they are required to do is to give the right from of the verb, in this case 'visited'. The student does not even have to examine the whole sentence. A slightly better one is the type where the student has to make a choice. However, as pointed out earlier, such an exercise still has its limitations.

There are other types of exercises such as sentence completion, matching, sentence transformation, sentence construction or dialogue writing based on a model. Some of them may be more useful and interesting than others. Examples can be found by consulting textbooks currently used. However, the point I want to make is that for language work to be effective, there should be some kind of communicative activities and activities which are cognitively demanding. The exercises should preferably be text-based and not be in the form of isolated sentences. Contextualization is also an important factor. The materials should as far as possible be authentic and interesting in content. Some of the exercises in a book like *Use of English: Grammar Practice Activities for Intermediate and Upper-Intermediate Students* by Leo Jones (1985) fulfil the requirement although there are also some exercises that are rather traditional.

Teaching Structures through Situations
Let me come to another major point in lesson planning and that is contextualizing the structure. *The Report of the 1st Commonwealth Conference on the Teaching of English as a Second Language* contains a statement worth repeating:

'Sentences should be taught through situations; the situations chosen must be realistic—they must have meaning for the learner.'

Presenting structures through appropriate situations is still a useful and effective technique. Articles on teaching structures through situations can be found in past issues of *Modern English Teacher*, especially those published between 1976 and 1979. *Selections from MET* edited by H Moorhead (1979) contains a number of these articles. Another source is *Situations and Aids for Teaching Structures* by Liz Baines et al (1976). The book covers practically all the basic grammatical structures and for each structure there are from 7 to 15 situations and visual aids suggested for teaching purposes.

Various devices can be used to provide contextualization. Games or activities such as Alibi and Predicaments can provide a useful context for practising the question form of the past tense and the second conditional, respectively. Sketches can be used to present and practise the modal perfects as in 'Teaching the Modal Perfects' by Donald Bowen and Coral Fillips McCreary (1977) in *TESOL Quarterly* Vol. 11:3. Pictures, charts, maps and questionnaires are often used to provide suitable contexts. Many examples can be found in *Teaching Grammar: Form, Function and Technique* by Sandra L McKay (1985). Another technique for teaching structures is through the use of songs. I have seen at least one teacher using popular songs to teach language structures. He used '500 miles', 'If I were a Hammer', 'The House of the Rising Sun', 'Tom Dooley', 'I'll Never Find Another You', 'Call On Me', 'Red River Valley' and 'The Exodus Song' to teach the various tense combinations of the conditional. Local teachers will be familiar with T. L. Tsim's radio programmes for teaching English (grammar) through old favourites. Cassette tapes of ELT songs such as *Mister Monday, Sunday Afternoons* and *Goodbye Rainbow* are of course well known and are frequently used in the classroom.

To Drill or Not to Drill?

In the heyday of the structural approach, pattern practice was considered the most effective method of helping students develop automaticity in using a structure. Different types of drills were used in the ESL classroom. Those included: expansion and contraction drills, mini-dialogue drills, question drills, clause combination drills, progressive-substitution drills, simple substitution drills. ESL teachers are now generally disillusioned with drills. They found them boring, mechanical and often ineffective. And yet it still remains true that students have to practise using a structure before automatic control is achieved. What can be done to make the activies interesting and effective, challenging and purposeful? 'Section II Collaborative sentence-making games' in *Grammar Games* by Mario Rinvolucri (1984) contains twenty sentence-making games, a number of which can fulfil the purpose stated above. Examples are 'Rub Out and Replace', 'Silent Sentence', 'The Marienbad Game', 'Contract and Expand', 'Sentence Collage', 'My Sentences—Your Paragraph' and 'From Pattern Sentence to Poem'. Another

approach is through the use of problem-solving discussions which will involve the use of certain structures. A description of this technique is given in *Challenge to Think* by Christine Frank and Mario Rinvolucri (1980). Under the title 'Creative Drills' the authors give 22 examples of such drills.

Humanistic Awareness Exercises

Since the publication of Gertrude Moskowitz's *Caring and Sharing in the Foreign Language Classroom*, ESL teachers have become increasingly aware of the potential of humanistic awareness exercises in language teaching. Christine Frank and Mario Rinvolucri's *Grammar in Action* (1983) contains 130 examples of such activities and between them they cover almost all the tenses and problem areas. Teachers will find a host of useful ideas in the book.

Games for Grammar Teaching

Teachers have always found games a ready ally when the students' interest begins to flag. Games are now recognised as having a definite role to play in language teaching, quite apart from their incidental use to relieve boredom. Three useful sources are *Language Games and Contests* by W. R. Lee, 2nd edition (1979), *Games for Language Learning*, (new edition) by Andrew Wright et al (1984) and *Grammar Games* by Mario Rinvolucri (1984).

Two other books on grammar teaching are worth mentioning. A book that tries to bridge the gap between grammar acquisition and meaningful communications is *Bridge the Gap* by Jami Ferrer and Patty Werner de Poleo (1983). It adopts a three-tier approach:

Tier 1:   Highly controlled exchanges
Tier 2:   Controlled yet somewhat longer exchanges
Tier 3:   Free exchanges

Most of the major grammatical structures such as tenses, modals, participles, clauses, infinitives and gerunds are covered and some of the suggestions are innovative. The latest addition to the field of grammar teaching methodology is *Teaching Grammar: Form, Function and Technique* by Sandra L. McKay (1985). The book contains an assortment of stimulating and useful techniques for teaching grammatical topics.

I have tried to provide some help to local teachers by mentioning a number of books which give innovative and practical ideas for grammar teaching. I include an appendix which I hope will provide ready reference for the teacher looking for useful ideas to teach some of the more important or difficult grammatical structures.

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Teaching Grammar—Activities and Games

Structure	Situations & Aids for Teaching Structures Page No.	Bridge the Gap Page No.	Grammar in Action Page No.	Teaching Grammar Page No.	Use of English (pp. 99–119) Communication Activities No.	Grammar Games Page No.
Verb Tense etc.						
Simple present	1	43–48	39–45	7–8		54, 108, 117
Verb to be	1			3–5		
Simple present—habit	7			66–67		100
Present progressive	8	21–28		5		97
There is/are		11–19		48–49		
Simple past	20	49–54	46–55	5, 6	5 & 15, 18 & 26	35, 59, 115 129, 135
Simple past & simple present			56–6060			77
Past progressive	21	29–32	61–63			
Simple future	23	33–38	74			
Future progressive		39–42				
Present progressive/going to for future	29					
Present perfect + just, yet, etc.	30					
Present perfect (indefinite) etc.	31	55–69	68–70	9–10	5 & 15, 18 & 26	28, 47, 81, 104, 121
Present perfect progressive						70
Past perfect	50			11–13		106
Various tenses together			64–65	69–70		
Imperatives/giving directions etc.	9, 33	1–10		1–3, 67–69	11 & 57	
Passive	51		79, 85		29 & 48	9, 35
Reported speech	64		81–83		34 & 51, 31 & 48	

Teaching Grammar—Activities and Games—Cont'd

Structure	Situations & Aids for Teaching Structures — Page No.	Bridge the Gap — Page No.	Grammar in Action — Page No.	Teaching Grammar — Page No.	Use of English (pp. 99–119) Communication Activities No.	Grammar Games — Page No.
Modals						
can/could (ability)	24	81–84				
Can/could/will/would/may (requests & promises)	25	85–86			8 & 19	118–119
Should/shouldn't/ought to	55	93–101		133–135		
must/mustn't/needn't	48	87–91				
may/may not (possibility)	41			132–133		
Should have/shouldn't have	55	103–106				
must be/can't be/must have been etc.	56					74
Interrogatives/questions/question tags etc.				32, 123	1 & 6, 3, 9 & 12, 22 & 32	22, 47, 84
Infinitive of purpose	34					
verb + infinitive/(pro)noun + inf.	60	142–143	88, 106, 109			
verb + gerund	59	144	108, 110			
verb + infinitive or gerund	57	145	107		33 & 39	
need + ing	49					
after, on, before, by + ing	58					112
used to	42		71			
get/be used to	43		85			
need + ing	49					
Participles		108–116				
Have something done						68

Teaching Grammar—Activities and Games—Cont'd

Structure	Situations & Aids for Teaching Structures	Bridge the Gap	Grammar in Action	Teaching Grammar	Use of English (pp. 99–119) Communication Activities No.	Grammar Games
	Page No.	Page No.	Page No.	Page No.		Page No.
Clauses	28	117–138		100–122	36 & 41, 37 & 43, 25 & 50	37
Defining/non-defining	40					
1st conditional	44		76	134–135		47, 56, 61, 66
2nd conditional	45		77, 80, 84, 86–87			112
3rd conditional	46		90			90
Other parts of speech						
Adjectives	12		90–94, 97	13		
Comparatives	16, 17			20–23		
Superlative	18					
Adverbs of frequency	10		89	15–17, 25–27		
Adverbs of manner	39		91			
Prepositions of place (location)	36	1–10		54–63	14 & 27	
Prepositions of time	37					
Articles	65					92
countable/uncountable nouns how much/how many/some/any				17–20, 63–66	16 & 45	
Conjunctions					23 & 54	13, 73

Note: Many of the games in *Games for Language Learning* (new edition) by Andrew Wright, David Betteridge and Michael Buckby can be used for practising language structures. Please refer to the index (pp. 207–208).

講詞法時要處處顧到句法

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　　漢語語法的研究對象，一般分爲"詞法"和"句法"兩部分。詞法研究詞的抽象性的分類，如"實詞"和"虛詞"的劃分，如從意義和作用上去分別"詞類"。此外，還可以研究詞的構成方式，以及詞的"本用"和"活用"等。至於句法部分，主要爲研究句子的結構和變化，也就是研究用詞造句的規則。

　　在語法敎學中，分析詞法時不能離開句法。因爲如果只是給詞分類，而不去接觸結構和用法問題，這些詞就會孤立於句子以外，看不到詞組織成句的語言規律了。

　　譬如講述形容詞時，除了在意義和作用上分類外，還要說明這類詞的語法特點。我們指出形容詞表示性質或狀態，運用了可以使語言彩色鮮明，生動形象；同時，也指出形容詞主要做修飾名詞的定語，從而構成合成詞或短語·，它的位置通常都放在被修飾的中心詞的前面。構成合成詞的，例如：

　　　龍馬銀鞍，朱軒繡轂。（江淹《別賦》）

　　　抱劍辭高堂，將役霍將軍。（李白《送張秀才從軍詩》）

　　　船終於開了，立在船尾，我們有機會看見船身壓過的海面，一道滾着
　　　白沫的湍流，歷史的遺迹，時代的波動啊。（蕭乾《雁蕩行》）

構成主從短語的，例如：

　　　目極千里兮傷春心。（《楚辭·招魂》）

　　　其長兵則弓矢，短兵則刀鋋。（《史記·匈奴傳》）

　　　我也怕思想發霉，樂意跟他出去看看新鮮景緻，就到了陶然亭。（楊
　　　朔《京城漫記》）

以上六例，凡加"·"旁點的是形容詞，"。"旁點的是中心詞。形容詞又可置於主語後單獨做描寫句的謂語，如：

　　　故至德之世，其行塡塡，其視顚顚。（《莊子·馬蹄》）——塡塡、
　　　顚顚，形容詞做謂語。

形容詞做謂語時，通常受程度副詞和否定副詞的修飾，如：

　　　臣之罪甚多矣。（《左傳》僖公二十二年）——甚，程度副詞。

前沿陣地上肅靜極了，不要說沒有一星燈火，而且連一點聲音也沒有。（劉白羽《英雄島》）——極，程度副詞。

回也不愚。（《論語·爲政》）不——否定副詞。

此外，在句子裏，形容詞經常充當狀語和補語。如：

他日，驢一鳴，虎大駭，遠遁。（柳宗元《三戒·黔之驢》）——大、遠，形容詞做狀語。

折獲尺寸，然明讀書。（《顏氏家訓·勉學》）——明，形容詞做補語。

又譬如講述程度副詞時，我們指出這類詞是用來修飾動詞、形容詞的，有表示程度的作用；同時，也指出這類詞的基本職能是充當狀語，幫助謂語表達各種意義。修飾形容詞，一般在被修飾的語詞之前。例如：

王有孽子不害，最長，王弗愛。（《史記·淮南王傳》）

自是之後，爲俠者極衆。（《史記·游俠傳》）

如水益深，如火益熱。（《孟子·梁惠王下》）

近年來我的記憶力開始衰退，有一些記得很牢的事情也漸漸地模糊了，彷彿有一把板刷蘸着水在我的腦子上面擦洗，要使我忘掉一切。（巴金《最後的時刻》）

今年的春天分外冷，張野給黃佳英披上了自己的上衣。（劉賓雁《本報內部消息》）

也有把副詞後置於形容詞的，如"君美甚，徐公何能及君也"（《戰國策·齊策》）。後置的程度副詞只可用"甚"字（僅限於古代漢語），其它的不能後置。上舉的"肅靜極了"是現代漢語的說法，古漢語沒有把"極"字後置的習慣。程度副詞主要爲修飾形容詞的，至於修飾表動作性的動詞，古漢語裏只限於其中少數幾個，如"頗"、"稍"等字，如：

語未卒，衞律還，頗聞余語。（《漢書·李陵傳》）

自繆公以來，稍蠶食諸侯，竟成始皇。（《史記·秦始皇本紀》）

現代漢語修飾動詞的程度副詞，例子就比較多：

現在我已經忘記了車站的名字，在記憶中反正是一個相當大的站，停車時間比較長。（季羨林《一個抱小孩子的印度人》）

孫小姐口氣裏決不肯和那寡婦作伴，李梅亭卻再三示意，餘錢無多，旅館可省則省。（錢鍾書《圍城》）

老沈說他精神很好，叫我放心，不妨打下瞌睡以養養精神。（陳若曦《南遷》）

微雨裏的青山，顯得格外嫵媚。（王尚義《狂流》）

翠翠當時竟忘了祖父的規矩，也不說道謝，也不把錢退還，只望着這
　　　　一行人中那個女孩子身後發痴。（沈從文《邊城》）
"已經"表示時間，"再三"表示頻率，"不妨"表示然否，"格外"表示程度，
"竟"表示語氣，"只"表示範圍，都是現代漢語裏各種不同的程度副詞。

　　　　講述詞法時，能夠接觸結構和用法問題，"詞"和"句"就不會割裂開來
。相反地，分析詞法如果離開句子，只是羅列許多虛詞和實詞，而給它們
分類，那麼，這種教學方法收到的效果，跟一般詞典如劉淇《助字辨略》
、王引之《經傳釋詞》、楊樹達《詞詮》，以及《國語辭典》、《現代漢
語詞典》等所提供的比較，不外是多了一番分類手續，多了一點語法術語
而已。再舉介詞的教學法爲例，來說明這個問題：
　　　　西門豹簪筆磬折嚮河立。（《史記‧滑稽列傳補傳》）
　　　　夫水，嚮冬則凝而爲冰。（《淮南子‧俶眞》）
　　　　公子與侯生決，至軍，侯生果北嚮自刎。（《史記‧信陵君列傳》）
　　　　有鳥赤首烏翼，大如鵠，方東嚮立。（柳宗元《遊黃溪記》）
如果僅指出句中的"嚮"字是介詞，或者進一步指出第一例是介處所，第二
例是介時間，第三、四例是介方位等，這都不算接觸到結構和用法的眞諦
，只是《經傳釋詞》加上語法術語的一種說法，對於語法學習者，是沒有
什麼實益的。我們要同時指出介詞是表示實詞和實詞之間關係的一種語詞
，必須和名詞或代詞結合，組成"介賓結構"，才能用在句子裏做動詞或形
容詞的狀語。所以介詞在句子裏面，要帶個名詞或代詞做它的賓語，在任
何條件下，都不能單獨運用。例如：
　　　　吾自衞反魯，然後樂正。（《論語‧子罕》）
　　　　子擊磬於衞。（《論語‧憲問》）
　　　　季氏富於周公。（《論語‧先進》）
　　　　苛政猛於虎也。（《禮記‧檀弓上》）
"自衞"、"於衞"等，就是介賓結構。"自衞"置於動詞"反"前，"於衞"置於
動賓結構"擊磬"之後，我們稱前者爲"前置狀語"，後者爲"後置狀語"。用
"於"字構成的介賓結構，在古漢語裏如用在形容詞後，就有"比"的意義。
"富於周公"即"比周公富有"、"苛政猛於虎"即"苛政比虎猛"的意思。這種
用法的"於"字，表比較的詞序，恰好和近代的用法相反，形容詞一在介賓
結構前，一在介賓結構後。介賓結構在古漢語裏也有倒置的，如用"面"、
"向"、"嚮"、"鄉"等表示方所，而所帶的賓語是"東"、"西"、"南"、"北"
等方位詞，習慣上一般把賓語倒置於介詞前。如：

東面而征，西夷怨；南面而征，北狄怨。（《孟子·梁惠王下》）

爲堂于西牆下，東鄉。（《儀禮·士喪禮》）

總而言之，講詞法時處處顧到句法，才眞正捉摸到了漢語由詞組織成句的語言規律；在教學上，才眞正把語法教活、教好。

TASKS FOR LANGUAGE TEACHER EDUCATION

Prem Mathur
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Introduction

The description of tasks in the paper is based on the approach developed over the last five years in conducting in-service teacher training courses at the British Council, Singapore. The participants are non-native speakers of English as a second language, with a near-native competence in both oral and written skills and with at least two year's teaching experience. The task types described have been used in the following types of courses:—

— Methodology courses leading to the R.S.A. Diploma.
— Short Courses, 40 hours each, on specific aspects of methodology, e.g., Listening and Communicative Approach.
— Short courses, 20 hours each.
— Workshops, of 3 to 4 hours duration, on specific skill areas, e.g. Remedial Teaching.

This is to establish that the task types have been used in different formats quite successfully. The claim to success is based on the consistently good results at the RSA examinations (100% at the last examination) and feedback from course participants, local education officers, and visiting specialists.

Rationale

The advocacy of tasks however, is not based on the external evidence alone; there are certain internal criteria which are more significant. Very briefly they can be stated as follows:

1. 'Practise what you preach': Since a communicative approach is what we generally advocate, the training methods are also 'communicative'. In procedural terms it implies a series of things to do, and as little 'lecturing' as possible.
2. Learning by doing is the cornerstone of the approach. What this implies is that the participants' beliefs, attitudes, knowledge and know-how are involved in the learning process. The approach has been seen to generate a better learning environment, a high level of morale and a feeling of freedom to make one's own decisions.
3. A necessary condition for the above-mentioned is to adopt a non-prescriptive approach—to allow participants (Ps) to evolve or acquire their own strategies and approaches. Tasks are instrumental in keeping the training non-prescriptive.
4. Participants should feel that what they do on a course is relevant to their needs and situation and feel involved, cognitively and affectively, in the training process. The approach helps to achieve this. Ps have, almost

without exception, expressed a feeling of satisfaction—of having enjoyed the course and having learnt something. They find the course 'challenging' as well as 'useful', this is what they say when they recommend a course to their colleagues.

5.   Another criterion is that theory should be seen to be relevant to day-to-day teaching problems, that is, theory should serve methodology. By putting tasks at the core of training sessions theories gain a new relevance and learning becomes meaningful.

Although this approach has been tried out in in-service courses only, in principle it should be useful in pre-service courses as well. In fact since it is a procedural approach it can easily be adapted for diverse situations, for example, language proficiency tasks can be introduced, if required, in the context of methodology components, e.g. remedial grammar in the context of teaching grammar, writing skills in the context of teaching writing, etc. Moreover, pre-service trainees will be able to relate their concepts of teaching and learning acquired through their own learning experiences to the new information and concepts introduced in the course.

Global Procedures

Since tasks cluster around main topics (Language Learning, Teaching Reading, etc) let me first describe what happens in a session devoted to a sub-topic, or in a part of the unit devoted to a topic. The following figure represents an idealised structure of a training session or unit.
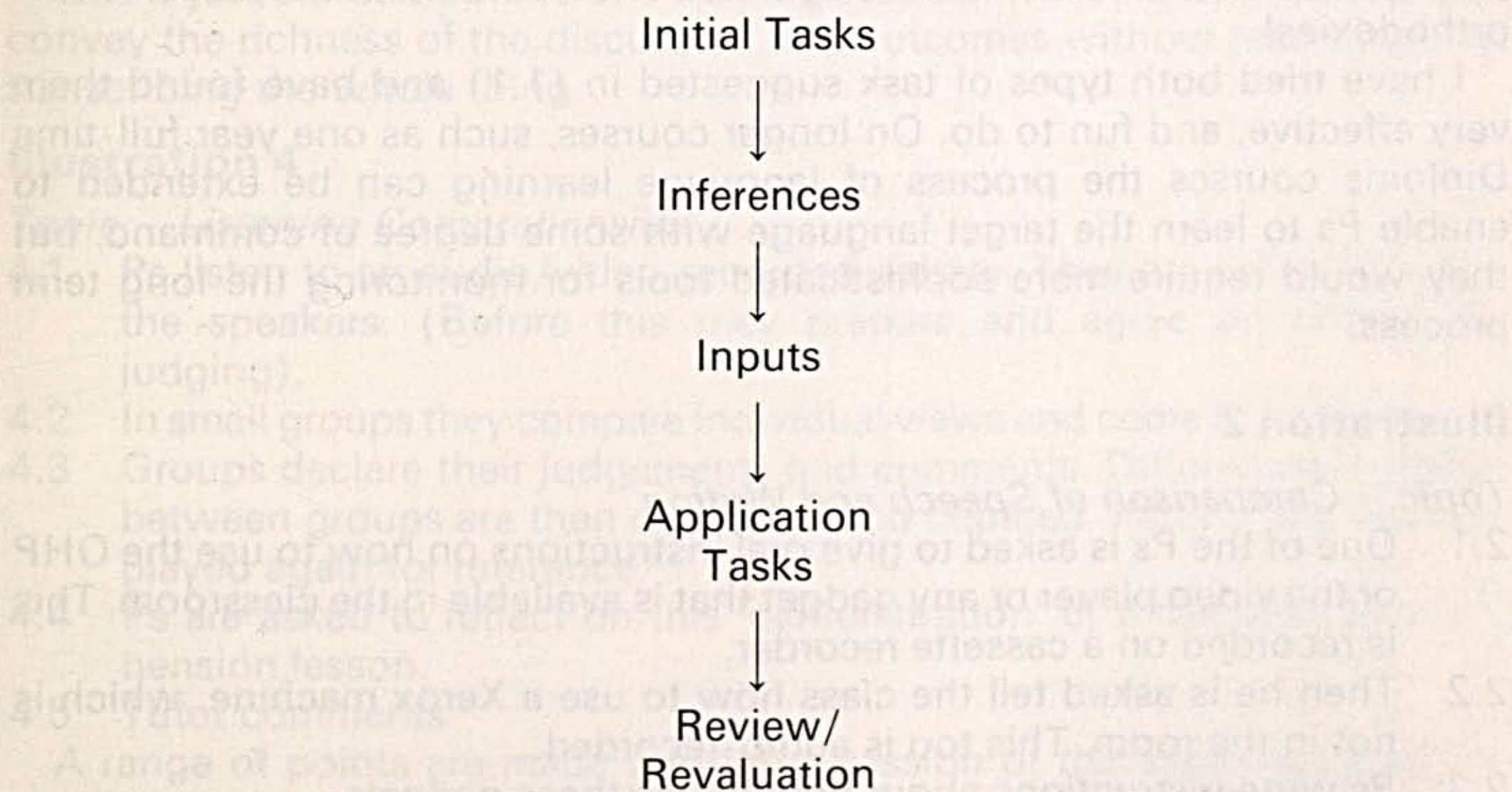
Initial Tasks

↓

Inferences

↓

Inputs

↓

Application
Tasks

↓

Review/
Revaluation

Fig. 1

Later on we will have a closer look at tasks, but first a few illustrations.

Illustration 1

Topic: Language Learning Theory

1.1　Ps learn a small chunk of an unfamiliar language, or a language text devised for the purpose, such as Dakin's Novish*

1.2　Ps reflect on the process of learning and make hypotheses in the light of *their* theory of language learning. Does the experience support/ negate the theory?

1.3　Tutor input, as necessary, with reference to current language acquisition theories.

1.4　Ps consider implications for teaching methods in use

1.5　Ps look at a unit from a course in use, or at samples of different types of teaching materials and evaluate them in terms of 1.4

After a session or two of the kind Ps would look at more specific methods and materials and then prepare their lesson plans for teaching practice of some kind.

The main thrust here is towards a reformulation of Ps' beliefs or theories in the light of current knowledge about language learning processes. It should be obvious that in a dynamic learning situation, such as this one, the Ps' 'knowledge' will be continually reformulated and, would not get fixed, become static, until such time as they have evolved their own individual strategies for coping with the various kinds of situation they encounter. Ideally they should continue to learn, and readjust or reformulate their principles and practice, unless they become 'specialists' and preach new orthodoxies!

I have tried both types of task suggested in (1.1) and have found them very effective, and fun to do. On longer courses, such as one year full-time Diploma courses the process of language learning can be extended to enable Ps to learn the target language with some degree of command, but they would require more sophisticated tools for monitoring the long term process.

Illustration 2

Topic: Comparison of Speech and Writing

2.1　One of the Ps is asked to give oral instructions on how to use the OHP or the video player or any gadget that is available in the classroom. This is recorded on a cassette recorder.

2.2　Then he is asked tell the class how to use a Xerox machine, which is not in the room. This too is audio-recorded.

2.3　Ps write instructions about how to use these gadgets.

2.4　The audio-recordings are played and Ps are asked to compare them with the written versions.

2.5　Ps make a list of differences between the oral and written versions they can perceive.

2.6　The tutor comments and provides additional features

* J. Dakin, Language Laboratory and Language Learning, Longman pp. 23–29

2.7   Ps are invited to reflect on implications for teaching.
2.8   Class discussion
2.9   Follow up readings are suggested.

Ps are able to point out quite a few differences using their commonsense and previous knowledge. It remains for the tutor to fill in the gaps and guide them to relate this knowledge to teaching methods. The Ps realise from this experience that there is no automatic transfer from oral to written skills and that there are things other than grammar that need attention.

Illustration 3

Topic: Reading Skills
3.1   Ps are given a text to read and do a range of comprehension exercises of the type given in course books they use.
3.2   They are then asked to look at the different questions and exercises and decide what specific skills they are aimed at. This requires them to examine the relationship between parts of the text and the comprehension exercises through reflection on how *they* answered the questions.
3.3   Ps make a list of reading skills. The tutor supplements.
3.4   Ps evaluate the given exercise types and think about improvements.
3.5   The tutor at this stage may remind them of some of the facts or principles previously covered and pose some questions about the organisation of a reading lesson, e.g., Should each lesson cover all the listed skills? Which skills can be best practised with the given text? etc.

This is just a broad outline of a training session. It would be impossible to convey the richness of the discussion and outcomes without recording and transcribing the whole thing.

Illustration 4

Topic: Listening Comprehension
4.1   Ps listen to an audio/video-recorded debate. They are asked to judge the speakers. (Before this they prepare and agree on criteria for judging).
4.2   In small groups they compare individual views and come to a consensus.
4.3   Groups declare their judgements and comments. Differences in views between groups are then discussed and debated. Parts of the tape are played again for reference.
4.4   Ps are asked to reflect on this 'demonstration' of a listening comprehension lesson.
4.5   Tutor comments

A range of points are made through a session of this type—purpose for listening, use of contemporary authentic texts, employment of oral communication and note-taking in a natural fashion, etc. Such sessions demonstrate a method as well as reinforce certain basic principles of teaching.

Task Types

Through these brief illustrations I have indicated the general nature of the training procedures, and shown that the sessions are very much

P-centered. Individual and group tasks involve a range of communication strategies and one could classify tasks in terms of these strategies, for example:

— Information recall and sharing e.g. (3.3) pupils make a list of reading skills
— Consensus seeking, e.g., deciding on how much weighting to give to accuracy in composition testing.
— Brainstorming and problem-solving e.g. what to do to minimise the use of L1 in group work.

However tasks can also be viewed from the angle of cognitive processes that are activated in the process:—

Reflection: Where Ps review and reflect upon an experience e.g., of a method, as in illustration 4 above.

Analysis: Where Ps have to analyse a language event or a text, as in illustration 2 (differences between Speech and Writing).

Inference: Tasks involving making hypotheses about teaching from some knowledge of language structures or processes as in illustration 2.5.

Application: As in lesson planning and materials adaptation tasks where a set of acquired principles are put into practice.

Global Tasks

Learning, as we are all well aware, is a very complex and dynamic process and is not amenable to very neat classifications. Training sessions of the type illustrated are dynamic events and involve a range of communication strategies and cognitive skills. When it comes to global tasks—lesson planning and teaching, a whole range of knowledge and skills is employed.

It should be pointed out that Ps are required to perform these global tasks as a natural culmination of each unit. The following will give an idea of the organisation of a typical unit.

Language learning task
↓
Reflection
↓
Inferences
↓
Theoretical inputs
↓
Comparison of different materials/methods based on approaches
↓
Feedback (and inputs)
↓
Adaptation of 'traditional' materials for communication practice
↓
Teaching (video-recorded)
↓
Review and evaluation of method

50

We use video-recorded teaching practice on the course. Small groups of Ps prepare a lesson for specific learners and the lesson is shared by two or three teachers. Students from local schools come to the Council Centre for these lessons. This practice is different from the traditional micro-teaching in that the lessons prepared and taught are not for practising microskills; full lessons, lasting 35 minutes, are prepared for a specific group of students coming for these lessons. It is 'micro' teaching only in the sense that each P teaches for only about ten minutes in a lesson.

The important thing is that preparation and teaching is done *cooperatively* by a group of Ps with the assistance of the tutor. The performance is not evaluated by the tutor; the exercise is very much a part of education.

The other kind of global task done, this time by individual Ps, is the Project. This is done over period of time, with some guidance from the tutor. This requires planning of teaching at macro and micro levels. A teaching scheme is prepared covering a few weeks, with details of materials and procedures used. Here the Ps have to put into practice all that they have learnt and assimilated. They have to take into account the realities of the situation as they have to use this scheme in their own classes and comment on what happened, that is, they evaluate the process themselves. Since this task forms the culmination of the course it is evaluated by tutors, not so much on the basis of the 'success' but rather on the basis of the quality of Ps' perception of the teaching-learning process.

Summing Up

Tasks, things that course participants *do*, are instrumental in educating them. Their knowledge, skills and attitudes undergo some changes through the experience.

This process can be visualised in follows:

Tasks

Knowledge ⟷ Attitudes ⟶ Skills

Approach

Teaching
Behaviours
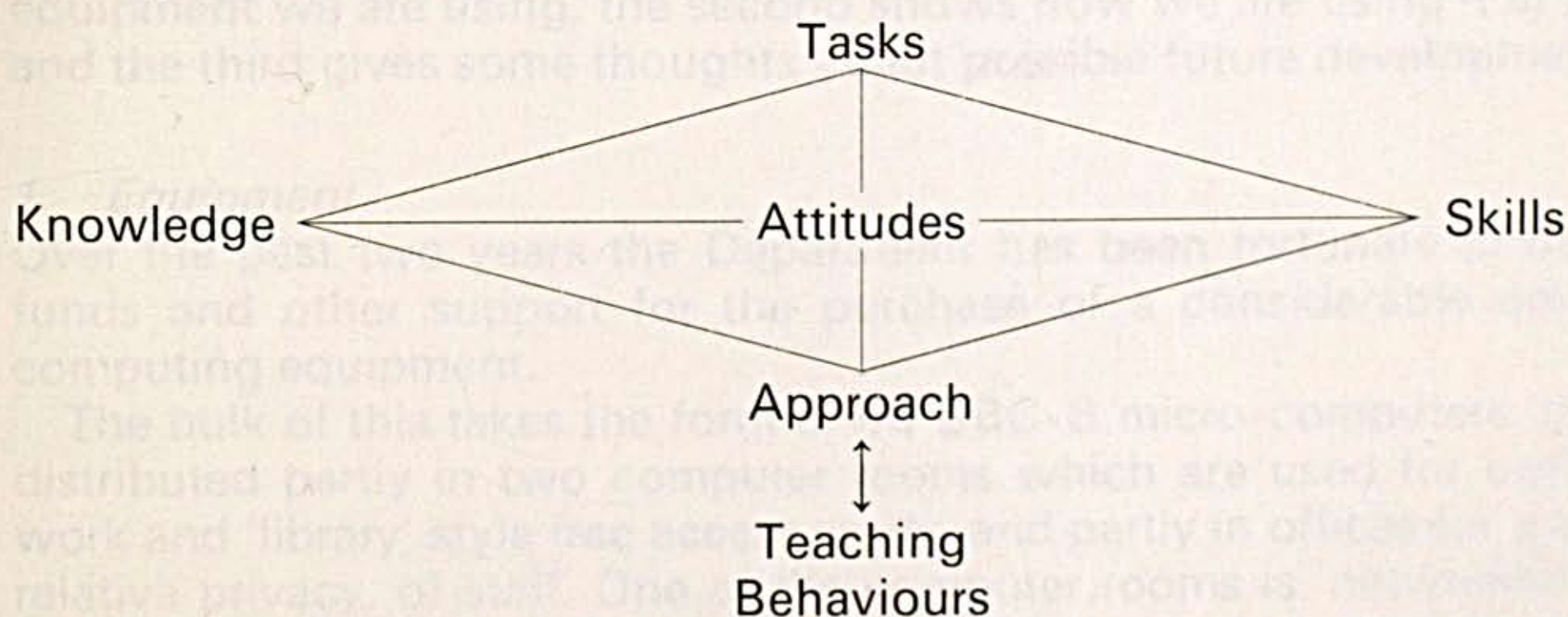
As the figure suggests, teaching experience in the classroom continually modifies the approach, or it should. It all depends on whether or not teachers have been educated in a way that enables them continue to learn. And tasks attempt to do just that.

The interactive nature of the procedures used, the inherent flexibility and adjustability of the nature and extent of tutor input and the resultant scope for learning to take its own course, help to inculcate learning modes different

from those that result from traditional 'prescriptive' methods of training—where trainees receive a set of principles, a body of knowledge, samples of model materials and methods, and they practise them.

Finally it should be made clear that tasks can be used in almost any training situation, provided that the aim is to *educate* teachers and not to produce automatons. Once general needs of participants have been identified and a list of topics has been prepared, which I suppose would more or less be the same for general methodology courses, the course planner can decide what main tasks to include for initiating the process for each unit. Then the tutors, on discovering the participants' specific needs, can decide about the nature of further tasks and the extent of input required at appropriate points in each unit. Where there is a problem of time, more tasks can be 'directed', through which participants arrive more quickly at the kinds of decision desired. This means taking short-cuts, and to that extent it would undermine the spirit of the creative construction process, but one cannot always have ideal conditions and compromises of this nature become inevitable. Under constraints of time one uses 'Socratic' lectures, or even straight 'teacher talk', but one could choose topics which could justifiably be covered this way. As far as methodology is concerned one cannot conceive how anybody can learn from just listening to talks about how to teach—there is no direct route from theory to practice. *Tasks* provide contexts for mediation between theory and practice.

COMPUTER AWARENESS AND LANGUAGE—TEACHER EDUCATION

Workshop prepared and presented by David Foulds & Anthony Cheung
Notes written by David Foulds

The purpose of this workshop is to address the question of computer-training for language teachers. We shall, in a short presentation, give a few details of our own experience of the use of computers in language-teaching at the Hong Kong Polytechnic, and we shall offer a 30 minute hands-on session to give those who are not too familiar with the subject (or know nothing about it at all) a taste of some of the kinds of things that are beginning to happen here and elsewhere. Armed with this information plus your own knowledge and experience, we would like you to discuss, in small working groups, (a) whether or not you think the use of computers in language teaching is, or is likely to be, important enough to be included as a regular feature of language-teacher training, and (b) if so, what form you think a 'Computing for LT' syllabus should take. In the final 30 minutes of the workshop we shall try to arrange a balanced sharing of views and ideas.

HONG KONG POLYTECHNIC
DEPARTMENT OF LANGUAGES

The Use of Computers in the Department

This short paper is in three main parts. The first gives details of the equipment we are using, the second shows how we are using it at present, and the third gives some thoughts about possible future developments.

1. Equipment

Over the past two years the Department has been fortunate in obtaining funds and other support for the purchase of a considerable amount of computing equipment.

The bulk of this takes the form of 60 BBC-B micro-computers: these are distributed partly in two computer rooms which are used for both class-work and 'library' style free access study, and partly in offices for the use, in relative privacy, of staff. One of the computer rooms is 'networked' which means, among other things, that all the people working in that room can share a common filing system. We expect all computers in the department to be connected to this network within the next few months.

We also have a WANG word-processor in the Department's general office, which has both English and Chinese (classical and simplified) software, and one IBM PC(XT) used at present almost exclusively for work with a major language-testing exercise.

2. Current Uses

At the present time the equipment is being used to a greater or lesser extent, for all of the following purposes—preparation of routine documents (letters/memos/lists etc), preparation of lesson handouts, statistical analysis of test data, computer-literacy work with HDTR (translation) classes, CAL(L), student word-processing and the development of administrative data bases.

The use of computers for office work and statistical analysis is nowadays considered fairly routine and I shall therefore not go into details.

The production of lesson handouts, done both on the office word-processor and on the BBC-B micros, is seen as advantageous from a number of different points of view. Handouts can very easily be corrected, updated, stored, accessed, and rearranged to suit various course parameters, when prepared on a word-processor. A more interesting development however, is that lecturers are beginning to see the even greater possibilities of preparing word-processor files, rather than printed handouts, for student use. These are not just for the students to read, but for them to work on and modify in some way.

Computer-literacy work with HDTR classes is something of a special case, and arises from the increasing understanding that computers are already beginning to make an impact in the translation business—the offices that deal with the routine translation of commercial and administrative papers. Not only are they there in the form of word-processors, but the automatic translation of natural languages, once something of a joke, and in any case only possible on very large installations, is now taken very seriously indeed. We want our translation students to leave with at least a little knowledge and experience of computers and an informed awareness of how they might affect their working lives.

Computer-aided instruction is now seen in many organisations as a useful staff-training device: if it works for large corporations there is no reason why it should not have a place in regular educational institutions. The question is, will it work for language learning? Computer-aided language learning—CALL—is something that we have been experimenting with. For the most part we have concentrated on small demonstration programs of the game/exercise/exploratory puzzle type. We have found that these can be used both as a testing and as a reinforcement aid, and, given the right class setting, they can and do stimulate considerable discussion. At present CALL is used on a voluntary, self-access basis, but we plan to begin integrating this work into regular course programs in the near future.

Student word-processing is currently the most popular computer-room activity with both staff and students. We have, this term, taught over 20 classes to use the BBC-B VIEW word-processor. Use of the word-processor is not mandatory owing to limitations of time, space and equipment available, but students are encouraged to use it for the writing of assignments and projects if they wish. We have found not only that work is neater—we have to try very hard to avoid marking up for neatness alone!—but it is certainly worked on more thoroughly and with greater care, and the tiresome business of correcting and restructuring is now very easy to deal with.

3. Future Developments

It is only too tempting, with equipment of this sort, to allow one's imagination to wander and dream up all sorts of schemes. We shall therefore limit our remarks to projects currently under discussion. These are, the integration of CALL packages into selected courses by writing program materials specifically for those courses and including the evaluation of student performance in CALL as an element of student assessment: the automatic presentation and marking of simple tests: the exploration of text analysis as a language-teaching device: the further exploitation of our student word-processing facilities.

The integration of CALL packages into selected courses is very largely an administrative matter, and speaks for itself.

We already have done some work on the presentation and marking of tests. We have, of course, the inevitable multiple-choice presentation package which does all the expected things—rearranges the order of questions and distractors each time the test is run, keeps score, gives immediate feedback, and so on. Another approach is the use of the computer screen as an answer sheet onto which the user can type his one-word or short phrase answers. Marking can be arranged to allow for alternative answers and common spelling mistakes.

Text analysis as a language teaching tool is by no means a new idea: in a sense the parsing of Latin sentences is text analysis and was used in the past to develop students' linguistic abilities (in some cases, it worked!). The computer, however, allows us to do very different kinds of analysis. One that we have been looking at for a few months is concordancing—the sweeping through text to find—and print out in context—specified words. Another, more recent development, is the rapid calculation of readability indices—a facility about which we have reservations, but it certainly gives rise to discussion.

As staff and students become more generally competent in the use of the word-processor, and as more of the computers are linked to a common communications network, we expect to be able to start developing word-processor files for student use for editing, merging, and completion exercises, introducing peer-critiquing of—and on—word-processor files, developing marking and advisory techniques on the computer network, and building up text, exercise and resources data bases.

The Evaluation of Computers, and the Things they do

Computers can do a few jobs very well, very reliably and very quickly: but there are many things they cannot do at all.

Computers are not alive, or human, or intelligent. They are machines which we humans use to do things we cannot easily do ourselves. We are not overawed by aeroplanes, though they fly and we do not; or bulldozers, though their strength is much greater than ours; or vacuum cleaners whose power to breathe in vast quantities of air and dust greatly exceeds the capacity of human lungs. Why should we think computers are in some way different to these?

Think of the computer as a tool or aid: decide exactly what you want to do, find out the things it can do, then think of ways to exploit it for your own purposes. Later, allow your understanding of the computer to generate new ideas about how to achieve your objectives.

Some of the things that computers are good at:—
They can count, do calculations, put things in, and out of, order, pick random numbers, keep time, display text, store information, check lists, compare things, follow a sequence of instructions, branch from one set of instructions to another, respond to certain kinds of external stimuli, display colours, make noises, control other machines, etc.

Other useful features:—
They are accessible, untiring, unaffected by repetition.

Some things they cannot do (yet!):—
They cannot produce film and photo quality graphic displays, speak very well, understand much of what they hear, make 'fuzzy' judgements (e.g. that's *almost* right), see, know what is going on in the world without being told, guess what the user wants, etc.

Q.:   Can a computer be as good as a teacher?
A.:   How good is a teacher?!
Should we compare an ordinary computer with an exceptional teacher? Or should we think, instead, of the computer as a dim but reliable and—within limits—knowledgeable assistant. The latter view is likely to be the more productive.

SOFTWARE DEMONSTRATIONS

1.   Chinese Word-processing
This is not a true word-processor, but a package which enables our HDTR (translation) students to learn the essentials of operating one of the better known ideographic word-processors. The user can type in, correct, delete, insert, save and load text in the normal way. New characters can be designed, and old ones modified, if required.

The program draws on a bank of 1 000 different Chinese characters (conventional), designed by HDTR students. The 1 000 characters chosen, incidentally, are taken from the early parts (Yrs 1–3) of the HK Primary Chinese syllabus.

The immediate value of this package is as an ideographic word-processor operation training package for local translator job-skills enhancement. However, it clearly has other possibilities.

2.   Data-base Management (Viewstore)
VIEWSTORE is a commercially produced data-base management package programmed especially for use with the BBC-B microcomputer. Like other packages of this type it enables the user to store various kinds of information which can then be manipulated and rearranged at will.

It clearly has value in helping with day-to-day administrative requirements of teaching such as the maintenance and printing out of class records and student scores. This is the purpose to which it is being put at the moment. However, it seems likely to be very useful as a resources listing device, and we have hopes that it will help with the time-tabling of the 600 or so course/classes and 9 000 contact hours we teach in the Department of Languages each year.

3. Text Manipulation Games

The computer is a remarkably good text-handler. Not only can it rearrange the width of typed lines (a regular feature of most word-processors), but it can juggle the lines about in any way you care to arrange, present lines one at a time and in various orders, separate all the letters of a word, or all the words of a sentence and present them in a different order, replace words, or parts of words, with blanks, change one letter for another and produce coded text,—the possibilities seem endless.

This home-made package presents a sample of such programs. CLOZE removes words from a text at intervals chosen by the user, replaces them with blanks and asks the user to reconstruct the text. SEQUENCER presents sentences from a text one at a time and in random order, asking the user to make a judgement about sentence order at each presentation. SCRAMBLED TEXT rearranges the order of both lines and columns of text and asks the user to reconstruct—a real attention grabber. LETTER-BOARD allows a text to be reconstructed by displaying all the instances of a given letter in the order chosen by the user—one 'game' is to discover the minimum number of different letters required for the text to become comprehensible.

4. English Word-processing (View)

The VIEW 1.2 word-processor, like VIEWSTORE, is a commercially produced package especially written for use with the BBC-B. Although it has its limitations it is a relatively easy word-processor to learn to use, it has all the essential features of most commercially available word-processors, and it has the added advantage that its files can easily be processed by other types of programme (see TEXT ANALYSIS, below). The user can type-in, correct, insert, save and load text, change formats, move blocks of text, copy, merge, search, and add a selection of print controls. Staff have found it perfectly adequate for the production of drafts, and one or two who know most of its features very well say they can produce professional-quality documents on it.

As a language-teaching aid it can be exploited in a number of ways. The simple fact that it takes all the worst chores out of writing has in itself a very stimulating effect—writing boring business correspondence becomes, believe it or not, 'fun'. Much can also be done by getting students to work on common files, by preparing semi-finished files and asking students to complete them, by—where a network is available—getting the members of a class to inspect and comment on each others work incognito (not so easily

arranged in open class and where hand-writing is a give-away), and much more.

5.   Voice Synthesis

'Talking' computers have been around for quite a long time. The Texas-instruments spelling toy was very popular only a year or two ago. The problem is to go further than just spelling, and either to have a computer improve its diction—they are still pretty tinny and Dalek-like—or else find uses for them where voice-quality is not so important.

We believe we have found one such use at least. Admittedly we do not go much further than letters, but the Maritime IPA (the Alpha-Bravo-Charlie-Delta code use by ships and aircraft) is something we have to teach from time to time, and it would be just as well to give our own students as much practice as possible. Also, listening to IPA code in real life often occurs under very difficult circumstances. The ether is noisy, the ship is rolling through a typhoon, and the message is being broadcast by a non English speaker, so top quality reproduction is not essential.

6.   Interactive, Text (Move-based Simulations)

Better known as 'Adventure Games', interactive text, or move-based simulation programs consist of a story line where, at each step or move, the reader makes some sort of decision: the story adapts itself to the reader's input with sometimes interesting, sometimes dire, consequences.

It was noted at Lancaster a year or two ago that programs of this sort stimulate a good deal of discussion where they are worked on by a pair or small group of students, and that the interest generated is so great that students will willingly say what they want to say in the target language if required to do so. Also it was thought that the exercise, by its very nature, would give a lot of practice in the use of modals, conditionals and so on.

We can certainly confirm the points about interest and stimulation. Stories other than these of the Fantasy and Science Fiction type are becoming available bit by bit.

7.   Text Analysis

Currently we have two home-made packages that come under this heading. CONCORDANCER searches through a series of word-processor files for words (or even parts of words, or short phrases) specified by the user, and prints these out (on screen or printer) surrounded by the text to their left and right. The amount of text that can be searched is limited to the number of word-processor files (roughly 500–600 words long) that can be kept on a disk (roughly 25). The writing of new text to be searched is done simply by producing a word-processor file and giving it the required name.

It has been suggested that text analysis of this sort can be used to advantage in a language-learning situation. We do not have enough experience to comment, but it would be remarkable if good use could not be made of programs of this sort in some teaching situations.