THE AUSTRALASIAN FIFTH ANNUAL STUDY SKILLS CONFERENCE

"LANGUAGE AND LEARNING AT TERTIARY LEVEL"

DEAKIN UNIVERSITY, 15 - 18 MAY, 1984

CONVENOR: ROSALIND MEYER

CONTENTS

'By Indirections Find Directions Out': Introduction to University Study
B. Ballard, J. Clanchy, and J. Taffe

Survey Results
Douglas Bate

Improving Access to Tertiary Education
Vic Beasley

Bridging the Gaps – Study Support Services for Off-Campus Students at the University of New England
D. Bowlay and S. Dorland

The Sentence is Basic
Helen Drury

Teaching Before Learning or Learning Before Teaching?
Nerida F. Ellerton

Some Aspects of Body Movement in Communication
June Gassin

Communicating Mathematical Skills and Ideas in Tertiary Institutions
Joe Gilks

Developing Audio Learning Skills Materials for External Students
Lorraine Marshall

Analysis and Synthesis: Developing Report Writing Skills in Tertiary Students
M. Rosanna McEvedy

'Easing the Entry': A Study Skills Programme for New Mature Entrants
Neil Quintrell

Let's Use the Video-Computer Link
Gloria E. Robbins and Sandy M. Pottinger

Industrialised, Individualised or Independent?
Frances Rowland

Interactive Video and Foreign Language Learning in the 80's
Liz Temple

Eloquence & Literacy
Peter J. Wakeham

Improving Students' Essays
Carolyn Webb

Developing Postgraduate Research Skills
Ortrun D. Zuber-Skerritt

Head Counting or Skull-Duggery: A Case of *Caput Mortuum*?
Hanne Bock and Helene Lewit

Generic Structures and Learning to Write
Frances Christie

Purifying the Tribal Language: What Do They Know of English, Who Only English Know?
Emeritus Professor C.E. Moorhouse

Cognitive Differences in Processing of Words and Pictures: A Cross Cultural Comparison
Barry L. Richardson and Dianne B. Wuillemin

Reading as Interpretation: The Jefferson Scandal
Gordon Taylor

Age of Acquisition: A Determinant of Hemispheric Dominance for Language Processing in Papua New Guineans
Dianne Wuillemin

Developing Post Graduate Research Skills
O. Zuber-Skerritt and A. Rix

Report on a Workshop: On 'Developing Postgraduate Research Skills'

THE AUSTRALASIAN FIFTH ANNUAL STUDY SKILLS CONFERENCE

DEAKIN UNIVERSITY, 15-18 MAY, 1984

"LANGUAGE AND LEARNING AT TERTIARY LEVEL"

****

PROGRAMME

****

TUESDAY, MAY 15, EVENING

7.00 p.m. for 7.30 p.m. — CONFERENCE DINNER

Speakers:

* The Vice-Chancellor, Deakin University, Professor F.R. Jevons, M.A.(Cantab.), Ph.D.(Cantab.), D.Sc.(Manchester).

inter alia is:
First Vice-Chancellor, Deakin University;
Fellow of King's College, Cambridge;
Member of Council, Museum of Victoria.

was:
Professor of Liberal Studies in Science, University of Manchester;
Member, Joint Matriculation Board, Manchester;
Member, Joint Committee of Science Research Council and Social Science Research Council, London;
Chairman, Graduate Careers Council of Australia;
Member of Council, Science Museum of Victoria;
Chairman, Victorian Vice-Chancellor's Committee.

He enjoys music, reading, walking, and swimming - especially, when at Apollo Bay.

* Mr. Lloyd Senior, B.A., B.Ed.

inter alia
Former Director of Teacher Education, Education Department;
Former Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Deakin University;
Former Member of Council, Melbourne State College.

Mr. Senior is still an active learner (currently, Computer student); he has been a teacher for "only 43 years", and relishes "a curiosity about Humanity".

* Mr. Stanley Croker, B.A.(Sydney), M.A.(University of the Pacific).

Stanley Croker, currently Head of University Community Services, Deakin University, has been shop-steward, mobile crane-driver and rigger, dairy-farmer, and (in a previous incarnation) Minister of the Methodist Church. He was Lecturer in Religious Studies and Ghandi Studies at the University of the Pacific, California, and later Sub-dean of its Student Services. At Deakin, he set up the Off-Campus Operations Unit and became its first Administrative Co-Ordinator.

He is a Founding Member of the Surfies, and also "makes a practice of sailing close to the wind".

WEDNESDAY, MAY 16, EVENING

7.30 p.m. — The Monash Players present "Strawberry Punch", a comedy of academic life by playwright/producer, Dr. Dennis Davison.

THURSDAY, MAY 17, EVENING

6.30 p.m. — Option of dinner for delegates at a Geelong restaurant.

* * * * * * * * * * * * * * *

S E S S I O N S - PROGRAMME

- Alternative sessions run concurrently except where indicated -

WEDNESDAY, MAY 16

9.00 - 10.00 a.m. — Emeritus Professor C.E. Moorhouse, A.M., D.Eng., Hon. D.Litt., F.I.E. Aust., F.I.E.E., C.E., F.A.C.E.

inter alia is:
Member of Council, University of Melbourne;
Member of Council, National Gallery Society;
A Founder (later President) of the Australian College of Education;

was:
First Professor of Electrical Engineering, University of Melbourne;
Overseas Representative of the Institution of Electrical Engineers, London;
Australian Representative of the American Institute of Electrical Engineers;
Member of the Societé Francaise des Electriciens;
Member of the Victorian Universities and Schools Examinations Board;
Member of Council of Royal Military College, Duntroon;
Dean of the Faculty of Music, University of Melbourne;
Chairman of the Board of Social Studies, University of Melbourne;
Chairman of Meanjin Advisory Committee.

He still regards himself as "capable of learning"; and, conversant with Maori and four European languages, is active in the Home Tutor Scheme for non-native speakers of English.

Plenary Session -

OPENING ADDRESS: "Purifying the Tribal Language: What do they know of English, who only English know?"

10.00 a.m. — Morning Coffee.

10.30 - 11.30 a.m. — Gordon Taylor, H.E.A.R.U., Monash University.

"Reading as Interpretation: The Jefferson Scandal"
By examining a particular case, this paper argues that study skills nostrums frequently advised may be discounted if attention is directed to the words of the source.

Gloria Robbins, Darling Downs Institute of Advanced Education.

"Let's use the video-computer link" (Discussion and demonstration).
Student response to intelligent technological aids for learning.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 16 - Cont'd.

11.30 a.m. - 12.30 p.m.

Associate Professor Barry Richardson, Department of Psychology, University of Papua New Guinea.

"Cognitive Differences in Processing of Words and Pictures: A Cross Cultural Comparison".
This research challenges received views of word processing in native and non-native speakers of English, with direct reference to E.S.L.

Vic Beasley, Flinders University of South Australia.

"Improving Access to Tertiary Education".
Foundation course.
An account of assistance developed for special entrants to Flinders University in a variety of courses.

12.30 p.m. Lunch.

1.30 - 3.30 p.m. Professor Roland Sussex, M.A.(Canterbury), Ph.D.(London), Department of Russian and Languages, Melbourne University.

inter alia is: Professor of Russian, University of Melbourne;
Member of the Editorial Board of Papers and Studies in Contrastive Linguistics;
Member of the International Review of Slavic Linguistics.
President of the Australian Linguistics Society.

was: Meetings Secretary of the Linguistics Association of Great Britain;
Secretary (later President) of the Melbourne Linguistics Circle.

Professor Sussex has studied and taught in universities in New Zealand, Great Britain, Czechoslovaki, and Australia. His interest in computer education has resulted in a system easy to use by teachers of any subject at any level, with direct benefits to both student and tutor.

He is a humanist who has been overtaken by the technological revolution.

Plenary Session: A demonstration and exposition of E/MU, a mode of computer authoring designed by his team to facilitate teaching and assessment at any level of education.

3.30 p.m. Afternoon tea.

...4/

WEDNESDAY, MAY 16 - Cont'd.

4.00 - 5.00 p.m. Dr. Colin Anderson, Department of French, Massey University, New Zealand.

"Success in Distance Language Learning at University Level". What constitutes success from the point of view of the extra-mural student? A survey of two hundred students of Massey University at four different levels of learning.

4.00 - 4.30 p.m. Joe Gilks, Division of Mathematics, Deakin University.)
)
4.30 - 5.00 p.m. Nerida Ellerton, School of Education, Deakin University.)

Philosophies of the teaching of Mathematics as a representative discipline with its own symbolic code.

5.00 p.m. Close of session.

* * * * * * * * * *

THURSDAY, MAY 17

9.00 - 10.00 a.m. Dianne Wuillemin, Department of Psychology, University of Papua New Guinea.

"Age of Acquisition: A determinant of hemispheric dominance for language processing in Papua New Guineans". Results from research with native and non-native speakers of English which suggests that early exposure to a written language may predispose the left hemisphere to accept languages learned later.

Lorraine Marshall, E.S.T.R.U., Murdoch University.

"Developing Audio Learning Skills Materials For External Students". An exposition of the process of peer learning adapted for students off the campus.

10.00 a.m. Morning tea.

10.30 - 11.30 a.m. Peter Wakeham, Department of Language and Literature, Melbourne College of Advanced Education.

"Communication theory made practical - a consideration of verbal and non-verbal communication in teaching". A redefinition of the basic elements in any successful communication between teacher and student.

Sue Dorland, Senior Counsellor, University of New England, and Des Bowlay, Department of External Studies, University of New England.

"Bridging the Gaps". A discussion of learning needs in mature students off campus, and of strategies developed to assist their study by the University of New England.

...5/

THURSDAY, MAY 17 - Cont'd.

11.30 a.m. - 12.30 p.m.

Frances Christie, Applied Studies Centre, School of Education, Deakin University.

"Generic structures and learning to write".
This paper argues that learning to write is a process of "learning how to mean".

Frances Rowland, External Studies Unit, Murdoch University.

"Independent, Individualised, or Industrialised?"
Three approaches to distance learning in Australia, with changes suggested to promote self-directed learning in students.

12.30 p.m. Lunch.

1.30 - 3.00 p.m. Ortrun Zuber-Skerritt, C.A.L.T., Griffith University.

A Workshop on developing Postgraduate Research Skills based on the design of a Research Studies Component in the Masters by Coursework Program in the School of Modern Asian Studies at Griffith University.

June Gassin, The Horwood Language Centre, University of Melbourne.

A Workshop on "Some Aspects of Body Movement in Communication". This workshop emphasizes the communicative value of Body Language.

3.00 p.m. Afternoon Tea.

3.30 - 4.30 p.m. Rosanna McEvedy, W.A. College of Advanced Education.

"Analysis and Synthesis: Developing Report Writing Skills in Tertiary Students".

This workshop examines postgraduate and undergraduate difficulties in learning to present acceptable written work.

Neil Quintrell, Health and Counselling Service, Flinders University.

"Easing the Entry".
An account of a Study Skills programme for new mature entrants at Flinders University.

4.30 - 5.00 p.m. Plenary Session: to discuss implications of the Survey of Student Literacy by Douglas Bate, Study Skills Adviser in the School of Humanities, La Trobe University.

...6/

FRIDAY, MAY 18

9.00 - 10.30 a.m. Helen Drury, Language Study Centre, University of Sydney.

"The Sentence is Basic".
A workshop on new ways of talking about language and alternative teaching techniques for migrant and overseas students.

Carolyn Webb, Language Study Centre, University of Sydney.

"Improving students' essays".
A workshop aimed at formulating a framework for teaching the steps in the process of essay writing.

10.30 a.m. Morning tea.

11.00 a.m. - 12.30 p.m.

Plenary Session: Brigid Ballard, John Clanchy, John Taffe, C.S.S.U., Australian National University.

A Workshop: "By Indirections Find Directions Out: Introductions to University Study".
This workshop will cover many aspects of Study Skills, including Mathematics.

12.30 p.m. Lunch.

1.30 - 2.30 p.m. Hanne Bock, Study Skills Adviser, School of Social Sciences, La Trobe University.

"Confessions of an English Teacher (AO)".
This paper examines problems of literacy encountered in the School of Social Sciences at La Trobe University.

Liz Temple, School of French, University of New South Wales.

"Interactive Video and Foreign Language Learning in the 80s"
A discussion and demonstration, which illustrates the acquisition process in language-learning and the nature of languages, together with new teaching methods found effective for students.

2.30 - 3.30 p.m. Plenary Session: to evaluate issues raised during the 1984 Conference.

3.30 p.m. Afternoon tea.

* * * * * * * * * * *

'BY INDIRECTIONS FIND DIRECTIONS OUT': INTRODUCTION TO UNIVERSITY STUDY.

B. BALLARD, J. CLANCHY, AND J. TAFFE

Brigid Ballard has a BA from Oxford in English Language and Literature and an MA in Teaching from Harvard University. She has also studied at Cape Town and Goulburn and is currently working, very part-time, towards a PhD at ANU on the novels of Xavier Herbert (and would welcome any skilled advice and sympathy for this bit of foolishness). She has taught in Nigeria, the United States and Papua New Guinea before coming to the Study Skills Unit in 1977. Her professional interests cover all aspects of academic writing and thinking, with particular emphasis on shifts in styles of thinking and studying which are necessary for students entering tertiary studies whether from Australia or overseas. Her current main interest (apart from the novels of Xavier Herbert) is working with Asian postgraduate students both at the ANU and overseas.

John Clanchy is currently coming to the end of a decade of study skills counselling at ANU, after a number of years teaching in state and private schools and colleges in Victoria. He graduated in English Language and Literature from Melbourne University, wrote his MA thesis (forgettable) on Chaucer and holds a Dip.Ed. from the same University. His particular professional interest lies in the processes of writing, and together with Brigid Ballard he has written two texts which treat different aspects of study and writing at the tertiary level: Essay Writing for Students (Longman, Melbourne) and Study Abroad (Longman, Malaysia).

John Taffe is the mathematics and statistics adviser in the Study Skills Unit. His BA from Monash is in Mathematics, French and Philosophy, and his MSc from Melbourne is in Mathematical Economics. The improvement of mathematics and statistics teaching at secondary and tertiary levels is his main professional interest.

'By indirections find directions out': Introductions to University Study.

Each February since 1978 we have run introductory courses for new ANU students. These courses attract between 90 and 120 participants; three quarters are women (mostly in Arts) and about 90% are mature-age. The majority of them want a general introduction on 'how to study at university'; some 20 or more want specific help in preparing for courses in social sciences which require the use of statistics. In the first section of this paper we focus on the general Introduction to University Study course and in the second on the Statistical course.

A. INTRODUCTION TO UNIVERSITY STUDY COURSE

The students, who are divided into groups of eight on the basis of preferred time and subject choices, meet twice weekly for the three weeks leading up to Orientation week. We deliberately try to encourage a relaxed atmosphere with formalities kept to a minimum: the groups meet in our own rooms rather than in classrooms; each session begins with coffee and general chat - and so on.

In our view two characteristics distinguish these groups from others we run in the course of the year. First, the rate of attendance is extremely high; although most of the students have other occupations, being employed or with family responsibilities, almost all attend all of the 90 minute sessions. Second, there is a noticeable change in the attitude of the students over the three week period: the initial nervousness - for some, deep anxiety - at the prospect of university study normally gives way, by the end of the course, to moderate confidence in their capacities to meet the new demands they will face when their courses begin.

These two characteristics of high motivation and high anxiety dominate the comments the students make when asked, in the first session, why they have started university studies and why they have enrolled for the course. Every year the same explanations are offered:

> I never had a chance to go to uni before ... This is something I've always wanted to do ... a degree will help in my job and it will also give a chance to follow up my interests ...

and

> It is years since I left school. I just don't know if I'm capable of writing essays ... I haven't used my brain properly for twenty years ... I don't have any idea what to expect, what I'll be required to do, the standard of work ...

Our task in running the course, then, is two-fold: removing some of the uncertainties and, in the process, helping these students develop confidence in their own academic capacities.

How do we try to achieve these aims? What do we actually do during this three week period? In what ways are we 'introducing' students to university study? Indeed, how far is it either possible or desirable to introduce students to experiences which are still in the future for them? How far should we try to 'model' lectures, tutorials, writing assignments and research projects, and how far restrict ourselves to outlining in general terms some key strategies for study?

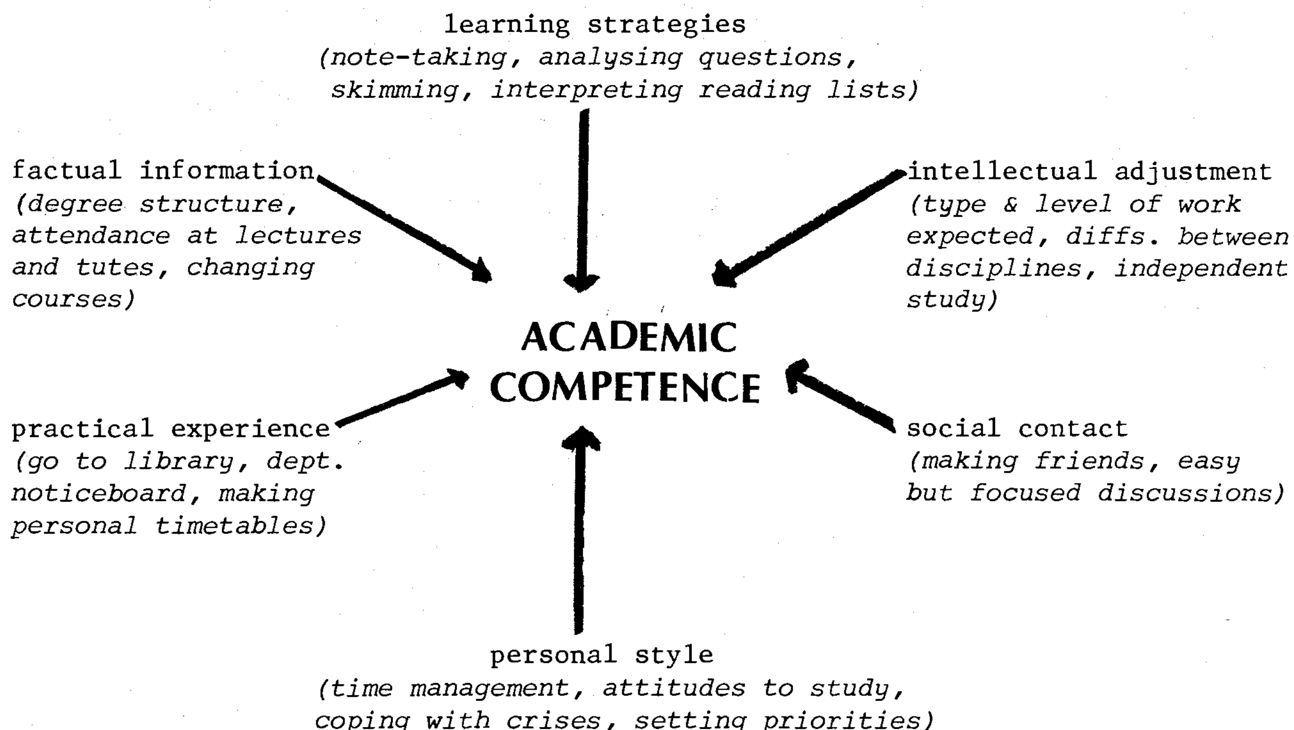
We have no final answers to some of these questions, and we have not yet developed a course which can satisfy all the demands which students bring. Each year we try out new variations; with each group the sessions take on a different life. Nevertheless we have gradually developed a rationale and a curriculum which seem to satisfy students' needs and which take account of that combination of high motivation and high anxiety which we recognize, from our own experience and from the literature[1], marks this group of students off from others.

Rationale for the course

There are three basic assumptions which underpin our course:

1. Students join the course because they are nervous about starting university study.
2. Growth in confidence is closely linked to growth in competence in the relevant environment. Since the environment here is the university, the appropriate context for any introductory course is itself academic.
3. Study skills are best learned when the activities and materials are genuine, i.e. drawn from actual courses in which students are enrolled.

The diagram below sets out the various approaches by which we guide new students towards the eventual goal of academic competence. There are, of course, many other factors involved in achieving such a goal, including personal attitudes, intellectual capacities, teaching styles and many more, but we have identified here those approaches which we feel ourselves most competent professionally to handle and which meet the needs the students themselves express.



1. See A.B. Knox, Adult development and learning, San Francisco, Jossey-Bass, 1977, and References at end of B. Ballard's paper 'Mature Age Students: How Different?', Study Skills Conference, Q'ld Univ., 1983.

The curriculum

The curriculum of the course, which is described on pp.4-5, should be read as a set of possibilities rather than an inflexible schedule. In practice each group expresses its own - slightly different - needs, and the sessions are reshaped to meet these differences. The changes are usually modifications rather than major variations - maybe a shift in emphasis or in the proportion of time given to particular activities. Occasionally we may experiment more radically. For example, this year with some groups we replaced Session 6 (time management and a discussion with a second year student) with a showing and discussion of 'Tutorial Presentation Skills', a 40 minute videotape made by CALT at Griffith University. However the basic curriculum holds firm, as it represents seven years of accumulated reflections by ourselves and our students on their needs at this preliminary stage of their academic career.

Feedback on the course

In the early years we used to be satisfied with the feedback we got from our students during the course, taking the high attendance rate and the occasional bunches of flowers, cakes and bottles of wine as an adequate indication of success. However a couple of years ago we decided to be more systematic in eliciting feedback and we now, at the end of first semester, write to all the students who attended the course. We ask them to reflect on their experience during first semester and then let us know what was useful and what might be improved in our introductory course. At the same time we ask them to let us photocopy their own essays as resource materials for next year's course.

We have found that these responses which are based on three months of actual experience of university study much more useful than evaluations made in the euphoria of the end of our course. We find that, as the selection of comments below illustrates, the students confirm the usefulness of our general approach.

The first set of comments relates to our categories of factual information and practical experience (see diagram on p.2):

> 'Your assignment - go find your Department, read the noticeboards etc - is invaluable. The first lectures had so many instructions like 'It will be on the board in the Department' etc. The lecture halls seemed full of people who didn't have a clue where to go, what to do, what a tute was, that there would be tutes etc.'

> '... helpful firstly because it forced me to find my way around the campus which was something I was putting off until the last minute through lack of courage.'

Here are some comments on the more amorphous area of intellectual adjustment:

> 'so many new rules/etiquettes to assimilate before one even gets down to doing any actual work... course is especially useful in bringing to the new student's attention: just what is expected of him/her; how the 'system' works, and the standard of work required to gain certain marks.'

> 'The course gave me a sense of direction and an ability to plan my study ...'

THE CURRICULUM

OBJECTIVES	ACTIVITIES	MATERIALS
SESSION I		
sharing anxieties	✱- Introductions: pairs interviewing re biography, subject choices, motivations, anxieties, then introducing partners to the group	
gaining information	- Leader outlines structure and aims of course (focusing on academic skills) - Question time: questions encouraged re immediate practical concerns (enrolling, degree structure, subject choices, etc.) ✱- Leader • explains basic teaching/learning organization: lectures, tutes, labs, private and library study; • shows students how to find these things for their subjects; • encourages discussion of work loads/course demands, time management	Course outlines from relevant subjects from previous year, detailing syllabus, essays, exams, tute reading lists etc.
beginning to develop a specific skill	- Homework: "Read and make notes on this article in preparation for a tutorial discussion in a week's time. For reading and note-taking combined you are limited to a strict maximum of 20 minutes. Bring your notes to our second session."	C.A. Mace, The Psychology of Study, Penguin, 1962, pp32-41
socializing	- More coffee, individual queries	
SESSION 2		
understanding the importance of a clear intellectual & practical PURPOSE	- Brief general discussion of ease/difficulty of homework - Students in 4's share the notes they made and explain why they read and noted as they did ✱- Plenary discussion on variety of methods. Examine other (printed) examples showing different paradigms of note-taking for same extract - Group redivides into 4's. Each group researches a different question relating to Mace. (Groups do not know questions are different.) Notes then compared between groups. Need stressed for clear intellectual purpose. ✱- Full group discussion of practical purposes for note-taking (to jog memory, research essay, store long-term for exams) and way this too determines methods. Crucial differences between notes from lectures and exams.	Students' own notes on Mace extract Sheets from previous students who had undertaken the same exercise Printed questions, each requiring researchers to go to a different part of the extract for an answer
ice-breaking & orienteering	- Homework: "Go around the University until you find at least one of your Departments and the first-year notice board. If possible, introduce yourself to the Departmental secretary. Report back in session 3."	
SESSION 3		
sharing experiences	- Reports on homework assignment	
developing & reinforcing a specific skill	✱- Learning flexible reading strategies. All students asked to read the opening section of a chapter of a popular historical text, then in 4's arrive at an agreed oral summary of the structure of argument. 4's compare summaries and relate them to sheet on which first sentences of paras. have been typed. Further rapid skimming of sections of the chapter. - Further practice on a textbook or paper from disciplines common to members in the group. - Leader elaborates on typical structures and the function of paras in academic writing (inc. variations eg. some American texts) ✱- Group discussion of essay question and reading list from popular first-year course. Decisions about what to read, when, how.	G.Blainey, The Tyranny of Distance, Chapter 7. A typed sheet containing the first sentence of each para in Section 1 of Blainey Chapters and papers from a wide variety of first year courses One para from Blainey, diagrammatically mapped to show logical connections Essay topic and reading list from Pol.Sci I course
comfirming importance of PURPOSE	- Homework: "1. Apply skimming strategies to any academic texts you are reading in preparation for courses. 2. Read through this list of essay topics before session 4, including topics for subjects other than your own."	Students' own preliminary reading Five page handout of essay topics compiled from courses in all disciplines in the previous year

✱ Indicates activities which normally constitute the key elements of each session and occupy the bulk of time.

THE CURRICULUM (cont'd)

OBJECTIVES	ACTIVITIES	MATERIALS
SESSION 4		
sharing experiences	- Discussion of homework tasks focusing on:(1) texts for which skimming has proved more difficult. Leader suggests modifications of strategy; (2) what can be perceived about nature and structure of essay questions (as distinct from content)	As for Session 3. Students also sometimes bring texts of their own on which they have been practising skimming
developing a specific skill	*- Practice in analysing essay topics. Leader provides a strategy for focusing on three kinds of key words in topics: Content (eg. social organisation), Directional (eg. discuss), Contextual (eg. two tribal societies).	
socializing into ground-rules of academic culture	*- Discussion of issues which students raise from this exercise: typically, issues relating to argument, judgement/personal opinion, fact vs interpretation, extent of research, use of sources, etc.	
reinforcing a skill	- Students into 2's to practise in detail the analysis of questions from their own disciplines, followed by group discussion of observations/ difficulties.	
extending knowledge of the culture	- Homework: 1. 'Read through this handout which explains in detail - with comments from lecturers on students' essays - the four key expectations of academics in Arts & Social Sciences about essays. 2. For the next week make up some sort of plan/timetable of all projected activities. Use any format you like but estimate times.'	Photocopy of relevant pages from Clanchy & Ballard, Essay Writing for Students, Longman Cheshire, 1981, pp. 4-11
SESSION 5		
sharing anxieties and experiences	- Discussion of issues arising from Homework 1: typically, concerns re quality of writing required, style, personal vs objective tones, differences between disciplines, argument, meaning of 'critical', differences from school etc.	
strengthening critical sense by applying 'rules' of the culture	*- Detailed analysis of short essay. Group analysis of topic then students read essay once. Very brief discussion, swapping first impressions → decision that essay lacks coherent argument. Students read essay again, making one sentence summary of writer's presumed intentions in each paragraph. Overall summary elicited and written on blackboard. Then discussion of ways of reshaping material to make coherent argument. Group assesses essay against four expectations above.	Copy of first-year 1000 word Anthropology essay (to be distributed at Conference)
reinforcing critical sense and practising earlier skills	*- Follow up. Students read another (closely related) essay praised by lecturer for fluency. Discussion of source of fluency. Students then asked to skim essay. Attention to paragraph structure (+ related back to discussions of reading). Students attempt to skim first essay. Discussion of problems.	Copy of another first-year 1000 word Anthropology essay (to be distributed at Conference)
further orienteering	- Homework: 'Go to the Chifley Library and find by whatever means you can the shelves that relate to at least one of your subjects.'	
SESSION 6		
sharing problems and strategies for coping	*- Discussion of exercise of time-tabling previous week's activities. Styles of time management, making priorities, reality vs intentions, flexibility etc. discussed.	Students' own timetables, lists, doodlings etc.
making the whole task seem possible, and revealing some of the hidden agenda of study	*- 2nd year student speaks for 15-20 mins on experiences of first-year at University. Then follow-up discussions/questions. Typically, issues include: time management, clashing responsibilities, library and accessibility of books, essays, relations with lecturers, tutorials, taking notes in lectures.	2nd year student encouraged to bring folder of notes and essay drafts from previous year
improving awareness of networks of support	- Leader sums up, stressing key areas/skills covered, inviting each student to consult at least once in course of first semester, pointing to other resources (Counselling, Students' Union, Library tours etc.) - More coffee and gossip (encouraging students in same courses to swap phone nos. addresses etc).	CSSU bookmarks (names, phone nos. etc.)

* Indicates activities which normally constitute the key elements of each session and occupy the bulk of time.

By far the greatest number of comments focus on matters that fall within our categories personal style and social contact:

> 'It was a great comfort to know that I was not alone in my worries and difficulties...'
>
> '... an introduction to some people whom I saw later and was able to talk to... an opportunity to ask someone many questions about which it turned out I was totally lost with eg. I thought that I only studied one subject in my Arts course.'
>
> 'Useful mostly in meeting people who were as nervous as I was and finding I wasn't the only person who felt unsure of themselves.'
>
> '... useful to meet other people in the same position as myself returning to study, lacking a certain confidence but dying to have a go. The course enabled me to come to grips with the personal reasons for wanting to study and to realize the depth of commitment required... I still see fellow Study Skills course members in the library and we compare progress, difficulties and other gossip.'
>
> '... helpful being able to ask the most basic questions about student life and work and realizing that no one else in the group knew either.'

Noticeable here is the great relief of many students when they realize they are not isolated in their feelings of incompetence and anxiety. And they occasionally remark on the informality of the course as being particularly helpful in drawing them out of their state of shyness:

> 'The atmosphere generally... made me feel I could approach the CSSU when in later months I had problems...'
>
> 'The small group and informal atmosphere is most conducive to expressing what may seem in more formal setting a trivial problem.'

The one category,we have noticed, which attracts little comment is that of learning strategies. This might at first seem surprising but one student did reflect on this matter very perceptively:

> 'One of the problems of writing an assessment such as this is the phenomenon whereby once one masters a skill, it becomes automatic/'second nature' and taken for granted. However I can recall that at the start of the year I was terrified that I would not be able to learn; that I couldn't remember facts; that I wouldn't be able to research information, that I would not be able to write a coherent essay expanding and elaborating on a particular question; or that I would not be able to cope with the social aspects of university life. Yet I find that I have managed to do all this reasonably well...'

This comment, we think, crystallizes the real process by which students improve their learning strategies and study skills - on the job. In our preliminary course we can only give them some understanding of the academic setting and some feeling of confidence as the basis upon which they can later acquire the skills they really need.

Making changes

In our letter to the students we specifically ask for criticisms and suggestions for change. The problem with eliciting criticism is that we then have to do something about it. And this raises the further problem of how far we should attempt to respond to 'customer' demands - how much should we try to cram into the curriculum? Let us take a sample of student suggestions over time and show how we have dealt with them. (The suggestions are grouped under A, B, C, D simply for ease of the following commentary.)

A. '... the invitation of second year students to come to one session so that the new students could ask them direct questions about studying.'

'I would have liked to have spoken to a second-year student in order to get some first-hand information. For this reason I would be happy to come and talk to any interested new students at the CSSU course next year.'

B. '... more experience in tutorial participation ... I am still not at ease in tutorials even after all this time.'

'... more emphasis to be placed on tutorials. This aspect of university is foreign to students especially persons such as myself educated under a very structured system. I found tutorials as a part of university experience the most difficult to adjust to ...'

C. 'An actual essay set by you to be done so that we could get an assessment of our writing ability before the year began.'

'I would have liked to perhaps do some mock exercises like: write a short essay, prepare to lead a tutorial or prepare a bibliography for a subject.'

D. 'A later similar course after having experienced the problems with essays would be marvellous...'

Suggestion A seemed immediately sensible, easy to effect and, as the student remarks, likely to provide credible 'first-hand information'. This is now a routine part of our course.

Suggestion B we are currently experimenting with. Certainly tutorials can be 'difficult' for many new mature-age, particularly female(?) students. For this reason we used the Griffith tape (see above) in some groups this year. In 1985 we shall experiment further, this time using the groups themselves as the basis for analysis, i.e. helping members of the groups make objective and conscious the actual process in which they are engaged.

Suggestion C we refuse to accede to. While recognizing students' anxiety about this matter, we do not believe that an essay written without an academic context, without genuine research or content, without the need to follow disciplinary conventions of analysis, argument, or even presentation, will provide any useful diagnostic information. So, for philosophical reasons, we remain steadfastly opposed

to this suggestion. We refuse - what the student herself calls - 'mock exercises' and instead direct students to come for individual assessment / help when writing their first actual essay.

Suggestion D is the obvious implication of our own reasoning in refusing Suggestion C. Yet we cannot do it for logistical reasons, in particular the weight of numbers of other first year students demanding entry to our essay writing courses. So we compromise, encouraging each student to come for individual assistance with an early assignment.

Thus student evaluation provides important information for us in confirming the value of and helping us to reshape our course - as well as acting as a stimulus to change. Yet it is only one source of information amongst many. Finally, we fall back on our own professional judgement in making the decisions we do: whether - as here - to accede, to refuse, to compromise or to experiment further.

Our own evaluation

We ourselves have mixed feelings about the Introduction to University Study course. On the one hand it apparently fills a persistent need: it does assist new students to bridge the gap between their previous educational experience and the new demands of university study. It alerts students to some of the possibilities and pitfalls ahead of them. It can too act as an early warning system for the teaching staff in the Faculties. On two or three occasions we have, from observations or information gathered in our groups, been able to forewarn academic staff of problems likely to occur in their course. One such observation - that many of these students would have substantial difficulty in writing their first academic essay - led to our writing a short paper for Faculty distribution. The practical outcome has been that most departments within the Faculty of Arts and the Faculty of Asian Studies now allow students - all students, not merely mature-age ones - to rewrite and resubmit their first essay in the discipline. In this way our introductory courses have enabled us not merely to assist individual students but also marginally to reshape the academic environment for all students.

On the other hand we have doubts every year whether the course is really as effective as the students seem to think - we know that they do not yet have the skills which they will need to cope with their studies, we know that talking about strategies for writing essays is not the same thing as actually writing an essay. Also, to be honest, this course is much more draining on the energies and patience of the advisers than our later courses on essay writing and exam preparation. Here we have to provide so much of the context and encouragement; later the students bring their own materials and their own experience to the courses so that the sessions almost run on their own energies.

Nevertheless we think the real value of the course, despite all its shortcomings, is that it does begin to meet the expressed needs of the students who elect to come because they are worried about their capacity to adjust to academic studies. Although we are inevitably concerned as much with the development of personal confidence as with the acquisition of skills at this stage of the students' experience, we believe it is important that this development takes place within a specifically academic context. For this reason our explicit focus remains upon the demands that the university environment makes upon students, not upon personal growth and psychological adjustment. It is this distinction, we believe, that marks

off the approach we take from that of personal counsellors. The two approaches are complementary, not in competition; but our own competence and interests as study skills advisers persuade us that there is value in adopting the academic context as our way of assisting students to adjust to university studies. The two approaches may lead to the same ultimate goal, but our philosophy and style bend us, Polonius-like, to *by indirections find directions out*.

B. SPECIAL PURPOSE COURSES - MATHEMATICS AND STATISTICS IN THE SOCIAL SCIENCES.

As well as the general 'Introduction to University Study' course the Unit offers special purpose courses which deal with mathematical and statistical aspects of first-year study. Currently two courses are offered - 'Graphs and Models in Economics' and 'Statistics in Psychology' - corresponding to two major sources of demand for the mathematics adviser's services.

These courses are attended by 25-30 students and have several points in common with the general course:

- the students who attend are mainly mature-age and mainly female,
- most doubt their ability to cope with tertiary study, especially with its mathematical aspects,
- the focus is on the academic demands students will face,
- the main aim is to generate some student confidence about approaching the study tasks of the year ahead, and
- in the final session groups discuss the study requirements of their courses with a student who has been through the mill.

In style they are also very similar to the general course. There are six 1½-hour sessions wherein a small group (6-8) of students exchange information about their backgrounds and why they came to the course, and what they expect of university. Coffee and tea are provided, and this helps create an informal and relaxed atmosphere. By the end of the three weeks, many have made their first friends among their fellow students. This is probably the most important part of the hidden curriculum.

The courses differ from the general course in the tasks given to the students. Instead of reading and taking notes they read and extract information in numerical form. Instead of the contexts and purposes of note-taking they discuss the contexts and purposes of number-collecting and methods of summary and presentation. Instead of analysing essay topics they read economics tutorial questions for clues about model assumptions and appropriate graphs. And so on.

The courses differ also in that they are directed towards the study of particular subjects. It has not always been so. In 1979 and 1980 I gave a single introductory course under the title of 'Basic Algebra for Statistics'. The assumptions behind this were:

- students attending such a course are nervous because they perceive themselves to be lacking in 'mathematical background' for social science courses, and
- that the appropriate response was an attempt to supply this missing 'background'.

The thought that these assumptions were naive in the extreme did not occur to me at the time of designing the original course. Accordingly,

it was designed as a mini maths course - beginning with the arithmetic of positive and negative numbers. Negative numbers are spectres whose sudden emergence from the mists of time was, for many, quite alarming. These apparitions had not had time to recede before, lightly and somewhat heartlessly as it now seems, the course introduced new horrors in the form of Σ notation and the method of construction of standard deviations. The uncomplicated logic of the course design was that showing how standard deviations were made would help demistify them. It turned out otherwise. The students were generally relieved at being able to turn to the final topic of straight lines - at least they could draw pictures of them, and this was reassuring.

Thus, though they were let down fairly gently, some students expressed thoughts such as 'If that was an introduction, what will the real thing be like?' Questions such as this can be chastening to leaders of courses. Courses of this kind should help to increase students' confidence that they can cope with the academic tasks ahead of them.

The major weakness of this early course, as I see it, was that it was too literal-minded. Academics said 'Background algebra is what they need!', and the course attempted to deliver this commodity. One problem with this approach is that it involves the discussion of techniques without adequate reference to the contexts in which they will be used. Another is the virtually irresistible pressure, on the course leader, to go too fast.

The courses in their present forms are the results of a gradual evolution away from the 'give them the algebra' model. Their style is now stable, but I expect that the detail of their content and how it is treated will continue to change from year to year. Indeed, new courses will probably be devised as new needs become apparent. What these courses will share with the present ones is the property of being focused on the mathematical demands which students will face in particular fields of study.

The teaching strategies used in the present courses closely parallel those given in the detailed curriculum for 'Introduction to University Study' set out above. As it seems unwise to present the curricula of the specialized courses in similar detail for a non-mathematical audience I offer instead the following brief descriptions.

'Graphs and Models in Economics' is tailored to the needs of those prospective students of ANU's Economics I course who lack basic mathematical expertise. Economics I is a study of the workings and consequences of simple economic models, in which explanations in lectures and textbooks rely heavily on the suggestive power of graphs. Manipulations of graphs correspond to changes in the state of markets. Facility in performing and interpreting these manipulations distinguishes competent students from those who struggle with little success. The course makes use of extracts from Economics I handouts and tutorial questions from the previous year, as well as explanations from texts, to give students experience in translating from descriptions of economic scenarios to graphs, in deciding what graphical changes are indicated and in making the translation back to discussion of economic consequences. This procedure, on early indications, seems to succeed in engendering some confidence in students that they may be able to adjust successfully to the Economics Department's style. Of course, a good relationship between the Department and the course leader is essential.

'Statistics in Psychology' operates on a slightly different philosophy, in that it does not concentrate on a single set of skills regarded as

essential. Since 1982 Psychology I at ANU has incorporated a heavy statistics component - half the year's work in terms of lecture and 'lab' time, much more in student study time. To say that the students who enrol in 'Statistics in Psychology' are nervous at the prospect of this statistics component is a considerable understatement. 'Panicked' would be more accurate in some students' cases. Which is why the 'algebra' approach described above is wrong.

In 1984 the course started with a look at the research interests of the Psychology Department, as evidenced by the titles of papers written in the past five years, which are listed in the Department's manual for students. The first purpose of this was to look for reasons why statistics may be necessary in psychology. A count of those papers which clearly were based on experiments or questionnaire surveys and those which may not have been was convincing. It was also the first evidence students had that they could extract information that was not immediately obvious by using a simple statistical procedure - that they would 'do' statistics and that there might be some point in it.

The course proceeded to an examination of some data concerning the whole Psychology I class of 1982, which the Department had compiled for me. A number of activities centred on the idea of comparing the course group with the 1982 'population' in various ways, involving both descriptive and inferential uses of the figures. No mathematics was done. The idea was simply to give the students experience of making sense of, and inferences from, sets of figures that initially appeared fairly meaningless. Again the hope was to inspire some confidence in students that learning from statistics was within their capabilities.

These courses, then, like the general course, 'by indirections find directions out'. By providing initial experiences of success in an academic context they aim to make future success seem possible - perhaps even probable. If not a chart for the academic future, then at least a compass.

SURVEY RESULTS

DOUGLAS BATE

Douglas Bate is Canadian by birth but lived from 1960 to 1974 in the United States. He graduated from the University of Washington with qualifications in English, education, and broadcast journalism. Prior to moving to Australia in 1975, he worked for one year in the news department of a Seattle broadcast house. During his first two years in Australia, he taught high school English, developed a literacy program at Footscray College and taught existential philosophy at an adult night school. In 1977, he was appointed lecturer in the use of English for the School of Humanities, La Trobe University, where he is currently employed.

His non-professional interests include writing poetry and prose and wide reading.

SURVEY RESULTS

Collected here are the summaries of three surveys conducted late last year. They attempt to obtain a wide range of information about university students' literacy skills, from the perspectives of 100 academics and 370 first-year students at La Trobe University, and 38 business or government organizations.

The surveys were conducted in order to learn what the different groups actually believe, rather than relying on speculation and hearsay; to discern how the groups communicate about communication; to promote more informed discussion about issues of literacy; and to draw from the data ideas for more effective teaching.

For now, I am simply making the survey results available and look forward to discussing the issues at the time of the conference.

STAFF SURVEY RESULTS

Students' Expression/Essay Composition Skills

FOREWORD

This survey obtains a university-wide sample of staff views on: the main problems in students' English expression and essay composition skills; the estimated percentages of students who could benefit from direct instruction; the main causes behind the problems.

Responses have been organized and presented to speak largely for themselves. I believe it is of implicit value to know what views are held, to discern patterns and consensus. What is held to be true is more a concern here than the extent to which beliefs reflect the truth. One can better pursue the latter once the former is established beyond unsystematic hearsay and speculation.

Douglas Bate
School of Humanities
La Trobe University

CONTENTS

- Survey Sample 1
- Survey Summary 2 - 5
- Survey Responses 6 - 26

Note on contents:

The survey summary categorizes responses for a quick grasp of the survey's substance. Time and interest permitting, you may wish to read through some or all of the actual survey responses. They include interesting comments not categorized in the summary. Responses are organized according to Schools or Departments and give answers to the following specific questions:

(1) What do you believe to be the main problems students experience in English expression and essay composition? What percentage of your students do you believe could benefit from direct instruction in these areas?

(2) What do you regard as the main causes behind these problems?

Responses to question (3), concerned with special information and skills for writing in particular disciplines, have not been included. That information is still being considered for its potention contribution to a student manual to be used in the Humanities Language Development Programme.

Surveys of staff, students, and business-government organizations will contribute to a report to the School of Humanities Literacy Committee.

SURVEY SAMPLE

There were 130 responses to the survey. Those submitted late in the year, after word processing had begun, have not been included. Random selection from five heavily represented Departments or Schools further reduced the sample to 100.

Contributors to Sample

Agriculture:	3
Art History:	1
Biochemistry:	1
Biological Sciences:	1
Botany:	1
Cinema Studies:	2
Computer Science:	2
Economics:	7
Education:	8
English:	8
French:	1
Genetics:	4
Geology:	2
History:	10
Inorganic Chemistry:	4
Italian:	2
Legal Studies:	2
Linguistics:	2
Mathematics:	3
Microbiology:	1
Music:	2
Organic Chemistry:	3
Philosphy:	6
Physical Chemistry:	3
Physics:	1
Politics:	3
Prehistory:	3
Psychology:	3
Social Work:	3
Sociology:	5
Spanish:	1
Statistics:	2

SURVEY SUMMARY

1. Main problems in English Expression

Just over two-thirds of respondents (69) indicated that a main problem is with grammar-syntax-punctuation. This is taken as a single category, since the skills are interrelated and infrequently occur in isolation from one another. Other main problems (in order of frequency mentioned) are: spelling, range and precision of vocabulary, style appropriate to subject and verbosity.

2. Main problems in Essay Composition

The main problems (in order of frequency mentioned) are:

a. ability to develop and maintain logical sequencing in the organization of an essay. Inherent here are the internal unity of paragraphs (sentence relationships), the relationships between paragraphs, and the use of connectives (conjunctions).

b. ability to develop and maintain a coherent argument supported with evidence and examples.

c. ability to outline or plan the sturcture of an essay.

d. ability to comprehend reading material, extract and summarize main points and arguments, explain and discuss alternative viewpoints-interpretations, and maintain balanced integration of own voice with quotations and paraphrases.

e. ability to keep a specific essay question/topic in central focus.

3. Benefits of Direct Instruction

Direct instruction refers here to the general area of English expression and essay composition. No attempt is made to link estimates of the benefit of instruction to specific skills.

Forty-three respondents offer a percentage estimate of their students who could benefit form direct instruction.

Mean average: 57%

Distribution:
0 - 25% (9)
26 - 50% (13)
51 - 75% (9)
76 - 100% (12)

A further six respondents indicate that "most" of their students could benefit from direct instruction, and two say one-third have major problems but don't express a view on whether instruction would help.

Ten respondents believe that few if any of their students would benefit. Several reasons are given:

a. it's too late to remedy defects that arose out of long period of ineffective schooling.

b. doubtful of student motivation if no "credit" is attached.

c. doubtful of direct instuction not related to subject.

d. not the answer where poor expression is function of poor grasp of content.

e. lots of practice in reading and writing is probably more effective.

f. answer lies in more willingness amongst tutors to see effective student learning and articulation as part of their jobs.

g. it's futile until concept of standards returns to secondary schools.

The other 39 respondents offer no estimates.

4. Main Causes of Problems

Causes refer here to the general area of English expression and essay composition. No attempt is made to link specific causes with specific problems.

The causes cited are organized into five categories:

- Inadequate/insufficient pre-tertiary schooling
- University/staff factors
- Language/home background
- Cultural factors
- Student attitudes/understanding

Pre-tertiary schooling

This cause is cited most frequently (62%). Several reasons are given:

a. absence of suitable migrant English and remedial programmes.

b. failure of teachers to insist on correctness and accuracy.

c. failure of teachers to pin-point weaknesses and give follow-up advice, due partly to excessive teaching loads.

d. shortage of properly trained specialists and fact that teachers themselves are often poorly trained in these skills.

e. school English is too much "social comment" at expense of skills-based teaching.

f. lack of training/practice in critical-interpretative-analytical prose; limited experience with essays that draw on references and deal with abstact intellectual concepts.

g. lack of preparation for independent critical thought.

h. force-fed system of learning.

i. lack of serious assessment techniques.

j. lack of challenge and rigour in school programmes.

University/staff factors

a. low entrance requirements.

b. intake from less effective schools.

c. emphasis on content at expense of skills teaching.

d. staffs' failure to point out and advise on particular weaknesses.

e. staffs' failure to see effective student learning and articulation as part of their jobs.

f. staffs' failure to present material and expectations clearly.

Language/home background

a. non-English speaking or bilingual (often insufficient grasp of both languages).

b. home environment in which linguistic skills are neither encouraged nor appreciated.

Cultural factors

a. relative indifference of society to importance of language skills, both spoken and written.

b. excessive exposure to electronic media (especially television) that encourages passive learning.

c. low cultural value on non-prescribed wide reading of good literature which would feed and inspire writing or promotion of the idea of writing itself as a craft, a discipline and a liberating accomplishment.

Student attitudes/understanding

a. sheer carelessness, unwillingness to consult dictionary, edit work, care for presentation.

b. attitute that these skills are unimportant in comparison to getting essential content across.

c. absence of language appreciation and indifference to linguistic precision (near enough is good enough).

d. conceptual confusion and lack of knowledge of subject matter manifesting in poor expression and composition skills.

STUDENT SURVEY

Expression, Essay Writing, Study Skills

FOREWORD

Survey results are based on responses of first-year students from the Schools of Humanities, Social Sciences, Behavioural Sciences, Economics, Physical Sciences and Biological Sciences.

Responses have been organized and presented to speak largely for themselves. I believe that improved teaching-learning can be promoted by identifying more systematically students' views and impressions of their early tertiary experience.

Douglas Bate
School of Humanities
La Trobe University

CONTENTS

- Survey Questions 1
- Synopsis 2
- Survey Summary 3 - 9
- Survey Responses 10 - 91

To the Reader:

The main substance of this survey can be obtained by reading the synopsis and survey summary. The summary organizes responses into lists and categories for easy reading.

The actual (most unedited) survey responses are organized according to Schools. Time and interest permitting, you may wish to read some or all of these responses. Obviously, many of the students' comments elude capture in a summary. An alert reading will discern patterns, but overall value will likely depend on the reader's own creative thinking.

QUESTIONS

1. Are you finding your English expression and essay writing skills are adequate to the demands of university study? Yes ______ No _____. If not, what specific problems do you experience?

2. Do you believe you could benefit from direct instruction in these areas? Yes ______ No _____. If so, instruction in what skills would be most helpful to you?

3. If you are experiencing problems, what do you regard to be the main causes?

4. What are the differences in the essays you are required to write at university from those you wrote in the past? Do you receive sufficient guidance in making the transition?

5. In what ways have you had to adjust your expectations and assumptions about university study? Can you recommend ways in which the process might be made easier for first-year students?

6. What non-academic factors (positive or negative) do you believe most affect your academic performance?

7. Are you satisfied generally at this stage with your experience at university? What or why not?

SYNOPSIS

A total of 370 students (247 native; 123 non-native) responded to the survey: Humanities (126); Social Sciences (68); Behavioural Sciences (53); Economics (50); Physical Sciences (50); Biological Sciences (23).

Sample numbers vary for each question, since not all students answered all the questions. Moreover, there is variation in frequency of responses to specific questions across Schools. Obviously, not all questions are equally relevant to all courses of study. Physical and Biological Science are not represented here for questions 3, 4, 5 and 6, as a result of an insufficient number of responses to these questions.

Results of questions one and two are based on 370 responses from all six Schools. 73% of native speakers and 59% of non-native consider their skills are adequate to the demands of university study. Together, 69% of respondents believe their skills are adequate.

51% of native speakers and 65% of non-native believe they could benefit from direct instruction. Together, 56% believe they could benefit. As expected, non-native speakers are less confident of their skills than native speakers, and a greater percentage believe they could benefit from direct instruction. There are many students in both categories (native and non-native) who, while regarding their skills as adequate, believe they could benefit from instruction.

Results on causes of problems are based on 144 responses from four Schools. Causes located within the self (abilities, attitudes, skills) are cited most frequently (52%), followed by staff/course factors (21%), non-academic problems or pressures (15%) and pre-tertiary schooling (12%).

Results on the differences between university and past essays are based on 192 responses from four Schools. Views on differences are expressed by 180 respondents, while 12 consider there to be little or no difference. Of the 192 responses, 85 address the issue of guidance: of these, 55 consider that guidance is insufficient.

Results on adjusting expectations/assumptions about university study are based on 165 responses from four Schools. Coping with independence is cited most frequently (40%), following by study being more difficult than expected (10%), little or no adjustment (10%) and study being less difficult than expected (3%). Most of the others addressed themselves only to ways in which the transition could be made easier.

Questions six (non-academic factors) and seven (general satisfaction) are concerned with matters of larger contexts and morale as they affect academic performance. Results of question six are based on 191 responses from four Schools. Negative factors get more emphasis; twelve factors are cited in the Survey Summary. Results to question seven are based on 302 responses from the six Schools. Almost 3/4 of respondents say they are generally satisfied with their university experience.

Note: percentages are close approximations.

SURVEY SUMMARY

A. QUESTIONS ONE AND TWO

1. **Are you finding your English expression and essay writing skills are adequate to the demands of university study? If not, what specific problems do you experience?**

2. **Do you believe you could benefit from direct instruction in these areas? If so, instruction in what specific skills would be most helpful to you?**

Results are drawn from 370 responses: Humanities (126); Social Sciences (68); Behavioural Sciences (53); Economics (50); Physical Sciences (50); Biological Sciences (23). Of these, 247 are native speakers; 123 are non-native speakers.

Humanities

Question One:	Yes: 86	(29 non-native)
	No: 40	(17 non-native)
Question Two:	Yes: 78	(31 non-native)
	No: 48	(14 non-native)

Social Sciences

Question One:	Yes: 37	(9 non-native)
	No: 31	(8 non-native)
Question Two:	Yes: 44	(13 non-native)
	No: 24	(5 non-native)

Behavioural Sciences

Question One:	Yes: 39	(2 non-native)
	No: 14	(2 non-native)
Question Two:	Yes: 30	(3 non-native)
	No: 23	(1 non-native)

Economics

Question One:	Yes: 30	(11 non-native)
	No: 20	(15 non-native)
Question Two:	Yes: 29	(16 non-native)
	No: 21	(10 non-native)

Physical Sciences

Question One:	Yes: 44	(19 non-native)
	No: 6	(5 non-native)
Question Two:	Yes: 17	(13 non-native)
	No: 33	(11 non-native)

Biological Sciences

Question One:	Yes: 19	(3 non-native)
	No: 4	(3 non-native)
Question Two:	Yes: 9	(4 non-native)
	No. 14	(2 non-native)

TOTALS

Question One:	Native-	73% Yes, skills adequate 27% No, skills not adequate
	Non-native-	59% Yes, skills adequate 41% No, skills not adequate
	Together-	69% Yes, skills adequate 31% No, skills not adequate
Question Two:	Native-	51% Yes, could benefit 49% No, couldn't benefit
	Non-native-	65% Yes, could benefit 35% No, couldn't benefit
	Together-	56% Yes, could benefit 44% No, couldn't benefit

Skills

Frequently cited expression problems are: grammar, syntax, vocabulary, spelling, verbosity, style, subject terminology. Frequently cited problems of essay writing are: planning, organization, logical sequencing, constructing an argument, interpreting and analyzing questions, research skills and referencing.

Many students have difficulty articulating specific problems and skills, hence phrases like: not intellectual or sophisticated enough; how to express ideas clearly and correctly; what information to include and when to include it; what is expected generally and in particular subjects; how to be critical and analytical, etc.

B. QUESTION THREE

Q - If you are experiencing problems, what do you regard to be the main causes?

These results are based on 144 responses from Humanities, Social Sciences, Behavioural Sciences, and Economics. Causes are organized into four categories in order of frequency cited.

1. Self (52%)
2. Staff/Course Factors (21%)
3. Non-academic Problems/Pressures (15%)
4. Pre-tertiary Schooling (12%)

Self

a. lack of experience/practice;
b. lack of confidence;
c. carelessness/failure to edit;
d. lack of organization/application, concentration;
e. poor time management;
f. poor study skills;
g. insufficient reading experience/speed;
h. lack of motivation/incentive;
i. lack of knowledge in subject matter;
j. no effort to improve in problem areas;
k. inability to adapt to tertiary study/writing requirements;
l. non-English speaking background.

Many students, incidentally, seemed unable to distinguish between cause and problem, for example: the cause of my problem is poor expression skills.

Staff/Course Factors

a. unclear expectations;
b. insufficient guidance for writing in particular subjects - different standards in different subjects;
c. breadth of topics covered;
d. excessive work loads;
e. lectures delivered too quickly;
f. no guidance on how to improve after essays returned;
g. little guidance on what to concentrate on in reading;
h. insufficient explanation of assignments;
i. guidance on essay content too vague;
j. tertiary essay skills not taught;
k. scarcity of source materials;
l. unapproachable tutors.

Non-Academic Factors

a. time and distance of travelling;
b. home duties and family demands;
c. financial problems;
d. part-time or full-time job pressures;
e. emotional problems;
f. inadequate social network and support

Pre-tertiary Schooling

a. insufficient instruction in these skills;
b. subject types not part of schooling;
c. different systems of teaching;
d. different methods of study and writing

C. QUESTION FOUR

Q - **What are the differences in the essays you are required to write at university from those you wrote in the past? Do you receive sufficient guidance in making the transition?**

These results are based on 192 responses from Humanities, Social Sciences, Behavioural Sciences, and Economics. Of these, 85 students responded to the issue of guidance.

Insufficient Guidance: 55
Sufficent Guidance: 30

Some 180 respondents expressed some view on the differences, while twelve considered there to be little or no difference.

Differences (refer to university essays)

a. longer, more detailed and complex, require more thought;
b. more and wider reading and research;
c. more emphasis on discerning arguments and critically analyzing sources;
d. more marks hinge on fewer essays;
e. greater role in developing arguments, using evidence and referencing;
f. more emphasis on focus - can't stray, digress or pad.
g. more depth, less time, more detailed planning required;
h. more scope/variety of essay options, less specific topics and guidelines;
i. higher standard expected in all matters of expression and construction;
j. more initiative and independence required;
k. more specific requirements in format/presentation;
l. less help/guidance after essays returned, less teacher contact;
m. content topics covered much more quickly in class:
n. different approaches/styles required in different subjects;
o. more research responsibility, more mindful of quotations and plagiarism;

p. less outlining (and handouts) on references and information, pressure to pass students leads to more force feeding at secondary level, hence inadequate development of independent learning skills;
q. less knowledge/guidance on what is expected - well directed on what to write about at secondary school;
r. more staff involved with each subject - difficult to adjust to varying expectation and standards.

D. QUESTION FIVE

Q - In what ways have you had to adjust your expectations and assumptions about university study? Can you recommend ways in which the process might be made easier for first-year students?

Results are based on 165 responses from Humanities, Social Sciences, Behavioural Sciences, and Economics.

1. Coping with independence: (40%)
2. Study more difficult/higher expectations: (10%)
3. Study less difficult/lower expectations: (3%)
4. Little or no adjustment: (10%)
5. Other: mostly recommendations for making transitions easier for first-year students.

Coping with Independence

a. less dependence on teachers/less contact;
b. optional class attendance;
c. time-study management/self organization;
d. less guidance before, during and after assignments;
e. expectations not spelling out;
f. need for regular and consistent study;
g. need for self-motivation, self-discipline, work initiative;
h. need to balance social life with academic demands

Recommendations for Transition

a. H.S.C. students should visit the university more often, sit in classes become familiar with campus, talk to students. See some normal days, not just orientation day;
b. prospective students should perhaps submit a preliminary essay for feedback;
c. expand orientation sessions to specific schools;
d. make sure that all students are aware of extra help available;
e. stress early the implications of independence in study, the need to organize days and plan study;
f. give more practice essays before marking;
g. provide more social activities from tutorial base to break down inhibitions;
h. stress the need to start studying early in first term;
i. give more instruction into the "thinking" of a subject;
j. give sessions to help draw out shy students, build confidence, improve

expression, especially for foreign students;

k. tell students at beginning what is actually expected and provide regular extra help for those whose problems persist;
l. stress need for a dedicated attitude and active plan of attack;
m. emphasize value of working for a time before entering university in appropriate cases;
n. advise students to change subjects or tutors if either inhibits or restricts learning;
o. give more advice on specific study skills and a perspective on how thorough study should be, what priorities should be given to what;
p. provide less stringent timetables on choices of lectures and tutorials;
q. give more emphasis to verbal assessment;
r. stress that passing H.S.C. is not a signal to "relax"

E. QUESTION SIX

Q - What non-academic factors (positive or negative) most affect your academic performance?

Results are based on 191 responses from Humanities, Social Sciences, Behavioural Sciences, Economics. Respondents place more emphasis on "negative" influences, hence the following "Dirty Dozen", in rough order of frequency mentioned.

1. Social Life: excessive socializing undermines study time, concentration, etc. However, several find in socializing and friendships a helpful source of relaxation, esprit de corps, etc.

2. Domestic Duties/Family Commitments: time and energy devoted to running a household, raising children, keeping harmonious relationships with spouses, etc., leave academic demands a burden.

3. Family Life: pressure from parents, disharmonious relationships, conflicting interest, etc. A considerable minority, however, find positive family support and encouragement an important factor in the academic challenges.

4. Part-Time or Full-Time Jobs: time and energy devoted to making a living make it difficult to fit in studying.

5. Emotional Problems: stress, anxiety, loneliness, depression, low confidence undermine study and concentration.

6. Financial Worries: how to make ends meet while studying ship-building techniques in the middle of the 14th century.

7. Outside Interest/Hobbies: mostly sport, clubs, etc., cutting into study time. Some, of course, find these a valuable addition to study, especially if they complement study.

8. Travelling Time: hours spend on buses, trains, in cars, etc., leaving one tired or anxious.

9. Motivation Level: usually little connection between what one wants, loves, etc., and what one finds oneself doing.

10. Interest in Subjects: low interest undermines concentration and motivation.

11. Teacher-Study Interaction: disheartening quality of subject-object alienation.

12. Drugs/Alcohol: excess, no doubt in reaction to one, some or all of the above.

F. QUESTION SEVEN

Q - Are you satisfied generally at this stage with your experience at university?

Results are based on 302 responses:

Humanities	Yes (90)	No (28)
Social Sciences	Yes (41)	No (18)
Behavioural Sciences	Yes (32)	No (14)
Economics	Yes (20)	No (8)
Physical Sciences	Yes (23)	No (9)
Biological Sciences	Yes (14)	No (5)

TOTALS

Yes: (73%)

No: (27%)

Note: Percentages in this summary are close approximations.

BUSINESS & GOVERNMENT SURVEY

Graduates' Communication/Literacy Skills

FOREWORD

This survey obtains a university-wide sample of staff views on: the main problems in students' English expression and essay composition skills; the estimated percentages of students who could benefit from direct instruction; the main causes behind the problems.

Responses have been organized and presented to speak largely for themselves. I believe it is of implicit value to know what views are held, to discern patterns and consensus. What is held to be true is more a concern here than the extent to which beliefs reflect the truth. One can better pursue the latter once the former is established beyond unsystematic hearsay and speculation.

Douglas Bate
School of Humanities
La Trobe University

CONTENTS

- Survey Sample 1
- Survey Summary 2 - 5
- Survey Responses 6 - 26

Note on contents:

The survey summary categorizes responses for a quick grasp of the survey's substance. Time and interest permitting, you may wish to read through some or all of the actual survey responses. They include interesting comments not categorized in the summary. Responses are organized according to Schools or Departments and give answers to the following specific questions:

(1) What do you believe to be the main problems students experience in English expression and essay composition? What percentage of your students do you believe could benefit from direct instruction in these areas?

(2) What do you regard as the main causes behind these problems?

Responses to question (3), concerned with special information and skills for writing in particular disciplines, have not been included. That information is still being considered for its potention contribution to a student manual to be used in the Humanities Language Development Programme.

Surveys of staff, students, and business-government organizations will contribute to a report to the School of Humanities Literacy Committee.

SURVEY QUESTIONS

1. What are the communication skills most important for a graduate to have upon entering careers in business and government?

2. In what situations (applications, interviews, reports, letters, memoranda, meetings, formal presentations, using the telephone, etc.) do inadequacies in graduates' communication/literacy skills most commonly occur? Please be as specific as possible about the nature of these inadequacies.

3. How do graduates' communication/literacy skills generally compare with those of employees without tertiary qualifications?

4. What do you believe are the most commonly held views on the causes of inadequate communication/literacy skills amongst employees?

5. Do you believe that it is generally accepted amongst employers that there is a direct relationship between efficiency/productivity and sound literacy skills? If so, why? If not, why?

6. What is your opinion of the effectiveness of conventional classroom courses in Business English/Report and Letter Writing? Do you know of other approaches to this type of training? Are they effective?

7. In what ways do you believe universities might better develop in graduates the communication/literacy skills required by government and industry, given that to some degree the development of such skills will occur later (i.e. within the context of a specific job and organization)?

8. Additional Comments.

SYNOPSIS

The communication skills most important for graduates to have upon entering careers in business and government are (in order of frequency mentioned): oral expression (29); written expression (21); interpersonal communication (13); report and letter writing (11); effective listening (8); effective reading (2).

Inadequacies in graduates' communication/literacy skills most commonly occur in: reports-letters-memoranda (20); applications (12); interviews (8); telephone conversations (8); meetings-formal presentations (5). Inadequacies, then, are apparently more noticeable in written contexts (32) than in oral contexts (21).

However, graduates' skills compare favourably to those of employees without tertiary qualifications: superior (21); little or no difference (7); too varied to generalize (6). One respondent feels graduates are marginally worse, but only in terms of expected standards.

Respondents believe that employers' most commonly held views suggest that causes of inadequate communication/literacy skills amongst employees are to be found in: primary and/or secondary education (27); university education (6); business-government organizations (6); home and/or ethnic background (3); personal inhibition, shyness, lack of confidence (3). The influences of television viewing and computer technology were mentioned only once.

In the respondents' views, employers do believe there is a direct relationship between sound literacy skills and efficiency-productivity: yes (33); no (7). These figures exceed the 38 replies because some answered both "yes" and "no" in the course of making qualifications.

Conventional classroom courses in Business English/Report and Letter Writing are regarded as: beneficial (25); not beneficial (5). No respondents indicate knowledge of distinctly different approaches to this kind of training. However, several references are made to training which supplements classroom courses.

Most respondents suggest ways in which universities might better develop in graduates the communication/literacy skills required by business and government: (31). Others believe that universities ought not to be involved in this sort of training: (7).

SUMMARY LISTS

(1) **What are the communication skills most important for a graduate to have upon entering careers in business and government?**

In order of frequency mentioned:

A. Oral Expression Skills (29)
B. Written Expression Skills (21)
C. Interpersonal Communication Skills (13)
D. Report and Letter Writing Skills (11)
E. Listening Skills (8)
F. Reading Skills (2)

Oral Expression Skills

1. Grammatically correct speech;
2. Clear, accurate concise speech that gets to the point;
3. Speech free of slang, jargon, esoteric and pompous language;
4. Variety of speech styles to suit one's purposes and listeners.

Written Expression Skills

1. Correct grammar and punctuation;
2. Clear, accurate and concise writing;
3. Writing free of slang, jargon, esoteric and pompous language;
4. Accurate spelling;
5. Variety of writing styles to suit one's purposes and readers.

Interpersonal Communication Skills

1. Assess most beneficial approach to aggressive and defensive reactions;
2. Communicate in manner which is assertive without being aggressive, speak and write plainly, even "matter of factly" without being rude or talking down;
3. Judge when to talk and when to listen;
4. Be assertive in making needs known and requesting information for adjusting to new role;
5. Relate to people at all levels of organization and be flexible in communication styles;
6. Meet people properly and with confidence;
7. Understand another person's viewpoint and reasoning;
8. Exercise effective questioning techniques;
9. Be able to resolve conflicts;
10. Use and interpret body language effectively.

Report and Letter Writing Skills

1. Ability to construct different kinds of reports and letters in manner appropriate to subject matter and audience;
2. Ability to think through an issue or proposal, draw conclusions and make recommendations;
3. Analytical ability to grasp key issues and "talk net";
4. Ability to make shift from lengthy academic analytical-descriptive writing to succinct information based writing when necessary;
5. Ability to present arguments and information logically.

Listening Skills

1. Demonstrate an understanding by paraphrasing information and arguments and reciting instructions;
2. Check that meanings are received as intended;
3. Listen actively rather than passively.

Reading Skills (no elaboration)

(2) In what situation (applications, interviews, reports, letters, memoranda, meetings, formal presentations, telephone, etc.) do inadequacies in graduates' communication/literacy skills most commonly occur?

In order of frequency mentioned:

A. Reports/Letters/Memoranda (20)
B. Applications (12)
C. Interviews (8)
D. Telephone (8)
E. Meetings/Formal Presentations (5)

Written context: (32)
Oral context: (21)

Reports/Letters/Memoranda

1. Ignorance of formats and structures;
2. Poor grammar, syntax, punctuation, spelling, paragraphing;
3. Inability to be brief, logical and precise in plain, readable English;
4. Excessive use of jargon and esoteric language;
5. Inability to distinguish minor from major points and condense into critical factors;
6. Inability to express clearly a point of view or compose a report that reaches logical conclusions;
7. Tendency to present subjective, speculative arguments;
8. Tendency to discuss/debate along academic lines rather than within the specific government/industry contexts;
9. Failure to use language of common courtesy.

Applications

1. Illegible signatures, addresses omitted, letters not signed;
2. Failure to understand questions;
3. Poor grammar, syntax, punctuation, spelling, paragraphing;
4. Inadequate letter format;
5. Inability to tailor application to address specific position (often life histories instead of relevant experience and skills).

Interviews

1. Poor grammar and excessive use of colloquial language;
2. Poor eye contact;
3. Too much talking; not enough listening;
4. Insufficient questioning;
5. Explanations about oneself and one's skills, ambitions, plans, etc. are not effectively communicated;
6. Inability to portray a "hungry" attitude and an absolute lack of business awareness;
7. Need for more thorough preparations and more confidence.

Telephone

1. Lack of planning before calling, e.g., noting down main questions and points in a logical order;
2. Assuming that the other is doing nothing when ringing;
3. Manner too hasty and formal;
4. Lack of confidence;
5. Absence of basic good manners and failure to adopt a "professional" approach.

Meetings/Formal Presentations

1. Lack of public speaking skills in preparation and presentation;
2. Lack of confidence in meeting and talking with other people;
3. Ignorance of group member behaviour;
4. Difficulties in training of staff or client personnel.

(3) How do graduates' communication/literacy skills generally compare with those of employees without tertiary qualifications?

In order of frequency mentioned:

A. Compare Favourably (21)
B. Little or no Difference (7)
C. Too Varied to Generalize (6)

Compare Favourably

1. In conceptual thinking, clarity of thought, following through an idea, analyzing issues;
2. In written and oral skills;
3. In listening effectively;
4. In sensitivity to non-verbal communication;
5. In research skills;
6. In communication confidence;
7. In arguing and persuading.

Little or no Difference (No elaboration)

Too Varied to Generalize

1. Differences not so apparent at higher levels of organizations;
2. Graduates sometimes less adaptable than those with lower academic qualifications who have relied more on experiential learning on the job;
3. Quality of secondary education can have significant bearing;
4. Advantages for those graduates who have studied professional writing;
5. Depends partly on ability to learn specific forms of written communication and interpret unfamiliar formats;
6. Often those highly numerate are poor communicators;
7. Depends very much on the individual (can vary from excellent to incredibly bad).

(4) What do you believe are employers' most commonly held views on the causes of inadequate communication/literacy skills amongst employees?

In order of frequency mentioned:

A. Primary and/or Secondary School Education (27)
B. University Education (6)
C. Business/Government Organizations (6)
D. Home and/or Ethnic Background (3)
E. Personal Inhibition, Shyness, Lack of Confidence (3)

Primary and/or Secondary School Education

1. Not enough emphasis on 3 R's;
2. Too much emphasis on experimental forms of teaching;
3. Move from traditional basics to free expression;
4. Downgrading of tough subjects in place of impractical subjects;
5. Content-based emphasis at expense of skill-based teaching;
6. Too narrow development of communication skills;
7. Low priority to debate and public speaking skills;
8. Little or no specific letter/report writing taught;
9. Absence of rigor in formal education, attitude that "near enough is good enough".
10. Lack of practical experience.

University Education

1. No specific letter/report writing skills taught;
2. Too little practical application of subjects;
3. Difficulty adapting from university communication contexts to business/government contexts;
4. Emphasis on content at expense of skills teaching;
5. Downgrading of tough subjects. (Equality in all things at all times).

Business/Government Organizations

1. Too little formal training in these skills;
2. Too little personal tuition and experience;
3. Too little feedback from supervisors as to performance in written/oral communication;
4. Insensitivity to non-verbal communications;
5. Written messages done in haste;
6. Ineffective reading and interpreting of written messages;
7. No testing of written skills prior to appointment;
8. No testing of abilities in work situation;
9. Lack of understanding others' functions within organization (value of inter-departmental meetings);
10. Lack of communication in the first instance.

D and E (no elaboration)

(5) **Do you believe that it is generally accepted amongst employers that there is a direct relationship between efficiency/productivity and sound literacy skills?**

A. Yes (33)
B. No (7)

(Exceeds 38 replies because some answered yes and no in qualifying their answers.)

Yes

1. Though importance varies according to the kind of organization and the employee's function within it;
2. Confusion, misinterpretation, correction and rewriting waste time, cost money and lead to more mistakes and more correspondence;
3. There is an assumption that deficient literacy skills indicate deficient thinking;
4. Weaknesses and errors create bad impression with public and other organizations;
5. More confidence in those with competence;
6. Sound skills alone won't ensure total efficiency/productivity, but they can't be achieved without them;
7. Especially in government and other service or labor-intensive industries where main inputs and outputs are information and communication;
8. Business communication is related to obtaining information for a specific need. Time-effort and quality of contents have a major impact;
9. The lifeblood of an organization is good communication within hierarchical structure;
10. It's when a specialist graduate aspires to management areas remote from degree-based skill that literacy skills start to become crucial;
11. Reliance on information in written forms (both paper and electronic) is growing;
12. With increasing involvement in decision making at variety of levels comes need for greater ability in information processing;
13. Crucial in jobs where ability to comprehend written matter forms basis for action or advice;
14. Especially when the only means by which senior managers, other companies and different sectors judge an individual or the organization is through written work.

No

1. If senior positions have highly literate secretaries who can correct, modify and restructure written communication;
2. For those jobs where lack of written expression skills can be overlooked provided task is completed or general thrust of message is understood;
3. Some people who cannot communicate with others can still be productive and efficient in their own areas of responsibility;
4. Not when reports are judged on content alone;
5. Efficiency depends more on organizational skills, technical ability and time management;
6. In some work categories, job satisfaction and motivation have more influence than do literacy skills;
7. Most employers are not good communicators themselves and hence never know how much it is costing them.

(6) What is your opinion of the effectiveness of conventional classroom courses in Business English/Report and Letter Writing? Do you know of other approaches to this type of training? Are they effective?

A. Beneficial (25)
B. Not Beneficial (5)

Beneficial

1. Providing that participants already possess the basics of correct oral and written expression;
2. As additional training but do not remedy the basic lack of correct English skills;
3. But basics of expression are almost impossible to convey to those who failed to learn them in earlier stages of education ... though if supervisor can critically evaluate work and has time to explain, then some improvement can result;
4. They provide a good base from which application and style can vary with experience;
5. For polishing existing skills rather than teaching new ones;
6. Although students have no concept of the frequency that they will be asked to use these skills;
7. If lecture type training is immediately followed by small tutorial discussion with high degree of interaction;
8. If course content reflects real work situation;
9. If complemented by high volume of practical experience under guidance of personal tutor (manager, supervisor, external consultant, etc.);
10. If employee is highly motivated and sees participation in course as chance to help fulfil career ambitions;
11. If introduced on top-down basis with chief executive on first course to set standard thereafter and if course brings rewards and is non-threatening;
12. If supervisor has ability and willingness to supplement formal coursework with on-the-job tutoring;
13. If instructor is highly literate and has expertise;
14. In-house workshops increase motivation when instruction is specifically tailored to needs of individuals and organization;
15. But would benefit from greater use of organizational communication research (types of communication in different organizations, organizational roles, its context in the environment).

Not Beneficial

1. Traditional measures are not working;
2. Limited because people take any new learned behaviours back into work environment which does not reinforce them;
3. Because basic English competence is too often lacking;
4. Not a substitute for intensive on-the-job training by a good supervisor (but most haven't the time and skills).

Other Approaches

None mentioned specifically, though certain supplementary activities, like follow-up on-the-job supervision, provide instruction that goes beyond a traditional classroom course.

(7) **In what ways do you believe universities might better develop in graduates the communication/literacy skills required by government and industry, given that to some degree the development of such skills will occur later (i.e. within the context of a specific job and organization)?**

1. Make a core communications skills subject compulsory unit in basic degree;
2. Provide English expression instruction to students in all faculties;
3. Provide instruction in letter and report writing;
4. Specific business and government related subjects could be introduced into existing Arts courses to open employment options for generalist graduates;
5. Test potential undergraduates before entry;
6. Give as much attention to the skills of expression as is given to content;
7. Develop amongst academic staff more awareness about practical writing skills;
8. Give more emphasis to public speaking and debating;
9. More action research instead of purely descriptive-analytical papers;
10. More project/report work and less examination;
11. Set business oriented written projects, especially on location;
12. Case studies and some "real-life"" interaction with industry;
13. Introduce analysis of actual business papers and reports;
14. Involve guest speakers from business and government (executives and recent graduates);
15. Participation of managers from business and government in workshops and sections of courses;
16. Teach listening skills, group dynamics, sensitivity to non-verbal languages;
17. Make students with weaknesses aware of them so that there is motivation to improve;
18. Provide remedial help to those who need it;
19. Give more work-experience training;
20. Integrate careers/appointments expertise in design and conduct of various course options across faculties with respect to communication skills;
21. Encourage tutors to keep their fingers on the pulse of general business activity by visiting business and government, speaking with employer groups to understand what's required of graduates (or gain some industry experience themselves);
22. Research communication effectiveness along variety of organizational dimensions and use this as a basis for expanding the experience of students while in courses;
23. Recognize the role of self-esteem in risk taking and experimenting with various forms of communication in new situations;
24. Set and maintain literacy standards on a day-to-day basis through all subjects. Students best learn by continuous exposure to good English and by vigilant monitoring by all instructors.

Six respondents stated that universities should not be involved in communication/literacy skills instruction.

1. Communication/literacy skills of graduates are already adequate;
2. Since problems begin in early education, universities are unlikely to contribute a generalized solution to these problems;
3. Universities should refuse entry to students who (a) fail a preliminary entrance test or (b) score below a certain level in H.S.C. English;
4. Those who cannot express themselves should fail H.S.C. in the first place;

5. A reasonable communication/literacy skills standard is not required in some faculties;
6. There is ample scope within pre-tertiary education for students to develop communication/literacy skills. The development of these skills will occur within the context of specific jobs ... it would be impractical for a university to endeavour to cater for all areas of employment ... it's up to the individual to adapt to a particular organization once there.

Concluding Comments

The survey questionnaire was designed to elicit a wide range of views without the constraint of predetermined options at every step. Responses have been organized and presented to speak largely for themselves. It is of implicit value to know the views of personnel and training officers, who can have considerable influence on the career prospects of graduates.

It is hoped that this survey provides a useful reference for creative discussion amongst the School's Literacy Committee members. Moreover, it is trusted that contributors themselves will find some value in considering their views collectively. Should enhanced communication occur between academics and employers, so much the better.

Surveys concerning matters of communication/literacy skills have also been conducted amongst academics and students at the University. The three surveys together will contribute to the report to the Literacy Committee early in the year.

However, these survey views prompt one observation at this stage. Respondents indicate that inadequacies in graduates' skills are often evidenced in written contexts. While there may be explanations, there is little excuse for university students completing their studies with patterns of weakness in basic expression and composition skills.

Experience tells us that such residual weaknesses can be precisely identified and overcome in adults who do not master these skills in earlier schooling. What we need is a broader strategy to catch these problems before they carry over into career contexts.

This is especially so when in-house training programs and conventional courses often neglect (or despair of) making provision for teaching correct and effective English per se. The acquisition of new forms of communication is undermined by the persistence of old problems in the "mechanics".

At the very least, we should provide an opportunity for those of our students heading toward careers in business and government to write a practical report prior to graduation. It is curious that transition-oriented instruction of this sort has not been offered to university students. Certainly this would often leave them disadvantaged in comparison to graduates emerging from more practical career directed courses.

A practical step in this direction is well within our capacity. Special consideration might be given to a joint project involving Humanities, the Careers Advisory Service and interested personnel/training officers. For example: the Careers Advisory Service could help co-ordinate the right student participants and government/business contacts. Some on-location experience could inform the students' reports. Training and personnel officers could comment briefly on form and content. English and composition skills could be assessed and improved through our Language Development Program. If the principle of sharing expertise through co-operative effort is accepted, the details of practice would follow in time.

In any case, many more of our final-year students might benefit from an assessment of their essays, which has the single purpose of catching basic, residual English weaknesses per se prior to their entering the workforce. This has been done successfuly through a segment of the Humanities program, but with a very limited number of students.

Appendix 11

Survey Respondents

Ansett Airlines of Australia
Arthur Anderson & Company
Arthur Young & Company
B.H.P. Company Limited
B.P. Australia Limited
Cadbury Schweppes Party Limited
Commonwealth Banking Corporation
C.S.I.R.O.
Deloitte, Haskins & Sells
Department of Community Welfare Services
Department of Finance
Department of Housing and Construction
Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs
Department of Labor and Industry
Ernst & Whinney
General Motors Holden
Hewlett Packard
I.B.M. Australia Limited
I.C.I. Australia Limited
Kodak Pty Limited
Ministry of Consumer Affairs
Melbourne & Metropolitan Board of Works
National Australia Bank
Nissan Motor Company
Norwich Union Insurance Society
Overseas Service Bureau
Peat, Marwick, Mitchell & Company
Price Waterhouse
Priestly & Morris Services
Qantas Airways
State Bank of Victoria
State Law Offices
Telecom Australia
Touche Ross & Company
Trans Australia Airways
Victoria Police
Woolworths Limited

'IMPROVING ACCESS TO TERTIARY EDUCATION'

VIC BEASLEY

Vic Beasley, B.A.(History/English), B.Ec., B.A.(Psychology), is a Transition Counsellor at the Flinders University of South Australia. He has responsibility for and a special interest in the transition of students, wherever they come from, into University.

His position involves liaison with secondary students, especially school leavers; organising for Orientation and Open Days; and, earlier, included convening the Handicapped Persons Committee which he set up. He has taught at all levels from Grade 1 to First Year at University, and given a Masters' Course.

He is a feminist psychologist: and has marched under the banner on International Women's Day.

IMPROVING ACCESS TO TERTIARY EDUCATION

In an article in "The National Times" of November 9, 1981, Susan Geason wrote: "The spirit of the sixties isn't dead in all universities. There are still people trying to open up higher education to those with brains and a strong desire to get out from under." She went on to describe the Transitional Year Program begun by Canada's University of Toronto in the early seventies, and added, "The closest any Australian university comes to such a program is Newcastle's Open Foundation Course."

In 1982 it was proposed that Flinders University develop an open foundation course. A short pilot course of six weeks duration was subsequently mounted in the third term of 1983. It consisted of the following topics.

1. An introduction to the Study of Biological Sciences.
2. Humanities General Foundation and Study Skills.
3. An Introduction to Mathematics.
4. An Introduction to the Study of the Social Sciences.
5. An Introduction to Twentieth Century Fiction.

The response was greater than anticipated. Table 1 shows the numbers of people who:

1. applied for each topic;
2. were enrolled in each topic;
3. attended the first session of each topic;
4. attended the last session of each topic;
5. subsequently applied for admission to the University under the Mature Entry Scheme.

TABLE 1: Applications, Enrolments and Attendances

Topic	App.	Enrl.	Session 1	Session 6	M.E. Apps.
Biol Sciences	51	40	32	8	6
Humanities	112	80	58	24	16
Mathematics	48	48	34	12	6
Social Sciences	147	103	67	46	23
20th Cent. Fict.	46	40	32	15	6
TOTAL*	405	311	223	105	53

* A total of 266 people applied for admission to the Foundation Course. Many applied for more than one topic. The totals in columns 1-4 therefore involve double counting.

This response to a brief period of publicity suggests that there is a strong demand within the community for a university based foundation course. Several topic organisers were concerned that they could not provide a suitable learning environment for the large numbers who had applied to enrol in their topics. Consequently applicants could not be admitted to every topic for which they applied, though every applicant was enrolled in at least one topic.

Of the 311 enrolments there were 223 first session attendances (72% of enrolments) and 105 last session attendances (34% of enrolments and 47% of those who attended the first session). Of the 266 persons who applied to undertake some part of the Foundation Course, 53 (20%) subsequently applied for admission to an undergraduate degree programme by way of the Mature Entry Scheme.

REASONS FOR ENROLLING IN THE FOUNDATION COURSE

In order to form some impression of why people might choose to apply for admission to a university-based foundation course, each applicant was sent a short pre-course questionnaire, one item of which asked: "What is the main thing(s) you hope to gain from taking part in the course?" The 84 people who responded made a total of 116 responses to this question. Table 2 shows the frequency with which particular objectives were mentioned.

TABLE 2: Objectives of Foundation Course Students

Objective	Frequency
To judge my ability to cope with university studies	41
To broaden my outlook	22
To obtain information about university courses and their requirements	20
To increase confidence in my ability to cope with university studies	11
To improve my study skills	7
To obtain more satisfying employment	6
Enjoyment	5
Other	4
	116

It appears that most of these respondents wished ultimately to undertake university studies. They hoped that the Foundation Course would allow them to judge their capacity to cope with university studies and/or would increase this capacity to cope with such studies. They hoped that it would increase confidence in their intellectual ability and improve their knowledge about university courses. A significant number (23% of all responses) wanted either to broaden their outlook or to gain enjoyment from the course,suggesting that for many the course was seen to have intrinsic value independent of its providing a new form of access to higher education.

The following quotations give a better picture of what applicants were seeking.

Judging ability to cope with university studies

"An indication of whether this is beyond my grasp or worth undertaking."

"To evaluate my ability to cope with study and run a family and home."

"Insight into what level of work is required."

"Whether I am capable of study after such a long time."

"I've been in Australia for one year and I do not know exactly if my English is good enough."

"To get the 'feel' of a part of university life."

"Whether I can apply myself to study in the manner required."

"An evaluation of my ability to study profitably and maybe even enjoyably."

"To prove to myself that despite a totally inadequate formal education, I can cope with university studies as my children have done."

"To satisfy a desire for tertiary education hoped for but unfulfilled in my youth."

Obtaining information about courses and their requirements

"To discover my preferences among the 'branches' of Social Sciences."

"Relationship between lecturer and student in an academic environment."

"A greater understanding of the requirements of university life e.g. lectures, essays, library."

"Some knowledge of lecture and study routines and what will be expected of me."

"Knowledge of structure and content of a Uni course/lecture system."

"A general overview of what is available to mature age students."

"To get an insight and grounding in the subjects I hope to study in the future."

Increasing confidence in intellectual ability

"Confidence to feed my present enthusiasm for learning."

"Confidence - I would like to continue to study."

"To gain confidence in my abilities and the courage to attend university full time."

"The confidence to apply for university entrance."

"To become familiar with the university so I will feel more at ease if I am accepted."

Improving study skills

"Acquisition of study skills."

"Learn study techniques and how to write essays (always my weak point)."

"Study skills and a clear perception of what is required of me and how to product the result."

"Essay writing and quick note-taking."

"To be able to write clear and concise essays, bibliography inclusive, and to improve on my command of English language."

Broadening outlook

"Rejuvenate a tired brain."

"Become more aware of others' points of view."

"To broaden my outlook on life."

"To awake a part of my brain which has been stagnating for many years."

"Opening new interests."

"To learn about things I do not know about."

"I desire to keep my mind active. Forced to retire at 65 years of age, I feel that I have many years of useful life yet, with the hope that I may still contribute something of value to society."

"To understand better the complexities of the age we live in, to assess and make judgements."

"To be better informed in order to maintain an interest in Art, Politics and Economics."

"To be a more informed person."

"Having lost my husband less than one year age, I feel that I have to restructure my life in order not to dwell on the past."

"Obtain interest and stimuli for a mentally active retirement."

"To improve my mind, my perception, and to be in a position to take control over the course of my life."

"Understand changes cocurring in society and take some small part in influencing those about me to adapt to those changes."

"To obtain self-satisfaction as I am not ready for the slag heap."

Obtaining employment

"To make me more qualified to pursue a more meaningful and satisfying role of employment."

"Create better career opportunities."

"Possible new line of employment."

"Direction and advice about career opportunities/ possibilities centred around the Biological Sciences."

A PROFILE OF STUDENT PARTICIPANTS

Student participants were also mailed a brief post-course questionnaire. Sixty two responses were received. These responses give some interesting insights into the kinds of students attracted into the Foundation Course and the ways in which they viewed the course.

The age of respondents ranged from 21 years to 74 years; their average age was 41.3 years. This compared with mature age entrants over the period 1974-1983 whose ages ranged from 20 years to 65 years and whose average age was 30.8 years. It might be that the Foundation Course will attract somewhat older students than has the Mature Entry Scheme.

Respondents also indicated how many years since they had last studied formally. That period ranged from 0 years to 46 years; the average period was 16.3 years.

Not only was there great variation in the length of time since these people had last undertaken some form of study, there were also great difference in the levels at which they had previously studied ranging from a person who had last studied at first year high school level forty years before to one who had undertaken university studies the previous year. Ten people (16.4%) had previously studied at tertiary level, six of these having undertaken teacher training. Twenty seven people (44.3%) had undertaken post secondary studies in a wide variety of certificate level courses, the most common being nursing (ten persons). A further 24 persons (39.3%) had previously studied at secondary level, most having reached either year 10 or year 11 level.

It is clear that the Foundation Course attracted people with very varied educational backgrounds. This is likely to present one of the major challenges to those mounting such a course.

A major objective of the Foundation Course was to provide a means of access to university education for adults who would not otherwise have considered this possible. It was to be a mechanism whereby inequalities in educational opportunity might be redressed. This was based upon the belief that there are many talented people in our community whose previous experiences cause them to feel alienated from higher education, and that such a situation represents a loss both to those individuals and to the community. The Foundation Course then has sought to give doubtful, unconfident or disadvantaged people the opportunity to judge for themselves whether they would want to undertake further education and to develop some of the skills necessary for success.

To assess whether the Foundation Course is achieving this objective it would be necessary to make a judgement concerning whether it is attracting sufficient people from areas of the community previously underrepresented in universities. The profile of the previous educational background of our respondents suggests that in 1983 a proportion of the applicants had not been notably educationally disadvantaged in the past and may have been able to cope with university study without the aid of a Foundation Course. On the other hand, a significant proportion either had very limited previous formal educational experience and/or had not studied for many years. To this extent the course appears to have served a very important social and educational function.

STUDENT REACTIONS

For many students the course achieved its purpose of arousing interest in further learning.

> *A very worthwhile exercise which has provoked me to attempt to enter the University of Flinders next year.* (Fiction)
>
> *The course gave me confidence to apply for Mature Age Entry to the University.* (Mathematics)
>
> *I have nothing but praise for the time and effort the (topic organiser) put into the course and I came away with a healthy appetite for more courses of this kind.* (Social Sciences)
>
> *Speaking as one who had retired from the competitive fields of the workforce, I discovered that the Foundation Course has fired my ambition anew. It has made possible the aim and motivation to achieve a new direction to living. It has given me a new vitality. A vision of a new horizon.* (Humanities/Fiction)
>
> *I have discovered the feeling that there is so much to learn and something new is just around the corner. A whole new world inside the microscope opened up to me.* (Biology)
>
> *It seemed to open a mental door and created within me an intense desire to learn more.* (Social Sciences)

It was clear that often the course had increased people's confidence in their ability to study successfully.

> *The course gave me the confidence to apply for Mature Age Entry to the University.* (Mathematics)
>
> *You asked what I found most valuable. The answer is self confidence. I did the Foundation Course and I surprised myself.* (Biology)
>
> *Writers such as Kafka or Camus, whom I have always considered too intellectual for a person of my limited education, to understand, have been revealed as within my comprehension.* (Fiction)

Not everyone found the course rewarding however.

> *After attending two sessions I realised that I did not have sufficient inclination to do a degree course. It did not seem relevant to my life as a wife and a mother. The time demands would be too great and the family would suffer. Thank you for the chance to find these facts for myself.*
>
> *I realised after about three lessons that I had chosen the wrong subject and was grateful for the insight.*

STAFF REACTIONS

Participating staff members were invited to respond to the following questions:

- From your point of view, which were the most pleasing aspects of the Foundation Course? Why were they pleasing?

- Which do you consider the most unsatisfactory aspects of the Course? Why were they unsatisfactory?

A 60% response rate was obtained.

Respondents consistently stated that the characteristics of the students attracted by the course pleased them most.

> *(Most pleasing was) the freshness, enthusiasm and eagerness of the students... they brought a genuine desire to learn and experience which made for great liveliness and vigour.*
>
> *One felt able to challenge, encourage and reassure students who would grace this university but who, for whatever reason, felt less than confident.*
>
> *There was no difficulty in getting a discussion ... those who spoke were thoughtful and temperate in their statements.*
>
> *(The most pleasing aspect was) the number of students who were eager to learn about the library and its services.*

Some staff were particularly impressed not only with the potential of these students but also with the demonstrated ability of many of them.

> *Marking these students' papers confirmed my sense of an untapped pool of ability in the community ... the average standard was slightly higher than (my first year students!) We should be an Open University.*
>
> *I offer a similar tutorial to second year students and I would say that the foundation course participants were generally sharper and produced a better discourse.*
>
> *The committed core group read a novel a week (including three which are by any standards very difficult works), listened attentively to lectures which in one case ran to 75 minutes, and participated in discussions which ran for up to one and a half hours ... the range of ability across the group was enormous... at least two would clearly produce distinction level work in English, and at least half would have no difficulty with our English courses.*

One staff member argued that the quality of argumentation and analysis was partly because of the nature of the Foundation Course.

> *The discussion sessions were in some ways more intellectually adventurous, and more rewarding, than my formal tutorials. Since there were no penalties for saying "the wrong thing", and since nothing hinged on whether or not they agreed with me, participants were willing to pursue lines of argument more vigorously, and to admit openly to confusion if they were confused.*

CONCLUSION

When the Foundation Course Working Party first met, the members did not know whether the proposal to establish a foundation course was realistic. In order to test it out, they developed and, with the support of other colleagues, implemented a trial course on a voluntary basis.

The response to a brief period of publicity demonstrated community support for such a course. Subsequent comment by both staff and students suggested that the course had been in many respects highly successful, but that it could be improved. Suggestions for improvement included the development of an appropriate introduction to study techniques. Possible developments in this direction are currently being discussed.

V.J. Beasley

Flinders University
March, 1984

'BRIDGING THE GAPS - STUDY SUPPORT SERVICES FOR OFF-CAMPUS STUDENTS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW ENGLAND'

D. BOWLAY, AND S. DORLAND

Des Bowlay, Student Services Officer, Department of External Studies.

The Co-Author, Des Bowlay, is a former personnel and industrial psychologist whose interests in staff development and associated areas led him to work more directly with adults in tertiary education. He has worked since 1975 in an administrative and student services capacity with the Department of External Studies at the University of New England.

Sue Dorland, Senior Counsellor, University Counselling Service.

Sue trained as a counsellor after coming from a lecturing background, and now has ten years' experience in counselling in a university setting. A particular interest of hers is Mature Age Students and their adjustment to life and learning at university. Through working at U.N.E. this interest has grown to meet the needs of external students.

BRIDGING THE GAPS - STUDY SUPPORT SERVICES FOR OFF-CAMPUS STUDENTS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW ENGLAND

Almost by definition, Australian off-campus or external students have been the poor relations when it comes to the matter of direct assistance in the area of study skills, among other aspects of student services. Yet this increasingly popular mode of study, given significant impetus by a combination of economic circumstances and 'institutional bandwagoning' in the late 1970's and early 1980's, now involves some 40 tertiary institutions and 40,000 students mostly adults 25 years and over (Johnson, 1983). Most of those institutions have a well-developed range of student support services, and are conscious of the need to offer study skills assistance to their 'on-campus' or internal student bodies, but find it difficult to grapple with the concept and practice of extending such services to any off-campus component. A recent major review of services to tertiary students in Australia (Roe et al., 1982) finds little to report on in the way of such developed activities for part-time students, and that it is 'an issue' only in 'some institutions' in relation to off-campus students. While the concept of distance education as a legitimate alternative tertiary endeavour is still seeking its own theoretical stance (Keegan, 1980) and indeed its place in the total Australian academic enterprise, the off-campus student population continues to diversify and grow, bringing with it a potential conflict between academic expectations and demands and a growing state of 'unpreparedness' on the part of many adults admitted and enrolled under liberalised entry criteria.

Yet it is a movement, indeed part of an evolutionary process in the tertiary education sector which is in keeping with the economic and social changes of the last decade, and a movement which is clearly international. Griew, (1983), in attempting to reconcile traditional methods of evaluation of institutional 'performance' with the experiences of open tertiary education emphasises that social criteria of access and opportunity must emerge as clearly in the future as accreditation has in the past.

For those institutions prepared to adopt an 'open entry' approach and give some substance to the policy of open tertiary education, a corresponding responsibility exists to assist in the process of adaptation by such students, if only to ensure that the experience of tertiary studies is not a personal disaster and/or psychological setback for the individual, and an academically abortive operation arising from a lack of any real congruence between course demands and student capability.

Such is the state of distance education that it cannot afford to appear to be watering down or even changing academic expectations to cope with a different kind of student: yet the reality of external student populations is a heterogeneity of age, educational background, motivational influences, and recency of involvement with any formal educational system. In a recent paper Ballard (1983) sets out a category of adult student characteristics, based it appears, on the mix of adult students now finding their way into on-campus or full-time studies in the A.C.T. Ballard's summary of likely or anticipated demands on student services or advisers presents a formidable challenge for any professional team, but when it is considered that an off-campus student body is of even greater diversity in both background and motivational influences, the task of providing an adequate range of study skills and services is conceptually, financially and logistically a very tough one indeed.

The University of New England, with an off-campus studies scheme implemented in 1955, is one example of an attempt by student services staff in general to use available resources in an attempt to meet some of the recent challenges associated, and to provide direct assistance to adult external students. A composite set of characteristics is provided in Table 1, indicating changes in the past ten years within the external student body.

Probably the most sifnificant developments are those changes brought about by the introduction of a Mature Age Admission Scheme, more formally in 1978, but in existence in a trial format since 1974. In essence, the

scheme provides for admission consideration for adults 23 years and over, regardless of previous educational background, and largely dependent on the applicant's own written case. The emphasis is on evidence of motivation for studies, records of achievement in areas other than educational spheres, and a subjective but central and co-ordinated assessment of skills in style and expression in the written case made by the applicant. Admission granted to such applicants is unconditional, their status after admission being that of any student admitted under matriculation type criteria, where recent and previous educational attainment is a major deciding factor. In keeping with a philosophy that a tertiary education opportunity should be open to all, the University of New England administers no entrance tests, but maintains a system which provides access to enrolment through a number of 'doors' depending on the background of individual applicants.

It has been necessary to elaborate on this philosophy and policy to set the scene for the way in which student services have been structured and developed to cope with student support inclusive of study skills. In the 1980's, up to 50% of the total annual intake of 1200-1500 new external students is composed of students admitted under the Mature Age Admission Scheme, now well established throughout Australia as a bold and early venture into 'second-chance' tertiary education for a significant cross-section of the Australian community, eager for retraining,personal development, leisure, or extra qualifications in a rapidly changing society and economy.

The cohorts of adult students thus involved are by definition, untrained, unfamiliar and largely unprepared for the demands of tertiary study. Interest and motivation are self-evident, but can often flag in face of a combination of interference factors - ongoing and extra commitments to work, family, partner, friends and community for example. Such other commitments are often stated by students to be a reason for early withdrawal or inability to complete the first year, but when coupled with the limited capacity of a part-time student to meet the normal expectations of academic work, go a long way towards explaining the one in two attrition rate common among first year external students. Given also that the external studies mode is largely independent of structured and formal tuition, requiring extra self-directing and organising skills on the part of the student, it is surprising that the attrition rate is not higher still. Where then does the student services practitioner start?

If serious about meeting the challenge, the practitioner new to the field would find a great deal of value in the realities expressed in the work of Frederick et al. (1980), which deals with learning skills in the

broader or 'macro' sense as a contributing factor in student adjustment, seemingly independent of mode of study. Indeed, our experience over the years with off-campus students commencing study reflects a demand for the kind of support services which assist in organisation and adjustment and that these aspects may in the long-run be just as crucial as the 'micro' skills involved with absolute correctness of grammatical expression or some extra reading speed. Learning to be a successful student in the particular context in which we operate means nothing less than learning to manage yourself and parts of your life towards certain ends or goals. While we have developed a system which is able to cope with the micro-steps in enhancing academic performance, and we are conscious of the ways in which such assistance can add to student capability and confidence, we are essentially more concerned with equipping and assisting students to complete that essential first course, semester or year rather than exhorting them to superior academic performance as a primary objective.

How then do we translate such objectives and philosophy into a range of services and access points, to help bridge the gaps between student and student, staff and student, student and institution, and between starter and effective student status within the individual?

Like other institutions which believe that an effective and tailored transition program should be offered to entrants (e.g. Elkerton 1982) the University of New England has responded to the 'starting out' range of problems with its own approach (Bowlay and Phillips, 1979) and finds that these programs are very effective (Bowlay 1980) in their short and medium term impact. Yet our philosophy and approach at the University of New England recognises that transition programs are not enough: in the case of the external student, study is an activity initially grafted into or on to an existing lifestyle, albeit willingly, and has a continuing and competitive part in that lifestyle. We also believe that while off-campus or external study is in a sense, independent study, it is by no means a sentence to solitary confinement and indeed much can be gained by continuing reinforcement of the learning community and mutual interest concepts in a large student body.

Within the Department of External Studies there is a team of student services officers, each having responsibility (among other things) of enrolment and advisory services for external students on a degree/subject basis. These student service personnel therefore have first-hand knowledge

of the difficulties faced by the students. Des Bowlay, one of these officers, became particularly interested in developing strategies to help externals adapt to and cope with their study.

Within the university there is also a Counselling Service which provides the usual services including study skills help (except for the area of literacy skills). Although its brief is to be available for all students up until 1980 very little Counselling Service energy was spent on external students. When Sue Dorland took up the appointment of Senior Counsellor in 1980 she was approached to become involved in the efforts to provide help and support for externals. Since then the Department of External Studies and the Counselling Service have worked together on several projects for this end.

Support systems for externals are now well-established at U.N.E. They are both of a formal and an informal nature and if you were an external student at U.N.E. with a need for help or support there would be a number of avenues open to you. For on-campus help you could ring or write to your student services officer in the Department of External Studies or you could contact a counsellor in the Counselling Service. Off-campus you could contact the Sydney Centre, essentially a liaison and service office which has staff trained to help if they can or to refer you on elsewhere if they cannot. Also off-campus if you live anywhere in N.S.W. or in Melbourne or Brisbane, you could contact your local Regional Advisor. He or she would be one of a team of 13 such people who are graduates of U.N.E. and are paid a small honorarium to assist prospective and enrolled students. They are trained, by the authors and others, in helping skills for administrative, study and personal problems. You might prefer to contact your Graduate Representative. He or she would be one of a network of 60 such people located throughout Australia who are volunteers with no formal training but with time and energy offered in helping and advising students. Another option open to you is to consult your geographical roll - a computer print-out of all external students, regardless of course or year of study, who are living in your geographical area. These rolls provide for even more informal contact with peers to discuss problem areas. The off-campus support network which arises from interaction among these resources can result in the formation of different types of support groups, for example subject-oriented or mutual interest groups, either of which can deal with study skills activities. Finally, if you are living in an area with a tertiary institution of its own you might prefer to opt for more professional help by contacting the counsellors at your local institution. The U.N.E.

Counselling Service has made arrangements with many other counselling services which has resulted in access to a range of professional assistance within easy reach of the metropolitan off-campus student.

This multi-faceted structure of support services for our externals has grown out of the varying needs of these students - needs that are dependent on each individual mix of geographical location, educational experience and educational goals. The projects that have been and are being developed to provide study skills help are therefore also multi-faceted. Table 2 attempts to link the support services, both on and off campus, and the support projects the service provides.

If you are a prospective student of U.N.E. asking for admission by the September preceding your enrolment you would be invited to attend a weekend Orientation School on campus. Among other things the weekend would give you a realistic look at you and external study, and would help you to decide your level of readiness for such study on both an academic and a personal level. If you also happened to be a prospective Arts student you would be invited to remain on for the two days after your school to attend an optional two-day study skills workshop. At these you would learn skills of a more micro nature - essay writing, reading, note-taking and concentration skills.

Once you are an enrolled student you have several options open to you for study skills help provided by the U.N.E. support systems.

On campus you could seek individual professional help from the Counselling Service. Also on campus, starting this year, you could attend an optional day of study skills workshops immediately after your compulsory residential school in May ("lay-day" workshops). If all goes according to plan you will be able to attend workshops on such themes as 'fitting external study into your life', 'dealing with stress while studying', as well as the more usual topics of preparing for and taking exams, essay writing, reading and note-taking skills. The workshops are free of cost except for the extra night's accommodation. Your workshop leaders will be the counsellors, some staff of the Department of External Studies, local 'experts' (funded by the University), interested academics in your subject area and some interested regional advisors who are being trained as leaders.

Off campus you could attend a study skills workshop in your region. This could either be an 'expert-centred' workshop organized by your Regional Advisor or the Sydney Centre whereby local experts in study skills are paid (by the participants) to run such workshops for you: or it could

be a 'student-centred' workshop run by the Regional Advisors themselves along the lines of the workshops outlined by Graham Gibbs (1981). Here the Regional Advisors use their own personal strengths and expertise helped by resource material and much encouragement from the authors. These workshops have no charge.

Many prospective students cannot attend the Orientation Schools because of distance, finances, or late application for admission to U.N.E. Leaders of the study skills workshops therefore decided to make the material generated from the schools available to such people. The counsellors made study skills audio tapes which are available for purchase at a nominal sum by both prospective and enrolled U.N.E. students. The tapes cover the following topics: studying externally - some strategies for personal survival; how to succeed in examinations; efficient reading, note-taking skills; stress management for externals. The literacy workshop leaders have written two correspondence courses which can be taken by anyone, regardless of student status, for a fee. Both courses are non-credit and self-paced and each unit of the course is marked and returned with comments. The courses are entitled 'Essay Writing for Tertiary Students' and 'English Expression and Grammar'.

For some years U.N.E. has also offered a voluntary remedial and refresher course in basic mathematics to incoming external students, available either as part of an orientation school or as a separate activity. For those unable to attend this school, which is held on campus, a self-paced correspondence program in basic mathematics is available on a similar basis to the literacy program. There is also a workbook in basic and remedial mathematics available at nominal cost.

We have certain limitations placed on us when devising our support projects. One limitation is that of time - most of our students, unlike on-campus students can only attend workshops in the evenings and weekends and have to fit these workshops into normally busy lives. Another limitation is geographical isolation - some students can only use the audiotapes and correspondence material except of course when they are attending their compulsory residential school and therefore can use on-campus facilities.

Important distinctions between the on and off campus programmes are those of initiation and implementation - the on-campus programmes being developed by university staff while the off-campus programmes are largely devised and developed by the Regional Advisors and for example, by the staff at the Sydney Centre. This results in most of the off-campus activities being student directed at a more grass-roots level. The leaders

'out there' have our active encouragement and support, and once they have worked through their anxiety at leading such groups they have shown us that valuable work can be done by 'amateurs' using a student-centred approach.

But what exactly is 'valuable'? What exactly are we achieving by intervening in all these ways? What would be happening if we hadn't intervened? Yes, here comes the perennial problem of evaluation and the issue of whether we should even attempt to measure these projects in terms of academic performance.

The feedback we get from each approach is nearly always positive, and indicative of the fact that students are using the kinds of support services available. A major research project being conducted by Brian Glover (Department of External Studies) and funded by a grant from the Australian and South Pacific External Studies Association (A.S.P.E.S.A.) is considering and evaluating this aspect, among others. The Orientation Schools are formally evaluated by the participants at the end of each school and although we have made minor changes in response to the feedback over the years the basic structure and content is very much appreciated - in fact students talk of positive and lasting effects some years on into their academic life. The research of one author (Bowlay 1980) has shown conclusively that those students attending Orientation Schools tend to stay enrolled in their first year rather than join the almost 50% drop-out rate of first year enrolled students. If motivation alone causes the staying power then we have a chicken and egg problem because those students who come to Armidale for such a school are motivated enough to pay to get themselves there and often have to take time off work. Do they in that case 'need' the Orientation School? Would motivation alone keep them enrolled all year? For many we think not. We are aware, (Bowlay 1979), that much of the impetus to student retention amongst Orientation School participants can arise from the early mutual support system engendered deliberately during the intensive school. The schools also provide a focus for a range of activities to be carried out on a self-help basis back home. So, without attending the school, would they have been able to fit external study into their life successfully? Would they have recognized the stress early enough and been able to do something about it? Would they have known what they need to work on in terms of academic and personal readiness before the start of the academic year? From the feedback of the participants over the years it seems not; the mix of the macro and micro approach to study skills offered through the schools obviously meets the needs of the off-campus student returning to study.

As indicated earlier, students admitted under liberalised entry schemes now account for a majority of all external undergraduate enrolments at U.N.E. The University opens its doors very widely and we believe it is therefore the university's responsibility to offer assistance in adapting in every way to successful external study, hence our concern in reaching every student. Meanwhile we understand that the choice of what help and support to opt for, if any, is theirs. We are not committed to any approach being the best and we believe that the choice of whether or not to reach for support is up to each individual student. Indeed external study often attracts the personality-type who prefers to 'go it alone regardless'.

But for those who do reach out, we, in the support services are trying to bridge some gaps, bearing in mind the extreme variations in geographical location, educational prerequisites and personal educational goals. We believe we are also doing this in a way that is both innovative and relevant to bridging another gap, - the gap which is developing because external enrolments are outstripping the capacity of institutional support services.

TABLE 1

COMPOSITE AND PROGRESSIVE EXTERNAL STUDENT CHARACTERISTICS

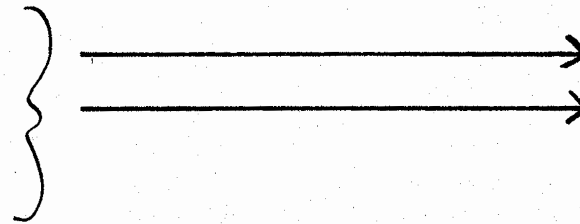
CATEGORY		1974	1979 (25th year of external studies scheme at UNE)	1983
Number of students (at 30th April)		3707	4925	5785
Average age		31.4	33.9	35.1
Male	M	60%	52%	48%
vs				
Female proportions	F	40%	48%	52%
		%	%	%
Country & elsewhere	C	65	62	63
vs				
Metropolitan location	M	35	38	37
Primary occupational categories		%	%	%
a) Teachers/Lecturers		60	41	28
b) Housewives		10	11	10
c) Admin. & Managerial		5	9	10
d) Professions & Arts (including nursing, paramed. etc.)		10	14	18
e) Clerical, office		7	11	15
f) Retired		1.5	4.5	6.5
Estimated proportion of new students enrolled under liberalised entry conditions		1%	35%	45%
Annual withdrawal proportions* (total external population)		23.6%	23.8%	26.3%

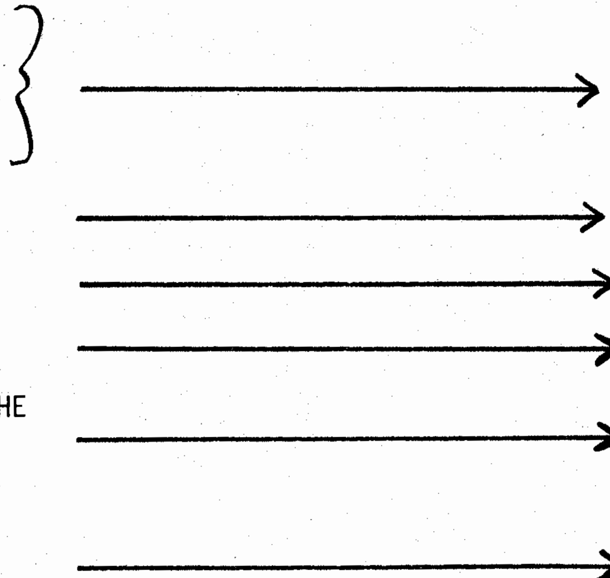
* Based on Feb/March enrolment numbers in each year: 30th April base would reduce withdrawal rate by approximately 5%.

TABLE 2

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN U.N.E. SUPPORT SERVICES AND STUDY SKILLS PROJECTS*

U.N.E. STUDENT SUPPORT	STUDY SKILLS PROJECT
ON-CAMPUS	
STUDENT SERVICE OFFICERS IN THE DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL STUDY; COUNSELLORS IN THE COUNSELLING SERVICE; INTERESTED ACADEMIC STAFF	ORIENTATION SCHOOLS; 'LAY-DAY' STUDY SKILLS WORKSHOPS
OFF-CAMPUS	
SYDNEY CENTRE; REGIONAL ADVISORS; GRADUATE REPRESENTATIVES	STUDY SKILLS WORKSHOPS IN THE REGIONS - Either 'expert' or 'student' centred.
PEER SUPPORT	SELF-HELP STUDY GROUPS
COUNSELLING SERVICE	STUDY SKILLS AUDIO TAPES
ARMIDALE LITERACY EXPERTS	CORRESPONDENCE COURSES IN LITERACY
INTERESTED ACADEMICS IN THE DEPARTMENT OF MATHEMATICS	BASIC AND REMEDIAL MATHEMATICS CORRESPONDENCE COURSES; BASIC AND REMEDIAL MATHEMATICS BOOKLET
SUPPORT SERVICES IN OTHER INSTITUTIONS	INTER-INSTITUTIONAL NETWORK





* This table does not include individual study skills help available from the counsellors and the student services staff.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Ballard, B. 1983. Mature Age Students: how different. Annual National Conference on Learning Skills and Communication, Brisbane.

Bowlay, D.J. 1979. Motivation and Persistence at External Tertiary Studies - the Mature Age Open Entry Student. Unpublished thesis - University of New England.

Bowlay, D.J. 1980. Orientation Programs for External Students - Do They Work? Australian and South Pacific External Studies Association Newsletter, Vol.6, No.2.

Bowlay, D.J. & Phillips, D.E. 1979. Giving New Students a Year's Start - An Intensive Orientation Program. Proceedings, Biennial Forum, Australian and South Pacific External Studies Association, Perth.

Elkerton, C. 1982. Uniprep 1982: a Program to Facilitate Transition for New Students. Research and Development Paper No.4 (Student Counselling and Research Unit), University of New South Wales.

Frederick, J., Hancock, L., James, B., Bowden, J. and Macmillan, C. 1980. Learning Skills: a review of needs and services to students at the University of Melbourne. University of Melbourne, Student Counselling Service Learning Skills Project.

Gibbs, G. 1981. Teaching Students to Learn: A student-centred approach. The Open University Press, Milton Keynes. U.K.

Griew, S. 1983. Access and Opportunity: Social Criteria in the Evaluation of Distance Education. Proceedings: International Congress of Open and Distance Teaching Universities, Spain. International Council for Distance Education.

Johnson, R. 1983. The Provision of External Studies in Australian Higher Education. Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission.

Keegan, D.J. 1980. On Defining Distance Education, Distance Education, Vol.1, No.1.

Roe, E., Foster, G., Moses, I., Sanker, M. and Storey, P. 1982. A Report on Student Services in Tertiary Education in Australia, Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission.

'THE SENTENCE IS BASIC'

HELEN DRURY

Helen Drury, Tutor, Language Study Centre, University of Sydney.

Teaching English as a Second Language to overseas and migrant students.

Apart from teaching general language skills, Helen is also involved in teaching strategies for listening to lectures and taking notes.

Currently developing materials aimed at building listening skills.

Interest: Himalayas.

'THE SENTENCE IS BASIC'

Most migrant and overseas students will have studied English sentence structure, often to the point of nauseum. However, they will also realize that errors in sentence construction will result in lower grades for written assignments even though the content may be acceptable. This workshop will examine ways of helping students at the micro level of the clause/clause complex to be more aware of language structure. New ways of talking about language will be explored as well as alternative teaching techniques.

WORKSHOP:

THE SENTENCE IS BASIC

(See also Part 1)

HELEN DRURY

LANGUAGE STUDY CENTRE

UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY

THE SENTENCE IS BASIC

This workshop is based on the application of Functional Systemic Grammar (as developed by Professor M.A.K. Halliday)to the teaching of sentence structure.

The functional approach to E.S.L. teaching has been applied over the last 10 to 15 years with the result that teaching materials and learning situations have become more orientated towards language as communication. The emphasis has been on the meaning - the semantic system - where structures and lexis are chosen according to the function which the speaker wishes to perform or the ideas or notions which the speaker wishes to convey in a given situation. Since functional grammar is an attempt to describe the whole language system, not only written language but spoken as well, the functional ideas have tended to be used in areas of language teaching where traditional descriptions have been weakest. That is , they have been widely used in teaching listening and speaking skills rather than writing skills. Where functional grammar has been applied to writing, it has been used more at the paragraph level , to teach, for example, paragraphs with the function of comparing and contrasting. Thus all the published courses which aim to teach sentence structure follow the traditional approach.

This workshop examines an alternative approach which has been used in 1hr./ week classes in term 1 1984 at Sydney University. The classes aim to improve the sentence structure of overseas and migrant students enrolled in Sydney University. The Appendix , which is the agenda for the workshop, illustrates relevant aspects of the grammar and exercises which have been used in classes. It must be stressed that this course is in an early experimental stage and thus a lot of the materials are growing, developing and changing as the course is.

Each part of the Appendix will be discussed in turn.

Appendix 1 illustrates and contrasts the descriptions used by traditional grammar and functional grammar to analyse the same sentence. Most teachers and students have many complaints about traditional grammar but functional grammar would have to be considerably simplified if it were to be taught to and used by students.

Appendix 2 This exercise was used to introduce students to the clause complex. Students were asked to discuss the meaning of sentence 1('what it was about') and from their comments, words, groups and clauses were identified. Parts of the clause complex which could exist on their own or form a meaningful unit were labelled as being equal in value, whereas those which could not were labelled as dependent on a dominant clause. Thus students could see that a great variety of dependent relationships are possible and these can 'nest' inside each other. In addition, the importance of conjunction words in determining clause bounderies and signalling dependent or equal relationships was highlighted. In comparing sentence 1 and 2, students were asked to give examples of where they might find the 2 types of writing and also what differences they had noticed between sentence 1 and 2. Sentence 1 is more typical of spoken language and is characterised by a simpler nominal group structure, more frequent use of the conjunction 'and', the presence of more clauses and the use of the subject 'students' as theme. In contrast, sentence 2 is more typical of written language since it has longer and more complex nominal groups, nominalisation of processes, passive structures, fewer clauses and marked themes. Further practice in recognising complete clause complexes rather than fragments can be given in the form of nonsence sentences as illustrated in the next exercise.

Not only are clauses related in terms of their dependency but also in terms of their logical meaning. The idea in the first clause is either expanded on or used to project another idea. Clauses can be expanded on in three ways:
1. extension 2. explanation 3. elaboration

Appendix 3 illustrates exercises which were used to practice the reletionship of explanation as well as exemplifying this relationship. This relationship includes both the aspect of equality and interdependence, hence both the traditional ideas of subordination and coordination. Thus it embraces a larger category than the traditional class of adjectival clauses whilst excluding defining relative clauses which in functional grammar are rank shifted to the group level where they qualify the noun and form part of the nominal group.

Students were asked to identify explanation clauses in part of a text. Then they had to link together the ideas in the last part of the text which were expressed in simple sentence form and use explanation conjunctions and structures to carry out this joining process. A possible answer for this exercise is given.

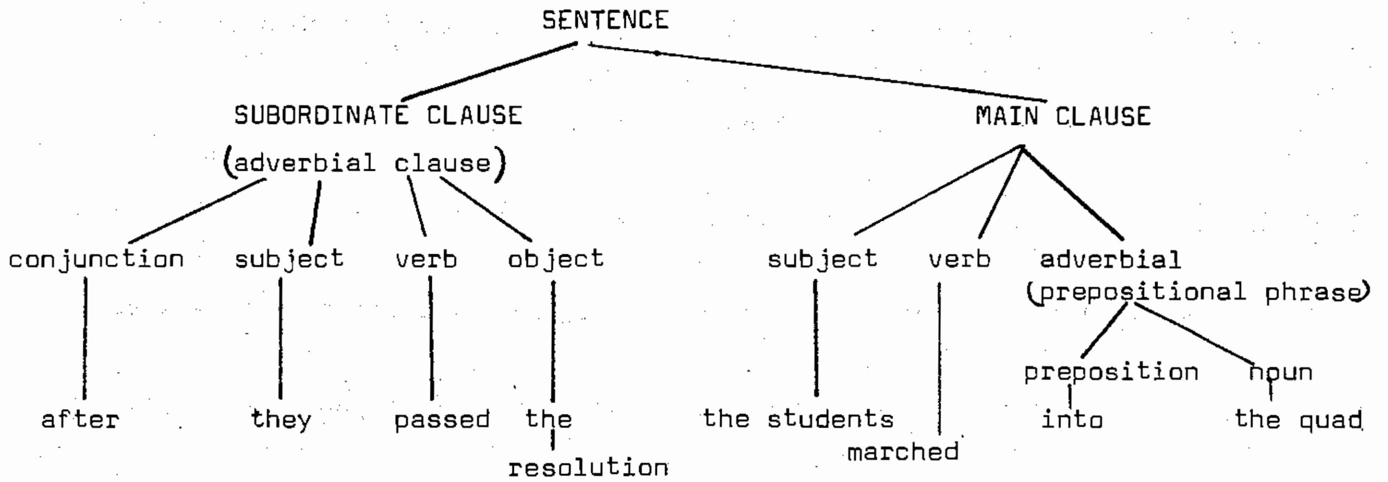
Appendix 4 An understanding of sentence structure involves analysis within the clause itself. The clause represents patterns of experience and we use the clause structure to build patterns of reality. The pivotal point of the clause is the process but processes always involve participant(s) and optional circumstances. The functional description of processes is far more halpful and accurate than that provided by traditional grammar. Students can be asked to come up with their own classification of the functions of processes from a random list of verbs. The three main categories are likely to emerge, ie: material, mental and relational. A tabular approach can help students to identify the nominal and verbal groups in a clause and also the prepositional phrases. Linking these with the functions of participant, process and circumstance helps students to come to a deeper understanding of the clause and its component parts and how these parts interact with each other.

Appendix 5 Students own errors can be used to teach correct sentence structure. Here process errors have been grouped together. Students were asked to work in groups to correct the errors and to try to explain their corrections.
For example:
1. Here it can be argued that the quality of 'less likelihood' applies to the'career goal'and therefore a relational process of being should be used to attribute this process to its participant. ie:'which would BE less likely TO change' Note the comparison with 'which would HARDLY change'
2. 'criticize' is a verbal process and when the criticism is made explicit so must the process of 'saying' or'arguing' that goes with it ie: 'SAYING that Japan .....'
3. 'raise' is a material process,an action process and it requires 2 participants; an actor or agent and a goal or medium (the participant that undergoes the process). The verb 'rise' is also a material process but here the singla participant is the actor and the medium ie: both the doer of the action and the undergoer (sufferer).
4. 'feel' is a mental process in this sentence and is responsible for projecting the idea that they were anti-communists etc. Therefore a 'that' clause is required ie:'to feel that they were . ...'
5. 'have' is often used in a metaphorical sense eg:'have a headache' means 'to be ill with a headache' This can sometimes be confusing. Here 'have' can be used for war experiences but not for persecution. To 'have' an experience is an accepted metaphorical usage. Persecution however must be suffered or experienced.
6. 'know' is a mental process of cognizing as is the acceptable alternative 'understand'. Perhaps the way to explain the acceptable version is to focus on the participant 'discontent' and ask whether this can be known. It can in the literary sense but otherwise it can be felt it it is our own or understood if it is somebody else's.

The last example illustrates some of the subtleties of the language and the difficulties involved in helping second language learners to come to an understanding of these.

AFTER THEY PASSED THE RESOLUTION, THE STUDENTS MARCHED INTO THE QUADRANGLE.

ANALYSIS USING TRADITIONAL GRAMMAR



ANALYSIS USING FUNCTIONAL GRAMMAR

	AFTER	THEY	PASSED	THE RESOLUTION,
THEME (textual)	Theme marked βX			
	Theme: textual; conj.	topical subject	Rheme	
MOOD (interpersonal)		subject	finite/ (past)	predicator complement
		Mood		Residue
TRANSITIVITY (ideational)		Actor	Process (material)	Goal (medium)

THE STUDENTS	MARCHED		INTO THE QUAD
Rheme α			
Theme: topical subject	Rheme		
subject	finite / (past)	predicator	Adjunct
Mood		Residue	
Actor (medium)	Process (material)		Circumstance of location

NOTE: METAPHORICAL INTERPRETATION

pass a resolution ≠ agree to a resolution . Therefore a material process is disguising a verbal process and the resolution is the range covered by the proces of agreeing.

RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN CLAUSES: THE CLAUSE COMPLEX

IDENTIFY THE CLAUSES. WHAT ARE THE DEPENDENCY RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN THEM?

1. The students decided/to demonstrate at a lunchtime rally on the front lawn/
   dominant / dependent

   and then they marched into the quad/and gathered in front of the Vice-Chancellor's
   equal / equal

   office/where they hung banners and signs over the windows/and chanted slogans
   dependent / equal

   for a separate department of Political Economy.

2. After passing a resolution in favour of a demonstration at a frontlawn

   lunchtime rally,/the students marched into the quad. ,/where banners and signs

   were draped over the window of the Vice-Chancellor's office/and slogan chanting

   in favour of a separate department of Political Economy went on for some time.

WHAT ARE THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THESE TWO SENTENCES? WHERE WOULD YOU EXPECT TO FIND THESE SENTENCES?

RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN CLAUSES

1. DEPENDENCY RELATIONSHIPS
   a) equal (coordination)
   b) dominant/dependent (subordination)
2. LOGICAL MEANING RELATIONSHIPS
   a) expansion
      1. extension +
      2. explanation =
      3. elaboration x (enhancement)
   b) projection
      1. verbal (speech)
      2. mental (thought)

WHICH OF THESE SENTENCES ARE COMPLETE?

MAKE THEM ALL INTO COMPLETE SENTENCES.

1. The pogs brattled the mindle
2. The pogs brattling the mindle
3. The pogs were brattling and the mindle
4. The mindle brattling pogs
5. Pogs which brattled the mindle
6. After the pogs had brattled the mindle
7. The mindle was brattled by the pogs
8. By the mindle brattled doonly by the pogs
9. Whenever the pogs wanted to brattle the mindle which they had caught.
10. Though the mindle brattled by the pogs

EXPLANATION

- the second clause doesn't add any new information but it explains more about the first clause by restating,clarifying , refining

1. EXAMPLES OF EQUAL RELATIONSHIPS
   a) The clock doesn't go ;(in other words) it's not working (i.e.)
   b) He won many competetions ;(for instance) he won the University medal (e.g.)
   c) I wasn't surprised; (in fact) it was what I had expected (viz)
2. EXAMPLES OF DOMINANT/ DEPENDENT RELATIONSHIPS
   A) Finite
      a) They decided to cancel the show, which upset everybody.
         (non-defining relative clause)

      Note the difference in meaning:

      The workers, who are on strike, are dissatisfied. (non- defining)

      The workers who are on strike are dissatified. (defining)

B B) Non-Finite
      a) There was a fire there, blazing away brightly.

UNDERLINE THE EXPLANATION CLAUSES IN THE FOLLOWING NEWSPAPER ARTICLE. ARE THEY EQUAL, DOMINANT OR DEPENDENT? CAN YOU FIND ANY EMBEDDED OR RANK SHIFTED CLAUSES? (ie: defining relative clauses)

Russians tell of acid rain threat

By THEODORE SHABAD of The New York Times

NEW YORK, Tuesday: Acid rain is entering the Soviet Union from central and western Europe, Soviet scientists report.

Their findings, based on nearly 900 samples collected by monitoring stations along the western borders over the past three years, appear to add a new aspect to the acid rain issue, which has been stirring international concern.

The environmental effect of acid rain, which is produced mainly by electric generating plants and other industrial emissions, was long believed concentrated in eastern North America and in Scandinavia, where the water of lakes has become increasingly acidic.

In an effort to determine the source, Soviet meteorologists retraced the movements of cloud systems with the most acidic types of rains over a 48-hour period. This backtracking analysis, according to the Soviet report, suggested that the lowest pH values were associated with air masses moving out of central and western Europe.

1. non-finite dependent clause ......
2. rank shifted clause _ _ _ _ _ _
3. finite dependent clause ....
4. finite dependent clause .... (which is where)
5. rank shifted clause ________

FORM SINGLE SENTENCES OUT OF THE SENTENCES WHICH ARE BRACKETED. WHEN YOU USE DOMINANT AND DEPENDENT CLAUSES TRY TO LINK THEM WITH RELATIVE PRONOUNS WHERE POSSIBLE. TRY TO LINK USING THE RELATIONSHIP OF 'EXPLANATION'

The Soviet scientists found acidity in lakes.
The lakes are in the North West region of the Soviet Union.
They wrote a report.
The report said that acid rain was being added to local soils
Tha soils were naturally acid
The nutrient properties of the soils were low
These properties would be lowered

Soviet territory is affected by acid rain
900,000sq. km. are affected
This area is along the western border of the Soviet Union

Acidity is determined by a chemical measure
This is called the pH index
The index for pure water is 7
Natural rain has a pH of 5.7.
Natural rain is slightly acidic
Acid rain has a pH of less than 4.7
The Soviet scientists found pH values below 4.7 in 42% of the samples

POSSIBLE ANSWERS

The Soviet scientists who found acidity in lakes in the North West region of the Soviet Union wrote a report saying that acid rain was being added to local soils, which were naturally acidic and also low in nutrient properties, with the result that these properties would be lowered.

The Soviet territory affected by acid rain covers 900,000 sq. km. adjoining the western border.

Acidity is determined by a chemical measure called the pH index in which * the index for water is 7.
Natural rain has a pH value of 5.7, that is, it is slightly acidic.
Acid rain, which has a pH value of less than 4.7, was found in 42% of the samples taken by Soviet scientists. * *

* Note: this is a rank shifted clause expressing a circumstance. Therefore the relationship is elaborating.

* * rank shifted clause

RELATIONSHIPS WITHIN THE CLAUSE : TRANSITIVITY ANALYSIS : PROCESS ANALYSIS

- the clause represents a process; our conception of reality; 'goings on' (doing happening, feeling, being)
- a process consists potentially of 3 parts
  1. process (verbal group)
  2. participants in the process (nominal group)
  3. circumstances associated with the process (adverbial group/ prepositional phrase)

TYPES OF PROCESS

1. MATERIAL : John kicked the cat (doing, happening)
2. BEHAVIOURAL : John laughed. (phsiological/psychological behaving)
3. MENTAL : John saw the stars (perceiving)
   John knows the answer (cognizing)
   John likes Mary (reacting)
4. VERBAL : John said he was hungry (saying)
5. EXISTENTIAL : There's a problem (existing, happening)
6. RELATIONAL : John is the leader (identifying)
   John is clever (attributing)
   John has a new car (possessing)

IDENTIFY THE CLAUSES IN THE FOLLOWING PARAGRAPHS. DIVIDE EACH CLAUSE INTO PARTICIPANTS, PROCESSES AND CIRCUMSTANCES PUTTING THEM INTO THE APPROPRIATE COLUMN IN THE FOLLOWING TABLE. LABEL THE PROCESS TYPES.

PARTICIPANT(S) (who/what? as subject)	PROCESS (what's happening?)	PARTICIPANT(S) (who/what ?)	CIRCUMSTANCE (when/how/where? etc
political economy supporters	demonstrate (behav./verbal)		
a crowd ....demonst.	gathered (material)		in the Main Quad .... on Wednesday ...
	calling for (verbal)	a continuation	in third year Economi
some	demanded (verbal)	a separate dept. of P.E.	within the Faculty .
the number	was estimated (relational, ident.)	at about 600 by student organisers	
other observers	put (relationel, ident.)	the crowd at about 300.	

Political Economy supporters demonstrate

A crowd of student demonstrators gathered in the Main Quadrangle outside the Vice-Chancellor's office on Wednesday, 15 June, calling for a continuation of separate Political Economy I and Economics I courses and for the availability of more Political Economy options in third year Economics. Some demanded a separate department of Political Economy within the Faculty of Economics. The number was estimated at about 600 by student organisers but other observers put the

CORRECT THE FAULTY PROCESSES IN THESE SENTENCES. WHY ARE THEY WRONG?

1. Students in those faculties have a much stronger career goal which would less likely change if student loans were introduced.
2. Some criticize these two arguments from the view of Real Politik that Japan is not likely to be attacked because she has no such sets of conditions of war.
3. Arms races raise as a result of political conflicts.
4. Communist led workers tended to feel them as anti-communists and therefore anti-labour.
5. As they had dreadful persecution or war experiences, there were fairly high rates of mental and marital breakdown.
6. But we can know the discontent of the well qualified people in such a book as Kunz's ' The Intruders'
7. All of the displaced persons who came to Australia within the I.R.O. Mass Scheme were demanded to enter into at least 2 year indentures as a pre-condition of their resettlement.
8. But we cannot miss the government's consideration for the anti-semitic movement.
9. Immigrants have variety not only in their ethnic origins but also in their characteristics.
10. The term refugee reminds us specifically of the people who received the influences of World War Two.
11. This passive pacifism although most popular argument has a vital criticism
12. The Japan U.S. Security Treaty went into effect at the same time as the self defence force.
13. Each human activity needs space which often occurs a conflict between different activities.
14. This makes the treatments of the dentists are more difficult.
15. Most students between these ages have had work where they experienced the taste of income which made them obtain luxuries.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

GARNER M.(1983)Grammar : Warts and all River Seine Publications

Halliday M.A.K. A Short Introduction to Functional Grammar (1983) Department of Linguistics University of Sydney

Leech G. & Svartvik J. A Communicative Grammar of English (1980) Longman

'TEACHING BEFORE LEARNING OR LEARNING BEFORE TEACHING?'

NERIDA F. ELLERTON

Nerida Ellerton completed her Ph.D. in Biophysical Chemistry at the University of Adelaide in 1966. After three years as Research Fellow in the U.S.A. (one year at the University of California at Berkeley and two years at Oregon State University), she continued her career in New Zealand. She was involved in lecturing and research in Chemistry at Victoria University of Wellington, but subsequently extended her studies to Mathematics and Education, gaining secondary school teaching experience as well as her Dip. Ed. Stud. and Dip. T. In 1982, she initiated a large scale (10,500 pupils) cross-cultural study on the development of abstract reasoning, using mathematics as the test area. She took up her appointment as Lecturer in Mathematics Education at Deakin University earlier this year. Her interests include photography, and her work in audio-visual programs has earned her associateships in the Royal Photographic Society and the Photographic Society of New Zealand (ARPS and APSNZ).

This reflective essay falls into two sections:

(a) the dichotomy of teaching at tertiary level in an area which draws examples and subject matter from the primary level.

(b) assumptions that lecturers make about the level of abstract reasoning of their audience.

An open-ended approach is designed to provoke discussion.

When teaching tertiary students in a subject such as Mathematics Curriculum which introduces pre-service students to the teaching of Mathematics in the Primary School, a set of opposing factors becomes evident.

On the one hand, the lecturer is presenting, at the *tertiary level*, the theory of learning mathematics and strategies for teaching it, while on the other, the examples and discussion need to be centred on mathematics at the primary level.

Observations suggest that the student, accustomed to making notes on tertiary level material, does so in detial for the theory section, but makes less detailed notes for the examples and discussion part of the lecture. This may arise because the examples are, on the surface, 'more obvious' in content. Lecture notes taken in this way will, however, contain an imbalance of theory *versus* specific examples.

Although handouts solve this superficially, the origin of the problem is sufficiently deep rooted that, when the students study the handout, they tend to skim over the 'trivial' examples drawn from primary school mathematics, thereby again leaving the theory with *no* examples.

This can be illustrated by the following:
In a lecture, the discovery of addition may be described in terms of a child's need to experience partitioning of a set into subsets, as well as combining two sets to make a total set. For example, if a child has a set of six blocks and splits this up into two subsets of four blocks and two blocks, he or she does not realize that this is the reverse of combining a set of four blocks with a set of two blocks. It takes considerable experience for the child to

realize that the two sentences describing those actions are closely related. 6 = 4 + 2 and 4 + 2 = 6 describe these actions. An *operation* has emerged.

The student may write in note form:

addition - set into subsets

6 blocks ⇄ 4 blocks   2 blocks

Unless the student writes: actions described by 6 = 4 + 2 *and* 4 + 2 = 6, one of the key points of this segment has been lost. Writing only 6 = 4 + 2 is *not* sufficient as the main points are the reversibility of the operation and the association of the number sentence with the actions described.

At this point it is possible to generalize. Why should students fall into this type of trap? Can it be that, when studying a text-book or listening to a lecturer, the students tend to 'turn-off' the reading or the listening in sections with which they think they are already familiar? This gives them a break from what can be heavy and demanding concentration on new areas. It is, in effect, also an economy measure as significant time can be saved if a 'known' section is studied in depth. Many students adopt this technique intentionally.

While this may be useful in the short-term note-taking situation, one of the main problems with such an approach is that of recall. An apparently easy section that has been skimmed through will not be easy to recall in detail if notes on that section are almost non-existent. Furthermore, recall will be disjointed (difficult sections only, with no 'easy' examples or linking sections), thus creating either confused recall or actual gaps in a student's knowledge or both.

It is important to note that the 'known' section is presumably a sound, well established part of another subject or discipline, or an earlier part of the same subject. The knowledge gap created is, therefore, in the *new* subject area - the existing knowledge will not be 'wiped' from its original context, just *ignored* in its new context.

These comments apply only to a subject which draws heavily on either related or interdisciplinary areas. A subject which builds *directly* on previous concepts will not be vulnerable in this way, because the 'known' material is not actually *incorporated* into the new course; the 'known' material is the set of assumptions, etc that lays the foundations for the new.

How, then, can a lecturer tackle the problem? First of all, a lecturer should never hesitate to point out possible pitfalls in the course ahead, at the same time suggesting a solution. Handouts can be set out clearly so that the 'known' section is embedded into the text and not just 'tagged-on' at the end of the new. Effective use of the overhead projector to highlight examples which students may otherwise pass over will help to place emphasis where needed. The lecturer needs to be convincing in the presentation of the material and in the applicability of the examples or 'known' material referred to. Finally, reinforcement through a student's own experience is probably one of the strongest learning tools available to a lecturer. In tutorial questions, discussion groups or assignments, the students can be set the task of drawing on their own prior knowledge (including from primary school) to find examples to illustrate the theories or methods they are currently learning about. They are then in a much better position to integrate parts of their prior schemas *into* the new instead of assimilating *only* the new.

Turning attention briefly away form the subject matter, other major variables when lecturing are the audience and the lecturer. In any subject area, a lecturer makes certain assumptions about the audience. These include an assumption about the conitive level at which the lecture will be pitched. The audience becomes an 'average' human listening force, possibly of a 'concrete' background or an 'abstract' background, or a combination of the two. If the audience is predominantly of 'abstract' background, but the lecture is pitched at a concrete level, boredom is likely. Conversely, though, if the audience is of 'concrete' background but the lecturer chooses to talk in very abstract terms, then the audience will almost certainly not comprehend most of the lecture content. There are levels, too, associated with the degree of abstraction, and similar arguments apply. To confound and confuse, there are those individuals who *can* operate at the absract level, but either choose not to, or cannot operate at abstract levels in more than one dicipline, possibly because of poor transfer mechanisms.

Inevitably, the discussion returns to the subject matter. The lecturer, though, has a cause-and-effect relationship which makes it difficult to choose a level for the lecture context. Are the student responses the *cause* of the lecturer working at that level or the *result* of it?

At this stage the distinction between language acquisition and abstract reasoning should be established. It is quite possible to couch a simple concept in highly specific language (especially true in mathematics). An example of symbolic language may be:

$$Pr\ (X \in A) = \frac{n(A)}{n(\mathcal{E})}$$

In 'words' this is: the probability of a particular favourable outcome is equal to the number of favourable outcomes divided by the total number of possible outcomes. For tossing a coin, for example, Pr (X = Heads) = ½. That is, the probability that the outcome of tossing a coin will give heads is ½.

The *concept* involved in the above example, although abstract in-so-far-as the student needs to visualize possible outcomes in an imaginary situation, is not a difficult one - if you toss a coin 20 times you expect to get heads about 10 times - but the *language* is new.

Does language sometimes disguise the concept difficulty? Are students sometimes overwhelmed by language rather than concept? What balance should there be between language and concept? Which should be taught first (if a choice exists) - language or concept?

In contrast, if a question such as the following is posed, the students' abstract reasoning may well be stretched to the limit - yet the language used is everyday vocabulary only.

> "Help yourselves, but only twelve each," said Jim grabbing a dozen marbels from the box. "We've less green than blue and less blue than red, so each take most red and fewest green."
>
> Jim having done so himself, the other boys complied. There were only the three colors, and the box contained just the right number.
>
> "We've all picked different selections," remarked Joe. "I'm the only one with four blues."
>
> "So what?" Pete picked up one of his green marbles that he'd dropped. "Let's play."
>
> And play they did.
>
> There were twenty-six red marbles altogether. So how many boys were there?
>
> (From: "Mathematical Diversion" by J.A.H. Hunter and J.S. Madachy, Dover, N.Y. (1975))

I leave these problems with you for reflection, with the postscript that, in the words of Sir Joshua Reynolds:

> "There is no expedient to which a man will not resort to avoid the real labour of thinking".

'SOME ASPECTS OF BODY MOVEMENT IN COMMUNICATION'

JUNE GASSIN

June Gassin is a native Californian who has lived and taught in a number of countries including France, Spain, and Japan. She is currently Lecturer in ESL at the University of Melbourne. She has studied under Odile Menot from the Institut de Phonetique in Paris, and she is particularly interested in the pedagogy of rhythm, speech and body movement.

'SOME ASPECTS OF BODY MOVEMENT IN COMMUNICATION'

The aim of this workshop is to heighten the participants' awareness of the important role of body movement in communication. Body movements may "speak" for themselves through gesture, posture, stance, facial expression, eye contact, spacial arrangement, time sequence, vegetative organization or what I call vibrational frequency. Such movements may be categorized as personal, situational or culturally specific, and they may change in form, position and amplitude according to context.

The same types of body movements as mentioned above may also accompany speech. In this case they can either complement it, modify it, substitute for it or contradict it. Our perception of the true meaning behind someone's words often relies on this subtle means of non-verbal signaling.

Body movements do not, however, accompany speech only as indicated above. They are, according to William Condon, precisely synchronous with the rhythmic features of our language. His concepts of rhythmic auto-synchrony and interactional synchrony are of paramount importance in understanding some communication disorders. His work also has wide-ranging implications for language learners and teachers. As Odile Menot has pointed out, learning a language means finding the "natural" link between body and speech. Teaching a language means working with students on the synchrony of body and speech.

'COMMUNICATING MATHEMATICAL SKILLS AND IDEAS IN TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS'

JOE GILKS

Joe Gilks, M.Sc.(UNSW), M.A. (W.S.U.), Dip.Ed.(Syd.), was appointed Senior Lecturer in Mathematics at the Gordon Institute of Technology, Geelong, in 1971 after 5 years at the Royal Australian Naval College and 9 years in N.S.W. high schools. During a year of study leave he was involved in a small amount of lecturing at Washington State University. He returned to his present position at Deakin University where he is responsible for the Numerical Analysis courses and the mathematics option taken by students in the School of Education. He is a member of the Geelong Veteran Cycling Club, and a Bridge player ready to make up a table.

Communicating Mathematical Skills and Ideas in Tertiary Institutions.

Mathematics at tertiary institutions is presented in a variety of ways with verbal and written (often symbolic) language dominating the communication between lecturer and student. The extent to which language and the style of teaching influences learning will be considered in what must be seen as a personal view.

1. Tertiary Mathematics Courses

There are two main categories into which courses may be placed.

i) Courses in which the main aim is to teach a skill where, complete understanding of the underlying theory is regarded as desirable but not essential.

(ii) Courses in which the main aim is to teach embracing ideas and concepts and to develop mathematical creativity in the students.

Very roughly, type (i) courses are taken by "users" of mathematics at Year 1 or Year 2 level whereas most courses beyond Year 2 are of type (ii). Twenty years ago, the Committee on the Undergraduate Program in Mathematics of the Mathematical Association of America produced recommended curricula for specific student groups. They were adopted so extensively in North America that excellent texts were written specifically for them. They have standardised notation and mathematical content of mathematical courses in much of the western world.

2. Teaching Mathematics

Some of the more frequently encountered situations are listed.

(i) Large classes with small tutorial groups. Up to 600 students in a large lecture theatre are expected to copy every word which is written on the board or overhead projector. Small tutorial groups (15 to 20 students) where students work on exercises are the only opportunities for one to one communication between staff and students. These classes depend heavily upon the lecture notes and the recommended text.

(ii) Special classes for a narrowly defined group of students. In these classes, such as "Statistics for Psychology" it is usual for the lecturer to present a worked example and set many similar examples for the students to do in their spare time. It may be that a minimum of theory is given. The applications are chosen so as to be meaningful to the group.

(iii) Keller plan courses divide traditional courses into short modules and students are self-paced through them. These courses rely heavily on texts or printed notes and tutorials where tutors supervise each student's progress through the modules.

(iv) Off campus courses depend largely upon the printed word, although large scale operations supplement this with audio cassettes and video tapes. Mathematics without regional tutorials prove to be very difficult and frustrating to all but the most highly motivated students.

(v) Seminars for staff, postgraduate students and some undergraduates are usually reports on current research. Specialised terminology and notation is defined at the start of such a lecture and this is developed to describe the major results of the research topic.

(vi) Final year undergraduate classes for mathematics majors are exciting challenges for staff because of the prospect of making the students into creative mathematicians. A lecturing style which stimulates and encourages an independent line of investigation is vital. However, a vast amount of factual knowledge must be imparted at the same time.

The stimulation and encouragement of independent thought is, of course, most desirable in all mathematics teaching, but the structure and nature of many of the courses militates against this.

3. Learning Mathematics

There is extensive research on how school children learn mathematics and considerably less on tertiary students. Hickerson(1) describes learning elementary number facts as similar to learning language and advocates a standard progression of teaching stages which ensures the language required to express a particular mathematical concept is developed ahead of the concepts itself. The affects on mathematical achievement of reading skill and the reading level of textbooks is studied extensively by Aiken(2) who has shown that both are significant factors.

There can be no doubt, however, that students learn mathematics by doing mathematics. The more practice exercises worked by the student, the better he or she becomes. The jargon and symbolism of mathematics becomes entrenched with usage. Students learn from their errors as well as their successes. They must be encouraged to try problems which are new to them and, if they are successful, they learn through discovery. This is the catchcry of many teachers of school mathematics. It is argued by Beberman(3) that students will retain mathematical ideas much longer if they are discovered rather than explicated by the teacher. On the other hand Ausubel(4) presents a contrary view.

The discovery approach for advanced students was developed extensively by R.L. Moore of Texas University with his teaching of topology. Many of his students (and, in turn, their students) with teaching positions in universities are perpetuating this system in which the lecturer puts carefully selected problems to the students and, on a one to one basis, monitors progress through them. A minimum of help is given, and, strict devotees of this method will prohibit the use of textbooks or communication with other students. It is claimed that top students thrive, provided that they are sufficiently motivated whereas lesser students have a high failure rate.

4. Modes of Communication

As with other fields of tertiary study, there are certain modes of communication which are practised with varying levels of proficiency. On campus lecturing of mathematics depends heavily upon the spoken word and notes which are written on boards. The notes include diagrams, algebraic symbolism and numerical calculations. The extent to which students communicate with each other and with their lecturer depends upon their personal relationships and the extent of the encouragement which the lecturer gives. The submission of assignments is another important aspect of communication.

Off campus mathematics courses have special difficulties but technology is helping to alleviate the problems. Telephone tutorials allow improved communication, although it is very difficult to read an equation over the telephone. The Open University uses audio and video tapes as well as television but these have deficiencies in so far as they are a one way movement of ideas. By contrast, the experienced on campus lecturer can monitor student reaction to the lecture and adjust the pace accordingly. This subtle form of communication may well distinguish a successful presentation from an unsuccessful one.

5. Special Language

Mathematics is an exact discipline and, as such, requires precision in notation and language. If a student is asked to prove that "if n is any natural number greater than 10 then n! is divisible by 100", the words any, natural and divisible are to be treated as having special meanings which differ from their meanings in everyday use. The sentence construction is important too. For example, whereas the above statement can be proved to be true, its converse, "if n! is divisible by 100 then n is a natural number greater than 10" is false. A purist may define the set of integers to be $\{\{n\} | n \in N\} \cup \{\phi\} \cup N$ which is quite unintelligible to all except those who have studied the meanings of the symbols used in the expression. This example emphasises that learning mathematics is a cumulative process where known language, notation and ideas allow extension to new ideas with associated language and notation.

6. The Future

The content of tertiary mathematics courses continues to change, albeit slowly at times. Notation becomes standardised and applications reflect changes in other disciplines. Technology influences teaching style and course content. For example, the proliferation of microcomputers causes a greater demand for numerical analysis in undergraduate programs. Video tapes and computer aided instruction will be used more extensively for on campus as well as off campus students. Computer graphics have the potential to replace black-board diagrams and play-back systems will doubtlessly replace some of the traditional forms of lecturing. Despite this, face to face communication will remain for many years as vital for the dissemination of mathematical ideas in tertiary institutions.

References

1. Hickerson, J.A. ´Similarities Between Teaching Language and Arithmetic´, Arithmetic Teacher, vol.6 (1959) pp.241-4.

2. Aiken, L.R. (1971) ´Language Factors in Mathematical Learning´, Review of Educational Research, vol. 42 (1971) pp.359-84.

3. Beberman, M. ´An Emerging Program of Secondary School Mathematics´, Cambridge, MA: Havard University Press (1958).

4. Ausubel, D.P. ´Learning by Discovery - Rationale and Mystique´, Bulletin of the National Society of Secondary School Principals, vol.45 (1961) pp.18-58.

'DEVELOPING AUDIO LEARNING SKILLS MATERIALS FOR EXTERNAL STUDENTS'

LORRAINE MARSHALL

Lorraine Marshall started at Murdoch University as a Foundation Staff Member to establish the Learning Skills Programme. Lorraine developed and co-ordinates that programme, which is based on the integration of the process of learning with course content. This is done particularly in conjunction with three major First Year courses, the trunk courses. At Murdoch she was also instrumental in establishing and providing the development of an Independent Study Contract system which is unique to Australian tertiary institutions.

Lorraine is co-author with Frances Rowland of A Guide to Learning Independently (Longman Cheshire, 1981). In addition she is the author of a series of educational programmes, called Study Skills, on ABC radio.

DEVELOPING AUDIO LEARNING SKILLS MATERIALS FOR EXTERNAL STUDENTS

Murdoch's External Studies programme is based on the premise that external courses should mirror as close as practicable their internal equivalents. The Learning Skills programme for internal students is both content related and utilises peer learning as a teaching method. Until recently only written Learning Skills materials were available for external students and while these are course content related, they have not utilised the principle of peer learning. Three sets of audio materials (one on reading and two on essay writing) have been developed on a model which incorporates the content orientation and the process of peer learning. A different approach to peer learning was used to develop each set of materials, one used open ended questioning, another was scripted with particular learning processes in mind and the third used semi-structured tutorials. In the workshop the development of the materials will be outlined and examples of the tapes and supplementary materials will form the basis of discussion.

'ANALYSIS AND SYNTHESIS:
DEVELOPING REPORT WRITING SKILLS IN TERTIARY STUDENTS'

M. ROSANNA MC EVEDY

NAME:	Mary Rosanna McEvedy	BIRTHPLACE:	New Zealand
		NATIONALITY:	New Zealander/Australian

EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

DOCTORATE:	University of W.A.	(anthropology/linguistics/education)
B.A. Hons (First):	University of W.A.	(anthropology/linguistics)
TEACHER'S CERTIFICATE:	Teachers' College for Further Education, W.A.	(primary school)
TEACHER TRAINING:	New Zealand	(primary school)
CURRENT STUDY:	M.Sc.	(geochemistry)

WORK EXPERIENCE - TEACHING STUDY SKILLS

PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHER in schools with high migrant emrolments.

E(nglish) L(anguage) I(ntensive) C(ourse) for O(verseas) S(tudents) at W.A.I.T.

INTENSIVE TUTORING of sponsored, postgraduate, overseas students enrolled in the English Preparation Centre, Dept. of Education and Youth Affairs, Sydney.

INTENSIVE, SHORT TERM TRAINING COURSES run by the English Preparation Centre, DEYA, for students sponsored by the Australian Development Assistance Bureau.

WORK EXPERIENCE - TERTIARY STUDENTS

POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS enrolled in INTERCULTURAL STUDIES and MIGRANT EDUCATION.

POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS enrolled in READING.

CURRENT EMPLOYER: W.A. COLLEGE OF ADVANCED EDUCATION, Claremont Campus.

ANALYSIS AND SYNTHESIS: DEVELOPING REPORT WRITING SKILLS IN TERTIARY STUDENTS

© M. Rosanna McEVEDY
(W.A. College of Advanced Education*)

ABSTRACT

Many students enrolled in tertiary institutions face serious problems because they have not mastered the craft of report writing before commencing their tertiary education. Because students are presumed to possess this skill on entry to tertiary institutions some instructors are disconcerted when they discover they have to train students in the craft of report writing while teaching the content of the discipline.

This paper is addressed to instructors with overseas, migrant and Anglo-Australian students who have problems with:

* the general conventions and requirements of report writing in tertiary institutions;
* planning, organising and writing coherent, logical reports; and
* developing a more rigorous attitude towards evaluating their own writing.

EXPECTATIONS OF REPORT WRITING IN TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS

The Importance of Report Writing Skills

Students enrolled in universities and colleges of advanced education are faced with writing tasks variously known as reports, theses, essays and assignments. The assessment of tertiary students' academic performance is largely based on their written assignments and so learning how to present an acceptable report is vital if students are to study successfully at tertiary level.

Tertiary Study

Middle-class students with Anglo-Australian backgrounds who have been

---

* I would like to acknowledge the considerable support I received from the staff of the English Preparation Centre, Commonwealth Department of Education and Youth Affairs, Sydney, N.S.W. in clarifying my ideas and practices.

educated in the Australian school system have certain advantages over non-middle-class, Aboriginal, migrant and overseas students (Schools Commission, 1979). Not only does their culture more closely match that found in Australian tertiary institutions but they have a sociolinguistic and learning style advantage, too.

Middle-class Anglo-Australian students are trained to be 'field independent' and 'incentive motivational' learners (Ramirez and Castaneda, 1974), and the emphasis placed on independent, self-based, responsible study by tertiary institutions actively selects for these students. It is not argued here that these selection criteria be replaced: however, tertiary instructors need to be aware of the fact that they have to help 'field dependent' students (Ramirez and Castaneda, 1974) acculturate to the expectations, norms and values of tertiary study. In particular, lecturers may have to teach the conventions and norms of report writing to non-middle-class students while teaching the content of the discipline.

Lecturers' Expectations and Problems Occurring in Reports

When marking students' essays lecturers expect them to:

* have a clear structure;
* cover the topic in sufficient breadth and depth;
* be written in an appropriate style; and
* observe presentational requirements.

Unfortunately, many students fail to meet one, or more, of their lecturers' expectations.

The most common short-comings in structure and content in students' essays are:

* mastery of the subject is not demonstrated because the question has not been interpreted correctly and, thus, has been answered abliquely;
* coherent, flowing logic is absent because insufficient planning has been done; and
* the structure of the argument is obscure because the writing task (that is, to discuss, evaluate, analyse, compare and so on) has not been approached correctly.

Students also have problems with expressing their ideas in appropriate language. Students need to use the specific terms of their discipline

confidently and accurately, and to write in the correct style (See Appendix 1 for a discussion of style.). Students who do not use the right style and technical vocabulary have not written for their audience, but for themselves. Such students do not always communicate fully their knowledge of the subject because they have not expressed themselves in an acceptable way.

Other problems in students' reports are related to poor presentation. Some students fail to realise that if their essays do not look like essays then they will not be treated as such. Students' reports should aim to help the reader identify the main ideas quickly so that the theoretical approach is easily perceived. The judicious use of space (blank lines and wide margins), headings, different typefaces and a consistent sub-pointing system help the reader's comprehension immensely. The attitude of students towards their readers and their work is implied in their:

* legible writing;
* use of punctuation;
* well set out bibliography;
* consistent in-text referencing system;
* neat title, contents, tables and figures pages; and
* clearly labelled diagrams and tables.

Essays, whose writers do not demonstrate a high level of mastery of the subject, but which are well presented, are more likely to be more favourably received than essays whose writers show a similar level of understanding of the subject, but which have a low standard of presentation: the reason is the readers/markers are alienated by writers whose presentation makes it hard for them to understand the message.

Another major problem occurring in students' essays is plagiarism. Overseas students often have difficulty understanding that any idea not their own has to be referenced back to the primary source. Such students are perplexed by the Australian attitude towards plagiarism as it does not necessarily attract any disapprobation in their home countries. In particular, paraphrases and précis of others' work, which require some intellectual effort on the students' part, are often not sourced because the effort put into the restatement of others' ideas is seen to confer ownership of the idea on the students. Convincing students that it is the idea, and not the language that it is couched in, that has to be sourced is often difficult.

Principal Problems Revisited

Students have difficulty with one, or more, of the following:

* analysing the topic and understanding the writing task;
* planning a structured, coherent argument that answers the question;
* expressing themselves clearly (See Appendix 1);
* demonstrating knowledge of the subject; and
* presenting the report well.

The point of teaching report writing skills to students is to equip them with a set of internalised standards which they consult to evaluate their own work before it is submitted.

THE PROCESS OF REPORT WRITING

Cognitive Activities and Skills Acquisition

The initial objective is to make students understand that report writing is both a process and a skill, and that it can be learned. The process of report writing is divided into several elements or stages (Figure 1) and these are grouped into sets which require the following cognitive activities:

* analysis;
* synthesis; and
* evaluation.

The results of the students' thinking are then placed before the reader more or less successfully depending on the standard of presentation. Competent use of presentational techniques can also be learned.

The balance of this paper describes in detail only those elements in the report writing process which students have most difficulty with:

* analysing the question;
* planning an outline;
* writing a draft; and
* presenting the final document.

Stylistic matters are reviewed in Appendix 1.

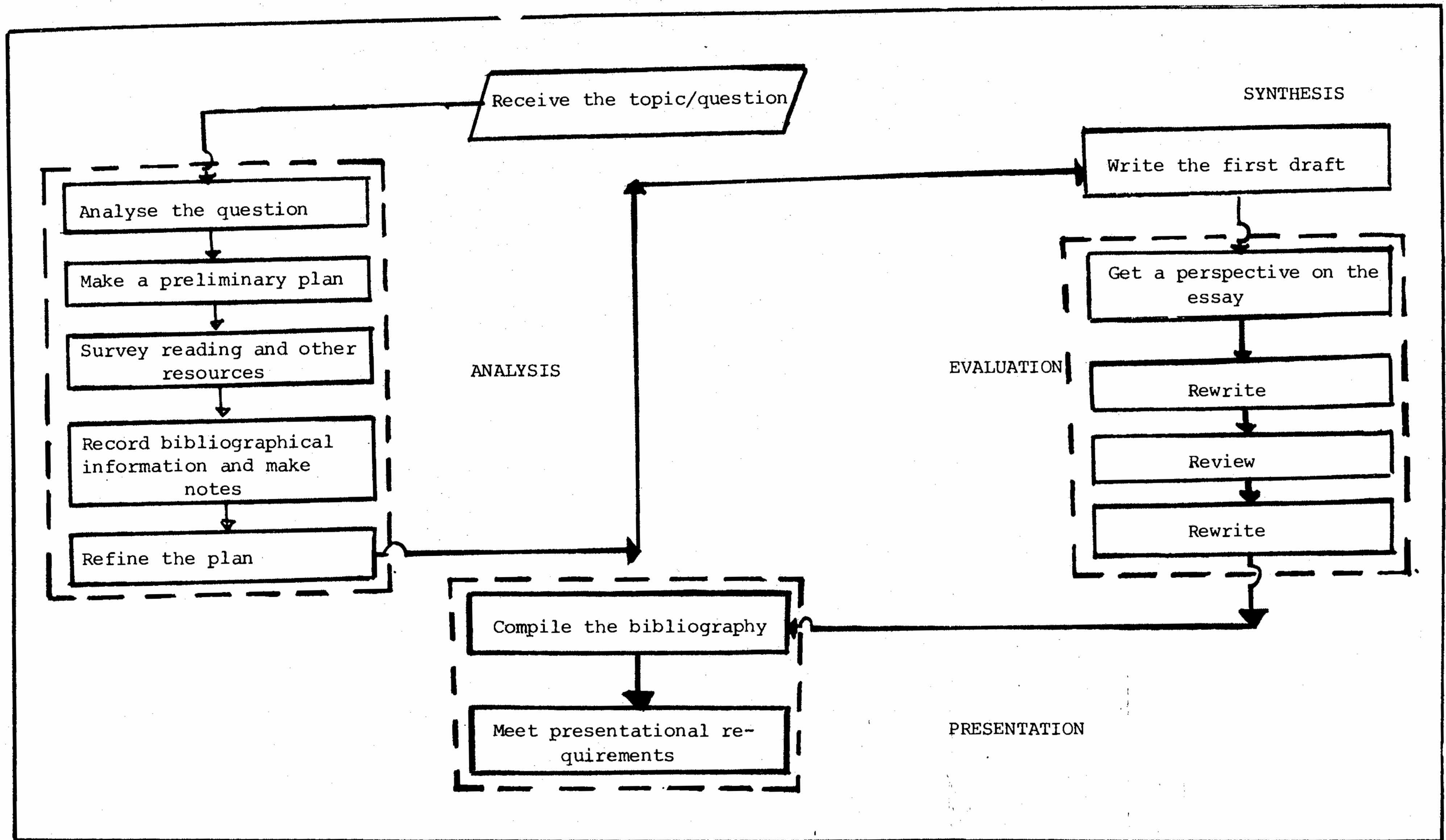


Figure 1: The Process of Report Writing

ANALYSING THE QUESTION

Interpretation

Most students experience difficulty understanding essay questions at one time or another during their tertiary study. But many ESL/ EFL students continue to have problems coming to grips with essay topics late into their academic careers, long after most of their Anglo-Australian peers have learned to analyse questions. The problem is compounded in those overseas students who have enrolled in graduate degrees because:

* they acquired their bachelor degrees substantially through rote learning, memorising a few texts;
* they are used to teacher-dominated instruction and have difficulty accepting they are responsible for initiating much of their own learning;
* they have not been trained to write essays which require them to think for themselves and to evaluate others' work.

Educational experiences, culture and language barriers prevent culturally different students from interpreting essay questions correctly with confidence. It is possible to provide students with a set of instructions on how to analyse questions (Table 1) in order to off-set the influence of these barriers.

	OBJECTIVE	TECHNIQUE
1	To isolate the **key** words	* identify the **content/topic** words * recognise the **task** words (discuss, evaluate, account for, describe, compare, contrast, relate, review, comment on)
2	To understand the **relationships** between the topic and task words	* study how the topics **depend on** and **relate to** each other * check the **prepositions** and **logical linkers** for their functions * refer to the task words and choose how to **approach** the topic
3	To represent the relationships between the topic and task words **visually**	* draw a **diagram** of the relationships between the topic and task words

Table 1: Instructions on How to Analyse a Question

Visual Input

Students who have difficulty understanding what the string of words in a question means can usually understand diagrams of the relationships between content and task words. The rationale behind diagramming logical relationships is to make students use non-graphemic ways of getting at the information when words fail to convey meaning.

Diagrams, such as those in Figure 2, express some of the relationships between topic and task words.

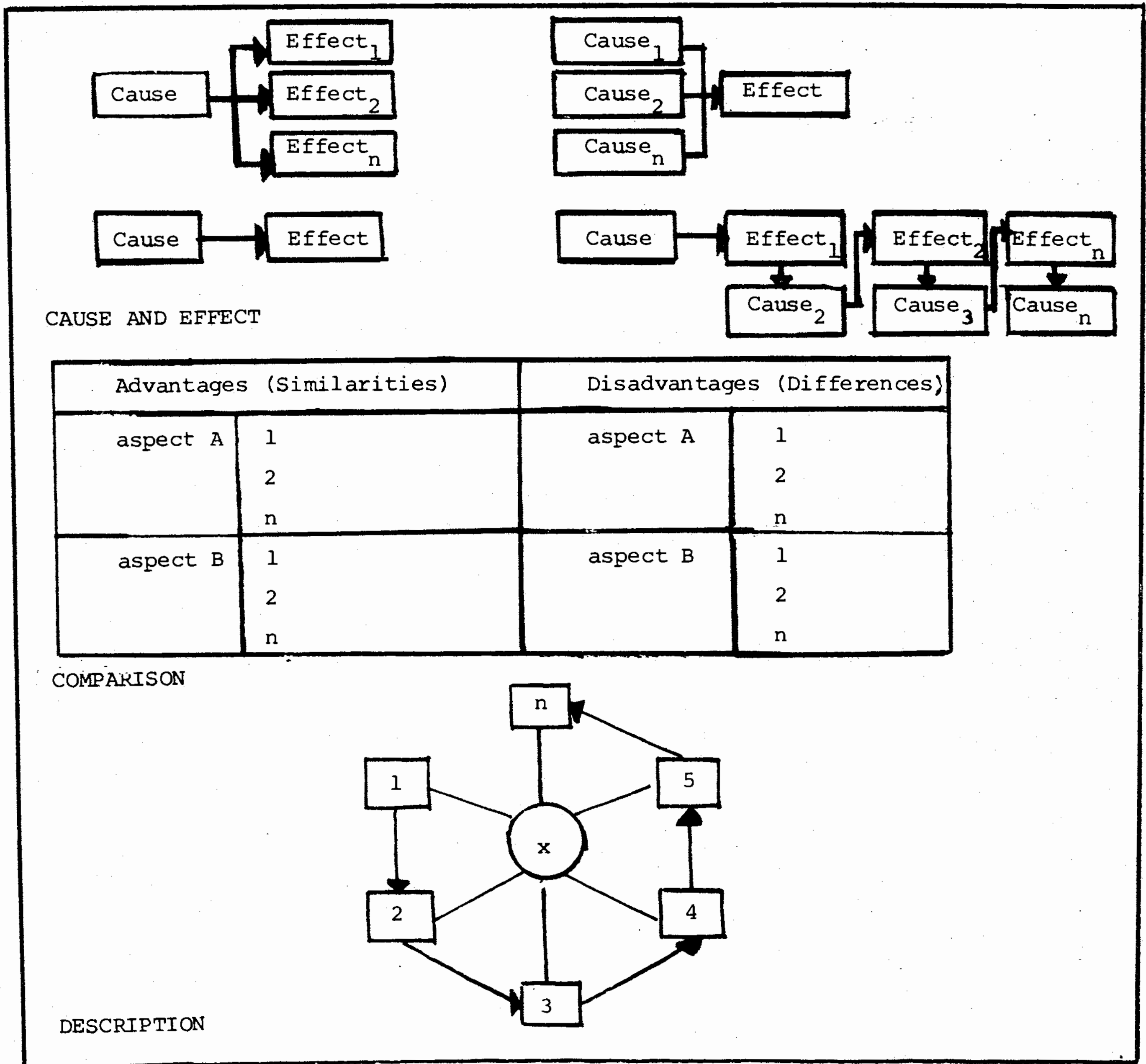


Figure 2: Relationships between Selected Topic and Task Words

Students can start with the simpler diagrams and then move on to flowcharts which visually demonstrate more complex relationships between the writing task and the subject (Figure 3).

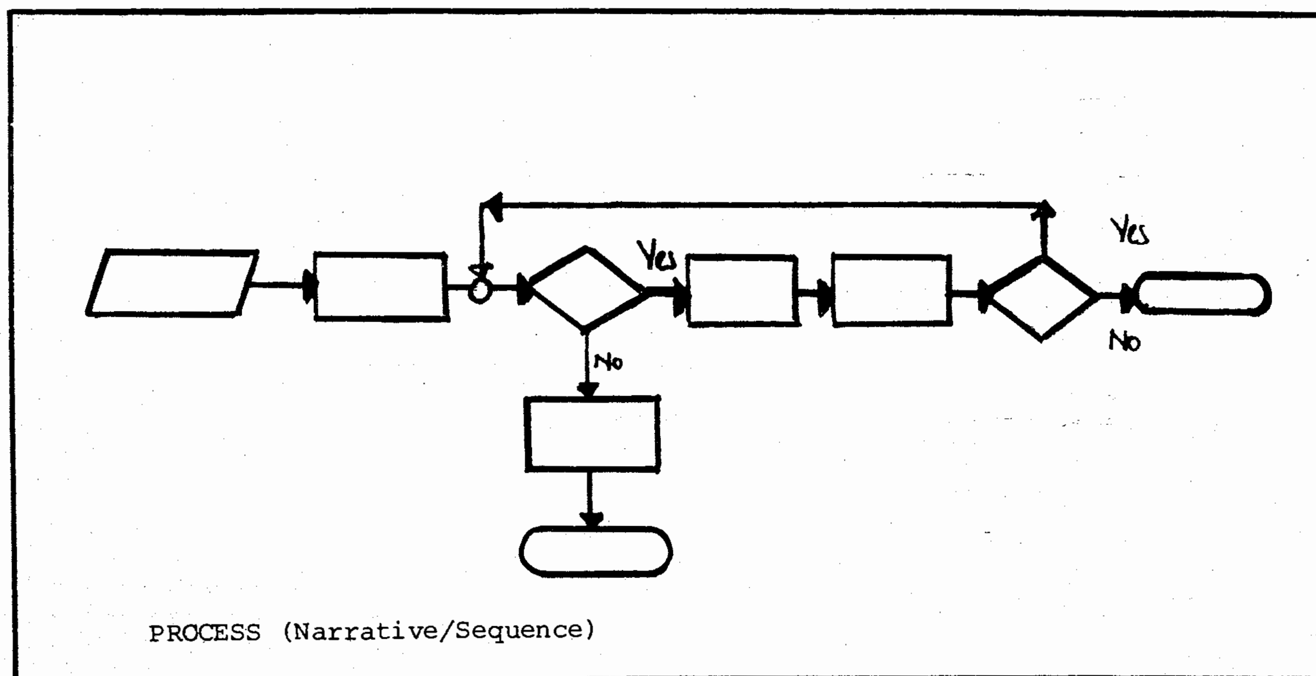


Figure 3: Flowchart of a More Complex Relationship between Topic and Task Words

These flowcharts are summaries of the argument in an essay and a description of the logical flow of content: in effect, they are basic plans.

PLANNING AN OUTLINE

The Functions of Outlines

Outlines of essays have five basic objectives:

* to establish the students' state of knowledge on the subject;
* to indicate where substantiation of claims is needed and additional information required;
* to order the content;
* to clarify the approach; and
* to reveal the skeletal structure.

Preliminary Planning Tasks: Establishing What is Known

When students are confronted with an essay question they often respond

negatively, believing they know nothing about the topic. The first task of the instructor is to make the students realise that they do, in fact, possess relevant information, and that it is a matter of identifying and recalling it and putting it down on paper. One way of overcoming their protestations that they know nothing about the topic is to set a question on a topic completely outside their field and ask them to write an answer under examination conditions. Most students are able to write four to six paragraphs in about an hour and then they are able to be guided on where there are informational gaps or structural problems to be remedied. It is useful, at this stage, to teach them to distinguish between fact and opinion and to identify claims that need substantiation by referring to others' work. Once they are convinced that they do have knowledge to recall students can then be set a question in their speciality and asked to 'brainstorm', that is to jot down any idea on the topic as it occurs to them.

The number of ideas generated during brainstorming can be quite large. But students must accept that their knowledge is not always accurate or recent and so they must be prepared to identify where their information is scanty and where substantiation is needed. Initial library research activities can be based on filling in these gaps.

Ordering Ideas

Some students worry about tackling essay questions because they do not know how to organise their ideas on a topic. The ideas randomly generated during brainstorming should be organised into sets based on main ideas, which appear as headings, and followed by ideas which support or modulate them. These sets of ideas should be sequenced in a logical order to form the body of the report. Alternatively, if a flowchart has already been drawn up the ideas recorded during brainstorming can be entered directly on to the chart at the relevant point.

Regardless of whether ideas on a topic are generated by brainstorming or acquired through library research they must be organised into a sequenced, coherent argument. Convention demands that essays have:

* a beginning (an introduction);
* a middle (a development or body);
* an end (set of conclusions);

and the functions of each of these parts need to be clearly understood.

When planning an outline of the introduction, development and conclusion of an essay students should do the tasks presented in Table 2 so that a sound skeletal structure underpins the content of the report.

	SECTION OF TEXT	TASK
1	Introduction	* note the key words requiring definition * limit the coverage of the essay by delineating the scope and focus * indicate the writing task (discussion, evaluation, analysis, comparison, and so on) * outline the plan of the essay, using phrases similar to those occurring in headings in the development * identify the theoretical stance
2	Development	* expand the plan of the essay given in the introduction in a point-by-point sequence * stick to the topic * meet the writing task * present the information from the theoretical angle indicated in the introduction * identify claims that need substantiation or refutation by referring to other authors' work
3	Conclusion	* make a preliminary guess at the main issues and ideas, but be prepared to modify them in the light of reading * write down personal opinions, but be prepared to change them * leave space to discuss implications * try to identify areas that need further investigation

Table 2: Filling in an Essay Outline Section by Section

If students perceive the functions of each section of the text they can draw up skeletal plans which have the introduction, development and conclusion identified and then merely slip the sequenced information into the appropriate slot.

Intermediate Tasks: Resources Survey and Starting a Bibliography

Brainstorming and organising the information around a three-part outline allows the gaps in the students' information to be identified. The students should do a full reading and resources survey, based mainly on books and journals. Where necessary, scripts, newspapers and films should be reviewed and interviews with experts done. All information is to be accurately recorded and sourced correctly. In particular, quotations and bibliographical details should be exact. Failure to record bibliographical information correctly the first time means several trips to the library to retrieve the information are needed. Students should be encouraged to create a bibliographical index on cards so that they can easily compile a bibliography later.

Refining the Plan

To make sure that the information gathered is relevant and that the writing task is being addressed the students should be encouraged to carry out those activities listed in Table 3.

	ELEMENT REQUIRING REVIEW	TASKS
1	Title	* examine the topic and task words again * review the coverage expected by the title * relate the title to your plan and reading to see if the writing task has been met
2	Structure	* check that main ideas are readily identifiable by headings * look at the flow of ideas from section to section * review the linking of ideas to each other within the sections of the text * check that main ideas have been expanded or modified
3	Content	* discard irrelevant material * add any pertinent information * insert references to reading materials at appropriate points * identify suitable places for supporting tables and diagrams in the outline * organise quotations into the same order as they are referred to in the outline

Table 3: Refining the Plan and Sticking to the Point

At this stage the preliminary plan will be overcrowded and virtually indecipherable so a new plan, incorporating the refinements, should be drawn up. Another review of the plan should be done and appropriate changes made until the outline is satisfactory.

WRITING DRAFTS

Making Meaning Apparent

A crucial point that students need to understand about assignment writing is that they are writing to communicate with the reader, not for their own edification. They must be made aware of the fact that care is needed so

that their meaning is communicated at the three meaning levels that are found in English discourse:

* sentence level;
* paragraph level; and
* the text, or discourse, level.

Students' ideas should be clearly expressed in well constructed sentences that use simple language. These sentences should have:

* main ideas, contained in the compulsory main clause; and
* optional, supporting ideas expressed in the subordinate clause.

The logical relationship between the idea expressed in the main clause and that found in the subordinate clause should be made obvious through the use of tenses, modifiers, pronouns, connectors and logical linkers.

Ideas expressed at sentence level should be grouped, ranked if necessary, and then written into paragraphs. The most important idea is presented in the topic sentence. Students should be made aware of the fact that scientific and technical writing usually has the topic sentence placed initially in the paragraph whereas in literary or narrative writing it may be final or medial. Other ideas should be expressed in sentences which modify, develop, summarise or terminate the topical idea. Logical, coherent relationships between sentences should be made apparent through the use of reference and linkers.

At text level, principal ideas should be readily identifiable. Students can help their reader find the main ideas by using headings and a consistent sub-pointing system. The skeletal structure underpinning the content of the essay needs to be easily grasped when the reader initially surveys the report to get a feel for the flow of ideas and their organisation. Tables and figures help the reader to assimilate the broad thrust of the essay quickly.

Layout of the First Draft

A high standard of neatness is not the primary aim of the first draft. Rather, the aim is to get ideas to flow logically and coherently and support them with sourced quotations, tables and diagrams. Aiming for neatness on the first draft impedes the process of getting the text together. Because considerable modifications will be made to the first draft it is necessary to remind students that they should leave a lot of space for change by:

* leaving a very wide margin; and
* double-spacing the lines of writing.

ESL/EFL students need to be reminded to write horizontally, in script, using

English from the beginning rather than writing in their first languages and then translating, as this approach accustoms them to using English more frequently.

Many students believe that the first draft is the final one. They believe their writing task is finished once their ideas are committed to paper. Tertiary instructors often need to convince students that the first draft is only the initial one and that careful writers usually labour through four or five drafts before they are satisfied.

Steps in Writing the First Draft

Students require help in writing the different sections of their essays. They readily agree they have to:

* tackle the introduction;
* expand the development; and
* formulate conclusions and discuss implications.

But many students have some initial difficulty in accepting they should rewrite the introduction after the report has been completed. Because their ideas are rendered more comprehensible to them, and possibly reorganised, during the writing process students should be encouraged to rewrite their introductions so that the reader encounters a development that reflects the plan proposed in the introduction. Specific steps in writing reports are presented in Table 4, overleaf.

EVALUATING THE PRODUCT

Getting a Perspective

Students tend to submit their reports immediately they have finished the final draft, mainly because of poor planning of time. Reports and essays benefit from being put aside for a few days as the writers then come to the content with a refreshed viewpoint. Students should be encouraged to finish their assignments at least a week before they are due so that they can review and revise them more thoroughly.

Revision

Review and revision need to be done to a single assignment <u>several</u> times, looking at different levels in the text (Table 5) each time.

	TASKS	PROCEDURES
1	Expand the introduction into several paragraphs	* write definitions of key words and expand these by using examples and referring to authoritative sources * limit the scope of the topic by concentrating on the major points * state the approach to the task of the essay (e.g. comparison,review, and so on) * state the sequence in which ideas are presented
2	Expand the development into sections that contain paragraphs	* use headings to identify separate sections within the development * check that the sequence of the headings matches that given in the introduction * write paragraphs about the content indicated in the headings, enlarging on important aspects within each paragraph * include relevant quotations at the right places in the paragraphs to support or refute claims * give the sources of quotations, tables and figures * include diagrams and tables if necessary
3(a)	Formulate the conclusion	* present a summary of the main ideas and conflicting opinions * present the writer's opinions * formulate a concluding idea that restates the problem
(b)	Discuss any implications	* identify any deficiencies the writer's study has revealed * indicate if any further works needs to be done to remedy these deficiencies
4	Review the introduction	* rewrite the introduction

Table 4: Steps in Writing Reports

	TASK	PROCEDURES
1	Look at the general sense	* check the logic of the essay for ambiguities incoherent thought, convoluted sentences * check the main ideas are presented * write down any new relevant ideas * cull repetitive material
2	Check the paragraphing	* check that paragraphs contain topic, sentences and modulating, terminating and transitional sentences where necessary
3	Check the sentences	* make sure that main clauses appear in each sentence * make sure that subordinate clauses are included where necessary
4	Review for details	* check the syntax, punctuation, spelling headings, charts, tables, vocabulary * check the content of quotations and in-text referencing system * use a dictionary
5	Check the use of space	* look at single spacing, indentation, headings, sub-points

Marking Up and Editing

The use of space communicates the organisation of ideas to the reader. Students improve the communicative efficiency of their writing by:

* using wide margins;
* leaving clear spaces around headings and sub-headings;
* framing tables and figures;
* using different typefaces; and
* following a consistent sub-pointing system.

How to correct the use of space should be marked up on their drafts by students as they revise them so that the meeting of presentational standards and conventions is made easier when it comes to writing the final copy.

Other corrections relating to:

* punctuation;
* spelling;
* referencing and quotations;
* spacing;
* paragraphing;
* typeface;
* tables and figures; and
* insertions and deletions

should be marked up using those correction symbols followed by printers. Students benefit from being trained in the use of printers' editing symbols early in their tertiary careers as they have ample time to practise using them before they apply them to theses.

PRESENTING THE FINAL PRODUCT

Compiling a Bibliography

By this stage the students should, ideally, have completed these steps:

* analysed the question;
* brainstormed for ideas;
* planned an outline;
* researched the topic;
* recorded bibliographical sources and quotations exactly;
* refined the plan;
* written a first draft;
* revised the content of the first draft;
* edited the draft.

The next step is to complie a bibliography. If students have maximised their library study time they will have recorded the bibliographical details of each book and article on separate cards. All that remains to be done at this stage is to put the cards in alphabetical, authorship and date order and check each card for errors. The bibliographical sourcing conventions of the discipline, department or institution should be followed.

Conventions

Conventions which students commonly fail to follow are:

* writing on only one side of the paper;
* using the right sized paper;
* writing legibly, or typing;
* leaving a 2.5cm margin on the left side of the page;
* using a consistent in-text referencing system;
* following correct pagination procedures;
* providing a title page;
* italicising non-English words;
* identifying tables and figures with numbers and titles; and
* locating tables and figures in the appropriate places in the text.

Two more serious problems also occur:

* lack of acknowledgement of the sources of ideas; and
* failing to indicate where quotations start and end and the students' work begins,

and these omissions are to be treated severely.

Some students, however, wish to 'pretty up' their work and write on grey, perfumed A3 paper, in multicoloured inks. Others see technical report writing as being a sub-variety of creative short story composition, using florid phrases and punctuating like James Joyce. Such creativeness should be reserved for diaries and novels.

Final Presentation

After the text is written up the bibliography needs to be compiled and attached to the end of the essay. Then all pages are numbered consecutively in Arabic numerals, starting with <u>1</u> on the first page of the text and continuing until all pages are numbered.

Next, an Abstract should be written to summarise the thrust of the essay.

Contents, tables and figures pages are drawn up and page numbers cross-referenced to the text. A title page is then written out and the preliminary pages ordered correctly; then, with the exception of the title page, numbered with Roman numerals, starting at II.

A COMMENT

Such an approach to teaching report writing is mechanistic. But for many students, struggling with a different learning style and linear logic, the procedures are a source of confidence to them when they are faced with a blank sheet of paper and 2,000 words to write on an unappealing topic. Getting the structure right can, in fact, help improve the content.

APPENDIX ONE: STYLE

Elements of Style

Pick up a book teaching students how to write essays (Jordan, 1980; Borrell and Bateson, 1980; Zinkin, 1980; Ehrlich and Murphy, 1964; McKay and Rosenthal, 1980; Barr et al., 1981) and a definition of the style commonly used for report writing emerges:

* the passive voice is used in preference to the active to denote the writer's impartial attitude to the subject. For example:

The lower speed reading scores of overseas students indicate a slower rate of language processing.	→	A slower rate of language processing in overseas students is indicated by their lower speed reading scores.

* the third person singular is used to show that the writer is not personally involved in the topic under discussion, and the first person is avoided:

I think the results of the survey show that overseas students do not read as quickly as L_1 students.	→	It is thought that the results of the survey show that overseas students do not read as quickly as L_1 students.

* the Latinate words in the English lexicon are used in preference to the (generally) shorter Anglo-Saxon words, as they are somehow more 'technical'. So a cattle tick becomes an acarid, to the confusion of farmers.
* convoluted, compound sentences are used to express several ideas in a single sentence. Several simple sentences, connected by reference and linkers, would express the ideas more clearly.
* tentative, indirect statements are made to express claims:

  It would appear that the results indicate a need for closer consultation between foremen and process workers to prevent the possible occurrence of unpleasant incidents.

* sentences which run counter to the usual end-focus and initial-theme organisation of information in English clauses (Quirk, et al., 1977:937;945) are frequently encountered in the formal style. So existential there + be passives, fronted adjuncts and -ing clauses often occur in sentences.

  Ahead, standing on the hill top in solitary splendour, was the castle which had been constructed by the peasants in the Twelfth Century. There was an element of mystery about it.

In sum, the report writing register is used to produce impersonal, factual

accounts. Unfortunately, the unanticipated effect of such advice can be the production of woolly thoughts in vague, complex, verbless structures. What is needed is simple, clear language which expresses ideas concisely, precisely and logically.

Useful advice that can be given to students, and in particular to overseas students, is:

* use the active voice when possible so that the reader does not have to process the active-passive transformation unless there is a clear need to shift focus and theme in a sentence for emphasis;
* write directly, using fewer existential (there + be) and cleft (it + be) sentences;
* use common words whenever possible as the overuse of technical terms and jargon alienates the reader;
* write I think if it is necessary or, alternatively, use synonymous phrases such as in my opinion, but not both in the same sentence;
* use the Latinate words in the English lexicon, by all means, but write them in simple sentences;
* avoid compound sentences with many embedded sentences as they can be difficult to decode. In addition, the likelihood of a mistake in grammar being made increases as the complexity of the sentence increases;
* maintain distance from the subject through controlling tenses, modifiers, pronouns and linkers.

Teaching Style: English for Academic Purposes and English for Special Purposes

All students need to master the general academic register (EAP) and the register for their particular disciplines (ESP). So, tertiary instructors need to teach the conventions that underpin all academic writing and those that are especially associated with given disciplines. What is shown in Table App. 1 is how to teach the general academic style and suggestions where ESP would be appropriately inserted.

A word of caution is needed: the minimal amount of written English that students should be exposed to is a paragraph, and preferably discourse units several paragraphs long. Otherwise, students will have problems comprehending and attending to the text.

TEACHING PROCESS		PROCEDURES
1	Exposure	* present students with examples of informal and formal English drawn from letters (a) to a friend (b) to a professor/manager (Jordan, 1980:18-21) * present students with several unidentified examples of formal and informal English drawn from academic topics which contain general information, e.g. (a) the water cycle (b) education in Australia * discuss the meaning of the articles * compare how easy each article is to understand
2	Recognition	* ask the students to separate the articles into piles based on language similarities * discuss the linguistic criteria the students used to sort the texts into piles * elicit, and blackboard, the following characteristics of formal writing (a) use of jargon and technical terms (b) use of the passive voice (c) use of tentative statements (d) absence of contractions (e) virtual absence of the first person singular (f) occurrence of existential and cleft sentences (g) higher proportion of Latinate words (h) longer sentences (i) compound sentences
3	Evaluation of styles	* draw out what features make the formal style hard to understand * discuss the writer's obligations to communicate efficiently * advise students to retain those features of the formal register that do not impede communication with their audience
4	Guided production	* present forced-choice exercises (Barr, et al., 1981:147-149) * present students with transcripts of informal dialogue and ask them to rewrite them in formal reported speech (This will elicit the passive and make students watch their use of tenses, linkers and reference) * edit and mark up mistakes using printer's symbols * get the students to correct their drafts and rewrite * present students with diagrams of processes followed in their disciplines, e.g. (a) soil formation (b) suturing wounds and ask them to write these in formal English, incorporating ESP where necessary * present students with a simple topic in their own speciality, e.g. (a) artificial insemination in cattle (b) testing for acids to write several, well linked paragraphs on
5	Free Production	* encourage the students to practise their writing in summaries, short papers

Table App. 1: Training students to Write in the Appropriate Style

REFERENCES

Barr, P., Clegg, J. and Wallace,C. Advanced Reading Skills, Longmans, London, 1982

Borrell, R. and Bateson, G. Say it in Writing, Edward Arnold, London, 1980

Ehrlich, E. and Murphy, D. The Art of Technical Writing, Crowell and Co., New York, 1964

Jordan, R. Academic Writing Course, Collins, London, 1980

McKay, Sandra and Rosenthal, Lisa Writing for a Special Purpose, Prentice-Hall, Englewood Cliffs, 1980

Quirk, R., Greenbaum, S., Leech, G., and Svartvik, J. A Grammar of Contemporary English, Longman, London, 1977

Ramirez, M. and Castaneda, A. Cultural Democracy, Bicognitive Development and Education, Academic Press, London, 1974

Schools Commission Australian Students and Their Schools, A.G.P.S. , Canberrs, 1979

Zinkin, T. Write Right, Pergamon, Oxford, 1980

ROSALIND S. MEYER

Rosalind Meyer, B.A.(Melbourne), M.A. (Oxford), was city-bred but became a farmer's wife. From time to time she taught in British or Australian schools, and for five years was Director of English Studies at a New Forest convent. Subsequently she tutored in English Literature at Monash University. Contrasting experience has proved useful in her present position as Adviser in Literacy/Study Skills at Deakin University, which has involved her, among other concerns, in the provision of support for external mature students, and a course in English for Electrical Engineers. From these two fields she has evolved the theories (published variously) which underlie her current practice in every area.

She has also published an account of a related research venture, entered into jointly with a member of Sciences, which succeeded in teaching an illiterate 12-year-old to read by C.A.I. Having become interested in the potential of micros (with colour) for remedial teaching, she has since been developing her own software for tertiary students; and is now enrolled as a computing student.

Other output includes the production of a series of tape-recordings of talks invited from staff for distance learners ("What Is Academic Intercourse?"); a booklet for Deakin mature students on essay-writing; and a brief grammar for scientists.

She enjoys the classically romantic (pre-twentieth-century drama, Old Icelandic, elderly Alfa Romeos) and is a part-time dilettante.

CONFERENCE CONVENOR

'EASING THE ENTRY'

A STUDY SKILLS PROGRAMME FOR NEW MATURE ENTRANTS

NEIL QUINTRELL

Neil Quintrell graduated in Pharmacy from Adelaide University in 1958 and worked as a pharmacist until 1982. In 1971, he returned to study at Flinders; in 1977, began working part-time as a Student Counsellor at the Health and Counselling Service at Flinders. He completed his Psychology training in 1979; and now works full-time at the service. He is married, has four daughters, and would like to be rich enough to travel around the world a lot.

"EASING THE ENTRY"

A STUDY SKILLS PROGRAMME FOR NEW MATURE ENTRANTS

Flinders University has a well-developed mature entry programme and mature entrants now comprise approximately 15% of the first year enrolments. The offers to applicants go out in two waves - one in September and a second in December.

Recognizing that those receiving offers would be experiencing a mixture of excitement and apprehension following their acceptance, and recalling that mature age people make up a high proportion of our first term study skills groups, we decided to develop a pre-enrolment programme which would capitalize on their early eagerness, provide them with relevant experiences of University life and help develop some basic study skills.

The "September offer" entrants were invited to a programme which ran on 4 evenings in November, and "December offer" entrants were invited to two one-day workshops in February. The approach was very similar in each case.

Our normal approach to study skills teaching is to provide relevant experiences followed by guided reflection, and this programme was similarly designed.

The programme

In brief, the programme consisted of a lecture/note-taking exercise, a library tour and exercise in finding references, a tutorial or laboratory exercise and either a meeting with mature entrants from former years (November) or an essay exercise (February).

Lectures/Taking notes

After a welcome and an introduction to the programme, participants were taken to one of the University's lecture theatres, where one of the University's lecturing staff delivered a typical first year lecture. We have so far used lecturers from Biology, Psychology, English, Politics, offering people a choice of two in any one programme. It is our intention to involve more disciplines and to "rotate" the offerings so no one discipline is over used. Participants were asked to take notes in any way they wished. At the end of the lecture, they were invited to "compare notes" with one another, looking for similarities and differences in approach; then, in fours, to generate a list of positive advice about note-taking and a list of questions. The feedback from this discussion allowed the student counsellor leading the session to reinforce points made by the group, and to extend or add to other comments. The lecturer was also involved in the feedback session and participants were encouraged to ask any questions they wished.

Typically, they asked things like "Can we interrupt the lecturer and ask questions?", "Can we use tape recorders?", "Is that about the pace most lecturers go?", and "What would _you_ expect us to get down out of your lecture?".

The heartening thing from our point of view was the number of questions which people were enabled to ask which they may have feared would appear "dumb".

Library

Participants were taken on a standard 30-minute library tour by library staff. This session has to be carefully controlled as groups of above 15 are unwieldy and we have to stagger the starting times for each group of 15.

After the standard tour, participants are given sheets with a reference typed at the top. (see sample in Appendix A). The references are provided by the lecturer after the lecture to increase the sense of relevance of the exercise. Participants are then "turned loose" in the library in pairs, threes or singly depending on their own choice, to find the references.

Inevitably, they have difficulties - can't find call numbers, forget which floor the periodicals are on, can't find the book etc - and must seek help from the library staff. This may be the greatest gain from this session - actually talking to live librarians.

Tutorials/Laboratory

Participants who have attended a first year Arts lecture then attend tutorials based on the lecture. Again actual tutors in actual tutorial rooms are used (or in the case of Biology, actual demonstrators in actual laboratories). A full one-hour tutorial or 2-hour laboratory is held, after which participants are encouraged to reflect on the experience, and create positive advice from each other on how to get the best out of these bits of University life. The tutors are on hand to answer direct questions on the use of tutorials.

Meeting former mature entrants

This session is offered in the November programme only for 2 reasons. One is pragmatic - it's easier to get hold of current students then than in February. However, it is also true that the February group will, of necessity, have answered questions about enrolment, course choice and whether to actually accept the offer or not.

At this session, we select about a dozen mature entrants from previous years (or more if we can get them) and invite them to come along for the evening. We divide the group into small groups with 2 "seniors" in each group (a ratio of abour 4 or 5 new students to one senior is ideal), and invite them to raise any issues that still concern them. We instruct the seniors that they do not have to know all the answers (if they don't they note them and produce them in a plenary session), that they should be aware of the level of apprehension and excitement that the new students will be feeling (we suggest that they try and remember how they felt) and that without being dishonest, they should maintain a positive and hopeful stance about university life. We do make an attempt to provide seniors who have had as wide a spread of subject choice as possible, because many questions do concern this area.

Essay Writing

In February workshops, the above session is replaced by one on essay writing.

Participants are given a typical short first year essay (Appendix B) and are invited to imagine that they are the markers. Each individual "marks" the essay (without any prior briefing) and gives it a grade (A-F). They are then asked to form pairs and to compare their comments with another - essentially "what did you look for?". Then in fours, they are asked to continue their discussion including a defence of the grade they assigned.

The leader accepts feedback and engages the group in a discussion of what things are important in a University essay.

After this discussion the leader hands out a marked copy of the essay (Appendix C) (all comments have been deleted from the first copy) and participants are invited to discuss differences between what they did and what the marker did. This leads into a general discussion and question and answer session on essays and related matters.

Student response

At the end of each series, students were asked to fill out a feedback sheet (see Appendix D).

The comments from these (by now over 200 people have been through the four programmes we have run) and our own observation lead us to believe that these sessions have been highly successful.

My report following the November 1983 series summarizes typical comments:

"a. The lecture session is understandably a more uncertain experience for participants. It is the first night. They know few people, and their apprehension is high. For all that, comments were positive and people reported that this session was "excellent", "very good", "interesting", "enjoyable", and "helpful". Some expressed uncertainty - "still not sure of best method of...taking notes", "wondered at the method", "tried to take too much down".

From conversations with students afterwards it seems that the comment of one student - "nice to be familiar with the format" - sums up a common feeling.

b. Some people found the library "somewhat confusing", suggesting that it needed "a lot more time to become acquainted with", etc. but most found it "great", "excellent", "most illuminating", "terrific" and "a great help".

c. By the third session people were getting to know each other and it is not surprising that the highest praise came for the tutorials. The list of comments... are consistently positive - "a great help", "the teacher made the fear of tutorials diminish", "informative and interesting", "very exciting" etc.

d. The meeting with former mature entrants, was also judged very positively - "wonderful", "very useful", " a necessary experience", "confidence building", and "I enjoyed this time the most", are typical comments.

The word that occurs most frequently in response to the invitation to note down their main gains from the series is "confidence". Participants are obviously looking forward to their first year of study with a sense of anticipation. They have met some friendly people and have a clearer idea of what to expect."

Staff involvement

One of the features of the programme is the involvement of academic staff with the students. We have, of course, been selective about whom we ask, but it is nevertheless true that staff are enthusiastic about the programme and rate if very highly. They enjoy their session with the students (who are enthusiastic, highly motivated and interesting) and ask to be involved again in the future.

For the students, to have the attention of academic staff to whom they can address their questions in a less threatening atmosphere than that of "real" lectures and tutorials is greatly appreciated.

Comments

The word that most frequently crops up in the feedback sheets and in conversation with participants is "confidence". Participants feel they are now "ready to start", many of their early fears have been dealt with and that they can look forward to the year with real gains in confidence.

The features of the programme from my point of view are

1. The involvement of academic staff.
2. The nature of the experiences offered - they are real, not contrived.
3. The spread of responsibility. (One person carries the responsibility for organization but the "delivery" is spread among many).
4. The simplicity of the programme - only a few key experiences are offered, but the gains in confidence are large.

Neil Quintrell,
Health and Counselling Service,
Flinders University of S.A.

Browder, L. 1980. *Developmental Biology.*
Saunders: Philadelphia.

1. Find and record the call number of this reference.

____

____

2. Find the reference in the library and note where you found it.

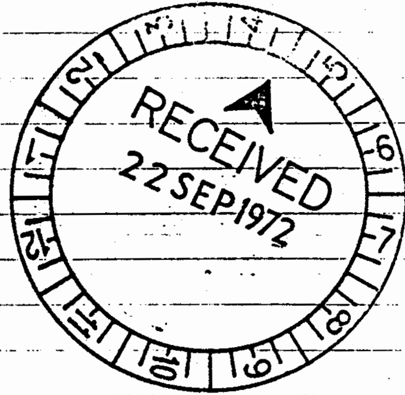
(1) on what floor?

- [ ] ground floor
- [ ] first floor
- [ ] second floor
- [ ] third floor

(2) in what section?

- [ ] periodicals
- [ ] main shelves
- [ ] reserve collection
- [ ] multiple copy collection

PSYCHOLOGY 1



Essay no. 3

'Consider the proposition that aggression is an innate drive in man and that wars are therefore inevitable.'

Due Date: Friday, September 29th, 1972.

Approx. words: 1,100

Synopsis.

The claim of this essay is that neither of the extreme views writers take on the subject are tenable. An examination is made of the contributions of the ethologist Lorenz, and some criticisms are made of his method. The polar extreme view expressed by Montagu et al is examined, and its overall strengths and weaknesses explored. The frustration-aggression hypothesis is introduced, and it is concluded that it provides a good descriptive framework, but does not address itself to original causes. Finally, the view of Eibl-Eibesfeldt of man as possessing innate drives for aggression and mutual co-operation both of which are amenable to social conditioning is offered. The conclusion reached is that man has an innate drive for survival which will find expression in both co-operative acts and aggressive acts. This drive is amenable to social conditioning, and is only triggered by appropriate stimuli. The place of man in relation to war is briefly examined, and it is concluded that war is a social, not biological phenomenon.

Bibliography

Berkowitz, L. *Aggression*
McGraw-Hill, N.Y. 1962.

Eibl-Eibesfeldt, I. *Love and Hate*
(English translation by Geoffrey Strachan)
Methuen & Co. London, 1971.

Lorenz, K.Z. *On Aggression* Methuen & Co. London, 1966.

Montagu, M.F.A. *Man and Aggression*
Oxford University, London. 1968.

One of the notable things about writers who have expressed polarized views on the subject of aggression as an innate drive is their common criticism that their 'opponents' have failed to account for significant evidence on the subje ct. It will be the claim of this essay that such criticisms are valid, and that neither the psychoanalytic theorists' view of man as driven by aggressive urges which must find release, nor the strict behaviourist view that all behaviour is learned and non-instinctual, are tenable.

Psychoanalytic theory views man as driven by competing forces, both constructive and destructive. Each must find expression. Man's best hop e is to achieve a balance between these basic drives, and keep his 'Thanatos' under control. The ethologist, Konrad Lorenz, in his book On Aggression (1966) picks up the idea of an innate aggressive drive that must find release. His understanding and explanation of human aggression derive largely from his studies of animal behaviour. His observations of the apparently irrational acts of fish and birds (particularly his observations under laboratory conditions) lead him to emphasize this view of aggression. Two criticisms are levelled at his work. Firstly, he is ready to make an uncritical equation of performance under laboratory conditions and animal behaviour in their natural habitat. Secondly, he assumes too easily that what is true of animals is true of man. (Particularly when it is noted that much of his evidence is derived from such evolutionary distant relations as fish and birds, this criticism is underlined).

Lorenz's positive contribution to an understanding of aggression lies in his distinction between differing forms of aggression in the animal world. Some acts ensure adequate living space; others are for sexual selection, or to obtain food. Still others are for defence when threatened.

At the polar extreme is the view expressed by Montagu in the introduction to Man and Aggression (1968). In a seathing criticism of the notion of aggression as innate, he sweeps the whole idea of instinct aside.

> "Everything a human being does as such he has had to learn from other human beings." (p. xii).

In the same book, J.H.Crook expands this idea in relation to aggression.

> "The prevalence of aggression in modern man may be attributed to aversive features in the complex ... world in which he lives, rather than to some unsatisfied vital urge." (p. 173)

But it is difficult to see how a human infant could survive without some instinctual processes. The ability to suck, for example, seems an unlearned response, essential for survival.

The contributors to Man and Aggression (1968) do make several important contributions. The distinction between aggression as an offensive act, and as an instrumental act (e.g. in the acquisition of food) is underlined. They also point to the ability of many animals, including man, to live together harmoniously, noting that primates are not usually belligerent unless provoked. Montagu's plea for a more rigorous approach to arguments from animal behaviour to man, is an important counter to Lorenz. The book does not attempt, however, to advance any cohesive statement on how learning may create aggression.

In the social learning area, the frustration-aggression hypothesis, first advanced by Dollard and his colleagues in 1939, and amplified by Berkowitz (1962) is most helpful. Berkowitz dismisses the idea of aggression as an innate drive. (However, he is careful to distinguish between the Freudian view, and that of such as McDougall. The latter view holds that aggression is innate; but is only triggered by certain stimulus situations.) According to the above hypothesis, aggression is a learned response to frustration, defined as

> 'interference with the occurrence of an instigated goal-response at its proper time in the behaviour sequence.' (Berkowitz (1962) p. 26)

Berkowitz makes his contribution to the basic hypothesis by examining the cognitive processes that occur in the organism as a response to frustration. He deals with emotions of fear and anger, and stresses the importance of individual interpretation of the frustrating event.

As a basic, descriptive model the frustration-aggression hypothesis is a valuable aid. However, Berkowitz is not always convincing in his handling of such problems as aggression in response to unexpected pain, and strains to encompass all acts of aggression in his hypothesis. Finally, his approach must be judged as descriptive but not teleological.

The German biologist, Irenäus Eibl-Eibesfeldt (1971) introduces an interesting variant into the discussion, claiming that man has innate drives for both aggression and co-operation. These drives, however, are not the

relentless drives of the psychoanalysts or of Lorenz, but are amenable to conditioning. His argument is built on the universality of both qualities in man and animals. Even the most pacific of tribes display some aggressive acts, if not physically, then verbally (as in the case of the Eskimos and their 'singing competitions8), or by projection onto inanimate objects (as the Arapesh of New Guinea). Similar universality is observed in the matter of co-operation.

To discover some synthesis from the above positions is a daunting task.

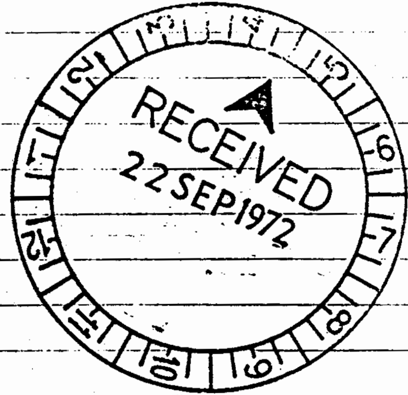
It is suggested that the evidence from such writers as Lorenz and Eibl-Eibesfeldt cannot be ignored, and it is postulated that man possesses an instinctual drive for survival. In order to survive, he must seek co-operation with his fellows, but, at the same time, in threatening situations, self-preservation may demand aggressive acts. This drive for survival is not the seething cauldron that Freud envisaged, but is elicited by appropriate stimuli.

In addition to acts of aggression designed for life- or species-preservation, however, man may be taught to act aggressively. The behaviour of men in war is just such learned aggression. Mankind's approach to war does not support a view of a 'natural' taste for fighting. Hate for the enemy must be created and continually reinforced or man shows little interest in killing. Soldiers must be threatened with death for failure to obey orders to kill. (Cases of soldiers enjoying killing, are, it is suggested, not cases of release of innate drives, but evidence of psychopathological behaviour.)

It is , therefore, concluded that the aggressive act of war stems, not from man's basic drive for survival, but from his social conditioning.

> "War among nations is a social phenomenon,
> not a biological one." (Berkowitz, p. 23.)

PSYCHOLOGY 1



Essay no. 3

'Consider the proposition that aggression is an innate drive in man and that wars are therefore inevitable.'

Due Date: Friday, September 29th, 1972.

Approx. words: 1,100

B

Excellent job. Very well written, + very well argued. I failed to give it an A as because there is much specific experimental evidence but you left out – such specific evidence could have helped your points in a number of places.

Do not write on back side of pages.

Synopsis.

Good generally

What support? State first

The claim of this essay is that neither of the extreme views writers take on the subject are tenable. An examination is made of the contributions of the ethologist Lorenz, and some criticisms are made of his method. The polar extreme view expressed by Montagu et al is examined, and its overall strengths and weaknesses explored. The frustration-aggression hypothesis is introduced, and it is concluded that it provides a good descriptive framework, but does not address itself to original causes. Finally, the view of Eibl-Eibesfeldt of man as possessing innate drives for aggression and mutual co-operation both of which are amenable to social conditioning is offered. The conclusion reached is that man has an innate drive for survival which will find expression in both co-operative acts and aggressive acts. This drive is amenable to social conditioning, and is only triggered by appropriate stimuli. The place of man in relation to war is briefly examined, and it is concluded that war is a social, not biological phenomenon.

Good source – I would like to get a look at this myself – A.S.

Bibliography

Berkowitz, L. *Aggression*
McGraw-Hill, N.Y. 1962.

Eibl-Eibesfeldt, I. *Love and Hate* –
(English translation by Geoffrey Strachan)
Methuen & Co. London, 1971.

Lorenz, K.Z. *On Aggression* Methuen & Co. London, 1966.

Montagu, M.F.A. *Man and Aggression*
Oxford University, London. 1968.

One of the notable things about writers who have expressed polarized views on the subject of aggression as an innate drive is their common criticism that their 'opponents' have failed to account for significant evidence on the subje ct. It will be the claim of this essay that such criticisms are valid, and that neither the psychoanalytic theorists' view of man as driven by aggressive urges which must find release, nor the strict behaviourist view that all behaviour is learned and non-instinctual, are tenable.

Good introduction

Psychoanalytic theory views man as driven by competing forces, both constructive and destructive. Each must find expression. Man's best hop e is to achieve a balance between these basic drives, and keep his 'Thanatos'. under control. The ethologist, Konrad Lorenz, in his book On Aggression (1966) picks up the idea of an innate aggressive drive that must find release. His understanding and explanation of human aggression derive largely from his studies of animal behaviour. His observations of the apparently irrational acts of fish and birds (particularly his observations under laboratory conditions) lead him to emphasize this view of aggression. Two criticisms are levelled at his work. Firstly, he is ready to make an uncritical equation of performance under laboratory conditions and animal behaviour in their natural habitat. Secondly, he assumes too easily that what is true of animals is true of man. (Particularly when it is noted that much of his evidence is derived from such evolutionary distant relations as fish and birds, this criticism is underlined).

Good criticism

Lorenz's positive contribution to an understanding of aggression lies in his distinction between differing forms of aggression in the animal world. Some acts ensure adequate living space; others are for sexual selection, or to obtain food. Still others are for defence when threatened.

At the polar extreme is the view expressed by Montagu in the introduction to Man and Aggression (1968). In a seathing criticism of the notion of aggression as innate, he sweeps the whole idea of instinct aside.

> "Everything a human being does as such he has had to learn from other human beings." (p. xii).

In the same book, J.H.Crook expands this idea in relation to aggression.

> "The prevalence of aggression in modern man may be attributed to aversive features in the complex ... world in which he lives, rather than to some unsatisfied vital urge." (p. 173)

But it is difficult to see how a human infant could survive without some instinctual processes. The ability to suck, for example, seems an unlearned response, essential for survival.

The contributors to Man and Aggression (1968) do make several important contributions. The distinction between aggression as an offensive act, and as an instrumental act (e.g. in the acquisition of food) is underlined. They also point to the ability of many animals, including man, to live together harmoniously, noting that primates are not usually belligerent unless provoked. Montagu's plea for a more rigorous approach to arguments from animal behaviour to man, is an important counter to Lorenz. The book does not attempt, however, to advance any cohesive statement on how learning may create aggression.

In the social learning area, the frustration-aggression hypothesis, first advanced by Dollard and his colleagues in 1939, and amplified by Berkowitz (1962) is most helpful. Berkowitz dismisses the idea of aggression as an innate drive. (However, he is careful to distinguish between the Freudian view, and that of such as McDougall. The latter view holds that aggression is innate; but is only triggered by certain stimulus situations.) According to the above hypothesis, aggression is a learned response to frustration, defined as

> 'interference with the occurrence of an instigated goal-response at its proper time in the behaviour sequence.' (Berkowitz (1962) p. 26)

Berkowitz makes his contribution to the basic hypothesis by examining the cognitive processes that occur in the organism as a response to frustration. He deals with emotions of fear and anger, and stresses the importance of individual interpretation of the frustrating event.

As a basic, descriptive model the frustration-aggression hypothesis is a valuable aid. However, Berkowitz is not always convincing in his handling of such problems as aggression in response to unexpected pain, and strains to encompass all acts of aggression in his hypothesis. Finally, his approach must be judged as descriptive but not teleological.

The German biologist, Irenäus Eibl-Eibesfeldt (1971) introduces an interesting variant into the discussion, claiming that man has innate drives for both aggression and co-operation. These drives, however, are not the

interesting viewpoint

relentless drives of the psychoanalysts or of Lorenz, but are amenable to conditioning. His argument is built on the universality of both qualities in man and animals. Even the most pacific of tribes display some aggressive acts, if not physically, then verbally (as in the case of the Eskimos and their 'singing competitions8), or by projection onto inanimate objects (as the Arapesh of New Guinea). Similar universality is observed in the matter of co-operation.

Good

To discover some synthesis from the above positions is a daunting task.

It is suggested that the evidence from such writers as Lorenz and Eibl-Eibesfeldt cannot be ignored, and it is postulated that man possesses an instinctual drive for survival. In order to survive, he must seek co-operation with his fellows, but, at the same time, in threatening situations, self-preservation may demand aggressive acts. This drive for survival is not the seething cauldron that Freud envisaged, but is elicited by appropriate stimuli.

Good - I like this way of putting it

In addition to acts of aggression designed for life- or species-preservation, however, man may be taught to act aggressively. The behaviour of men in war is just such learned aggression. Mankind's approach to war does not support a view of a 'natural' taste for fighting. Hate for the enemy must be created and continually reinforced or man shows little interest in killing. Soldiers must be threatened with death for failure to obey orders to kill. (Cases of soldiers enjoying killing, are, it is suggested, not cases of release of innate drives, but evidence of psychopathological behaviour.)

Good point

Good!

It is , therefore, concluded that the aggressive act of war stems, not from man's basic drive for survival, but from his social conditioning.

"War among nations is a social phenomenon,
not a biological one." (Berkowitz, p. 23.)

LET'S USE THE VIDEO-COMPUTER LINK

GLORIA E. ROBBINS AND SANDY M. POTTINGER

DARLING DOWNS INSTITUTE OF ADVANCED EDUCATION

ABSTRACT:

The instructional possibilities resulting from a link-up between a microcomputer system and a laser video disc system are being investigated at Darling Downs Institute of Advanced Education. This article describes the work being done on two projects, both of which use a Hitachi microcomputer system and a Pioneer video disc system. The major project, "Mechanical Vibrations" (School of Engineering) is at the stage where a video tape has been produced containing relevant video segments and accompanying sound track (2 channels). While this tape is now at a video disc production house where a master video disc will be cut, work is proceeding with the computer graphics and self tests that will interact with the disc. The second project, "Single Lens Reflex Photography" makes use of a commercial video disc as an aid in a photography course.

LET'S USE THE VIDEO-COMPUTER LINK

GLORIA E. ROBBINS AND SANDY M. POTTINGER

Gloria Robbins, B.Sc.(St. Andrews), Grad.Dip. Comp. Stud.(Canberra C.A.E.), has worked in Computer-Assisted Learning since 1976, at Flinders University in the School of Medicine. Later she taught, using her own software, in the School of Chemistry at A.N.U., and is now working on new projects in the Department of External and Continuing Education at the Darling Downs Institute of Advanced Education. She is a Member of the Computer Managed Learning Project for External Students.

She has lectured in Medical Statistics at Otago University, has been Librarian at the Papuan Medical College, Port Moresby, and a Consultant Programmer at A.N.U.

Her hobbies are bushwalking, tennis, reading, and classical jazz. She loves new places, new people, and new experiences.

INTRODUCTION

A new dimension is added to the use of computers in education when these computers can also control 'real-life' sound, colour and motion. The addition of a laser video disc system as a peripheral device to a computer system provides the learner with an on-line resource from which new information may be gathered to extend present knowledge and stimulate interest beyond what may be required to meet course requirements. This is an extra benefit, apart from the normal use of the video-computer link to provide video segments selected by the teacher with associated tests accompanied by video and textual feedback presented on the computer screen.

HARDWARE AND SOFTWARE

At Darling Downs Institute of Advanced Education two projects which involve the video-computer link are now underway. Hardware consists of a laser video disc player (Pioneer PR7820 Model Three) connected to a microcomputer system (Hitachi MBE-160002) through an RS232 interface. While at present a Hitachi colour monitor and a television monitor (JVS 776AUM-D) are used, it is expected that all video output will be to a single monitor at a later date. An optional input device is a light pen. Software is being written in Microsoft Basic with the intention that the library of routines will be readily transportable to other computer systems. The routines will be common to all video-computer projects. At this stage of development it is a question of deciding what routines are required to exploit the potential advantages of the linked systems. Students should be able to 'browse' freely through a video disc, stopping and starting the player, changing direction and speed of viewing at will. Through a series of menus and a catalogue of selected video segments they should have easy, fast access to the segment they have chosen to view, and they must then be able to stop or to review that segment. A video editor is required so that new video segments can be selected or frame numbers modified. A menu system also gives access to tutorial type lessons, tests and supplementary text material. The degree of control or management of access to the video disc and the computer material is of course in the hands of the subject expert and instructional designer of the courseware.

PROJECT "MECHANICAL VIBRATIONS"

A team consisting of subject matter specialist, audio-visual producer, instructional designer, artistic director, graphics artist and programmer has been formed to work on the project "Mechanical Vibrations" for the School of Engineering. A video tape has been produced which contains video segments of location shots of real events in various vibration environments taken both in the field and in the laboratory. There are also segments of 16 mm films and existing videotapes for which copyright permission has been obtained and the emphasis in these is on dynamic visual displays. An addition to the tape has been the inclusion of several humorous segments (running gags and vaudeville comedy) to be used as rewards following success in self-test quizzes and summative tests conducted on the microcomputer. This tape has now been sent to a video disc production house so that a master disc can be cut and some copies made. It is expected that this process will take approximately one month.

There are four target audiences for the video disc described above. These audiences vary primarily in terms of prior mathematical knowledge. At the highest level the video disc will cater for senior undergraduate students studying for the Bachelor of Engineering degree. At the next most complex level the video disc will cater for students studying for an Associate Diploma

in Mechanical Engineering. While mathematical computations expected of this group are not complex, they are more demanding than the requirements of the other two groups, liberal studies' students and the general public. The latter group will be able to view the video disc without encountering any mathematical computations. Work on the project to date could be classified into three parts, all closely interwoven:-

(1) designing the courseware;

(2) gathering video segments and production of master video tape;

(3) preparation of the 'storyboard' linking up video and computer activities;

(4) writing computer subroutines to control the video disc player from the computer and designing computer graphics.

On receiving the master video disc the main task will be finding the exact 'start' and 'end' frame numbers for each video segment, and programming in each segment with the corresponding computer text or graphics. There are two voice channels on the video disc and through varying the video segment shown as well as the audio track component heard by an individual, it will be possible to cater for the different target audiences.

PROJECT "SINGLE LENS REFLEX PHOTOGRAPHY"

The second project, "Single Lens Reflex Photography", uses a commercial video disc, for which the Institute has obtained copyright permission, as an instructional aid in a course in photography which forms an option in the Visual Arts Programme. The disc, "The Creative Camera: a video primer of SLR photography", manufactured by Pioneer is a visually pleasing presentation. There is excellent use of imagery, well produced exploded diagrams and many examples which are easy to follow. The video disc is used interactively to provide the theoretical framework for the course and this has been supplemented with discussions, questions, computer screen reviews and summaries of the information presented on the video disc as well as comprehensive 'hands on' experience.

As this is the first time this particular course has been offered, the eleven students enrolled have been actively involved in the weekly programming of the computer segment. They have selected which segments of the video disc require further explanation and have entered into the computer catalogue the 'start and stop' frame numbers with an accompanying title of any segment they think would be valuable for either review or as an extension to the requirements of the course. The 'start-stop' feature and the ability of the video disc player to locate quickly a specific segment make this whole unit an excellent self-instructional aid. Ideas have come from the students on the construction of computer screen menus and the presentation of screen graphics. They have all become familiar with the operation and functions of a video disc player and have incidentally extended their knowledge and interest in computers. Through their active participation, much of which was in their own time, the students have been able to influence the design of the course rather than being passive receivers of a complete computer-video disc package.

Comments from the students on the video disc production included:-

too much information too soon on the video disc;

narration so fast that key information seemed to be glossed over;

it was an American production - great to have a similar Australian one.

The general concensus was, however, that these problems were to a large extent rectified by the controlling computer program with its inclusion of supplementary explanations, interactive questions and answers and easy access to video segments for revision. The support of the computer program gave an opportunity to pause, assess and review information before continuing to a new section.

Students were encouraged to bring their cameras with them, whether to the formal class or when attending on their own. Additional tips on the practical use of a camera were available in association with the relevant video segments, thus allowing students, for example, to practise loading techniques before attending a practical class. The quiz, taken at the end of the seven weeks course, has been designed to contain questions of a situational, problem solving nature. Feedback on their answers could be obtained in hardcopy and contained suggestions for video segments to review and references to further reading.

CONCLUSION

The video-computer link in no way replaces the teacher. Instead it consolidates the teacher's position by generating enthusiasm and discussion for the subject. The ease with which video segments can be accessed through a computer program involves the student in information seeking and this is a key factor in information retention. In the two projects described in this article different approaches have been taken. The first project calls for the production of a video disc which contains the required video courseware, while the second project, using an existing disc, breaks down the wealth of information available into more digestible morsels.

We have an innovation with the video-computer link which can either be fully integrated into an existing course or can provide a vehicle for self-directed learning. Research skills can be enhanced and student participation encouraged through the use of this new mode of visual identification with a subject.

Authors:

Gloria E. Robbins
Computer Systems Officer
Department of External and Continuing Education
Darling Downs Institute of Advanced Education
Toowoomba, Queensland. 4350.

Sandy M. Pottinger,
Lecturer, Visual Arts Programme
School of Arts
Darling Downs Institute of Advanced Education
Toowoomba, Queensland. 4350.

The authors wish to acknowledge assistance from the following staff members:

J. Kemo, Instructional Design Unit
Department of External and Continuing Education.

M. Toleman, Computer Services Unit
Resource Materials Centre.

'INDUSTRIALISED, INDIVIDUALISED OR INDEPENDENT?'

FRANCES ROWLAND

Frances Rowland - Brief C.V.

1981

- Education Officer, External Studies Unit, Murdoch with a particular interest in learning skills.
- Tutoring and lecturing in School of Education and School of Social Inquiry, Murdoch.
- Series of broadcasts on FM radio for metropolitan students on what it's like to be an external student.

1975-1981

- Tutor in School of Social Inquiry, Murdoch.
- Established first Women's Studies courses at Murdoch.

Prior to 1975

- Three years at West Australian Institute of Technology as assistant to Deans of Applied Science and of Health Sciences.
- High school teacher.
- Writer and editor for International Computers Limited.
- Film scriptwriter.
- Librarian/information officer.

Publications:

- Co-author with Lorraine Marshall of A Guide to Learning Independently (Longman Cheshire, 1982) and of previous Murdoch learning skills booklets.
- Co-author of book manuscript on expectant fathers.

INDUSTRIALISED, INDIVIDUALISED OR INDEPENDENT? -

(learning skills and distance education)

Abstract

The paper looks at three approaches to distance education in Australia, discussing the scope for an external student's own learning purposes and the role of learning skills staff within each approach. Some changes which could provide greater opportunity for self-directed learning are considered.

Frances Rowland
Education Officer
External Studies Unit
Murdoch University
South Street
Murdoch, Western Australia 6150

Distance teaching/education (Fernunterricht) is a method of imparting knowledge, skills and attitudes which is rationalised by the application of division of labour and organisational principles as well as by the extensive use of technical media, especially for the purpose of reproducing high quality teaching material which makes it possible to instruct great numbers of students at the same time wherever they live. It is an industrialised form of teaching and learning.

So wrote Otto Peters[1] in 1973, and in the past decade one of the few major theoretical debates in distance education has centred on his definition. Is distance education industrialised? Or is it a form of education which manifests itself in highly individual dialogues between a tutor and each isolated student? Or is it neither of these models, but simply a method of teaching? The latter view is not uncommonly expressed in Australian tertiary institutions with their 'integrated mode' of distance education, i.e., where there is a large overlap between the internal and external versions of course offerings.

Another seminal article in distance education is Daniel and Marquis' "Interaction and independence: getting the mixture right".[2] The authors' examine choices that institutions face in establishing an open learning system; and they define "independence" as learning activities where there is for the learner no *two-way contact with another person (or persons) in such a way as to elicit from him reactions and responses which are specific to his own requests or contributions.*[3]

It is likely that people at this conference have different ideas of what constitutes independence in distance education, and so I'd like to begin with a brief definition of the way I intend to use "industrialised", "individualised" and "independent" in this paper. In the main part of the paper I'll expand these definitions, and look at place of external students' learning purposes within each one. I should add that by "external students" I mean students who are taking most or all of their courses externally, whether metropolitan or rural, i.e., those students without real access to on-campus learning skills help.

The "**industrialised**" approach is centred on the needs of an institution and might be expressed as "Technology rules, o.k.?" The quote from Peters captures some of its major aspects - a division of labour, mass production, wide use of technical media and an emphasis on rational organisation.

"**Individualised**" distance education is embodied for me by the image of 'feeling liberal and warm inside', an image taken from a quote from Daniel and Marquis.

> *Remote learning systems must beware of the illusion of solving problems with flexible rules which make the staff feel liberal and warm inside but which do not of themselves help the student attain his goals.* [4]

Such education is centred on teaching and on course content, while sometimes allowing for limited student choice. To permit a student to choose their own essay topic or to decide whether to complete a course in one or two semesters may make us feel nice, but how far does it genuinely allow for the student's own learning purposes and accept student initiatives?

"**Independent**" distance education is student-centred and learning-centred, with self-directed students who take responsibility for their own learning - the "I did it my way" model. A mixture of industrialised and individualised education can often be found within the one institution, since it seems that both are based on the idea of knowledge as a commodity. But I would argue that fostering independent learning requires radical rethinking of the nature of distance education - I am not equating "independence" simply with isolation from other students or from an educational institution.

How can those of us with a concern for learning skills in external studies help students become more independent? This question will be discussed towards the end of this paper, but I think there are two basic aspects of distance education on which it is necessary to focus as a starting point.

Firstly, the budgets for distance education in universities and CAE's are based largely on an industrial production model. In this model, funding for interactive components such as learning skills assistance to individual students is often something of an after-thought or even an anomaly. As Harris and Holmes describe in their article on the Open University :

> *The major problem was to design a teaching system which would solve the unique contradictions ..... between the need to maintain 'high standards' while operating an open admissions policy, and the need to run a large-scale centralised organisation in a cost-effective way while preserving an emphasis upon the educational requirements of individual students just as in conventional universities.* [5]

In integrated mode distance education in Australia, the pressure to prove the cost-effectiveness of the external mode has been considerable. Add to this the expensiveness of extending direct individual assistance to students who are often widely scattered and/or enrolled in courses in comparatively small numbers, and we understand why an industrial model for distance education might be popular. Once the fixed costs of the prototype and production line for a new model TV are established, the variable costs of producing one thousand sets are little more than those of producing one hundred. Similarly, once a system to produce ten sets of a new course package is set up, it is comparatively cheap to produce one hundred sets. Even where a relatively high proportion of an institution's budget is allotted to interactive student services - for example, one-third of the Open University's budget in the mid-70's[6] - the basic economics of distance education is reflected in figures such as that given by Wagner who showed that *in 1976 the ratio of fixed cost to variable cost per student was about 2000:1 in the Open University compared to 8:1 in the conventional universities.*[7]

Secondly, two philosophical aspects of current Australian distance education seem to have contrasting implications for student independence. One aspect is what I think of as "the package effect". This refers to the probable impact of presenting students (particularly those isolated from any significant interaction with a tutor or with other students?) with a package of course materials. It would take a self-confident learner to be able to use such a package for his or her own learning purposes rather than to say "Ah, this is what Comparative

Literature (or Introductory Statistics or ....) is all about" and set about 'doing Comparative Lit.'. And while we know that many external students are mature-age and highly motivated, this doesn't mean that they are self-confident - often far from it.

However, the second aspect which I'd contrast with "the package effect" would seem to offer a hope of genuine independence, and this hope comes from looking at who external students are. Formal tertiary education is often only one part of an external student's life, and may well be a minor part in comparison with commitments such as paid work and family life. Because these students have little time to spare on 'irrelevant' learning, it seems likely that if they are clear about their own reasons for learning then they might use institutional materials for their own ends rather than being overwhelmed by "the package effect". The learning resources in their own communities may then become valued (by them, if not by academics) instead of seen as inadequate supplements to an on-campus library. Also, as these students are mostly mature-age, they have an array of informal learning skills which can be built on in formal education if the links between formal and informal education are recognised. (Now, unfortunately, enrolling at a university or CAE may isolate a student - such as a farmer's wife - from the informal learners in his or her community.)

But before getting carried away by possibilities, let me look in more detail at "Technology rules, o.k.?" - at **the industrial approach to distance education**.

Keegan argues that it is fundamental that *In traditional education a teacher teaches. In distance education an institution teaches.*[8] Effective teaching within this institutional approach depends on prior planning and organisation rather than on teaching ability. There is a division of labour between, for example, course writers and instructional designers and printers. Industrial management skills are needed for efficient production of materials. Communication between the institution and its students is controlled by rules of technology instead of by the social norms which govern face-to-face personal interactions. And as Harris and Holmes comment, while education funding is reduced,

> *a centralised, rationally organised teaching system with large staff-student ratios must appear to be an attractive proposition. We believe that we should take seriously the OU boast to be 'the university of the future', and in the light of these possible developments, the educational value of what the OU offers must be examined with the greatest care.*[9]

Certainly rational 'efficient' organisations and teaching have great appeal for administrators. (I wonder if the assertion that distance education is simply a method of teaching lends itself to an 'efficiency-of-production' approach?) Academics who appeal to efficiency often reason that 'Procedure A is more efficient for the institution and therefore it's better for the students?' While the good of students can't automatically be equated with the maintenance of an institution, Daniel and Stroud[10] make a persuasive case that distance education students are more affected by the health of their institution than are

on-campus students. But much of what is designated "efficient" and which does maintain institutions can be argued to be grossly inefficient in facilitating self-directed education; and it is entirely possible for students to graduate with 'excellent' results from a 'healthy' institution without undertaking any significant independent learning.

Perhaps this phenomenon is connected with a possible danger that Keegan identifies in his definition of distance education, viz., that of alienation of the academic workforce. Staff may feel that their teaching is depersonalised, particularly those *whose qualifications and training have not prepared them for work in the most industrialised form of education*, where *educational decisions may be controlled by mechanised and automated processes* and where *the constant process of writing creatively for distance students .... poses problems* and the *marking of distance students' work .... has a definite propensity for staff disillusionment.*[11]

How can learning skills staff function as part of the industrial approach to distance education? We will be expected to provide a general learning skills package for all students; to refer students to study skills books; to conduct introductory sessions as part of an on-campus orientation programme; or to offer remedial help for students with inefficient learning techniques. All these approaches separate the learning process from course content, and approach learning skills problems as though they were diseases against which students could be vaccinated.[12]

It is apparent that student purposes are irrelevant to the purely industrial form of distance education. Students are likely to take an assignment-oriented path through each course, and to adopt a surface approach to their learning. [See the appendix for a brief explanation of the terms "surface" and "deep" and "active" and "passive" learning.] As Gibbs points out, surface learning is widespread in both conventional and Open University higher education and

> *even when students can pass conventional exams by accumulating marks by memorisation, they may understand the key concepts of their subject extremely poorly (e.g., Dahlgren, 1978). As the vast majority of students in higher education do* <u>*not*</u> *fail their exams it must be concluded that higher education accepts the dismal consequences of taking a surface approach as a perfectly acceptable learning outcome.*[13]

One way in which higher education has tried to alleviate such problems is by moving towards **<u>an individualised approach to distance education</u>.** In order to feel liberal and warm inside, institutions and their staff incorporate *a degree of flexibility into the processes to cater for learners with a number of personal values on some universal scales, or with a set of particular varieties of 'entry behaviours', or with personal preferences within a restricted range of 'learning styles'.*[14]

Instructional designers and programmed learning material both fit comfortably with the individualised approach to curriculum planning and evaluation. Carefully set-out course objectives are a feature and *student needs* [are] *to be represented as a series of desirable outcomes,*

ideally listed as 'behaviours' which they would achieve? [15] Grading at the end of courses serves employers' needs and thus pressure for vocational content can be relieved (as in teacher training) or removed (as in some arts subjects), leaving tutors apparently free to emphasise the course content rather than the work for assessment. The content of a sequence of courses is likely to be defined by academic consensus concerning the core areas of a particular discipline, with teachers having some choice of content in individual courses. This consensus approach, whether operating within a course team or when one academic writes material for the informal approval of colleagues, tends to produce course materials from which explicitly personal judgements by an author are eliminated or where alternative views on a topic are the exception rather than the rule. Likewise, assessment is carried out by academics according to 'objective' criteria.

So where do student purposes fit into this individualised approach? Since academics have some choice in course content, some of them will allow students some choice (which book to review, the order in which to submit assignments). But many course guides show little evidence of real encouragement for students to think about their own objectives and even less evidence of time allowed for students evolve their own objectives as an integral part of a course. And even where it is acknowledged that student evaluation might make a small contribution, staff usually accept that it would be too time-consuming to integrate such evaluation from external students. For students who do work out their own goals, and who are inclined to take a deep active approach to a course, it can be difficult to mesh their own goals with the written

course objectives, particularly if the latter change during the teaching of the course or if the course tutors have different objectives from the course writers. Even where a tutor wants students to make course material personally relevant, institutional demands lead many students to take a surface approach to learning. For example, what do you do as a student when in impersonal course materials you are asked for your carefully thought-out personal opinion as part of an essay which you are told will be judged according to certain impartial and uniformly-applied criteria?

The individualised approach in higher education is familiar to most learning skills staff, though probably less so in external education than on-campus simply because of time-and-distance problems. In this approach we try to help students meet course objectives and attempt to create as much room as possible for a student's individual learning style to develop. (The latter endeavour often leaves us feeling like Sisyphus, particularly if there are few people with learning skills concerns in the entire university or CAE.) To these ends, we sometimes produce course-specific learning skills materials where process and content are linked. While this link is generally recognised as desirable it also has limitations. The student with a surface approach who is helped to write a book review for a literature course may be unable to transfer the appropriate skills to writing a film review in a media course; and in either case, the student is likely to be writing the review because the course materials asked for it, not because she or he initiated it as a piece of learning.

Perhaps we supplement such course-based material by trying to promote tutor-student dialogue within a course. This dialogue could consist of informal correspondence by letter or tape or 'phone, or - if a current Murdoch project proves valuable - using a subcarrier signal on FM radio to reach a particular student audience who can then 'phone their tutor in the FM studio.

And of course we can provide help to individual students where possible. But for students who are rarely on campus, how can this be done? By study centres if they exist; and otherwise, by time-consuming communication on an ad hoc basis.

If we accept the individualised approach to distance education, we at least should try to implement it effectively. But Gibbs argues that we don't achieve this, and his attack is on two fronts (at least!) Firstly, he sees teachers as clinging to the *overarching belief ... that subject expertise is a lecturer's main asset, and that "covering" this subject matter is the main task,*[16] and asserts that *we fear losing our authority and status ... we rig things (by choosing the topic, the level and the pace at which it is tackled, the way we encourage passivity and discourage real questioning) so as to make that authority nearly invulnerable.*[17]

Gibbs talks about lectures as the most obvious manifestation of this attitude and re-asserts Rogers' contention that to focus students' learning almost solely on content is to guarantee that their knowledge will become outdated in a rapidly changing world. Instead students need to focus on the ability to solve problems and to find out for themselves - to learn how to learn.

In distance education the dependence on lectures is reduced in courses which use few lecture tapes or transcripts (and when staff can't use weekly tutorials to give mini-lectures!) But while dependence on the method, i.e, the lecture, may be reduced, dependence on the experts, i.e., the lecturers or other academic staff, is not. In fact, the missing lectures may well be replaced with an amount of reading material considerably beyond that which internal students are given. When confronted with a large amount of course materials or with long lists of expected readings, it is not surprising that many external students decide at the beginning of a course that a surface approach to their study seems the only feasible one.

The second attack that Gibbs makes concerns our relative ignorance about how students consciously control their approaches to studying, including their use of course materials.[18] This is particularly true for students at a distance, since staff don't have access to the large amount of information which can be gleaned during face-to-face contact about strategies used by internal students. And we can't assume that external students will use strategies identical to those used in on-campus study.

Thus studies such as the one by Clyde *et al.*[19] are stimulating even when the data comes from a comparatively small number of students. In this Queensland survey the average length of a study session for the 25 students concerned was 1 to 2 hours, with many shorter sessions of hour or less and some very long ones - guess when? - when assignments were due. What implications would an average study session of 1 -2 hours have for writers of course guides? Can the short sessions be given a focus within the course, or are they an important part of students' individual learning flexibility?

At a more conceptual level, Marton and Svensson talk about the difficulties that many students have with the structure of learning materials. I want to use a lengthy quote from their article because it seems to me to contain a profoundly important point.

> *One such difficulty is linked with texts based on the principle-examples structure. Marton and Wenestam (1979) have used texts in which the main point is a certain principle (such as scientific hypotheses are tested by means of comparing two conditions, on the average equal in all respects but the one which the hypothesis to be tested concerns) illustrated by a single rather comprehensive example (such as Semmelweis' search for the cause of child-bed fever in mid-nineteenth century Vienna). The example is subordinate to the principle it is intended to illuminate. In reality this hierarchical structure is missed by a substantial number of students whose reading of the text lacks the dimension of depth. Instead of understanding it as a main point (a principle) illustrated by one (or several) example(s) they conceive of it as a number of apparently unrelated parts on the same level. In the above example, they think the text is about both the testing of scientific hypotheses and the search for the cause of child-bed fever, without seeing the reason for juxtaposing the two topics. This levelling out of the hierarchical structure of the text has been called horizontalization. In some instances the main point vanishes altogether.*[20]

Another article, by Morgan, Taylor and Gibbs,[21] makes a related point concerning the possible limitations on manipulating students to learn more actively by using inserted-text questions and self-assessment checks in course materials. The authors mention the possibility that such devices - which are dear to the heart of many an instructional designer - in fact often move students in the direction of surface learning.

These two related points raise a question on a similar matter. What happens if, in an attempt to individualise distance education, we present students with course materials which consist of a required core and optional resources in order for students to choose from alternative paths through the material? Even if we imagine we have set out the core and the options clearly, isn't it likely that students who take a surface approach to their learning will actually see all the materials as required? We can make the structure clear for internal students, both explicitly and implicitly, during face-to-face contact. But for externals......? If we add to a surface approach an absence of genuine help to enable students to find their own resources outside course materials, the chances of the optional material being perceived as 'required' seem high.

Another area in which we have little systematic knowledge of distance students' actual learning strategies is their use of comments on assignments. Compare a student who collects an essay from a tutor and reads the tutor's comments while still in the university or college environment with a student who goes to the mailbox to collect the essay

and then reads the comments at home. Will the external student sit down with a cup of coffee and give themselves time to read the tutor's feedback carefully? Will he or she simply glance at the grade and any comments on a cover sheet then get back to working out how to pay the family bills - or to work on the next essay which is due tomorrow? Do students relate comments on one essay to those on an earlier piece of work? Do they often share the comments with other people at home? We have snippets of information picked up from students about these questions and we have our intuitions and expectations about them - but how much systematic information do we have about what students see themselves as doing in this aspect of learning?

How do we gather such information from external students? We can send out questionnaires, but they seem to me to be prone to the limitations similar to those I've mentioned for course materials. We can go out and interview large numbers of students in their study environments, but this is time-consuming and expensive, especially when compared to research with 'captive' on-campus students. And then we have the challenge of working within a coherent theoretical distance education framework which is genuinely student-centred - a singularly abstract task when you rarely see the students and when there's yet another internal student at your door.

Yet without such knowledge about how a range of external students conceptualise and set about their learning, how far can we improve the abilities of distance teachers? Within an individualised approach to distance education the danger is that in external studies units we will

often resort to trying to improve the efficiency of course preparation or the structure of course materials as the major part of our attempt to improve the learning of external students. Sometimes - if we see part of our role as improving the quality of teaching rather than simply picking up the pieces as students cope with whatever style of teaching they happen to encounter - we try to encourage staff to acquire basic distance teaching skills. We might, for example, hold a workshop on the use of the telephone with students, sharing with tutors what we think is the amount of information a student can absorb in one 'phone call, or how a call could be integrated with written feedback. Unfortunately - at the other end of the spectrum from student-centred research - much of our energy may be spent on trying to get tutors to 'phone a student even once during a course, or on persuading administration to adopt a simple method of reimbursement which will encourage the 'phone calls which have to be made in the evenings if a tutor is to contact working students.

Supposing, however, that we were able to improve the quality of much distance teaching, to improve both the teachers and the materials? Then, instead of mostly individualised teaching, we might see an increase in the amount of independent learning that students could undertake. Student-initiated projects or contracts within a course or instead of a course might increase. Such projects would be no more than an extension of individualised learning if they were viewed only as another method - this time on a one-to-one or small group basis - of a student discovering what an academic thinks is the 'correct' knowledge about a topic. However if the independent study consisted of contracts set up by the student within his or her own educational framework, then they could offer glimpses within an individualised-teaching institution of significant independent learning.

But these are large suppositions about teaching - and the contracts would presumably have to meet institutional requirements for submission of grades, how substantial the assessment should be, which staff were permitted to supervise contracts, ... etcetera.

> *There have been times when I have toyed with the notion of student-led innovation: that if students could be helped to become autonomous learners then lecturers would be obliged to adopt a different and more useful role. But lecturers hold all the trump cards. In the game, sophisticated autonomous learners bowed down to the demands of their teachers and passively submitted to being taught and so learnt less. What one learns from higher education is how to be a dependent learner. Continued preoccupation with teaching, at the expense of learning, is not going to change this situation.* [22]

The demands of the teachers are a part of the demands of an institution. Hence my earlier assertion that a radical re-thinking of distance education is necessary if we are to consider seriously **an independent approach to learning.**

As I mentioned in the introduction, I do not see independent, self-directed distance learning - "I did it my way" - as equivalent to isolation either from other students or from an educational institution. In fact I envisage students working with other students as a major potential source of independence from a university or college - but more of that later.

Students who are geographically or socially isolated from the institution with which they're enrolled are not infrequently referred to as "independent" in distance education literature. When we look at the educational lives of such students, we notice that they still have to follow standard assignment deadlines, that they are required to meet course objectives in assessment, that they have limited choice (if any) of assignment topics and appropriate resources for those topics, and so on. The "independence" they have seems to consist of not having to attend lectures and tutorials and laboratory sessions at set times (though, if for example they're Open University students, they may well find themselves getting up early or staying up late to catch a required radio or TV broadcast).

There is another sense in which some distance education students can have a measure of independence, i.e., in their freedom from those aspects of the hidden curriculum which their tutor conveys to on-campus students in a tutorial or a laboratory session. Yet this aspect of independence from an institution or its academics is rarely referred to in writings on distance education - perhaps it is not seen as significant or desirable? Or perhaps the matter goes deeper than that, as could be inferred from Keegan's article highlighting the characteristics of distance education. Together with *participation in the most industrialised form of education,* in a list of six major characteristics he includes *influence of an educational organisation especially in the planning and preparation of learning materials.* [23]

How far that influence extends and how much planning is seen as essential are key questions when considering autonomous learning by external students. Such learning can obviously include use of institutionally-prepared materials but for the student's own purposes in learning rather than in an approach centred on demands of teachers and course content. Daniel and Stroud talk about student development, using the Chinese proverb '*If you give a man a fish he will eat for a day. If you teach him to fish he will eat for a lifetime*', and go on to say:

> *To pursue the analogy of the proverb, the new institutions* [in distance education in the 1970's] *began their activities as fishmongers with the production and delivery of better and better courses as their primary aim. As time went on, however, it became clear that there was no such thing as a perfect course. A purposeful student can learn from a relatively ordinary course while no amount of instruction design is proof against lack of motivation."* [24]

In connection with this, it's worth noting that some studies[25] suggest that even students who usually take a deep approach to learning will often become anxious and move towards surface learning in response to the nature of the explicit or implicit demands (exams, or 'performance' requirements) that they perceive as coming from teachers or course materials. Presumably then, assessment in independent study should be student-initiated and negotiated with an academic where necessary.

In individualised education, one of the uses of assessment is to motivate students. "If we didn't give them deadlines, they'd probably never turn anything in, and if we didn't give them grades, what they did turn in would be just thrown together at the last minute." Internal students can be motivated in a variety of ways during face-to-face contact, from a casual comment by a tutor after a seminar to a performance given by a skilled lecturer. But for external students, the most potent motivation from academic sources may be the date for the next assignment. These students need to be more self-motivated, and self-directed study seems the most honest and logical way of allowing this to happen.

In this paper I have used terms such as "learning skills staff" to refer not only to people appointed with a specific responsibility for this area but also to other people, most notably academics in subject areas, who share a real concern for external students' learning. In the industrial approach with its division of labour and in the individualised approach with its teacher/expert-centred approach, staff appointed to learning skills responsibilities are likely to have a role which, despite some overlap, is clearly different from the role of the staff in external studies and from that of the 'teaching staff'. However, in an independent approach with its primary focus on learning, the roles of these three groups would coincide considerably. All staff would move towards becoming resource people, facilitators, animateurs ... the terms already exist, with a multiplicity of meanings.

Let me draw together some **changes** we might want to see as part of an independent approach to distance education. Some of the suggestions which follow could equally well fit with the individualised model as I've described it. This is because it seems that like students, we probably won't amend our habits overnight, so I see change as a continual process of negotiating for an increasing independence for students. However, I don't think that change will occur unless as we negotiate we frequently ask ourselves "Is this change directed towards students being able to learn independently on a large scale, or is its main effect likely to be making me feel liberal and warm inside at the expense of real student independence?"

I'm not about to attempt to present a picture of a complete new model of education - I have neither world enough nor time, so I hope you'll forgive my coyness in this matter. Instead, I shall begin with the first piece of the puzzle that comes to mind - research: looking closely and thoroughly at the perspectives that distance students bring to their learning. The understandings we reach as the result of such research could help us decide how the interactive component of an external studies budget might best be spent to further students' own goals. The initial studies from this perspective (see the appendix) suggest, for example, that a deep approach to study is associated with learning which lasts longer and is more satisfying, both goals for which most learning skills people would like to see students aim. If further research confirms these findings, what difference will it make to our work? (What do we do, if anything, for students who are apparently happy with a surface approach to their studies?) I'd hope we would discover new

ways of helping students conceptualise content in which they're interested. I'd expect that at least the research might give us fresh insights into why

> *Didactic* [learning skills] *texts take the decisions out of the hands of the student, and leave him reliant on expert advice. If the advice doesn't fit his problem, or if he finds he* <u>*cannot*</u> *do the things in the recommended way, he is stuck. A student....new to studying may well be rather anxious and depressed if he discovers that he cannot write his notes as Tony Buzan says he should. Will his studying be less effective as a result of not being able to write 'organic' notes? The television keeps saying so.* [26]

Which brings me to teachers who currently are identified as subject experts ..... Within course materials and in assignment feedback or assessment, I'd hope that our judgements and assumptions would be made more explicit - once we ourselves became aware of these. I'd like to see research on what happens to student learning if such staff teach outside their speciality, a practice which is currently regarded by most as the province of 'those soft-option, inter-disciplinary people' or as something they themselves have to do if student numbers in their area are light and they need to make up their teaching load elsewhere. If we regularly taught as 'non-experts' in a subject we might still try, but in a new way, to rig things to retain some authority. Or we might discover how absurd and anxiety-producing are some of the demands that we make on students and learn that if we refrain from making such demands we can trust students to learn intelligently.

Those of us who are also concerned with the preparation and design of course materials for external students could give higher priority to helping teachers move towards becoming resource people for students, and we could give lower priority to being experts in 'efficient' pre-planning as a means of helping students learn. We could also ask ourselves questions about the place of new technology in self-directed learning; for example, whether education by satellite will actually improve teaching and help students learn independently (the two are not automatically identical) or whether the technology will be used to deliver 'more of the same', with student choice still limited.

For students to be able to make their own choices, they need encouragement and 'sounding-board' assistance to articulate their purposes for learning at all stages - before they enrol (see the Deakin centrefold for a good example of help at this stage); when they start at university or CAE and/or in a particular course; during a course; when evaluating their own work; and when they are confronted with major academic choices.

To help students who are striving to become independent in a situation where most academics still focus on their own specialities, it's useful if the students can be directed to teachers who will support students as they follow their own learning purposes. I'd argue that, with the possible exceptions of acquiring practical skills and in postgraduate study, a student will be more likely to take a deep, active approach to learning about subject X with a supportive teacher who hasn't specialised in the subject than with a teacher who's expert in subject X but who teaches within the industrialised or individualised model.

How can external students locate such teachers, when they take longer than internal students to get to know staff and find it more difficult to change tutors? Profiles of staff which include statements about their educational philosophies could help, as would student evaluations of staff which indicated how supportive a teacher was of students' independent learning. (Like many study skills texts, student evaluations of staff sometimes seem concerned chiefly with helping students have a nicer time while meeting other people's objectives.)

If we want to reduce the "package effect" on external students and help them build on the potential strengths they have as a base for independent learning, several possibilities emerge. One possibility often suggested is to introduce or increase staff-student face-to-face contact in external teaching, as in residential schools or regional study centres. In learning skills, Gibbs' student-centred approach requires face-to-face 'talking it through' with staff and students present. Gibbs is optimistic that exercises based on his approach could be developed for students working at home on their own, but doesn't know if the approach _is_ relevant in this situation and realises the problems involved in using written material to produce action and interaction.[27]

Face-to-face options are valuable for external students when, for example, they are acquiring practical skills such as classroom teaching or laboratory procedures (although it seems likely that videocassettes will increasingly be used in these areas). Such options are not feasible if distances between students and the institution are vast and/or if student numbers are so small that the capital costs of study

centres are disproportionate. And this is where technological solutions which allow for two-way communication without face-to-face contact present another possibility - teleconferencing, for example. Teleconferencing is something of an exception however, since many technological solutions seem to be "vertical technology" designed to allow staff-student communication but with student-student communication confined to being highly structured and limited (for example, only possible via the tutor) or non-existent.

If we ask ourselves which skills are needed to foster independent learning to help a student evolve his or her goals, to develop nascent abilities and to share learning experiences, we are likely to come back to the supportive skills of questioning and listening and acting as a sounding board. Learning skills staff may have these attributes in abundance; so may subject teachers; and so might other students, particularly if encouraged to develop them.

Self-help groups of external students, if operated in conjunction with study centres, may help students move towards independence. However, rather than accepting self-help groups as a useful extra, I can envisage a central role for them in an independent learning system of distance education (for example, in contributing a group assessment of each other's work as a major component of evaluation). "But we send students lists of other students in their area and they hardly even use them." In a system where students are clearly expected to direct their important educational communications (such as assignments) to the university or CAE, this lack of contact is hardly surprising. "It's

difficult enough for us with all our resources to get materials and assignments to and from students. It would be too difficult for students to keep in touch with each other." Students don't need to do mass mailings for a medley of courses. Self-help groups could be of a size which suited the learners, rather than a size that the institution thought efficient. It would be interesting to research whether the role of such groups varied according to the number of participants. "What if there were only a dozen students in an area and they were all doing different courses?" Perhaps if students share learning experiences when they come from different courses it will help wean them from the assignment-oriented approach to courses that seems prevalent among external students. "Wouldn't many of the groups fold up because they didn't know what to talk about?" Massey University Extra Mural Students Society runs and pays a group of student "communicators" who act as *the local "lifeline" service for extra mural students* [28] from enrolment to exams. The initial practical queries put a student in friendly contact with the local communicator and the "Hints for Communicators" handout indicates that students have plenty to talk about! "What about very isolated students? Would they miss out? And wouldn't other external students find it difficult to find places for group meetings?" Contact between group members wouldn't have to be face-to-face, even in metropolitan areas or large country towns. An exchange of 'phone calls, letters, tapes (or videocassettes?) would keep people in touch, as would services such as the Flying Doctor radio network. If students did meet, they could do so in private homes rather than needing study centres. The liaison person would be the lynch-pin of the group, rather than a particular building. If a physical contact point was necessary, perhaps a local centre of informal learning such as a library could serve some groups.

I don't know if independent self-help groups would work. I hope they would, given time to evolve and given institutional and academic support. But that would involve changing the way we see an institution's role in distance education and therefore changing how an institution allocates resources to external studies. Very briefly, what other sort of institutional changes might we consider to help independent learning?

We can push for more opportunities for independent study, whether as 'course-alternative' contracts or as the basis for individual degree programmes. We can try to create whatever time and space we can for students to discover learning skills they already have, to try new approaches gradually and to be able to 'get worse before they get better'. External students need administrative procedures and academic willingness to allow them to change tutors and courses more easily early in a course. And if students are to have time to evolve their own goals, we need to consider whether the semester/term system with which they work allows room for this. If not, can we give external students additional flexibility, for example, allowing them to extend a course over two semesters or allowing variable starting times for courses? Then there are issues with inter-institutional implications, such as the optimum size for institutions capable of promoting independent learning; and the question of whether an institution acts as an educational broker to help a student select, say, a career goals and then possibly refers the student to a 'rival' institution.

We probably each have an institutional change or two we'd like to see implemented, so rather than add to my list I want to end it with a caution about the appearance of the words "cost-effective" and "efficient" whenever they appear in meetings, course planning, and discussions on distance education. Delivering cost-effective education efficiently can be highly desirable if this is seen as means to an end. However institutional representatives are often like Becky Sharp when she said *"I think I could be a good woman if I had five thousand a year"*,[29] and "cost-effective" and "efficient" can signal a hidden agenda which is not designed to serve the aim of students' genuinely autonomous learning. Would such learning be less cost-effective than industrialised or individualised learning? If we start with an industrial approach as our basis then yes, it is comparatively expensive to individualise teaching to any significant extent, let alone create opportunities for self-directed students. But institutions expend a lot of time and money on activities which are basically designed to keep control of education and teaching firmly in institutional and academic hands. To change this - so that many of these resources come to be used in facilitating self-directed learning - requires that radical re-thinking of underlying educational philosophy to which I referred earlier. A daunting challenge - but it's helpful to remember that there are no immutable laws of the universe which declare it to be an absolute impossibility.

As a concluding footnote to their critique of the Open University, Harris and Holmes make a salient point for all of us who'd wish for educational change.

> *By using the Open University's own facilities for disseminating our arguments, we may be helping to encourage a profound, but liberating, discussion of a wide range of Open University practices. On the other hand, however, our efforts could be incorporated, as others' have been, in a spirit of 'repressive tolerance' by becoming subject to the very constraints and controls we ourselves have uncovered. Our arguments in this article could be rendered ineffective as critique while adding to the liberal appearance of Open University materials. We can only hope that the incorporation will not be a total one....* [30]

When I think through the philosophical implications of how I spend most of my time as an academic involved with distance education, learning skills and subject teaching, quotes such as the above one make me very uncomfortable. I don't think I can be a latent risk-taker - I either hang glide or I don't, I either cross the road or I don't, I either work to enable distance students to learn independently or I don't. Therefore if I believe independent learning by students is a worthwhile goal, I have to ask myself just how much I'm doing towards that goal. I hope this paper raises similar questions for you.

APPENDIX: The phenomenography of learning

Recent research* on student learning includes a perspective which sets out to understand qualitatively what learners experience and how students conceptualise and interpret their learning. This perspective contrasts with that which describes the student from within the researchers' concepts of learning and which often explains differences between students and between learning outcomes in quantitative terms.

From the first perspective - a phenomenographical one - one of the variations in the way students interpret their approach to learning tasks is systematised as "deep" and "surface" processing. More recent studies on the links between approaches to learning have used the following categories in describing students' levels of understanding of written material.

Approach to learning	*Level of understanding*
Deep active	*Understands author's meaning and shows argument is supported by evidence* [Abstracts personal relevance from argument]
Deep passive	*Mentions the main argument, but does not relate evidence to conclusion*
Surface active	*Describes the main points made without integrating them into an argument*
Surface passive	*Mentions a few isolated points or examples*

- Entwistle, N.J. Styles of Learning and Teaching, 1981, Wiley & Sons, p.85

* For reading on this research see, for example, the articles in references 20, 21 and 24 for this paper.

REFERENCES

1. Peters, O. *Die didaktische Struktur des Ferunterrichts. Untersuchungen zu einer industrialisierten Form des Lehrens and Lernens*, Weinheim: Beltz, 1973, p.206; in Keegan, D. "On defining distance education", *Distance Education*, 1980, 1(1) pp.13-36.

2. Daniel, J.S., & Marquis, C. "Interaction and independence: getting the mixture right", *Teaching at a Distance*, Spring 1979, No. 14, pp.29-44.

3. Daniel & Marquis, p.30.

4. Daniel & Marquis, p.36.

5. Harris, D., & Holmes, J. "Open-ness and control in higher education: towards a critique of the Open University", in Dale, R. *et al.* (eds), *Schooling and Capitalism*, Routledge & Kegan Paul/Open University Press, 1976, p.81.

6. MacKenzie, N., *et al.*, extract from *Open Learning: Systems and Problems in Post-Secondary Education*, UNESCO Press, 1975, in *Teaching at a Distance*, No. 8, pp.77-82.

7. Wagner, L., "The economics of higher education revisited", *Higher Education*, 1977, 6, pp.359-81.

8. Keegan, D. "On defining distance education", *Distance Education*, 1980, 1(1) p.19.

9. Harris & Holmes, p.79.

10. Daniel, J.S., & Stroud, M.A. "Distance education: a reassessment for the 1980's", *Distance Education*, 1981, 2(2), pp.151-2.

11. Keegan, p.20.

12. Rowland, F.A., "Learning at a distance, or Does the doctor know best?", *Challenges Facing Distance Education*, vol.1, 1983, Toowoomba: D.D.I.A.E., p.305.

13. Gibbs, G., "Better Teaching or Better Learning?", *HERDSA News*, July 1983, 5(2) p.5.

14. Harris & Holmes, p.81.

15. Harris & Holmes, p.81.

16. Gibbs, p.3.

17. Gibbs, p.11.

18. Morgan, A., Taylor, E., & Gibbs, G. "Understanding the distance learner as a whole person:, *Learning at a Distance: A World Perspective*, 1982, Athabasca University/ICCE: Athabasca, pp.103-106.

19. Clyde, A., *et al.*, "How students use distance teaching materials: an institutional case study", *Distance Education*, 1983, 4(1) pp.4-26.

20. Marton, F., & Svensson, L., "Orientations to studies, approaches to texts: A relational view of study skills applied to distance learning", *Learning at a Distance: A world perspective*, 1982, Athabasca University/ICCE: Athabasca, pp.97-102.

21. Morgan, Taylor, & Gibbs, p.105.

22. Gibbs, p.11.

23. Keegan, p.21

24. Daniel & Stroud, p.159.

25. Gibbs, G., Morgan, A., & Taylor, E., "A review of the research of Ference Marton and the Goteborg group: a phenomenological research perspective on learning", *Higher Education*, 1982, 11(2), p.135.

26. Gibbs, G., "Learning to study: a student-centred approach", *Teaching at a Distance*, March 1977, No. 8, p.6.

27. Gibbs, "Learning to study", p.7.

28. Massey University Extra Mural Students' Society, "Hints for communicators", (undated), Massey University, N.Z.

29. Thackeray, W., *Vanity Fair*, ch.36.

30. Harris & Holmes, p.87.

INTERACTIVE VIDEO AND FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNING IN THE 80'S

LIZ TEMPLE

Liz Temple is Lecturer in French at the University of N.S.W. She teaches and researches in the area of applied linguistics, and is at present working on language learner fluency. For the past year she has been investigating the use of interactive video in language teaching and is currently conducting an experiment to assess its effectiveness.

INTERACTIVE VIDEO AND FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNING IN THE 80'S

Interactive video has become part of the language programme of students in the School of French of the University of N.S.W. and the aim of this paper is to explain how and why this approach has been adopted. The particular version of interactive video used is not two-way TV, split screen, videodisc, nor part of a computer system for language learning. It is a self-contained unit consisting of a monitor and recorder for video playback, a student unit with microprocessor which controls the interactive mechanism and the visual display, and a programming unit with which existing video material can be made into programmes. The purpose of this equipment is simply to make video viewing interactive. The student's understanding is verified by means of questions, appearing either on the screen or on paper, to be answered by the student on the student unit after each segment of a programme. There is immediate feedback: after a correct answer the programme proceeds automatically to the following segment, after an incorrect answer the student has the possibility of reviewing that segment, or entering a different response, or watching additional material. He|she cannot continue until the question is answered correctly. Thus the machine individualises learning in so far as students proceed at their own pace.

The many uses of video in foreign language teaching have been recognised in recent years. In video, we have a medium which not only is motivating in general, but which allows a vast range of material to be presented, far beyond the normal resources of the classroom, and one which adds a dimension to understanding and learning by means of its visual input. Interactive video adds the advantages of active participation on the part of the learner, immediate feedback, and individualisation. I believe it is a valuable support to the language teacher and one which reflects current thinking in the methodology of language teaching.

For the last ten years, foreign and second language teaching has been moving away from a structural view of the learner's competence - a linguistic competence acquired through the assimilation of forms and meanings - towards the concept of communicative competence. In this so-called communicative approach, the ability to communicate effectively in the target language is seen as the principal goal of the learner. Since the form of language is determined by its use, the acquisition of purely linguistic skills does not guarantee that ability. Syntax is at the service of communication and not an end in itself, as has often been the case in foreign language methods(1). Communicative competence requires a knowledge of rules of use. The task of the language teacher has become more difficult: how does one facilitate the acquisition of the communicative system of a language? The foreign language learner is especially at a disadvantage. Whereas the resources of the second language learner are inevitably communication oriented, the former has little opportunity to experience the "rules of speaking", as Hymes termed them (2).

Video is a particularly valuable means of presenting language in use. Audio documents have been used in most courses to present language samples in situation, but real communication generally occurs in a visual mode, and to neglect this part of the message is to neglect such elements of the communicative system as gesture, gaze, posture, and the attitudes of the speakers. Through watching video documents, students can become aware of these signals and widen the set of cues which contribute to their understanding and learning of the target language. Questions in an interactive programme can be specifically directed to their awareness of these cues. The great variety of material that can be shown on video serves both to widen the range of language situations to which students are exposed, and to add interest and enjoyment to their studies. An

interesting project has been set in motion by the Bureau pour l'Enseignement de la Langue et de la Civilisation française à l'Etranger (BELC) in Paris, with the aim of establishing an international network of exchange of video cassettes. This scheme, called Video Correspondance, involves student and other groups communicating with their counterparts in other countries by sending their own productions on video cassette. Here we can truly refer to "authentic documents" (3).

Another fundamental element in the communicative act is the context, including not only the setting, the roles of the speakers and the function of the message, but also the different socio-cultural system. Authentic video documents will reveal to some extent the interaction between language and society: language use relates to a particular socio-cultural context. With the visual support of such documents, the language learner can perceive more readily the pragmatic rules as well as the semantic and syntactic rules of the language. It is appropriate that a socio-linguistic competence be built up at the same time as a grammatical competence, given that native speakers are known to be more tolerant of errors in pronunciation and syntax than violations of rules of speaking.

The extralinguistic information present in video material is also important in the acquisition process itself. In his "Monitor Model", Krashen has distinguished "language acquisition" - the natural processes of internalising a language system, particularly one's first language - and "language learning" - the conscious study and application of rules (4). The former is the more successful strategy, yet the formalised setting of foreign language learning at the tertiary level tends to encourage the latter. The Monitor functions in particular in the writing skill, and courses which concentrate on structural accuracy, discrete items, or written production, may be overdeveloping an analytic skill to the detriment of intuitive processing. This criticism has been made of

computer assisted language learning programmes (5). Nonlinguistic cues supplied by the context contribute to the interpretation of linguistic and pragmatic elements, and guide the learner in his/her "language acquisition".

Central to this theory of acquisition is the input hypothesis, which states that the way we acquire language is through comprehensible input. Listening comprehension has long been accepted as an important part of the acquisition process: some researchers now see as optimal for the beginner, a systematic exposure to the spoken language and a delay in oral production (6). An initial large amount of meaningful listening practice provides the necessary input from which learners can gradually construct a linguistic system. I believe that intermediate and advanced students also require a greater exposure to the language than is often realised. As they progress, comprehensible input remains an essential source of the "primary communicative data" that will be used in the continual refining of their communicative competence. It is evident that the amount of input available to university students in language classes, generally between three and six hours per week, is insufficient for this appropriation phase to occur effectively. There is a need for a much greater volume of language material to be experienced. Contact with the spoken language outside the class has usually involved laboratory exercises, aural comprehension passages, sometimes multi-cultural television and foreign films when these are available. With interactive video, students have access to the necessary input in their own time, and can work in a way that is consistent with the approach to language teaching in the 80's.

Krashen describes the optimal input as having four characteristics (7). It is comprehensible, interesting and/or relevant, it is not grammatically sequenced, and it must be sufficient in quantity. Interactive video programmes can fulfil these conditions. A sufficient quantity of material

can be seen because of the self-access system, the material is not grammatically sequenced since students are confronted with authentic documents, the programmes are interesting given the impact of the medium (and, hopefully, the choice made by the teacher), and finally, they are comprehensible, on the one hand, through the contextualisation afforded by the visual image, and on the other, through the feedback provided by the interactive system.

The student who is simply watching a television programme in the foreign language, may fall into the role of the passive home viewer. But with interactive video the programme is no longer a one-way communication. The linear mode of television is interrupted as the students actively participate in the programme. The questions allow them to verify their hypotheses about meanings, immediate feedback helps memory retention, and their "interlanguage" is progressively revised. The concept of "interlanguage" implies that the learner's system represents a series of approximations to the target language that are continually being updated as new elements are appropriated. These modifications rely not only on the input mentioned above, but also on some kind of feedback regarding the particular stage of linguistic and communicative development reached. The question and response system of interactive video gives the students a chance to check their understanding as well as their retention of certain items. Two criticisms of the system are pertinent here. Firstly, the kind of question possible on the simpler versions of interactive video is limited, because the student unit allows entry of numerical responses only. This means that questions will be of the type True/False, Multiple Choice, Sequencing, and the like. Secondly, the appropriation of specific language data is not, in a communicative approach, under the control of the teacher. According to their needs, interests, background, individuals will acquire different features at different times. Nonetheless, the questions play a useful role in involving the students actively in the programme, in controlling the sequence and reviewing of segments, and in

reinforcing through the written code, language items which have been encountered only in their spoken form.

Thus, interactive video machines can be used successfully (and reasonably cheaply) by modern language departments to provide interesting, out-of-class, self-correcting language activity. Above all, students have the opportunity to watch material that presents authentic language use, and explore it on different levels. These can be global comprehension, detailed comprehension, understanding of language functions, awareness of paralinguistic features, knowledge of vocabulary, structures, expressions, idioms, or pragmatic rules, and appreciation of cultural content. Apart from whatever area is singled out in the questions, such language in context represents the data from which they structure language rules and build their communicative competence.

NOTES

(1) See WIDDOWSON, H. G. (1978) Teaching Language as Communication, O.U.P., Oxford, p.67.

(2) HYMES, D. H. (1972) "Models of the interaction of language and social life",in GUMPERTZ, J. J. and HYMES, D. H. (eds.) Directions in Sociolinguistics : the Ethnography of Communication, Holt, Rinehart and Winston, N.Y., pp.35-71.

(3) Normally authentic documents (non-didactic samples of the foreign language taken from texts transmitted between native speakers, such as advertisements) lack authenticity in that their original communicative purpose is lost when they are used for pedagogical purposes.

(4) KRASHEN, S. (1982) Principles and Practices in Second Language

Acquisition, Pergamon Press, Oxford.

(5) JOY, B. K. and LIAN, A. P. (1983) "The Butcher, the Baker, the Candlestick Maker : Some uses of dialogue generators in computer assisted Foreign Language Learning", ARAL, 6, 2, pp.60-71.

(6) Examples are Asher's "Total Physical Response" method and Potovsky's "Delayed Oral Practice". See WINITZ, H. (ed.) (1981) The Comprehension Approach to Foreign Language Instruction, Newbury House, Rowley, Mass.

(7) KRASHEN, S. (1982) "Theory versus practice in language training", in BLAIR, R. (ed.) Innovative Approaches to Language Teaching, Newbury House, Rowley, Mass.,pp.15-30.

ELOQUENCE & LITERACY

PETER J. WAKEHAM

Peter Wakeham took his Dip. Ed. and degree in English Language and Literature at Melbourne University. Shortly after, he started a major research project into teaching method. This has expanded to include detailed research, pilot studies, and professional practice with consultancy in Counselling, classroom discipline, communication, film production, and software design. At present he lectures in English and classroom communication at Melbourne State College.

He is a Hong Kong qualified instructor in Tai Chi, and runs a professional mime troupe. His basic craft, however, is poetry.

The Deakin Study Skills Conference

LANGUAGE AND LEARNING AT TERTIARY LEVEL 15 May to 18 May 1984

E L O Q U E N C E & L I T E R A C Y

Peter J. Wakeham

ELOQUENCE & LITERACY

STUDENT DIFFICULTIES

When a student arrives at a tertiary institution we can anticipate a range of problems, partly caused by the student's previous education, and the education of his teachers. These would include difficulties with the students'

LITERACY	: in terms of the accuracy, power, fluency, and aptness of their expression; comprehension; and general knowledge
ENTHUSIASM	: for the institution, course, career, particular subject, current topic, instructor; and for study in general
IMAGINATION	: in terms of the vivid perception and expression of their responses and experience - whether peaceful, inspiring, or frustrating; and related to their age and experience
LOGIC	: with the organization of their work; with the discrimination, ranking, and weighing of the evidence, contexts, and hierarchies within the topic; with the related entailments and implications; in their ability to cope with inter-active (dyadic) problems; and in their intelligent 'pursuit' of the dynamics of the text or problem; and
MATURITY	: in terms of the range and depth of the student's experience and compassion; similarly, in terms of the depth and lucidity of the student's self-knowledge; in the power of their concentration; and in their 'docility' - in the sense of their ability to be open to knowledge and yet alert to nonsense

In my experience, the major cause of failure in a subject is due to the first, and in some ways the least important aspect of 'readiness' - literacy/eloquence. That is, most students are adequately mature, logical, imaginative, and enthusiastic before, during, or after competent instruction; but fewer of them are adequately literate for what I would call a tertiary level of comprehension and expression.

LITERACY

Although students will obviously benefit from expert assistance in all of these areas, literacy is still the area that seems to attract most attention. Literacy (in school and public debate) is too often narrowed down to either the science of correct syntax, organization, and spelling; or to a 'language experience' happening, where involvement and spontaneity are expected to miraculously teach the fullest range of literate skills. I would suggest that any approach to literacy which did not take into account such critical factors as : an ear for tone and cadence; an eye for vivid and precise observation; and a sense of ordered and fair thought - will not even enable the less than literate student to write a simple letter of application for a job.

The fact is that these seemingly difficult arts can be taught to fourth year Primary children with little difficulty - provided they are shown the appropriate skills in a suitably child-centred and yet not reductive system. In this short lecture it would not be possible to give full details of the preparation, aids, language and content that typically achieve these results. But let me digress a little to take an example from literature that can serve as an illustration of such suggestions.

THE STORY MODEL

A start is made by introducing the children (or older students) to one of the more original versions of the Grimm's brothers' folk-tales: telling the story, and then pointing out that these stories seem to have been means of people expressing frustrating incidents or situations under the guise of a story. That is, all the fairy-tale elements of castles and witches and heroes and maids, seem to have stood for helpful or antagonistic individuals or elements in the personal or public life of the writer.

The students are then given an example of how a possible story might have been mapped out and carefully translated into a particular Grimm tale - with interesting variations and inversions, such as a river standing for a particular group, or a couple for an individual, or a female for a male - to further protect the author from an awkward discovery.

The students or children are then shown how a real-life story can be carefully crafted from sharply observed story elements around a named character - using belongings, actions, locations, and associates, etc. - which can, one by one, be transformed into a fairy story, or other guise. It is stressed that, even though the original and fictive versions will work on each other, the personal story is the 'former' of the fictive story: the exploration of fantasy should not unnecessarily weaken the original, if disguised, experience. (These are important elements for the later extension

of this technique, where "compacted" stories are added to the original account, as in for instance, Shakespeare's Antony and Cleopatra.)

This is then developed into such areas as the creation of stories from the student's actual life situations; closer appreciations of the "blood and sweat" behind the writer's art; studies of 'character' to show how a COUPLE, or even a SOCIETY can become a character (as in Romeo and Juliet or Tess of the D'Urbevilles, respectively); joining characters - formed and filled out as indicated - to build more complex and yet well-shaped stories; developments into history and into social studies; and so on.

Not only does this open out the idea of transforming various levels of experience into art in a personal and yet crafted way; it also introduces the child to the very challenging world of dyadic thinking - where the mind works directly with paradox, without significant confusion or over-simplification: a much treasured art of the skilled thinker.

IMPROVING COMMUNICATION

This example also brings up again those two central areas that are at the heart of bringing the teacher's skills into a place where the willing student can benefit, without wasteful and unnecessary exertion, in the educational wealth, hopefully being offered by the teacher. These two areas are firstly - the arts of turning experience into suitably clear perceptions to be written etc.(: while our responses and experiences are beyond our clear perception

they are also beyond our skills of accurate expression).

Secondly, there are the parallel arts of turning such integrated and vivid perceptions into logical, imaginative, factual and well-expressed essays (and so on) - respectful of correct syntax and yet both cogent and imaginative(: no matter how moving and clear the experience, we will either stay frustrated in our desire to express our insight - if we lack adequate skills of description; or we will drastically reduce or distort the experience in the telling).

Oh to always have at our fingertips the skill of writing poems/letters etc. which would perfectly express the paradox of our existence without deflating it! Anyone, for instance, who has tried to capture that reasonably common type of reaction to death (for example), where the person can feel both profound grief, at the same time as he can feel an equal and conflicting sense of the warmth, courage, and generosity of the deceased and of those closest to the deceased, will appreciate the difficulty of re-creating such simple (?) complexity; and the tendency of the work to end up in one or other "camp" - or uncomfortably caught between the two.

Many of you would know the art of Donne, Shakespeare, etc. who, for instance could precisely capture the grim qualities of the Reaper, death - in the imagery and so on; while, at the same time the development of the rhythm and of the metaphor, created a sense of hope and life.

TEACHING

But to come back to the precise point of the students' difficulties, it is important to recognize how rarely the student is given even an introduction to such satisfying literacy skills; and how poorly in general, our system caters for the student's logical and imaginative development. That is, I think that it would be safe to say that we do very little to help students to see experience vividly in terms of visual, auditory, and kinetic, etc. perceptions that are not bound by our limitations in such fields. As well, we often fail to show the student, fortunate enough to have such skills, how to adapt them to an essentially verbal or abstract curriculum; we can at times parody a proper insight into the language and imaginative world of children and adolescents; and when we provide instruction in expression we too often bias it towards those students who have made a sometimes empty art of fluency and debate.

That is, those students who have not been educated to translate/(?reduce) experience into verbal or mathematical or abstract concepts - but who are skilled perceivers of ideas in visual and other modes - will be at a severe disadvantage in the current system. Too often we teach from where we are at (or where our 'brightest' students are at!), in terms of knowledge, age, perception, culture, and so on - rather from where the majority of our ever-changing classes might more surely be found.

Obviously, the onus is on the teacher to find appropriate AVENUES for each and every willing student; and to then find TRANSLATIONS to enable students to convert their own private responses and experiences into new forms of insight, unity, and expression. With the work-loads and job insecurity that many lecturers and tutors bear, it is probably little wonder that we sometimes choose the soft option of evading the issue as one of "survival of the fittest" and so on, rather than seeing how we might present academic material in such a way that it would not always be biassed towards those who are verbally (and mathematically) literate. (This problem is even further exacerbated when we dogmatically teach from what is actually a 'school'-based or bigoted stance.)

I hope that I have already made it clear that this is not to suggest in any way, that we should reduce knowledge to a sort of pseudo-kindergarten level. On the contrary, the pressure to see our material in precisely graphic or kinetic terms will inevitably enhance the students' and our level of insight; and improve the level of sophisticated abstraction. One very important side effect (in my experience of primary, secondary, tertiary, and professional instruction), is that such changes nearly always improve the level of co-operation, enthusiasm, and industry in the class or work-room.

CONCLUSION

The study of teaching is obviously an extensive and challenging field. We have barely considered such areas as the place of abstraction in conceptualization (- although this can be related back to the idea of characters, in the sense that when abstractions become as real as 'characters' they become much, much easier to appreciate and rationally manipulate). I have made little reference to the various differences between students - literate or otherwise - some tending towards factual as against imaginative as against argumentative approaches to assignments. There has been no time to +present the critically important area of cadence, tone, and rhythm in language art; nor the place of oral reading skills as part of a student's basic literacy. Nor has there been time to closely consider the nature of creativity and its place in the curriculum.

There has only been the slightest of references to the problems of finding ways of transforming adult (lecturer) language and experience into suitable communications for adolescents or even for young adults; nor enough about the importance of showing the student how to bring depth and life into his common language. Little has been said about how all of these ideas lead on to a genuine autonomy in the student, which can drastically ease the load of the teacher - let alone regularize the pedagogical status between teacher as guide and pupil as learner, rather than teacher as slave or slave-driver, and so on.

I have not even opened the hornets' nest of what are the possible forms of key PRINCIPLES of knowledge in the humanities; or the similarly sensitive area of the art of unbigoted generalizations and of unbiassed "working models". Lastly, there has also been no room to bring up the topic of mystery and the sacred in education - presuming that many here, however challenged, would be firmly convinced that there are boundaries to knowledge, even in terms of the complexity of any one human life; and so on.

But I hope that this paper has been broad enough and yet detailed enough to draw both commentary and reflections which will contribute to our better understanding of these most important areas of teaching. With that hope, I hand you back to the "chair"!

Peter J. Wakeham

* * * * *

IMPROVING STUDENTS' ESSAYS

CAROLYN WEBB

Carolyn Webb - Senior Tutor, Language Study Centre, University of Sydney.

Teaching English as a Second Language to overseas and migrant students.

Particular interest in language and learning skills such as those required for essay writing and seminar participation. Currently developing classroom materials for practice in the various stages of the essay writing process.

Interest: Wine, especially champagne.

IMPROVING STUDENTS' ESSAYS

A workshop session aimed at formulating a framework for teaching the steps in the process of essay writing. Rather than merely identifying the steps in the process and making prescriptive statements about how to perform the tasks involved, workshop participants will be asked to find examples from students' essays of the ways, both acceptable and unacceptable, that they have attempted to deal with performing these tasks. (Copies of sample essays will be distributed to intending participants for perusal before the workshop.) Various exercises for class or individual practice will be discussed.

WORKSHOP:

IMPROVING STUDENTS' ESSAYS

(See also Part 1)

CAROLYN WEBB

LANGUAGE STUDY CENTRE

UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY

IMPROVING STUDENTS' ESSAYS

Carolyn Webb

Workshop participants were asked to discuss the adequacy of a research essay written by a Thai student undertaking a Master Degree course in Education. (Appendix I a-d)

The discussion centred around how to guide the student to better writing. An outline of the Essay Writing Course being developed at the Language Study Centre was used as a basis for analysing the essential steps of effective writing grouped broadly into "what to say" and "how to say it". (Appendix II a)

Focussing on the level of "how to say it", participants then examined a typical writing exercise from this course and some samples of students' writing in response to the exercise. (Appendix III a-b) (Appendix IV a-d)

During the discussion, a scheme for analysing the elements of cohesive discourse was proposed for participants to consider and attempt to apply to the samples of student writing in order to define more precisely the causes of error or inadequacy. (Appendix V a)

Finally some suggestions for using such an exercise as a teaching tool were offered. (Appendix VI a)

M.A. Preliminary in Education
Essay by a Thai student on: "What do you see as the distinctive contribution of sociology and study of educational institutions and practices?"

Everyday the mass media, the press and broadcasting in particular, bring us news of disasters, conflicts and new problems to be solved. In sociology, we study the behaviour of people in a careful and scientific way and also the way in which a society is organised.

This essay attempts to explain the distinctive contribution of sociology and study of educational institutions and practices. It is obvious that sociologist approaches education at a level of abstraction which is essentially concerned with the social institutions of education, from peer groups through classes and schools to the system of education, with institutional compositions, structure, procedures, ideologies and functioning; such are working and outcomes, and with interrelationships between education and other institutions.

As a matter of fact, the educational system seems to be inefficient because of the inequality of opportunity of education in the society. Therefore, the concepts of social class is need to be considered since it basically underlines the equality or inequality educational opportunity in the existing society. Consequently, social mobility and social changes are discussed. Then, the sociological perspective theories towards education are explained. Two major theories are selected for the purpose of discussion here, on the one hand is the structural functionalism which traces schools as school system; on the other is social action theory which illustrates schools as social worlds. Lastly, is the discuss of educational changes which are effected by the economic changes (and social changes).

It is important to bear in mind that inequality and innovation are the two relevant issues in the contemporary sociology of the school. In fact, inequality is more likely to effect innovation, which is the most striking feature of schooling. Change seems to be continuous with new curricula, new forms of organization and new teaching methods taking place inside new styles of building with new kinds of equipment.

First of all before attempt to discuss about the distinctive contribution of sociology and study of educational institutions and practices. The basic understanding of sociological concepts are important. Three important concepts of social class, social change and social mobility are selected here because of their relevance and interrelations.

In a society, classes are roughly or arbitrarily defined by sociologists into 3 different classes, they are upper classes, middle classes and lower classes. More importantly social class is the most significant in relation to the life chances and life expectations which an individual may have in society, so that a person's class position may determine standard of the type of education he receives. Occupation is vital here, mainly different sizes of income lead to differences in life chances. However, status tends to vary with occupation or income. Thus, social class influences the educational opportunity achievement motivation as well. According to SELFE, social

class is the classification of the population into broad groups, which are ranked in socially superior and inferior positions on the basis of objective criteria; occupation, attitudes, life style.[1]

In my country, Thailand, for example, the middle class children have more educational opportunity than the working class children. Basically, the parental

---

1. P.L. SELFE. SOCIOLOGY AN INTRODUCTORY COURSE, THOMAS NELSON Ltd, 1975, p. 258

occupation or income both encourage them in schools. Many children from the working class do not have enough uniforms especially those in good quality. There are prevalent shortage of text books and stationery. Thus, the middle class children have more facility in learning and better chances to do because their parents can afford the money to support them in their schooling. Moreover, most of the middle class parents have good positions in their jobs such as public servants, clerks, teachers and doctors, whereas the working class parents whose occupations are labourers, merchants and farmers, are at a disadvantage socially and financially to support their children in schooling. Therefore, the middle class parenta' higher income and occupational status are favourable for their children life chances and better educational opportunity.

Furthermore, social mobility extends a person beyond his or her existing social class or social status. It is the ability to move up or down through class or status groups.[2] In most cases, the opportunity for individual to improve the level of his social class comes largely through education. For example, a working class boy could go to university to get his qualification and ends up being, raising himself from working class status to middle class status. Basically, educational achievement motivates social mobility as well. Therefore, it enables the individual to attain higher occupation as well as formal qualification. Let me give another example in Thailand, many working class children whose parents are farmers, they become lawyers or doctors. Despite their humble ways of life, they have higher educational and occupational aspirations. At the same time, aocial change which is overlapped or intertwined with educational innovations is the main factor for formulating educational policy or understanding the relevance of educational institutions such as education reform, education readjust in society, for examples, new curricula, new forms of organization and new teaching methods. According to SELFE (1975), there may be changes in attitute, fashion, or ways of behaving as a results of innovations by opinion of leaders who establish new trends. Basically, economic change affects social change and then educational change as well.

There are two sociological perspective theories that are most relevant for study of educational institutions and practices. The structural functionalism theory, on the one hsnd and the social action theory, on the other. The main objective of structural functionalism is to produce theories that emphasises other structural characteristic and individual behaviour.[3] In contrast to the structural functionalism, the notion of the social action focuses more directly on the individual.[4] Theoretically, the structural functionalism identified schools as social systems. It is obviously possible to see relationships between what people do, or do not do, at school, and income, style of life, occupation and social class in adulthood. Particularly, the teacher-pupil relationship is a form of institutionalised dominance and subordination.[5] For examples, teachers represent the formal curriculum in the form of tasks and pupils are the material in which teacher are supposed to produce results. Therefore, pupils' roles as are subordinate to all teachera; that is accepting and carrying out what teachers say because they are teachers.[6] Similarly teachers' roles are mainly concerned with the privacy of the classroom like autonomy, providing the teacher with the freedom to do what he believes to be right in his own rooms.[7] In fact, pupils are human beings striving to realise themselves in their own way. Thus, teacher-pupil

---

2. Ibid; p.258

3. ROBERT HAGEDORN AND SANFORD LABOVITZ, AN INTRODUCTION INTO SOCIOLOGICAL ORIENTATIONS, JOHN WILEY & SONS, INC, SYDNEY, 1973, p.4

4. Ibid; p.8

5. IVAN REID, SOCIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE ON SCHOOL AND EDUCATION, OPEN BOOKS PUBLISHING LIMITED, LONDON, 1978, P. 39

6. Ibid; p.57

7. Ibid; p. 61

relationship seems to be underlying hostility because pupils are interested in their own worlds than which teachers have to offer. According to this, the educational innovations are discussed in the educational system.

But the social action identified schools as social worlds. It is concerned with social situations that what goes on in schools, for example, the interactional analysis between teacher-behaviour in the classroom, teacher's interest in educational research also type of teaching. The way in which pupils see and react to teachers and the basis on which they do, are of prime importance in understanding what goes on in classroom and schools. During my teaching practice experience in Thailand, in 1977, I was in charge of a grade-six class. I encountered a lot of discipline problems from the delinquent students in that class. They often disrupted the class, by making loud noises and gave no attention to the lessons, and their absence from the class were becoming regular. I, then, tried to understand their deviant behaviour and it took me quite some time to learn the reasons. Finally, I discovered that a lot of them came from families full of constant financial troubles which make me fully understand why they behaved in such a way, as it was their only outlets for their troublesome familial background. It is, of course, important that teachers and pupils are not viewed only in relation to each other, or only in the classroom. They both are related outwardly into the community and beyond to society. According to KEDDIE, teachers are viewed as educationists who help pupils to develop[8] their thought, work and concept or ideal. Furthermore, teachers are viewed as teachers in categorising and evaluating pupils.

According to Marxist model, the educational system is economically important. The possibility of being mismatched between education and economy different rates of change is a major cause of educational change. Thus, educational adjustment is relevant to changing economic conditions. For examples, the standard of living is going up, in Thailand. Therefore, the educational institution such as schools have arranged some courses which are of vocational relevance. In fact, the problem of unemployment would be reduced if the relevance are fully achieved. In this way, questions of educational aim and policy bring about the educational change.

In looking at the educational innovation, new approaches of educational goal, new form of organisation such as new teaching methods, new curricular are considered. As Whiteside stated that innovation means the changes needed in schooling to bring it into line with a changing society and also the changes needed to allow its students to cope with a future society.[9] The educational innovation in a part of social change, in particular, it is as progressive classroom practice. Innovative school is supposed to be famous at the present time because its flexible and adaptable programs. For example, in the primary schooling of Yinbilliko, it uses the innovative teaching methods, which the teacher gives guidance and the children are encouraged to seek answers for themselves. Moreover, it has flexible timetables, few rules which often decided upon by the pupils. Pupils do not wear uniforms because individuality is strongly stressed and there is less emphasis on competition and ranking children against one another than in common in conventional schools. Traditionally, the school has been established by groups of people, usually parents, teachers, and other educators who believe that a wide choice within the school system is healthy. However, conflict between teachers and parents seems inevitable in many alternative schools because strongly-held beliefs about education are what make a parent choose an alternative school in the first place.[10]

Furthermore, the educational innovation is formed in another kind of changes. According to ILLICH (1971), he rejected the schooling system because it is as obligatory without skill learning education. In particular, it tends to the instruction and teaching.[11] In fact, the idea of deschooling is being much criticised

---

8. Ibid; p. B5

9. TOM WHITESIDE, THE SOCIOLOGY OF EDUCATIONAL INNOVATION, METHUEN CO, Ltd, 1978, p.19

10. CAROLYN PARFITT REPORTS, EDUCATIONAL HERALD, May 29, 1979

11. IVAN ILLICH, DESCHOOLING SOCIETY, HARPER & ROW, NEW YORK, 1971, p.354

or debated, as ILLICH has stated, was an undeniable human right that all those who want to learn should have access to available resources for learning at any time in their lives, for examples, museums, libraries and the establishment of 'school exchange' which are learners and who process skills.[12] Therefore, deschooling is a new approach of educational innovation. Particularly, it emphasises learning by motivated student acquiring new and complex skill. In fact, deschooling as skill centre or market for all ages by matching right partners for learning.

By virtue of this nature above, D'URSO supported the idea of deschooling. Actually he explained that the 'hidden realities within Australian schooling are dominated by many teachers and administrators.[13] Thus, deschooling, that is, the disestablishment of schools and their substitution by inexperienced and informal learning networkers organised through learning exchanges connecting who wishes to learn something with someone qualified and willing to teaching its.

Innovation in education do not exist in any changing, objective sense but are constantly being defined, changed as a result of experience. At any one point in time different people may have quite different perceptions of an innovation and over time the same person may change his perceptions of an innovation. Sociologists have been at pains to point out to innovators that they should not ignore the intention between the organisation of the school and the wider environment including social programs, economic growth.

Conclusion

This essay is about the distinctive contribution of sociology and study of educational institutions and practices. The most relevant issue in the contemporary sociology of the school is, the educational innovation. It is hoped that in this new role of educational change what would play a crucial role in strengthening progressive education. It is important to explore that what the role of this change would be. Would, for example, educational goal through social class being made have an equally facilities available. Would the questions of how working class children could achieve in the schools like middle class children be answered. We should also consider how social system defines class, in particular, how school is defined or fit in or being put in the context of a social system. Therefore, the study of educational innovation is central to most of the contemporary debates about the changing nature of schooling. It is likely to be of major importance to all who seek to understand the realities of change in the contemporary school.

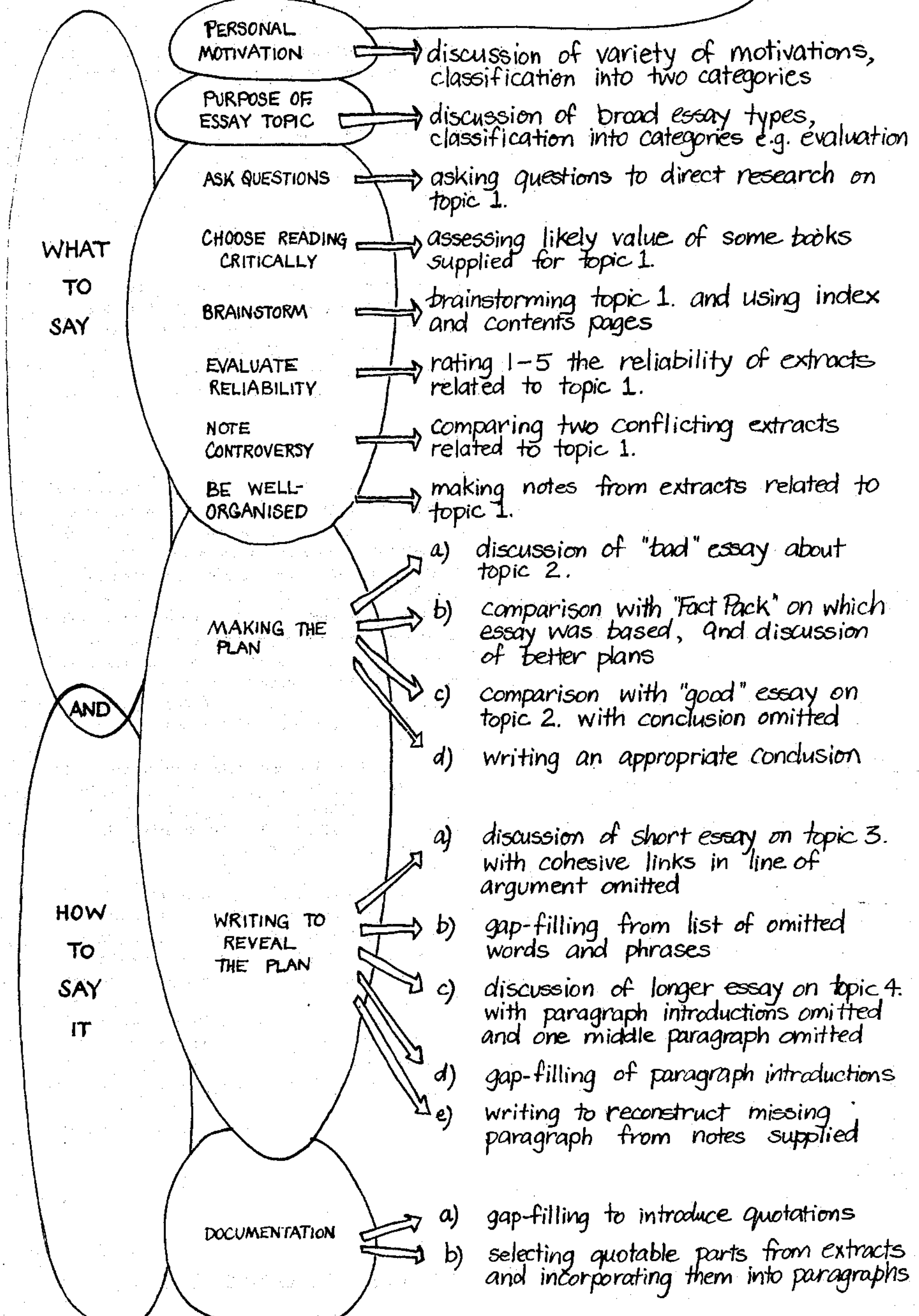
In Thailand, 'Open University', is a new approach of the educational innovation. In fact, it generates widely range of subjects, student opportunity for studying. People can go to 'Open University' without any entry prerequisites or skills. It is left to them to choose their interesting subjects as well. Therefore, 'Open University', is hoped to give all levels of people their 'life chances' in the future.

Sociology of education is, then, best seen as a particular approach to the explanation of educational phenomenon. At the more general level, the sociology of education has contributed a demonstration of the relationship of teachers, pupils, and their activities with society and of how the social structure enters and effects the social reality of the classroom. Basically, it provides a view of education as a social process and institution. For example, schools as social system or social worlds. As we can see, educational system is mainly involved in social class, social change, social control. Therefore, educationists do not only know the academic knowledge and skill in relationships within the classroom, but also an understanding of the constructive relationships within community outside. In other words, educationists have to study social acts. Consequently, sociologists have to consider the nature of school culture, nature teacher personality. Or we can say they have to study human interaction or social groups as well.

---

12. TOM WHITESIDE; OP.cit, p.19
13. S. D'URSO "HIDDEN REALITIES WITHIN SCHOOLING", AUSTRALIAN JOURNAL OF SOCIAL ISSUES 9, No.2 (1974)

(Appendix II a)

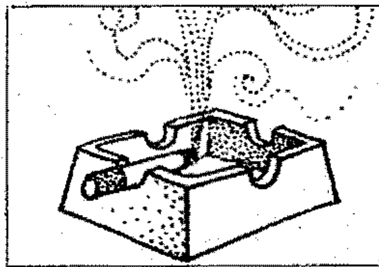


Coronary Heart Disease (CHD) is caused by the clogging and narrowing of the coronary arteries - the special blood vessels which nourish the heart muscle. It is due to an artery disease called atherosclerosis (hardening of the arteries). A heart attack or 'coronary' occurs if a coronary artery becomes completely blocked and prevents blood from nourishing part of the heart muscle. Thus coronary heart disease is really coronary artery disease. It is not due to disease of the muscle itself. Nor it is it the inevitable result of aging. Atherosclerosis also occurs in arteries elsewhere in the body, and may affect the brain, kidneys, legs, etc. In total, artery disease accounts for more than 50% of all deaths in Australia.

(These two paragraphs are quoted from The Complete Australian Heart Disease Prevention Manual by Allan and John Borushek.

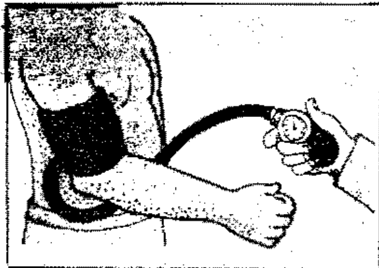
Based on the information given over the page, write a paragraph to fit in between these two paragraphs.)

Although there are some unanswered questions about coronary heart disease, there is substantial evidence to back up current recommendations. Furthermore, the simple, safe and common sense preventive steps recommended in this manual are also in harmony with a natural, holistic way of life. The earlier a healthy life-style is adopted, the greater the long-term benefits. For this reason, children should be taught to be critical of, and avoid, the various unhealthy influences around them.



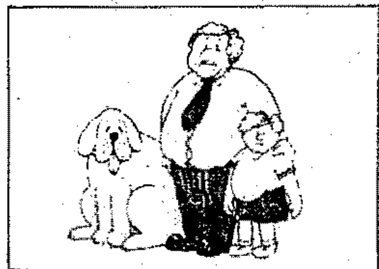
CIGARETTE SMOKING
(A Major Risk Factor)

The risk of heart attack is doubled in heavy cigarette smokers. The risk of sudden death from heart attack is 5 times higher than for non-smokers. Fortunately, the risk for ex-smokers decreases to almost the same level as for people who have never smoked.



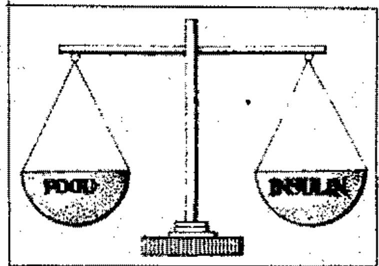
HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE (HYPERTENSION)
(A Major Risk Factor)

People with high blood pressure have up to 4 times the risk of heart disease. Even moderately raised blood pressure leads to a higher risk. About 1 in 6 Australians has high blood pressure, often without knowing about it as there are no early warning symptoms.



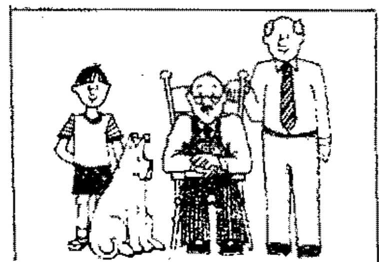
OBESITY

Obesity increases the risk of heart disease mainly by contributing to high blood pressure, high cholesterol levels, and diabetes. People who are more than 20% overweight have 3 times the risk of those slightly underweight.



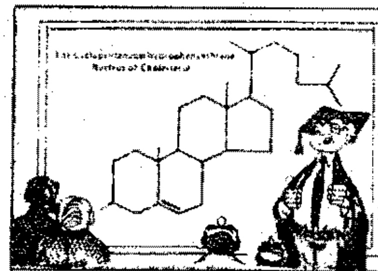
DIABETES

Heart disease is more common in people with diabetes, and often occurs at an earlier age. Most diabetes occurring later in life is triggered by obesity. Diabetics on high fat, low carbohydrate diets are at greater risk of heart disease than those on vegetarian-style carbohydrate diets.



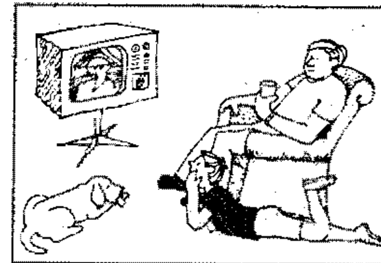
HEREDITY, AGE AND SEX

A family background of heart disease or high blood pressure may increase the risk. The chance of heart disease increases with age. Before their change of life, women are less prone to heart attack. However, women taking 'the pill', especially those who also smoke, are at greater risk.



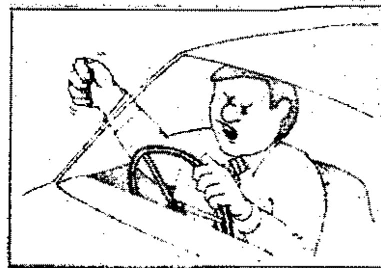
HIGH BLOOD CHOLESTEROL LEVELS
(A Major Risk Factor)

While cholesterol in the body is essential to life, excess cholesterol and fats in the blood contribute to unhealthy arteries. Heart disease may result. Generally, the higher the level of cholesterol in the blood, the higher the risk of heart disease. Diet influences blood cholesterol levels.



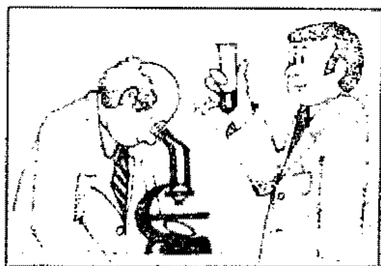
SEDENTARY LIFESTYLE

Regular exercise strengthens the heart and improves the circulatory system. It also helps control other risk factors (e.g. raised blood fats, stress and blood pressure). Inactive males have a 2 to 3 times greater risk of heart attack than very active ones.



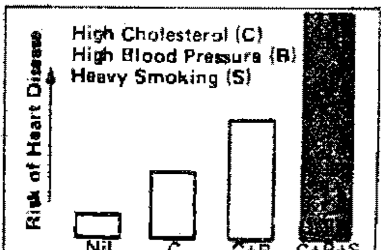
STRESS & BEHAVIOUR PATTERNS

Many heart attack victims are always rushed, over ambitious and easily agitated. This 'full speed ahead', or 'Type A' behaviour may be an important factor in heart disease. Prolonged anxiety and depression which occur in distressed people may also increase the risk of heart disease, as well as other ailments.



OTHER RISK FACTORS

There are probably some other risk factors that play a role in CHD. However, those so far identified are reliable indicators of CHD, and can predict who is likely and who is unlikely to develop CHD.



MULTIPLE RISK FACTORS

Combined risk factors do not simply add — they multiply the risk. A person with 3 major risk factors is about 10 times more likely to suffer heart disease than his 'normal' counterpart.

(Appendix III b)

①

There are many factors to occur the heart attack. One of the major factors is that people have another disease. for example, high blood pressure, obesity, diabetes ... Another fact is that someone has a bad habit. smoking, sedentary lifestyle and bad behaviour. It may also increase the risk of heart disease. A family background, age, sex and so on are also the factor which occur the heart disease. Finally. What is to be attention to is combined risk factors do not simply add, they multiply the risk. A person with 3 major risk factors is about 10 times more likely to suffer heart disease than his normal counterpart.

②

The major contributing factors which increases the percentage of deaths due to coronary heart disease are three, ie smoking, high blood pressure and high blood cholesterol levels. The risk of heart attacks is doubled in heavy smoking, while it is almost the same among non smoker and exsmoker's. The heart disease caused by high blood pressure and high cholesterol is directly proportional to the level of blood pressure and levels of cholesterol in the body. Obesity and diabetes also leads to heart disease especially at later age. Life style, behaviour of people, and age also contributes to heart disease but these chances can be reduced by regular exercise. Multiple factors simply can increase the chances of heart disease. There are some other factors as well which are yet to be identified. But factor identified so far are reliable.

③

The mechanism of atherosclerosis which can cause deaths $>$ 50% of Australian is thickening of the arteries by accumulation of Lipoproteins around arterial walls. This disease apart from heredity, which shows us is a disease which human being they are not doing the right things about their life styles and their habits. In the other words, it is a mal-habit disease. Most of researchs have been done to show a lot of factors which influence the disease, such as; The person who smoke cigarette heavily are in high risk groups, or The person whose blood pressure is high are likely to get the disease, or somebody who have high blood cholesterol level, who are in danger having the disease too.

There are some other factors as well, for example, obesity, diabetes, heredity, age and sex, sedentary lifestyle, stress and behaviour patterns which originate the disease but not as risk as hypertension, cigarette smoking, high blood cholesterol level.

So, people who live in civilize way of life they must know how to control their lives to avoid these sorts of things as much as possible.

4

In the light of the seriousness of this statistic, it is indeed fortunate that some major risk factors have been identified and that, in the main, they are controllable. Amongst the groups most at risk are heavy smokers,who double their risk of heart attack and multiply by 5 the risk of sudden death from an attack. Another large group at risk is of those with high blood pressure whose chances of heart disease is increased by 4 times. A third major risk factor is high blood cholesterol levels.

Along with these three major areas of risk, there are a number of other factors which can give an early warning of heart disease. Obesity, a sedentary lifestyle, and stress can all be controlled to some extent so that the risks associated with them are reduced. Diabetes, however, although often linked with obesity if it occurs in later life, is not as readily controllable. Quite beyond control, but happily less significant, are the factors of heredity, age, and sex, all of which will influence the risk of heart disease.

In considering preventative measures against heart disease, it is important to note that a combination of risk factors multiplies the risk such that a person with three major risk factors increases the chances of contracting heart disease ten-fold.

5

A 50% that could well be reduced if we are prepared to accept that habits of living have a great deal to do with the incidence of coronary heart disease, for example smoking, a major risk factor and which if stopped may dramatically decrease the smoker's risk of death. Obesity a not uncommon problem in today's modern Australian society; a problem that will send blood pressure sky-rocketing which in turn will almost certainly lead to hypertension and thereby coronary heart disease. Also, a too sedentary lifestyle undeniably comfortable and tempting, but inhibiting efficient blood circulation, and preventing the heart to operate at full capacity, if allowed to continue would be detrimental to a person's well being. A further risk factor which is sometimes difficult although possible to control: stress and behaviour patterns. Should a person approach life (especially the aggressive, 'full speed ahead' person otherwise known as 'Type A' personality) in a calmer frame of mind, and for those of extremes of temperament, trying to ride out the highs and lows of depression would allow less likelihood of suffering coronary heart disease. There are of course other factors: diabetes, hereditary, age, sex, high blood cholesterol levels, but if we at least avoid the easy but bad habits knowing that combinations of such risk factors do not simply add, but in fact multiply the risks: persons with 3 major risk factors have 10 times more chance of suffering sometimes lethal heart disease than their normal counterparts.

6

Death from coronary heart disease or the hardening of the coronary artery may be due to a number of factors which influence arteriol health. In general, these factors are connected with our living habits. There are three major risk factors. Firstly, the presence of high blood pressure increases the risk of heart attack four times. High cholesterol levels are a second factor which contribute to unhealthy arteries. Lastly, the risk of heart attack doubles in heavy smokers.

As well as the above factors, there are other risk factors which are connected with our lifestyle, health, and heredity, age and gender characteristics. For example, those who lead a sedentary life or a stressful life have an increased risk of heart attack. Also, people who suffer from obesity or diabetes are more prone to heart attack, as well as those who have a family background of heart attack.

Although these factors are the most important there are probably some others that play a role in coronary heart disease.

7

The chance of suffering from Atherosclerosis can be prevented by following a healthier lifestyle, which includes giving up smoking, doing regular aerobic exercises, and eating a more balanced diet. Research has shown that cigarette smoking, high blood cholesterol levels, sedentary lifestlye, and obesity increase the risk of atherosclerosis. High blood pressure (or hypertension), diabetes as well as stress and behaviour patterns also increase the risk of atherosclerosis. It is therefore advisable to have regular medical checkups as well as to learn to cope with anxiety and depression. Heredity, age and sex too play a role in atherosclerosis or coronary heart disease, they cannot be changed or treated as the other factors already mentioned. However, these innate factors help to identify the person whose heredity, age or sex characteristics make him/her more susceptible to atherosclerosis. For such people, the need to follow some of the preventive measures outlined above is greater. Some other risk factors too influence the risk rate of atherosclerosis. However, those so far identified are reliable indicators of atherosclerosis, and can predict who is likely and who is unlikely to develop the problem.

(8)

There are some risk factor which trigger coronary heart disease. One of the three major risk factors is high cholesterol. The higher the level of cholesterol in the blood, the higher risk of heart disease. Another risk factor is high blood pressure. People with high blood pressure have up to 4 times the risk of heart disease. Still another major factor is smoking. The risk for ex-smokers, however, decrease to almost the same level as for never smoked people. Other risk factors are obesity, diabetes, inactive lifestyle, heredity, age and sex. These risk factors are also reliable indicators of coronary heart disease - they can predict who is likely to develop coronary heart disease.

(9)

The risk of having coronary heart disease can be minimised if people pay more attentions to their daily lives. As reported, cigarette smoking, hypertension and high cholosterol level are the three detrimental factors contributed to coronary heart disease. Therefore, cigarette smoking habit should be gave up and hypertension treated as early as possible. Less fat and cholesterol intake should be avoided as well. It seems that obesity people and diabetics have a higher chance of getting coronary heart disease. Furthermore, since obesity, hypertension, high blood cholosterol level and diabetes have been reported to be closely related to each other, they act together as multiple risk factors to increase the incidence of coronary heart disease. Interestingly, people under stress and depression may be easier to get coronary heart disease but too easy a life with a sedentary lifestyle will get the same end. There are also some other risk factors which are not very clear now. The unavoidable risk factors for everyone of us include heredity, age and sex which are still rather puzzling.

(10)

As it is well-known that the more Australian died by the artery disease, it should be studied that what the risk factors are, in order to prevent the coronary artery disease from continue raising. There are three major risk factors: firstly, "cigarette smoking": the smokers died by heart attack is 5 times higher than non-smokers, so the heavy smokers are easy get the artery disease; secondly: "High blood pressure", people with high blood pressure have up to 4 times risk of heart disease, so high blood pressure leads to a higher risk; thirdly: "High Blood Cholosterol levels": the excess cholesterol and fats in the blood also get heart disease. Besides, another factors: such as obesity, diabetes, age and sex, sedentary lifestyle, stress and behavious patterns and some other risk factors.

COHESION

Theme

Modal Adjuncts

probability
frequency
opinion
admissive
assertive
presumptive

desiderative
provisional
validative
evaluative
predictive

Conjunction

implicit
explicit

internal → [i.e. / e.g.]

external →
- [additive / alternative]
- [contrastive / similarity] → [purposive / causal / concessive / conditional]
- [simultaneous / successive]

Reference

Lexical Cohesion

EXERCISES FOR CLASS WORK ON "HEART DISEASE" PASSAGE

A. WORKING OUT WHAT TO SAY

Draw up a rough plan for writing your passage, considering:

(a) whether you will use all the information or only some of it

(b) whether you will give equal emphasis to all the information you choose, or give particular emphasis to part of it

(c) whether you will classify the information into groups or make each point separately

(d) what relationships you will present between and amongst the points you make

B. WORKING OUT HOW TO SAY IT

Discuss the effectiveness of the following sentences as introductions to the passage, considering:

(a) their relationship to the previous paragraph

(b) the way in which they predict the passage will continue

* The mechanism of atherosclerosis which can cause deaths in over 50% of Australians is thickening of the arteries by accumulation of Lipoproteins around arterial walls. (passage 3)

* There are some risk factors which trigger coronary heart disease. (passage 8)

* As it is well-known that so many Australians die from artery diaease, it is vital to study what risk factors are in order to reduce the incidence of the disease. (passage 10)

* There are three major contributing factors which increase the risk of death by coronary heart disease.

Complete the following introductory sentence, keeping in mind its relationship to the previous paragraph and the way that it predicts the passage will continue:

* In the light of the ________________ of this ________________, it is indeed ____________ that some ________________ have been identified and that, in the main, they are ________________. (passage 4)

Write a sentence that will follow on from the one above.

etc. etc.

DEVELOPING POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH SKILLS

ORTRUN D. ZUBER-SKERRITT

Zuber-Skerritt, Ortrun Dorothea, University Lecturer. Staatsexamen (Kiel) 1963 (approximately equivalent to BA Hons Dip.Ed.); Assessorenexamen (Kiel) 1965 (approximately equivalent to M.Ed); PhD (Qld.) 1976.

Lecturer (tenured) in the Centre for the Advancement of Learning and Teaching, Griffith University 1974-to date. High School Teacher, Germany 1963-71, Brisb 1971-72; Tutor in German, University of Queensland 1972-74; first woman on the senior faculty staff at Griffith University 1974; Visiting Professor, J.W. Goethe, University Frankfurt 1978.

Publications: Video in Higher Education, Kogan Page, London, 1984; Page to Stage - Theatre as Translation, Rodopi, Amsterdam, 1984; The Languages of Theatre - Problems in the Translation and Transposition of Drama. Pergamon Press, Oxford 1980; Geschichten zum Nachdenken, Hicks Smith & Sons 1973; contributor to Translation as an Agent of Communication edited by M.G. Rose, Outriggers 1980; contributor to Ubersetzungswissenschaft edited by W. Wilss, Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft 1982; contributor to Drama in Commonwealth edited by G. Stilz, Gunter Narr Verlag 1981; journal articles and conference papers in higher education and linguistics; a series of eight video and audio programmes for the advanced teaching of German, and video programmes on small-group teaching, tutorial presentation skills and postgraduate supervision.

Special Interests: comparative literature, Australian theatre, higher education, linguistics, classdical music, skiing.

DEVELOPING POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH SKILLS

A WORKSHOP

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Design of a Research Skills Component Integrated in the Masters by Coursework Program in the School of Modern Asian Studies at Griffith University - a report on workshops with supervisors and postgraduate students.

2.0 LARGE GROUP DISCUSSION

2.1 Questions and comments on the model presented in 1.0.

2.2 Formation of interest groups according to subject areas.

3.0 SMALL GROUP WORK

3.1 Brainstorming (e.g., 'What skills are required?'
'How are they best taught/learnt?'
'What are the institutional possibilities, problems, boundaries, etc?')

3.2 Deciding on main aspects and categorizing (adding to, deleting or re-ordering) points in 3.1.

3.3 Preparing overhead transparency or poster for 4.0.

4.0 PLENARY DISCUSSION

4.1 Reports from groups.

4.2 Discussion of reports and implications at individual, institutional and national levels.

Dr. Ortrun Zuber-Skerritt,
Centre for the Advancement of Learning and Teaching,
Griffith University,
Nathan. Q'ld. 4111.
AUSTRALIA.

THE AUSTRALASIAN FIFTH ANNUAL STUDY SKILLS CONFERENCE

Academic Skills and Learning Centre

LIBRARY

Language & Learning At Tertiary Level

DEAKIN UNIVERSITY 15-18 MAY 1984.

THE AUSTRALASIAN FIFTH ANNUAL STUDY SKILLS CONFERENCE

"LANGUAGE AND LEARNING AT TERTIARY LEVEL"

DEAKIN UNIVERSITY, 15 - 18 MAY, 1984

CONVENOR: ROSALIND MEYER

PART 2

Papers/Abstracts of Workshops received following the Conference appear below in alphabetical order by surname of author.

Bock, H., and Lewit, H.

Christie, F.

Drury, H.

Moorhouse, C.E.

Richardson, B.L., and Wuillemin, D.

Taylor, G.

Webb, C.

Wuillemin, D.

Zuber-Skerritt, O., and Rix, A.

HEAD COUNTING OR SKULL-DUGGERY

A CASE OF CAPUT MORTUUM?

HANNE BOCK

AND

HELENE LEWIT

SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

LA TROBE UNIVERSITY

Hanne Bock has taught essay writing and study skills to Social Sciences students at La Trobe University since 1979. Prior to that she taught English in Denmark and Linguistics in Australia. She has a Cand. Phil. in English Philology from Aarhus University, Denmark, an M. Litt. in Australian Literature from James Cook University and has just finished a Ph.D. thesis on Henry Handel Richardson (don't ask her about it!). Professional interests generated by her job are, broadly, styles and *genres* in academic writing, the patterns of thinking underlying these, and the process of learning involved in mastering them. Her private interests are ... private.

Helene Lewit has a B.A. Hons. in Linguistics/Philosophy from La Trobe University. She has just finished an M.A. thesis, entitled "On Definites and Indefinites in English" or "A Cure for Insomnia". She taught Linguistics at La Trobe University prior to joining Hanne Bock in 1982 as the Second Comic Actor in the School of Social Sciences. Professional interests generated by her job are best formulated as questions: What is good writing? and What are good ways of teaching good writing?

HEAD COUNTING OR SKULL-DUGGERY:

A CASE OF *CAPUT MORTUUM*?

A paper presented to the Annual Language and Study Skills Conference, Deakin University, May 1984

by

Hanne Bock and Helene Lewit

Language and Academic Skills Unit
School of Social Sciences
La Trobe University

The concern of this paper is the views on the literacy and learning problems of La Trobe students presented in the recent report "Head Counting and Higher Education". The authors of the report, Robert Manne and Michael James, are concerned with rationalizing their experience as teachers of Social Sciences students. As some of you know, Helene and I are language and academic skills teachers to the same students; you may therefore find our rationalizations a useful mirror to Manne and James'. Our views are based purely on our experience with students who have sought our assistance with language and learning problems. The only testing which lies behind our conclusions is their degree of usefulness in the working out of effective teaching strategies. They are, if you like, linguistic accessories after the fact.

Our first concern must be to establish what it is we are discussing. Manne and James sum up the problems as deficiencies in "levels of literacy and general knowledge, the conceptual capacity and imagination, the diligence and persistence of...students admitted to universities like our own". Earlier they point more explicitly to "absenteeism", "plagiarism" and "late submission". In descriptive impressionistic generalizations, this is what the problems look like from a "demoralized" (the term is Manne's) teacher's perspective. What, then, is the situation from our point of view based on our work with students who seek assistance with language and learning difficulties?

There are problems with Manne and James' generalizations. They create the impression that all students have all problems, rather than that most students have one difficulty or another, which is closer to the truth and hardly remarkable. We shall now consider these generalizations under three broad headings: firstly, learning skills, where we take issue with the idea that absenteeism and late submission are new problems, specific to La Trobe and an unfailing indication of the absence of "the habit of learning and intellectual curiosity". Secondly, we address the problems of sampling in a discussion of the extracts of student writing quoted by Manne and James. Leading on from that, we shall consider the concept of "literacy".

LEARNING SKILLS:

For our students, absenteeism and late submission are often the expression of a difficulty in organizing their time. Pressed, some students will make the choice to neglect classes temporarily in favour of getting an assignment in on time. This choice may be quite prudent considering the extent to which lectures are taped and available for self-study, as well as the fact that friends tend to be prepared to take turns going to tutorials and to supply notes for each other. This far, at least, "group activities", "egalitarian behaviour" and "informality" are a positive part of university studies.

Other students choose to follow classes and instead submit late. Again, organizing time may be a problem, but it cannot be assumed automatically that motivation or scholarly aptitude is inadequate. Neither can it be taken for granted that the student who submits late in one subject is also the one who is behind in another, nor that only one factor is responsible. Generally, there are a number of factors working together, some of which relate to course structures.

Essay dates tend to fall close together across subjects, and students do have heavy loads. It is not unusual for a full-time student to have to produce about 20,000 written words during his first year at La Trobe. This is approximately equivalent in length to five scholarly articles. Further, a lecturer may fall sick, or underestimate the time required to cover certain materials, and the student who selects a particular essay topic may therefore have his long-term planning disrupted. Availability of library materials is another influential factor and so is the length of time a student may have to wait for the return of a previous essay.

Insofar as the student can exert any control over the situation, the choice of which essay to postpone is rarely a fortuitous one. A determining factor is often the teacher's perceived humaneness and approachability. Late submission may therefore be an indirect compliment to the teacher.

Most of our students have had the experience of being late with an essay because they have put too much work into it. Absorption in the materials to the exclusion of a realistic assessment of the task in terms of time, marks and competing demands is one of the common learning skills problems our students face. Late submission is thus in a number of cases due to all good scholarly virtues, as we are sure most university teachers would know from their own work.

Now if we can look at learning skills problems in a broader context: A survey carried out at Melbourne University in 1979 concluded that approximately 18% of Melbourne students were in need of assistance with some kind of learning skills problem. This was only half-way through the period of decline as measured by Manne and James; if their measure is correct, and if learning skills problems are caused by falling standards in secondary schools, the needs of Melbourne students should be considerably greater now.

In order to gain a realistic measure of the size of these problems, the Melbourne team found it necessary to isolate a number of factors which may occur independently or in various combinations as learning skills problems. The factors were:

> In addition to "*study skills*", the ability to maintain study plans, to balance study and relaxation, to use free time constructively, to cope with pressure and deadlines and to find enough study time (all in the *time and study organisation* area)...Also necessary are *motivation* factors such as keeping up interest in studies, coping with exam-anxiety, knowing how much academic progress is being made, being able to speak in tutorials and seminars and to work without being monitored.
> (Frederick *et al.*, 1980:1).

If Manne and James had taken similar care in defining their terms, they would probably have found that the student populations at Melbourne and La Trobe are experiencing much the same kinds of learning difficulties, possibly with local variations in composition and predominance of certain problems.

No equivalent study has been done at La Trobe. The best we can do is to give you the figures from our unit in 1983. During that year, we gave assistance to 349 students on a variety of problems related to Social Sciences subjects. This figure constitutes 24% of the School's enrolment, but it includes an unspecified number of students taking one or more Social Sciences units, but enrolled in other schools. Approximately 80% of the students were self- or friend-referred; only about 20% of the 349 had been sent directly by their subject teachers. This last figure gives an indication of the students' levels of motivation as against the perceived severity of their problems among their teachers.

We could draw parallels to the experiences of our colleagues at other universities as well, but there seems little point in continuing. We will conclude that in the area of general learning skills, we have no evidence that a "gulf" exists between the "elite and the lower status universities"; and we note that Manne and James provide no comparative evidence to support the claim.

THE SAMPLES:

This problem: the lack of comparative material combined with suspect selection criteria recurs in Manne and James' attempt to prove that the "literacy" levels of La Trobe students have fallen since 1975. It is probably true, as they claim, that their five small extracts, from exams and essays, selected "more or less at random" (a contradiction in terms?) will contain little to surprise teachers at La Trobe, for the extracts illustrate nearly the complete range of errors we find in students' essays. They are not, however, representative of the error distribution we would normally find in essays.

While we have no doubts as to the honesty of Manne and James' intentions in selecting these extracts, we would suggest that they have been the victims of some common fallacies in the assessment of written work. Exam scripts cannot be placed in the same category as essays for the purpose of assessing literacy levels. In contrast to the demands of essay writing, students are urged to concentrate on getting their points down in an exam and not to worry about style. Legibility is the only demand to presentation. To judge a student on an exam script is equivalent to judging a professional writer on his first rough draft. The choice of

three exam scripts among the five samples may therefore have contributed to the concentration of errors found here.

All five extracts give the impression of being opening sections either of full papers or of arguments. This too may have caused a bias. Errors are non-randomly distributed with a tendency to cluster in particularly difficult sections. Students tend to find introductions particularly difficult, hence we often see a disproportionate number of errors exactly in introductions with a noticeable improvement as the essay proceeds. The number of errors in these extracts is therefore unlikely to be representative of the full essays or indeed to be a genuine indication of the students' literacy levels.

Topic statements are by definition general and can, when taken out of context, give an undeserved impression of naiveté. Consider, for example, the following statement which was used this year to introduce a full lecture course:

> There are basically two dominant political systems in Europe: the parliamentary system and the communist system.

This kind of statement is commonly used in academic discourse to establish the field of investigation while implying a justification for the choice. Now compare the following extract cited by Manne and James ignoring its surface problems:

> Vietnam and Bulgaria are undeveloped nations, who, although they differ in lifestyle, culture and history, share something, that being they are both communist systems of government.

This is essentially the same type of statement. It indicates an area and makes a claim which the paper will have to develop. There is nothing intrinsically naive about it.

The extracts were reportedly selected from among written work from "two of our first-year subjects". Both were, however, quite obviously Politics subjects. This raises the question whether five samples of topic sentences from three exam scripts and two essays in two Politics subjects can be in any way claimed to be representative of the general literacy levels of approximately 1,332 first-year students scattered across a range of Humanities and Social Sciences subjects.

In view of the non-random distribution of errors, the question is not an idle one. Manne and James themselves acknowledge that "a certain number of the students who fail or drop out of a first-year Politics subject will perform satisfactorily or even well in their other subjects". Quite so; and similar variations are often found in the quality of expression not only from one section of a student's paper to the next, but also from paper to paper. In order to piece together a useful picture of a student's language competence, one must look at full papers and at papers from the various subjects the student is studying.

Again, there is no comparative material to show that these extracts actually represent a fall in standards relative to 1975. And further, were these papers failed? If so, what kind of indication do they provide that standards are falling at La Trobe? Were they passed? If so, each paper as a whole must have had considerable compensatory values and the

quoted extracts can then not be representative of the students' actual achievement or indeed of their capabilities.

"LITERACY":

We have now arrived at one of the most fundamental fallacies of Manne and James' argument. They proceed on the assumption that literacy problems are synonymous with remedial problems and that consequently previous educational institutions can and should be made totally responsible for them. This is not the case. The literacy problems our students face are of a diverse nature. For one thing, it is not unusual for students to experience a drop in language performance during their first year at university. Based on symptoms alone, as they appear in university essays, this drop tends to be seen as a purely remedial problem. It is, however, far more often the temporary outcome of a number of stress factors: discipline orientated, language orientated, cultural and social.

The basic condition to keep in mind when discussing degrees of language performance is the fact that language competence only develops in the face of a need to communicate, i.e. we must all have a certain content to express in order to feel the need to learn to express it. Students are no exception. One of the most popular *dictums* about the value of university study is that it challenges the students' intellectual universe. Indirectly, it therefore also challenges their language. As new thoughts have to be clothed in words and strung together in sentences, the student's language competence will need considerable expansion and restructuring.

We may use plagiarism as a brief illustration. Manne and James single out this problem as an aspect of "remedial" language problems and an unscholarly, almost criminal practice; to a very large extent it is neither. It is largely a developmental problem, the depth and extent of which are not widely recognized, and advice offered, although repeated and stressed has as a consequence little effect. The problem therefore takes on greater proportions than it needs to.

Although a critical selection process is called for in secondary education, there is considerable emphasis on assimilation of facts. These requirements in turn affect requirements regarding style. In the process of building up a rounded store of information and rules from core texts, the term plagiarism has little meaning. Paradoxically, however, Manne and James' apparent call for a stronger 3R orientation in secondary schools is also a call to increase the unquestioned "facts" component of the curriculum.

To make this point more sharply: Where the aim in writing is the critical assimilation of knowledge seen as facts, essays based on texts will contain a selection of facts - or *motifs* - dyed in personality. The writing becomes a repetition of the creative act, so to speak, and the appropriate style will show a one-to-one correspondence between the writer, the selection and the views expressed. Subjectivity may reign absolute. When the aim becomes the creation of knowledge, "facts" become "views". Views are by definition personal and the need now arises for a style which will allow the assignation of views to others. Stylistic objectivity has been introduced to serve as a hand basin in which the writer, in good Pontius Pilate style, may wash his hands of responsibility for the elements he has brought together.

Both *genres* are perfectly legitimate; unfortunately both are known simply as "essays".

To demonstrate, I have brought some essays written by a student in our bridging course. The one which illustrates the subjective style in its purest form was written under conditions in which there could be no suspicion of an intent to plagiarize. The other two show first and second attempts to write to the directions set out in John Clanchy and Brigid Ballard's book. To dispel any notion that the student's "conceptual ability" was at fault, let me add that this particular student had achieved the transition to a perfect Pontius Pilate style before the end of first term.

The point we want to make is: Learning not to plagiarize is not merely a mechanical matter of footnoting and bibliography which "diligence and persistence" will achieve. It is first a mental reorientation of self towards sources; it is also an analytical process reflected in a particular style: A new stylistic framework has to be developed which distances the writer from the views presented. As part of that framework, new distinctions have to be learned between verbs like "claim", "argue", "demonstrate", "illustrate", "find", "prove" etc. etc. and subtle differences in tense shifts which have little to do with keeping tense consistency but indicate degrees of endorsement with statements made.

The process of learning a style as complex in its determining elements as this may take time. It is actually achieved with remarkable speed by very many students. However, where there are problems, admonitions which imply criminal intent rather than educational reorientation will do little to promote learning. When it comes to style, in many profound ways the mirror of content, Manne and James show little awareness of the role of university studies in challenging the student's intellectual universe, although that role appears to be one of their main concerns.

Part of the problem with Manne and James' view of literacy is that they assume that there is only *one* way of writing good English. This is not so. As indicated in the previous example, it is very much the case that good writing is good writing in context. To give a striking example of this, let me quote from Douglas Bate's report, which canvassed the views on literacy skills of graduates among Government and industrial employers. The following complaints were made:

> Graduates appear to have problems in writing reports and memos. There is a tendency to go into too much detail on minor points and therefore lose the main point. (2:13)
>
> Most business situations tend to have an urgency factor, and the Pareto Principle of 80% right now applies. In their search for perfection new graduates tend to be verbose - and late. (2:21)

In other words, what is condemned as overgeneralizations in university essays is legitimized in the business context as the "Pareto Principle", and failure to live up to it is seen as a literacy problem. The passage continues:

> An ability to condense the situation into critical factors with few but well chosen words is a prime need.

Separated from its context in this manner, the comment appears to refer to a skill that university students need to practise as well. But when it is recalled that it was the discussion of the Pareto Principle that prompted the comment, it becomes clear that it here refers to qualities quite different to those it would have referred to in a university context, and that consequently we are not being made aware of a continued failure to learn on the students' part, but of a need for reorientation in learning. If you read through the report, you will find a number of similar gems, all complaining of the absence of context-specific skills described, however, in terms of universal "literacy problems". In the tendency to use the term "literacy" without any attempt at definition, it has become a rubbish bag into which all sorts of problems may be thrown for the purpose of shifting blame.

It is for this reason that we prefer the term "literacy conformity". The situation is that at university, students are trained in a formal discourse style which is neither widely appreciated nor particularly useful outside the academic context. It would not therefore seem excessive to expect universities to take some responsibility for the teaching of it. A University-Or-Bust approach to the teaching of English in secondary schools, which appears to be what Manne and James are calling for, would hardly be in the interest of the majority of secondary students, or of the community.

What, then, are the literacy problems we meet among our students? To answer this question it is necessary to understand that although we can talk of academic discourse as a style distinct from a marketing report or a personal letter, it is a *genre* containing several variations which, however, cannot be used *ad hoc*. Each discipline has evolved its own register, i.e. general vocabulary plus subject-specific terminology, and shows a predilection for certain structures. Characteristic of our students' difficulties is the tendency for "remedial problems" to occur exactly in the integration of these two factors: the discipline-specific and the general, into sentence and paragraph structure.

For example, how does one construct a sentence around the word "contrapposto" in Art History? Is "the rule of law" a tautology in Legal Studies? May the phrase "an overpowering force" be used descriptively in a Politics essay as it may in an English essay? Are differences in deductive and inductive analysis reflected in essay and paragraph structure? How do the demands to "plain and simple English" and the virtue of "coming straight to the point" apply to a carefully modified hypothetical proposition? And as John Clanchy (1981:22) has shown, the choice between passive and active voice, first or third person narrator is not determined by stylistic rules and cannot be predicted from the rules operative in "general rounded English". It is determined by the scholar/scientist's "conception of knowledge and his relation to it".

Errors arising as the students come to terms with these issues would be better labelled problems in literacy conformity than literacy problems. Remedial problems they are not, if by that term we understand something the student has neglected to learn at an earlier stage of education. These styles, or elements of style, can only be learned together with the meaning of analysis and the process of arguing within a particular discipline. Style as conceptualization cannot be taught prior to its use.

Evidence that this is the root cause behind a substantial number of apparently remedial errors is provided partly by the fact that if we ask our students to write in a mode familiar to them, their writing will show a substantial reduction in errors relative to their university essays. Further, when we address our teaching to the problems as we understand them, certain types of "remedial" problems will diminish automatically. This is so for subject-verb agreement, sentence fragments, illogical sequencing (use of wrong adverb, conjunction, tense, etc.) and malapropisms. Certain other problems will remain and may require considerable drilling. Even so, residual problems have proved to be most effectively and efficiently resolved if the basic teaching materials are university texts. This means that insofar as students are transgressing *general* rules, the problem lies not in learning certain rules by heart, but in learning to recognize the presence of the conditions for applying those rules in a new - and far more sophisticated - context.

The fact remains, the newness of the situation, of the procedure as a *whole* is directly responsible for a significant portion of apparently remedial problems.

Another influential factor is the contrast between formal written academic discourse and the students' vernacular. It is conceivable, if not actually known, that students' competence in academic English may reflect somewhat the relative shift in emphasis towards oral expression as a communicative medium for learning in schools, as this shift favours automatically, and in our view legitimately, the vernacular. It is, however, also conceivable that the acceptance of the student's vernacular may have been instrumental in enabling a greater number of students to reach university entry levels by allowing them to develop intellectually within a more familiar medium. It may in short be necessary to concede that a shift in emphasis is not synonymous with a fall in standards. There is certainly irony in the fact that the students' oral skills are often lauded indirectly, when the quality of tutorial input of Australian students is compared favourably with that of students from educational systems overseas.

The international role of English academic discourse is not unlike that of Latin in the medieval world. Various figures indicate that the percentage of scholarly journals published in English is extremely high. Swales (1982:2) for example quotes a figure of 80% for Engineering. This is a position of tremendous communicative power, but also one which is held only at a cost. The basic structure, vocabulary and spelling of academic English has to be kept nearly static. Localized change must be avoided. Change and evolution must be proportionate to and follow upon conceptual change and evolution within disciplines, so that, in effect, change is explicable within the relevant literature itself.

Although university teachers tend to comply with this implicitly, both personally and in their demands of their students, only few rationalize their demands beyond the request that essays must be "easy to read", and in "correct English". In other words, familiarity with certain structures and registers becomes "ease and fluency", and a set of rules which apply only in a specific context becomes "correct", i.e. the specific is universalized and deviance is made a "literacy problem".

Some rules of written language have only limited application in the spoken. If we take the closest approximation to the written academic

discourse available, i.e. a formal lecture and transcribe the utterance, as distinct from reading the prepared manuscript, many so-called literacy problems will be found. This includes non-functional repetitions, false starts, subject-verb problems and so on. Even when the lecture leaves the impression of having been carefully prepared and fluently delivered, a significant number of such "errors" will occur. This is so despite the fact that spoken formal discourse is influenced by, indeed kept in check by, its written counterpart. Unless we want to argue that lectures are orally illiterate, we have to concede that not all rules are operative on both written and spoken forms of the same language.

Other spoken forms show, of course, greater rule divergence; and it would be counter-productive as well as futile to demand that they conform.

We now have the background necessary to understand the nature of another set of "remedial" problems in the essays of our students. They arise because there is insufficient recognition among teachers that some language rules apply only to one medium. The result is that some rules operant upon one are explained in terms of the other, thus reversing cause and effect. An example is punctuation. Its usefulness is restricted to its visual impact. Accordingly and despite widespread folklore, it conforms to rules within the written language alone. Corrections made in students' essays indicate an awareness of this, although the accompanying advice to students often is to "read aloud" in order to check "flow" and to punctuate where they "make a pause".

Now, "pausing" combines with a number of other devices, such as intonation, to convey a variety of complex meanings in the spoken language which punctuation marks cannot convey, or cannot convey alone, e.g. hesitation, irony, emphasis or ellipsis. In reading aloud, we make a pause and adapt intonation patterns to suit the punctuation, not the other way around. The marks are placed almost exclusively to indicate grammatical units, and in subconscious conformity with this, teachers will conclude from students' punctuation errors that they do not know what a sentence looks like. Nevertheless, the advice continues to be given: read aloud and place a comma where you pause for breath. We do not stop in our reading in order to breathe.

Some mistakes which appear in written work as remedial sentence constructions combined with lousy punctuation are attempts to follow this advice, attempts, that is, to bend the written medium to rules governing the spoken. The advice may conceivably cause no damage to a student whose language competence is predominantly visual, or to one to whom the spoken language is secondary to the written. But for a student with an uneven competence, with the balance tipped in favour of the spoken and/or a predominantly auditory orientation, the rule will counteract learning. In short, students who hear rather than see what they write are going to have problems with a rule which tells them to do exactly that.

We suggest that this has been part of the problem in the J.S. Mill and Stalin extracts, quoted by Manne and James. Listen, for instance, to the first sentence in the Mill extract:

> J.S. Mill's conception of the House of Commons being a democratic body and the House of Lords, the aristocratic. Illustrates exactly the point I wish to make.

The punctuation marks separating "aristocratic" from the sentence of which it is a part, are meant to convey the meaning of the elliptic parallel structure. They substitute for a pause on either side of the word plus a dual emphasis on "democratic" and "aristocratic".

It is conceivable that if students in general increase their oral competence relative to their written, conceptual confusion in the formulation of rules such as just discussed will have a greater impact on their written performance. But are errors due to confusion of two media and the rules operative on either a remedial problem? If so, it implicates the teaching not only and possibly not even predominantly of secondary teachers.

A more specific set of problems in moving from vernacular to formal written discourse is faced by our students of migrant background. Their dialects will often contain structures transferred from their parents' native language - "frozen" structures, so called. (And please note that this full stop is wrong if you read, but correct if you read aloud). For a variety of reasons, these structures are rarely noticed in spoken communication. But they will surface in written discourse, where, unless they are recognized, they may be seen as remedial problems and/or reflecting a naive mind.

It is well-known, for example, that Asian students have problems with the articles in English, and allowances are made for that. What is not so well known is that students of Greek or Eastern European extraction often do too. Unfortunately, the impression created by the writing of such students is reminiscent of that created by the utterances of English pre-school children going through the naming stage in mental and language development. The unsuspecting, linguistically naive teacher may as a consequence perceive his student's conceptual ability in a coloured light.

It is true that there is a number of "clumsy" or "incorrect" structures of this origin to be isolated in the academic writing of our migrant students; but if we insist on calling them remedial problems we will not be able to teach these students much; neither can we claim to be a multicultural society. It is also true that our migrant students appear to be particularly prone to drops in performance of general language rules when they enter university; but experience in teaching has taught us that this is more usefully seen as an indirect effect of bilingualism than as a conceptual/remedial problem.

In general, bilingualism is complementary, i.e. competence in each language tends towards specific and complementary areas. The bilingual person's command of either language is thus as a rule more limited than the monolingual person's. Hence there is a greater susceptibility to confusion. However, the combined language competence of the bilingual person tends to be greater. Our bilingual students are no exception to this. Once the nature of their particular language competence has been recognized, its broad and varied base can be turned to advantage in further learning.

And now for a series of parting shots:

The word "remedial" implies a lack of growth or a cantankerous growth. It implies that something which should have been learned has not been learned. It implies that "corrective" measures are required. A

teaching approach based on these assumptions and applied to the problems of Social Sciences students at La Trobe has limited results - and we speak from experience. The problems we face are best seen partly as a continuous developing process of language learning branching gradually into various genres and styles, partly as a set of contrasts in which spoken language stands against written, vernacular against academic discourse in its various subtypes, one professional jargon and one set of conventions against another. None of these problems is unique to La Trobe, although their particular composition may be.

We are now in a position to attempt a definition of the term "illiteracy". It is, in our view, the failure, for a variety of reasons, by a person or group to fulfil the rules of language use set by another person or group. Linguistics uses the term language deviance, which although it implies a stigma just as "illiteracy" does, nevertheless infers that conformity, not remedialism is the key factor in determining its application. In contrast, "illiteracy" or "remedialism" tend to universalize what is context-specific.

Last barrel - if you survive this you'll be right:

If the "conceptual confusion and naiveté" which facilitates the equation between problems of literacy conformity and "remedial" problems is allowed to continue, such problems may indeed become intractable.

GENERIC STRUCTURES AND LEARNING TO WRITE

FRANCES CHRISTIE

Lecturer in Language Education in the School of Education, Deakin University.

Formerly worked as a secondary teacher of English and History, then moved into teacher education for some years before going to the Curriculum Development Centre, Canberra where from 1979-81 she was responsible for the national co-ordination of the Language Development Project.

Moved to Deakin in 1982.

Interests: Bushwalking, Movies, All forms of live theatre, travel, reading.

GENERIC STRUCTURES AND LEARNING TO WRITE

A paper presented at the Australasian

Fifth Annual Study Skills Conference

Deakin University, 15 - 18 May, 1984

Frances Christie
School of Education
Deakin University

I intend to argue in this paper that when we learn to write we learn 'ways of meaning' - ways of organising experience, information and ideas, all of which find expression in distinctively different language patterns. To use language in the terms being argued here is to construct meaning, or, to put the point another way, meaning is realised in language. The measure of this lies in the fact that different texts have distinctively different linguistic features: it is in these that meaning is realised.

There are of course many ways of making meaning available to us apart from those of language: dance, music, and the many other artistic forms found in our own and other cultures immediately spring to mind. Moreover, ways of meaning differ from culture to culture, and they also change over time, for they are socially created, and like other social phenomena, they are constantly subject to processes of transformation and change.

I want to suggest that successful participation in one's culture involves learning to interpret and employ its way of meaning, and that such a view has important implications for educational processes generally. Educational activities at any level from primary to tertiary, are really activities undertaken in the expectation that those being educated will be enabled to become successful participants in their culture.

In a sense the latter point may seem rather obvious. Indeed, when we consider the kinds of educational activities in which most of us engage as teachers, or when we consider for example the kinds of educational aims which find familiar expression in curriculum guideline documents in schools, it is clear that we do want those whom we teach to become successful participants in their culture.

In the Australian context for example, in common with other Western countries, we tend to value for those whom we educate the development of skills and capacities of many kinds. Moreover, these skills and capacities are valued across the full range of subjects or content areas, and in significant ways they are all seen to contribute to the development of the educated person. I refer to the development of such things as: methods of enquiry and of valuing, habits of critical judgment and discrimination, skills of reflection, analysis and speculation, or capacities to synthesise information and points of view.

These are all among the characteristics we value for those whom we educate, and it takes no great perspicacity to see that that is because they are among the characteristics valued in the wider community our educational institutions exist to serve.

Such characteristics and the many others we might easily identify if we took the time needed to do so, are developed in different ways of making meaning, including ways of making meaning in language.

The latter observation is not in itself an obvious one, yet it is this which lies at the very heart of my discussion. Methods of working, of reasoning and of argument, of valuing and of investigating, are frequently talked of in a manner which suggests they have an identity independent of the behavioural forms or patterns in which they find expression, including of course forms of language.

In this connection it should be noted, it is professional educators who are themselves frequently responsible for the serious confusions which creep into educational discussion, having unfortunate consequences for educational practices and hence for students' learning.

At all levels of education, as students acquire new information, learn new ways of working, develop new intellectual perspectives, or expand and extend those earlier developed, they engage in interpreting and manipulating differing patterns of discourse. As they learn to manipulate such patterns so they learn ways of meaning.

The difficulty in all this - the source of the confusion into which much educational discussion frequently plunges us - is that language itself is in an odd sense 'invisible' - the resource we most frequently use and hence most take for granted. Thus, when teachers focus upon what it is they intend their students to learn, they tend to focus, to some extent understandably, upon 'content', 'knowledge' or 'ideas' - all conceived of as matters which exist independently of language use. Get the 'content' right, seems to be the assumption, and the language will in some fashion fall into place after it. Yet what is 'content' or 'information' or 'ideas'?

I would suggest that such terms refer in a very general way, to complex sets of understandings, to methods of posing questions and investigating these, and that they are realised in distinctive patterns of discourse. When we

and our students use language we construct texts, and as we construct texts, so too we construct the meanings associated with the various aspects of human experience and endeavour which we call 'content areas'.

It was Halliday (1975) who first suggested that learning one's mother tongue was a process of 'learning how to mean'. It was a suggestion he made out of a study of one young child's early language development: he linked his observations of the young child's learning language to his view of the complete language system which the child would eventually learn. The one illuminated the other.

In learning to use one's mother tongue one learns to construct text as a part of the process of learning to negotiate and build relationships, understandings, attitudes and points of view. The latter constitutes the various kinds of 'content' of language, and both in speech and in writing the nature of the texts alters depending upon the kinds of 'content' involved.

What are the educational implications of such a view of language? Two implications seem to me worthy of being stated:

1. at any level of education we must recognise that when students learn, they are engaged in learning differing ways of constructing and organising meaning in texts;

2. that teachers need to be aware of the kinds of linguistic demands they make upon their students so that they may usefully guide and direct them, thus assisting them to learn.

Nowhere are these implications more important than when we consider the kinds of writing tasks students are commonly given to complete. Learning to write is a matter of learning to construct differing written texts - differing genres - having distinctive generic structures. The nature of these generic structures is culturally determined, for they are intimately linked to the various culturally created means of expression and articulation of experience available to us.

In my view, such an understanding does not familiarly inform practices in teaching writing at any level of education. On the contrary, two views, both of them largely unhelpful to students, have tended to prevail for a long time. The one, associated in particular with much English teaching practice, has tended

to emphasise 'creativity' or 'self-expression', and the need to allow students plenty of scope to express themselves in writing much as they want, with minimal direction from others.

The other view, associated with the teaching of most subjects other than English, tends largely to ignore language altogether and to suggest that what matters is that the 'information' or 'content' in the writing is appropriate.

The former view fails to acknowledge how it is that people become creative or self-expressive. Contrary to popular myth, creativity is not something individuals simply generate within themselves. Rather, I suggest, creativity is generated out of exposure to various modes of meaning found within one's culture. It is through manipulation of these, playing with the various genres available - that individuals do both express themselves and, sometimes, create new genres.

The second view of writing which I have suggested is associated with other teaching subjects, is, for reasons I have earlier addressed, unsatisfactory because it subscribes to a belief in an independence of form and content which is simply illusory. Meaning or 'content' resides in, or is realised by language, and students who struggle to make sense of new information or content in writing are actually struggling to deal with the language necessary to achieve an appropriate mastery of that content.

I propose to consider here three examples of writing by young writers. They were written by students much younger than those of most participants at this conference. I shall nonetheless argue that my general observations are relevant when we consider students writing at any age. I shall argue in particular that since patterns of language are culturally created, they are, like many other aspects of behaviour, learned. In addition I shall suggest it is the responsibility of teachers to have a much more sensitive regard for, and interest in the nature of language, and in particular the various kinds of generic structures their students must master in order successfully write in the various subjects or content areas of concern.

In examining each of the texts I intend to draw upon perspectives drawn from systemic linguistics, in particular in the work of Halliday (1984) and that of Martin and Rothery (1980; 1981).

Text 1 : The kangaroo who lost its tail

A long time ago there was a kangaroo who did not have a tail and all the animals laughed at him and that made him sad. How did he get it back? he got it back by dipping his tail into lolly-pop siarp (syrup). The animals started to like him and then thay played with him. Would you like it? I would not because it would be most annoing.

The End

Text 2 : Sharks

"Sharks"! When people think of sharks they think of harsh, savage fish that attack at sight as a matter of fact they are completely wrong. Although there has been reports of shark attacks these are very rare. Most sharks won't even come near the shore so people swimming near the shore can consider themselves almost guaranteed safe.

Sharks have special sense organs that can sense things up to 1 mile away. The shark uses fins to balance itself and it has to keep swimming or else it will sink. The shark's teeth are razor blade sharp and although you can only see two layers of teeth there are many in the jaw. Usually smaller fish follow the sharks around in hope of gathering up scraps that the shark may leave.

Text 3 : Character Study
Puberty Blues : Personality

Debbie was a girl who wanted to be with the top gang at the beach. She and her friend tried everything to get into the gang. She wanted to be tough and cool and have spunky boyfriends. She always lied to her parents so she could go to the beach. She smoked cigarettes and did the wrong things at school. One day she got into the gang. She was a top chick now. She could get a spunky boyfriend when she wanted. She went to parties and drank alcohol and cigarettes. One day she took drugs and started having them all the time.

Debbie lived in a huge red brick mansion. It was three storeyed and had a built in swimming pool. She hung around with the surfie gang and was cool and tough. The gang spent most of their time at the beach surfing. On weekends they would go out in panelvans to the drive-ins and dark streets. Sometimes they would go to someone's house when their parents were out.

Debbie wrote the book. It was written in the first person and told her feelings and what she did. At first she liked being in the group and being cool and tough and taking drugs. But after a while she became sick of it and left. She started surfing with her friend.

Text 1 is by a child in Grade Two, aged 7 years.

No-one here would have any difficulty identifying this as a story. The fact that we can so identify it is in itself significant. We do so because as successful participants in a culture which values storytelling we recognise a familiar generic structure, a way of constructing meaning in language. How do we know this is a narrative? What linguistic features in the text give it its distinctive character?

Consider first of all the schematic structure of the text:

Orientation:	a long time ago there was a kangaroo who did not have a tail
Complication:	and all the animals laughed at him and that made him feel sad.
Resolution:	how did he get it back? he got it back by dipping his tail into lolly-pop siarp. The animals started to like him and then they played with him.
Coda:	Would you like it? I would not because it would be most annoing.

This particular breakdown of elements of schematic structure comes from the research of Labov and Waletsky (1967) into spoken narrative. The coda - the storyteller's evaluative comment upon the story - they found did not always occur in narratives. While being careful to point out that many other kinds of narratives apart from those they examined required analysis, they found that narratives tend to introduce characters,placing them in some kind of setting, and also establishing some sense of time. They tend also to introduce some complication(s) and ultimately to bring about some resolution. In particular according to Labov and Waletsky a sequence of events temporally linked, and some kind of crisis or complication, appear to be the two most distinctive elements of narratives.

In table 1 I have set out a clause breakdown showing in particular conjunction and themes. Theme incidentally, in systemic linguistics simply refers to that which comes first in the clause. Note the opening theme - really a cliche in children's stories - 'a long time ago'. It has the function of establishing a temporal sense. Subsequent temporal sequence is provided by the use of 'and', in two cases where there is an implicit 'then', and in one case where it is explicit: '<u>and</u> all the animals laughed at him <u>and</u> that made him sad'; and in 'the animals started to like him <u>and then</u> they played with him'.

The story is told in the past tense, a common though not invariable feature of narratives. The experiential processes found here are worthy of comment.

Processes - 'what is going on' as it were - are identified in English in verb structures. Some of the processes here are to do with attribution - e.g. 'he did not have a tail'; others with behaviour e.g. 'they laughed at him'; others with action e.g. 'they played with him'. The processes of the coda by contrast are attitudinal: 'would you like it?

Narratives, since they deal with the unfolding of events typically have a number of action processes. It is significant that this text has very few action processes. Their absence confirms the sense that the text lacks much in the way of event.

Text 1 is pretty rudimentary and Tables 2 and 3 help to demonstrate why we can make this judgment. Table 2 setting out reference chains across the clauses indicates how minimal are the references to characters other than the kangaroo. Table 3 indicates the principal lexical strings in the text. Under each of the headings I have identified it will be clear that the relevant items are few. In significant ways the text lacks detail.

Why is such an analysis useful? I suggest it is very useful because it focuses attention upon both the strengths and the limitations of the text. It is often very difficult as we all know, to identify in any precise way those linguistic features of written texts which account for their structures. Yet such information is essential if we are to be able to guide those whom we teach into achieving greater mastery of the genres they need to learn.

Now let us turn to Text 2 Sharks, an expository piece by a Grade 5 boy aged 10 years. This is a very different piece from Text 1. It represents a very different way of making meaning and its linguistic features offer a considerable contrast with Text 2. Probably no-one here would dispute that this is an expository piece, and that it represents an attempt to construct a scientific meaning. I would suggest that its schematic structure should be set out thus:

Argument	Sharks. When people think of sharks they think of harsh savage fish that attack at sight as a matter of fact they are completely wrong. Although there has been reports of shark attacks they are very rare. Most sharks won't even come near the shore to people swimming near the shore so people swimming near the shore can consider themselves almost guaranteed safe.
Description	Sharks have special sense organs that can sense things up to 1 mile away. The shark uses fins to balance itself and it has to keep swimming or else it will sink. The shark's teeth are razor blade sharp and although you can only see two layers of teeth there are many in the jaw. Usually smaller fish follow the sharks around in hope of gathering up scraps that the shark may leave.

I suggest that the schematic structure should be set out thus because the first of the two paragraphs appears to have a different character and function from the second. It remains far finer linguistic analysis to demonstrate whether this is the case.

Look firstly then, at Table 4, where I have once again set out conjunction and theme for the whole piece is of course established with the opening: 'Sharks'. There are two conjunctions and one phrase having the function of a conjunction in the early clauses to 6b. I refer to 'as a matter of fact', which I have glossed as 'but', and to 'although' and 'so'. Their effect is to help sustain and develop expression of opinion about sharks. Three conjunctions are also used in the second paragraph - 'and', 'or' and 'and although' - more of which in this case may be said to support argument, though they certainly have the function of tying the paragraph together.

Collectively, the conjunctions here have the function of sustaining argument in paragraph 1 and description in paragraph 2. The 'connectedness' is thus not that of temporal connection which we saw applied in Text 1.

The text is written in the present tense, a familiar feature of expository and scientific writing, and the experiential processes are to do with attitude and attribution. Thus, in the first paragraph behaviour processes are present: 'think' used twice, and 'can consider'. Other processes are to do with 'being': 'are' is used twice and 'has been'. In general these processes relate to arguing about the claims made wrongly about sharks.

Processes in the second paragraph significantly include no behavioural processes which compare with those in the first paragraph, while there are a number of processes of attribution: 'have', 'has, and 'are' used twice.

Overall then, it is the processes and the conjunctions which together give this text its distinctive character, making it an expository rather than a narrative text.

Tables 5 and 6 provide at a glance evidence of the distribution of references and the distribution of items to do with sharks, attitudes towards them and their characteristics. The distribution set out in Table 6 confirms the claim that paragraph 1 is to do with attitudes and claims made about sharks, while the second paragraph deals with sharks characteristics.

Now let us turn to Text 3 - a character study on a character in the Australian novel Puberty Blues. I do not propose to set out a schematic structure here though I suggest if I did it would indicate that this text is a series of descriptions. It is of course, again as most of us would easily recognise, an example of literary criticism, though as Table 7 will begin to help explain, it doesn't satisfy as a piece of literary discussion.

Look in particular at the use of conjunctions and observe the absence of any to do with interpretation. You will find in fact that if you were to reverse paragraphs 1 and 2, you would not materially alter their meaning, since there is an absence of connection between them and indeed across the clauses within them. One might be tempted to think the essay is a recount of the details of the novel, a feeling supported by the use of the past tense which as I earlier noted is a frequent feature of narration. However, you will find no evidence of implicit temporal connections here as I suggested earlier you could in Text 1.

Most of the processes are to do either with action or behaviour. Debbie 'wanted to be tough and cool'; 'she drank alcohol'; she 'smoked cigarettes'; she and her friend 'tried everthing to get into the gang'.

Now look at Tables 8 and 9. Table 8 reveals Debbie is the most frequently identified referent, the only other significant referential chain being to do with the 'top gang'. Table 9 sets out the principal lexical strings in the test. Note the high incidence of items to do with Debbie's desired associates and activities, but note also the very few to do with the book and its writing.

Such an analysis serves to demonstrate why on a first reading of the piece one is left with an unsatisfied sense that the text lacks much interpretative power, though the conventions of literary criticism and of character study really require that some interpretation be offered.

Conclusion

How then am I to bring the various elements of my discussion to a close? I hasten to say, if it is necessary to do so, that nothing I have said in analysing the three texts should be taken as criticism. They are all creditable achievements from the writers concerned. I have sought rather in my analysis to demonstrate some usefullinguistic skills all teachers including those at the tertiary level, might well develop for considering the writing of those whom they teach.

Behind this necessarily quick demonstration of such linguistic skills and perspectives lay a number of assumptions to which I referred earlier, and to which I would return as I close. In creating written texts we construct meanings, selecting from the resources available within our language appropriate linguistic items, and these we fashion into different patterns to realise different meanings. The various patterns are culturally created, representative of the range of potential genres valued in the community, or valued at least by differing groups within the community.

When students learn to write they are actually learning ways of meaning - mastering the generic features of differing kinds of texts. It behoves us as teachers to develop as precise a sense as is possible of the linguistic features of such texts so that we may assist those we teach to learn.

Footnote

I am indebted to Mrs. Brigid Ballard for telling me after this paper was delivered, that the writing in Text 3 was very representative of the kinds of literary critical texts her Malaysian students produce at A.N.U. She pointed out that in her experience for many such students writing of this sort constiutes appropriate writing about literature. The observation is an interesting one, confirming the general point I have argued that ways of writing like ways of meaning generally are culturally created. Simon, who wrote Text 3, operates in a culture whose expectation in literary critical discussion is that some interpretation be offered of character.

References

1. Halliday, M.A.K. (1975), Learning How to Mean, Arnold: London.

2. Halliday, M.A.K. (1984) A Short Introduction to Functional Grammar, Arnold: London.

3. Labov, W. and Waletsky, J., (1967) 'Narrative analysis: oral versions of personal experience in J. Helm (ed.), Essays on the Verbal and Visual Arts: Proceedings of the 1966 Annual Spring Meeting of the American Ethnological Society, University of Washington Press: Seattle.

4. Martin, J.R. and Rothery J. (1980; 1981) Writing Project Reports Numbers 1 and 2' Working Papers in Linguistics, Linguistics Department, University of Sydney.

Note

For permission to use the three texts thanks are due to the following people and their children:

Mrs. Irene Hudson
Mrs. Joy Frayn
Mr. Ron Lewis

TABLE 1.

Text 1 : The kangaroo who lost its tail

Conjunction and Theme

1.	A long time ago there was a kangaroo
2a.	who did not have a tail
and	
2b.	and all the animals laughed at him
and	
2c.	and that made him sad
3.	how did he get it back
4.	he got it back by dipping his tail into lollypop siarp
5a.	the animals started to like him
and then	
5b.	and then they played with him
6.	would you like it
7a.	I would not
because	
7b.	because it would be most annoing.

TABLE 2.

Text 1 : The kangaroo who lost its tail

Reference : identifying participants

Clause number				
1	kangaroo			
2	who			
3	him	animals		
4	him			
5	he			
6	he			
7	him	animals		
8	him	they		
9			you	
10				I
11				

TABLE 3.

Text 1 : The kangaroo who lost its tail

Lexical cohesion

	Kangaroo	Tail	Kangaroo's feelings	Other characters	Other characters' attitudes	Author/ reader interactio
1	kangaroo					
2		tail				
3				animals	laughed	
4			sad			
5		get back				
6		dipping tail				
7				animals	like	
8					played	
9						like
10						
11						annoing

TABLE 4.

Text 2 : Sharks

Conjunction and Theme

1. sharks

2. when people think of sharks

3. they think of harsh savage fish

4.a that attack at sight

('but')

4.b as a matter of fact they are completely wrong

5.a although there has been reports of shark attacks

although

5.b these are very rare

6.a most sharks won't even come near the shore

so

6.b so people swimming near the shore can consider themselves almost guaranteed safe

7. sharks have special sense organs

8. that can sense things up to 1 mile away

9.a the shark uses fins to balance itself

and

9.b and it has to keep swimming

or

9.c or else it will sink

10.a the shark's teeth are razor blade sharp

and although

10.b and although you can only see two layers of teeth

11. there are many in the jaw

12. usually smaller fish follow the sharks around in hope of gathering up scraps of food

13. that the shark may leave.

TABLE 5.

Text 2 : Sharks

Reference : identifying participants

Clause number	Sharks	People	Other fish
	sharks		
1.	sharks	people	
2.	fish	they	
3.			
4.		they	
5.			
6.			
7.	sharks		
8.		people	
9.	sharks		
10.			
11.	shark		
12.	it		
13.	it		
14.			
15.			
16.			
17.	sharks		fish
18.	shark		

TABLE 6.

Text 2 : Sharks

Lexical cohesion

Clause number	People	Sharks	Wrong views of sharks	Shark characteristics	Shark habits	Other fish
•		sharks				
1.	people	sharks				
2.			harsh savage fish			
3.			attack			
4.						
5.			shark attacks			
6.						
7.		sharks				
8.	people					
9.		sharks		special sense organs		
10.					sense	
11.		shark		fins	balance	
12.					swimming	
13.					sink	
14.				teeth, razor blade sharp		
15.				layers, teeth		
16.				jaw		
17.		sharks				smalle fish
18.		shark				

TABLE 7.

TEXT: Character Study from 'Puberty Blues'

Conjunction and Theme

1. Debbie was a girl
2. who wanted to be with the top gang at the beach
3. she and her friend tried everything to get into the gang
4a. she wanted to be tough and cool
and
b. and have spunky boyfriends
5a. she always lied to her parents
so
b. so she could go to the beach
6a. she smoked cigarettes
and
6b. and did the wrong things at school
7. one day she got into the gang
8. she was a top chick now
9a. she could get a spunky boyfriend
when
9b. when she wanted.
10a. she went to parties
and
10b. and drank alcohol and cigarettes
11a. one day she took drugs
and
11b. and started having them all the time
12. Debbie lived in a huge red brick mansion.
13a. it was three storeyed
and
13b. and had a built in swimming pool
14a. she hung around with the surfie gang
and
14b. and was cool and tough
15. the gang spent most of their time at the beach surfing
16. on weekends they would go out in panel vans to the drive-ins and dark streets
17a. sometimes they would go to someone's house
when
17b. when their parents were out.
18. Debbie wrote the book.
19a. it was written in the first person
and
19b. and told her feelings

and

19c. and what she did.

20a. at first she liked being in the group

and

20b. and being cool and tough and taking drugs.

but

20c. but after a while she became sick of it

and

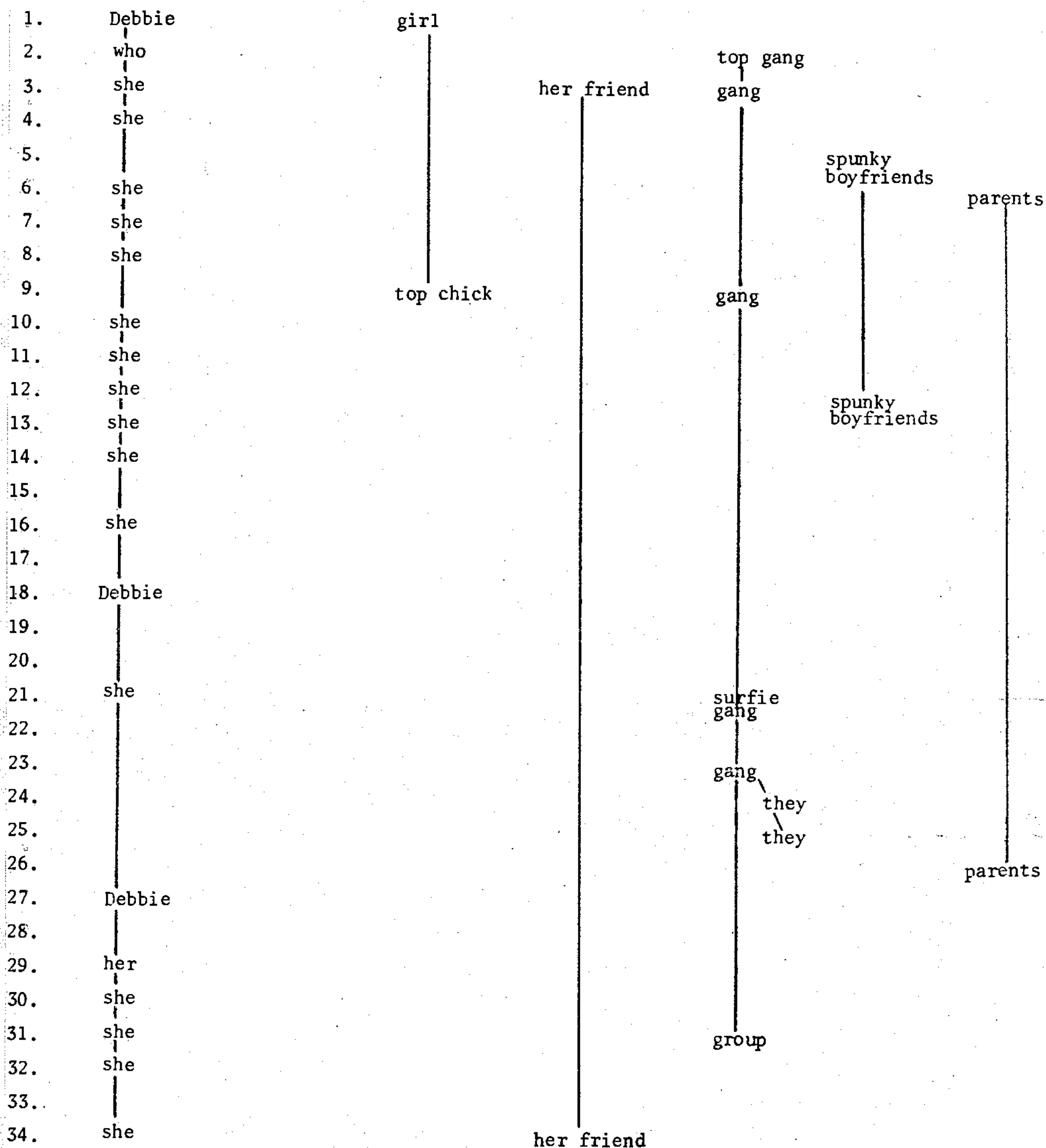
20d. and left.

21. She started surfing with her friend.

TABLE 8. TEXT: Puberty Blues

Reference: Identifying Participants

Referential Cohesion



PURIFYING THE TRIBAL LANGUAGE

What do they know of English, Who only English know?

EMIRITUS PROFESSOR C.E. MOORHOUSE

(See also Part 1)

PURIFYING THE TRIBAL LANGUAGE

What do they know of English, who only English know?

(Say what you are going to say, say it, then say you have said it)

ON CONFERENCES, (Addresses and this address) 1- 3

ON TITLES AND QUOTATIONS
This Conference, My Title and Sub Title of Address,
Huxley 4- 8

ON MYSELF
Language Interest,
Uses and Joys of Language Studies 9-12

ON WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS
Own Activities 13-14

ON VISUAL COMMUNICATION 15-18

FINAL REMARKS (Two Quotations) 19

ON CONFERENCES

It is not uncommon for the presumably sympathetic outsider who has been invited to deliver an opening address at a Conference to express views on some topic dear to him, or her as the case may be.

These views may be vaguely related to the Conference Theme, and designed in addition to ensure some Press publicity, or they may disclose an expert and intimate knowledge of the material to be presented.

A further possibility is that an Opening Address may give a speaker the opportunity of mounting some hobby horse of his or her own with a captive audience.

(E.G. A few weeks ago now Professor Blainey, delivering the opening address at the Annual Conference of the Institution of Engineers, Australia in Brisbane, devoted rather more than half his remarks to the undesirability of unrestricted Asian immigration.)

This particular Conference, under the general heading of Study Skills, covers naturally enough, a wide range of topics, as the programme in front of you indicates, and provides for any of these approaches.

Judging from the abstracts and preprints I have so far seen, what the various sessions - whether language, or learning or both - appear to have in common is that they are based on professional activities undertaken by those who are contributing.

They can, perhaps, be aptly described as "Clinical Notes", related to experiences, and I rejoice to find too that many references to "future research" seem to be lacking.

While, in any of the professions, there are some practitioners who devote themselves primarily to theory and others to practice, all have to accept that a combination of theory and practice is an essential characteristic of a profession.

It can be necessary, on occasion, for a member of a profession to take some practical action without a full knowledge of all the relevant information - either because some facts are unobtainable or because the theory is inadequately developed - and immediate results are needed.

When the circumstances are unusual, and the practitioner has learnt something of interest and value, he or she has, I believe, an obligation to record the experience for other members of the profession so that they may benefit from it, or discuss and criticize the action taken in the light of their own experiences.

This I consider to be an important justification for the holding of Conferences like this one - and for papers such as that of Hanne Bock and Helene Lewit.

A second reason is that, as occurred after a UNESCO Seminar on Visual Education, a monograph may be produced, and I think this might be considered by a body such as this one.

From time to time it has occurred to me that something like Bruce Truscot's "First Year at University", but written for the present-day situation here in Australia and New Zealand and not limited to Arts courses, would be "A Good Thing" and some years ago I produced a proposal for a work "Problems of Transition" - only to be told by one publisher that the Secondary School Teachers consulted saw no need for it: (This last does not seem to be borne out by the programme items for this Conference.)

Apart from this however there is another function, of benefit in the Antipodean situation, and that is of fostering a Federal, (or International) ideal - which at times seems to require every possible assistance.

For these reasons I have always been a strong supporter of the Annual Conferences of two bodies with which I have been associated for many years - those of The Institution of Engineers, Australia and of The Australian College of Education, which are held in each State in turn - even though they are criticized by some as containing too few "research" papers and too many "social" events.

I hope that what I have to say to-day will have some relevance to the theme of this Conference and the pursuits of its participants and, also, that it may suggest an area which might be considered as suitable for a future one.

A few years ago, when presenting a paper 'Teaching Professional Communication' to an Engineering Conference I had occasion to express the view that professional engineers have much more writing to do than is implied by technical report writing and certainly much more than most school teachers, parents, and first year students appear to realize.

It was in Sweden that I met a teacher of engineering who told me that his students could cope with lectures given in Swedish, German or English. When I said that I had met Australian educators who felt that there were intelligent people who could not learn a foreign language he replied "That may be, but these are not the sort of people we wish to become engineers."

The general area of language and learning is, in fact, one that has a special interest for me because I have had to cope with the consequences of some illusions about the nature of engineering teaching which can best be illustrated by the following -

(i) One would-be student from Thailand who entered the University of Melbourne some years ago was rejected by the Faculty of Commerce on the grounds that his English was not good enough, and was sent along to Engineering by the Commerce Faculty's Secretary - presumably on the grounds that a lack of knowledge of English would be unimportant in our course. In the event, kindhearted though we were, he failed First Year.

(ii) Not long ago a Lebanese student, newly-arrived in Australia, who applied for a place in Engineering and was required to take an entry test, stormed out of the room when he found that it would not be conducted in Arabic.

Towards the end of my term of office in the University of Melbourne I volunteered for the position of Director of Studies in First Year Engineering - this involved many activities of a counselling type and drew heavily on what I had learnt from long acquaintance with the Student Counsellors of the University from the beginning of their activities in fact, and from my participation in the establishment and early operation of the University Teaching Project, and in 'Studies in other fields' in Third Year Electrical Engineering.

Time and time again I found myself listening with ever-mounting fury to statements such as "Teacher said that once I had done English Expression at H.S.C. I wouldn't have to worry about English any more."

(The Faculties of Engineering in Melbourne and Monash are now requiring a "D" (pass) in English as a pre-requisite.)

THE CONFERENCE TITLE

In passing I feel that there are two questions arising from the Conference title.

(1) Is learning possible without language?

(2) Is learning possible without a written language?

(The answers to these can I think be "yes" and also "no": a case of some sort can be made for either)

Having now commented on the Conference title I feel bound to explain the title and sub-title I have chosen for my address.

MY TITLE AND SUB TITLE

The title was suggested to me by Aldous Huxley's use of the phrase in an essay "Literature and Science" which I read over twenty years ago.

In it he was concerned with the questions -
"What have poets, dramatists and philosophical essayists contributed to the study of man in the past?

"What are scientists contributing now?"

All of us, he says undergo various kinds of experience - the impressions conveyed by the senses, the intellectual experiences of logical thought and the emotional experiences.

To those involved in a given set of events, the sense impressions and the intellectual experiences may be largely common, while the emotional experiences differ widely from one person to another.

The former experiences Huxley describes as "public" and regards as those of interest to science, the latter he considers to be "private" and the primary concern of literature.

He then proceeds to point out that common language is inadequate both for the scientist and the literary artist; describing each as being engaged in purifying it - a term whose particular sense derives for Mallarmé's line.

"Donner un sens plus pur aux mots de la tribu."

The need for these purifying activities constantly arises -

"Change the wording of a scientific paper and as long as clarity is preserved no loss has been suffered.

Change the wording of a work of literary art however and it loses its apocalyptic quality." (This for me is applicable to the "Revised Standard Version").

I am an unashamed user of quotations, especially, in titles, and one who rarely thinks of saying 'and I quote' something which I fear is becoming more and more necessary as time goes on and there is less and less in the way of common reading experience. Many educational papers do seem to quote extensively but usually from themselves or fellow educators.

When someone has said something which conveys an idea better than I could it seems to me both desirable and efficient to use it and so at this stage I introduce some purified and apocalyptic quotations of some relevance to this Conference, including one from a Conference Paper.

(a) "Reading maketh a full man, conference a ready man and writing an exact man." (Too much of any maketh a fed-up man).

(b) "Men's thoughts are much according to their inclination, their discourse and speeches according to their learning."

(c) "Men use thought only as authority for their injustice and employ speech only to conceal their thoughts."

(d) "Words have two functions - on the one hand to state facts and on the other to evoke emotions."

Huxley concluded his essay by saying -

> "That the purified language of science, or even the wider purified language of literature should ever be adequate to the givenness of the world and of experience is, in the very nature of things, impossible."

Two things occur to me on considering this statement:

On the one hand, from the point of view of communicating ideas the purified language of the scientist would lend itself to translation from one tribal language to another much more readily than that of the literary artist. Samuel Johnson's statement that it would not be necessary to learn another language if good translations were available is relevant here.

On the other hand it seems possible that the private experiences of individuals might be more universally conveyed by the use of the visual arts - by an extension of the process by which the symbols and diagrams which are used to convey some fairly abstract ideas in my own field are accepted by international agreement - although there are subtle

differences even here in the conventions adopted - those of the Frenchman differ slightly from those of the Englishman.

My sub-title partly alludes to my belief that there are times when a picture is worth a thousand words and could perhaps be better expressed as "What do they know of any language who only writing and speaking know?"

There is however another reason for its present form which I chose partly as a result of my experiences in the Home Tutor Scheme. In this one conducts an hour's conversation once a week in English, with a recently arrived migrant.

When I joined the Scheme I indicated, as requested, some knowledge of languages other than English listing Spanish, Italian, French and German.

For some reason or other, however, I have found myself allotted Russian and Polish migrants, (as well as one Hungarian), and made some, to me, fascinating discoveries about the English language, and the differences between the Romance and Slavic languages as a result.

It is not easy to explain to the intelligent and equiring Slavic language speaker that in English many nouns have plurals in "s" while verbs only use "s" in the present singular so that "dogs bark" and "a dog barks" are the accepted forms.

Use of the articles "a" and "the" presents problems to those whose language does not include them, as too does the use of past tenses, since their ways of going about the description of past events differ from those of English (and the romance languages), while the verb "to be" is commonly omitted.

(I have the impression that "Ship here tomorrow" would be perfectly acceptable when literally translated into Russian).

All this bears out a personal belief that the study of other languages helps in the use of one's own.

(There are occasions too when one realizes that some things have been better expressed in one language than another.)

SOMETHING ABOUT MYSELF

Having got this far when I was preparing this address I felt if forgiveable to say something about myself since at first sight it would seem unlikely that a Professor of Engineering would be giving it.

What follows can perhaps be described as a case study of a linguist manqué.

In the unlikely event of applications having been called for the task of presenting this address, I could have put forward something like the following:

I went to school where it was considered normal for those showing any signs of intelligence at all to study French, Latin and Greek in addition to formal English grammar, beginning at what many educators now seem to regard as an unprofitably early age and with much of what is described, disparagingly nowadays as 'rote learning'. (Can one manage an Intellectual Exchange without some base?)

My family and my circle of friends contained members who had been to the same school, and had been treated in much the same way, and did not consider it impolite to refer to dictionaries in conversation, even at meals.

One result of this seems to have been the production of some three generations of amateur linguists -
my grandfather having taken up French again with enthusiasm at the age of fifty, and my father, whose profession had made the study of Hebrew highly desirable took up that of Modern Greek at the age of fifty-five (with assistance from a local fishmonger) and that of Fijian ("a soft snap compared with Hebrew") at the age of sixty-five when resident in Levuka for two years.

They also regarded reading to be worthwhile occupation, to be indulged in undisturbed, and not as the last resource of the lonely.

I can recall that when I went home one day and said that a master at school had told us that after learning five languages the rest would come more easily there was general agreement that this seemed likely. I decided, at the age of twelve or thereabouts, that one day - when I had become and engineer - I would give the proposition a practical test.

This proposition I have come to suspect requires some qualification since, having studied Spanish while a demonstrator in engineering in the University of Melbourne, and German while in an engineering works in England, I found later that Swedish (which I made some attempt to tackle while visiting engineering works in Sweden for some six weeks many years later) did not come easily!

SOME USES AND JOYS OF LANGUAGE STUDIES

I found French useful in visits to Engineering Works in France, Switzerland and Belgium and at a Conference on Large Power Systems in Paris: but not, contrary to a UNESCO headquarters belief, of much value in Latin America.

German I used in Switzerland on skiing holidays, on a canoe trip down the Danube, and much later on in Heidelberg and Munich.

More recently, because of some twenty weeks spent in Italian surroundings - ten on an Italian ship (Galileo Galilei) and ten in Italy I made some study of Italian, reinforced by use of the language laboratory in the University of Bristol, and attendance at a term of first year lectures when I was a visiting Professor there.

(I also used its language laboratory to brush up my Spanish before spending a week in Madrid some years later when I was a visiting Professor again).

In passing I cannot resist including Francis Bacon's remark "He that travelled into a country before he hath some entrance into the language goeth to school and not to travel" - to which he might well have added that such a traveller "findeth it more costly".

My study of Spanish ("why not cash in on the Latin") proved to be by far the most rewarding linguistic activity since it was when I took Spanish I ("not for any degree or diploma") that I first met my wife while, later on, a knowledge of the language - of which I have remained an "aficionado" and revealed at a UNESCO Conference (on the Education and Training of Engineers, and held in Paris) led to two UNESCO assignments - one in Venezuela and another in the Dominican Republic.

On sea voyages over the years I have passed the time pleasantly with Hugo's "Italian in three Months", "Let's learn Maori", and "Chinese for Beginners" (purchased in Shanghai) - (There are some interesting resemblances between some of the constructions in the last two of these). Flights do not give the same opportunities, but I did look through 'Instant Hawaiian' while crossing the Pacific.

In the early years of Deakin, as one of the very few members of the Interim Council who had some acquaintance with a language other than English,I was assigned the task of producing a memorandum on possible language studies for the Council's consideration.

A final comment in the language area, which may also be of interest in that of learning is that when lecturing in my own course in Melbourne I noted that the main questions brought up by earnest Continental and Asian students, just after a lecture, were usually on the points covered in the last quarter hour or so of it.

My own experience in Venezuela was illuminating because, when I was there, I had to spend some time attending engineering lectures given in Spanish and I found that about half way through a lecture a kind of fatigue set in,and I began to watch the formulae and diagrams as they were put up on the blackboard without attending at all closely to the accompanying explanations.

ON WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS

Having indicated something of an amateur status in one of the professional fields of this Conference my application to give this address would perhaps have gone on by stating that I have had, as a teacher of engineering and formerly as a practising engineer for some ten years, a professional interest in the communication of ideas and the development of trains of logical argument by the use of words and phrases, of symbols and codes and especially by the use of pictures and diagrams of various kinds ranging from the somewhat realistic to the extremely abstract. I have also been heavily involved in what some would call pastoral care, and other counselling.

For many years I conducted classes in the University of Melbourne, and in Deakin, in Communication Skills for engineering students at various levels and with a major emphasis on the reading and writing of English; I still mark exercises in this area. I was also a member of Deakin's Literacy Committee.

On various occasions I have expressed the apparently heretical views that Universities should not expect schools to turn out finished writers and that Employers should not expect Universities to do so either. 'Continuing Education' is needed in this field also.

Again, in the University of Melbourne I was involved in the teaching of Engineering Drawing and in pointing out its relationships to other forms of representation in the early part of the course, while I organised oil painting classes for my Final Year Engineering students at RMIT and Swinburne for several years.

One result of this, was that I have long been a week-end painter myself and later became a member of the Victorian Artists' Society.

Another was my part in the development of Sixth Form Graphic Communication and yet another my continuing association with Art and Design here in Deakin.

It should by now be apparent that throughout my career I have never let being an engineer, or a teacher of engineering, prevent me from taking an interest in anything else and have found that there is, in fact, much in what I learnt from engineering that can usefully be applied in other areas - I am not a believer in the impossibility of transfer of training and have found that it is possible to make some contribution because of, and not in spite of, being an engineer. Here I find myself in complete agreement with Jaques Barzun when, in his "House of Intellect", he says that the superstition that understanding is identical with professional skill is a tacit denial of intellect.

There is, he says, a large field to which Intellect has access in its own right.

"With a cautious confidence and sufficient intellectual training it is possible to master the Literature of a subject and gain a proper understanding of it - of the accepted truths, the disputed problems, the rival schools, and the methods now in favour.

This will not enable one to add to knowledge but it will give an appreciation of what a particular discipline has to offer the world".

One can, I believe, also gain such an appreciation from considering the material presented and discussed at Conferences such as this.

Inspired by this many years ago now I conducted a subject designed for the Arts student "Engineering Study" in the University of Melbourne, and later I endeavoured, unsuccessfully, to interest the Engineering staff of Deakin in the production of an off-campus course of study "Engineering for the Citizen").

ON VISUAL COMMUNICATION

"In the name of education we teach people to read and we teach people to write, but we leave them to learn to see by themselves."

The theme of this Conference would appear, from the point of view of a would-be contributor, to invite the production of papers on the study of languages at the tertiary level and also on the part played by language in the learning process. I suspect that for the majority of would-be contributors the term "language" would imply written, and perhaps, spoken language - this is borne out by the nature of most of the sessions proposed on this occasion.

I should like, at this stage, to express some thoughts on "Visual language" and to suggest that some attention be paid to it in a future Conference.

In his introduction to "Pictures as Arguments" Hans Hess expressed the view that pictures may be propositions of reality.

"When we think of the expression of ideas we usually think of the written or spoken word which is the accepted form for the expression of thought. Yet we know that thought is expressed by scientists not in words but in a language of symbols which becomes the current equivalent of the reality it attempts to describe."

"In the same way," Hess says, "painters use a language not of words but of forms or symbols to depict a form of reality."

(It is worth noting here that Deakin's second level "Art" course of study has the title "Iconic Lanaugage")

My own activities and experience in the Visual Communication area, apart from its use in Engineering, have been with the introduction of Graphic Communication at Sixth Form level, in the production as editor of, and contributor to two books - Visual Education and Visual Messages - participation in a UNESCO seminar, Visual Education in the National Gallery Melbourne and the production of Visual Language, and of Iconic Language as off-campus courses of study by this University. I firmly believe that communication of this kind has an important part to play in what is becoming known as Distance Education.

Unfortunately it appears to be a widespread belief that visual messages are easy to produce and understand and so training in their production and use is unnecessary. Nothing could be further from the truth.

What any visual message - like any written one, - conveys to a given recipient is almost entirely governed by the viewer's background, training, and experience.

It can reasonably be said that communication of the graphic variety uses symbolic systems of one sort or another. To be unambiguous and effective visual messages must then conform to sets of conventions, known to, used by and subscribed to by all those concerned.

There must, in effect, be a "grammar" which has been acquired by both the producers and receivers of such messages.

At a Conference of the Australian College of Education, not long before the Introduction of Graphic Communication as a sixth form subject, recognised for selection purposes by the Victorian Universities, I presented a paper on the subject in question.

At that stage I was the Chairman of the newly formed VUSEB Standing Subject Committee, and had been responsible for much of the subject's design, for piloting it through Melbourne University's Professorial Board - with material assistance from the Professor of Fine Arts, - and the production of a suitable text.

On that occasion the Conference Theme was "The Educational Process" and I set out to explain what was meant by the title "Graphic Communication".

Here some knowledge of Italian proved useful, because I was able to draw heavily on Bruno Munari's "Design e Comunicazione Visiva" in which he begins by enquiring whether it is possible to define his term.

It can be said that everything which comes to our eyes is a visual communication of some sort and Munari's contribution to our thinking was in making a distinction between casual, or accidental, and intentional visual communication.

The former is dependent on the observer's reaction to a chance occurance such as a cloud formation, the latter on his reaction to a designed occurrence such as a set of smoke signals.

Munari went on to suggest two categories of intentional visual communication - that of aesthetic information and that of practical information - a distinction not altogether unlike that made by Huxley which I mentioned earlier.

My own interest in this area arose from my experience in the education and training of technologists at the tertiary level where I encountered, more often than not, students whose interests and previous education lay mainly in mathematics and the physical sciences - (and who seemed to have hoped to have finished with English!)

These students however, although admittedly only when sufficient external pressure was applied, showed some evidence of having acquired much more skill in the use of words than of visual messages.

Very few of them, seemed to be at all competent in the use of graphical devices - either for guiding their own thoughts or for illustrating their arguments and they were, in any case, painfully slow in producing them on the occasions when they had to do so. Those who are concerned with students in the liberal arts area will even more rarely, I suspect encounter students who are competent in visual communication.

Graphic Communication falls into Munari's practical information category and is concerned with these messages which are conveyed by two-dimensional and stationary devices (unlike Body language) which can be lumped together as "drawing" and in this context may be of the kinds commonly described as representational, diagrammatic, and symbolic.

It is commonly used in mathematics - as one of the present Conference sessions will indicate - and the sciences, in architecture, economics, education, and engineering and in daily life in advertising, control of traffic, and in attempts to surmount language problems.

I was immensely cheered to find diagrams in a paper on Report Writing at this Conference.

In some areas visual communications of the graphical kind, properly used and understood, are sufficient in themselves and can be superior to the written or spoken word, in others they are chiefly of value in amplifying, enriching or "purifying" it.

Since such messages are becoming more and more commonly used in many fields of human endeavour and with some computers devoted to producing them it seems curious that so little attention seems to be devoted to consideration of their production on the one hand, and their interpretation and criticism on the other, in educational establishments or in Conference papers!

If "a picture is to be worth a thousand words" it has to be a "good" picture.

However - "Pleasant though it is to wander undisturbed through a garden of bright images, are we not distracting our minds from subjects of almost equal importance?"

What I have been saying about Visual Communication then, is something that might be kept in mind by the designers of some future Conference.

FINAL REMARKS

I use the phrase designedly, I doubt whether it is possible to draw "Conclusions" from what I have said and I have always found it difficult to produce them.

I therefore proceed to wind up this discursive discourse by using two fairly relevant extracts from the writings of others which indicate the things to be avoided - in Conferences especially.

The first on language comes from The Retroactive Existence of Mr. Juggins by Stephen Leacock.

"Juggins somehow never got far with his studies. For a time he studied French with tremendous eagerness. But he soon found that for a real

knowledge of French you need first to get a thorough grasp of Old French and Provençal. It proved impossible to do anything with these without an absolutely complete command of Latin.

This, Juggins discovered, could only be obtained in any thorough way through Sanskrit which of course lies at the base of it. So Juggins devoted himself to Sanskrit until he realized that for a proper study of Sanskrit one needs to study ancient Iranian, the root language underneath. This language however is lost."

The second, on not learning, is from The Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam. An obvious case for study methods.

"Myself when young did eagerly frequent
Doctor and sage and heard great argument, about it and about
But evermore came out by the same door.
As in I went".

I finish by expressing the conviction that neither of these will be applicable to anyone attending this Conference and so I wish it every success.

COGNITIVE DIFFERENCES IN PROCESSING OF WORDS AND PICTURES: A CROSS CULTURAL COMPARISON

BARRY L. RICHARDSON

AND

DIANNE B. WUILLEMIN

DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY/PHILOSOPHY

UNIVERSITY OF PAPUA NEW GUINEA

COGNITIVE DIFFERENCES IN PROCESSING OF WORDS AND PICTURES: A CROSS CULTURAL COMPARISON

Barry L. Richardson
and
Dianne B. Wuillemin

Department of Psychology/Philosophy
University of Papua New Guinea

Forty Papua New Guinean subjects showed an unusual and significant reversal of effect in a picture-word Stroop-type experiment whereby pictures were found to interfere in word naming.

A similar effect was found for the Stroop colour-word experiment in which words typically interfere with colour naming (this was confirmed with our data) but colours do not interfere with word naming. However, for PNG subjects, colours did interfere with word naming.

These differences, between Papua New Guinean performance and that of subjects elsewhere, are not explainable in terms or poorer absolute or relative naming times of English words since PNG's naming times were not slower than those of the overseas subject and, like the overseas subjects, PNG subjects named words faster than either pictures or colours.

Instead, it may be that PNG subjects process English words as visuo-spatial stimuli for which right - hemisphere function is dominant. Since the same hemisphere is mostly responsible for colour and picture processing, interference between such aspects of a single stimulus is enhanced. For other subjects (with English as the first language) the words could be processed in the left hemisphere and pictures and colours in the right. Since words are named faster than colours or pictures and are laterally separated for processing, interference occurs in one direction only. Evidence for this idea is discussed.

Cognitive Differences in Processing of Words and Pictures: A Cross Cultural Comparison.

When 12 colour names are printed in black ink and subjects are asked to read these words aloud, they have no trouble in doing so. When the same colour words are printed in different colour inks (e.g., the word BLUE is printed in yellow ink, and so forth) subjects again have no difficulty, in fact it has been reliably demonstrated that naming colour words printed in incongruent colour inks is done as quickly and as accurately as naming the same list of colour words printed in black ink. However, when the task is to name the colour of the ink in which a colour word is printed (e.g., say "RED" when the word "BLUE" is printed in red ink) significant increases in errors and response times are observed (Stroop, 1935; Dyer, 1973).

This phenomenon is known as the Stroop Colour - Word effect and a similar effect is demonstrated when pictures are substituted for colours. The time taken to read aloud a list of 12 common nouns does not differ from the time taken to read the same list of words printed inside line drawings of objects (e.g., the word DOG printed inside the outline drawing of an apple). However, naming the pictures when words appear within is significantly slower (Smith and Magee, 1980).

Neither the colour-word Stroop effect nor the picture-word interference effect can be attributed to longer absolute naming times for colours and pictures because the colours in which colour words are printed take longer to name than do colour patches in a control condition (Dyer, 1973) and pictures presented with words inside take longer to name than do pictures alone in the corresponding control condition. (Smith and Magee, 1980).

Since words presented alone are named faster than either colours or pictures presented alone, it seems reasonable to hypothesise that when stimuli consist of a mixture of words and colours, or words and pictures, the interference occurs in only one direction because words are available for verbal response before either colour information or picture information. Thus, when the colour label or picture name is required as a response, the already available word name has to be suppressed until the colour or picture label goes through the processing system and finally becomes available as a response. This explanation of the colour-word and a picture-word Stroop effect is known as the response competition explanation and has received considerable support (Dyer, 1973).

When Stroop phenomena were demonstrated in psychology laboratory classes at UPNG, some unusual results were obtained. Papua New Guinean subjects showed the expected interfering effects of words when naming colours or pictures but it was also found that colours and pictures significantly interfered with word naming, that is, the effects were symmetrical. This has not been reported for subjects in Europe or North America who show asymmetry in the effect, as described earlier.

The research reported here was designed to investigate the symmetrical picture-word Stroop effect as observed in Papua New Guinea. From a theoretical standpoint, the finding is important since for Papua New Guinean subjects, both pictures alone and colours alone are named <u>slower</u> than words alone (this is also found elsewhere). Yet in PNG pictures and colours nevertheless interfere in word naming tasks (this is not found elsewhere). These results cast doubt on the adequacy of the response competition explanation. If pictures and colours are processed or named more slowly than words, how can they interfere with word-naming? It is also possible that our Papua New Guinean subjects process pictures, colours, and words in a manner very

different from that of their overseas counterparts. One way to investigate this possibility is to manipulate variables which have been shown to affect extent of word interference in picture naming and look for similar effects in PNG subjects who demonstrate interference of pictures in a word naming task. One such variable is the semantic relationship between pictures and words in a Stroop type list. Rosinski (1975) showed that latencies for picture naming increased with decreased congruence of picture-word pairs and Ehri (1977) found that nouns were more distracting than either adjectives or functors.

If the symmetrical interference effects shown in Papua New Guinean subjects is robust and meaningful, its basis should be made clearer by an examination of the effects of semantic relationships between picture-word pairs in a Stroop situation.

METHOD

Subjects

Twenty male and twenty female undergraduate students served as subjects. All spoke English (the language of instruction in PNG schools and universities) but none learned English as their first language.

Materials

Five lists, each containing 12 different pictures of common objects, were prepared on separate sheets. One of these sheets (List 1) contained pictures alone (i.e., no words were written inside the pictures). The other four lists contained words whose relationship with the pictures varied as follows:

List 2: Pictures and words semantically related. Each picture-word pair came from the same conceptual

category (e.g., the word BOAT inside the outline drawing of a car; the word FISH inside the drawing of a pig).

List 3: Pictures and words sementically unrelated, i.e., from different conceptual categories (e.g., the word FISH inside the drawing of a hat).

List 4: 100% congruent picture-word pairs (e.g., the word GLASS inside the drawing of a glass).

List 5: 50% congruent picture-word pairs. Six of the 12 word pairs were congruent and six were not.

Five lists containing 12 different words denoting common objects, were also prepared. One of these was used for the word alone condition and contained no pictures. The remaining four lists contained picture-word pairs whose relationships was as described for list 2-5 above.

The target items used for the word lists were the same as those used for the picture lists. Thus, each subject named each item twice — once as a word and once as a picture.

Procedure

Half of the subjects were required to name all of the picture-target lists first and then all of the word target lists. For the other half of the subjects the order was reversed. Within each block, the 5 picture-target lists and 5 word-target lists were presented in random order, with a different random order for each subject.

Prior to the picture-naming block, subjects were given a practice list of 12 items consisting of pictures which were different from those used in the experiment. These were combined with words or presented alone such that

items from each of the 5 types of picture lists were represented. A similar practice list was shown prior to the word-naming block.

Subjects were asked to name either the pictures or words as quickly as possible (depending on the condition) and were asked to ignore the irrelevent aspect of each picture word pair. A hand-held stopwatch was used to time the subject's performance for each of the 12 item lists.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The mean times to name each list of 12 items were calculated for each of the 10 conditions -- 5 word naming conditions and 5 picture naming conditions. The effects of semantic relatedness and congruence of picture-word stimuli can be seen in Table 1 and Table 2 respectively.

Table 1

Means naming times (secs.) for pictures and words presented alone (control conditions) and pictures and words presented with semantically related or unrelated distractors.

Mean Picture Naming Times

Pictures alone	Pictures with semantically unrelated words	Pictures with semantically related words
8.44	11.23	15.83

Mean Word Naming Times

Words alone	Words with semantically unrelated pictures	Words with semantically related pictures
5.15	5.92	5.91

Table 2

Mean naming times for words and pictures accompanied by 0%, 50%, and 100% congruent distractor items. (Note that the naming times for pictures and words with semantically related distractor items are included in this Table under the 0% congruence condition).

Mean Picture Naming Times

Pictures with 100% congruent words	Pictures with 50% congruent words	Pictures with 0% congruent words
7.74	11.30	15.83

Mean Word Naming Times

Words with 100% congruent pictures	Words with 50% congruent pictures	Words with 0% congruent pictures
5.10	6.34	5.91

Three dependent t tests were performed to determine the significance of the differences between the mean picture naming times shown in Table 1. Consistent with results found elsewhere, pictures with semantically unrelated words and pictures with semantically related words took significantly longer to name than did pictures alone. In addition, pictures with semantically related words took significantly longer to name than did pictures with semantically unrelated words.

Also consistent with previous research was the finding that picture naming times increased as congruence between pictures and words decreased as indicated by the results of three dependent 't' tests performed on the means for picture naming times presented in Table 2. For

all six comparisons, t (39) was calculated and each comparison was associated with a p value of less than .01.

These results confirmed that Papua New Guinean subjects experienced interference from words when naming pictures and that the degree of interference was a function of the semantic relationship and level of congruence of the picture-word stimuli. In this respect, these subjects showed a pattern of responding which was similar to that of western subjects.

The more important comparisons were between word naming times in Table 1. Although the difference between mean naming times for words alone ($\bar{x} = 5.15$) and words presented with semantically unrelated pictures ($\bar{x} = 5.92$) was small, it was nevertheless significant beyond the .01 level, as was the difference between the naming time for words alone and that for words in the presence of semantically related pictures. Very low variances contributed to these significant differences which, incidentally, were also significant using a sign test. Not surprisingly the difference between naming times for words presented with semantically unrelated pictures ($\bar{x} = 5.92$) and words with semantically related pictures ($\bar{x} = 5.91$) was not significant.

Word naming times with varying levels of picture congruence showed a similar pattern. Words surrounded by 100% congruent pictures were named at the same speed as words alone ($\bar{x} = 5.10$ secs and $\bar{x} = 5.15$ secs respectively). But the times taken to name words in the presence of 50% congruent pictures ($\bar{x} = 6.34$) and 0% congruent pictures ($\bar{x} = 5.91$) were both significantly longer than the time taken to name words alone. Again, p values were less than .01. As was found in the comparison of word naming times when distractors were either semantically related or unrelated words, no significant difference was found in word naming times for 50% and 0% congruence ($\bar{x} = 6.34$ and $\bar{x} = 5.91$ respectively).

How can these results be interpreted? Firstly, we can say that Papua New Guinean subjects show the expected increase in picture naming times when words are there to interfere. In addition we can say that words which are semantically related to the to-be-named pictures are more interfering than are words which are not semantically related. Likewise, we can say that lists in which words are 50% congruent with the to-be-named pictures produce less interference than do lists in which there is 0% congruence between the pictures and words. In this regard, Papua New Guinean subjects perform as would be expected on the basis of previous results from picture-word Stroop studies.

Secondly, we can say that significant interference from pictures is observed when Papua New Guinean subjects are asked to name the words and ignore the pictures. This symmetry of interference is not consistent with previous findings and is not consistent with the response competition theory.

An alternative explanation of the Stroop effect is based on processing interference or overlap of processing of the two aspects of the stimulus. According to such explanations the conceptual codes of the two aspects of a Stroop stimulus share many common features and time is required to "disambiguate" them and to select a single code for conversion into a (later formed) response. Some researchers have suggested a broad locus for processing interference in the cerebral hemispheres (e.g., Jorgenson, Davis, Opella and Angerstein, 1980; Tsao, Feustel and Soseos, 1979). Hemispheric difference studies have shown that in Western subjects both colours and pictures are processed primarily in the right cerebral hemisphere. When the task required is one of naming the colour or picture, the left hemisphere, largely responsible for language, is also involved. Word processing on the other hand seems to be almost entirely uner the control of the left hemisphere.

Thus, when pictures or colours are to be named, the final processing stage (naming) will occur in the same area of the left hemisphere in which the accompanying word is being processed and interference between these two closely located activities will slow down the naming of the colour or picture. When words are the part of the stimulus to be named, on the other hand, the processing of the accompanying picture or colour, taking place in the right hemisphere, is unlikely to produce interference because of the cerebral distance between the two sites of processing.

This approach to processing interference in terms of proximity of cerebral processing sites, may provide an explanation for the symmetrical interference effects seen in Papua New Guineans naming picture-word and colour-word stimuli. In separate studies at the University of Papua New Guinea it has been found that an unusually high proportion of PNG's are right hemisphere dominant for processing English words (Wuillemin, 1984). In Papua New Guinea subjects therefore it is likely that a picture and word or colour and word presented together will both be processed in the right cerebral hemisphere prior to one or both aspects of the stimulus being named in the left. This explanation is supported by the results of colour-word Stroop experiments conducted on Japanese subjects. When tested in Kana (a syllabic orthographic form of Japanese language) the usual asymmetical effects were observed, such that words interfered in colour naming but not the reverse. However, when tested in Kanji, a pictorial form of the language known to be processed in the right hemisphere, symmetrical interference was observed with interference from words in naming colours <u>and</u> the reverse. (Morikawa, 1981)

Although the symmetry of interference of words when naming pictures and pictures when naming words can be explained by the suggestion that Papua New Guinean subjects show a greater tendency to be right-dominant for English,

the failure to demonstrate the same differential picture-on-word interference as a function of semantic relationship or level of congruence is not readily explained. We have only recently begun to explore these issues and we hope to be able to provide more conclusive data in the near future.

References

Dyer, F.N. The Stroop phenomenon and its use in the study of perceptual, cognitive, and response processes. Memory & Cognitive, 1973, 1, 106-120.

Ehri, L.C. Do words really interfere in naming pictures? Child Development, 1976, 47, 502-504.

Jorgenson, C., Davis, J., Opella, J., and Angerstein, G. Hemispheric asymmetry in the processing of Stroop stimuli: An examination of gender, hand-preference, and language differences. International Journal of Neuroscience, 1980, 11, 165-169.

Morikawa, Y. Stroop phenomena in the Japanese language: The case of ideographic characters (Kanji) and syllabic characters (Kana). Perceptual and Motor Skills, 1981, 53, 67-77.

Rosinski, R.R. Picture-word interference is semantically based. Child Development, 1977, 48, 643-677.

Smith, M.C., & Magee, L.E. Tracing the time course of picture-word processing. Journal of Experimental Psychology: General, 1980, 109, 373-392.

Stroop, J.R. Studies of interference in seriel verbal reactions. Journal of Experimental Psychology, 1935, 18, 643-662.

Tsao, Y., Feustel, T., and Soseos, C. Stroop interference in the left and right visual fields. Brain and Language, 1979, 8, 367-371.

Wuillemin, D.B. Age of acquisition: A determinant of hemispheric dominance for language processing in Papua New Guineans. Unpublished manuscript, University of Papua New Guinea, 1984.

READING AS INTERPRETATION: THE JEFFERSON SCANDAL

GORDON TAYLOR

H.E.A.R.U.

Monash University

Gordon Taylor, B.A. (Sydney), M. Litt.(Edinburgh), is a Senior Lecturer in the Higher Educational Research Unit of Monash University, with responsibility for use of English. He began his career as a schoolmaster in Sydney, and later taught English and Linguistics in Kenya, Rhodesia and Ethiopia.

Reading as Interpretation: the Jefferson Scandal

Gordon Taylor

> ... an inference of intention is a way of accounting for or explaining the generation of an utterance; it can never be a report.
>
> \- Morse Peckham

'How can I put into my own words something some scholar has already expressed so well?' 'How can I be expected to decide when the experts disagree?' These are two questions with which those who teach university students are familiar. They are questions to which it is not easy to provide straightforward and convincing answers. The first will commonly be met by a reference to plagiarism and the injunction to learn to summarize. The answer to the second is usually expressed in the rather general instruction to weigh the evidence critically and to give a considered opinion. Both these kinds of response rather evade the questions the student asks, since neither really addresses the How. Moreover, neither recognizes that the two questions are in fact closely interconnected, or that it might be better to tackle the second, more taxing, one first, so that putting others' ideas into one's own words then becomes a relatively minor problem.

Our students' questions look at first blush to be questions about writing. In a sense they are. But they must be faced squarely when the student confronts a book with a note pad at his or her side. Failure to solve these problems at this point can only partly be redeemed later on as the essay is being written. Notes are (or can be) preliminary sketches for some part of the finished work, just as the artist's charcoal sketches are the first attempts to make some sense of the subject beyond the easel. Reading is not - despite what manuals on the subject so often suggest - in the first instance a matter of efficiency, flexibility, speed or even of comprehending ideas and information. It is not even, again in the first instance, about skimming or scanning to find and identify the main ideas. Note-taking is not about "reinforcing" understanding.[1] All these things

may be relevant to various stages and kinds of reading. But first, coming to terms with a book and its author is a task in interpretation. Putting a text into our own words is not a matter of "reporting" or "reproduction". The moment we begin to desert the original text, to stop quoting, our paraphrase is an interpretation of the author's meaning. And as soon as we begin to interpret, we are making decisions, exercising judgement.

Hence judgement is at the root of reading and understanding. It is not the final stage to be tackled when all the 'skills' of reading have been played out and the reading manuals, their part of the job completed, are closed. 'How can I decide...?' contains the question 'How can I use my own words...?' since, as F.R. Leavis has pointed out, "a judgement is personal or it is nothing; you cannot take over someone else's".[2]

How have we come to get the priorities reversed? The answer, I believe, lies in the assumptions much modern positivism and behaviourism have made about epistemic certainty, about the nature of the facts and evidence to be "weighed', and about the nature of language. We were taught (and by and large we continue ourselves to teach) that the language of academic discourse should be either a transparent window on the reality it attempts to refer to, describe and explain; or, similarly, that at its best it is a perfectly fashioned mirror held up to reflect nature and society. Language that is not like this is not the language of enquiry. Bertrand Russell's view that "Words have two functions: on the one hand to state facts, and on the other to evoke emotions"[3] neatly divides the 'universe of discourse' into statements that can be verified and fictions (like poetry, religion and metaphysics) that cannot. Stating facts has come to be associated with the idea of certainty: all an 'average' reader needs to do is to comprehend and learn these thoroughly verified facts. Russell also asserts that language (rather than words) may serve to "alter the state of the hearer",[4] the function that allows for the development of argument and discussion. But this, for most people, means no more than combining statements of fact in a logical and persuasive manner. The doctrine that objective language "states facts" had been questioned earlier, but was not widely doubted until the 1950s (by Wittgenstein, Austin and others). It is still assumed by many.

What might students thus indoctrinated make of the question 'Was Thomas Jefferson the father of his slave Sally Hemings's illegitimate children?' when they discover that we shall probably never certainly know? It isn't that we are short of hard facts, which can be quite clearly discerned through even a fairly

cracked and dirty linguistic window. It is that, however weighed, the evidence does not support a clear answer. Nor can the students take refuge in this conclusion, waiting upon further 'research' to produce the necessary facts. Saving an archival miracle, such evidence will not now come to light. Yet the question is a good historical problem, and it is one which has much exercised the "experts", especially since the publication in 1974 of Fawn M. Brodie's Thomas Jefferson: an Intimate History.

Brodie did establish a number of new facts. But her book is chiefly remarkable, in the first place, as an attempt at forging a more subtle link between language and fact than common positivism allows. In the second place, it is remarkable as a rather good example of how this connection should not be established.

Thomas Jefferson: an Intimate History is an exercise in 'psychohistory', in which the language of Jefferson and others in this drama becomes a major source of evidence. So far so good. The problems raised by language in such a case are extreme: the student must learn to interpret Brodie's and other historians' interpretations of the primary sources, which are themselves linguistic artefacts. Moreover, the student is faced with the rather difficult conceptual problem that, since Brodie's 'psychohistory' draws upon certain techniques of psychoanalysis, many of the 'linguistic facts' she uses in evidence are ultimately justified (if not created) by the psychoanalytical theory itself. The problem of interpretation faced by the student - as by the more experienced reader - is how to break out of the hermeneutic circle: one needs to understand something of the general theory in order to interpret and judge the detailed analyses of linguistic evidence; and one needs to understand the details in order to judge the general theory or approach. What seems clear from these considerations (and they apply equally to liberal, 'Whiggish' and positivist approaches to history) is that one cannot interpret successfully without some training in how writers approach the nexus between language and fact.

One further and related difficulty in the analysis of primary evidence in historical problems such as the one we face is that much of it is testimony rather than fact. Hence, as historians well know, the reader must make a provisional judgement on the motives and intentions of the testifier before any profitable use can be made of their words. This, together with the theory-dependence of certain kinds of facts and linguistic evidence, calls for background knowledge and reading skills of a high order. If language can be thought of at

all as a mirror, it is as a hall of distorting mirrors more reminiscent of those in Coney Island than a camera. One scholar, Merrill Peterson, writes in a now familiar metaphor that Jefferson is "a sensitive reflector through several generations of America's troubled search for the image of itself".[5] The mirror is as apt to reveal the problems and preconceptions of those who hold it up as it is to reflect the facts of what is called the "Miscegenation Legend", the "Dusky Sally Story" (she was one-quarter black) and the "Jefferson Scandal".

Jefferson's wife Martha died in 1782, having made him promise never to marry again. In 1802, when Jefferson was in his first term as president, James Callender, a disgruntled former supporter of the President, published in the Richmond Recorder a story "well known" around Jefferson's home town Charlottesville, Virginia. Callender alleged that Sally Hemings's children were Jefferson's. The allegation was widely denounced as "filth" easily explained by Callender's own motives. Federalist and Republican newspapers, as well as the nation at large, debated the story for some years. It was dropped after a time, but revived again by the anti-slavery movement up to and during the Civil War. Jefferson, who died in 1826, never referred openly to the story, whereas he did admit to having as a bachelor "offered love" to the wife of one of his white neighbours.

Jefferson's family always denied the truth of the story. Indeed, not long before she died, his elder daughter sought to prove to her own children that one of Sally's children could not have been fathered by Jefferson. His official duties, she tried to show, had kept him away from home, where Sally lived, for fourteen months prior to the birth. This 'fact' has been exposed by Douglass Adair and Fawn Brodie, the latter of whom established beyond doubt that Jefferson was at his plantation, Monticello, nine months before the births of all Sally's children recorded in the Monticello 'Farm Book'[6]. On the other hand, one of Sally's sons, Madison Hemings, whose memoir constitutes one of the main primary sources supporting the allegation, claimed that his mother was pregnant by Jefferson when in 1789 they returned to Monticello from Paris, where Jefferson had been minister to France. There is no evidence in the Farm Book that Sally did have a child at this time. Douglass Adair concludes that there was no such child.[7]

These, of course, are not the only significant facts in the case, but they do illustrate, first, that primary documents must be treated with some suspicion and interpreted carefully - rather than being read for their 'main points'. This

is a historian's truism. Secondly, they show that a secondary source, such as Brodie, can be quite inconsistent in its treatment of the same primary document, the Farm Book. When all the facts and main points are gathered in, we do not have even the beginnings of an answer to the question whether Jefferson fathered Sally's children. All we have is a list "on the one hand" and a list "on the other". The answer lies not in 'information reproduced in our own words' seen clearly through the transparent language of the sources, but in our interpretation of this less than transparent language itself.

If reading and note-taking cannot be simply a report of or reproduction of the content, but rather a matter of interpretation, we must ask in what interpretation consists. Clearly, any text - not just the difficult ones - will pose certain problems of understanding. Students recognize this, and many are therefore reluctant to depart too far from the author's text for fear of exposing their lack of understanding - that they haven't got it right. Getting it absolutely right is an illusory aim, however - there will always, in principle, be an indeterminacy in the meaning of a text. Understanding, as E.D. Hirsch argues, is "a process of validation"[8], that is to say a process by which we construct a hypothesis about the meaning of a text and put it to the test of observation and argument. The result is not a report of the true meaning of the text, but a conclusion about its "best meaning"[9]. In similar vein Morse Peckham argues that the very fact that we ask what an utterance means is sufficient evidence that there is uncertainty in reading "and that a decision must be made".[10] The language of our books and sources, in other words, needs to be tackled in the same frame of mind that the scholar or student will bring to any evidence or facts that can more or less clearly be separated from it. The language of the texts is itself evidence to be weighed, not merely a window on the factual evidence.

Evidence of what? It can't, of course, be direct evidence of or for the facts of what did or did not happen. The answer lies in rejecting those notions that to say or write something is always to state a fact or opinion and that the meaning of a statement can always be assessed in terms of its truth value. Since Wittgenstein's Philosophical Investigations it has become possible to see more clearly that meaning in many kinds of statement is determined by the use of terms in the language rather than by more formal considerations. The implication of 'use' is that there must be a user. Hence, we can conclude with J.L. Austin that "... the issuing of an utterance is the performing of an action - it is not normally thought of as just saying something".[11] And that, if in

writing an author is performing something, then he or she must have some intention to mean. It will be seen that the emphasis in Wittgenstein and Austin is shifting away from the problems of the relationship between language and its subject-matter towards a view of language as a realization of an author's intention. In showing that speech-act theory (as Austin's approach is called) gives prominence to intention and therefore to the importance of mind, E.D. Hirsch concludes that interpretation must consist in part, at least, of "a guess about [the writer's] intention"[12] (my emphasis). This guess is then subjected to examination by analysing the text. The text, therefore, is evidence of the author's intention.

That the reader should not attempt to take the author's intention into account (the Intentional Fallacy) has been one of the fundamental tenets of Anglo-American literary criticism since the 1940s. Many, if not most, university teachers of English still hold to the doctrine, and it can probably be assumed that secondary school English teachers - those who teach our students to read - have thoroughly absorbed the doctrine too. But the New Critics never questioned the applicability of using intentions in the criticism of "non-literary" language, much of the force of their argument resting on the supposed special nature of literary works of art.[13] The effect of ignoring this important qualification, coupled with the widespread failure of university English departments to show any interest in non-fictional prose written later than the eighteenth century, has been that there is little systematic study of how to apply the considerable work on speech acts to describing intentions in academic prose. Those books on reading which do talk about the author's "purpose", do so in a rather imprecise and sometimes muddled way.[14] Moreover, the new kind of specialist in reading with a background in linguistics or cognitive psychology has not yet attempted to apply speech-act theory or the theory of interpretation to the reading problems of university and college students in a way that would be useful either to them or to their teachers.[15]

Yet to be able to analyse what an author is doing with and in his or her text is precisely what our student of Jefferson needs if the question I have set is to be answered. What follows can in the space of a short paper neither be an exhaustive account of what authors can do with their texts (were that possible) nor what the primary and secondary sources reveal about Jefferson's sexual life. Rather, I shall be schematic on both matters, merely suggesting how the one needs to be approached in order to make possible an answer to the other.

It might be helpful to begin by illustrating the effect of textual evidence on the kind of answer we might eventually arrive at. Dumas Malone, Jefferson's definitive biographer, draws this conclusion:

> ... it is virtually inconceivable that this fastidious gentleman whose devotion to his dead wife's memory and to the happiness of his daughters and grandchildren bordered on the excessive could have carried on through a period of years a vulgar liaison which his own family could not have failed to detect.[16]

Malone's facts, so far as they can be disentangled from the language, nobody disputes. Jefferson's wife, it seems, was a difficult woman, but his devotion to her is established. The affection between Jefferson and his daughters a reading of the letters makes clear. His grandson Thomas Jefferson Randolph became the trusted manager of Monticello. But whether the family detected a putative liaison with Sally is somewhat beside the point, since all America knew as early as 1802. What is important in reading this sentence is to pay attention to the diction as evidence of Malone's intention. "Fastidious gentleman", "devotion to his dead wife's memory" and "vulgar liaison" set up their own pattern of meaning which no doubt Malone intended as a reinforcement of his defence of Jefferson's 'official' reputation. It is not even so much a (somewhat miscalculated) appeal to the reader's emotion that makes the language work against this defence. It is rather the assumption that his reader will share his judgement that a love affair between Thomas and Sally is indeed a "vulgar liaison", and moreover, that the "fastidious gentleman" would have shared it too. On these matters the student reading Malone will have to make his or her own judgement.

Quentin Skinner has drawn a distinction between motives and intentions that corresponds fairly closely to the kind of difference I have just illustrated[17]. By and large we can think of motive as a more or less conscious or conventional intention. In the context of academic prose the conventional motives can probably be labelled relatively easily. Intentions are much more complex, but can still be systematised to some extent.

The general motives which govern most academic writing, and which students must learn to recognize, are these:

- ACCEDING TO, DEFENDING or CONFIRMING a particular point of view;
- PROPOSING a new point of view;
- CONCEDING that an existing point of view has certain merits <u>but</u> that it needs to be QUALIFIED in certain important respects;

- REFORMULATING an existing point of view or statement of it, such that the new version makes a better explanation;
- DISMISSING another person's work on account of its inadequacy, irrelevance, incoherence or by recourse to other appropriate criteria;
- REJECTING, REBUTTING or REFUTING another's argument on various reasoned grounds;
- RECONCILING two positions which may seem at variance by appeal to some 'higher' or 'deeper' principle;
- RETRACTING or RECANTING a previous position of one's own in the face of new arguments or evidence.

These motives position the writer's point of view with respect to what else has been written on the subject. Dumas Malone's sentence, quoted above, is motivated by the desire to DEFEND the point of view that Callender's charge is baseless. (Furthermore - and this is a separable element - Malone is defending a particular view of Jefferson's reputation.) Virginius Dabney's book The Jefferson Scandals: a Rebuttal wears its motive on its dust jacket[18]. In the process of rebutting the legend he does, however, have to CONCEDE certain points - for example that Brodie has demonstrated Jefferson's presence at Monticello at the time Sally's children were conceived. We see, therefore, that these motives can interact in various ways at different levels of the argument.

Intentions, though less consciously under the control of the writer, may resemble motives in their conventional quality, at least up to a point. The elusiveness of intentions stems primarily from the complexity of their interactions with motives and from their interactions among themselves. Of intentions it seems useful to discern three main kinds (the labels I give them here are only suggestive and provisional): analytical intentions, structural or rhetorical intentions, and affective intentions.

By 'analytical intentions' I mean those modes of academic discourse which may be employed to analyse or discuss the subject matter. I have not the space to justify or to expand on the list of intentions given below. An examination of the theoretical literature and the practice of scholars in a variety of disciplines, however, suggests that they are the underlying ones.

- EXHORTING or RECOMMENDING us to act, think, behave and so on in a certain way. These are a special kind of JUDGEMENT or EVALUATION which contain a modal like 'ought' or 'should' in their formulation and which may implicitly begin with a phrase like 'I

suggest', 'I recommend'. The converse of an exhortation would be a WARNING.

- THEORISING about and EXPLAINING how or why things are as they are.
- DEFINING terms and concepts by NAMING, STIPULATING, REFERRING to objects, CLASSIFYING individuals into classes and by DISTINGUISHING between and COMPARING similar classes by means of ASCRIBING characteristics to them.
- DESCRIBING the characteristic features of the object being enquired into.
- OBSERVING and IDENTIFYING the objects to be analysed.
- EVALUATING the adequacy of our observations, descriptions, definitions, explanations, theories and exhortations in the light of criteria appropriate to each.

The dominant analytical mood of the Malone sentence quoted above is some kind of exhortation. Fawn Brodie is rather more subtle. In April 1804 one of Jefferson's two surviving children, Maria, took ill and died at the age of twenty-five. Jefferson hastened home for Maria's illness. In describing these events Brodie pauses to offer an explanation of Jefferson's meaning when he wrote to his friend John Page that "I ... have lost even the half of all I had". Brodie writes:

> Social protocol had always demanded public rejection in all cases of miscegenation with blacks. Many white men went further, and denied to themselves the reality of their paternity of the mulatto children by an unexpressed syllogism that was also a fantasy - often an unconscious one. "It is lust that results in children born out of wedlock. It is the black woman who lusts, and who has seduced me against my will. Therefore the children are hers, not mine." Jefferson very likely did not take refuge in the common defense against guilt. In the same letter to John Page in which he wrote of losing "half of all I had," he also said, "But whatever is to be our destiny, wisdom, as well as duty, dictates that we should acquiesce in the will of Him whose it is to give and take away, and be contented in the enjoyment of those who are still permitted to be with us." And there is important evidence that in this great crisis of bereavement he turned for solace to "those still with us," to the young black mother, the source of continuing life.
>
> Sometime during Jefferson's visit home for Maria's illness - April 4 to May 11, 1804 - Sally Hemings conceived another child. A son, whom she named Madison, was born on January 19, 1805 ...[19]

My first attempt to construe this passage was unsuccessful. There seemed no connection between the first and second halves of the long paragraph until

I realized that Jefferson - according to Brodie - was able to look on the bright side of his daughter's death by thinking not only of Martha, his older daughter (the other half) but of Sally Hemings too. Brodie EXPLAINS Jefferson's resignation to Maria's death by IDENTIFYING Sally among "those ... still permitted to be with us". Jefferson's intention might well have been to REFER to Sally in the comment he made. To substantiate this interpretation would require the reader to examine many such similar cases in Jefferson's writings, bearing in mind the (textual) fact that Sally's name occurs nowhere in his correspondence.[20]

Turning now to what I have called the structural or rhetorical intentions of the author, we focus our attention on those more formal relations between the elements of a text that account for its coherence. Brodie provides us with examples of two characteristic stratagems in empirical writing. In the passage quoted above she first provides a GENERALISATION or GENERAL INTERPRETATION and then goes on to adduce PARTICULARS which constitute the evidence. That Madison Hemings was born nine months after Maria's death is the "important evidence" in favour of the idea that Jefferson turned to Sally in "this great crisis of bereavement". The reader looking for coherence in Brodie's argument can hardly escape the considerable lacuna between general and particular here, since there is nothing but coincidence of circumstance to connect the two. No doubt the phrase "source of continuing life" is intended to supply the link, but the reader's acceptance of this is going to depend on whether Brodie has established that Jefferson looked on Sally in this light.

The converse rhetorical procedure is to take certain particulars and to build from them a generalisation. This Brodie does when she notes that Jefferson, in using the word 'mulatto' eight times in twenty-five pages of his journal to describe the soil of eastern France, Germany and Holland, must have been thinking of Sally Hemings, left behind in Paris.[21] In his review of Brodie's book, Garry Wills has taken this interpretation apart very well.[22] It is instructive to see how, the linguistic sophistication of his argument entirely eclipsing the simple equation between word occurrence and state of mind on which Brodie builds her case. First Wills points to the entry in the Oxford English Dictionary that shows 'mulatto' to have been an eighteenth century American term for describing yellowish-brown soil. Jefferson's usage was not therefore idiosyncratic. Then he examines Jefferson's use of soil-colour vocabulary, showing that 'mulatto' takes its place in a semantic field of eight

terms ranging from black to gray and white. Wills concludes that the repetition of 'mulatto' is no more than a reflection of the soil-colours Jefferson actually saw on his journey. Generalisations, the student must be taught, are not built simply on the noticing of a few particulars, whether those particulars are ones of language or of fact.

There are other common rhetorical intentions the reader needs to identify and to examine for their soundness. These I shall not illustrate. Facts, reasons, causes, effects, functions and so on can be ITEMISED in a list, the sequencing in which the student must be able to follow. Hence it becomes important to realize when an author is REPHRASING, EXPANDING, DIGRESSING and SUMMARISING, and when an examination of some situation or event is being used merely to EXEMPLIFY or ILLUSTRATE rather than to construct an empirical argument. Also, of course, INFERENTIAL arguments (if ... then) must be followed and analysed.

Finally, we come to affective intention. By this I mean something like what literary critics call the tone of an utterance. Here we are concerned in part with the author's attitude to the reader. Clearly the force of argument and factual evidence and the 'rhetorical devices' of prose are relevant to this intention. But beyond these matters are the much more elusive qualities of syntax, rhythm and diction, some hints of which we caught in the sentence quoted from Malone. I do not propose to try listing these things, since any list would amount to a rather useless catalogue of intellectual sensibilities. Instead, I shall examine briefly an example from a secondary source and then one from a primary source.

Virginius Dabney meets in part the charge that Sally travelled home pregnant from Paris thus:

> Furthermore, in order for us to credit the story of Sally's having a baby soon after her arrival from France, we must believe that Jefferson, a conspicuously loving father by all the credible evidence, seduced a sixteen-year-old slave girl and traveled with her on shipboard, in an advanced state of pregnancy, in the intimate company of his two young daughters. Anyone familiar with his relationship with his children, testified to by scores of affectionate letters and every proof of adoration and concern, will find such a story altogether unbelievable.[23]

There are clear echoes in this vigorous prose of Dumas Malone's style of argument. Its vigour, nevertheless contains an element of anxiety. Does not Dabney protest rather too much? Does he not rather try to preempt the reader's more sober reflection on the attitudes and habits of an eighteenth

century diplomat, gentleman and father. It is a useful exercise to reread the passage on the assumption that Sally was pregnant (as servant girls at the time commonly were), not by Jefferson but by some Parisian rake. How much of the argument remains? One need not even be disposed to accept that Sally was pregnant in order to dismiss it. Dabney enters into a conspiracy with his reader ("Anyone familiar with his relationship with his children ..." - having described it elsewhere in the book), flattering the latter's knowledge of this point while circumventing any knowledge of Jefferson's attitudes to his slaves' pregnancies. (There is, so far as I am aware, no evidence that he frowned on the many illegitimate births at Monticello.) Dabney begins to sound rather shrill in the face of the most gentle questioning.

Dabney's tone here is remarkable in its similarity not only to Dumas Malone's but to that adopted by Jefferson's grand-daughter Ellen Randolph Coolidge, writing to her husband in 1858. The quintessentially nineteenth-century fervour of this prose is unmistakable:

> But again I would put it to any fair mind to decide if a man so admirable in his domestic character as Mr. Jefferson, so devoted to his daughters and their children, so fond of their society, so tender, considerate, refined in his intercourse with them, so watchful over them in all respects, would be likely to rear a race of half-breeds under their eyes and carry on his low amours in the circle of his family.[24]

Ellen Coolidge's tone can be accommodated by the reader of the 1980s: she was after all a direct descendent of Jefferson and she has absorbed that moral tone of her times which was beginning to blurr the earlier distinction between sensibility and sentimentality. We can even overlook her reference to "a race of half-breeds" as perhaps excusable exaggeration when, as she must have realized, Sally Hemings's children were octoroon (one-eighth black) and therefore by Jefferson's own definition legally white.[25] These things the modern reader makes allowances for in Ellen Coolidge. But in Dumas Malone and Virginius Dabney? True, Malone has replaced Coolidge's "low amours" with "vulgar liaison"; and both have wisely updated their diction to eliminate "intercourse". To raise a knowing smirk in the reader would be quite inimical to their intention.

It will be appreciated that the ability even to recognize an author's motives and the three kinds of intention I have set out above cannot be presupposed in the student who has successfully completed a secondary school history course and supplemented his or her work in history with a standard

course in reading or study skills. Much less can it be assumed that the student will be able to construct from the sources an answer to our question which responds sensitively to the complexities of the interconnections between motives and intentions in prose. These are intellectual skills which need to be taught, and which can best be taught in the context of an empirical problem such as that raised in this essay. It is, of course, necessary to generalise to some extent beyond the particular problems of interpretation posed by the sources in the Dusky Sally Story, American history or history as a discipline. This I have tried to do by setting out a provisional classification of motive and intention, within which the task of sorting out an answer to the question of Jefferson's paternity of Sally Hemings's children can be tackled. In this case, as I have tried to show, affective intention (or tone) becomes very important as a source of interpretative evidence. In other historical questions and in other disciplines it might be less so.

It seems to me that the inadequacies I have pointed to in the writings of Brodie, Malone and Dabney stem from a common cause - no matter that Brodie is a 'modern' psychohistorian and Malone and Dabney empiricists in the traditional mould, and no matter that Brodie on the one hand and Malone and Dabney on the other are violently opposed on the answer to the question. What both sides have in common is a naivete about the linguistic implications of the primary sources they use. For example, we saw Brodie failing to examine the history and structural semantics of the word 'mulatto'. Her interpretation of Jefferson's intention in using the word is almost certainly inadequate. Jefferson's reference was to the soil and not equivocally to Sally as well. Malone's and Dabney's error is of a commoner but subtler kind. In coupling a close examination of motives (such as the unhappy Callender's) with the intentions endemic in the prose of nineteenth century defenders of Jefferson's moral reputation, they have reduced their argument to an incoherent blend of stringent empirical enquiry and purely speculative moralising. Put another way, Brodie sees her subject through the roseate glasses of modern romanticism, Malone and Dabney through those of nineteenth century romanticism. Consequently, their writing on this question displays at times a remarkable similarity, the contrast in their views notwithstanding.

It is only when the reader appreciates this that he or she will be led to open up other lines of questioning and enquiry. More emphasis might be placed, for example, on the generally acknowledged interpretation that Jefferson was

pre-eminently a man of the eighteenth century and whose own use of language (and conduct of his life) was governed by the motives and intentions of an Enlightenment intellectual, politician, and, in American terms, aristocrat. Less emphasis might be placed on Ellen Coolidge's letter and on the testimony of her brother Thomas Randolph. Randolph's account contains statements inconsistent with his sister's, statements inconsistent with each other and at least one palpable lie. In certain places its tone is quite disingenuous.[26]

More emphasis might be placed on the testimony of Madison Hemings, first published in the Pike County Republican, an Ohio abolitionist newspaper, in 1873.[27] Malone and Hochman[28] have enquired closely into the circumstances of Madison's memoir, emphasizing the propagandist motives of the paper's editor, S.F. Wetmore. But, as they themselves concede, this does not impugn the sincerity of Madison's own motives and intentions. One major problem of interpretation that must be faced in dealing with this testimony is to decide how much of it is Wetmore and how much Madison Hemings. Dabney seems to think that little weight can be given to it because the "proficient use of English" demonstrates that the writing is Wetmore's.[29] Wetmore says in his introduction that "we have given the old man's [Hemings's] story as he has given it to us", a clear statement that he has relayed it. Would not the tone of the narrative be entirely false if Wetmore had sought to use or imitate whatever dialect Hemings spoke? Look, too, at the censorious tone Wetmore adopts to Jefferson in his introduction:

> While he never experienced many of the cruelties of slavery, we must say that the system was cruel, at best. To keep such a man as Madison Hemings in the condition of a slave, however well treated in other respects was a sin of very deep dye .... If he had been educated and given a chance in the world he would have shone out as a star of the first magnitude. But he was kept under, by his own father, an ex-President of the United States, and a man who penned the immortal Declaration of Independence which fully acknowledges the rights and equality of the human race!

Now compare this with the dispassionate voice of the testimony itself:

> [Jefferson] was uniformly kind to all about him. He was not in the habit of showing partiality or fatherly affection to us children. We were the only children of his by a slave woman. He was affectionate toward his white grandchildren ...

This is not the abolitionist rhetoric of Wetmore's introduction.

It is by examining linguistic nuances of this kind in the context of what else is known about Jefferson that we might discover whether he fathered Sally's

children. Hemings's even temper is indicative of the ordered conventions of life on an eighteenth-century gentleman's plantation. He also implicitly confirms the judgement of Garry Wills, T. Harry Williams and other historians that Jefferson led a very ordered and compartmentalised life into which women were fitted at his convenience.[30] We cannot accept, as Brodie would have us do, that Jefferson was in love with Sally Hemings, nor the high Victorian view of Ellen Coolidge, Malone and Dabney that such a liaison is inconceivable. Rather, we need to examine Wills's suggestion that Sally was a convenient concubine who would not compromise the ordered life of the massa of Monticello. That is an unromantic view. It is truer to the eighteenth century. To establish it would demand the linguistic analysis of many more texts, an analysis of the kind I have sought to demonstrate. Students who are taught to interpret textual evidence in this way should have little cause to ask the questions with which this paper began.

Higher Education Advisory and Research Unit
Monash University

Notes and References

1. It should hardly be necessary to document this kind of language. It is the common parlance of reading and study skills texts.

2. F.R. Leavis, 'Two Cultures? The Significance of Lord Snow', Nor Shall My Sword (London: Chatto & Windus, 1972), p. 62.

3. Bertrand Russell, 'A Plea for Clear Thinking', Portraits from Memory and Other Essays (London: Allen & Unwin, 1956), p. 180.

4. Russell, An Enquiry into Meaning and Truth, 1940, (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1962), p. 194.

5. Merrill D. Peterson, The Jefferson Image in the American Mind (New York: Oxford University Press, 1960), p. vi.

6. Fawn M. Brodie, Thomas Jefferson: an Intimate History (New York: W.W. Norton, 1974), pp. 296, 493.

7. Douglass Adair, Fame and the Founding Fathers (New York: W.W. Norton, 1974), chapter 8.

8. E.D. Hirsch, The Aims of Interpretation (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1976), p. 33.

9. Hirsch, p. 78.

10. Morse Peckham, 'The Intentional? Fallacy?', in David Newton-De Molina (ed.), On Literary Intention (Edinburgh: the University Press, 1976), p. 151.

11. J.L. Austin, How To Do Things With Words (Oxford: the Clarendon Press, 1962), pp. 6-7.

12. Hirsch, p. 71.

13. In the essay that formulated the doctrine the authors wrote: "In this respect poetry differs from practical messages, which are successful if and only if we correctly infer the intention". W.K. Wimsatt and M.C. Beardsley, 'The Intentional Fallacy'. Sewanee Review, LIV, (1946), pp. 468-488. Reprinted in Newton-de Molina. The sentence above appears on p. 2.

14. See, for example, Mortimer J. Adler & Charles Van Doren, How to Read a Book (New York: Simon and Schuster, Revised edition 1972), pp. 92-94. This "classic guide to intelligent reading" has been informing attitudes since 1940. Its section on 'Discovering the Author's Intentions' warns the reader against "the fallacy of thinking you can discover what was in an author's mind from the book he has written", and never quite recovers its poise sufficiently to say how or in what terms we can work out what an author is trying to do. We must not, it tells us, "psychoanalyze Shakespeare from the evidence of Hamlet". That is an injunction against some Freudian readings of texts, not against discovering an author's intentions.

15. R.J. Spiro, B.C. Bruce & W.F. Brewer (eds.), Theoretical Issues in Reading Comprehension (Hillsdale, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1980) is a very large and rather wordy volume reporting heavily funded research at the University of Illinois. In it two papers (Morgan & Green; Bruce) take up some of the issues of intention and speech acts, and one (Brewer) takes up questions of literary theory and the rhetoric of texts in a psychological context. Morgan and Green hardly get beyond texts like 'Some linguists can't read', though their paper has other virtues. Bruce makes the useful general point (p. 380) that understanding an author's intentions marks the difference between minimal comprehension and "deep understanding" of a text, but is unable to suggest how the reader can achieve this depth of understanding. Brewer's section on exposition (p. 232-233) tells us little that the average freshman doesn't already know.

16. Dumas Malone, Jefferson the President: First Term 1801-1805 (Boston: Little Brown, 1970), p. 214. This is volume 4 in Malone's six volume biography of Jefferson, Jefferson and his Time.

17. Quentin Skinner, 'Motives, Intentions and Interpretation', in Newton-De Molina (ed.), pp. 210-221.

18. Virginius Dabney, The Jefferson Scandals: A Rebuttal (New York: Dodd, Mead, 1981).

19. Brodie, pp. 380-381.

20. Dabney, p. 59.

21. Brodie, pp. 229-230.

22. Garry Wills, 'Uncle Thomas's Cabin', New York Review of Books, April 18, 1974.

23. Dabney, p. 48.

24. Ellen Randoph Coolidge to Joseph Coolidge Jnr., October 24, 1858. Full text first published in The New York Times, May 18, 1974.

25. Jefferson's 'formula' is reprinted in Brodie, pp. 433-434.

26. Reprinted in Brodie, pp. 494-497.

27. Reprinted in Brodie, pp. 471-476. Brodie does not, however, reprint the Pike County Republican editor's introduction to Hemings's memoir. This will be found in Malone and Hochman (note 27 below).

28. Dumas Malone & Steven H. Hochman, 'A Note on Evidence: The Personal History of Madison Hemings', Journal of Southern History, vol. XLI, no. 4 (1975), pp. 522-528.

29. Dabney, p. 46.

30. T. Harry Williams, 'On the Couch at Monticello', Reviews in American History, vol. 2, no. 4 (1974), p. 523.

I wish to thank Tony Wood of the Monash University History Department for the loan of Dabney's book, not held in an Australian library, and for bibliographical advice. He, Guy Powles and Jim Mackenzie of Monash and Ros Meyer of Deakin University made many helpful comments on drafts of this paper.

AGE OF ACQUISITION: A DETERMINANT OF HEMISPHERIC DOMINANCE FOR LANGUAGE PROCESSING IN PAPUA NEW GUINEANS

DIANNE WUILLEMIN

PSYCHOLOGY DEPARTMENT

UNIVERSITY OF PAPUA NEW GUINEA

Age of acquisition: A determinant of hemispheric dominance for language processing in Papua New Guineans

Dianne Wuillemin
Psychology Department
University of Papua New Guinea

Simple English words were tachistoscopically presented to either the left or right visual field of 62 Papua New Guinean University students. All subjects were right-handed, proficient in English, and multilingual. Their mean response times to read out the words presented to the left and the right visual fields were calculated and the percentage of subjects who were thus classified as left or right dominant for English was determined. When percentage of subjects who were left dominant for English was plotted as a function of age of acquisition of that language a linear relationship was obtained, such that 100% of subjects who learned English prior to 5 years of age showed left hemisphere dominance and only 38% of subjects who acquired English at age 12 appeared to be left dominant. Neither number of languages learned prior to English nor number of years between testing and the time at which English had been acquired showed any relationship to hemispheric dominance.

A comparison of these results with those obtained using Western bilingual subjects, suggests that early exposure to a <u>written</u> language may predispose the left hemisphere to accept later learned languages. Many Papua New Guineans are not exposed to a written form of language until they learn English and if this exposure does not occur early enough it is possible that the brain treats these words as visuo-spatial stimuli which are more appropriately dealt with by the right hemisphere.

In Papua New Guinea, as in many Western countries in recent years, educators have been concerned about the standard of English used by school and university students. The problems of learning English are greatly exaccerbated in Papua New Guinea by limited schooling facilities. Only 70% of school-aged children are able to enter first

grade. Children in remote villages simply cannot make the journey to school each day because of the distances involved and the mountainous or swampy terrain which makes modern transport impossible. Boarding facilities are limited and families are reluctant to be parted from their young children for long periods. Of those who enter school, usually at age 7 or later, less than 30% will reach high school.

In primary schools the teaching language is sometimes Tok Pisin or a vernacular (Tok Ples) in the early years, although nearly all students are exposed to English by the time they leave primary school. Approximately 5% of the students we have encountered in first year at university were not exposed to any English until they were 12 years old. At high school level, teaching is almost entirely conducted in English, although the standard of English used by teachers is sometimes questionable.

The focus of this paper is not on the broader problem of educational opportunity, as briefly outlined above, but on the performance of the advantaged 2% who have access to university education. The poor standard of English, the only teaching language at university level, is well recognized, as indicated by the presence of a compulsory first-year course 'Foundation English' offered at the University of Papua New Guinea.

The members of the Psychology Department at the University have tried to define the problem of 'poor English' more specifically by examining study skills, cognitive functions, perceptual skills, reading ability and neuropsychological aspects of language processing. It is this last aspect that will be addressed primarily in this paper.

The divided visual field study to be reported here involves one of several commonly used techniques for inferring which cerebral hemisphere takes the major role in processing various types of visual material. The results of such studies have been validated by comparison with clinical findings. The logical basis for divided visual field studies is straightforward. The two cerebral hemispheres are divided laterally into left and right, connected by the corpus callosum and other small commisures. Stimuli on the left side of the perceiver's visual world will be transmitted via the retina of both eyes to the right hemisphere, while those on the right side go to the left hemisphere. Thus, by having a subject fixate a particular point and arranging for stimuli to be presented to the left or right of the fixation point, we can be certain that these stimuli will be initially transmitted to only one of the cerebral hemispheres. The speed or accuracy of the subject's response to such stimuli can be referred to the hemisphere which received the stimuli.

Using the above method many researchers have determined that the left hemisphere has superior processing skills for various verbal tasks. For example, right handed subjects have shown right visual field advantages (superior left hemisphere processing) for letter recognition (Bryden 1973, Bryden and Rainey, 1963), for word/nonword judgements (Bradshaw, Nettleton and Taylor, 1981) for word recognition (Phippard, 1977) and word naming (Levine and Banich, 1982). See Beaumont, (1982) for a recent review of this area. However, in poor readers the right visual field advantage for verbal material appears to be absent or substantially reduced (Olsen, 1973; Marcel, Katz and Smith, 1974; Pirozzolo and Rayner, 1979).

Studies of bilinguals, using divided visual field techniques, concurrent tasks, and dichotic listening tasks, have generally shown a left hemisphere superiority for both languages. The subjects tested include English-Hebrew bilinguals (Gordon, 1980; Shanon, 1982), Spanish-English bilinguals (Galloway and Scarcella, 1982), English-German and English-French bilinguals (Sewell and Panou, 1983) and Portugese-English bilinguals (Soares, 1982). A few studies, such as Sussman, Franklin and Simon (1982) have shown bilateral control for later learned languages in bilinguals. Unfortunately, many of the above studies have failed to take into account the age at which the second language was acquired and to relate this to subjects' performance.

The present study was designed to determine which cerebral hemisphere is primarily involved in verbal processing in Papua New Guineans. Because of the apparent difficulty with English in Papua New Guineans, English words were chosen as stimuli and age of acquisition of English was considered in analyzing the results. It should be borne in mind that the results obtained apply only to this language and that no inference can be drawn about the processing of the subjects' various native languages.

Method

Subjects

Forty-seven male and 15 female first year university students participated in the study. All were right-handed and were verbally fluent in up to 7 Papua New Guinean languages as well as English. The ages at which the subjects had first acquired English ranged from infancy to 12 years. At the time of testing subjects were aged between 18 and 38 years.

Apparatus and Procedure

All subjects were required to fill out a language background questionnaire and handedness inventory before the experiment.

Each subject was seated in a darkened room and asked to place their chin on a small rubber pad in front of them. The chin rest ensured that all subjects maintained a constant distance of 60cms from the center of the projection screen. A microphone placed close to the subject's mouth was connected to a voice response timer (Lafayette, model no.63040) which measured the time from onset of the stimulus on the screen to onset of the subjects response. Two Kodak Ektagraphic slide projectors (model no. AF-2k) fitted with tachistoscopic shutters were aligned so that they both projected onto the same area of the back of the screen. The projectors were synchronized so that a fixation cross in the center of the screen was constantly exposed using one projector, but switched off automatically for 100 milliseconds while each word was exposed using the other projector. The words were placed such that their center was 3.7cms to the left or right of the center of the cross, forming a visual angle of 3.5° from the center of the subject's line of vision.

Subjects were told that words would appear briefly on the right or left side of the screen, but that they should attempt to look at the cross in the center of the screen at all times, making no effort to look directly at the words. They were instructed to say each word out loud as quickly as possible. Immediately before each word a 'ready' signal was given verbally.

Three words were presented, once to the left and once to the right of fixation, for practice. This was followed by 10 test words, presented once to the left visual field and once to the right. Order of presentation of the words and of left and right visual field exposure was randomized with the constraint that no word appeared twice in succession. The words used were all common 4-letter English words such as book, coat, fish and tree.

Results

Subjects' response times were recorded for each word and a mean response time for LVF and RVF presentations was calculated. Trials on which subjects made errors were few and times for these responses were not included. Subjects were assigned to groups according to the age at which they first learned English. For each group the percentage of subjects whose response times were faster for RVF presentations (implying superior left hemisphere performance) was calculated (see figure 1).

As no subject had identical LVF and RVF mean scores the percentage of subjects whose response times were faster for LVF presentations (superior right hemisphere performance) is the inverse of that shown in figure 1.

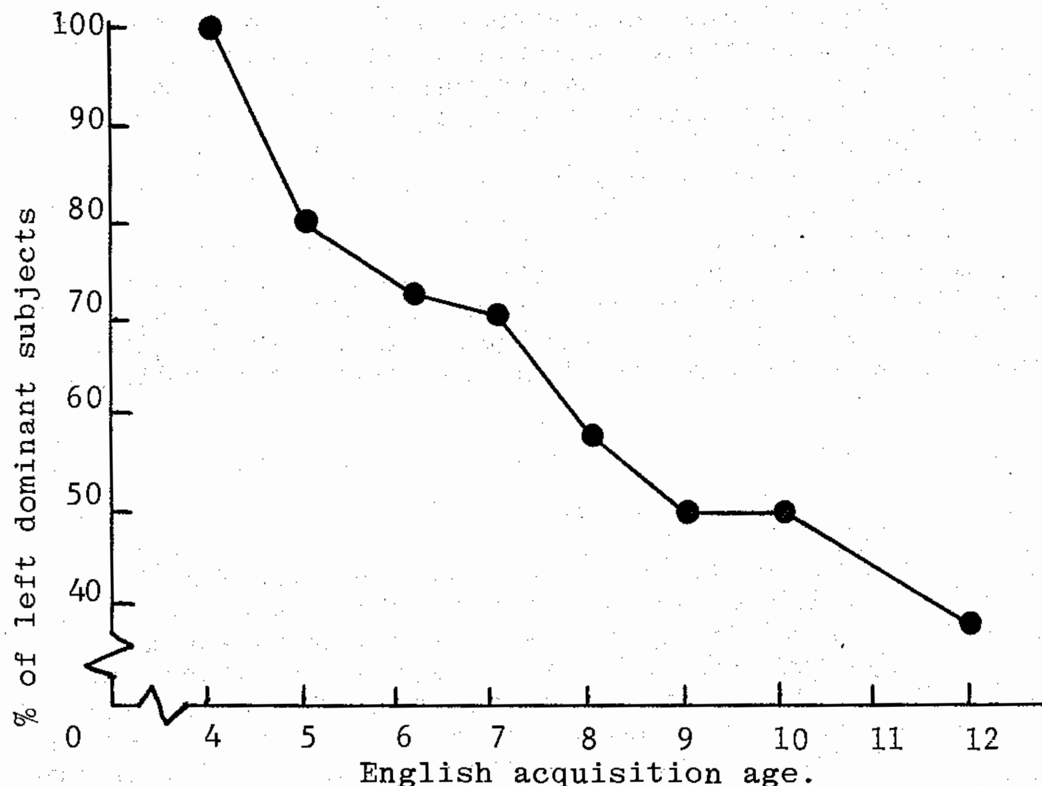


Figure 1. Percentage of subjects who were found to be left dominant for naming English words for each age of acquisition of that language.

It is quite apparent from figure 1 that the likelihood of left hemisphere superiority for processing of English words declines with increasing age of acquisition and that the right hemisphere plays an increasingly important role in such processing.

In order to determine whether there were factors other than age of acquisition which may have contributed to the above findings information about number of languages learned prior to English (taken from the language background questionnaires) and length of time that English had been spoken by each subject were analyzed. There was no significant difference between subjects designated as right and left dominant for either of these factors indicating that neither number of languages learned prior to English nor length of time that English had been spoken could account for the shift from left to right dominance.

These findings then raised the question of whether there were any differences between the right hemisphere of right dominant subjects and the left hemisphere of left dominant subjects in their ability to process words. The type of data collected in this experiment does not allow a detailed analysis of the nature of processing. However, a t-test comparing the response times for LVF presentations for right-dominant subjects with RVF presentations for left-dominant subjects indicated that the left dominant subjects were significantly faster at naming words than were right dominant subjects when the words were presented to their dominant hemispheres. While response time is only one measure of processing skill, the results suggest that subjects who are right dominant for naming English words are less efficient at this task than left dominant subjects.

Discussion

The findings presented here indicate that for Papua New Guineans, which cerebral hemisphere becomes the dominant one for processing English words is related to age of acquisition of English, and that cerebral dominance may in turn affect efficiency of processing. The results also indicate that hemispheric superiority for processing English is not determined by either the number of languages learned prior to English nor the length of time that English was known by the subjects.

Why do Papua New Guineans show an increased tendency for right hemisphere language processing with increasing acquisition age of English, when previous studies (e.g., Shanon, 1982; Galloway and Scarcella, 1982) of bilinguals typically report left-dominance for both languages regardless of when the second was learned? The most obvious difference between the languages learned by Papua New Guineans and those of subjects in previous studies is the form in which their languages are learned. Although young Papua New Guinean children may be verbally fluent in several languages at an early age, they are unlikely to know how to read or write these languages. In fact, for some languages, used by small groups, there is no written form of language. It is not until they are exposed to English that most Papua New Guinean children learn to read and write. In order to understand how this lack of exposure to written material may contribute to the development of right-hemsphere language processing, it will be necessary to briefly consider how the two cerebral hemispheres are involved in the development of language.

Early babbling in infants and the more refined speech sounds produced by young children appear to be controlled by Broca's area (the center for motor control of speech) located in the left cerebral hemisphere in neurologically normal individuals. It is likely that this area is genetically pre-programmed specifically for this task. Also, evidence of a right-ear advantage in dichotic listening tasks in children as young as 3 years of age suggests a left - hemisphere advantage for processing spoken language. This also may be genetically determined and present at birth but it is not possible to test young infants for language processing ability in order to confirm this. Thus the area for producing speech lies close to the area for receiving speech in the left cerebral cortex. In the process of learning language the child must make frequent comparisons between sounds that others produce and sounds that he produces in order to refine his own speech, and meaning must be attached to these utterances. The area involved in understanding speech, i.e., attaching meaning to words, is usually located further back in the left temporal lobe.

In most societies the child is exposed to a written form of the language he has already begun to master, and initially meaningless squiggles become associated with the sounds they represent, so that with several years exposure, letters and groups of letters can automically access a phonological code, and words for which the meaning is not known can nonetheless be pronounced. This skill can also be transferred to other languages providing that they are written in a familiar alphabet so that children and adults alike are capable of pronouncing foreign words, albeit with a poor accent, without knowing the word's meaning. Thus in bilinguals and multilinguals there would be no reason to assume that the areas of the brain responsible for producing speech sounds and associating these with written representations for the first language would not also serve later languages.

But what happens if the young child is not exposed to written language? If the sounds of language are not associated with any written representation then the link between letter and sound which gives letters their linguistic status cannot be built up. It should be remembered that words, as a class of visuo-spatial stimuli, have a special status only because of the sounds we have learned to associate with them and the meanings we ascribe to collections of those sounds. It is conceivable that if associations between spoken and written language are not learned early enough, then the brain will not recognize writing as language, reserving the language processing centers of the left hemisphere for the verbal form of communication to which it has become accustomed. Words would also be treated in the customary way, as visuospatial material more appropriately dealt with, by the right hemisphere. Links between written words and their speech sounds would still be built up with repeated exposure, but they would be between rather than within hemispheres.

This explanation, when applied to the results of the present study, would suggest that a greater proportion of subjects are found to be right dominant for naming English words as age of acquisition increases because written words are treated differently (i.e.,more visuo-spatially) in these subjects, from those who have had earlier exposure to written language. Spoken language; on the other hand, would be processed in the left hemisphere regardless of whether it was English or an earlier learned local language.

The results of a concurrent finger-tapping and speech task (Wuillemin, unpublished data) support this split in processing of English between the left and right hemisphere in some Papua New Guinean subjects. While the overall results of greater right hemisphere involvement with increased acquisition age were replicated, many of the right dominant subjects showed some left hemisphere involvement (presumably in the speech output stage) while reading out text-book passages written in English.

While the finding of a relatively high proportion of right hemisphere English language processing in Papua New Guinean students cannot be invoked to explain all of the difficulties these students have in using English it may at least in part account for some of the performance deficits and unusual results produced by earlier researchers. These include poor performance on reading tests (Price, 1973), interference in naming words in the presence of pictures or colours in Stroop-type tasks (Richardson and Wuillemin, in a separate paper presented at this same conference), reduced recency effect in recalling lists of words (Wuillemin and Richardson, unpublished data) and poor recall of important details, as opposed to less relevant information, from stories (Moore and O'Driscoll, 1983). These latter two findings may be related to the global, spatial nature of right hemisphere processing as opposed to the analytic, sequential type of processing exhibited by the left hemisphere.

This paper has provided data indicating an unusually high proportion of right hemisphere language processing for English in Papua New Guineans and has raised the possibility that early exposure to written language is an important component in developing 'normal' left hemisphere laterality for language processing. To what extent problems in using English as a teaching/learning language result from this is not clear. Further research on spoken English and local languages is presently being conducted with a view to providing a clearer picture of language localization in multilingual Papua New Guineans and the role this plays in language proficiency.

References

Beaumont, J.G. (Ed.) Divided visual field studies of cerebral organisation. London: Academic Press, 1982.

Bradshaw, J.L., Nettleton, N.C., and Taylor, M.J. Right hemisphere language and cognitive deficit in sinistrals? Neuropsychologia, 1981, 17, 113-132.

Bryden, M.P. Perceptual asymmetry in vision: Relation to handedness, eyedness and speech lateralization. Cortex, 1973, 10, 419-435.

Bryden, M.P., and Rainey, C.A. Left-right differences in tachistoscopic recognition. Journal of Experimental Psychology, 1963, 66, 568-571.

Galloway, L.M., and Scarcella, R. Cerebral organization in adult second language acquisition: Is the right hemisphere more involved? Brain and Language, 1982, 16, 56-60.

Gordon, H.W. Cerebral organization in bilinguals. Brain and Language, 1980, 9, 255-268.

Levine, S.C., and Banich, M.T. Lateral asymmetries in the naming of words and corresponding line drawings. Brain and Language, 1982, 17, 34-45.

Marcel, T., Katz, L., and Smith, M. Laterality and reading proficiency. Neuropsychologia, 1974, 12, 131-139.

Moore, D., and O'Driscoll, M. Strategies for studying text: A comparison of Papua New Guinean and American research findings. Journal of Educational Psychology, 1983, 75, 460-464.

Phippard, D. Hemifield differences in visual perception in deaf and hearing subjects. Neuropsychologia, 1977, 15, 555-561.

Pirozzolo, F.J., and Rayner, K. Cerebral organization and reading disability, Neuropsychologia, 1979, 17, 485-491.

Price, J.R. Studies of reading in Papua New Guinea. Research Report No.2 From the Psychology Laboratory, 1973, University of Papua New Guinea.

Sewell, D.F., and Panou, L. Visual field asymmetries for verbal and dot localization tasks in monolingual and bilingual subjects. Brain and Language, 1983, 18, 28-34.

Shanon, B. Lateralization effects in the perception of Hebrew and English words. Brain and Language, 1982, 17, 107-123.

Soares, C. Converging evidence for left hemisphere lateralization in bilinguals. Neuropsychologia, 1982, 20, 653-659.

Sussman, H.M., Franklin, P., and Simon, T. Bilingual speech: Bilateral control? Brain and Language, 1982, 15 125-142.

DEVELOPING POST GRADUATE RESEARCH SKILLS

O. ZUBER-SKERRITT

AND

A. RIX

GRIFFITH UNIVERSITY

Developing Postgraduate Research Skills

Zuber-Skerritt, O. and Rix, A.

Griffith University, Brisbane
(Presented by Ortrun Zuber-Skerritt)

Three years ago I presented a paper to this conference at La Trobe University on 'The integration of student study skills into a first-year programme at Griffith University'.

Meanwhile departments or schools at other Australian institutions of tertiary education have introduced workshops on learning skills or study methods as an intgral part of their first-year courses.

Today I would like to talk about the intregration of a workshop component on postgraduate research and writing skills into a Master-by-Coursework programme at Griffith University[1]. My colleague, Alan Rix, the convenor of this Masters programme, and I are not aware that such an integrated, practical course on postgraduate research skills exists anywhere in Australia, although research studies have documented that a large proportion of postgraduate students need more help with developing research skills.

Traditionally, in universities it is up to the individual supervisors to decide how much help they provide to their students in developing thesis research and writing skills. In most cases the development occurs accidentally rather than systematically.

WHY WAS THIS INTRODUCTORY WORKSHOP COURSE ON DISSERTATION RESEARCH AND WRITING NECESSARY?

It was introduced for the first time in 1984 on a voluntary basis, as an experiment to help alleviate problems experienced with earlier dissertations in this programme and generally identified in the educational research literature.

The Master-by-Coursework programme in the School of Modern Asian Studies (MAS)[2] is an example of a postgraduate programme which attracts people from a variety of academic and employment backgrounds (business executives, high-school teachers, army officers, etc., some of whom have not undertaken formal study for many years) and of different age groups (from twenties to late sixties). For most of them, dissertation research and writing is a completely new task. It is no wonder, then, that a relatively high percentage of the first intake of students in 1981-82 experienced serious problems in research and writing the dissertation and in the assessment they received. The following example from an MAS examiner's report in 1982 highlights the problem:

> More disturbing ... was the general lack of scholarly awareness... For example, there is a tendency throughout to make assertions and not to document them, to use impressions as the premises for arguments, to guess at motives rather than analysing and investigating them. My experience in supervising another Masters student as well as in examining this dissertation leads me to wonder whether our expectations for these students are too high. In these cases of which I have had first hand experience, there is a general lack of the fundamentals of scholarship which are drummed into honours students as a matter of course. If my impression is correct, and if it goes beyond these two students, then I suspect we need either to modify our expectations of what they should provide in these dissertations or to insert a more rigorous methodological component into the Masters course work programme.

Reports like these led the Postgraduate Coursework Board to make the following decisions:

- to restructure the programme and to include an introductory course on dissertation research and writing conducted jointly by staff of MAS and CALT(2);
- to revise the aims and standards of the dissertation and to communicate them to students in the information booklet and GU Handbook, and to examiners in the MAS School's 'letter to examiners' (explaining the role and weighting of the dissertation in this programme and with an attached assessment guide stating the criteria to be used;
- to hold a meeting of supervisors to discuss the responsibilities and functions of supervisors (based on the results of a CALT survey), dissertation standards, workshops, etc.

A meeting of supervisors in November 1983 discussed these matters. The questionnaires on the 'Functions of Supervisors' and 'Postgraduate Supervision: Role Perception Rating Scale', designed by Ingrid Moses, TEDI, conducted by CALT, and comleted by nine supervisors, provided an excellent basis for detailed discussion. Finally, supervisors agreed on a framework and realized that students needed advice and guidance, particularly in the early stages of their dissertation research and writing.

As to the standards of the dissertation, it was agreed that we should try to reach as high a standard as possible (perhaps to the level of an article in a middle range journal). The minimum acceptable standard should be as laid out in the letter to examiners.

It was also agreed that supervisors should meet their students in the following two weeks in November

- to assist in defining the expectations which each had of the other. (Supervisors might or might not wish to exchange with their students TEDI questionnaire forms regarding the role of supervisors);
- to set tasks and directions for work over the summer; and
- to refer students to the set textbook by Anderson et al (1982).

The problems in the MAS Masters Course are by no means unique to this course or to this university, but indeed are common in postgraduate education at other universities in Australia and in other parts of the world.

Relatively little research has been done in postgraduate education (as compared to research in undergraduate learning and teaching), but there are a few studies which demonstrate that most problems arise from the lack of understanding and communication between students and supervisors. Moses (1981) summarizes some problems identified in the literature in this field:

Welsh (1978) in the UK has found that in general, students' perceptions of the supervisor's role are similar to the supervisors' perceptions, i.e., to counsel, advise, and guide. This is confirmed by Battersby (1980) in New Zealand. But Rudd (1975) has found that students in different disciplines have different needs. For example, table 1 shows that social sciences students wanted more/better supervision, more/better lectures, more instruction in research methods etc.

Table 1

Improvements desired (Percentage of students suggesting change)

	Arts	Social Studies	Pure Science	Applied Science
More instruction in research methods	10	17	9	7
More/better lectures	11	27	18	14
Broadening background knowledge	3	9	7	3
More/better seminars or other opportunities for discussion	34	12	9	7
More/better supervision	16	29	17	30
More people working on same problem	6	5	3	7
Better physical working conditions	8	12	5	8

Rudd (1975) has also found that there is a consistent percentage (up to 25%) of postgraduate students who are dissatisfied with the supervision they are receiving. The five main difficulties are:

1. neglect;
2. clash of personality;
3. misinformed or ignorant supervisor leading student on wrong track;
4. inexperienced supervisor;
5. overcommitted supervisor who was willing, experienced or competent, but had no time.

We believe that for Master-by-Coursework students, a well-designed workshop course with supervisors' participation can mitigate most of the above problems.

Table 2 shows, among other things, that more than half (55%) of Social Science students wanted closer supervision.

Table 2

Consultation with supervisor during initial reading/planning stage

	Percentage of students (N=669)			
	Arts	Social Studies	Pure Science	Applied Science
1) Wanted closer supervision	41	55	34	39
2) Wanted it less close	1	0	5	3
3) Satisfied	59	45	61	58

Apart fr.m the Sydney study (Ibrahim et al, 1980) which identified two main problem areas, i.e., excessive standards and inadequate supervision, there is no Australian study predicting success of postgraduate students. But we know from Welsh (1980) that there are certain variables affecting success as can be seen in table 3.

Table 3

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE 'SUCCESSFUL' STUDENT	CHARACTERISTICS OF THE 'UNSUCCESSFUL' STUDENT
Science faculty student (especially if an MSc taught course)	Arts faculty student (especially if for MLitt by research)
Male	Female
Aged less than 30 on entry	Aged 30 or more on entry
Overseas origin	Home origin
Student status	Staff status
Full-time student	Part-time student
Indirect admission to PhD study	Direct admission to PhD study

Moses (1981) has found at the University of Queensland that one of the main problems is the lack of written regulations and guidelines related to postgraduate research. Table 4 shows the number of departments (out of 50 surveyed) giving written advice on the areas listed.

Table 4

Type of Information Included	No. of Departments
Research/supervision areas of staff	30
Departmental rules relating to courses, procedures, enrolment not covered in University of Queensland Higher Degree Handbook	20
Resources for research available to postgraduates	18
Current or past thesis topics of postgraduate students	17
Financial assistance available to postgraduate students	17
Mention of supervisor responsibilities	12
Guidelines for research and/or thesis construction/presentation	12 (plus one compiled by students)

Of course, when reading the information (Moses, 1981: 42-76) you will notice that the quality and quantity of advice varies a great deal. However, we hope to have shown with this very brief excursion into surveys on postgraduate supervision that problems have been identified elsewhere and some steps taken to alleviate them (e.g., the written advice provided by some departments and the 'Check List for Good Supervisory Practice' by SERC, 1983). Yet we are not aware of any systematic courses on practical postgraduate skills integrated into the programme. We therefore designed a workshop course which dealt with skills generally needed for writing a dissertation, but also specifically needed for research projects in 'Australian-Asian Relations', and tailored to the perceived needs of a varied group of largely mature-age students.

Since we believe that similar workshop courses could be beneficially introduced for other groups of students at tertiary institutions elsewhere, the aims and procedures of our three three-hour workshops are outlined below.

The First Workshop

Aim

The aim of the first workshop was to discuss dissertation standards, expectations, and individual students' research proposals.

Procedure

1. Introduction: The role and purpose of the workshops; the workshop programme; the place of the dissertation in the degree, and standards expected.
2. Problems of earlier dissertations; problems identified in educational research; discussion of the results of the CALT survey on the supervisor's role; trigger film; discussion between supervisors and their students on each other's expectations; video programme: 'The Supervisors' Viewpoint'.[3]
3. The dissertation proposal[4]: discussions in three groups (according to study areas) of individual dissertation proposals. Each student was asked to explain to their fellow students and supervisors in their group:
   - what their central question or problem is;
   - why this problem is important and worthy of study; and
   - how they will go about it (research methods and underlying assumptions).
4. Homework: to write a critique on a given article following given guidelines[5].

The Second Workshop

Aims

The aims of the second workshop were to help students

- to analyse a text critically
- to structure their dissertation
- to organize their time
- to discuss problems they have personally encountered in their research (with support from group and supervisors).

Procedures

1. Analytical Critique Exercise(6). Purpose of the critical analysis exercise.
   Small-group discussions on individual critiques (Cf. written homework) and generally on the given article, following the 'Guidelines for the Analytical Critique Exercise'(5).
   Reports from the three groups to the plenum. Plenary discussion.
2. The structure and time-tabling of the dissertation. Examples of dissertation structures; two extreme examples of a 'Contents' page; dissertation timetable for 1984 and advice on each stage.
3. Problems students have encountered in study and research. Large group discussion on problems of using and interpreting primary and secondary sources, biases, subjectivity, objectivity, etc. Small-group discussions on individual problems.
4. Homework: to read Anderson et al (1982), pp. 10-14 and to prepare a 'Notes' card for the given article.

The Third Workshop

Aims

The aim of the third workshop was to discuss the 'nuts and bolts' of dissertation research and writing, such as the use of sources, note-taking, style-sheeting, writing and presenting the dissertation.

Procedure

1. Finding, indexing and note-taking from research materials.
2. Use of sources: analysis of contradicting sources.
3. Exercise in transposing statistical data from a text into a table and a di..gramme; reading graphs critically to avoid manipulation on the writer's part and misinterpretation on the reader's part.
4. Stages of writing; style sheets (e.g., Anderson et al, La Trobe University and the Harvard system); references and footnotes; writing and presenting the dissertation.
5. Questionnaire survey obtaining feedback from students and supervisors on their benefit from this course.

Evaluation

In order to obtain feedback and to assess the success of these workshops, a mixture of formal and informal, qualitative and quantitative methods of evaluation were used: class observations by the workshop leaders and their informal discussions with staff and students; a survey of students' and supervisors' perceptions of the course by questionnaires; and the use of video.

General Observations

On the whole, the workshop leaders, the supervisors and the students thought that these sessions were needed, useful, helpful, successful and

well worth while. Attendance might be seen as a criterion for success. Most students attended all sessions. As well as the two workshop leaders, seven supervisors attended the first workshop; eight attended the second; and four came to the third workshop (although they were not expected to attend this last one because it dealt with the nuts and bolts of dissertation writing). Apart from achieving the intended objectives (e.g., to support supervisors in their tasks of helping students develop dissertation research and writing skills in a more systematic manner, and to provide a forum for discussion among students, among supervisors and between students and supervisors), other side effects turned out to be just as valuable for postgraduate research and dissertation writing: for example, the students' increased motivation and confidence through a feeling of support and through group discussions.

The common problem of 'isolation' and 'loneliness' (social as well as intellectual loneliness) which Welsh (1979) identifies as a major difficulty for postgraduate on-campus students in their departments and as a reason for discontinuation of study, is likely to be aggravated for part-time students like the students in this Master Coursework programme. They have full-time occupations unconnected with universities and they pursue study part-time, either for intrinsic reasons or for career purposes to upgrade their qualifications and to extend their knowledge and skills in Australian-Asian relations. Some students intimated that they had been uncertain as to whether they were on the right track and going in the right direction, but that the workshop discussions clarified a lot of this vagueness.

Thus, the process of learning through group discussion and interaction in an unthreatening, supportive environment was seen by many to be as important as, or more important than, the content and skills taught in this introductory course. The course proved to be, not only supporting the

individual student-supervisor work relationship as intended, but also fulfilling additional group functions which could hardly have been achieved individually.

The above general observations by the workshop leaders were confirmed by students and supervisors in their responses to the survey questions at the end of the third workshop and in a video-recorded discussion five weeks after this last workshop.

Positive Feedback

All responding **students**, without exception, answered 'yes' to question 4: they found the workshops of benefit in preparing for their dissertation. In their own words, their reasons were:

- They (i.e., the workshops) provided a forum for discussion on the planning and writing of the dissertation. It was useful to hear about the expectations of the school/university re the dissertations and suggestions for planning and thinking about what was to be done.
- Prior to the workshop, the dissertation was a vast, amorphous obstacle which lay before me which I was unable to address effectively. The workshops helped me to delineate the tasks involved, and to clarify my methods of approach. It still frightens me but now I know more clearly why.
- They were an excellent motivational and organising force. The content of each was highly relevant and the opportunity to ask questions and clarify points was appreciated.
- The workshop has been particularly useful with regard to the formatting and other formal aspects (structure, referencing) of a dissertation.
- They cleared fogged perceptions of what was required.
- Areas of method - timetable, format, conventions very well covered. Major pitfalls warned against.

Further reasons were given in response to question 7a, i.e., what they appreciated most about these workshops:

- I appreciated the concern felt by MAS and CALT that the development and presentation of the dissertations should prove a worth-

while and stimulating experience for us. It is often assumed that later year and post-graduate students know how to prepare and write a thesis and of course, we didn't know. These sessions helped to clarify procedures for us and allowed us to discover with fellow students and staff some of our problems.

- Assistance in organisation, the workshops gave a feeling of great support and concern for the students in their tasks. An atmosphere of sympathetic yet practical guidance.
- The workshops were very specific in their aims, and set out to explain in organised fashion a number of problems (or rather, the solutions to problems) faced by neophyte writers such as myself. The leaders appeared to understand well the difficulties faced by the students, and approached questions that were uppermost in our minds.
- The opportunity to discuss in open forum the problems we have experienced so far, in our dissertation. The opportunity to carry out practical exercises and then review them in a group. The opportunity to view problems of earlier dissertations. The presence of so many supportive and contributing staff members - their ideas were good to hear, and view, as was the case with the video.
- All the hard work that the organisers have done in preparing and conducting this workshop.
- I needed to know more about the format expected in the dissertation. I appreciated this information.

Supervisors, in response to the same question, also appreciated the workshops for the following reasons (quoted verbatim):

- Exchange of ideas amongst attendants - gave all a much wider perspective than would otherwise have been the case. Small group session very useful. Provided excellent framework for students and supervisors to work from.
- The chance for all of the standard problems in dissertation writing and in the supervisor-supervised relationship to come up in an impersonal context. Second, the chance for the students to work together a bit, see their common problems and hopefully to put themselves in a position to provide help and support for one another.
- Appreciated the opportunity to identify and establish in my own mind, requirements and standards of the masters programme; CALT's contribution, particularly segment using the video: it was thorough, thought-provoking and, essentially, healthy as it exposed both student and supervisor alike to the ideas of others; workshops contributed to lessening the loneliness of the long-distance writer.
- Perhaps the best aspect of the workshops was the fact that it increased the awareness of the type of problems generally found in thesis writing i.e., - a sufficiently narrow topic that is appropriate for a Master's dissertation, - forcing students (and supervisors) to structure a thesis in a manner that permits the thesis to be written in a sequential manner, - indicating to students that they had common problems, that it is a difficult task to structure a thesis and to maintain an argument over some 20000 words.

Six out of eight supervisors stated that these workshops helped them in their own supervision:

- They gave me a clearer idea of what students and staff do or should expect.
- Helped to clarify/give a structure to my own views on roles of student and supervisor; gave a perspective to problems of dissertation-writing wider than that of myself as supervisor - raised issues the two of us may not have thought of until much later in the piece.
- All in all I thought that this was very useful and expect that it really will pay off when we look at the final products.
- Absolutely, they placed expectations (mine and students) within a context related to standards, demands (on both students and staff members) etc, I don't doubt it will prove to be a solid 'yardstick' over ensuing months.
- Brought a greater awareness of students' difficulties and the lack of clarity in their thinking with respect to the thesis topic. It was also helpful to indicate to the students that they had specific deadlines to meet - this makes them start with the writing process.
- Led me to thinking about role of supervisor and clarifying this in my own mind, the timetabling of writing of thesis.

Negative Criticism

Only two **students** expressed criticism relating to three problems of the course which the workshop leaders had identified, too: (a) the session on statistics, (b) the timing and (c) the physical setting of the workshops.

(a) The exercise in statistics (see procedure 3 in the third workshop) was only useful for four students who had never done statistics before; but for the other students it was too simple.

(b) It was suggested that one or two workshops should have been held in November/December on the dissertation design and rationale (before students started research over the Christmas break) and two workshops on formal aspects of dissertation writing in March.

(c) The lecture room was not conducive to small group discussions.

Supervisors provided the following criticism:

One staff member reiterated the students' criticism of the lecture theatre and the data analysis session; three lecturers agreed with students criticism of the timing of the workshops. Two supervisors suggested that 'a good deal more could have been laid out on paper' referring especially to the analytical critique exercise[7]. Two other lecturers were conscious of the time factor involved in these workshops:

- The major criticism is that they were a bit long. Some of the discussion groups became repetitive and would have been improved if a time constraint had forced the students to deal only with the central issue of the thesis. I also doubt if the video sess.ons were of much help.
- Could we either compress things a bit or else roster the supervisors in some way that each of us only had to come twice instead of three times.

Suggestions for Improvement

Some of the above criticisms imply suggestions for improvement:

- to schedule two workshops in November/December and two in February/ March;
- to select a better room for small-group discussions with movable chairs and desks;
- to delete the data analysis exercise;
- to roster supervisors, or at least to schedule those issues together which relate to matters of use to them;
- to revise the analytical critique exercise to provide more examples for analysis.

A 'Revised Programme for Workshops' has been designed as the result of the above feedback, criticism, and suggestions for improvement, provided by students and staff.

The use of Video

The use of video [3] proved to be an interesting tool of evaluation, especially the programme entitled **The Supervisors' Viewpoint** screened in the first workshop. The video-recorded interviews demonstrated prevailing views on the role of the supervisor held by faculty in the School of MAS and represented by the MAS School Chairman, the convenor of the Coursework Master programme and another senior academic experienced in P/G supervision. With the exception of one supervisor and one student, all workshop participants found this programme 'useful' or 'very useful'.

Other uses of video were video-self-confrontation for recall and analysis and video recording of an evaluative discussion. For example, the use of video recording and analysis for the analytical critique exercise was preferred as a tool of evaluation to other instruments (such as class observation, interview, questionnaire, etc.) because it provided a fuller record of the discussion during the workshop and had the additional advantage for students after a few weeks to look at themselves (in an edited version), to be reminded of, and to revise, the knowledge gained from this experience: critical thinking and analysis are the most important skills to practise when using primary and secondary sources for one's arguments in a thesis. After the recording of the exercise, students themselves suggested to meet for another session in seven weeks time in order to view and discuss the video programme.

After viewing this programme some students and supervisors discussed the value of these sessions. They evaluated what it was they had gained from the workshops which they could not have gained from individual supervision. This evaluative discussion was video recorded again and shown at a meeting eight weeks later (see footnote 3, Feedback on a Workshop Course).

Conclusions

After recognizing the major problems in this Master by Coursework Programme (similar to those in other postgraduate programmes identified by educational researchers) the series of workshops has partially solved those problems.

There are four sets of related issues we have been concerned with:

1. issues related to 'inadequate supervision' (Ibrahim et al, 1980; Rudd, 1975) due to the supervisor's lack of time, knowledge or experience;
2. issues related to students' 'lack of the fundamentals of scholarship' (see examiner's report, p. 2 above) due to a lack of background knowledge, training or experience in research methods;
3. issues related to a lack of understanding and communication between supervisor and student (Moses, 1981; SERC, 1983); and
4. issues related to an institution's or department's lack of written regulations and guidelines (Moses, 1981).

This workshop course on 'Dissertation Research and Writing' integrated into the MAS Masters Coursework programme was able to attack all four sets of problems by:

1. supporting supervisors in their practical tasks of supervision and in the mechanics of ensuring that students could make good progress (Cf. SERC, 1983);
2. developing postgraduate students' skills generally needed for writing a dissertation and specifically needed for their research projects in 'Australian-Asian Relations', and tailored to the perceived needs of this diverse group of largely mature-age students from varied professional backgrounds;

3. facilitating discussions among supervisors, among students, and between students and supervisors, especially to understand and communicate dissertation standards, and expectations which each has of the other;
4. distributing to and discussing with both supervisors and students written regulations, guidelines and practical advice.

Apart from achieving these intended aims, the course turned out to fulfill additional needs; it helped to overcome these students' social and intellectual 'isolation' or 'loneliness' identified by Welsh (1979); it also helped increase their confidence and motivation to study and to complete thei; dissertation within the given time limit and to the required standards and expectations of the University. The supervisors and workshop leaders as well benefitted from this systematic approach to discussing dissertation research and writing, not only for their tasks as supervisors of dissertations, but also for their own research or PhD theses.

The final test, of course, is still to come. We shall not really be able to fully evaluate the effectiveness of this workshop course until all dissertations have been examined.

Another open question remains: whether our revised programme for workshops can be transferred, in an adapted form, to other P/G programmes, to other institutions, or to other countries.

It might largely depend on the success of the course convenors and workshop leaders, and on the extent to which they will be able to involve their colleagues in this team-work, and hence on the extent to which students will become confident and motivated to upgrade their dissertation research and writing to their highest personal capacity.

NOTES

1. A full report on this introductory workshop course, entitled *Dissertation Research and Writing,* has been prepared by the authors with appended materials used in the workshops.

2. The following abbreviations are used throughout:

GU	Griffith University
MAS	School of Modern Asian Studies
CALT	Centre for the Advancement of Learning and Teaching
TEDI	Tertiary Education Institute, University of Queensland
P/G	Postgraduate

3. The following video programmes were produced by Ortrun Zuber-Skerritt with staff and students from the School of Modern Asian Studies at Grifffith University, 1983 and 1984:

The Role of the Supervisor in Postgraduate Research

1. Trigger (2 mins)
2. The Supervisors' Viewpoint (17 mins)

These programmes are edited versions of video-recorded interviews with supervisors who responded to three questions:

- What is the role of the supervisor?
- Who is responsible for the quality and presentation of the final thesis?
- How can skills in dissertation research and writing be developed?

Dissertation Design and Rationale (20 mins)

Excerpts from a video-recorded workshop with postgraduate students discussing their individual research proposals in small groups in response to three questions:

- What is your central question/problem?
- Why is this problem important and worthy of study? (Significance)
- How will you go about it? (Research methods and underlying assumptions)

Analytical Critique Exercise (22 mins)

Excerpts from a workshop on critical text analysis. An inter-active programme for students intending to develop skills in critical analysis and following suggested guidelines.

Dissertation Research and Writing -
Feedback on a Workshop Course (20 mins)

Excerpts from a video-recorded evaluative discussion with some students and supervisors on the workshops in which they had participated.
The problems addressed in the workshops are outlined in a brief introduction. The discussion brings out the effects of the workshops which staff and students thought useful and could not have been achieved by individual supervision.

Note: These programmes are not commercial, staged productions, but edited versions of simple video recordings of normal classroom activities, intended for educational purposes only.

4. Students were asked to have read chapters 1-3 in Anderson et al (1982) before this workshop and to complete their dissertation proposals (along the lines of the three questions given) to the satisfaction of their supervisors by the end of the third workshop.

5. The 'Guidelines for the Analytical Critique Exercise' are based on an article by Furedy and Furedy (1983) and included in our report mentioned in footnote 1.

6. This exercise was video recorded and edited for a programme entitled *Analytical Critique Exercise* (see footnote 3).

7. However, with hindsight, other supervisors and students in the evaluative, video-recorded discussion five weeks later maintained that these workshops could not have been substituted by written material or individual supervision to the same effects. (see footnote 3: *Feedback on a Workshop Course*.)

List of References

Anderson, J., Durston, B. and Poole, M. (1982) *Thesis and Assignment Writing* Brisbane: John Wiley & Sons

Battersby, D. and K.M., (1980) 'In the eye of the beholder: results from a New Zealand survey of education students' views in postgraduate research' in A.H. Miller (ed.) *Freedom and Control in Higher Education* Research and Development in Higher Education, Vol. 3, Sydney: HERDSA 88-101

Furedy, C. and Furedy, J. (1983) 'Ways to promote critical thinking in higher education' *HERDSA News 5* (1) 3-4

Ibrahim, E.Z., McEvan, E.M., and Pitblado, R. (1980) 'Doctoral supervision at Sydney University, hindrance or help?' *Vestes 23* 20-21

Moses, I. (1981) *Postgraduate Study: Supervisors, Supervision and Information for Students* Brisbane: TEDI, University of Queensland, ISBN 0 86776 046X

Rudd, E. (1975) *The Highest Education* London: Routledge & Kegan Paul

Science and Engineering Research Council (1983) *Research Student and Supervisor. An Approach to Good Supervisory Practice* London: SERC

Welsh, J. (1978) 'The supervision of postgraduate research students' *Research in Education 19* 77-86

Welsh, J.M. (1979) *The First Year of Postgraduate Research Study* Guildford: SRHE Monographs, University of Surrey

Welsh, J. (1980) 'Predicting postgraduate performance' *Notes in University Teaching 1*, Aberdeen: UTC, University of Aberdeen 1-4

REPORT ON A WORKSHOP

ON 'DEVELOPING POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH SKILLS'

held at the Third Annual Learning Skills Conference
at Deakin University, 17 May, 1984, 1.30 - 3.00 p.m.

After a half-hour presentation (see attached abstract), followed by some questions, answers and video illustrations, the audience, consisting of about 50 conference delegates and 50 postgraduate students at Deakin University, split up into three groups (although they were asked to form small groups of 5-6 members). Several students left after the presentation and did not participate in the discussions.

Reports from the three groups to the plenum revealed that the post-graduate (P/G) students had come to this workshop with the expectation to be trained in research and thesis writing skills and, of course, they were disappointed to find that only the issues of P/G supervision and training were raised and discussed.

Group 1, consisting of some conference members, but mainly of P/G students at Deakin University, reported that the latter group had other expectations of this workshop. They said that the big turn-up of students at this conference session proved that there is a great need for something like the Griffith University workshops; there is a lack of directions, guidelines and contact. Contact only occurs at the administrative level. Some students had never met their supervisors. They felt that the supervisor should not be the only one a student depends on. There should be an academic co-ordinator overseeing students' needs and arranging workshops or facilitating help where needed.

Group 2 reported that they could see the value of the 'Griffith University model'. They reiterated the great need for study guides in dissertation writing and the opportunity of workshops and seminars, particularly on: choosing a topic, looking through earlier theses, discussions with other supervisors, especially on assessment criteria and the preparation of a 'defense' of a thesis. Supervisors should also learn skills for conducting individual meetings with their students.

Group 3 stressed the need for a clearer understanding of the supervisor's role and a better and more systematic training of P/G students in the production of a thesis. They suggested that a change in the university structure is necessary for these things to happen and initiatives to be able to be carried out. For example, at the moment, students' topics are approved at different times (sometimes it takes very long until a topic is approved) so that not all students in a course or program would be ready for these workshops at the same time.

In conclusion, the series of practical workshops integrated into the MAS Master-by-Coursework program, was seen as a 'model' for alleviating problems and needs which exist at most Australian tertiary institutions.

ABSTRACT

Developing Skills in Dissertation Research and Writing for Postgraduate Coursework Programmes

ZUBER-SKERRITT, O. and RIX, A.

(Griffith University, Brisbane, Australia)

This paper discusses the design, implementation and evaluation of a new workshop component on 'Dissertation Research and Writing' integrated into a part-time Masters Coursework programme.

The workshops started from the premise that most problems of postgraduate supervision and dissertation writing (generally identified in educational research studies and particularly experienced by previous students in this programme) can be alleviated by a more systematic approach, by structured workshop activities, group discussions, and interaction among supervisors, among students, and between students and supervisors.

As an extension to the traditional work relationship between the individual student and his/her supervisor, this workshop course had the purpose of supporting supervisors, rather than interfering, in their practical tasks of supervision and the mechanics of ensuring that students made good progress (cf SERC 1983).

An excellent response by both students and supervisors (e.g., through a very high attendance rate and positive feedback/evaluation in a survey) indicated that the intended aims had been achieved by the following activities and processes:

- establishing a clear framework; discussing dissertation standards and staff/student expectations;
- discussing individual dissertation proposals (e.g., central question/problem, rationale, research methods, etc) in small groups with other students and supervisors;
- analytical critique exercise; the use of sources: analysis of contradicting sources;
- the 'nuts and bolts' of dissertation research and writing (e.g., the structure and time-tabling of the dissertation; note-taking; style-sheeting; writing and presenting the dissertation).

The process of learning through group discussion and interaction in an unthreatening, supportive environment was seen to be as important as the content and skills taught in this course. Apart from achieving the intended objectives, the course turned out to fulfill additional needs; it helped overcome P/G students' social and intellectual 'isolation' or 'loneliness' identified by Welsh (1979) and it helped increase their motivation and confidence.

The oral presentation, in demonstrating materials used in the course, will be illustrated by OHP transparencies and video excerpts.

Discussion will be invited on questions of transferability of this (revised) course to other institutions and countries; and on institutional boundaries, barriers, problems and possible solutions.

References

Science and Engineering Research Council (1983) Research Student and Supervisor. An Approach to Good Supervisory Practice London: SERC

Welsh, J.M. (1979) The First Year of Postgraduate Research Study Guildford: SRHE Monographs