

A Cog in the Wheels of Change

On the Rationale behind the Decisions Made in the Making
of a Japanese High School Textbook for Teaching English

高等学校英語教材作成の中にある根拠

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Introduction

Native speakers of English teaching English here in Japan come from a variety of backgrounds. Some have little or no training in the teaching of English as a second language. Others have completed courses at accredited institutions or universities and have had numerous years experience in teaching. However, whether they be assistant English teachers with little or no training or highly qualified college lecturers they all seem to ask the same questions at one time or another about the quality and appropriateness of the textbooks used in high schools for the teaching of English as a foreign language. The questions most frequently put are; Why doesn't anyone try and change the way English is taught here? and Why is there so much emphasis on grammar translation and reading and very little on oral communication?

In this paper I will briefly discuss some of; the historical aspects related to the teaching of English in Japan; the various guidelines

set down by Japanese Ministry of Education, Science and Culture (*Monbusho*); the rationale behind some of the decisions taken in the production of a general English course textbook for high school and in doing so I hope to shed some light on a much maligned area of education. I will also make reference to 'ACCESS TO ENGLISH 1' (Ogata, Okada, Okamoto, Kanazawa, Kanegae, Shiozaki and Bufton (1993) (Hereafter referred to as "Access 1") a course book written for, and conforming to *Monbusho's* new guidelines for study in senior high schools (1989) in order to give a clearer insight into the actual processes involved in the production of such a text. I will also briefly refer to two units from "Senior Swan English Course 1" (Serizawa et al. (1987) as being representative of the old style *Monbusho* approved high school English text books and one of the units from "Access 1" to demonstrate some of the effects that the new guidelines have had on the approach and production of these new materials.

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A brief history on the debate over teaching English as a foreign language

Through Japan's long history of education there have been many heated debates concerning various issues, but none have perhaps been so long and as emotive as the discussions over foreign language teaching.

This debate began in earnest around 1922 when Harold E. Palmer became Linguistic Advisor to the Japanese Ministry of Education and Director of the Ministry's special Institute for Research in English teaching. During his tenure Palmer made several recommendations for change. Among these recommendations were changes from a grammar translation method that concentrated solely on written texts to a more oral approach (Palmer and Palmer 1925) and a controlled vocabulary beginning with a core of five hundred words increasing in increments to a thousand (Palmer 1930, 1931)., Though rather crude by today's standards many of these recommendations were, in comparison with the methods in use at that time, at the forefront of second language pedagogy.

Unfortunately, they were largely ignored until 1983 when *Monbusho* began to implement changes in high-school ESL syllabuses and teaching methodology by the introduction of new guidelines.

These changes were brought about in part as a response to growing criticism from Japanese and foreign English teachers, and an acknowledged need for improvement in education system as a whole by *Monbusho*.

The 1983 *Monbusho* guidelines set out

national syllabus requirements for the study of English and covered the overall objectives of the curriculum; language materials, including structural and grammatical items; number of new words and idioms; and details concerning reading, writing, hearing and for the first time speaking. As a result of these new guidelines a new generation of textbooks were developed. However, these textbooks also continued to promote the traditional Japanese grammar-translation methodology and varied little from those they were meant to replace.

For example, in "Senior Swan, English course I" (1987) one can see that only the minimum of thought was given to the oral component of the new syllabus, because out of the sixteen units covering one hundred and forty-nine pages only two units are assigned to any kind of oral work. The two units assigned to oral work each consist of a three page dialogue followed by a written comprehension check and a key sentence, which incidentally does not even appear in the lesson body, demonstrating [S+V+O] (illustration 1 a.) Perhaps the more adventurous teacher would allow the students to take turns in reading the various roles. Who knows, as the teacher's manual makes no mention of how best to use this for oral purposes. The remainder (for example, p.p.54-62) in keeping with materials suitable for the continued use of grammar-translation as the main teaching methodology all consist of a body of text followed by a comprehension test and various drills and exercises that concentrate on lexis, structure and grammatical items, the aural component of the syllabus being covered by a set of two cassette tapes which contain readings of the main text and nothing else. Even

the teacher's manual gives no hint or explanation of how best this listening material could be used.

The main texts which were designed mainly for facilitating the teaching of reading, writing and grammar are in themselves interesting, well written examples of correct English and conform tightly to the guidelines' structural syllabus. The accompanying tests and exercises however, are almost all citation activities or translation activities and reflect very clearly the grammar-translation come audiolingual teaching methodologies for which they were designed. While it is true that most people seem to learn a

that there is no opportunity for students to experience any roughly tuned natural language input. This and the fact that the exercises are still just citation activities which afford students little or no opportunity for communicative output, go a long way in proving that nothing more than lip service was being paid to the hearing and speaking components of the guidelines.

So, in spite of the 1983 guidelines, change was still slow and criticism of the way foreign languages were taught continued. Amongst the criticisms most frequently made were: the main teaching methodology was still based on the traditional Japanese style grammar-translation method, (*yakudoku*) a method renowned for its contorted manipulations of a language, (Bauer 1994); and that the overwhelming influence of the university entrance examinations which tested such contortions still inhibited communicative approaches to language teaching because English was still considered an academic subject similar to Latin.

Of course, these criticisms are valid if one believes that *Monbusho* really sought change in the way things were done, but in reality the seriousness of their desire for change to a more rounded and communicative approach can be challenged when one considers that the only reference to speaking and hearing other than the three statements referring to the subjects on page 79 of the official English translation 1983 guidelines was the ambiguous statement on page 81 "Consideration should be given so that a harmonious balance is kept among activities of listening, speaking, reading and writing." which leaves one wondering how *Monbusho* or the publisher

11. DAVID'S BIRTHDAY 101

MR BROWN: And now I think we must go. We don't want to be late for the theatre.

MRS BROWN: No. I don't like rushing⁶ in at the last minute. I like to be in my seat well before the curtain goes up.

MR BROWN: The theatre is just round the corner, so we won't need a taxi.

For Comprehension

次の各文のうち本文の内容と合っているものを選びなさい。

1. Today is David's birthday.
2. David got up early this morning.
3. The Browns enjoyed a good meal at a restaurant.
4. This was their second visit to the restaurant.
5. David made a speech at his birthday party.
6. Mr Brown expected that David would be at Oxford next year.
7. The Browns were going to see the musical *My Fair Lady* after dinner.
8. The theatre was not far away from the restaurant.

Key sentences-----

6. She *loves reading* in bed. [S+V+O(動名詞)]

2. *be late for* ~: 「～におくれる」 3. *rush in*: 「駆けこむ」 at the
last minute: 「まぎわになって」 4. *well before* ~: 「～するずっと前に」

6. *just round the corner*: 「角を曲がってすぐのところ」

curtain [k r t n] taxi [t ksi]

1 a

language more effectively if it is tidied up, the unit for oral communication, (illustration 1.a) a script from some melodrama, is so tidy and devoid of the natural discourse markers that one finds in authentic material,

for that matter interpreted two units of oral work out of sixteen as constituting a “harmonious balance.” The truth, I believe the reason for the slow pace of change in the texts was due more to a wide reluctance by many of the publishers - and *Monbusho* - to produce texts with more oral work when they knew that many of the older and less proficient English teachers teaching during the nineteen eighties would resist such change, especially when the measure of their success was still going to be gauged by how well students fared in university entrance examinations.

In 1989, in another effort to alleviate some of the continuing problems, *Monbusho* again up-dated guidelines for language education in senior high schools and in 1990 issued a confidential memorandum to universities and colleges recommending changes in entrance examination assessment criteria.

For an overall impression of what the guidelines are I will briefly summarize the main points before going on to show how these have or have not affected the overall design and content of the materials used in “Access I”.

Monbusho Guidelines

The Monbusho guidelines, which in reality are rules which must be adhered to, effect many aspects of education and, perhaps none more so than, the content of each subject’s syllabus. For a textbook to pass government inspection and approval (*kentei*) for use in the nation’s high schools it must conform to THE GUIDELINES FOR STUDY IN THE SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL, Foreign Languages, English, (*Monbusho*, 1989).

This document outlines the National Curriculum requirements for the study of English. The curriculum is divided into seven components titled: “English I” (4 credits); “English II” (4 credits); “Oral Communication A, B and C,” (each worth 2 credits); “Reading” (4 credits); and “Writing” (4 credits). Students are required to earn a minimum of eighty credits to graduate high school. Each credit is thirty-five hours; one school hour is fifty minutes. There is no *Monbusho* ordinance that dictates the study of English. Schools are free to choose from a variety of other languages and are free to organize their own curriculum within a given set of parameters. However, schools choosing to offer English will be required to teach the general English course “English I” in the first year and at least one of the three “Oral Communication” courses for one of the three years spent in high school. All other components are optional, which means that the number of English language courses offered and the number of hours offered will vary from school to school.

‘ACCESS TO ENGLISH 1’ was written to conform to the guidelines for ‘English 1’ and all quotations made concerning these guidelines are from my own translations.

The overall objectives of the course of study “English I” are to cover four skills titled; listening, speaking, reading and writing (p.7 I. i.) with the overall intention that students will be able: (1) to express their feelings and opinions in spoken and written forms of the language; (2) to communicate freely without hesitation; (3) to develop a positive attitude toward communicating in a foreign language, and to

broaden international understanding by increasing their interest in language and culture (p 11) .

The aims of the listening comprehension component are to enable students to: understand accurately the content of short sentences or utterances; listen for the gist of longer passages, e.g., paragraphs, stories; and respond appropriately to what they hear by making comments or giving opinions (a.i.u. p.18).

The speaking component is to enable students to: be able to respond appropriately in context; express their opinions about something that they have read and; to organize what they wish to convey and to express themselves without missing the main points (a.i.u. p.p.19-20).

The reading component is to enable students to: comprehend the material when it is being read either aloud or silently; and get the gist of longer passages and to correctly understand the intended message; read long passages quickly; and read emotionally or with expression (a.i.u.e. p.p.20-21).

And the writing component to enable students to: take down short sentences from dictation; write a summary of something they have heard; write a summary of something they have read; and to write clearly and accurately (a.i.u.e. p.p.22-25).

Taking into consideration students' levels of achievement, materials of an appropriate level should be chosen. "Grammar items should serve some communicative purpose"

(p.25). In addition to the one-thousand words taught at junior high school, of which five-hundred and seven are given, each course book is allowed an unrestricted new vocabulary of between four and five-hundred new words which are to be introduced along with basic formulaic expressions.

These new guidelines represent a major shift in the way English has been taught in Japan (cf.1983 guidelines) and reflect *Monbusho's* attempt to introduce more emphasis on language as communication rather than language as an academic subject.

On the surface these guidelines give the overall impression that a syllabus other than a structural one would be in order. The conditions look ripe for a communicative syllabus and one may wonder why we did not take the opportunity for a more communicative approach than the one we decided to take. Unfortunately, though, on closer examination of the guidelines one notes the need to use key structures from the syllabus (Structures to be taught, p.p 62-64.142-143) and *Monbusho's* preference for structural and grammatical items to be taught according to their syllabus. Perhaps more importantly, though not written in the guidelines' overall statement of objectives, one of this course's main aims is still, preparing students for formal examinations: examinations which, although changing, still rely mainly on testing a student's ability to understand and manipulate the language's structure. And so with this in mind we decided upon a syllabus with a structural core around which everything else would spiral.

In addition to the five hundred and seven

compulsory words taught in junior high school the publisher decided to limit the number of new words for the two book series to six hundred and twenty-five, three hundred and twenty-three of which appear in "ACCESS I". The reason for such a low number of new words in this course is that "ACCESS I" is part of a full range of course books offered by the publisher and is specifically aimed at low achievers.

The decision making process

Discussion on the framework and syllabus began in early 1990 and took about five months with meetings being held once a week, each meeting lasting on average about four hours. The reason that this process took so long was mainly due to the amount of time needed to reach a consensus on how exactly to interpret the then new guidelines and how best to implement this seemingly radical new change without falling foul of both *Monbusho* and the teachers who are expected to teach from the new guidelines.

Unfortunately, *Monbusho* does not give any solid examples to make specific what it is they mean exactly in many of the guidelines nor in such statements as "basic useful collocations and expressions" (*Monbusho* Guidelines 1989. p.26 e). A statement which I interpreted to mean those kinds of collocations and expressions which serve either a phatic purpose or signal certain changes during communication, my Japanese colleagues interpreted as meaning basic useful idioms and expressions of a grammatical nature. i.e. "know... from.... It's not easy to know a good book from a bad one." (Access 1 p.42). Therefore we had to be especially

careful to make any of our decisions that were independent of the guidelines defensible in some way.

Our decisions concerning teaching methodology were made after considering that although the formal teaching situation is at present undergoing a change from the old grammar-translation and audiolingual methods to a more eclectic approach, the former are still used and have the potential for adaptation and integration into a viable approach suitable for meeting the requirements of *Monbusho* and the classroom. Which in turn meant that we would need to underpin our material selection and recommended teaching procedures with a sound second language acquisition theory.

At first we considered Krashen's comprehensible input hypothesis (1985) that if students are allowed to experience enough comprehensible input of an appropriate level, they will internalize the grammar and lexis. However, there are a number of problems with the input hypothesis, for example, some of the hypotheses are not falsifiable (Sharwood-Smith, 1981; Gregg, 1984) and that Krashen's claim that 'learnt' knowledge does not contribute to the development of 'acquired' knowledge cannot be empirically tested. However, there is sufficient reason to believe that comprehensible input does facilitate acquisition and therefore we felt it important to make sure that our material was graded. We also encouraged teachers to use English roughly tuned to the students' levels as much as possible.

We also considered the interaction hypothesis (Long 1983a) which posits input is made

comprehensible as a result of modification to the interactional structure of conversations when communication problems arise. Unfortunately, however, the negotiation of meaning only results in acquisition if there is a low affective filter. Which means that even if we designed a large number of interactive tasks for the classroom to promote negotiation, they may actually fail to aid language acquisition because they produce tension in the learner (Aston, 1986). Nonetheless conversational interaction does enhance strategic competence which helps the learner to make better use of his or her current language ability and therefore we would be justified in developing such tasks.

Finally though, we decided to base most of our decisions on the integrated hypothesis (Ellis, 1994) as this theory resolves the question of why instructed language learning results in faster learning and better levels of achievement in the long term while in the short term often fails to result in the direct acquisition of new grammatical structures. It hypothesizes that while the relationship between explicit and implicit knowledge is not direct or automatic, it does make the correlation that explicit knowledge does facilitate implicit knowledge by making the learner aware of linguistic features present in input — an essential point in defending a structurally based syllabus.

The structure of ACCESS 1

The overall framework and syllabus of 'Access I' was designed especially for low achieving students. Therefore the content was designed to be less difficult ('difficult' here being defined as volume of material to be

covered and the complexity of sentences used within a given body of text) than the average high school textbook, however, this is not to say that is of any less worth than textbooks with more difficult content.

The book starts with three warm-up lessons which contain no new grammatical or lexical material and are designed to gently wean the students from a junior high to a high school learning environment. The lessons from then on progress along a syllabus that contains the structures laid down by *Monbusho* though in a different order. Items that we thought were of particular use, but not in the official syllabus, were inserted in our optional "a la carte menu." Items included, for example, were such things as how to say large numbers; western gestures and their meanings; popular sayings and cliches; and how to read Roman numerals. I still have my doubts about the usefulness of the latter, however I must concede that the simple math exercises using Roman numerals have had very positive feedback. Toward the end of the book there are two lessons devoted to reading. Though these lessons contain new vocabulary, they do not contain any new grammatical structures and are designed primarily as review exercises for homework during vacations. At the end of the book there are three sections. The first is called "Functions" which is a summary of the main functions introduced in the book; the second "Useful Expressions", a summary of the one hundred and forty-four expressions that are considered useful, especially in entrance exams; and finally the "Word List", an alphabetical list of every word in the book, excluding proper nouns, the page on which they first appear and separate list of verbs and their participle

construction.

For the purpose of counting new words we decided that a new word would be defined by its spelling. For example, the irregular verb 'speak' and its past tense form 'spoke' would be counted as two words, whereas a homograph such as 'score', which is both a noun and a verb, is counted as only one new word. The same rule was also applied to adverbs. While this was not an entirely satisfactory solution it was workable and it made the categorization and counting of new words easier. This system also enabled us to increase the number of meanings carried by each word without increasing the number of new words.

The general format of 'Access 1' is very similar to all of the text books written for high school use, whatever the publisher, and seems to suggest some form of collusion between publishers. However, as far as I am aware there is no collusion, which leaves one wondering why then, do they all look the same? One possible reason is, that even when given the opportunity for a radically new approach, there is no advantage in taking it if it is not what the market wants. (A view held by our publisher.) This conservatism is relatively easy to understand when one considers that the overwhelming majority of my colleagues come from within the Japanese educational system and have all been accustomed to doing things in a similar way for a great many years. This, of course, combined with the fact that those in senior positions who choose the textbooks for schools are most likely to have come from similar backgrounds, one can easily see why anything that seems not to disrupt the way things are done, is more welcome than anything that poses

radical change. After all they are the ones who have to live with the consequences of any change.

It was also according to this hypothesis that we designed the page layout for each lesson. (see below illustration 2a taken from the T.M.) This format is the same for each of the ten standard lessons which progress according to the syllabus.

Lesson
4 Father and Son

Dr. White of New York works at a center for boys with learning problems. One day a father brought his son to him for testing.

The father told Dr. White about his son. "The boy is having difficulty in learning and can't even play baseball. My son isn't doing well because he doesn't try. I have done everything for him. I have even shouted at him and punished him. But nothing helps."

訳例
「父親と息子」
ニューヨークに住む医師のホワイト先生は学習障害児のための施設で働いています。ある日息子の父親が検査のために息子を連れて来ました。
父親はホワイト先生に息子のことで話しました。「息子は覚えが速く野球もできないんです。努力しないからうまくできないんです。私は息子のためのあらゆる事をやってみましたが、怒鳴ったり罰を与えたりもしました。しかし何の効果もありませんでした。」



Questions and Answers

- Where does Dr. White work?
He works at a center for boys with learning problems.
- Why did the father bring his son to Dr. White?
He brought his son to him for testing.
- What problems did the boy have?
He had difficulty in learning and couldn't even play baseball.
- Did the father try to help his son?
Yes, he did.

Useful Expressions

学習障害児や発達障害児を連れて来た。
* Please bring your calculator to every lesson.
(毎時間、計算機を持ってきなさい)
"We are having a party tonight. Can you come?"
"Sure. Can I bring my sister to the party?"
"Of course."
(今夜パーティーをやるんだね。来るの、お誘いありがとう。私の妹も連れて来ていいの、いいね。)

QUIZ 解答

- ニューヨークの学習障害児のための施設で働いている。
- 父親が息子に野球もできないから、努力しないからうまくできないから、息子のためのあらゆる事をやってみましたが、怒鳴ったり罰を与えたりもしました。しかし何の効果もありませんでした。

120 [教科書 p.40]

2 a

Lesson 4 and the rationale behind its contents

Lesson 4, as with all the other lessons, is a unit designed to be completed at a rate of one page per fifty minute class and follows a set pattern similar to the one used by previous text books. (cf. illustration 1a) Each page consists of a passage of text; useful

expressions, generally of some grammatical or structural significance, chosen from the text by general consensus; and a list of new words translated together with a guide to their pronunciation written in the international phonetic alphabet. Other items such as comprehension, listening, pronunciation drills, structure and communication activities appear at the end of the lesson.

The main aims of Lesson 4 are; to teach students how to give and follow instructions in writing and orally by using both the language that they already know and the new language learned in the lesson; to aid them in mastering the pronunciation of the digraph /O/; to teach the present perfect tense; the gerund as the subject of a sentence; and to teach the structures embedded in the useful expressions.

The first page of text in this lesson is designed to start with either an oral introduction or team teaching activity which serves to get students interested in the lesson, (top-down processing) (illustration 2a, 2b,). At the top of the page there is also a brief note and introduction in Japanese designed to indirectly remind teachers to use "warmers" and not to go in cold - a practice which I and my colleagues have witnessed far too often in high schools.

The main text was chosen from several put forward because, firstly, we thought that this material had an interesting point to make and secondly, it came closest to meeting the guidelines' subject matter requirements as the story concerned relationships that students can relate to. It also had the advantage that by substituting father for mother we

Oral Introduction

This lesson is a story about a father. His son was having trouble in learning. The father was worried. So, he took his son to a center for boys with learning problems for testing. The doctor tested the boy and then he tested the boy's father. What happened next was very interesting. So let's read the story and find out what happened.

<Yes or No?>

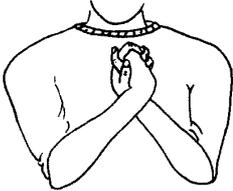
1. Was the boy having trouble in learning?
-- Yes, he was.
2. Did the boy's father take him to a doctor?
-- Yes, he did.
3. Did the doctor test the boy's father?
-- Yes, he did.

Team Teaching Plan

AET and JTE both need to practise the following.

1. Put both your arms out in front of you with the backs of your hands facing each other and your little fingers both pointing up.
2. Cross your arms over and clasp your fingers together.

3. Still keeping your hands clasped together rotate them in towards your body and up under your chin.



4. AET points to a finger (Don't touch the finger) and asks the JTE to move that finger. At first it is very difficult to move the correct finger.

AET: (Performing the aforementioned movement) Can you do this?
JTE: Let me see, can you do it again, please?
AET: Sure, watch. (Repeats the movement.)
JTE: (Does the action and asks) Now what do I do?"
AET: (Points to a finger and asks) Can you move this finger? How about this one? And this one?"
JTE: (Tries and says) It's not so easy, is it? (Then have the students try.)



Lesson 4 119

2 b

could avoid stereotyping parental roles and here in Japan where parental roles are well defined, this reversal of roles can be used as one of the spring boards in the lesson for further class discussion. The text itself was written with the need for controlled exposure to new vocabulary and grammar in mind.

Comprehension

Comprehension of a passage of text involves relating what has been read to previous knowledge and experience. It will involve students identifying significant detail; reorganizing information; using facts, opinions and arguments to check the internal logic of the argument; and organizing the new information into previously accepted categories or modifying existing knowledge and categories where necessary (Merrit, 1979). This will involve students being trained in a number of

words, but an image of the text's message. It follows therefore, that given the level of students for which this text is intended, their overall level of comprehension may, on occasion, be better checked though the use of L 1 rather than L 2, as the latter may be restricted by their limited ability to use some of the new vocabulary and structures.

Pronunciation drills

The pronunciation drill (p.43), follows a syllabus independent of the main text and at this stage is still only concerned with the pronunciation of phonemes that the Japanese find problematic.

We would have liked our pronunciation syllabus to have gone beyond merely teaching phonemes and minimal pairs. However, given the limited amount of space available and the fact that this subject goes beyond what one expect high school teachers to know, we kept our syllabus to a minimum. The contents for our pronunciation syllabus were based on the following points:

There are only five basic vowel phonemes of standard Japanese which is a much smaller number than those found in English. While the Japanese vowels have long forms the variations in English vowel length are completely allophonic (Ladefoged, 1975:250). In Japanese however, they are in limited distribution with the short forms and the mid vowels. They also tend to be lower than the vowels in European languages that are represented by the same symbols. (Shibatani 1990:161). In addition to the limited range of vowels the range of consonants of Japanese is also limited in comparison with English.

Japanese has five vowels while Gimson lists twelve for received pronunciation (RP) (1962:99); 15 consonants for Japanese (not including /N/ and /Q/) and twenty four for RP. Even when allophonic variations are included, the imbalance remains and therefore we have concentrated on the phonemes and allophones that are not found in Japanese or on sounds and contrasts that occur in unfamiliar environments.

The schwa which occurs in English unstressed syllables, but not in Japanese is covered in our syllabus as are diphthongs and the fricatives /f, v, θ, ð/; the lateral /l/; and the retroflex /r/, which also do not feature in the Japanese phonetic system.

Page 44 is devoted to the review and practice of the new structural and grammatical items presented in Lesson 4 and has deliberately been kept short in an effort to escape the grammar only image of past textbooks. This at first may look insufficient, but with four pages of the workbook and two pages of the students' guide devoted to the same, there is in fact ample review and practice.

Listening

The listening activity (p.43) is designed to review language already learned; as a receptive task requiring type 2 skills; and as a lead in to the communication activity on page 45.

The length and style of the listening activities in 'Access' were based upon our belief that while there are many similarities between reading as a skill and listening as a

skill, there are also some differences. Text, unlike spoken language, is static and is taken in at the reader's own pace, but tape recordings of spoken text, on the other hand, are received at speed. They may of course be played over and over again, but the speed at which they are received still remains the same. It therefore follows that considerable time needs to be invested by both students and teachers alike if the maximum benefit from listening materials is to be achieved. This in turn restricts the length of listening passages as teachers can only allot a certain amount of time to each activity within a syllabus.

In addition, written and spoken text differ markedly. Written text is tidy in that it is generally grammatically correct and that the argument being presented progresses logically, where as spoken language is generally more spontaneous and open to continual readjustment by the speaker. The dilemma here of course is which do we provide. Our decision was to begin with mainly tidy texts and to gradually introduce discourse markers such as hesitation devices (i.e. Well, Um, er,); topic change markers (i.e. Talking of which..., Tell me...,) etc, as the lessons progress.

Consequently the methodological model that we adopted for listening is essentially the same as that for reading in order to thoroughly cover as many type 1 and type 2 listening skills as possible.

Production

Finally, following on from the listening activity on page 43, the unit culminates on page 45 (illustration 2d) with a communication activity.

COMMUNICATION ACTIVITY

A 大輪の丸の下に大きな三角形を描きなさい。

1. Draw a large circle.
2. Draw a small triangle in it.
3. Draw a small triangle in it under the small circle.
4. Draw three short lines on the right and on the left of the small circle.
5. For the eyes, draw two small black circles.
6. Draw two triangles for the ears.

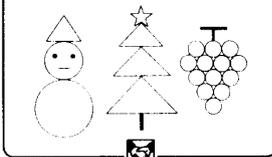
What is it? It's a _____.

ある。
<例>
Snowman (雪だるま)
 <例1>

1. Draw a triangle.
2. Draw a large circle under the triangle.
3. For the eyes, draw two small black circles in the large circle.
4. For the mouth, draw a short line in the same circle.
5. Draw a very large circle under the circle. What is it?

 <例2>

1. Draw a large circle.
2. Draw a smaller circle on the large circle.
3. In the second circle, draw two small black circles for the eyes.
4. For the mouth, draw a short line in the same circle.
5. Draw a triangle on the second circle. What is it?

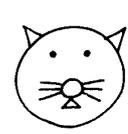


B 大輪の丸の下に大きな三角形を描きなさい。その下に、大輪の丸の中心に小さな三角形を描きなさい。

(Communication Activity)

ここでは、①人に指示を出す、②人の指示に従うという言語活動をとりあける。

A. <例>



It's a cat.

<留意点>

このactivityは individual work として授業中にもできるし、宿題にもできる。また先生(またはテープ)が指示を目で与えることにより listening の activity にすることも可能である。いずれも生徒の実情にあわせて使っていただきたい。

B

絵を描く時の指示は、上から下へ描くように指示を出す方法と、下から上へ描くように指示を出す方法が

Christmas tree (クリスマスツリー)
 <例1>

1. Draw a small star.
2. Draw a triangle under the star
3. Draw a bigger triangle under the first triangle.
4. Draw a bigger triangle under the second triangle.
5. Under the third triangle, draw a short line which is standing. What is it?

 <例2>

1. Draw a short line which is standing.
2. Draw a very big triangle on the line.
3. Draw a smaller triangle on the first triangle.
4. Draw a smaller triangle on the second triangle.
5. Draw a small star on the third triangle. What is it?

A Bunch of Grapes (一房のぶどう)
 <例1>

1. Draw a short line from left to right.
2. Draw a short line under the first line. These two lines become a T.

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2 d

The use and design of the communication activities used in 'Access' are underpinned by our adoption of the Integrated Theory of SLA (Ellis, 1994. above).

The various SLA hypotheses incorporated in the Integrated Theory suggest that language learning is aided by interaction and that when learners negotiate toward mutual understanding the process exposes them to language that has been made comprehensible. It also suggests that when learners are 'pushed' (Canale and Swain, 1980.) to use all their existing linguistic resources in order

to get their meaning across, they stretch their own linguistic output and increase the likelihood of new language and structures being integrated into their own interlanguage.

In order to achieve the maximum pedagogic potential from each of the communication activities offered in 'Access' we tried to ensure that they met the criterion of a communication task. These criterion are that a task must intrinsically feature the following characteristics in order to create a '*communicative opportunity*' (Ellis, 1982:75):

1 . The success of the enterprise generated by the materials must be demonstrated by the outcome and not by the process of the activity (see Corder, 1977 cited in Ellis, *ibid*).

2 . The focus of the enterprise must be on message throughout, rather than on channel, i.e. the speakers must be concerned with what they have to say rather than the way are going to say it.

3 . There must be an 'information-gap' [or similar, e.g. a difference in opinion or personal experience], i.e. one speaker must not know what the other speaker is going to say, although at times she may be able to guess it.

4 . The communication which the enterprise entails must be negotiated rather than predetermined. This will require the speaker to make adaptations both to what is said and to how it is said in the light of the feedback they receive.

5 . The speakers involved should be

allowed to use whatever resources - verbal or non-verbal - they possess, irrespective of whether these resources conform to normal native-speaker behavior or not. (Ellis, *ibid*)

In addition to examining whether a task met the above criterion a task would also be assessed for the kind of language that it would likely generate and the amount of interactional adjustment they produce.

Briefly this was done by assessing whether a task was: a one-way task, which is a task where the learner in possession of all the information has to pass it on to the other learner who has none; or a two-way, task where both learners have to share their information in order to complete the task. Two-way tasks generate more interactional adjustments than the former (Long, 1983a, Nunan, 1993:60) and therefore the majority of tasks in 'Access' are of the latter type.

Tasks were also assessed for difficulty in accordance with the three components in the model proposed by Skehan (1994:191-4). In brief these are: Code complexity - the variety and difficulty of syntax and vocabulary; Communicative stress - the pressures of real-time communication on comprehension and output; and Cognitive complexity - the nature and extent of the mental processes involved in the preparation of expressing one's thoughts. Task difficulty was considered for two reasons: first, if a task is too difficult then learners will concentrate on message at the expense of form or worse become demoralized and switch off; and second, if a task is too easy then there will be nothing to stimulate the learning processes.

Conclusion

I have briefly pointed out that the debate over English teaching materials and methodology in Japan has been a long one and that *Monbusho's* latest guidelines represent a major shift away from English as an academic subject to English as language for communication.

I have also described the new guidelines and discussed how these and the realities of the market place and the teaching environment have lead us to compromise on certain issues in order to produce a text which is usable and saleable. And in conjunction with a sample lesson I have explained the rationale behind each of the exercises. In doing this I have made clear that we the authors of 'Access 1' have in earnest tried to contribute to *Monbusho's* declared aims of greater emphasis on English as a language for communication.

This textbook was written with the ultimate goal of preparing students for college or university entrance examinations. It contains far more oral work than it's predecessors and as it was also designed to be used in conjunction with one of *Monbusho's* additional syllabuses I believe it to be an ideal core textbook for the students at which it is aimed. Nevertheless whether these or better approaches to using the materials are adopted will always remain with individual teachers.

In closing and more importantly perhaps, is the fact that 'Access 1' passed the *Monbusho* textbook inspection procedure, thereby

receiving the official seal of approval as a text which conforms to and reflects *Monbusho's* designs for the future. This approval is necessary as without it a text can not be used in a high school, no matter how much more suitable it may be. Of course, it may be said that while texts conforming to the 1983 guidelines, did in fact do little or nothing to promote oral communication even though it was required in those guidelines. This can not be said of the present approval system as *Monbusho* sends half of the inspection copies it receives to various universities and high schools for blind assessment and comment on a text's content and viability. This new method has resulted in the rejection of the unprecedented number of at least four textbooks for failing to "shift classroom English toward a greater emphasis on communication" (Daily Yomiuri November 1992). There is hope yet.

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