

**EFFECT OF LITERATURE-BASED INSTRUCTION
ON ESL ACQUISITION RATES**

Kedrick P. A. James

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Department of Language and Literacy Education
The University of British Columbia
Vancouver, Canada

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Abstract

In light of research on bilingual education, this thesis examines English as a second language instructional methodologies that prevail in private, international ESL schools with an adult clientele. Notably, the current state of the international ESL industry does not reflect key advances in thinking about ESL teaching and learning. For example, the present emphasis on standardized testing as a gatekeeper of social, academic, and economic advancement has persuaded many private international ESL schools to adopt a grammar-based, communicative model of instruction in the understanding that such an approach is most efficacious in preparing students for success on exams. This study, however, suggests that a variety of factors contribute to student success in these settings, not the least of which is cultural immersion, which enhances reciprocal learning processes and contextualizes learner input. Literature is posited as furthering this process through *textual immersion*. Employing methods that promote textual immersion and creative response to literature encourages instructors and students to set aside the biased notion that there is a correct standard of English usage, and to explore, instead, the interactive possibilities inherent in meaning-making and cultural expression. In this study, it is hypothesized that integration of literature into ESL pedagogy increases basic grammatical knowledge and enhances cultural sensitivities. An experimental design was used to compare the results of a literature-enhanced, content-rich curriculum with a standardized, grammar-focused curriculum (Soars and Soars, 2003). With an alpha level of .05, findings suggest the null hypothesis for significant variation in acquisition rates dependent on curriculum, according to standardized test scores (Harrison and Kerr, 1996).

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CHAPTER ONE

Literature Saves Students From Walking The Blank

Dissecting the Living Language

What if we were throwing away half of the potential of every language learner by teaching from normal grammar based texts in the adult private ESL school context? Would we think of language learning differently if instruction gave rise to play, and work to fascination? Would this encourage students to become self-motivated, and exceed even their own expectations? The range of linguistic mastery traverses from gesturing and physical signifying to fantastic and bottomless literature. At some point in the continuum we might plant a flagstaff and say, "This, here, is the point of Fluency. From here we may take our measures of individual ability." If we can test for a standard English knowledge reliably, we can issue certificates to any person who demonstrates it; and so we do. In the present global economic climate, English certification has blossomed into a multibillion dollar industry. Numerous adult private ESL schools teach primarily from grammar-based curricula toward grammar-standardized tests. In the process we, and I say we because I teach in such a school, convert the infinite ingenuity of human linguistics and expression into an alphanumeric equivalent, a score, or a grade. We reduce the whole to a gradient-encoded feature. In most cases, the result bears significant consequences for the individual, in ways which are not necessarily relevant to the content of the assessment, instruction, or learning. This is like grading drivers according to their skill at changing tires. But we can have only a few flags, because, after all, even double standards are a problem: too many and the system is reduced to functional impotence.

A living language is not easily measured. It grows in waves, eddies, pockets of culture. It is the manifestation of ongoing social dialogue, and it is constantly changing. Language sustains our interpersonal identity in a neighborhood of relations, broadened by perspective into the virtual realm of history. At its most profound, language has affective energy which we feel but cannot measure, a type of cumulative energy of resonance. Language connects the external world to remote regions of psyche, and vice versa. For many centuries, the standards of fluency have been set by great oratory and literature. Engagement with a foreign language implied learning through the language's content, and being informed about the ideas and ideals of those who had come before and given character to the language. Linguistic form and function were originally a matter of *techne*, the art of dialogue about a craft, such as speaking or carpentry (as in the word root of articulation). The test of fluency was the ability to move others with language, to woo their beliefs, ideals and behaviours. For the Classical Greeks this servile art was known as rhetoric, a composite aesthetic of rhythm and dynamic derived from persuasive speech, tropes which filled both pattern and performance. English speaking cultures adopted this model for the most part. But in the present-day adult international English as a Second Language private school context, only the structural education has survived; the art of making meaning has been scrubbed, and to a very large degree, literature has gone with it.

To turn learning foreign language fluency into a business requires pragmatism and efficiency. Language must be made perfunctory, and the user, proficient. The teaching and assessment of proficiency, as an enterprise, has taken off around English as a Foreign Language in the last few decades. And I, an ESL instructor, am one of the

direct beneficiaries of my native tongue. Everywhere I see teachers like myself selling the language in bits and pieces, nuts and bolts, teaching students to change tires. And I love to teach the bits and pieces but only because *in context* they are so important. Without context, the pieces are stripped of their relative values and meanings. Fluency springs from interpersonal, intertextual contact. And, based on my own experience, literature is the best tool I know for broadening context, and therefore broadening fluency. But literature is highly subjective, and it excels by not being standard. So whatever it is we are marketing and selling as English in the private ESL school context, it is not reasonable to call it fluency. Though we may call it grammar in use, it is not strictly utilitarian knowledge either. Native speaker need no formal knowledge or understanding of grammar to function and succeed in their own society. Fluency happens regardless, with enough sustained engagement. So what many private ESL schools are selling to the general non-English speaking public is the *enhancement* of the innate heuristics which gradually manifest as the acquisition of a foreign language, and a piece of paper signifying the degree to which this process has occurred. We sell the manual, and the parts, but the cultural roadmap is not included.

A Memorable Fancy

I don't know how it happened to me. As a young child I remember being read to and liking it. I remember, around the same preverbal time, playing with my twin in the bathtub, and him telling me things that were so funny I would go into hysterics, fits of uncontrollable laughter, even though we could not speak, per se. I remember the early childhood education basal readers (who could forget Dick and Jane?) and the alphabet

on a row of green cards just below the molding of the classroom ceiling with thin stylized arrows showing the movements of each letter. Later, I remember writing stories which the teacher stapled to the wall in the hallway outside our classroom, and my story had so many pages it had accordion pleats made with paperclips to keep it from being trampled on. I remember writing a poem for my grade three teacher, about snow, and it was published in an anthology of children's poems, which I never got to see. I remember C. S. Lewis, Dr. Suess, and then, after an apathetic hiatus as a reader, finding Harry Harrison, and an early burgeoning love of Science Fiction. I remember how, in Space Ship Medic, when the ship is stranded ex nihilo and loosing oxygen, the hero saves the day by running an electrical current through a trough of water, and I got my first sense of alchemy.

I remember hearing Leiningen Versus the Ants on CBC radio, while driving home on a drenched Friday night with my family from violin lessons, and although it was a cold winter night, we stayed half an hour in the unheated van to hear the end of the story. I remember teaching the story many years later and finding the same thrill. And I remember reading No One Here Gets Out Alive, a biography of Jim Morrison, when I was sixteen, and how Morrison had been inspired by the work of Rimbaud. And so I went to a local bookstore, asking for something by Rim-baud to the clerk with the glasses at the front desk of Banyan Books, and was loudly mocked for my ignorant pronunciation. But then it happened, like waking from a deep coma, and I began my real literary education.

My sense, based on these recollections, is that I became fluent at the age of 16, a decade after I had acquired functional literacy. The transition was marked by an awareness of my cultural ignorance. But it also ignited my engagement, as a self-

motivated researcher, with the breadth of what constitutes knowledge, long before I entered post secondary education. Fluency implied knowing where ideas come from, and who tells them best. But it also meant knowing where words come from, and what can come from their use. It was necessary to presuppose that words had far more potential meaning than I was aware of, and that a good dictionary was often the best book. I was a decade into fluency before becoming aware of how young English is--her first dictionary little more than a couple of centuries old--and how lexicons and semantic nuances are constantly changing. Additionally, the process of becoming literate cannot be rushed, especially regarding great books, which can take a lifetime to read or write. Furthermore, to know a book, one uses a stylized sense of the author, or in the case of stories, of the characters. And this mental image is created by the voice(s) within the text. The voice is generative, not prescriptive; it gives testimony, and a writer provides *testimony* for his world, that the voice might conjure beyond the circumstances of a user, and offer up its relevance to the explorations of future generations of readers.

Over two decades of fluency, I have taken the opportunity to meet more than a handful of the contemporary writers in Canada, the United States, Mexico, and Europe, and to present my own poetry in as many ways and media as possible. As such, it was a crucial and fulfilling aspect of my existence, not just my fluency: they have been mutually defined. Poetry has been my life. I was autodidactic in poetry, but my love of it was ignited by literary encounters with people who live through language and understand the more extreme range of experiences it invokes. Many people avoid literature (I do not mean the pulp of everyday writing) because it is demanding, and even dangerous, and the image they have of a literary figure is of someone frighteningly serious and austere, with

exhausting incomprehensible ponderings. When teaching teenagers literature, they are often amazed to hear that something was written just for experimentation and play. For many students the ludic state of energetic early childhood language games gets totally lost after a few years of textbooks, and they begin to see the world of literature as task-oriented, grade-determined obligation. Language is a master appeased by correct, formal responses. The television, the internet, the picture-loaded "teenzines", computer games and the cinema host their recreational needs, as print may once have done. As society retreats from literature for the easier gratification of electro-mediated experience, much of the essence of what makes for a good reader or listener is being lost in the process. And, I posit, it is this essence of inner listening, the reflective intelligence, wherein the real measure of fluency lies.

I have recounted my own experience in order to suggest the bias from which my work as a teacher and as a researcher, derives. I do not approach the teaching of literature or language in general as anything other than a commitment to the whole of what it has to offer. This involves manifesting the text, with all the skills and talents there are available to muster among those students gathered, so that it may be embodied, as a real and physical memory. These memories are woven with grand intertextual designs, conceptual highways—exploring themes and semes and memes which compose not just the map of language, but a growth in consciousness. The grand opera of sleep is the height of scale to which our language instruction might aspire. Teaching function and form is devoid of the personal value and relevance of language, and the personal is status pro quo to the learning experience. Without it, grammar is a bore. I love grammar, but only because of

my personal, highly-subjective attachment to language. Without this enthusiasm, much learning potential is wasted.

Benchmarking Fluency

One might think this argument errs in justifying the obvious: it is not hard to imagine that a context/content rich ESL curriculum taught in an engaging manner would inspire students in a variety of ways. Neither is it my purpose to dispel any illusions about getting rid of direct grammar instruction. Without some functional knowledge of the foreign language grammar already in situs, a literary curriculum would be less serviceable. Teaching of English as a Second Language (TESL) has tended to follow some basic curricular assumptions guilelessly (e.g. traditional grammar is the most effective pedagogy), while teachers are relied upon to provide the entertainment value of the lesson. Many adult international students have specific academic goals, such as entering North American universities, and their focus is on meeting the required standards of these institutions. Schools around the world teach ESL courses designed particularly to meet the linguistic challenges of professional academic goals. To satisfy the criteria, instructors of these courses teach to the test, as much as they teach the language. This, of course, is a familiar scenario—one that is played out at all levels of schooling governed by standardized tests.

There are many benchmarks of fluency. One benchmark of adeptness with a language is the ability to free associate, to think imaginatively (generate schema), spontaneously and rhythmically. This introspective salience requires the synthetic use of visualization (imagination) and internal dialogue (audiation). The rhythm of audiation

and conceptualization must become naturalized to the new syntax, so that students may function in context reduced communicative (or evaluative) tasks. As Cummins and Swain (1986) conclude, "a major pedagogical principle of both L1 and L2 teaching is that language skills in context-reduced situations can be most successfully developed on the basis of initial instruction which maximizes the degree of context embeddedness; ie, the range of cues to meaning" (p. 158). This change is only complete when the silent inner narrator has his or her voice clearly and effortlessly grounded in the natural melodic lilt of the target language and the notions of the user are expressed with a common idiom. Meeting the above criteria would put the user on communicative (if not cultural) par with a native speaker. But this can be hard to assess or inculcate in students, because such aspects of language are not *by the book*, but *by the people*.

Examples of writing provide an important qualitative measure of the naturalization of cognitive processes to the patterns of a new language. Yet there is a subjective looseness to the rubrics applied in the standardized scoring of writing. The subjectivity involved in grading writing shows a different measure is being used than when filling in a blank with the correct verb form or pronoun to complete an otherwise meaningless sentence. Instead the concerns governing writing assessment are interest, logic, style, flow. These are the currency of language, and result from feedback provided individuals in a shared cultural context. Meaning itself is dialectical, and memory requires the hook of meaning for retrieval. English speaking friendships, and other forms of cultural immersion, produce very sudden results, even though they are not instructionally ordered and coherent experiences. This is known to anyone who has tried to learn a language from books, and who then experiences cultural immersion in the L2.

A Rationale for Using Literature in ESL Instruction

The training of voices is one reason using literature in ESL instruction makes good sense. Literature creates out of voices, rhythms of song and storytelling: it constructs reality using type to encapsulate voices which become the associate of the reader, swinging alongside, through the text, like a patient dance partner. Reading literature aloud with others, enacting and embodying it, brings the voice of the text to life. When well chosen, literature reveals more about the linguistic basis of the culture from which it extends than do random sentences chosen for function recognition purposes, read aloud, if at all, in a monotone staccato. Fluency is not mechanical, it is personal. Literary schema are not structured in superficial taxonomies translated from one language to the next; rather, they explore the relevance of the schema to the target culture. With guidance, many underpinnings of the novel society can be exposed through an examination of even a small representation of its literature. To qualify this claim, the cultural, generic, and thematic threads of any literary work extend well beyond the work at hand, and resonate with the greater social fabric which clothed its author in the textiles (or voices) of fluent discourse.

By reacting and responding to values, we open up the possibilities for meaning and its construction. Through reading we gain a much better sense of how these possibilities are opened up through styles of discourse. Consequently, by reading aloud with coaching and guidance, ESL students gain all the potential benefits of language acquisition (innate processes) as well as learning (conscious, effort-driven processes). By chorusing voices, students can become sensitive to the foreign linguistic polyrhythms, and this, in turn, may affect the way they think, and dream, in a language. This highly

personal process can not truly be measured and norm referenced, but it thrives in the social environment of the classroom, where there is room for expressive experimentation and interaction. Unlike its standardized numerical equivalent, language does not have a fixed system. The fact that 1 is less than 2 carries little ambiguity; the word *chill* by comparison carries a wealth of possible values, some more or less culturally independent, and socially dependable. Paradoxically, pure mathematics becomes a play of abstractions and is attuned to intuitive, rather than strictly empirical, insights at the higher levels of inquiry,

Becoming a Teacher Researcher

After teacher training I began working for a high school, in the new international programme for foreign ESL students. I had the great fortune, to be designing curricula for their English Grammar, Literature, Drama and Mathematics classes. I taught all the subjects together, as units within units. I had student dramatize everything: we used mathematics to calculate the reality of stories, the distance traveled, the weight of enough gas to get to the moon, the worth in Canadian dollars of the dragon's treasure bed. They designed and role played sentence generating machines. Students learned every children's song I know, and spoke them as rap artists would. After a few months, some of them started to get my jokes. This is the real breakthrough, I thought at the time. They were acquiring culture and language was sneaking in the door with it. After completing my contract, I was eager to find out if there was one best way of learning a foreign language, better than listening to tapes and looking at grammar books. Literature is a catalyst for language, but it must be made manifest as a social experience. Literature

taught at its optimal level, with social acts of audiation and imagination, may be just as successful as grammar in ESL curriculum. These are the questions that began to interest me shortly before I accepted a position teaching ESL in Vancouver, Canada.

Setting the Scene: Teaching in an International ESL Institute

Beginning at nine in the morning, students take their seats for the morning lesson in one of 15 rooms with whiteboards, tables with 4 or 5 chairs each, posters, maps, and examples of student work. Students are usually happy to see their teacher and one another. Many are young adults, on their first overseas adventure, and for the most part, are having the time of their lives. The classrooms are square, with windows overlooking a courtyard. The school atmosphere is relaxed. Rules regarding punctuality and attendance vary among the teachers. Despite staff discussions, strictness fluctuates between non-admission for lateness and friendly greeting whenever a student arrives. Tailing a quick chat, teachers have students open their Headway English Course books (Soars & Soars, 2003) to a given page and the lesson begins. Frequently teachers give out supplemental photocopied handouts, which the class may do individually, in pairs, groups, or as a whole. A grammatical or thematic focus guides each period of 100 minutes, or may last over both morning sessions. Units have a weekly delivery and six-eight weeks make up an average length of stay at any level in Headway. It is not unusual for students to draw pictures, collage storyboards, make posters, role play, give presentations, play language games, watch movies and videos, or sing songs. Several teachers are musicians. And each class is quite different, because of teaching style, and because students change levels

individually rather than collectively, which means that peer groups do not set the tone of the various classes through which they progress.

When the break comes between the morning lessons, the students congregate in the lobby, seek spots in the computer room, go downstairs to the coffee shop, or stand outside smoking by the rear exit which opens on a landscaped white concrete terrace with a Japanese restaurant at one end. The teaching staff busily prepare for the next class or get refreshments. There are no bells to call students back to class. The atmosphere is buzzing and verbose. Some classes, those doing TOEFL or Cambridge preparation, may be writing an extended test, with closed doors signing QUIET PLEASE! The computer room packs full and some try to stay on past the start of the next class, with teachers calling to stragglers as they rush back to their rooms with piles of photocopies in hand. Finally, the secretaries take back the quiet of their central workspace, and the classrooms fill with the sounds of talking and laughing. The workings of a school can be known from the sound of the halls, and these corridors offer laughter, lecture, music, chatter and more chatter. At the end of the second period, teachers assign homework, perhaps play a quick game, and students hurry out to meet their friends.

At lunch break students leave their morning classrooms and gather in other classrooms, or go on outings with friends in relatively homogenous cultural groups to eat their lunch. Very often native languages other than English are heard at these times, around the fundamental social ritual of eating. The excited atmosphere of the school has a beneficial side effect. It makes students more talkative. Many thoughts and feelings, though, cannot be shared openly, and are quite difficult to express in English; this makes having fellow speakers of the first language a source of immediate camaraderie and a

source of potential learning deficit. The presence of other L1 speakers reduces the depth of immersion. Consequently staff are always advising students to make friends from a variety of nationalities and cultural backgrounds in order to promote casual English practice.

When students return from lunch they go to the somewhat easier and more relaxing afternoon period, also for 100 minutes. Business classes generally go longer in the afternoons, and remain more focused on formal models of speaking. Around the school the sounds of listening practice tapes emanate into the halls from the test preparation classes. Many of the voices on the tapes are British, and it seems the building has changed location. In conversation classes a jovial effort conflates the distinction between teacher and entertainer. At the beginner English levels, the students play simple games while teachers make larger-than-life gesticulations; in the intermediate levels students discuss current events at home and in the world; and in the higher levels they practice public speaking while teachers give input and feedback on particular areas of knowledge or interest. When classes are over the students leave for their residences, or gather for competitive sports and casual meetings with friends and other students. The frequent change of classes and teachers makes the whole school more cognizant of each other's existence. Teachers routinely change the levels and courses they teach. These changes are healthy, as monotony is dangerous on both sides of the educational equation.

At the end of the day, the teachers gather up their materials, clean up their classrooms, and leave or prepare for the next day, now looking more weary and spent. In the staffroom, a large library of books and tapes offer diverse lesson possibilities, or student-specific supplemental materials. There are separate shelves for Dictionaries,

Grammar, Reading, Writing, Listening, Conversation, Pronunciation, Vocabulary, Cambridge FCE, Cambridge CAE (Advanced), TOEFL and TOEIC, and Business English books, along with binders of test materials for each level, a pile of scrap magazines, a small selection of videos, two photocopiers around a central lunch/work table. From this list the most apparent absence is literature. The literature collection, some fifty adapted texts of various novels and plays, is kept in the Director's office. Any student may borrow a book, and for some students a particular book is suggested. However, the incorporation of literature into curriculum is very rare given the breadth of teaching styles and range of potential support materials, movies, comics and other adaptations available. For most teachers there is enough to cope with, so that the additional scope of literature is seldom worked into classroom instruction. The absence of literature may also be due to unfamiliarity with the materials or methods required to use them, or a lack of multiple copies of books to facilitate group instruction.

The requisite certificate to teach in the private ESL business is the Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL). TEFL certification is a booming industry in Vancouver, with dozens of private businesses training and certifying teachers for the international ESL market. Most are expected to find jobs overseas, where the demand is higher (as are the wages, in some cases). Teacher training takes the hybrid form of materials research, basic teacher training, and a rudimentary presentation of applied linguistics. Instruction ranges from one month to one year, with varying lengths of practicum undertaken. As is the case in any instructional scenario, teachers in training are expected to bring personal charm and interests, as a means of livening up the classroom dynamic. Techniques for specialty classes such as Business English or test preparation

are typically learned on the job, and reflect the life experience of individual teachers. Professional development will largely be done according to trial by fire. TEFL does not in any way prepare a teacher to teach literature, and yet, literature might be just what is needed to get prompt results from students. This is what became most apparent to me in my first experiences teaching ESL. Indeed, it strikes me that the lack of incorporation of literature is both oversight and inadequate teacher preparation. Until recently, after all, the notion that one could become educated in a language and remain ignorant of its literature would have seemed absurd, as Frey (1963) has observed.

International ESL, as a private sector industry quite recently come of age, has been slow to catch up to the theoretical research and field work in mainstream ESL, and consequently much L2 pedagogy in the adult private schools relies on pragmatism, using all the available resources, while needing to justify lessons based on the transmission of specific grammar *units* and formal communicative practice. Instilling an awareness of and interest in literature as a foreign language-learning resource has still further benefits in the context of international ESL. Most students return to their countries and the advantages of immersion are lost. Vocabulary disappears, general ease and fluency are likely to diminish unless the opportunity for frequent practice exists. Second languages have a "use-it-or-lose-it" quality. Krashen (1993) suggests that literature can help prevent a certain amount of eventual attrition or loss of fluency. Reading a novel in English from cover to cover, understanding its literal meaning, and its cultural significance, and bringing its characters to life, is an important milestone. The experience can be repeated, albeit more independently and requiring greater effort on the part of the learner. Reading supports L1 language skills profoundly throughout an individual's life; and in a non-

English dominant environment, reading English literature may help arrest the natural L2 attrition, not just of content knowledge, but with proficiency in use. It is important to provide ESL students with models of expression which reward repeated encounter, and can be resourced outside the context of immediate cultural immersion.

Literature can offer a solid foundation for many kinds of lessons and discussions which are undertaken in classrooms of the private ESL schools daily. Literature provides context through associated psychosocial constructs, or fantasies (Zizek, 1997) embedded in the habitual functions of language. Benefits of content learning can affect many aspects of synthetic and analytical cognition including memory, values orientation, cultural sensitivity, familiarity with idiomatic expression, identity development, and judgment, but all this is lost when we only provide an exercise in walking the blank. Throughout the busy day of the bustling private international ESL center I described, the paucity of content-rich language materials is a problem. With the introduction of computerized testing of standard English proficiency, the problem is unlikely to be arrested soon, unless literature proves to be at least as effective, if not more effective, in the education practices of the private adult ESL marketplace. And what better place to test this than *in situ*, at a private language school in a major urban center for English education, with willing and helpful volunteers, administration and staff.

A Call to Research

The Director of Studies at the language school came to me one day, and sharing my interest in literature and drama, asked me to create an off-curriculum afternoon reading class. The course began with a novel, *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep*

(Dick, 1968/1996) and *Mother Goose* nursery rhymes. The students practiced reading skills and memorized poems and had tongue twister timed competitions. The main goal was to engage students in the text by helping them not only to comprehend words but to hear, and express, the voices in the texts. We discussed the future, technology and ethics, and students did research on robotics and nuclear war. We discussed love, and what it means to love something inorganic. All the while students practiced reading aloud with expression, finding the meanings of unfamiliar words by context and etymological dissection. We play-acted scenes from the story, even though the classroom was small and there was very little room to move. Students found it a welcome change to the routine conversation practice. When the reading and dramatization was complete, we watched the movie adaptation *Blade Runner*, and, by way of summary, compared the original to the cinematic version.

The trial reading class was successful and warranted further development. Two factors gauge the merit of instruction in the private language school context: a) how much fluency is acquired according to subjective and standardized assessment over a given period of time, and b) how much the students enjoy the experience, the latter being closely connected to the school's bottom line. These are the standard measures of any enterprise in the business of selling language. The reading class was a success because it had a waiting list. One student remarked "it wasn't a class, it was an experience." Consequently, I was once again approached by the Director to create a specialized curriculum, based on academic principles of language education. This class was to coincide with the morning periods of instruction, and act as an alternative to the regular

program of level-based grammar instruction. I was thrilled at the opportunity to introduce a literary curriculum into the school and immediately agreed.

Thus I piloted an academic class lasting for ten weeks, five days a week, 200 minutes a day, upon the seas of literature (our theme was piracy). Study began again with a novel, this time *Brave New World* (Huxley, 1957/1996), complete with its alienated renegades who reject the shallow pleasures of their would-be utopia. We researched the history of communism and explored political allegory as a theme. I had had the great fortune to chance onto a collection of original Classics Illustrated dating from 1947, and found several seaworthy novels such as *Kidnapped*, *Robinson Crusoe*, *The Mutineers*, *Count of Monte Cristo*. Students read each story in three versions, an adapted text, an illustrated version, and selections from the original for comparison. We watched new and old pirate movies, created our own flags, sang shanties, and songs about pirates.

The course ended with the performance of two 45 min plays written and performed for the whole school in costume, by memory. This is a remarkable achievement for intermediate-level ESL students. Some personal gains they made during the course of instruction were not measurable according to standardized assessment. Changes in the students were largely personal, and social. They developed cultural fluency, began to have a communicative comfort, enjoy a certain respect among other students. They were, for lack of a better term, more engaged in their present circumstances. It is difficult to assess these points of progress according any standardized system. It was clear, however, that the students had gained much, and therefore the following question, which is central to this thesis, arose:

Might an instructional process involving engagement with literature match or exceed normal grammar instruction in terms of fluency attained, as measured by standardized ESL testing instruments?

To pursue this question, I elected to offer the class again under experimental conditions.

This study I will present in chapter 4.

Summary

To summarize, my own experiences teaching in an urban international adult ESL school led me to ask the following questions:

1. Is there a sound rationale for the bias of ESL instructional methodologies in some private adult ESL schools on form and function, content-reduced exercises?
2. Are current ESL instructional practices in such settings optimizing the reciprocal functions of oral and visual language processing, acquisition and memory?
3. Can literature be incorporated into routine ESL instruction in such settings so as to match or exceed expectations for fluency attained as measured by standardized ESL testing instruments ?
4. What are the other possible benefits of literature instruction in ESL?

This thesis, in which I address the above questions, is presented in five parts: (1) thesis introduction; (2) a historical survey of ESL instructional practices and a discussion of the theoretical principles on which these practices have been based; (3) a rationale for why literature is important in Language education and a theoretical basis for the

experimental design; (4) an overview of the experimental design and subject profile; and (5) a discussion of my findings and the implications of this research.

CHAPTER TWO

A Brief History of Second Language Education

The Verbal Contract

The notion of an ESL *industry* is of recent origin. Many of the standard instructional models of this field have descended, more or less literally, from the historic bilingual practices of clergymen and scholars learning Classical languages such as Ancient Greek and Latin, circa 1300 CE. This is because the earliest translations of biblical and many important secular texts remaining in European hands were in classical languages. When these languages ceased to be used in natural communicative situations, they were sought by individuals seeking through reading to have a first hand experience of the literature of those past cultures. Study was made using Latin or Greek phrase books, and a basic syntax, or blueprint for construction, was revealed. Literacy could be attained by reading volumes of literature, usually aloud. Knight (2001, p. 148) states that “Howatt records the use of materials to teach both French and Latin in the middle ages which were based on the study of dialogues (Howatt, 1984)”. Sounding was important, as most early scrolls and papyrus books had no break between words, reducing efficiency of visual scanning. The origins of reading rely on the notion of written record, usually the transcription of some form of verbal contract, between humans and the gods, or individuals. The textual record, which was kept sealed until circumstances demanded its re-sounding, was meant to be opened in the presence of a scribe or reader, someone who could render the contract verbal again. When I say contract, I mean it as verb and noun. A text brought people together in the pronouncement of its message, good or bad. As such, writing contracts the social environment; it is the harbinger of what later becomes

civilization, since reading began with the development of cities and the contraction of social space. Yet writing was a womb for the rebirth of voice, manifesting in internalized space, able to expand, as *The Word*, upon the world.

At a time when all learning was aural, the scribe likely had a more interiorized experience of language, simply because one cannot use any traditional forms of writing technology and maintain the same speed of oral production. Therefore the scribe needed to work from memory. The scribe, by comparison with the orator and reader, was graphically located in his procedural memory while it seems likely that others would have been almost entirely phonologically motivated. In antiquity, voices which existed in only one person's head were thought to have an extrinsic source: gods, demons, muses, witches, ancestors, etc. The post-bicameral split of the interior and exterior facets of consciousness was provoked in part by the transpersonal subjectivity of writing (Jaynes, 1977). The internalization of thought, and the manifestation of silent reading, have mutual histories. The mass-production of books by Medieval monastic orders began the process of copying in silence, from a quarto leaf, not by transcribing voice. This anticipated movable type, which mechanized copying and began the great spread of literacy. Early English printers, such as William Caxton, had a remarkable role in the evolution of the language, and were the first to make written complaint of the need for regulation of use and standardization of spelling (Milroy & Milroy, 1991). During the span of the last thousand years, Greek and Latin have earned the title *Ancient*, yet their pull on scholarly education in Europe and abroad remained profound, even in spite of recent challenges in the form of postmodern scholarship. When translations became more widely available, the need to learn the classical languages started to disappear, and all

that remained was the silent, Copyist's method, with its visual language learning and formal production, adopted for general use in English education.

Begins with Bilingualism

Bilingualism in the ancient world was common, for anyone engaged in trade had need of at least two or more languages or dialects. Schooling was also bilingual, and due to the scarcity of written materials, a scholar could not read widely in only one language. The oldest model of official bilingualism appears to have originated with the Hebrews, who generally maintained Jewish religion through Hebrew while allowing culture to absorb whatever dialect was common to the people of Diaspora. The colonial powers of Greece and Rome established their own schools and monuments to perpetuate their culture, but made no concerted attempt to spread the use of their mother tongue in the occupied territories (Lessow-Hurley, 1990). By the time Greek, Latin and Arabic had all frozen in their classical forms, there was an ever increasing need for linguistic plurality, not only of whole languages, but between fragmented dialects. Bilingualism was required of speakers, not because languages were syntactically incongruous, but because they were phonetically distant. Colonials in the New World made more rigorous efforts not only to preserve, but also to advance the use of their language, and to employ it as the chief tool of assimilation of diverse cultures into a dominant, linguistically homogenous norm. German was the most prevalent second language throughout much of the development of the United States in the 18th and 19th centuries, while French predominated in Europe as the *lingua franca* prior to World War One. More than a dozen languages were taught in schools and centers around America with Franke and Berlitz

and others pioneering new methods, such as the Direct Method, which emphasized oral interaction, by the end of the 19th century (Knight, 2001).

To appreciate the complexity of the national, political, social, and economic issues which revolved around immigration of non-English speaking peoples to North America, and the educational challenges they posed, I shall focus briefly on the settlement and schooling of Canada. This area of research has been remarkably well covered by Ashworth (Ashworth, 1975, 1979, 1988), and many details in the following section are amalgamated from her writings. Ashworth is not opposed to pointing out that Canadian history does not serve each group of its citizens equally. Students who lacked command of English were kept at a disadvantage, and little to no attempt was made to accommodate the great linguistic and inevitable cultural difficulties these individuals faced in their formal education, as well as in their subsequent assimilation in mainstream English-speaking society. Although it retains its official national status, French is in majority use only in Quebec, and therefore it has not been imposed, both as language and culture, on immigrant education in Canada in the way that English has.

Bilingualism in Canada

Canada is composite of many groups and nationalities, who have moved here under widely variant conditions, from all parts of the globe. The influence of the First Nations in Canada has been much more significant than in the United States in certain respects, and this includes the degree to which they shaped the first educational efforts made by the Europeans (Lessow-Hurley, 1990). This education was largely of a religious nature, as the teachers were Jesuit missionaries. The establishment of New France

differed from that of New England, given that the British were hemmed in by mountains, while French settlers had the St. Lawrence, and the great lakes to aid their rapid movement west, toward the interior of the country. The French settlements were thinly spread over a vast area. French administration officially allied itself with the Huron Nation, whom the Jesuits wished to convert. Therefore, the priests learned Huron, as did many settlers. Many early settlers were men, and this meant that many took native wives, whose children were Canada's first indigenous bilinguals (Ashworth, 1988).

John Cabot, in the British service, reached the Atlantic coast in 1497, and made this fact well known in Europe 37 years before Cartier planted his cross on the Gaspe Peninsula. British aspirations in Canada resumed, and by 1614. Shortly after the first French settlement was attempted in 1608, aggression between the two powers began. The struggle would not culminate until 1760, when Quebec and Montreal fell and Canada came under British rule. The impact of the imperial dispute remains a constant theme throughout the history of Canadian education. Provision for French education was made in Quebec, but along religious grounds, whereas other provinces such as Manitoba provided separate legislation for French secular schools (which they later sought to repeal when an equal educational issue arose with respect to Ukrainian immigrant children) (Ashworth, 1988). Canadian political structure gives the determination of educational policy over to provincial authority. The division of Quebec from the other provinces was put into effect by the Education Act of 1841, which gave Quebec two systems, one Catholic French, one Protestant English. The British North America Act of 1867 enshrined these denominational school systems in law: the country was assumed

Christian. It is easy to understand that problems, such as the "Jewish School Question,"¹ were destined to arise given the increasing diversity among the immigrant populations who arrived in Canada over the next hundred years. Furthermore, Canadian geography divides the country into disparate regions, which have been further divided politically, so that any common identity has been difficult to establish from the start. The situation of Afro-Americans seeking refuge in Canada is regional to the east, whereas Japanese migrant experience helped define southern British Columbia, Norwegian experience northern B.C., and the Ukrainian and Icelanders' experience did the prairies (Ashworth, 1988).

The issues for many of these disparate groups regarding the education of their children, have been the same. Each came willing to embrace the new culture while hoping to keep intact the traditions, educational and otherwise, which sustained their respective heritages. Bilingualism has been a very political issue throughout Canadian history; for example, immigrant groups such as the Mennonites sought to maintain their first languages as the language of instruction in their own schools. While in certain cases concessions have been made along racial, religious, or cultural grounds, few attempts to establish a bilingual school system survived the English-only mandate outside of Quebec. Even though attempts had been made to educate teachers to instruct in two languages (notably the Ruthenian Training School for Ukrainian teachers in Manitoba),² these were

¹ The Jewish Question simmered for nearly a century from 1870 on, as Jewish children in Quebec were forced to attend Protestant schools, owing to the religious disposition of the Montreal School Boards. As the Jewish children were more numerous in some schools than Protestant children, those schools sought to take away their basic right to an education. However, similar issues also existed in many other religious communities, and extend to other provinces such as the Doukhobor experience in B.C.

² Ukrainian communities who had immigrated to Russia when Catherine the great had made promise of land and religious tolerance came to Canada in two waves, first when those tolerances began to disappear 1896-1914, by which time there were around 132 Ruthenian and Polish schools. The teachers had formed their own schools and an association. Yet by 1916, the tolerance in Manitoba for bilingualism in education

ill-fated. The pejorative attitude toward students with English as a second language has been prevalent throughout Canadian political and social history. Concerns for their needs, and how best to benefit their learning, were relegated to the lowest priority. As Ashworth (1988) concludes, "There was virtually no training for teachers of English as a second language until the 1950s. Their status within the profession was low – as one school principal put it to me, ESL teachers constituted the "garbage heap" of the profession" (p. 28).

American ESL In Its Infancy

Successful English as a Second Language programs were offered by native tribes, such as the Cherokee,³ and immigrant communities, throughout the United States in the 19th Century. Only 14 of 45 states mandated English as the sole language of instruction at the close of the 1800's; however, ethnic clashes within the U.S., owing to various waves of European immigration, caused a growing disfavor to be shown to foreign languages. The high-profile German language schools attracted resentments which festered during WWI, so that by 1923, 34 of the total 48 states had English-only instructional policies (Castellanos, 1983). Between the wars, dual language instruction all but vanished, and remained in dormancy until events in the 1950's alerted Americans to the danger of Russian intelligence, and prompted the need for a re-evaluation of education in general. The National Defense Education Act (1958) made foreign language study a priority. At

had disappeared and the legislation allowing it was repealed, thus ending both the school for bilingual teachers and their Association.

³ The Cherokee, who were also known as the Civilized Indians by the colonists, succeeded not only in maintaining their traditional language and cultural practices, but their students outperformed all other high schools of the Southern States in the National Testing. This remarkable achievement was due solely to the tribe's efforts to offer their children a good education.

the same time, the Cuban Revolution sent many Cuban nationals into Florida. Spanish programs were set up for English speaking students, and they flourished. Concurrently, a growing political voice for minority groups during the 1960s brought about further public national educational strategies. President Johnson's War on Poverty was carried into effect with legislation stating that each individual, regardless of ethnic origin, was entitled to the same educational opportunities, and this included students of limited English proficiency.

In response to this nation-wide literacy mandate, money was poured into the promotion of English in schools of poorer and often language-challenged minority groups. This large effort at mainstreaming was mostly directed at assimilating diverse children into mainstream American culture. At the same time considerable monies were made available for all forms of military research, with a chief agenda of creating new information and communications technology to rival other, aspiring superpowers. Some of the rapid growth in scientific discoveries that were to fuel the later technological revolution had already been developed in Germany, and were whisked out after the war. The shift in power of the international political scene saw America take a global role in promoting its image, its products, and the English language, worldwide. At the same time the international monetary standard changed from gold to the US dollar. This meant the dominant medium of trade was to be English. Thus English, as opposed to any other international language, became established as the language of capital and opportunity. Media technology has come of age in an English speaking world, and the popularity of British and American entertainment has greatly increased the momentum of the English language as the discourse of power around the world.

Lighting Log Fires with Quills, Drills, and No Frills

During the pioneer days in Upper and Lower Canada, there was some difficulty in setting up a common school system. Grammar schools were the domain of religious organizations. As Wilson, Stamp and Audet (1970) observe, it was not until the Common Schools Act of 1816 that it was made possible for any community with twenty students to request an annual stipend of 25 pounds sterling from the government to cover the cost of the teacher's salary. The school buildings and educational materials had to be supplied by the community, and most often early schools were accommodated in any building, whether church or community hall or rented house, that would serve the purpose. The first school buildings were rough-hewn log cabins, having one room with a large fireplace as its focus. Students of all ages worked in the same room, but younger students had only a bench to sit on, without desk or back support, while older student sat in a horseshoe against the three encompassing walls. Students were required to bring a small school fee, and a specific allotment of firewood. There was little or no explanation given respecting why particular texts were used in lessons. Students studied basic literacy skills for the majority of their day through listening, rote memorization, and up to two hours a day of writing practice on low-grade paper or birch bark (Wilson, Stamp, Audet, 1970).

There was indeed no such thing as a standardized textbook used in Upper Canada throughout the first third of the 1800s. Students brought their own learning materials to class (spelling and geography books mostly); these books tended to be published in America and represented the heroes and points of view particular to that country. Naturally, these books were derisive about the British, and there was much affront taken

by regional administrators about the negative portrayal of the Crown. In 1815, one observer noted in the Kingston Gazette that the “baneful influence” of American textbooks and instructors “teach us to hate the government we ought and are bound to support; to revile the country we are bound to love and respect; and to think that there is nothing great or good, generous or brave, anywhere to be found but in the United States” (cited in Wilson, Stamp and Audet, 1970, p, 202). Like the constant bilingual battle of French and English Canada, the feud with the southern neighbor is also rooted in the identity of the country. Prior to the war of 1812, much of Upper Canada had been settled by Americans. This region might have joined the Union, had not their subsequent loss driven them back, and paved the way for waves of politically conservative British Loyalist settlers. Where schools had been founded, and communities prospered, the blackboard was introduced, along with learning slates in the 1820s. Publication of *The Upper Canada Speller Book* in 1829 introduced the first Canadian textbook for secular education, and through the 1830s, an industry began to proliferate on this model.

Recent Developments

The technological revolution, which brought about the Information Age, has wrought many changes to society, and to education. According to Lado, (1961, p. 1), these changes

have made the study of languages for basic communication with native speakers a mark of the twentieth century. The speed and frequency of international communication have outstripped the speed of teaching and learning languages and

demand more effective ways of teaching. The systematic investigation of science is needed to advance the teaching of languages.

The most amazing facet of Lado's claim is that it was made prior to the advent of personal computers and digital technologies. The notion of standard English has come under much scrutiny. With so many new users, the growth of English as a language occurs in the form of metamorphosis of the standard into a spectrum of dialectical variations, each matched to the needs of the users. Since the 1950s, there has been an increasing effort made to study the foreign language learning process. The classical model, with its lofty goals, no longer seems appropriate to an ESL world driven by professional rather than reflective desires. "In previous centuries," observes Lado, "it was reasonable and proper to study languages exclusively for the purpose of reading their literature" (1961, p. 1). With a growing interest in ESL for the purpose of business, academic, and social advancement, the desire to read the literature of various English speaking cultures has diminished, and, until recent movements, such as text-based teaching and English for Academic Purposes, language has often been taught to second language learners largely without its basis in the content-learning associated with studying literature (Knight, 2001). This is particularly true in the adult international private school setting, and presents a methodological oversight which the study described in Chapter Four examines.

Theories of Learning Language: ESL Perspective

Before proceeding into an analysis of contemporary ESL practices, let us turn the clock back again to observe the forces which were seminal to some of the theoretical

understandings which are brought to bear upon ESL today. During the socially turbulent 1960s, many new perceptions and theories arose around the nature of language, and how it is acquired and used. From teaching *Chimpanzeese* to Transformational Grammar, a new outlook was causing educators to re-evaluate their position on everything from basal readers to bilingual instruction. Since the beginning of the 20th century, sanctimonious traditional grammar school methods had been challenged by the Reform Movement (Knight, 2001). One of the most predominant the new methods was the Situational Language Teaching method which had been established in Britain by Palmer, Hornby and others, and focused more on oral interaction in meaningful, situated contexts. The next wave of theoretical advancements to ESL pedagogy came about through new understandings of first language acquisition. Canada was at the forefront of some of these changes.

By 1967 the Canadian government passed the Official Languages Act, and the country became officially bilingual. Canadian education began experiments with school-based immersion programs two years earlier. These were mostly Anglophone children learning French, as Canada is predominantly English speaking. The success of the immersion programs inspired some reevaluation of the practice of second language instruction. It highlighted the value of not just book-related learning, but environmental saturation with the target language. This instructional paradigm seeks to inspire the natural heuristics within the learner to do much of the instructional work. Behaviourist Education, as stimulus-response, teacher-centered pedagogical *modus operandi*, was attacked as essentially de-motivating for students. In many ways, the behaviourist model suited the classical, rote learning design, as its traditional methods were passive, formal,

and analytic. Chomsky gave new insight into the innate human capacity to analyze linguistic structure by an inherent Language Acquisition Device (LAD), which he claimed all humans possessed. Innatist Education methods, like immersion programs, emphasized engagement with, not just study of, the foreign language. Chomsky went further, spawning transformational grammar, which transformed linguistics into a more descriptive, rather than prescriptive, science. However, these transformations did not disrupt the common notion of a correct, formal English, prescriptive in nature, based on rules, learned from books, but inherent to a native speaker.

Many changes followed for English language educators. Whole language movements became vogue among North American public schools, but most of the whole language approaches were based on rhetoric and provided more conjecture than research (Stahl, 1999). Deeper and more pernicious changes were also being brought about by the presence of television sets in an increasing number of households, although the negative impact of television on literacy education has been challenged by Krashen (1993). With radio, TV, loudspeakers, the electronic world had gotten noisy. Above all, such technologies had a dramatic environmental impact (Milroy & Milroy, 1991). Time spent on reading was reduced, and therefore, in general, deep literacy (the meta-communicative faculties) among the North American youth suffered, and has continued to do so, while basic English literacy has been on a steady and consistent climb. While few North Americans are illiterate, many lack the language skills necessary to navigate the plethora of mediated information (Krashen, 1993).

The world engulfed in secondary orality, as Ong (1982) has termed the post-literate return to an oral-based culture, receives a remarkably different language

experience than does one solely dedicated to textual authority. Along with the shift toward mediated sound and image in popular culture throughout the latter half of the twentieth century, standard methods of second language instruction have vacillated between a variety of approaches, each of which emphasizes to a greater or lesser degree the communicative and interpretive needs of users. The 1970s were marked by Humanistic methodologies, which put the student at the center of the instructional paradigm, and attempted to relate to the student "as a 'whole' person and the classroom as an environment where more than the transfer of 'knowledge' occurs (Knight, 2001, p. 152). However, this ideological development was not mirrored by the institutionalization of the ESL assessment industry. The subtle tension between measuring for idiomatic fluency or functional proficiency has yet to be resolved. One solution which has become predominant in current practices, is to focus on the development of Communicative Competence (Celce-Murcia, 1991) emphasizes the needs of the individual, and arranges the linguistic context into four categories: 1) the possible expressions within the language; 2) the linguistic resources of the student; 3) the contextual demands of the situation; 4) the cultural appropriateness of verbal responses. Communicative competence has been challenged as a pedagogy on the basis that it focuses too exclusively on non-structural features and functionality in language use. Standardized testing across the field of education has played an increasing role in the shaping of society, and teachers may be more inclined to focus on producing competitive test results, as a proxy measure of learning. The influence of tests on pedagogy is a topic beyond the scope of this thesis, yet it nevertheless is worth observing that testing sets up a situation whereby pressure as opposed to pleasure governs the learning process, and that there are societal motivations

to learn a language which have little to do with acquiring a source of knowledge, experience and cultural integration. Therefore, the language acquired, when solely for the purpose of passing tests, lacks contextual clues, situational relevance, and communicative practice.

Research has shown that there are both positive and negative benefits of acquiring a second language. To resolve this contradiction, Cummins and Swain (1986) propose the threshold hypothesis as those “levels of linguistic competence which bilingual children must attain in their first and second languages both in order to avoid cognitive disadvantages and to allow the potential beneficial aspects of becoming bilingual to influence cognitive functioning” (p. 6). Thus, problems faced by immigrant children in Canadian schools were made more profound by the removal of their heritage language, without the supplementary advantage of social advancement, due to practices of racial, religious, and/or cultural discrimination. While many researchers see second language acquisition as parallel to first language acquisition, others such as Weinreich (1953) and Ervin and Osgood (1954), whose views are later taken up by Williams and Snipper (1990), see two distinct type of learners: compound bilinguals, who learn languages simultaneously, and coordinate bilinguals, who learn them sequentially. Whether they are equally fluent in both discourses is another matter of concern, for many learners experience deficits in L1 on their way to L2 fluency. This paper concerns itself with coordinate learners, who are immersed within the foreign culture and target language. Therefore, the concern here is placed on theories which have guided specifically the private sector adult international ESL industry’s pedagogy.

The Natural Approach, as advocated by Krashen and Terrell (1983), went a long way to improving on the Audio-lingual approach by importing Innatist theory into the instructional model. This model applies the processes of L1 acquisition, with its self-corrective mechanisms, to ESL, and purports, when given appropriate models of expression and guidance as input, to accomplish the task of language acquisition innately, without need of explicit iteration of language's rule-governed nature. Where this approach fails is in its lack of recognition of the differences between L1 and L2 needs and environments. Not only are they under different constraints in terms of time and motivation, but feedback in the processes of L1 learning—the Interactionist concerns—play an undisclosed but crucial role, not only in the successful delivery of this approach to ESL instruction, but in the research which has been used to support it. Negating structural study altogether equates to the colonial practice of teaching content texts without any explanation or modeling of adequate inquiring behaviours on the part of the student. Nevertheless, the Natural Approach comes closer to exemplifying an integrative and embodied pedagogy, and recognizes the importance of contextual, content-based learning in the language acquisition processes. As such, it offers vitality and subjective engagement to the learning procedure.

Having mentioned the Behaviourist and Innatist theories, Interactionist theories remain to be considered. Interactionist theory emphasizes the role of the caregivers and supporters in early childhood language acquisition. Although adult second language learning has major differences from L1 experience, the model most adaptable to adult international ESL is the Interactionist model. The process of ESL instruction involves much coaxing and correcting, a gentle refinement of the art of speaking. Curricula are set

up so that students can work in groups, trading speaking roles, or silently, or as a whole, led by the instructor. While a wide variety of media are used to reinforce instruction, the dimension of personal interaction between students and teachers, as well as students' homestay families, and school staff, play an enormous role in the success of both the student and the school.

For many years, the chief goal of ESL instruction and bilingual education across North America has been a disguised agenda of English monolingualism (Williams and Snipper, 1990). Immersion programs sought to redress this issue in Sweden and Canada, although official bilingualism is equally discriminatory against all non-official language groups who seek cultural participation. Extensive studies have been done on immersion programs in Canada since their inception in 1965. An analysis of research done by Cummins and Swain (1986) shows "an apparently more rapid second language learning exhibited by late immersion students" (p. 49), and that late immersion programs can be as effective as early immersion programs, although students enrolled in these programs have a higher rate of language loss when no longer immersed in the language environment. In all cases, both French and English, immersion had clear advantages over limited instructional time (partial immersion) in the target language. A relation drawn between both Innatist and Interactionist theories indicates that both contextual and environmental factors have a role to play in L2 education across all ages. Further, it shows that "the development of L2 grammatical proficiency is more dependent on exposure to L2 than is the development of L2 discourse and sociolinguistic proficiency," and that this exposure compensates for both cognitive attributes of the individual and L1 grammatical proficiency (Cummins and Swain, 1986, p. 209). However, a context-reduced mode of

instruction indicates that personal attributes of the individual “play a significant role in the development of discourse, sociolinguistic and grammatical proficiency” (p. 209). The research supports the notion that issues of sensitization to a language involve many extra-grammatical features.

During the last couple decades, tourism, pop culture, and trade from America ensured an ever-expanding need for access to English as the discourse of power. The teaching of English as a Second Language was designed to give people access to social and economic capital. A major advance of TESOL was the Communicative Method, which tried to establish the pragmatic aspects of communicative practice as situated in a given social paradigm. This method shares its focus on English for communicative proficiency with the Audio Lingual method, which was first systematized by the US Military in order to teach foreign languages quickly according to functional necessities of war-time engagement. Adapted into ESL, it represented a reentry of oral communication practice into TESOL, yet it lacks the highly prescriptive syllabus of audio lingualism, and is a nebulous collection of approaches (i.e. The Silent Way, Community Language Learning, Suggestopedia, and Total Physical Response) which are generally more student-centered than Audio Lingualism (Knight, 2001).

Following the developments of Communicative Language Teaching, two new strategies for ESL pedagogy have arisen: Task-based learning and Text-based teaching. Task-based learning provides students with common scenarios requiring practical solutions in the target language. While having a pragmatic application based on common sense, the method lacked interactivity and a logistical development of lessons through different levels of proficiency. Task based learning has however had an influence on the

development of ESL curricula, and though it may not be frequently used as a complete system of instruction, such task based exercises are commonly incorporated as portions within a unit of instructional text. Text based teaching, which is currently a method-in-progress, derives its theoretical basis from the work of Halliday and the theory of Systemic Functional Grammar. This theory emphasizes the role of learning as a social practice, situated in the changing context of the learning environment. It treats texts as representative of the social contexts in which they are used, and focuses on the synthetic comprehension of whole texts, rather than isolated examples meant to be applied generically across all situational contexts. Text based teaching requires much of students and teachers, as both must develop a level of literary expertise, but promises a rewarding experience which goes beyond memorizing the patterns of formal utterances, while resurrecting structural linguistic analysis in ESL practices. Although more broadly applicable than the limited context of international adult private-sector ESL education at the center of this study, it is nevertheless a departure point from which to position research and finding presented in the following chapters of this paper.

All these methods above have, in one sense, been posited as alternatives to the traditional grammar approach to ESL: implicitly, however, a basic grammatical translation approach underlies many of practices still in current usage throughout the ESL industry. And naturally, this approach is at the root of linguistic standardization. Truly, a language may be standardized only after it is dead. Teaching standardized English for communicative purposes presents a paradox: there is no way to rule out what can be said so as to make meaning, and therefore limitations, as all rules are, must be sought outside the vital heart of verbal, literate discourse. Language learning is still a difficult and

personally challenging process, one which involves many sacrifices of communicative comfort and confidence on the way to second language fluency. Any method which might facilitate this process and ease the transition will be a boon to teacher and student alike. However, these methods must contend with the current state of an industry driven by standardized testing, and the desire for increasingly rapid processes of language acquisition.

The Hollow Shell: Teaching Standardized English

Standardization is an ideology largely dependent upon writing for an abstract representation of rules based on common language use (Milroy & Milroy, 1991; Labov, 1970). Languages are living entities. They are constantly in flux. Yet the demands of the marketplace, particularly in the adult international ESL setting, are for standardized, itemized products, the collection of which implies a requisite knowledge of the language. As such, the study of word units and their structural syntax suffice. Oral communication, however, is predominantly governed by the phrase, spoken as a unit, and given meaning through a variety of extra-grammatical features such as intonation. It is both idiomatic and socially determined. The Grammar Translation method of ESL is form and function based. It reduces the limitless notion of language as possibility to the legitimate notion of probable structures housing typical or generic applications of form. Text based teaching and the use of literature are replaced with a standardized content-reduced curriculum of exercises emphasizing the importance of structure over style. Word values are related in taxonomies, or lists of kinds of words, with sentence-level examples and cloze exercises.

The sentences are mostly discontinuous with the inclusion of short reading passages on topics of common, though not particularly informative, concern.

Since word units can be counted, they are quantifiable, and students may gauge whether they are getting their money's worth accordingly. Or can they? One begins to learn language rules, more than language itself. The richness of cultural context is lost. The product of this methodological parentage is the general tendency to produce students who may score highly on tests of formal grammar, while their expressive and communicative skills are sorely lacking (Krashen, 1993; Thonis, 1970). This is what happens when language becomes disembodied. It is no longer a natural, but an artificial language. A disembodied language is always learned, where a natural language is acquired through physical embodiment of its communicative potential, combined with a high degree of context and content-related learning.

The habit of scrubbing meaning from ESL standardized curriculum is now widespread. There exists a great deal of literature on the importance of engaging students through content, but meaningful content is rarely included, even at the most superficial level in standardized ESL textbooks. The problems of contextual information are manifold, but the main problem is ambiguity. Standards, by definition, can have none of the ambiguity of natural languages, the hints of implication, innuendo, stylization. The standardization of language leads to a voiceless form of learning, borrowed from the silent study of classical Greek and Latin, motivated by the desire to read Plato, or Virgil, in the original. Second language learning was done, at the outset, to acquire culture. Early ESL was likewise motivated by the desire to know Milton or Shakespeare in the original. Now, however, it is used to gain access to the advantages which the foreign discourse

purveys in contemporary society. It needs to be globally assessed, and accreditation given to those who can meet the established, norm-referenced criteria. Assessment, and test preparation, are in many ways the biggest cash generators of the private international ESL industry. They work, as English L1 speakers say, with a heaping spoonful of implication, *by the book*. There is very little effort put into intonation, pronunciation, expression or imagination at all. Little attempt is made to build upon L1 understanding. And this is largely because these aspects of engagement with a language are personal, embodied, context-driven, ambiguous, and not given to standardization.

Standardized Tests and the Top-Down Approach

Teaching to a test, rather than immersing students within texts and allowing them to coexist with authors as the makers of meaning, exemplifies a pervasive top-down approach to TESOL. When language is conceived as structured from independent pieces, whose parts are mechanical in nature, cognition operates according to the schematic potentials for ideation and memory. These potentials are chiefly analytic and print dependent. With adequate practice at the testing materials, learners can master the forms and standard semantics necessary to succeed. In essence, students do not experiment, they correct. Visual learning begins with looking, then sounding and repeating ad infinitum. Acquisition, on the other hand, proceeds by mimicry, as if learning an instrument. At crucial early stages the mimetic babble of infancy is gradually replaced with context-motivated words. This, essentially, is the bottom up principle of (especially L1) acquisition. Voicing through mimesis is inherently playful, again in the sense that an instrument is to be played and experimented with if one is to become adept. Oral

memorization involves the use of such embodied resonators as rhyme, pitch and rhythm, patterns of sound, to locate language physically within the body and the memory. Bottom up learning is event oriented: the patterns of sound are connected by association with emotional and physiological states. These physical and emotional states were at the center of the Humanistic approach to ESL, but have not withstood the test-driven reality of contemporary methods. Acquisition is not repetition; it is ingestion.

The Audio-lingual Method of ESL instruction, which is now very much out of favour, was used for years in the United States primarily to teach oral communication; however, this approach did not explore the reciprocal benefits of learning from print, and limited expressive possibilities to routine responses. As Williams and Snipper (1990, p.91) observe: "Based on the Behaviorist assumption that language is essentially a matter of habit, this method utilizes repetition of regular language patterns, commonly in conjunction with a 'language lab,' to produce automatic responses in the target language." This is an unfortunate failure to recognize the importance of an integrated approach, one which draws on the reciprocal benefits of Innatist and Interactionist approaches. By comparison, top-down approaches to learning are thoroughly disembodied. ESL is assessed through various testing methods, the most common by far being multiple choice. Multiple choice, like all conceptual lists, is a purely visual phenomenon (Ong 1982). When confronted with multiple choice language tests, the native speaker will base his or her answer on what *sounds* correct, not what *looks* correct. Apparently, what is most needed is to derive a method which does not replace the advantages of those pedagogies which have come before it with other strategic benefits;

rather methods should engage learners on all levels by involving reciprocal techniques to assist the individual learner through their linguistic transition.

Standardization is a premise more real in concept than fact. This notion holds great social importance. The notion of proper English usage provides an ideal, which is both arbitrary, in so far as it is based on common English usage (which is inherently non-standard), and at the same time rule-bound and inherent to the construction of social position. The difficulty of the rule system is that exceptions abound in almost every case. It is a rare pleasure for an ESL teacher to teach a rule which abides no exceptions to itself within common English usage. Routinely, exceptions outweigh the rule itself, and irregularities must be learned by rote in the general category of exceptions to the rule. While this may be achieved through memorization, it is painstaking and difficult to access at the speed of conversation. Writing provides the basis for functional grammars, but the same grammar is used as the basis for correctness of speech. This is clearly a cart-before-horse behaviour, which the regimentation of top-down learning techniques accentuates; nevertheless, the approach seems a necessary evil, for few learners of a foreign language have time or money for the gradual bottom-up acquisition process of learning a language. This is particularly true for adult learners, whose frustrations with lack of communicative ability in English are set in high relief against the backdrop of their L1 fluency.

Excessive reliance upon standardized, grammatical models of language instruction have placed a great deal of pressure on those involved in ESL instruction to agree on and champion certain standard measures over others. Much of the industry in

academic evaluation for North America and beyond, particularly Asia, is subsumed by the Educational Testing Service:

More than 2,400 universities and colleges in the United states and Canada, as well as in other countries where English is the language of instruction, require TOEFL scores of applicants who are nonnative speakers of English. Many government agencies, scholarship programs, and other institutions also use TOEFL test scores. (1995, p. 3)

As the central body for not only the TOEFL test but also the gamut of university entrance exams (GMAT, LSAT, GRE, etc.), these tests are the main gatekeepers of social advancement for foreign speakers. TOEFL, as a standard, is format-specific. Its main tool of assessment is a multiple choice level of functional analysis, both in the grammatical and semantic domains. This limiting of options to 4 or 5 allows a matrix of levels to be established, and hence it suits the hierarchical structures of computer logic. TOEFL is presently pioneering computer-controlled language assessment. Ironically, the Test of Written English (TWE) must be administered as a separate form of examination, given on separate dates, and requires not one but two human beings to evaluate. Computers observe only a fraction of the linguistic fluencies employed by those taking the test.

American Vs. European Test Models for English

Hence, standards are generated from written texts, representing correct forms of expression for both written and spoken language. These standards are set against a backdrop of three options, each increasing in terms of the level of functional error they represent. The test-taker must choose the correct answer successively in order to prove

proficiency as a listener and a reader. The fact that the generative demands of language are almost entirely missing from the model is testament to our need to believe in the arbitrary value of TOEFL test scores. However, TOEFL works despite itself. Norm-referencing has a way of doing that, of being generalizable beyond case specific concerns. It works in the sense that we can learn not only the grammar of English as we prepare to write it, but also the grammar of TOEFL. The chief difference between the language TOEFL justifies and the language privileged by the European standardized English test manufacturers, such as Cambridge University Press, is that the latter expects a higher degree of idiomatic awareness, and generative manipulation of structure. In other words, the Cambridge system favors speakers of Romance or Germanic languages over Asiatic speakers, due to their greater similarity in cultural and linguistic habits.

These differences in philosophies of standardization say much about what is considered proficient purposeful English, but little about the real needs of learners. The learner who has specific needs has to some degree had those needs recognized in the development of a pedagogy known as English for Specialized Purposes (ESP), the most common manifestation of which is Business English, though in fact much more specialized programs exist (Williams and Snipper, 1990). In tandem with the development of ESP, English for Academic Purposes has gained currency among the aspiring scholars and academics in the ESL marketplace. These specialist programs offer valuable new approaches to learning a language, by focusing on the needs and interests of learners, and by incorporating more complex material which nevertheless can rely on a base of knowledge carried over from students L1 backgrounds to the target discourse.

This builds in an immediate, personalized, and pre-contextualized relevance to the instructional materials.

Some authors have questioned whether language can be taught for meaningful use and retention if it is delimited to only one kind of application. Without its social and cultural mothering matrix of emotive connections and imaginative possibilities, there is little probability that language can become naturalized, and produce a balanced bilingualism in the L2 user. All theories which attempt to reduce the learning of language to a system of parts seem to deny what is experientially obvious: that the intrinsic value of words is at least equal to their extrinsic value, and that the only way to acquire intrinsic knowledge is through intrinsic processing in that language. The battle over control of linguistic standards has been fought throughout the history of the New World, as a reflection of colonial obligations and internal disputes. Language is the engine of political will; it awards opportunity, privilege, status, and power to those who have the key to dominant discourses. And yet these extrinsic rewards do not even begin to comprise the real value of learning a language. In the end, they may even make us negligent of a better way to learn.

What Has Been Forgotten

The question must be asked whether the needs of ESL learners can be confined to linguistic concerns? Surely learning a language, especially in a foreign environment, has a great many other factors at work, ones which also involve learning and require a multiplicity of interrelated skills and cultural knowledge to be mastered. Standardization suggests that linguistic abilities are synonymous with all the other acts of cognition

required of an immigrant or a foreign student. As Edwards and Redfern (1992, p. 26) note, "until the late 1960s, teachers considered the educational needs of ethnic minority children to be exclusively linguistic". In mainstream education, the early 1970s showed a marked shift in approaches, one which recognized the ongoing extra-linguistic, multicultural problems faced by second language learners. Clearly, language is a key to overcoming these problems, and some methods of instruction are better than others at generating not only positive results on standardized language tests, but also more self-confident and aware students who are supported in their prior knowledge and identities, and who consequently may become additively bilingual, rather than reductively bilingual, and subject to the loss or denigration of both linguistic heritage and cultural identity.

A Modest Proposal

In this chapter, I have provided a brief history of the ESL industry in North America and have offered an overview of commonly practiced approaches to ESL instruction. Common methodological approaches to the teaching of adult international ESL in private schools combine the grammar-translation approach with a communicative model of instruction. While there has been a shift away from cultural assimilation to academic or professional advancement, the absence of content-rich and aesthetically-pleasing texts may run contrary to these goals as well. However, any attempts to re-institute the content-basis of curricula into adult, international, private-sector ESL institutions have not significantly succeeded, and the traditional approach, used thus, offers but a few extra-grammatical benefits to these students. Even grammar, in the days of North American settlement, justified its use as a means of moral, ethical and religious

(in other words *values*) education. Taking literature as a curricular basis for instruction may allow for the best aspects of all the theories mentioned thus far to be incorporated and, when used with a physically responsive and engaging approach, to be exploited reciprocally to provide the fullest potential for learning. Standard English can become quite dry and consequently more difficult to master when reduced to a set of rules without content learning cues. As Krashen (1988) and others claim, the mainstream approach is neither more effective nor efficient as an ESL methodology than one which emphasizes content reading and contextual learning. Krashen's Natural approach to instruction has been both celebrated and rejected by scholars, but it paved the way for a broader appreciation of the possible directions for curriculum and instruction in this field. In the latest developments, the benefits of text-based methodologies, combined with engaging and psycholinguistically stimulating instruction, are being realized and put into practice. These new advancements, however, have been slow to enter the private ESL industry. In the next chapter, I will address the question of how we might better facilitate language learning and personal growth through physically engaging text-based approaches to language.

CHAPTER THREE

Why Literature Can Offer More Than Other ESL Practices

The following chapter argues for active and engaged use of literature in ESL, and questions the adult international private sector ESL industry's practice of teaching to English proficiency tests, rather than teaching to the cultural worth of the language. My hypothesis in arguing for the use of literature in the classroom is that the voicing of literary texts leads to more naturalized L2 audiation (private verbal cognition), and that embodied experience modeling stylistically native verbal behaviors increases proficiency in the target language. By assuming that audiation is key to the innate acquisition of first or second languages, this hypothesis is an extension of Krashen's (1982, 1993) Natural Approach, adapted to the needs of "post-literate" (Williams and Snipper, 1990) ESL students in order to rapidly optimize acquisition rates. An implicit supposition of this hypothesis is that content-reduced methodologies over-emphasize visual, literal, and logical cognition, and by doing so make language learning more burdensome on non-automated (conscious, effortful) processes. Hence there is an imbalance of reciprocal linguistic skill development with the reduction of ESL curricula to standardized grammar instruction. Literature represents a living medium, a conceptual contract between the student and the teacher, one which proffers not just repetition for the sake of committing rules to memory, but an interactive arena for stylistic and lexical development, cultural growth and personal discovery.

Mirror, Mirror, on the Wall...

Canada prides itself on supporting freedom of expression. There are serious pitfalls for anyone who dares to standardize content. Doing so resonates with the history of fascism and censorship. Yet at the same time, the need to uphold standards, particularly in education, is paramount. The desire to gauge public intelligence became an obsession during the 20th century across much of the world, following the French model of I.Q. test created and revised by psychologists Binet and Simon (1905-1911). In America, Thorndike (1874-1949) made many lasting contributions through his analysis of word frequencies, creating special educational dictionaries, and a series of classical literature texts for elementary school children. His work formed the basis for much Educational research that was to follow, and provided the ideological basis for the standardized language test. Realizing that there was more to reading than vocabulary, he worked with Lorge to produce a test with more comprehensive measures of reading difficulty (Lorge and Thorndike, 1940). Thorndike's ideology was clouded by the bias so common in first-world-war thinking: "Thorndike was convinced that the measures of intelligence that he had developed measured mainly an innate characteristic, and that such tests could be used to identify genetically superior individuals at an early age" (Travers, 1978, p. 6). The language abilities tested in these initial instances had a stingy hegemony of class and race and gender and need built in, in as much as they reflect the ideology of their conception. It is these content standards which historically define any culture. As a result, content is frequently regulated and limited to purposive instead of imaginative application, and as often as not the purposive intent carries an ultimatum,

assimilation or exclusion. Herein the problem of having a single standard is no longer limited to the linguistic question, but to the broader ideology of standardization.

Concerning the standardization of grammar, Canadians not only support the myth of Correct English, we invoke this myth to measure personal worth (Milroy & Milroy, 1991; Ashworth, 1975). Poor grammar can be as offensive to some as something written in poor taste, and this has produced, among other social facts, a history of consequential discrimination. Yet the desire to elevate content knowledge is not met with the same enthusiasm in some sectors of the ESL industry as is the desire to elevate productive grammar skills. The language used thus is depersonalized and reductive: words may contain knowledge, but do not generate meaning. But just how discontinuous are content and grammar? Can they be taught, or regulated, separately, without in some way limiting the possibilities for personal growth in language education?

Content is subjected to expedience in common contemporary instructional practices, and it is the hollow functional shell or form that is taught in many ESL classrooms, particularly in the private international school setting. By the same token, if the various parts of the English language had names like clam, snail, mussel (instead of noun, preposition, verb), with enough shells to arrange in sequences, we might test knowledge of English. But learners remain quite ignorant of what was in the shell, before it dried up and blew away. We do not know how these semantic shellfish coexist, and what environmental conditions compose their natural habitat. The same problem exists around the notion of idiomatic language. Since it comes more or less directly out of spoken language, such language does not serve the same ruler as classical written grammar does. It does not mean exactly what it says. Instead, it conjures meaning by

implication. *Talking up a storm* has no literal equivalent; rather, it is colloquial and common to the collective audiation of its users: in other words, native speakers would not generally bother to clearly picture a storm of words. They would instead make a modification to the schema of talking with verbose discussion.

As will be discussed throughout this chapter, languages do not solely serve to communicate a literal image divorced from context, they also invoke nuanced meaning between users, through inherent emotional associations to the phonocultural patterns of speech. I put forth in this chapter the theory that there are two complimentary processes at work in interpretation and making meaning with language: *imagination* and *audiation*. Empirical science offers little solid evidence for either of these beyond how they may be made manifest; literature, on the other hand, is a vast resource for inquiry. Thus it is to literature that I turn in order to gain insight into what may be being lost in ESL educational methodologies that substitutes standard notions of communication for cultural and stylistic fluency. Because much of the natural language activity of native speakers is formulated around producing cognitive and social effect, and not specific literal meanings, we must admit that the standard of ESL pedagogy in many adult international settings, as presented in Chapter Two, does not fully optimize students' cultural interactivity, or the development of reciprocal skills and meaning-making resources.

Reading Homer in the original was one of the key reasons for the development of the instructional method used today in ESL; to know Homer was to know his phrasing and rhythms. Since Achilles had several epithets, one could devise a multiple choice test for students of Ancient Greek, asking which of four epithets completed the pattern.

However, this preoccupation would not make one conversant in the language. The same problem exists today, yet the goals of most adult language learners are quite different from those with specifically literary aspirations. As a result, literature has more or less been sidelined as a means by which foreign language learning takes place. However, with literature goes the teaching of content through language. Content in literature is defined by the cultural context from which it was derived. Divorced from context, gratuitous content is meaningless and instantaneously forgotten. Thus culture is presented as the test itself, and as the social practices around preparation and examination; these L2 interactions act as the sole executor of the cultural inheritance that a language has to offer. The immersion of a student in a particular contemporary English speaking environment counteracts some of this effect, as do experiences with commercial media in English. Yet the deeper linguistic resources shaping the contemporary manifestation of that culture still remain neglected.

Australia and New Zealand have of late had a booming share of the international ESL market, partly due to the relative degree of perceived post 9/11 safety. Today students go to learn English, not Australian, nor Canadian, nor British or any other spoken cultural dialect. This certainly has not always been the case. In many parts of the world, EFL offered, to those who could afford it, a choice of which variation of English to learn. Typically, one form of English would suit the local dialect, and be useful in the local environment. The other would be the going standard, often called the Queen's (or King's) English, which held prestige, but had little application in the home environment of the learner. In one example, the Chinese formed a large social group and economic force in Singapore in the 20th Century, and the issue was raised whether Singapore

schools should teach British English, or a South-east Asian dialect used there. The British made every attempt to convince them to learn the international standard English, but they resisted and maintained their dialectical English variant through education. The trade-off provided them with a unifying instrument of their local culture in the sacrifice of a certain amount of legitimate proficiency (Broughton, et. al., 1978). This is by no means the only example; many others can be given, some dramatic, like the riots during India's Independence, when the censure of Indian English was met with great public disapproval.

Today, largely due to the globalization of travel and communications, there is less inherited status gained from one dialect (i.e. British Standard Pronunciation) or another. Dialects themselves have fragmented over generations of inter-dialectical migration. As English grows, the distinction between dialects becomes less of a feature than the differences in operative vocabularies. Authority with specialized vocabularies seems at least as much a factor of social advancement as dialectical variations. Notwithstanding, certain accents and vocal mannerisms are inherited with dialect, and these may still provoke a broad range of discriminatory overtones in responses by those who assume the privilege of a dominant, standard English model. The widely held notion of this would-be Standard English is historically dependent upon the written word and literature, which ironically has been excised from the instructional curricula and materials. The grammatical vivisection of the language which replaces it is observed, learned and analyzed, from the top down. Literature, when used for content-based bottom up language acquisition, observes the English beast in flight, and motivates the engagement of a wide variety of cognitive and affective abilities in students, utilizing many intellectual faculties which Cloze exercises and multiple choice tests simply do not

assess, or even consider. Literature models how an adept native thinker thinks, not just what constitutes the rules of their linguistic engagement. Furthermore, it may also serve the development of student language skills in ways that standardized English testing services do recognize.

Tampering with the Inevitable

Acquisition of natural languages by humans is inevitable given the right conditions. But what constitutes the right conditions? There are environmental conditions, biological conditions, neurological conditions, psychological conditions, affective conditions, and cultural conditions all reciprocally interacting, feeding back upon each user, and gradually or rapidly changing in the process. Learning a language is a highly complex activity involving countless discrete skills. Many of these skills are physiological, some are epistemological, others are psychosocial, as emphasized in the three theories of language acquisition presented in Chapter Two: Innatist, Behaviorist, and Interactionist (Boyle & Peregoy, 1997). At best, the effort of language teachers to facilitate and refine the learning process engages all these conditions at once. Common to all is the reliance on recognition and memory of both sonic and visual patterns. Like an iceberg,¹ the majority of fluency skills employed in communicative acts are subsurface, insofar as they are automatic once motivated, and do not require conscious thought to

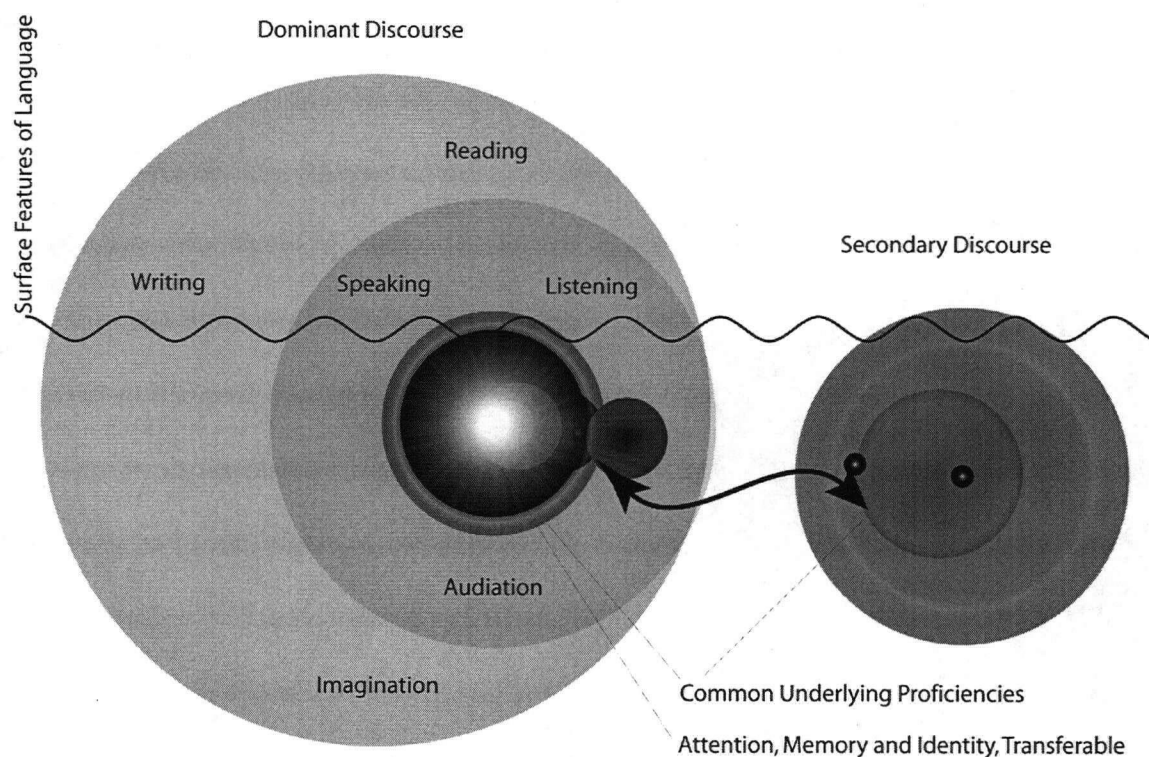
¹ I discovered, during the writing of this paper, that the iceberg metaphor is also employed, though with a significant variation, by Cummins and Swain (1986, Figure 5.3 The 'dual-iceberg representation of bilingual proficiency, p. 83). In their diagram, the iceberg has two peaks, which represent the surface features of both L1 and L2 discourse. While more optimistic than an iceberg which must melt and transform to acquire L2, the dual iceberg representation implies a large area of *common underlying proficiency* (CUP). Since my purposes are more focused on issues of fluency which extend to cultural proficiency, and the personal verbal changes involved, I have chosen to retain my version, as a contrastive *separate underlying proficiency* (SUP) model for culturally fluent bilingualism.

perform or recognize. Above the surface, the expressive and receptive forms and functions of communication can be heard, seen and accessed in the light of scrutiny. Above this is the realm of the intangible—the air of thought, self concept and group consciousness, the processing and structuring of experience—sustained in memory beyond but in relation to a manifest language code. Such is the memory of an individual, awash in a sea of language. Modifying the code would seem a risky business, except this ethereal realm of knowing can remain fairly constant while productive and receptive language processes are being changed over (Ellis, 1986).

Changed over, in this sense, does not mean losing the first language. Bilingualism can suggest equal linguistic status for both languages. A limited set of functions of natural languages are more or less universal, based on commonalities among embodied experiences (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980). If such Kantian universals were a substantial component of language learning, one could assume that wealth of experience would be an asset. Yet rather than organically bifurcating language development governed by the situation at hand, as in childhood bilingualism, adult second language learners superimpose the target language on their first (Lessow Hurley, 1990). While Cummins and Swain (1986), differentiate between two models of bilingualism—*separate underlying proficiency* (SUP) and *common underlying proficiency* (CUP)—many adult learners attest to L1 deficits on the way to L2 fluency. Loss of first language is not permanent, though, but resumes dominance in its own conditions. The difficulty of transition is not simply encompassed by the exchange of linguistic proficiencies; it can play a determining role in identity development (research presents both positive and negative examples from

bilingual education studies), and self-definition as both a private and public person (Rodriguez, 1982).

Figure 3.1. The ‘single iceberg’ representation of transitional ESL fluency in the process of cultural immersion.



Fluency in any given language implies effortless engagement—a kind of domestic comfort—at least in speaking. Fluency, as used here, cannot be adequately assessed with standardized language tests. Standardized tests accommodate only the apparent part of the iceberg which can be measured; and in the case of language, this is the public domain of formal (rather than formative) surface interactions. The exposed surfaces of language

are the parts we see and hear; communications that socially construct us, as much as we construct our presence within the social discourse. The exposed surface of language use is divided into two parts, receptive and expressive, both of which have an oral and written component: listening and reading, speaking and writing. Below the surface, at the bottom, giving ballast to the 'berg, is grammar, syntax, lexicon, the structural crystal of a common linguistic code. When learning a second language, grammar is maintained consciously until it can sink below the surface and start to grow organically, as Krashen (1993) proposes with his Natural Approach, which also uses literature as its primary pedagogical tool.

At some point upon the journey to fluency, when and if they persevere, students start to feel comfortable, and at home in the language. The degree to which it will be their language will be the degree and manner to which it remains in their lives. Social and communicative competence, which are buzzwords in the ESL industry, have much in common with the pedagogical method most favored to encourage competence, the *role-play*. Role-play is a big part of public life, but it is almost tragic when it is used in intimacy. Fluency is determined in contrast as that discourse which attends to intimate thoughts, to the individual's private state of personal reflection or interpersonal reaction. As such, changing a language may be like changing a lover, and given particular circumstances, they may not coexist equitably, or comfortably, even when a speaker appears to respond competently in either L1 or L2 situations. These changes are subject to individual differences between learners, and involve all the formative private discourse by which they became conscious. Languages grow independently, under socially constructed conditions, into bilingualism, or plurilingualism. The main concern of the

study I will present shortly was how we may access a broad range of conditions increasing the natural growth of a users' capacity with English receptively and expressively, but also *reflectively*.

Chilling in the Discursive Sea

For the most part, adult ESL learners come to make their language skills better, just as one might go to a doctor to fix physical ailments. Adult language learners come, normally, with some skills in place. However, the typical strengths which comprise their levels of proficiency differ depending on cultural backgrounds and individuals. In public school ESL education, students may arrive with only a modicum of verbal fluency, while in the more affluent private sector schools, many students have had at least some formal English education. After studying in EFL environments where language lacks social conditions which support expressive skills, the language learner goes to heal some of these expressive holes. Many come from foreign countries where they have taken several years of English in the junior and senior levels of schooling. This limits learners to a pedestrian notion of the language, precisely because literature is not made a central component of the teaching: ipso facto no models of reflective ideation in the target language are provided.

Expression requires conceptualization, especially in the domain of writing. ESL writing can show the degree to which conceptualization is occurring naturally (i.e. stylistically native) in English, or is being L1 processed and more or less literally translated. Written expression is not just about communication, it is about style and coherent ideation. Instead, EFL instruction often focuses on the passing of tests, which

are largely grammar based, and the testing of receptive skills, sometimes to the exclusion of expressive skills (Weir, 1988). The code provides the means, but it is the culture that provides the meaning. With meaning, emotive connections develop in the language, like long fibers reaching into the depths of the memory, and identity. These fibers emanate from the structural crystal—the below-surface central core of the iceberg—and as new words freeze onto the outer layer of consciousness, they take on the form of the linguistic crystal, deep within ideation and notions of selfhood.

When the music sounds within the language, words start to ring and resonate. The adept student begins not to only to see but also hear patterns in the language. Many of the decisions a fluent speaker makes are chosen for some sound rationale. The production of sound requires inspiration and articulated exhalation, and at its very core, this action is the essence of culture and the contraction of public space. Differences between languages are exaggerated by the phonological dimension of linguistics. There is the timbre of the language, its particular sonorous character, and then the particular cultural melody of its dialects, changing and growing with the players who use it to communicate with others and identify with themselves. The process is vastly personal. The principle unit of oral expression is not the sentence, but the breath. It is as much determined by lung capacity as social positioning and group identification. In many ways verbal mannerisms are the very process itself of socialization and tribalism in the global village (a superimposition—Vygotsky on McLuhan).

Literature is often characterized by stylistic approaches. Literature conveys the character of the culture in which it was generated through style, more so than it reveals any legendary fabrications of its authors, as Roland Barthes, and many authors in the

wake of structuralism have argued. Style is what individual users of a language inherently adopt and develop as their own, under the social contract that if one is to be stylistically fluent, one must be culturally fluent, because style and culture are codependent. Honing style, more than mere functional ability, may be made less difficult through the use of literature in the classroom (Short 1996). Literature is informative, and while authors can be dogmatic in opinion, they generate infinite possible styles for readers to adopt and adapt as their own. Literature advances the sonic content of language through style. The articulation of consonants provides the notes with rhythmic intensity while intonation of vowels and diphthongs give rise to melody, mood and emphasis. This melodic component of cultural speech cannot be print-encoded other than through stylistics. Without any of this song, language is quite sterile, and limited in po(e)tential.

Even when reading silently, a fluent reader provides the text with a voice, trying on, as it were, another's reflective discourse, a personal script from their cultural inheritance. This practice effectively bridges many a cultural and geographic gap, as style can be used to convey many idiomatic forms of expression at the root of cultural identity (Sihui, 1996). The better a reader is acquainted with the voice of a writer, the clearer the melodic component of script will be when reading. Style is not a function of discrete, categorical, analytical knowledge; it is not concerned with fact, but factualizing. Style in language use, as a manifestation of fluency, is difficult to assess, precisely because it is so personal, so rooted in circumstance, so deliberate of a cultural milieu. When writing transcends the private reflective realm of identity (literary authors come to be known by their style), it does so only as a cultural artifact; rather, literature speaks to us, always, from the metanarrative of lived experience. By its nature, literature is an act of testimony.

How Hearing Others Helps Us To Hear Ourselves

The recreation of the textual voices of the writer (either directly or through characters) by readers is an important component of the processes of comprehension and interpretation. The verbal rendition of thought, whether silent or aloud, allows the thought to take place, to register. Of course silent ideation of schema does occur, as in a daydream, but the vessel of communication between writer and reader is still the voice. Voicing thought makes a deposit in the brain bank. Voicing of text is also central to processes of prediction (Dyson, 1990, 2000). Reciprocal interaction of schema and verbal style in readers' comprehension of literary discourse is an underdeveloped field of research. For writers of all levels and backgrounds there is a constant struggle between flow of style and self-editing. To edit, one freezes the instant of expression as a textual object, and attempts to reinterpret the voice as another, a reader. To exhibit style, one must rely on dynamic, rhythmic continuity. If too many editorial (interpretative) instances occur in the initial stages of composition, a work may lack the verbal momentum which readers require for a satisfying exchange with an author.

Problems in adult ESL writing may involve some of these same dilemmas (Broughton, et al., 1978), especially if the use of dictionaries is extensive. Coherence can be put in danger, as can maintaining communicative efficiency. Reading problems in ESL can also manifest from interpretations which bias some features over others. In listening and reading tests, it is common to find assessment focused on what can only be called linguistic trickery. Certain words are used in order to confuse literal interpretation, which may seem consistent right until the end of a passage, when the alternative interpretation is

insinuated. An adept listener or reader will likely pick up the subtle meaning shift, while those more susceptible to a single “correct” interpretation will rely on the meanings which had previously offered a potential interpretation. A quick reconstruction of interpretations is far more arduous for the non-native speaker, especially when no physical, interpersonal cues are present to support the re-interpretation of a text or tape script.

As Stanovich (2001) has stated, better listeners make better readers. Knowledge of metastructural linguistic concepts and cognitive style is improved directly through reading practice and instruction (Robeck, 1982). Much research supports the notion that children who are read to on a frequent basis outperform those without literacy support at home (Rumelhart, 1994). Thus we can say that speech gives rise to writing, and writing stripped of living culture becomes the basis of standardized grammar, which, when taught as such, improves only those skills directly related with a literal display of linguistic accuracy. When literature, especially the sounding of literature, is put in the instructional loop, melody, the oral habits and patterning of sound are restored to the language, and likewise to memory. Samuels (1994) notices that using Read-Alouds as a teaching technique increases reading fluency and vocabulary retention. This technique increasingly feeds back on listening comprehension, so as to provide a better comprehension of stylistic features of expression, such as metonymic and metaphoric structures, as well as innate awareness of grammatical norms. This increase will likewise be passed on to writing skills, and provided there is strong environmental support for speaking practice, the oral skills will also improve, taking on various words and flavors of the practice texts. I have seen this happen, among my own students, when, with or

without intent, the distinct style of a writer we are studying enters their speech. In this reciprocal cycle, other intangibles are also being acquired along the way, such as cultural literacies, comprehension of idiomatic expression, vocabulary through contextual learning, broader knowledge-based, social identification, not the least of which is pleasure in the learning process from a good story or a moving poem. The reciprocity of learning is inadvertently interrupted when we take literature, and therefore cultural relevance, out of the ESL curriculum. Literature allows us the opportunity to act and react, to exist within the text as equals with the author, not just to passively observe examples of standard discourse at the epilinguistic level.

The Benefits of ESL Versus EFL

Initially, second language learning processes favor receptive skills, so they are the first to improve. The communicative approach to ESL instruction has been favored as a method compensating for this inadequacy of receptive abilities, especially print-only problems as Celce Murcia (1991) and others (Oller 1993; Boyle and Peregoy 1997) have argued. Adult ESL learners can be expressively inhibited by the sense that they will appear stupid, and they are often frustrated by a lack of vocabulary. One is amazed by persons, such as customs men at the Northern Italian border, who can switch from Italian to French to German, English, Spanish, Dutch, without missing a beat. We must assume that the conditions are favorable to multilingual maintenance, and that these conditions include expressive opportunities. In the order of routine ESL activities, listening and speaking prevail, as written communication may remain routinely involved in L1 use, whether through dictionaries, or note-taking. Using L1 text appears to have a less

inhibiting impact on rate of L2 acquisition than L1 oral retention, as bilingual immersion studies have shown (see Chapter Two). I can testify to this personally, as two years of Spanish education in Canada provided less fluency than my first month in a Spanish speaking country. Nevertheless, the benefit of the prior instruction would have to be taken into account.

The kind of immersion which literature offers, not just into the language, but into the pluralism of cultural voices which give 'authority,' transmits additional benefits to both ESL and EFL learners. Given adequate instruction and personal interface, learners may gain a great deal more from literature than even the content-rich world of ideas and stories it has to offer. If the level of the literary text and related discourse is appropriate to the level of the learner, students will benefit from *textual* immersion, wherein they will experience conceptualization in all its complicit subjectivity. A condition of many verbal and written behaviours is having something to say, or making a point. As readers of literature we add our own voices to the plurality of the text, we engage within the society of the book, with the writer—like Virgil to Dante— as our constant companion and mentor. Within a confiding atmosphere, the text-world provides an intimate verbal relationship between writer and reader, a fundamental principle of Interactionist theories of language learning.

Maintaining oral continuity in the L2 learning process was first institutionalized by Berlitz (Broughton, et al., 1978). The Berlitz method of language learning was developed at the turn of the 20th century when Berlitz hired a French teacher for his New York language school, not realizing that he spoke no English at all. He was out of the country when the new teacher arrived. Two weeks later, when he returned to the school,

he found the students interacting in French with greater ease than if they had been taught in both languages. ESL education currently relies heavily on this practice of complete communicative immersion. L1 use, especially in the classroom, is generally discouraged as counterproductive, even during the early stages of learning. The best conditions presume an English-saturated oral environment. But this same consideration is not reflected in much of the standard ESL curricula for adult learners, which deflect textual immersion by relying on decontextualized examples, semantically deficient, emotively anorexic, mnemonically bulimic, cultural waifs of print.

In EFL situations, language learning is a largely reading-based preoccupation, and even tests of listening utilize multiple choice written questions, and taped speech. Writing practice is largely formulaic. Although the notion of standardized English is generated from written English and not the spoken product of English users, it is nonetheless the most difficult to prescribe, and therefore to standardize (Chase, 1978). Compared with other forms of assessment, written English, across the field of education, is still dominated by subjective evaluation. It cannot be computer assessed so as to appreciate the content of the thought. In TOESL, evaluation of writing is a separate activity from the other formal language testing procedures. Grading is often based on the number of grammatical errors present: therefore assessment considers what is not done, rather than what is done. Writing extemporizes thought, the inaudible voicing of ideation (Carroll, 1965). Conceptualization is operative on many levels of unconscious and conscious experience. It is creative, yet standardization implies a complete lack of creative freedom. This contradiction is largely ignored. Teaching and assessing writing is an art unto itself. At its most formulaic, writing is seldom fluent. Only prolific writers master formulas.

Skill as a writer is almost always accompanied by substantial reading. But reading is here meant in the larger sense of works and oeuvres, not of disjunctive fragments used purely for leveled grammatical practice.

Waking the Whispering Silence

By comparison, ESL situations favor communication, and the productive, above-surface linguistic behaviours. Listening and speaking English for longer periods of time has the effect of situating language use and activating the phonotronic acquisition potential of the learner. This has implications in ESL for class size. The greater the number of students, the greater the restriction on guided speaking practice, and this is a key condition of acquisition and Interactionist learning. Sound sensitizes the listener to organic polyrhythms, the sonorous prototypes of speech. Sound has a special connection to comprehension, as it comes via the body, it embodies and interiorizes both time and space. Sound situates the attention of the listener; I believe it also does this for readers. In support of this claim is the common experience, while reading, of the mind having drifted from giving voice to the author's words, to an entire scenario—the day's events or a related notion—being played out, while the eyes and hands innocently, gainlessly, continue the passive act of reading a book. The goal of proficient reading is to be able to visualize at the speed of verbalization of a text.

Acquisition, with its innate correlation to the sonic environment as a physiological and biological fact, is retarded when the target discourse does not predominate both in circumstance and in texts. Adult learners require some grammar, so that they may begin the process of reformatting their first language to suit their new needs. Interactive

response to listening and modeled expression of literature gives voice to the silence of text books, and could radicalize the learning process through the subjective embodiment, or experiential approach, to language (Williams and Snipper, 1990). The immediacy of the ESL environment is a significant advantage to the learner, building meaningful connections between the language and memory. The same immediacy of cultural immersion could also be placed at the disposal of the ESL learner, through the use of level-appropriate literary texts to provide textual immersion in cultural paradigms.²

Literature and the Communicative Method

Much of the pedagogical methodology of the communicative approach to TOESL derives from common sets of multicultural activities, and shared kinds of experiences. Across this cultural bridge, the mental constructs of the learner are transported, piece by piece, word by word, from L1 to L2, and sustained through practice. Prototypes of social interaction allow for a great range of intercultural exploration, common vocabulary, verbal sharing among students, role-play, and group projects employing comprehensive and analytic cognition. Literature is a form of language sharing which can accommodate many integrated activities, scaffolded intertextually. Paolo Friere's method for teaching semiliterate people through embodied representation in many ways lit the spark of the socially-contextualized approach of the Communicative Method, later popularized by other distinguished scholars, such as Celce Murcia. Celce Murcia has a less apparently

² A distinction is being made herein between literary and non-literary texts. While both prove useful, as Krashen (1993) has shown through ESL research, literary texts may offer several additional benefits to the learner (Cook, 1996). Among the benefits considered in this paper are learning processes affected by modeling examples in literature of stylistic excellence: native linguistic characterization of phenomena; verbal synthesis of ideation—reflective and expressive—within the target discourse; and inter-cultural domain knowledge and fluency. These meta-structural aspects of texts are posited as having a coordinating effect on the use and comprehension of discrete parts of language—its formal grammar and syntax—as well.

political agenda than had Friere, yet the Communicative Method embraces all cultural forms of instruction, not just pragmatic or utilitarian ones. As such, it places authority within the expressive dynamics of living culture. Literature provides exemplary strategies for teaching language and content simultaneously (Mohan, 1998).

The integrated approach to learning English through literature incorporates activities exercising all the communicative skills, and its efficiency as a method can benefit both ESL and EFL environments. As Stern (1991) asserts, thematic and narrative fabrications in literary texts enhance the reciprocity between various types of skill development, enhancing breadth of knowledge and lateral thought. Moreover, literature offers a special vertical depth to language learning. Newton (1985) declares that one of the needs which is felt by the English-teaching profession at this time is what Stevick (1976) describes as the 'dimension of depth'—implying a deeper dimension to language learning than has the current emphasis on communication, or communicative competence. It refers to the learner's mental involvement in what he is hearing or saying, leading to a kind of communication that is more than superficial role-play and tacit acceptance of norms. As Newton explains: "one possible source of depth in language learning is literature. The potentials of literature are only now achieving fuller realization" (1985, p. 329).

Sounding the Noetic Depths

The depth of language needs to be sounded, as many great poets attest, like Artaud, swimming back to the surface like a distorted marionette from the depths of mad genius. To borrow from Ong (1982: 78): "sound incorporates"—it is the only sense which

gives us the sense of interiority; “sight isolates”—it is the diffuse reflection of separate surfaces of objects in an objective world. Therefore, it is the sounding of objects that reveals their interiority more, even, than touch does. Like vision, touch must palpate or penetrate its environment to know its interior, which then is only another surface—an exterior. Just as one sounds an object to know its internal composition, one sounds a tunnel, a hole or a hall, directing the voice to discern depth and internal dimension. No matter what visual perspective is taken, sound always centralizes perception and positions the subject and the subjective at its core.

In just this subjective manner, literature serves to sound the noetic depths. This statement ought to be taken literally. For literature to fully engage reciprocal learning, it must be, at least for extended sections, voiced with attention to expressive possibilities within the text, possibilities which can either nuance or entirely recast the meaning of the text. The brain, as an electrochemical organ, responds to sonic frequencies with different intensities of cognitive and physiological engagement. A sharp loud high-pitched sound causes the frequency of the brain to send waves of neurotransmitters and increase the frequency, in response, of the brain’s activity instantaneously. Sound has a profound physiological triggering-effect upon perception. Hearing is the first of the frequency based-senses to become aware, as hearing is also essential to balance, and may be said to extend beyond the ears to the perception of sub-audio vibrations below 20 Hz (Coren, Porac and Ward, 1984) . And so it is the subject ear distinguishing among the emotive values of sound—overtones, harmonics, reverberation, echo, *the attack-sustain-decay of life and language rooted as one*—illuminating the possible values and implications of literary discourse. Nevertheless, initially many ESL learners have difficulty recognizing

implied, culturally-loaded meaning in texts. For instructors, often the best method of conveying hidden meanings is through specific intonational patterns in oral reading, and through embodying the writer's style. The modeling of expressive verbal tropes and native mannerism is an invaluable aid to comprehension; in TESL it deserves its own specialized training, in order to establish in teachers and students alike a dramatic verbal expertise in ESL comprehension-development instructional techniques, and to help invigorate classroom activities across the industry.

Sounding out text provides a way of interiorizing the common structure of the language and of simultaneously re-enacting the expressive and reflective cognitive processes of writers or their characters. As a result, deep changes can begin to take place in the learner's own internal soundings. As reading rapidly increases vocabulary (Krashen, 1993), it has certain contextual associations accreted to it, which increase retention and comprehension (Smith, 1982). Thus even fluent speakers will be able to use certain words purely by appropriation of context. The language is no longer a transparent window, but a physical experience interiorized, so that when something sounds right, we mean it has an internal and physically satisfying dimension in its effect. Literature can provide instructional models which are not only fluent, by definition, but aesthetically cohesive and meritorious—worthy of sophisticated and repeated verbal encounter and visual scrutiny. The audition of inner thought in the target language is a milestone in the acquisition of a foreign language. It is a point at which learning as dispossessed object-oriented purchasing becomes an organic, internalized growth function of the self (see Carroll, 1964; Ellis, 1986). Therefore, when proposing literature as a fundamental in ESL

curricula, it is necessary to emphasize the methodological importance of training students in the sounding, as well as the comprehension and analysis, of texts.

Seeing Inside Out

Sounding helps us to envision what someone has written or said. Notice how, when confronted with a text which confounds comprehension, readers or listeners may look away, and repeat what they have read or heard, concentrating not on the external, visible world, but on the process of envisioning, which like sounding is internally generated. When we talk of imagination, we can as easily say that we imagine the smell of a rose, or the taste of chocolate, or the feel of fur, or the sound of sirens, as when we more figuratively see these things as shapes and objects inside our heads. When envisioning objects, we conceive them internally, but we still see them as projections, something apart from the imaginer. Language synthesizes sensation. It allows qualities and values to be exchanged among the senses. For example, imagine a campfire radiantly undulating under a warm starlit sky. The flickering flames dance in the darkness. I may convey this by saying *the soft fire*. Empirically, were one to test this by putting a hand to the flame, soft would not be an accurate description of the experience. Yet soft may incorporate the quiet crackling sound, the warmth of being beside it, the diffusion of the low-bandwidth light. The soft fire is not inaccurate, but serves several nuances of sensation recalled through contextual associations. In other words, the schema a reader uses must be flexible, as the literal interpretation of figurative language cannot serve these synaesthetic interpretations. Literally, the hot fire is accurate, but also redundant, in

the sense that the writer need not supply the specific quality of the noun object itself, except when emphatic usage is required to distinguish between intensities of combustion.

There appears to be some confusion between the role of visual schemata and sounding as the primary basis for comprehension. Rumelhart (1994) argues that schemata are fundamental to comprehension: "The process of comprehension is taken to be identical to the process of selecting and verifying conceptual schemata to account for the situation or text to be understood" (p. 268). The conceptual dimension of schemata situate them as Platonic ideals: they "are composed of generic or abstract knowledge, reflect the experiences encountered by individuals, are shared across individuals, are relatively stable over time, are probably formed subconsciously and at least for narratives, can be embedded in each other in an hierarchical way (Stein and Trabasso, 1981)" (as cited in Mavrogenes, 1983, p. 296). Conceptual ideals reduce immediate details to circumstantial prototypes and behavioral systems. Maturity of the individual brings with it lateralization of the brain and some degree of personal preference for, or bias in, verbal and visual modes of conceptualization. Objective truth relies on observation and visual, empirical modeling (e.g. an *eye witness*); subjective truth relies on auditioning and verbal, emotional modeling (e.g. a *testimony of character*). Literature tends to resound in the latter realm; standardized tests gain validity in the former.

Neither should we exaggerate the independence of these two binary functions of text comprehension. The voice awakens the language of the text and this conjures a simulacrum, or sensory imagining. To comprehend a text fully, we must individually create a representational schema and constantly modify it in the process of reading (i.e. auditing the voice of an author). By doing so, we are drawn into experiential memory by

way of associations built into all transcendental schemata (Johnson, 1987). As initial ESL learning involves the superimposition of L2 lexical items on L1 knowledge, the interlocking of procedural schemata to stylistic verbal patterns of thought and expression in the English language may be of paramount importance. This may also be particularly true in the case of adult learners, who have sophisticated schemata already in place, but who lack the L2 verbal resources connected to fluent expression of sophisticated ideas.

Visual information contains within it the ideological hierarchies of perspective. It is not centralizing, forming personal subjective location; instead, it objectifies focusing attention to one point, by which all else is made peripheral. Without attention, the stare of the eyes is blank. Reflective thought, which gazes upon memory, reverses the focus. Where sound perception is omni-directional, visual perception is unidirectional. This fundamental difference plays out in language use and retention. The *point of view* associates patterns of being and not being, and what their object status is in relation to the viewer. Associative schemata are primitive, and therefore fundamental to narrative comprehension, evaluation, and to seeing the bigger picture. The fascination with literature leans upon this exact function; individual stylistic patterns are made relative to the condensed, photographic ideal of what constitutes the bigger picture from a ideocultural point of view. There are naturally a great variety of approaches to visually schematizing meaning. The reliance on two-dimensional conceptualization, such as taxonomic lists, leaves much to be desired in terms of accelerating the functional skill of comprehensive visualization in L2 readers. Literature, on the other hand, can build meaningful frameworks for imaginative association of schema with L2 lexical items and expressive tropes. Furthermore, literature is frequently reproduced in a variety of visual

media, and this is a major boon to the language instructor who chooses to teach with literature.

When You Get Older

Contrary to the common assumption, second language learning does not become more difficult with age. Work done by Asher and Price (1967), Politzer and Weiss (1969), and Ervin-Tripp (1974) shows quite the opposite to be true: older ESL students outperformed younger students in the following areas: listening comprehension, initial pronunciation, retention of vocabulary, as well as number, gender, and syntax (Fathman, 1982). Hence there may be more significant factors in ESL than age. Indeed, age does not seem to be a deficit variable in the rate of acquisition. Age is, however, extremely important as a cultural variable, and has many significant ramifications outside the restricted sense of rate of language acquisition. Instead, the primary variables are more context-driven. When the learning conditions include cultural immersion, many other necessary processes of acquisition are engaged, not the least of which is routine communicative practice. Adult learners who come to a foreign country to learn a language are generally able to explore the living culture more fully through shopping, dining out, going to nightclubs and fraternizing with friends. There are many prepared lessons dealing with subjects along these lines, meant for their communicative practice. Often these lessons foster intercultural connection and comparison, which is best taken advantage of when an already broadly representative schema for the social practice is in place.

As well, many adult learners come with specific aims and ambitions, and have set goals for their learning. This makes motivation less of an instructor's job, and more of the commitment to learning and interest in the process is maintained by the student. The breadth of discourse appropriate to the classroom setting is also broader in the adult ESL context than for school-aged children. Content is never a less important issue, and obviously, many considerations are at play in the choice of materials where sensitivity is a must. The basic maturity of this audience allows for a large prospectus of possible choices for teaching materials; the main concern in choosing suitable texts is level of linguistic complexity. Likewise, a greater appreciation of the breadth of literary content and style helps to foster more rapid apprehension of the textual landscape. Reading comprehension combines implicit understandings related to form and structure with others related to content expectations and prediction. These in turn inform the reader's procedural approach with the text (Rumelhart, 1977; Mendak, 1983). Therefore, connecting the microprocedural with the macrofunctional is a matter of apperceiving literary style within genre. The adult familiarity with modes and models of expression means a more rapid assimilation of the appropriate procedural codes to facilitate comprehension. Modes of narrative or lyrical expression are common to most cultures, and are one potential source of common linguistic proficiency. Age has been considered herein because participatory literature may be particularly effective as an adult ESL instructional practice, which is ironic, for literature is more commonly used in early childhood language education than in adult ESL or EFL.

You Gotta Have Style

Using literature to teach ESL students does not necessitate the incorporation of stylistic analysis as such. Often the approach of literature teachers to form and style is based upon a taxonomy of forms. This treats a transcendental art form like a coronary investigation or biological lab report. It is especially difficult to apply literary criticism in ESL because the jargon of the discipline is unnecessarily effortful and reductive to an abstract system of values. In terms of reading comprehension, simply practising reading aloud with expression achieves many goals for language acquisition, more than would be achieved using a critical approach only. Only those terms relating to the most primitive narrative schemata are necessary. These schemata are sometimes organized into story grammars (Mavrogenes, 1983); however, these schemata must have particularization in context in order to facilitate, and not hinder learning. To properly teach stylistics is also to teach through enaction or dramatization. Literature needs physical embodiment to activate all the reciprocal mechanisms which facilitate meaning and comprehension through style. Stylistics are at the center of the expressive domain of linguistics, and yet their cumulative effect is psycholinguist. There are no constraints on literary style other than that which is sensually satisfying some notion of a schematic prime, common to both writer and reader. To model learning on literary style is to exemplify the notion of grammar in use, and to bridge pattern familiarity with the generation of transcendental meanings and structures.

Chaotic Error and the Art of Learning

One source for the difference in language learning rates between individuals is the willingness to make mistakes, and to improve with repetition. From the viewpoint of standardized language testing, error is measured backward from a perfect score to zero. It is a conceptual impropriety to think such absolutes exist, and that error is not fundamental to the learning process (as randomization is to the statistical process). As Krashen (1982) put forth, error compounds until precision evolves. The contradiction is that systematic error can produce stylistic excellence because it expresses something innately human. Language at fluency reverses, and communicates substantially through irregularities and varying degrees of implication. Some statistical methods of standardized testing, such as multiple-choice, convey artificial probabilities, whereas the core of language itself exudes possibility. Although it goes beyond the scope of the present work, Chaos Theory, as a mathematical depiction of natural growth, implies that incremental error is a central principle of the iterative processes of organic life (Pietegen, Jurgens & Saupe, 1992). This adds new dimensions to the Innatist model of education, suggesting language grows innately within us, when the conditions are suitable and stable. It further implies that the ESL industry may need to rethink the notion of error in regards to the creation of language assessment instruments.

The art of fluency is mastered through play and experimentation, and literature represents language at play. The learner models after examples, but this is not the same act as copying. Copying removes the activity from context. Language without context lacks significance. When teaching through literature, one is able to model the exceptional, not just the ordinary, as Carter (1996) articulates. Even when not

comprehending the full meaning, literature offers more than word order, and visual word recognition: it shapes macrotextual and microtextual patterns of linguistic awareness. At an appropriate individual level of L2 ability, it provides pre-contextualized vocabulary, entertainment, practical knowledge, and, most importantly, culture. Thus, one can learn language in a manner completely divorced from literature, but any limit on curriculum is a limit on learning. Literature excluded from a curriculum is culture excluded from a curriculum. To embody language is to absorb culture, not as an outsider, but as a participant.

One of the conditions favorable to language development is cultural immersion. Given that this is a benefit to ESL, how is it best put into practice? The grammar-translation methods of international ESL instruction tend to follow an EFL format, only they are delivered by native speakers in an English speaking environment. Yet the benefits may be equally due to cultural emersion during the process of cultural immersion. In order to improve the value of ESL instruction in such settings, we must understand the transition between languages and facilitate adaptive behaviors. Textual immersion in the target culture may be of great value in this process. Still, there are no valid methods available for studying the psychocultural adaptations of the language user. Until they exist, only the superficial artifice of second language learning, the appliqué of rules, can be observed with psychometrics (Ellis, 1986). Cultural knowledge cannot be evaluated where text is predetermined and tested by choice of prefigured responses. Forms of cultural fluency can only be observed through expressive output, either in body language, speech, or writing.

The conditions for language transition in an ESL environment ought to facilitate every possible avenue of energetically-positive communicative practice. The need to teach grammar at the initial stages should not overshadow the whole process. Second language learners and teachers exist in a transitional language zone. The teacher is reaching out, and the learner is reaching out as well, mentally, verbally, gesturally. On either side of transition zone, the gulf between languages opens on a wide sea of possible expression and nuanced connection. By employing all the communicative apparatus of the body we engage meaning in many reciprocal perceptions, and may increase the functions of innate language acquisition. When rooted with deep models of expression, the language is no longer simply the vehicle of informational transfer. The user now has a more innate connection to the language. After sustained involvement with literature, production of communicative tasks in the target language become increasingly sophisticated, more so than with purely oral methods of engagement (Krashen, 1993). With receptive tasks there is less referencing dictionaries and more approximation and guessing at meaning through context. There is a routine sense of structural integrity, even though it may remain quite skewed in production by incomplete transition (Ellis, 1986). This implies that one or more conditions of the bilingual challenge were not met. It is proposed therefore, that with adequate instruction facilitating the engagement, literature is an option which meets the requirements for accelerated language acquisition.

Subjectivity: What L1 Reading Research Can Teach ESL

Subjective experience is distorted by factors that influence attention, awareness, and control (Rumelhart, 1977). The experiences are stored in different parts of the

memory. For example, looking at a travel photo inspires a different memory than opening old luggage from the trip and having olfactory recreation. Further, the illusions multiply through memory processes, so that particular task dissociation methods must be employed to determine the regressive degrees of individual influences on a single task. The differences in subjective experience (awareness) “can be inferred from effects on the control of behavior” (Jacoby, Lindsay and Toth, 1992, p. 31). I call this a form of negative testing, as it is a matter of determining the influence of unconscious variables through presenting difficulties to normative behaviours and subtracting the normative results from the challenged data. These problems of holistic research, to respect both ideographic and nomothetic traditions, are prevalent throughout the humanities. Often they are posed as contradictory and antagonistic to one another (as in Palys, 1997). However, if one wishes to understand reading, and teaching people to read, beyond the basic hospital-like control processes of literal decoding, phonemic awareness and comprehension, it is quite clearly necessary to draw from both traditions, and to lean in the direction of cognitive psychology to explore how various factors of literary behavior interact. This is because we are largely unaware of the multiplicity of processes we employ as readers, and unconscious of the effect that being a reader has on our identity. I will discuss this further in Chapter 4 of this paper.

Negatest: Testing for What is not There

One difficulty faced by educational research into reading literature is the conflicting sense of conscious and automatic processes. LaBerge and Samuels (1974) provided the first theory to attempt to distinguish these features, the theory of

Automaticity. Over the years this theory has had to adapt to a growing awareness that what had originally been proposed as a simple transfer of skills from attention-driven to stimulus-driven responses actually involved a very high level of sophistication, and that the automatic processes were in many ways more superior in their functioning than conscious ones. Observes Lewicki,

A considerable amount of evidence indicates that as compared with consciously controlled cognition, the non conscious information-acquisition processes are incomparably faster and structurally more sophisticated. They allow for the development of procedural knowledge that is 'unknown' to conscious awareness not merely because it has been encoded (and entered into the memory system) through channels that are independent from consciousness. This knowledge is fundamentally inaccessible to the consciousness because it involves a more advanced and structurally more complex organization than could be handled by consciously controlled thinking. (Lewicki, Hill and Czyzweska, 1992, p. 796)

Research has sought a method to divine what this knowledge is, and how it may be used to support weaker readers (Stanovich, 2001; LaBerge & Samuels, 1974; Walczyk, 2000).

A key component of automaticity is memory. Memory acts as a control center for much of what we understand as comprehension. It is a comparative device, located on the qualitative and subjective level of the cognitive superstructure. Memory itself is divided by researchers into two compartments: the working memory and the long-term memory. Through adequate repetition, any skill may be transferred from the effort-oriented attention needs of the working memory to the nearly instinctive functions of the long-term memory. This means that the long-term memory frees up the much-needed

attentional resources of literal decoding for more comprehensive tasks involved with reading. This process is gradual, and natural in typical cases (Chomsky, 1965). The switch from attention demanding control processes to fluent decoding is automated by fourth grade (Rayner & Pollatsek, 1989). Our ability to understand the various subcomponents of reading comprehension from this point are liberally challenged. It is suggested by Lewicki, Hill and Czyzweska (1992, p. 796) that "these skills do not result from automatization through conscious experience." It has been necessary to segregate factors controlling comprehension and to test how much unconscious influence is involved through negative testing.

To draw the relationship of negative testing into the realm of literature and ESL comprehension, I digress to the work of a poet exploring negatext. This is a practice of negating (blacking out) a text to preserve only an essence—a poem in fragments, framed by the physicality of a page—isolated words and phrases twinkling like stars and galaxies in a clear night sky. The physical negation of function, form and style through the radical reduction of content liberates possible interpretations by excluding automaticity, and refocusing attention on language. This poet is not the writer, but the negatextual artifact means what he intends. The poem is composed of subtleties which caught his imagination, when his attention had dissociated from the task of comprehension. It represents a reflective assimilation of the text. The reading is in many ways deeper, and more literary, not more shallow, than the original text (e.g. obituaries, Alcoholics Anonymous pamphlets, children's books, etc). The poet, as reader writing a negatext, engages with language in such a way as to construct his own presence within the text, a presence marked by his particular identity and place in the larger construction of social

relations. An L2 adult reader employs a similar approach to construction of meaning and interpretation, building from the known, the recognizable, and forming the intent of the author from the conceptual possibilities which they themselves embody.

Functional automaticity has been given its due in terms of the literary and pedagogical policies of education since the time of Thorndike. However, in the narrow focus of functional skills, the reader is never such a creative presence as is suggested by the example of the negatext poet, reconstructing the author through the super-automaticity of self-determination. Literacy studies which ignore the many other issues of readerly engagement also disregard the transitional context faced in ESL, or any other bilingual context. Luke (2003) observes:

In order to build effective literacy programs to respond to the lingua franca and the curriculum questions, we cannot simply focus narrowly on what experimental research on variable pedagogic method tells us. The achievement of automaticity of skill cannot be the sole or driving focus of a language and literacy-in-education policy. We need a rigorous understanding of the places and spaces; the “social fields” and “linguistic markets” (Bourdieu, 1991); the zones of sociocultural and political power where language and literacy are acquired and used, gained and lost outside of schools. (p. 138)

Comprehension of literature in the ESL experience may involve many unconscious functions which are highly literate concerning the generative construction of meaning around the known, automatically-recognizable elements of speech. Language in the formative stage presents an open set of possible interpretations, and this also represents a level of engagement in discourse which many adept poets and novelists strive to maintain

throughout their lives. The transitional propensities of second language acquisition and comprehension may reflect a similar engagement in discourse, a reinvention of L1 schemata through reconstructed contextual associations. Therefore, the transcendent, metaphorical qualities in language may assist transitional phases of development in adult, second language learners.

Like Spinach to Popeye

Through task dissociation procedures, experimental psychology has tested for some of the factors engaged in comprehension. Tests which asserted the purity of either conscious or unconscious factors involved in comprehension have been rejected, as have been the more absolute distinctions originally posited by the theory of automatism (Jacoby, Lindsay and Toth, 1992). The main interest of this research into levels of awareness is "the opposition of consciously controlled and unconscious (automatic) processes as a methodological tool to identify factors that selectively influence the two forms of processing" (Jacoby, Lindsay and Toth, 1992, p. 804). Equations are used to model how processes interact, and "experimental conditions are then designed to map onto those equations, and the observed probabilities are used to solve for the unknowns. (1992, p. 33). Verbal Efficiency Theory (Perfetti, 1985, 1988) expands upon automaticity by suggesting that other aspects of reading involved in comprehension are also capable of automaticity, based on the comparison of expert and novice readers. A major tenet of this theory is that verbal efficiency is synonymous with reading ability. A reader with high verbal efficiency, according to Metacognitive Theory (Baker & Brown,

1984), uses self-reflective and self-corrective strategies in a sophisticated approach to reading.

Metacognitive Theory presumably accounts for the differences in comprehension between readers thus: successful comprehenders often have more strategies and are more likely to use them. (Walczyk, 2000, p.558)

The implications of this accretive development of reading skills has been the subject of much study and alarm, and is known as the Matthew Effect (Stanovich, 1986). The Matthew Effect describes the academically-debilitating, exponential consequences for those who fail to have a solid L1 foundation of both decoding and comprehension skills functioning at the level of automaticity. Differences in working vocabulary also follow, as a result of the incredible difference between literary and spoken language as primary sources of individual lexicons. Some claim lexicons in primary oral cultures were optimal at 4000 words (Ong, 1982), and yet the English dictionary contains well over 1,000,000 words. A poor reader and a skilled reader differ greatly in the volume of words they encounter, and their variety of uses (e.g., through suffixation only: auto, automat, automaton, automata, automation, automatism, automatic, automaticity, automatization, automatically, etc.). Thus poor readers will not clearly understand literate speech, not just because they lack vocabulary, but also because they lack sophistication of that vocabulary as it is used.

Acquiring language through literature not only increases vocabulary, but provides multiple contexts for the semantic field of one lexical unit (McRae, 1996). It also provides a broad range of non-epistemic associations, in other words, abstract textual experiences which can be formative in the development of subjective reality. Words take

on particular identities, they gain varying degrees of emphatic usage, and they become components of expressions and idioms which underlie the social and cultural sophistication employed in the linguistic strategies (multiple literacies) of an individual. Subjective experience is important because it serves as a basis for judgment and action; an individual must often react intuitively to implied information. When not adequately informed, or given sufficient resources to work with, the individual bears the consequences of language deficits in the objective, social realm. Using literature in teaching ESL may be one method of ameliorating or even solving this age-old problem (Brumfit and Carter, 1986; Lazar, 1993; Lier, 1996; Widdowson, 1990). The historic correlation between linguistic and social limitations in Canada (as discussed in Chapter Two, p. 24 - 26) is a lasting signal of the duty to foster excellent reading skills in all individuals.

Thinking to Read Vs. Reading to Think

The reading processes which develop after automaticity, by the fifth grade and up, have been correlated by the compensatory-encoding model (C-EM), which makes many of the non-explicit factors in the other interactive theories of cognition explicit. One unifying concept of C-EM is time: "given the flexible, adaptive nature of human cognition, with enough time most readers, despite their reading skill, can comprehend most texts literally" (Walczyk, 2000, p.560). This reflects Chomsky's notion that given a rich linguistic environment, the natural heuristics inherent in human behaviour will acquire language instinctively (Chomsky, 1965). Nevertheless, verbal inefficiency leads to slower processing and literary development. Furthermore, in the ESL context

transitional time is often limited, either by financial/professional demands on adults, or by the academic demands on youth in the peer-based cohorts of public schools. So if some of the factors inhibiting the development of reading skills are phonological (single deficit), and some are ideographic, or the combination of both (double deficit), it is important to distinguish how individual factors are related in the assimilation of text. Children with deficits provide another form of negative testing, and test results show correlations between particular deficits and their concurrent difficulties. In rapid naming tests with children of single and double reading deficits, Bowers, Sunseth, & Golden (1999, p. 49) found that "naming speed was related especially strongly to orthographic accuracy and speed, as well as to text reading speed, whereas phonemic awareness was related especially strongly to word recognition and decoding skill on a standardized measure of reading accuracy".

Another way to talk of this difference is to say that orthographic letter recognition involved in naming words and pseudo words affects the speed of recognition of the visual units of a given text, while phonemic awareness affects the conjuring of contextually appropriate associations and comprehension. Students with phonological (top-down) processing deficits performed more poorly than the comparison group with orthographic deficits tested by Bowers et al. (2000). Better word identification is directly associated with better phonemic awareness, and this is obviously key not only to the retention of the visual letter-string in the memory, but to comprehension processes as well. Therefore, the research shows that interactive factors affecting reading at the post-automaticity level involve not only conscious and unconscious factors but visual and verbal interactions as well (Goswami, 2000). Apparently, the auditory memory and the visual memory process

stimulation differently, and attention may be shifted from one to the other in order to compensate for a deficit, whether cognitive or environmental (dim lights or loud music). Hence, states Goswami, “tasks that tap phonological awareness at the epilinguistic level may lead to rather different patterns of findings from tasks that tap awareness at the metalinguistic level” (2000, p. 257). The findings deserve attention in the development of optimal programs and curricula to meet the needs of ESL students across all age groups. As this chapter has presented, literature provides an excellent resource for the development of automaticity in reading skills and the speed of visual pattern recognition in reading, and increases the metalinguistic processes of comprehension and recognition of culturally-implicit semantic nuances as well.

The identification of words phonologically is coincidental, in fluent reading, with sight-word recognition. In fact, it has been proven by another form of negative testing, using the Stroop effect (Stroop, 1935), that automatic processes are also obligatory in terms of memory retrieval. Logan (1997) tests Stroop effects to propose the Instance theory of Automaticity, and shows how negative testing can measure the degree to which a stimulus has been automated, using a distracting simultaneous stimulus to confound the task of reading a familiar word. This obligatory behaviour is easily witnessed for one’s self. Try, for some given period of time (say one day) to avoid reading text entirely. It is likely that you will have sounded out words on billboards, ads, etc before you are able to avert your eyes; text is everywhere, everywhere in our heads. I have found this equally true of same-alphabet foreign languages. While staying in the Czech Republic for a six week artist residency at the Hermitage in 1996 with a poetrio called AWOL Love Vibe, I took a vow of orality, and was determined to avoid all reading or writing behaviors.

Although I knew nothing of the Czech Language, and was in a large monastery in a quiet, small, rural northern Bohemian town, I was nevertheless unable to completely avoid phonological processing of script.

Logan suggests that there is strong support for the argument of one underlying process to automaticity, and that is memory retrieval. I don't necessarily agree. I think, as can be shown from the variety of other forms of negative testing, that there are many retrieval processes, functions which are not simply built from the encoding of empirical reality, and which are more sophisticated than the learned processes. Most of the sophisticated unconscious processes cannot even be explained by the user, let alone controlled (Jacoby, Lindsay and Toth, 1992). These subjective heuristics are multifaceted and are creatively employed in the synthetic analysis of relative values. The expression of these values can be witnessed through control of behaviour, but the values themselves cannot be seen, recalled or expressed without distortion effects.

Literature Lays an Egg

Since a variety of reading skills may become automatic over time, and automaticity is a function of pattern recognition, and recognition involves encoding different regions of the brain for simultaneous immediate retrieval, one can only imagine that the processes involved are not necessarily linear interactions on the top-down bottom-up vertical scale, as is suggested by Gough's model (Gough 1972). Gough's model is organized according to logical functions of language, rather than cultural functions of engagement and interaction, or cognitive functions of self-actualizing interpretation. An alternative model might represent language acquisition as nebula, as

organic associations developed through the gravitation of linguistic values relative to the individual learner. This is a central issue in ESL pedagogy, and the desire to instill fluency in language learners. In other words, there may be no overriding cognitive schema for reading comprehension that provides an explanation for the inventiveness that guides the interpretation and response of expert readers.

Interactive models (Rumlehart, 1994) attempt to outline the basic processes which can lead to a fluent comprehension of text. Basic fluency must be ascertained, and standardized, and therefore time constraints, which help delineate both automaticity and accuracy of motor skills, are used to provide a referential constant for assessment. Tests must exorcise ambiguity, or take common usage as a control for invention. The highly heuristic process of awakening subjective understanding through the sounding of words to invoke approximate schema, and the evaluation and rapid transformation of those schema to encompass further sounding, remains underdeveloped in the research on reading. Word identification may go much deeper than the ideographic recognition processes associated with rapid naming and fourth grade fluency. Awakening the individual to the complex identity of words instills a characteristic growth in the functions we witness as expert fluency. Memory, and attendant modes of comprehension and thought, are stimulated by all the senses, and reading can proceed by touch alone, in the case of blind readers, but audition has a special connection to comprehension. And it is in this particular cognitive role that reading literature offers it greatest benefits, especially in the field of ESL education. Literature brings to the forefront those skills by which we exit the passive role as readers/listeners, and become the gravitational center of the production of coherence, meaning and conceptualization, while inculcating the

automaticity of normative, functional reading skills and stylistically-native modes of expression at the same time.

Compensatory behaviours (e.g. slowing reading rate, looking back in text, reading aloud/subvocalizing, pausing) and compensatory strategies (e.g. shifting attention, rereading text) all involve some adjustment of the normative practice of reading that compensates for changes in the rate of audition. These same strategies are used, conversationally, when clarifying communication. While Schema Theory (Anderson, 1994) expands upon the visual role in reading to include imaginative processes involved in comprehension, learning, and memory, there are no tests at present which adequately distinguish how phonological and schematic functions interact within ideation and memory. Getting information into the working memory requires not just a visual appraisal, as with objective reality, but a sonic appraisal of the text, read so that it reflects the inner voice of the writer and reveals not just literal, but subtle implicit meanings as well. The benchmark of expertise in readers, as opposed to novice fluency, is seeing past the explicit literal meanings; being literate in a discourse requires comprehending implicit discourse. This form of mastery is highly text-dependent, and, as is asserted by Rauding Theory (Carver, 1996), temporal limitations to reading are adverse to successful results. Both the style of a given writing (frequency of nominalizations, familiarity of idioms, etc.) and the perceived value of reading it, are sizable factors in the performance of students on tests and evaluations: time restrictions, which limit the employment of compensatory behaviours and strategies when reading, are the most debilitating. The problem occurs not because students are impaired visually, but because they cannot

absorb the information through subvocalization quickly enough, and are therefore sounding-impaired by the time limit.

By the fourth grade readers have generally acquired verbal efficiency in terms of the form and function of the language. They can shuffle through routine, familiar vocabulary, and tackle big steps of unfamiliar words with adequate background resources and motivation; but they, too, can become increasingly inhibited in terms of breadth of conceptualization, interpretation, analysis and knowledge as time goes on—especially if language is not brought alive on a subjective level, but is treated as only the form and function of utilitarian communication. Just as very special skills are attained from the study of numbers beyond simple acts of counting, specific skills are attained through the study of words which are not simply acts of information retrieval and transfer. As the poet bill bissett once said in protest to a more utilitarian doctrine proposed for Canadian publishing at the 1992 Vancouver Free Press Festival Independent Publisher's Symposium, "we also need the opportunity to express the ecstasy of our lives." There is no form of testing or statistical analysis that I know of which tests for the ecstasy in our lives. Yet, oddly enough, this could be a very important variable if one is to assess the importance of literature as an ESL instructional focus. Literature allows for the transformation of automatic linguistic processes below the level of attention and conscious control. Inventiveness with language leads to inventiveness of spirit, thought, attitude, and action. Language not only helps us to transform our circumstances, it helps to transform ourselves. What we encounter in literature informs who we are, not just through mediated re-presentation (as with TV viewing), but through active self-encountering in the reflective practice of interpretation, which is itself dependent on

subconscious (automated) strategies for comprehension through audiation and imagination. These are root functions of all communication tasks (see *Figure 3.1*, p. 58).

The Egg Hatches

Like the cuckoo's egg, one never knows what will emerge from the egg of literature. Literature revels in ambiguity, and this runs counter to standardized measures. The basis of common usage to determine correctness is also challenged, since stylization of language is cultural, and contextually-based, not universal. Evaluation of literature runs counter to the impulse for standardization: it is the exceptional which matters, that which exerts subjective skill in dominating formal concerns, invigorating the words and bringing them to life. It breathes multiplicity. It is not simply decoded, and repeated upon subsequent encounter. It is not regular. It changes, takes on new emphases, new meanings, allusions, relevance. Repeated readings of a literary text tend to slow down the speed of appraisal and increase the depth of cognition, as opposed to increasing the linear consumption of words. Layers and vertical depths are explored, revealing correspondences within the language that seem beyond human control. Experts tend to specialize, not on skill development, as with the early childhood phase, but on particular authors. What has been discussed above as the E-CM compensatory behaviours and strategies, now become the select tools. Through development, these subskills of C-EM can become so prodigious as to imply the difference between Shakespeare and schlock. These are issues of encoding as writers, decoding as readers, that go well beyond a subset of related skills.

The transformation of schemata (see Johnson, 1987), and the transformation of strategies from one application to another, remain fairly mysterious. If anything so reliable as real formal structure, in the visual sense, were applied to the projective cognition processes that govern subjective interpretation, it would prove useless. Words evoke more than ideas, recantings of the past. They evoke emotions. But emotional responses cannot be standardized, and are often diametrical among a fairly homogenous and familiar group of people. Literature asserts form and function dutifully, to the degree required by its intended audience, but it also subverts form and function, seeks to turn metacognition on its head, inverts expectation, challenges norms, fires things up by breaking all the rules and tries to get away with it and take all the readers for a ride. It is an effort to set the language free. It increases the interplay of metalinguistic and epilinguistic features, thus optimizing the role of readers in their engagement with the text. Decoding literature is not a static process, and there is really no arbitrator of correct readings, just more developed readings. One is as absorbed in the rhythm as in the meaning, in the sound as in the allusion, in the grit as in the syntax. This subjective engagement, or textual immersion, into the whole language, not just its parts, is sorely missed in the methods of ESL instruction that are common in international adult private schools.

Some Light at the Start of the Tunnel

Attention to the task at hand is a benchmark of task performance (Reynolds, 2000). Where literacy is concerned it is quite clear that attention is the necessary predecessor of fluency. Its operation is quite simple: the more familiar the stimulus, the

less attention required to process it cognitively. Reaction becomes almost synchronous with perception. When readers do not understand they develop compensatory strategies. This luxury of processes is not available to the listener. Listeners must request clarification, or hope for clues, further along, that will help them resolve the annulled comprehension. To do so requires that extra attention be paid to the details, and this is true for readers also. All of us have had encounters with texts for which we are not equipped, intellectually or linguistically. We may choose, after exhausting our immediate resources, techniques and comprehension strategies, to abandon our efforts, or to transcend the processes we are familiar with and seek relevance through invention and self-governed interpretation. This curious human trait is also one of our most valuable, and justifying said relevance is the whole work of academia. High level metacognitive strategies are more transferable and are given to more adaptation in task performance than basic functional, or fully automated processes. It may be useful to teach not only creative writing, but creative reading and listening skills as well, as these language functions may be innate to the transfer of proficient L2 usage into fluent sociocultural interactions.

When we talk of reading, seldom do we talk of decoding literally, except to reference those important early years when attention is focused on each grapheme and we are struggling to combine letters into meaningful sounds. At this stage decoding is most important. And English, unlike Spanish, with direct phonological correlation, requires a lot of decoders. Readers must develop the understanding that there is phonological correspondence between the orderly shapes on a printed page and the sounds humans make when they speak. English is a particularly difficult language to master in this

regard, as it is replete with silent letters, and letters which make two or more different sounds and other peculiarities and irregularities. Once ESL students can identify the sight-sound synergy of writing, they must know the influence of surrounding conditions that determine which of several sounds particular letters make, or if they make a sound at all. They must know that a letter that stands alone is called by its name. They must know that the space between the letters represents something which is not a feature of speech, and that it divides the letters according to specific rules defining words. All these features are the very wellspring of poetry, which seeks to force the reader back to the text, to draw yet another draught of inspiration. The best poems are simply maps for transcendence through language.

It is therefore the integration of approaches and reciprocal learning behaviours which teaching ESL with literature not only facilitates, but accentuates and promotes. It weaves a sensual web with sound at the epilinguistic level so that one can observe—suspended—a view of the metalinguistic bigger picture . As Stern (1991) conveys, “the full array of values literature offers English instruction has yet to be fully realized. As ESL/ EFL professionals we must ask ourselves how to translate these potentials into classroom practice” (p. 330). I have set out in this chapter several rationales and supportive data to suggest why both reading and vocal practice with literary texts should, hypothetically, be able to increase a variety of valuable assets and skills for ESL students. Literature in general can provide much needed blueprints for successful interaction with the world (Purves, 1973; Rosenblatt, 1968). Appreciating literature involves skill-based practices required in order to develop high-level cognitive processes and resources, and attendant grammatical proficiencies; it also provides

interactions with the timeless aspects of culture, and the much-needed keys to sophisticated integration, economically, politically, socially, professionally, intellectually—even, I dare say, emotionally—into a given society (Brumfit and Carter, 1986; Lazar, 1993; Widdowson, 1990). This may be especially important in the field of ESL instruction, where fluency achievements are highly dependent on external variables, and especially susceptible to the transcultural motivation of individual students. Many variables in L2 instruction are psychological. While this is true in all forms of education (hence many of the problems of educational research), it can be particularly true when one is displaced, and adopting new languages, customs and habits. Literature seems to me to address many of the problem areas in contemporary international ESL educational scenarios where standardized curricula are routinely used, while invigorating the experience of textual immersion in English. To test the efficiency of Literature to engage both the standard form and function learning potential of ESL students, and also to engage the higher metacognitive and cultural awareness, I have employed the experimental methodology detailed in Chapter Four.

CHAPTER FOUR

Putting Literature In Its Place

Rationale Reprise

ESL in adult international private school settings is often taught as a mechanical system of patterns and rules, and this betrays the essence of language itself, as a living, growing, and rapidly evolving organism. The main course of grammar instruction is spiced with anecdotal sharing and the ingenuity of teachers. The call to invigorate language in the instructional process is, to be heavy-handed about it, a language teacher's duty. To do so requires a high level of subjective engagement and expertise (which could be called skill, or even confidence) on the part of the instructor and the students. The rewards are also higher, because the process of becoming fluent develops more than skill, it develops personal character. In ESL, extra effort must be made at all times to clarify instructions and model activities, thereby overcoming verbal and body language barriers. The Communicative approach is most favored in international ESL today because it facilitates expressive behaviors. Using literature in the context of an interactive approach satisfies many conditions of reciprocal learning. There is no single approach which will meet the needs of all students, and teachable moments come so rapidly that, as an instructor, one spends very little time sitting, or doing one kind of activity. Selecting a basic canon of literature to teach can be equally challenging. Literature rises above other print documents by one facet in particular: it is not simply the act of recorded speech but an exhilaration of style. Literature implies the crafting of language to suit a variety of emotive densities and noetic satisfactions.

As stated in Chapter One, my experiences as an ESL instructor led me to ask some basic questions: Can performatively-enhanced literature instruction produce equal or better results in adult international ESL acquisition rates to those produced through grammar-based instruction, according to standardized tests of English proficiency? What else might be gained through experiential literature methods that are presently lost in grammar-based ESL practices? I decided to carry out an experimental study at my place of employment. This chapter provides a detailed description of the procedural and evaluative methods used in my research, and an overview of the curriculum used in the experimental class.

For conventional science and scientific method to achieve its goals, experiments and results must be repeatable. Each hypothesis must be tried, tested, and retested to gain validity. Yet this presents some insurmountable problems in the field of educational research. As most teachers recognize, no two classes are the same. Intuition and spontaneity are of greater practical significance than repeatability. Teaching is most difficult when confronted with reluctant learners; to gain the students' confidence, so that they become engaged in a reciprocal learning environment, teachers must make themselves as vulnerable as their students, rising with their successes, travailed by their frustrations; teachers must be open and encouraging, even when feeling rejected. To understand the needs of ESL students requires an appreciation of what learning English means to each person individually; only then can strategies be devised to accommodate the vast differences which may be present, even among a small number of students. As teachers become tired or routine in their instruction, these personal issues may tear at the fabric of their confidence as individuals, and thus can easily cause people to shut down

their emotional commitment to teaching. But teaching, more than many professions, requires an emotional commitment. Literature can provide an emotional conduit, a way to share passions and opinions in an educationally salient and ethically sensible manner. In the binary realm of right and wrong responses, it is not only students who make mistakes. Students can be quick to notice such “errors”; so teachers, who, at some ideal level, are expected to be quasi-omniscient, are faced with both personal as well as pedagogical challenges. The subjective dynamics of teaching are profound. One compensation for this, and many other irregularities in educational systems, is the standardization of curricula.

A routine curriculum suggests a base line of language use, and this level of linguistic involvement standardizes students in the process, making them functional, eventually proficient, but not fluent. Like teachers, students face many struggles quite unrelated to the actual process of learning. Some of these struggles are quite beyond their control, while others relate to personal motivations. There is no one single criterion which determines a homogenous, predictable group of ESL students whose experiences and test scores will be generalizable across all situations. Age is the most predominant criterion used in education, but it is common knowledge that with an increase in same-age class size, a corresponding decrease in individual attention can have a negative educational impact. Lack of personal interaction reduces students speed of learning unless they are highly motivated and are at a sophisticated level of comprehension already. The journey of learning a language in a foreign land involves a dynamic growth rate on a personal level, and this growth is in direct relation to the success rate of any instructional design.

Despite all the personal changes which occur during an educational experience, it is only the form and content of knowledge, and not the experience of it, which is standardized for assessment. In the case of ESL, the chief goal of most contemporary students to whom I have spoken is to gain proficiency. Across all ages of students, benefits from cultural emersion, in terms of language acquisition, can be noted. The restructuring of linguistic relations and psycholinguistic adaptations to the new environment remain largely untestable, as they will be different for each individual depending on background, motives and experiences. To appeal to diversity, rather than norms, curricular materials must be responsive to these same issues of identity. In choosing the curriculum for the experimental procedure outlined herein, I retained, at all times, the freedom to change, add, and modify the program to suit the interests and backgrounds of the students, or to add perspective on current events, so that we might share as a group our responses to the world around us. Standardization removes curricula from the immediacy of the learning environment. To reinstitute teaching materials into the responsive dynamics of the classroom, we require more than standards, we require a broad instructional repertoire and synergistic strategies.

This study does not focus on evaluation of the literature studied; rather, it evaluates the development of functional language skills over a limited time, according to standardized forms of assessment. This decision may strike the reader as odd. However, the supposition put forth by Chomsky and the Innatist Theorists suggests the LAD will do its work regardless of the specific content of instruction. This experiment tested how effective guided literature instruction is in providing the skills valued by standardized testing agencies, and therefore by many adult international students of ESL. This had a

hidden benefit: it allowed for a much more creative experience and response to literature, which was no longer burdened with *correct* interpretation. Furthermore, it set a norm-referenced basis for the results, making them more broadly applicable. To create an adequate means of inquiry, two classes of intermediate level students were created: the control group, who followed a standard ESL grammar-based curriculum (Soars and Soars, 2003); and the experimental group, who worked with literature in a variety of media and genres. Both instructors had previous experience teaching the given curricula. Comparison of the two groups provided data regarding the relative rate of standard language acquisition, and reflected the relationship of specific skill development (i.e. grammatical knowledge, reading, writing) as a result of using literary versus grammar texts in the ESL learning environment. This being said, it is acknowledged that instructional context is directly related to skill development, and that these factors will have modified skill development to some extent.

Experimental Design

This experiment fits the Campbell and Stanley (1963) Type 4 Pretest-Posttest Control Group Design, wherein two groups are given pretests and posttests while one group, the experimental group, receives an strategic intervention (such as literature instruction) and the control group does not. For this study, two volunteer groups were randomly assigned to adjacent classrooms in a private ESL school, one housing an “Academic Class” (experimental) and the other a “Level 4 Headway Class” (control). In classroom #5, I worked with a group of 14 students, who were given the experimental intervention of a literature-based curriculum for two months. In room #6, joined by

windows with blinds and an additional door, another instructor taught a similar group of 14 students who received the American Headway English Course (Soars and Soars, 2003) for the same two-month period. The following section describes the curriculum and method of the Headway class briefly, followed by a more detailed review of the literature, themes, and practices undertaken by the Academic class.

Description of Control Curriculum

The standard course of instruction used in the Control group was the recently released American Headway English Program (Soars and Soars, 2003). Like other grammar-based communicative approaches, this curriculum focuses on a variety of parts of speech, and offers, through the student books and teachers' book, a wide variety of suggested classroom activities. There is a combination of grammar rules, Cloze exercises focusing on parts of speech, vocabulary development, reading comprehension passages, discussion topics, writing suggestions, and grammar usage themes. The main grammar themes of Level 4 are the construction of conditional sentences and expressions of hypothesis, opinion and preference. Additionally, there is a crossword, a pronunciation exercise, and exercises for verb-tense development. The intermediate workbook is divided into 12 equal units: Level Three starts at Unit 1, and Level Four at Unit 7. Each section explains and practices five to seven grammatical topics per unit. As such, this curriculum model is quite typical of standardized ESL textbooks, although it utilizes more graphic imagery than many other examples. There is a distinction between the student books and workbooks. Student books are glossy with full colour illustrations and photographs; workbooks, by comparison, are black and white, with considerably more

text in the form of vocabulary, grammar, syntax, and comprehension exercises. These workbooks have five pages of take-home exercises per unit, to compliment classroom instruction, during which the student books are used. All students receive a copy of the appropriate-level workbook upon entering the school, so this is a shared material resource between both Academic and Headway classes.

I will limit my discussion of the Control group procedure to the above description. The Headway program is the normal instructional format that students in this particular ESL institution would have encountered with or without their participation in the experiment. It was requested of the Headway instructor that he teach as he would with any other intermediate-level class. He did so, and brought his love of music and his guitar to spice up the instructional routine. Often, at the end of the daily session, the control group would be singing a popular song, with the teacher playing his guitar, or following lyric sheets and singing along with the compact disc player. The students were often laughing, and repeating useful phrases until they could pronounce them properly. In final student evaluations of their course (a routine administrative procedure at the school), students gave high ratings to their instructor, and to the educational experience in general. Students of the control group did on average regard their learning materials less positively than the experimental class, yet both classes had a generally positive impression of their course materials.

Description of Academic Curriculum

The academic curriculum focused on both individual texts/authors, and the intertextual relationships which exist at the thematic and ideological level of abstract

comprehension. In choosing materials for this course, a general theme of *Fantastic History and Historical Fantasy* allowed for the incorporation of a broad variety of instructional materials. The Academic class experienced several genres of literature, including a novel, short stories, comic books, and a selection of poetry, nursery rhymes, drama and journalism. Only the journalism selections were contemporary. The texts listed below are not intended to be exclusively representative of a canon of literature for use in private school ESL contexts; the literature employed in this experimental study reflects the effort to make texts relevant to the various backgrounds of students in the Academic class, and are drawn from my own readily available instructional resources. This decision making process would not exclude the use of less canonical materials than those included in this experimental curriculum.

Primary Texts and Academic Instructional Procedures

Literary texts used in the Academic class were intended to scaffold sequentially on the themes, vocabulary, and skills established with previous texts. While the following description of the core texts is presented as a scope and sequence for the instructional methods, it should be noted that instruction was often interrupted with relevant connections, spontaneous discussions and in-depth explanations, as well as periods of individualized instruction, especially when returning written compositions to students for review and correction. Many of the teachable moments in literature come when the opportunity to give meaning to a word arrives, as it so often does. Many word roots were explored during the course of teaching, and their derivatives shown as used in their stylistic, literary contexts. For example, “spec(ere)” was detailed as a word root meaning

look to help resolve meanings for inspect, respect, spectrum, speculate, spectacle, spectacles, spectacular, specter, and other derivatives. The semantic and syntactic transformations of word roots by inflections, suffixes, and prefixes was a constant instructional refrain, as a tool of word comprehension and vocabulary retention. When students required assistance with textual comprehension, every attempt was made to provide tools inherent to the language itself so that there could be a decreasing reliance on translators and dual language dictionaries. The above example emphasizes, however, the fundamental grammatical aspects of any competent, content-based ESL instructional practice.

Text 1: *Animal Farm*

Novel by George Orwell

Time of Instructional unit: 3 weeks

Scope

On the first day, the whole class went off to buy the Longman publication of the complete text of *Animal Farm* (Orwell, 1945/1996). This novel is commonly used in English education, as Orwell was not only a good storyteller, but a consummate and educated stylist, who wrote several published articles on style in English usage. *Animal Farm* is rhythmically sophisticated while maintaining a level of vocabulary consistent with an intermediate-level student of the English language. This narrative can be interpreted in many ways, but clearly the characters satirize historical political figures, and some of this history required explication. The political histories of Lenin (Old Major) Trotsky (Snowball) Stalin (Napoleon) Churchill (Mr. Pilkington) and Hitler (Mr.

Frederick) provided ample material for many in-class discussions. Choosing one of these historical figures, students received an assignment to research and print some material off the internet. Their goal was to find biographical information in English which they could understand. The student's findings were collected and presented to the class as supplementary materials. Discussions followed regarding the continuing political struggle between communist and capitalist ideologies. The presence of students from South Korea and Japan—both democracies with communist neighboring nations—gave deeper significance and broader context to the issues presented. Personal connections to these issues were explored in order to enhance textual relevance, narrative comprehension, and retention of vocabulary based on associated L1 frames of knowledge. Communism was also discussed in the context of its origins in the Paris Commune; the goals of the Commune, Brotherhood, Equality, and Freedom provide the fantasy on which the history of these regimes rode their often diametrical paths. The revolution of fate and the fate of revolution are bound together as the ever-turning wheel of fortune. At the end of the unit, the Hallmark Entertainment movie version of *Animal Farm* (1999) was shown in class, and students observed and discussed the political implications of the altered ending of the original novel in the modern cinematic retelling. The analysis formed the basis of their first writing assignment.

I should note, as well, that fortuitous circumstances had it that the an outbreak of Bovine Spongiform Encephalitis, or Mad Cow Disease, as it is commonly called, afflicted an Albertan cow during the study of Orwell's *Animal Farm* (1948). Fear of the disease quickly turned local concern into an international political issue, and the Canadian press was full of articles and information regarding the treatment of livestock

around the world, with frequent references to an earlier outbreak of Mad Cow Disease, in England and Europe. This deepened analysis of the core text by providing many supplementary news articles for class reading and discussion, and supplied an unforeseen breadth of focus and symbolic relevance to the study of Orwell's classic of modern literature. It presented a clear metaphor of the curricular theme at an early stage in the course. The fantasy of domestic animals rising up against their human oppressors (only to be defeated by themselves) to satirize the history of the Russian Revolution and Stalin seemed to resonate with the current events focus on the animal abuses in the food industry. The fantasy had current historical implications, while history had assumed a fantastical quality that is well conjured by the term "Mad Cow."

Strategy

Initial instruction involved a full summary of prepositions and the prepositional phrase. Using page one for modeling, students were individually assigned pages of the entire first chapter, defining new vocabulary, circling prepositions and underlining adverbs. The adverbs were underlined so as to promote reading with common placement of emphatic expression. The recognition of prepositional phrases gave students the opportunity to practice reading with common rhythmic units of English speech. Having divided the text into phrasal units with slashes, students were more able to apprehend the writer's style, and this was noticeable in their oral renderings of the text. Students rehearsed reading the assigned pages to each other, timing their performances with the challenge to improve not only speed, but expression. After sufficient practice, Chapter One was read in sequence, to the best of each student's ability. A Jigsaw exercise was

used to share vocabulary and narrative insights drawn from the page. Then the chapter was discussed as both a thematic and stylistic introduction to the novel, and students shared predictions of what was to follow in the narrative. Subsequently, several lessons were directed at reading the story aloud, with discussions of meanings, style and thematic developments within the text. Students were asked to make a cartoon illustration of a specific event in the narrative, and these were collected as a summary of the first half of the novel. At this point, many tangential issues arose, and time was taken to facilitate discussion of the role of propaganda and media in shaping the fictional society, and the spinning of truth (as seen in the altering of the 7 Commandments of *Animal Farm*), as a reflection of such practices in contemporary politics. Finally, students orally summarized one chapter each, and gave a round-robin oral rendition of the story prior to watching the movie version and writing the essay assignment.

Text 2: The Snows of Kilimanjaro

Short Story by Ernest Hemmingway

Time of Instructional unit: 1 week

Scope

Hemingway's classic story also involves animals and history, although history is seen through the distorted perception of a disease-maddened, dying man's recollections. The first two texts of this academic curriculum source the same historical period, and it is of pedagogical benefit that Orwell and Hemingway were contemporaries: they address similar concerns but from very different perspectives. Stylistically, however, they share a good deal in common, particularly in their use of descriptive phrasing. In Hemingway's

story, the protagonist joins the petty bourgeois to escape the ravages of the common existence, but finds himself in a soul-destroying cage, providing none of the passion for life which he, as a writer, had come to be known. He abandons his craft for temporal creature comforts, but finds he cannot withstand the psychological cost. Ironically, the comfort leads to discomfort, and numb despair. He is rotting, literally from gangrene, and spiritually from ease, and, separated from himself and the reality of his surroundings, he ends his days in an anachronistic fantasy of his own life experience. The animals in this story symbolize his sacrificed freedom, their wildness exaggerating his tameness, as epitomized by the hyena, coming like a messenger to proclaim his immanent death, and the tragedy of denying one's own true nature. This story is appealing, not only in the descriptions of the African savannah, but, for students of German or Swiss origin passages which reflect the protagonist's experience in the Black Forest region may be of particular significance.

Strategy

Students read the story aloud as a group. Hemingway's diction is more complex than Orwell's, as he makes many references to towns and geographical locations in Europe and America. Good maps and an atlas were of great assistance in the exegesis of various passages, especially the reminiscences of the protagonist (stylistically represented using italics). Students were given an exercise focusing on descriptive style, and did an analysis of the use of adjectives, especially in collocations and sequences. These stylistic tropes were practiced through oral reading so that the rhythm of syntactic climax on the noun-head of the phrase was made present in the reader's expression. Adjectives were

studied for their qualitative implications, and were copied down separately on a gradient wheel of qualitative values. To do this, a piece of cardstock paper was cut in a large circle, an example of which was drawn on the board. The circle was then divided into quadrants lower=negative; higher=positive; left=subjective; right=objective. Adjectives were assigned values and individually placed at a point on the circumference which seemed appropriate. As these word wheels began to fill up, many discrete values between adjectives were noted and discussed to reveal nuances of descriptive expression. Also, geometric relationships within the circle itself facilitated in outlining of many linguistic relationships which are key to fluent and colloquial expression and comprehension. The analysis was then expanded to the relative clause, as a breathing unit in literature. Hemingway's tale gives many ready examples of the use of relative clauses for stylistic language-effects. Students completed this unit by writing 200-word compositions based on an encounter with people in the local culture, using reported speech and exaggerated description.

Text 3: *Mother Goose*

Nursery Rhymes by Anonymous

Time of Instructional unit: Sporadic

Scope

The benefits of these childhood poems in the ESL context is their mnemonic ability to become fixed in the mind. Of all the things English-speaking children hear and read, few remain so rooted in memory as lines like "Ba-ba black sheep." To have English rhymes and rhythms insinuated in the linguistic apparatus of ESL students is a useful

thing, regardless of the student's age; it provokes the gradual internalization of English syntax, rhymes, and stress patterns. Poetry manifests strong mnemonic tendencies, and seems to have a magnetic attraction to specific locations of the memory. I find it noteworthy that little comprehension of the vocabulary in a rhyme is required for it to become fixed in memory. To children, "Ring Around the Rosie," with its somber Bubonic subject matter, is a ditty, not a dirge. However, this blithe acceptance of playful, rhyming language may not serve astute students, who may become frustrated by the nonsensical meaning, unless another set of rules are provided as a rationale for the learning activity. Extrapolating upon the meanings of a nursery rhyme, as interpreted by students from various cultural backgrounds, is not only enjoyable, but quite revealing about the cultural significance in interpretative practices.

Strategy

Peter Piper was given out to the whole class. A vocal warm-up preceded any work with the poem, and explored the pronunciation of characteristic phonemes such as plosives, fricatives, and vowel sounds. This was achieved by way of example and imitation. It is important to assist students individually through frequent modeling and repetition. Some L1 learners will have greater difficulty with certain sounds than others depending on their heritage. Arabic, Spanish and Korean speakers tend to soften plosives and/or harden fricatives, so that *Ps* become *Fs*, and *Vs* become *Bs*. *Peter Piper* can be easily modified to suit a particular case, so that the alliterative *Ps* are replaced with any other consistent phoneme. When the students' voices were sufficiently warmed-up, they rehearsed the rhyme, copying the instructor who gradually increased the length of the

phrase and speed of delivery, after which the students worked in pairs and began timing each other. The initial goal was to complete the poem in sixteen seconds, speaking clearly. A class competition was held to see who could read it the most clearly and quickly. Students who did not meet the target speed on their first try were allowed to try again until they achieved the minimum goal. The speed of oral rendition generally increases quite quickly, if one can stop from laughing, and the competitive aspect of this exercise adds much excitement to what otherwise may appear childish. A very adept ESL reader can vocally render "Peter Piper" under ten seconds after a few trials. The instructor (who had the rhyme memorized) then did a timed rendition for the class in the range of 5.5 to 6 seconds. Most students thought that this speed would be impossible for them to match. So students were told to put the text away, and work orally to master the six-beat pattern of Peter Piper's rhythm. Students practiced in groups, individually, and as a whole class, to become proficient with the rhythm, sometimes without using words, just ba-BA, or pa-PA, to establish the iamb. Once students had internalized the rhythm, they improvised a "sound jam," performed it as a canon, turning the poem into a musical happening. At the end of the process, group discussions of "paying the piper" and related idioms had students suddenly realizing deeper secondary implications of what they had been reciting. This acted as a good primer for later discussions of poetry. A discussion of the conditional, interrogative, SVO and OSV sentence types offered a grammar lesson that had quick recall potential built in. Finally, students were given other rhymes as homework to memorize and the renditions were timed in class over several days.

Text 4: *Tao Te Ching*

Poems by Lao Tsu (in translation)

Time of Instructional Unit: 1/2 week

Scope

Literature is most rich when it is representative of many cultures, from many different time periods. By drawing on universal structures represented in literature, one sees the bigger picture, and how individual experiences may be very different, while maintaining commonalities. This idea was communicated through a look at the notion and symbols of nothingness, oneness, and duality, and how human belief systems treat these concepts. Emotive, linguistic, and philosophical associations were brought into the discussion through analogies and common expressions, which were generated by both the students and the instructor. This helped establish the common perceptions between the individuals comprising the culture of the Academic class. Herein resided many opportunities for teaching verbal expression of numerical figures, adverbs of quantity, idiomatic expressions like *it's nothing* or *the one and only* or *couple* as verb, noun and adjective. Out of personal prerogative, I used basic Boolean logic blocks to build analogies and describe the "and," "or," "either," and "both" functions in sentence combining.¹ This was followed by an experimental pedagogical exercise linking phrases and clauses according to a simple circuit. With each student composing and reading just their function within the circuit, and then trading functions, instant, sometimes hilarious, poems occurred spontaneously, while emulating the basic principles of present-day computer systems. The Tao offers wonderful, complex sentiments attached to simple

¹ For further information regarding Boolean logic blocks and their basic functions, see Hillis (1998).

images and analogies. It shows how universal patterns are manifest in the daily matters of life on earth. Thus, even in translation, these poems set up a fantastic range of possible activities and discussions.

Strategy

The first order of instruction in poetry was to connect poetry meaningfully with a personal experience of the world. The scope of a poetry unit would generally require more than the limited period of one week which it received in the case of this experiment; however, the results were most enjoyable. First, the instructor performed some poems from memory. A discussion grew around the use of poetry in all the cultures represented in the class. Students were asked to choose one L1 one poem which they knew by heart. The poem could be song lyrics, childhood rhymes, humour, or almost anything which students could recite in their native tongue. They recited the poems to the class and, as a weekend assignment, were asked to write down an English translation. The following week, poems from the *Tao Te Ching* were provided, one per day, and these poems gave focus to the morning discussions. Students shared the translations of their chosen poems in groups of four, while the listeners made suggestions for clarification of the meaning, word choice and style. This process continued until the translations could be read by the student easily, in the natural rhythmic phrasing and expression of English syntax. After an in-class poetry reading (students performed their poems at the front of the class, with partial memorization), discussions regarding the nature of poetic expression and universality of poetic themes were discussed and exemplified. Students experimented with several methods of composing group poetry. At the end of the week, three favorite

poems were chosen for graphic design and poster presentation. These broadsheets were put on the wall for later reference and reflection. Many of the poems had references to students in them, and students had a real sense of fun and ownership over these productions.

Text 5: *The Iliad*

Comic Book: Homer (anonymous)

Time of Instructional Unit: One Week

Scope

The Iliad is the center piece of this thematic unit. Magnified by Schliemann's discovery of the real site of ancient Troy in 1871, this Homeric epic poem exemplifies both fantastic history and historical fantasy. The scope for teaching this work is vast with many reference points throughout history, mythology, and literature. In the ESL context, some adaptation of the text is obviously required. I would not have attempted a work of this complexity had it not been for the Classics Illustrated (1943) format, a copy of which I was fortunate enough to acquire. The combining of visual representation with divided narrative and character dialogue made creating visual associations with the text much easier, and limited the text to an appropriate level for intermediate ESL students.

Vocabulary and the idiomatic expressions derived from warfare are advantageous tangents of any literary discussion. Academic writing, with its argumentative and dialogical tone also arms itself with a battery of metaphors of conflict, useful in the development of student essay writing style. Vocabulary and idioms were introduced in the setting up of Homer's narrative. I found it useful to fill in the end of the story, with

the Trojan Horse and the capture of Troy and Helen, first. This part of the narrative is often the most well known: however, it is not in the original *Iliad*, as it has been passed down through the centuries. H.D.'s poem *Helen* gave discrete emotive content in plain language to the Greeks struggle for Helen's liberation, which I used to draw upon the historical importance of the text. No introduction to Homer is complete without giving some sense of the predominance of his works throughout Western literary history. In adult ESL, some familiarity with Western Classical literature is often present among the students. Taking any approach to Homer will produce a gratifying experience if the character interactions of the humans and gods can be clearly understood. To make the story more familiar and relevant, the Roman gods, and their respective domains of responsibility in human affairs, as well as the nomenclature of the equivalent Greek deities, were also presented in detail for note-taking. This led gracefully into a discussion about the solar system, the planets, and the acts of supplicating fate and divining the future.

Strategy

On the weekend prior to this instructional unit, I used an on-line service to make a birth chart for myself, with the date set 5,500 years ago, and instructed the students to do the same. Several gods of the Greek pantheon were introduced, around which much vocabulary was conveyed with historical connections drawn to terms such as *aphrodisiac*, or idioms such as *never trust a Greek bearing gifts*. The Roman belief that they had descended from Aeneas of Illium (Troy) presented the opportunity to introduce the companion Roman deities, which are recognizable to students as the names of the

planets. Astronomical atlases and picture books of Greek and Roman sculptures gave a vivid sense of the imagination of persons living in the bronze and iron ages. Using a handout with the names and symbols of the planets, deities, and their domain of influence, we discussed how moon, sun, planets and stars affect life on earth. We put our astrological signs on the board and read the daily horoscope. Then, as a small group exercise (some students did not have the circa BC 3500 birth chart prepared), students predicted the would-be ancient character-type of classmates using the available birth charts, and wrote horoscopes for the coming week accordingly. Star gazing, as an act of watching the gods in their planetary interactions to know the future, and requesting the aid of the gods to sway the course of fate, is a main component of the *Iliad*'s narrative technique. Before reading the story, a list of characters was put on the board. We went directly to the section with the insult to the Priest of Apollo, and discussed the role of religion and sacrifice in early cultures, and compared these practices to the present day. The final component of the introduction was to read "Helen" by H.D., which we discussed in detail, examining the vocabulary, style, and mood of the poem to thoroughly contextualize the reading of the illustrated story. Subsequently, students played parts while reading the narrative aloud. The Renaissance painters took much inspiration from Homer, and libraries are full of these images. These provided comprehension-support resources and were a great boon to instructional activities, and related, independent research projects. As time was of the essence in this experiment, I brought in a variety of images, rather than organizing a field trip to the local public library, which, otherwise, I would likely have done. When the story had been performed in its entirety, we watched a video of *The Odyssey* to close the unit.

Text 6: *Leiningen Versus the Ants*

Short Story by Carl Stephenson

Time of Instructional Unit: One week

Scope

In retrospect, this piece of literature, while wonderful in itself, was a pedagogical error at this point in the experimental curriculum. Stephenson uses a complex vocabulary, and students had been given many new words to deal with already. This short story was chosen because it had a clear relationship to the previous unit's notion of being embattled, or under siege (this time by nature). It allowed for a recanting of the vocabulary and themes present at the beginning of the experimental session, encountered in *Animal Farm*. It reflected South American cultural history, and helped to broaden the refecction of the cultural makeup of the classroom. However, the reliance on reading as homework, to facilitate more rapid instruction, meant that those students who followed through with their reading assignments clearly started to excel, while those students who put in less effort outside of class had a much more difficult time comprehending the text, when read aloud. While this text may be possible to use with intermediate students, a more lenient timeframe was in order. The four-day time constraint made the reading and comprehending efforts outweigh the interactive principles on which the lessons of this curriculum were designed. In addition, I was unable to track down the CBC radio play version, which would have provided a comprehension aide. This unit was intended to have a listening skills unit focus, with reading support, but given the lack of the key

resource and sufficient time, the emphasis became reading with dictionaries, and in-class listening support, an approach which favored some students over others.

Strategy

To begin, a review of the vocabulary of previous units was undertaken, as well as a discussion of the themes of the course. We began with the four kinds of conflict often identified in narrative: Human versus Human, Human versus Nature, Human versus Society and Human versus Self. We located the previously studied narratives in their respective quadrants. We discussed the shape of the narratives: where they begin in the telling of a story, how they rise to a climax, and how authors tell simultaneous actions. We analyzed the use of perfect aspect, and expressions which convey synchronization. Students began reading the story aloud, but soon it became necessary to read the story to them. The narrative reading was interrupted to draw a representative map of the Brazilian farm on the whiteboard, based on the narrative descriptions, with Leiningen's fortifications and the battle movements of the army ants. During the reading we also stopped to predict the outcome of the battles. Vocabulary was clarified and compiled on the board. Comparisons were drawn to other forms of natural armies, such as killer bees, locusts, and viruses. At the completion of the reading, students were asked to write a simple narrative having two simultaneous plot lines that meet at the climax. This writing technique is useful in the assessment of student strengths using verb tenses.

Texts 7 & 8: *Arabian Nights* & *Journey to the Center of the Earth*

Comic Book and Adapted Texts (3,000 word); Anonymous & Jules Verne

Time of Instructional Unit: One week

Scope

These two literary texts both explore inner worlds, and therefore are metaphorical representative of personal discovery. The connection between inner and outer exploration is easily related to by people from many cultures. The magical connection, the discovery of hidden secrets and senses, and the power of these secrets to control the way we experience reality while remaining ineffable and beyond definition, is an apt metaphor for the promise of the engagement with literature. The inward journey, into darkness, to discover a hidden treasure, is primitive to most cultures, and as such requires little explanation. As students have digested language, now the language, with its graphic corollary in the illustrated text, digests them. Students easily connected this narrative prototype to other stories in popular western culture, such as *Lord of the Rings*, with Golem and his Precious, or Harry Potter in the secret guarded chambers on a quest for the alchemist's stone. They also recanted stories from their own cultural backgrounds which fit the narrative models discussed. There is a glamour and romantic attraction to discovering some priceless treasure; treasure hunters are everywhere. Archeology's modus operandi stems directly from this urge. It is the dream of the limitless past manifest in the crushing limitations of the present. In Fellini's *Roma* we catch a glimpse of a Roman treasure—murals painted on subterranean walls of an ancient villa discovered during a subway excavation, before the fresh whistling air currents obliterate the ancient designs, and the dream of fantastic history vaporizes. I used this film segment as a

launching pad to have students imagine the treasure they would most like to find, a treasure so priceless that it could not be owned or possessed; this helped to bridge the hidden treasure metaphor to the subjective origins of narratives involving internal exploration.

Strategy

The class was divided into two groups, and each group was given one of the texts. Both groups read the text aloud. There was a reader, and a note taker, and these roles were switched, page by page. This way a point form of the narrative was created collectively by the students during the reading process. Students discussed how to best to summarize each page as a group. This practice greatly increased the comprehension of the text, (which of course was being further aided by the graphic illustrations of this comic book format), and also developed summarizing and paraphrasing skills. With the reading completed, the class discussed the hidden treasure motifs, and students had great fun relating narratives from stories and movies to complement theme. As a writing project, they were to imagine a discovery they would want to make. These paragraphs were shared among the group, and a favorite discovery was chosen. Both groups were then asked which parts of their narrative needed changing to accommodate the discovery of the selected discovery fantasy, and then they made these changes to the point form narratives. The story was then divided into equal sections, and each student become responsible for one section of the story. Each produced a full page of notes on their excerpt, and these were compiled into a play script. Student-directors cast group members into parts (gender-blind) and the entire script was photocopied for the students to learn.

After a few hours of rehearsal, finding props, memorization of acting parts and transitions, the students performed their stories for the other group, and retold each other's narratives as soon as the play was over. And so, with a laughter-bonding bang, the experimental curriculum came to a close.

Beyond Curriculum

The experimental curriculum detailed above is not meant to be definitive. In fact, I would go so far as to agree with Frey (1963) in saying that literature is a language within a language, removed from other language acts of communicating and legislating, yet integral to the ideological and cultural functions of language as a whole. The value of engagement with literature cannot be fully quantified, because it does not obey the rules of the objective world. It obeys the rules of language, as a progenitor of the imagination. Therefore, I would posit that I might have chosen any other group of level-appropriate literary works and the results would have been similar. Each work of literature chosen in the context of ESL demands careful consideration of the general level of student language skills. Another pragmatic concern is adequate teaching/learning support through resource materials, whether as picture books, songs, new articles, costumes, toys, etc. Having a broad variety of media and artifacts to facilitate connections between the textual themes and cultural motifs is a great asset. As often as not, it is the resource materials in-hand which determine the choice of texts, and not the other way around.

A close observation of an author's style may reveal many functional approaches for developing skills through example and practice. Beyond functional concerns, there is the vertical realm of literature, its capacity to synthesize the object-events of the

epistemological world into useful metaphors and archetypal patterns. Seeing these patterns in literature helps us to see these patterns in our own lives. This aspect of literature is brought to life through interpretation and is governed by language-based imaginative processes. Having an open approach to interpretation refutes the principles of standardized language assessment procedures, but it is inherent in the aesthetic appreciation of all cultural production. The ability to shift interpretation to suit one's own needs makes the development of a curriculum both a challenge and a wonderful game, like designing a crossword puzzle with a knot of interconnected themes, styles, concepts with decidedly different subjects and contexts. There is a greater importance on spawning imaginative interpretations in English than there is in the correctness of any given interpretative response. It is not about one language, or one culture; teaching literature is not about disseminating what is correct, but discovering what is possible.

As a teacher, I take discovering the possible to heart. Although it is generally much more work, I try to work with students to reinvent the understanding of a subject, not just to deliver it as prepackaged information, but to make it new. When there are different classes studying the same material and the teacher gives the same lesson a few classes in a row, toward the final session the lesson starts to feel disturbingly preconceived, and the connection between the students, the material, and the instructor, diminishes in the process. From the revelations of fellow teachers, I know I am not alone in this perception. If were to classify the approach I use to teaching literature, not just under experimental conditions, but routinely, I would call it applied mysticism. My goal is to make some of the greater mysteries simple and relevant, so they can be understood,

and through this understanding to weave by association the fabric of perception and expression.

The treasures hidden in literature are the “ping moments,” as a friend of mine calls them; moments where many previously unrelated facts, emotions and experiences suddenly gel into a recognizable shape, a piece of the bigger picture. Joined together these disparate details become a platform on which to gain a broader perspective on life, and one’s role within the cosmic circus. The intuitive level of interaction and comprehension was a variable in this research as it is in most educational research. We cannot break the individual bonds of an educational environment and hope to still be studying education. Intuition helps instructors adjust their work to suit almost any student or situation. This intuitive aspect of teaching is operative in parenthood and other forms of social role modeling behaviour as well.

To compensate for the possible Type I errors in the experimental design as a result of having different instructors for the two curricula, the instructors switched classes during exam preparation and invigilation, and all data was jointly marked, with a third external instructor providing a check for biased assessment of written compositions. To compensate for Type II errors, the assessment of language skills, which continued weekly throughout the duration of the experiment, was never content-based, and therefore cannot be said to be specific to either the literature, the grammar textbook, or the teaching styles of the instructors.

Testing Instruments and Assessment Procedures

Subjects were collectively given Cambridge First Certificate in English (CFE) Practice Test #1 (Harrison and Kerr, 1996) as a Pretest. Instructors switched rooms to administer and invigilate all exams. Each week consisted of 1000 minutes of instruction, with 100 minutes given to testing. The day of examination changed from week to week. The sequence of tests, or portions of tests, employed over the course of the experimental procedure are presented in Table 4.1. The range of tests, and frequency of testing, was done to increase the breadth of case analysis. In addition to the formal tests, a Personal Data Form (Appendix C) was completed by all subjects.

Table 4.1. Table of Testing Instruments used in the experimental design

Test Name	Reading	Writing	Grammar	Listening	Vocabulary
CFE Practice Test 1	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Critical Reading Series	Yes	No	No	No	Yes
TOEFL Practice Test	Yes	No	Yes	No	No
CFE Listening Test	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
In-Class Writing	No	Yes	Yes	No	No
CFE Practice Test 2	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No

The Personal Data form offers many qualitative insights into the above sources of raw data. With such a limited sample size, this information greatly improves the depth of

findings, and one may consider the results, as presented in Chapter Five, as something akin to an elaborate series of case studies set up under true experimental conditions. This makes for a very serviceable relationship in educational research, since qualitative analysis is highly regarded, and rightly so, given the subjective nature of the field. In addition to the collective testing of both classes, and the personal data, a variety of in-class assessments were undertaken by both instructors as part of routine class activities. These evaluative tools included games, competitions, individual presentations, comprehension of humour, emotional states, punctuality and attendance. The raw data used in teachers' daily routines are in fact seldom restricted to the results of standardized testing; we quickly depart from the standard when we come to know the person, and what he or she individually may need. Placed on Maslow's Hierarchy of Need, teachers have no choice but to work within parameters set by the learner, and to adapt the planned instruction to the present situation. Of the many experiences which gave voice to students in the experimental classroom, the opening discussion was usually the favorite of all students. It was a time when everyone had a chance to say what was on their mind, to learn about themselves and each other, to discuss world events, and to awaken English.

One area of real difficulty in language assessment is writing. To provide a scope of variation in the assessment of writing tests, writing samples were marked separately by three individuals (the two instructors and an external marker). Raw scores used in statistical procedures were based on an average of the three assessments. Grading was based on a ten-point scale to offer room for variation. As standard assessment rubrics seemed insufficient for the purpose of deeper investigation of the development of writing abilities in English, a Cultural Fluency Assessment Tool (CFLAT) (Appendix D) was

created to provide more detailed data. The CFLAT scores writing samples according to the use of language tropes which are culturally patterned and largely unconscious in native speakers. These tend to be acquired through phonological memory, and provide stylistic expression to a writer's voice. As this tool is not yet sufficiently proven as valid, it must remain of speculative interest only. Nonetheless, this instrument was able to display quite clearly which language functions were most affected by the different methods of instruction delivered during the experimental procedure. Furthermore, it points the apparent need for alternative measurement tools of writing for both ESL and public school language testing, so that we may more accurately evaluate the use of language in student writing samples.

By the conclusion of the study, four new volunteers had joined, and three had left. As well, two students had transferred between classes. The high changeover of students is inevitable within this experimental setting, as the enrollment of students happens weekly. Cambridge Practice Test #2 (1997) was administered after eight weeks of instruction as the Post-test. Students who entered after the experiment began all wrote the Pretest, and also wrote the Post-test with full term subjects at the end of the experimental intervention. This presents some skew to data. As a result only subjects who received instruction for six weeks or more were included in the findings. 28 subjects validly completed the study, as most transition happened within the first two weeks of the experiment. The smallness of sample ($N = 28$) presents some threats to the external validity of this project which are discussed in the next section.

Threats to Validity

The course of instruction in both classes followed a weekly format. Each week was divided into ten 100-minute classes (two per day). Each week in turn represented one unit (although the academic curriculum frequently deviated from this model) and culminated in a test. Additionally, by testing only the communicative skills, and not the content, I reduced the interaction bias of having two different, though equally experienced, instructors. Therefore, testing assessed English acquisition as a factor enhanced or hindered by secondary variables such as the teaching materials, different teachers and modes of instruction. Restated, the threats to external validity of the experimental design are significantly reduced by testing affective language skills divorced from strict memorization of the materials at hand. The developments witnessed are thereby assumed to be residual, a function of long-term rather than working memory. Thus, the experimental design measured an incremental stage in the development of English language skills. This provides a comparative measure of all secondary variables as a factor of Acquisition Rate over Time R/T , expressed as group means of achievement (see *Figure 5.1*, p. 147).

Following the Headway program exactly, six units comprises one level of proficiency, which is scaled from one to ten (though, at levels higher than eight, few students would continue the general ESL program, but rather would specialize according to their interests or occupation). The expected rate of level transfer is dependent on many factors, but is usually estimated at six weeks. In this experimental design, testing took just over one week of class-time collectively, and there were two holidays. Therefore, the norm-referenced standard of one IELTS level was used to gauge the effectiveness of the

curricula (see Appendix E), while acknowledging that many broader personal developments may have been masked from quantitative observation. Thus, the possible instrumentation, testing, interaction, and history biases were reduced, and results were subjected to regression analysis. Mortality (through subject departure) had given 28 valid cases in a true experimental design. The greatest challenge to external validity is the sample size and selection process. Due to ethical concerns in research, all participants in educational studies must be fully informed volunteers. As such, randomization in this study was limited to those who were at the appropriate language-level and chose to volunteer. It was fortunate indeed that many students wished to volunteer, but this still provides a threat of Interaction of Selection and X variable involved in that selection (Campbell and Stanley, 1963). A detailed overview of the experimental subjects below provides a more sound basis of knowledge about the volunteers, to help guide any generalizations to be made based on the findings of this study.

Analysis of Subjects

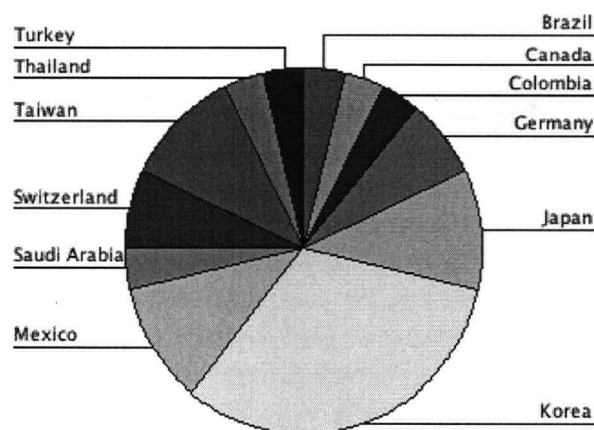
Linguistic Heritage

The conditions for an experiment at LSI were excellent in many respects. Firstly, there is a broad cross-section of students from countries and language groups in Asia, Europe, South America, The Middle East, Arabia. There is very little presence by comparison from Africa, Eastern Europe, India, and the myriad of less financially secure nations. The data presented herein has relevance to the experience of both immigrants and travelers, as many students come with the desire to facilitate their immigration to the country. The conditions do not reflect refugee experience except in the broader

philosophy and culture of second language learning. Figure 4.1 shows the distribution of nationalities through both control and experimental subjects.

The breadth of diversity in a resident student population is advantageous, as it helps to reduce the influence of heterogeneity on the results. The two classes in this experiment represent a microcosm of the ESL marketplace. This breadth of demand also broadens the opportunities for mutual cultural sharing. The school which accommodated this study has cultural fairs occasionally, which are organized by all the students, teachers and staff, and involve rotating groups of presentations and food testing, singing and slide shows. They are genuinely informative and students and staff have a rollicking good time. In some ways this fabulous diversity of subjects compensates for the difficulty of having a less than adequate sample size during the experiment. However, it was not possible to meet the lower limit of $N=30$ for external validity. Of the total sample size of 28 subjects, there were 12 nationalities and 12 first language groups present.

Figure 4.1. Frequency of Nationalities Represented by Country



Languages vary broadly among these nationalities. There is substantial research into the effect of heritage language on the learning of ESL. While German and Swiss German, or Taiwanese and Mandarin ESL learners may have much in common, they meet different challenges when learning English. These challenges are more broadly based than simply phonetic and grammatical concerns. One might expect that sharing root languages would make the process easier. Some attempt was made to observe the experimental data with a keen eye on whether L1 influences might account for an equally significant variable affecting the outcome of response to literature as a ESL pedagogical technique, as will be discussed in the findings. Yet English, with its multitude of irregularities, can present problems to all. Diversity in ESL classrooms is especially effective, for when heritage languages among students are not mutually intelligible, speaking English is a viable and necessary alternative during casual conversation. The influence of common L1 among students as a factor in learning inhibition presents an interesting expansion upon some of the research findings. The sample population represented only those students functioning at an intermediate level of fluency, who volunteered for participation. However, the L1 distribution shown in Figure 1.2 corresponds to the general attendance at the school during the period of experimental observation and instruction.

Gender

Male subjects outnumbered female subjects (M=16 / F=12). F=10 had an Asian L1 background. Diversity of language groups is more prevalent among males with M=6 students of Asian heritage. The L1 background may exert extra influence between sexes

as all but one female subject had a university degree (91.7%) while male subjects varied more broadly in background education, with only M=6 or 37.5 percent with a Bachelor or post graduate degree. Age is clearly not a factor here, as the mean age of female subjects was $X=23.8$ with a standard deviation of 3.2 years, while mean age of male subject was $X=25.8$ with a $SD=6.7$ years. Over all, the mean age in years was 25. Friendships outside the instructional context also play an important role in international ESL classrooms. Fewer females had friends living in Vancouver outside of the school context (50%), whereas 66.7 percent of male subjects had external friendships. This factor was made less significant as many relationships develop among students at the school, and those without external friendships seldom remain lonely. As a cross section of the Adult ESL population, the subjects in this experiment show the common tendency for international ESL to be a transitional zone of goal development for relatively well-educated young men and women.

Self-Concept as English Users

Self-concept is also a predominant factor in the learning behaviours of both men and women. Self evaluation of skill level with English was included in the Personal Data form. This was set on a five point scale categorized as *bad*, *not bad*, *good*, *very good*, and *excellent*. Subjects circled the category which suited their self-perceived skill at listening, reading, speaking, writing, and grammar. At the intermediate level no student chose the category of excellent, and thus it has been treated as a four point scale. 38 percent considered their speaking and writing skills *bad*, 18 percent thought of their reading and listening skills as *bad*, 48 percent considered their receptive skills *not bad*, and 34 percent

ranked themselves *not bad* in expressive skills. Self evaluation of skill level reflects perceived difficulty of that mode of communication. The average perceived difficulty of these modes of communication increases sequentially, where reading is perceived as the most facile, then grammar, listening, writing, and speaking as the most difficult respectively. This bears out certain presumptions built into the Communicative approach. Further cross-tabulation of Personal Data reveals that male and female subjects perceive equivalent difficulties with modes of language, yet female subjects had lower self concept regarding listening and speaking skill than male subjects. This self-concept was borne out in the results, as mean scores for male participants were 18 percent higher than the mean of female subjects on a standardized listening test administered in the fifth week of the experimental procedure. This difference is anomalous to other results, in which gender did not play a significant role in rate of language acquisition, as is discussed in Chapter 5. This is the only significant difference between genders in terms of perceived and apparent difficulties; however, there were no formal or standardized speaking tests administered in this study across both experimental and control groups.

Educational Background

Further investigations show that L1 base is also a factor with significant influence on perceived language abilities. As there were a majority of Korean students in this study, this may have significantly affected the data. While one Korean student selected high skill levels for reading, writing, grammar and listening, all other Korean subjects scored themselves, in all modes, *bad* or *not bad*. All Korean students fell into this category for speaking. Assessment by nationality shows no further correlation. However, on further

inquiry, a more interesting comparison is revealed. Cross tabulation of educational background and self evaluation shows a striking propensity for the most educated to have the lowest self evaluation of all the communicative skills, especially speaking, in which all subjects with one or more university degree rated themselves *bad*. This compares with the less educated subjects, who on average had a higher self-evaluation of communicative modes. This relationship is reversed however, when considering personal abilities with grammar. Less educated subjects generally had the lowest self-evaluation, while the majority of the more educated subjects rated themselves *good*. A total of 75 percent, or 21 subjects, had a Bachelor degree or higher. This clearly shows that academic English, which emphasizes grammar, can inhibit ability through self-concept of communicative abilities, especially where it requires spontaneous expression, as in speaking. Finally, age appears to have some influence, as older students generally perceive their abilities to be poorer than younger students (although, in many cases, the opposite appears to be true).

Of all the categories, it is significant that reading was perceived as offering the most proficiency to students. 52 percent of subjects (the largest majority choice) rated their reading ability as *not bad* and only 16 percent as *bad*. In all other language skills, 20 percent of subjects rated their level as *bad*. This can partly be explained by the ability to rely on translation dictionaries and repeated reading to facilitate comprehension.

However, listening is only perceived by 4 percent of students as harder than reading.

Reading and listening are also the first areas of competence which must be established in order to facilitate ESL learning. Reading skill, and subject confidence in reading, is of primary concern to the ESL instructor who wishes to teach using literature. This is true of almost all academic aspirations. Reading skill deficits seriously debilitate academic

learning (Stanovich, 2001), and therefore, the educational background of subjects in this study suggests that all students will have average or above average ability with reading. The fact that students have confidence with reading means that they can more readily be challenged in terms of the difficulty of the material and the complexity of analysis and response expected. Using reading as a reciprocal learning tool to facilitate speaking, writing and listening allows the most rooted of skills to support those skills which students consider more problematic.

Other Factors

Included in the Personal Data form was a question regarding number of years of formal study in English. This is expected to have some impact on the results, as a previous foundation of skills is sure to advance the learning process. The average number of years of EFL undertaken by the subjects of this study prior to inception was $X = 6.5$, with a 4.5 year standard variation. With such a length of prior EFL study, it is quite clear that ESL, with its cultural immersion advantages, can rapidly speed up the learning process for students of all ages. This study posits that improvements in English language skills may be seen and measured after only two months, while six years of study in school has only resulted in an intermediate level of fluency, with generally weak productive ability. Another important factor in the adult international ESL learning process is their interaction with English media. A rough estimate of time spent watching television was assessed by asking students how many hours of TV they had watched during the last week. These figures were placed into the following categories: 1-2; 3-5; 5-10; 11+. The average number of hours of English television watching was seven hours

per week. Male subjects tended to watch almost twice as much TV as female subjects. As a result, some hypothetical relation exists between TV watching, gender and listening comprehension (as it has been formally assessed), and may be worthy of further investigation.

All the above factors may present significant variables within the study able to exert an unexpected influence on the results. However, there is a good cross section of ages, nationalities, and personality types of both sexes to warrant a reliable, though small, sample. Reliable, in this sense, means representative. Finally, it bears mention that other significant factors include both individual motivation and attendance. There were periods during the experimental procedure where attendance fluctuated in both the Headway and Academic classes. Mean attendance for both classes was approximately 78 percent (some students missed portions of classes); this is average for the school, as many international students are also enjoying their vacation.

Summary of Research Design and Objectives

This research project was created as on-site educational study to test the effectiveness of literature in ESL pedagogy in the adult international private school context. The objective was to assess, according to standardized tests, whether a literature-based curriculum could produce results in student language acquisition equal to, or better than, results produced by standard grammar-based curricula (Soars and Soars, 2003). The study was conducted at an international ESL school in Vancouver, B.C. The model for the experiment was derived from Campbell and Stanley (1963), and fits the Type IV category of true experimental designs, called a Pretest/Posttest Control Group Design.

Two equivalent groups of volunteers received two months of instruction, during which a series of standardized examinations were administered to assess student progress. CFE practice tests were used for Pretest/Posttest procedures. One half of the subjects studied the normal grammar curriculum routinely used in the school, while the others learned through literature during the same periods of class time. It is hypothesized that teaching ESL using a literature-intensive curriculum will produce rates of language acquisition similar to those acquired with the grammar-based text, but will also aid in many other (often less empirically measurable) skills as well. To assess a broader range of possible variables influencing the results, Personal Data questionnaires were completed by subjects, and qualitative observations such as student work and course evaluations were also given consideration. It is postulated that literature is a vital learning tool, offering contextually and culturally significant learning opportunities in a content-rich environment, while engaging learners in both the formal and stylistic aspects of English communication. The results and implications of this hypothesis, and the experiment used to test it, are presented in Chapter 5.

CHAPTER FIVE

Discussion of Results and Findings

Basic Expectations

The question which guided the research had to do with the difference in normative rates of intermediate ESL acquisition between experimental and control classes situated in an adult international ESL school setting. There are many ways to address the collection of educational research data: the findings presented herein have a quantitative focus. The rationale for this decision is based upon the emphasis I have personally witnessed being given to test preparation in privately-owned ESL institutions. To answer the larger issues which the use of literature for language acquisition raise, a qualitative method may be more appropriate: but in this context, I felt that the use of literature per se required justification according to the standards of the industry and those engaged in it. The justification of a literature-enriched ESL education according to statistical methods does provide directions for further inquiry and theoretical development. For example, from the data presented in this chapter, listening skills can be seen as a predictor of variations in other communicative practices, as evaluated with standardized tests. An alpha level of .05 was used in all statistical tests. The statistical significance for between-group variation in summative mean rates of acquisition over an eight week period of instruction was $F(8, 17) = .201, p = .972$. This supports the null hypothesis that literature-enriched instruction is no less effective than grammar-focused instruction within a limited small sample size of $N=28$ students, comprised of two classes. While this result suggests that there was no statistically significant difference in

ESL acquisition rates resulting from a change in normative instructional curricula, further data analysis did reveal some significant variations between groups. The findings presented in this chapter were extracted from two sources: 1) statistical analysis of quantitative data from raw scores on standardized tests administered during the course of the experimental procedure, and 2) analysis of data compiled from subject responses on the Personal Data Form (Appendix C), third-party observations, attendance records, and course evaluations completed at the end of the experiment.

Any generalization about this topic would require a much greater sample size and, ideally, a longitudinal study, neither of which was possible given the practical demands of this study. The relevance of the research is not diminished by this fact. If literature can be shown to work for one ESL student, or a whole class, it will work for other learners, as it has done for centuries past. And in the literary process of learning the English language, students may become aware of a great many other things, cultural, historical, mythological, wondrous things (Lazar, 1993; Widdowson, 1990). The demands of students (especially adult students), and on students—largely determined by performance standards on functional communicative tasks and assessments—place functional communicative criteria forefront in many educational contexts. There is a need to ask whether ESL literature instruction, despite its many positive attributes, can be successful in meeting these basic demands. As this research shows, literature provides an excellent basis for learning both conceptual knowledge and basic functional grammar skills, and is an aid to the development of vocabulary and stylistic expression. As will be discussed below, this implies that literature increases relevant skills valued in standardized language proficiency tests at a rate similar to content-reduced textbook approaches to

ESL. As such, it is an under-utilized asset, and a potential boon to teachers and students alike.

One commanding variable, which I will neither excuse nor ignore, is the role of the teacher in context of learning language *through* literature. It goes without saying that a teacher makes the learning experience. Any reflection on educational practices must acknowledge the experiential factors—the social circumstances—of growth in knowledge. I was inspired to pursue this research because, as an ESL teacher in two settings—high school and international private school—I noticed a slavish tendency to simply follow form and function filled grammatical criteria, and noticed that the general rationale and disclaimer given was that of meeting the demands of the standardized tests. It is the same in many fields of education, where heavy emphasis rests on the results of standardized examinations, and teachers themselves are weighed and judged by their ability to deposit the necessary data into the willing or unwilling minds of students, regardless of their individual predispositions toward learning. To speak openly, this produces a timid response in teachers, a retreat from trying something unknown or untested.

The illusion of safety in a standardized system is both philosophically absurd and pedagogically detrimental. As I mentioned previously, I distrust those lessons I have given more than once, for they lack the inspiration of interactive learning and are rote data in my mind. This fact transfers to my students; they lack personal involvement and engagement with the information in the learning process. The information is simply data to be taken in, and for the most part, is rapidly forgotten. Teaching should be much more than this; high scores on tests are gratifying, but they do not produce scholars invested with curiosity. I try to teach fluency, not just proficiency. My opinion and approach to

teaching are not necessarily shared by all, or even many, in the ESL profession. As a researcher, the fact that I taught the experimental class means my own pedagogical biases were represented in these results, which is to some degree inevitable. Some of this issue is addressed by not testing for content knowledge and focusing on skills testing instead.

Reification of the importance of learner motivation, and instructional time in the learning process, seemed apparent from attendance records: patterns of chronic lateness or absenteeism among the subjects accounted for nearly all cases in which individuals fell short of anticipated base-line improvements. This discovery was equally true for both experimental and control groups. These two factors (motivation and instructional time) may be of greater significance than those factors directly related to instructional curricula. Causation is moot, because students who lack confidence in English comprehension and skills may be more likely to miss classes and to converse in L1 with associates when outside the school, further hindering their L2 assimilation. Likewise the instructor has less knowledge for individualizing exercises to address the specific L2 difficulties which these students may be facing.

As noted in Chapter Three, reading skills are a condition of success in heavily literate societies, and many alienated, affective disturbances can manifest in their deficiency. Students whose heritage language possesses a significantly different graphemic system than Roman script, and who lack sufficient practice reading in English, may also be overwhelmed by an increase in reading load, and the stylized language of definitive of literary texts. While one cannot place the cause of learning deficits on any one factor, the instructor, the student, or the curriculum, it is reasonably noted that motivation, willingness to engage and socio-cultural background are primary variables

influencing the results. On the positive side, students with perfect attendance performed above expectations. There were some remarkable increases in general linguistic ability among a group of experimental subjects who become friends, worked together and became highly engaged in their studies. One observer commented: "Oh them, they never do anything, they're always reading!" This group of students showed a remarkable increase of fluency in written expression, particularly in descriptive techniques, as is detailed in the section on Writing. This last finding demonstrated that a stylistic, content-driven literature curriculum can have a dramatic impact on the playful, imaginative, expressive capacity of the language learners.

Statistical analysis of the data after multiple regression analysis showed that the greatest single variable affecting the results over time was listening skills. Listening skills reflect many of the issues put forth in the rationale of this study. Performative engagement with content-based stylistic texts had a strong impact on the listening skills of the Academic class, and was the most significant factor in the slightly higher rate of language acquisition that students in the Academic class demonstrated. This finding supports the proposition that literature can be used in ESL instruction to enhance the benefits arising from reciprocal oral-visual skill development (Ausubel, Stager and Gaite, 1970; Pressley and Afflerbach, 1995). Further, it shows that literature is an effective resource for implementing a content-based ESL pedagogy which engages students as listeners, not just as readers (Cook, 1996). This distinction is of paramount importance to the communicative approach to ESL. Therefore, it may be assumed that literature can be employed across the communicative domains so as to satisfy the functional criteria at the

forefront of ESL industry standards. In the ensuing sections, I shall try to provide reasonable evidence for making these claims.

Instrument Selection

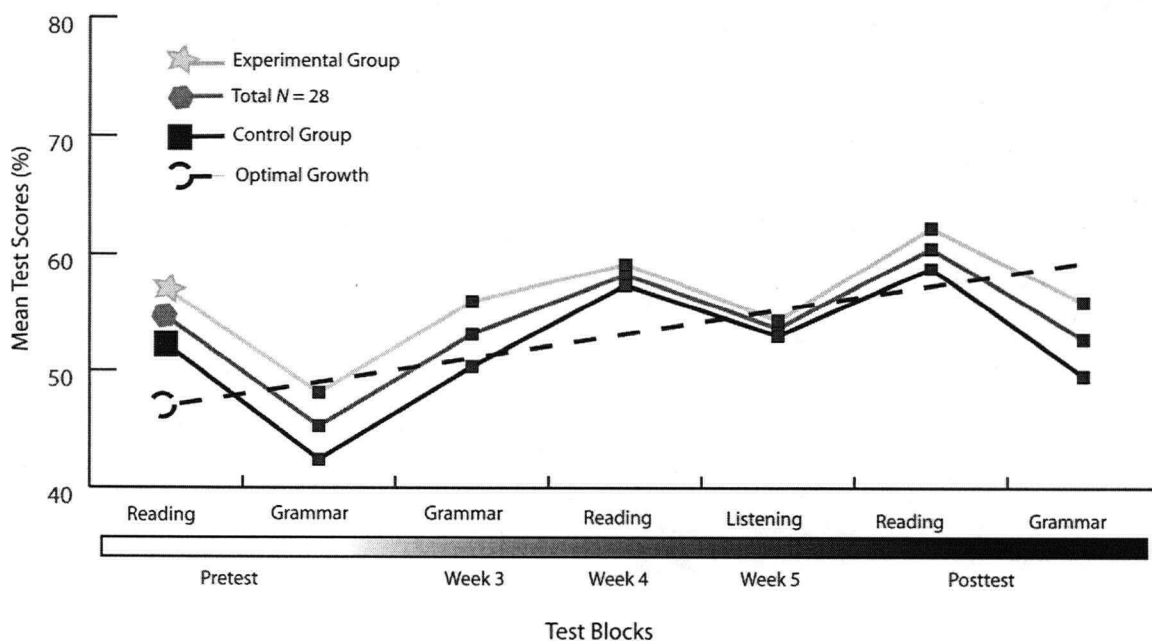
A baseline proof in any educational study is difficult to establish. In this case, statistical data collection and analysis utilized mainly norm-referenced testing, thereby accommodating some cross-referencing of data sets. Repeated statistical analysis of the raw data provided clear indication of improvement across both classes in acquired language skills, but only in certain instances was the .05 confidence level reached, thereby positing limited validity. Otherwise, the following conjectures based on the results must remain hypothetical, and case specific. The anticipated increase in language skills was plotted according to the International English Language Testing Services (IELTS)/Headway program model, consisting of 9 levels, divided equally into Beginner, Intermediate and Advanced categories. Students entering level four, should, after six to eight weeks, be prepared for level five. This rate allots one week per unit within the level. Students who wish to write the Cambridge First Certificate in English (CFE) test should have a minimum of level-five proficiency (see Appendix E). The choice of Pretest/Posttest instruments took this matter into consideration. The expectation was that on average, students entering the experiment would not achieve a passing grade on the pretest. By the end of the experimental period, it was anticipated that they would, on average, receive a passing grade. The weekly interim testing was conducted to understand the different standards of English tests commonly used in ESL, and to plot scores over time against normative expectations. This base rate of anticipated linguistic growth in

English is purely hypothetical and based on mean improvements across all data sets. It is acknowledged that learning is never linear. Nonetheless, this measure helps us to visualize these data as a continuum, and to see the general pattern of acquisition rates with and without direct grammar instruction.

Analysis of Data

The separate mean progress of control and experimental classes on weekly tests throughout the course is plotted below. Cross indexing of scores as a percentage of group ($N=28$) means establishes approximately equivalent values for each test, thus providing the incremental baseline of improvements expected, as a hypothetical linear trajectory.

Figure 5.1. Progress timeline: group means in percent on standardized tests with optimal growth vector increasing 1 percent per week over eight weeks.



Pretests and intake data showed the two groups to be marginally dissimilar, with the academic class about four percent higher in score on average and with less variance among the group. This discrepancy was reduced during interim testing. A possible explanation for this irregular feature in the data is that the change was due to a switch in testing format from CFE to Test of English as Foreign Language (TOEFL) during weeks three and four of the experimental design. This explanation suggests some test bias was present in the results. This bias is not surprising; many students were more familiar with the TOEFL format and standards, which are less vernacular, more syntax-based models for language assessment. The listening data, however, used the CFE format, and indicates a regression toward the mean. A factor in this centralizing tendency of group scores is also learning styles among students, whereby listening skills compensate for other L2 linguistic processes in students who are weak in formal grammar study practices.

While disparity was consistent across the duration of the study, there were minor fluctuations not represented in Figure 5.1 (p. 147), as greater deviation from means were present in pretest results as compared to posttest. Although near identical acquisition rates of all language skills assessed occurred in both groups, the control tended to homogenize more, in terms of level, than did the academic class. As these differences were influenced by only a few subjects, they do not prove significant in a Two-tailed Significance test. T tests for significance using step functions in the sequence of assessment were run to examine whether there was any significant variation in group acquisition rates. Confidence levels were not met in any of the above tests. Given the raw data of this study, it would seem likely that there is some Type II validity to the null

hypothesis for variance in rates of acquisition between groups over a two-month instructional duration.

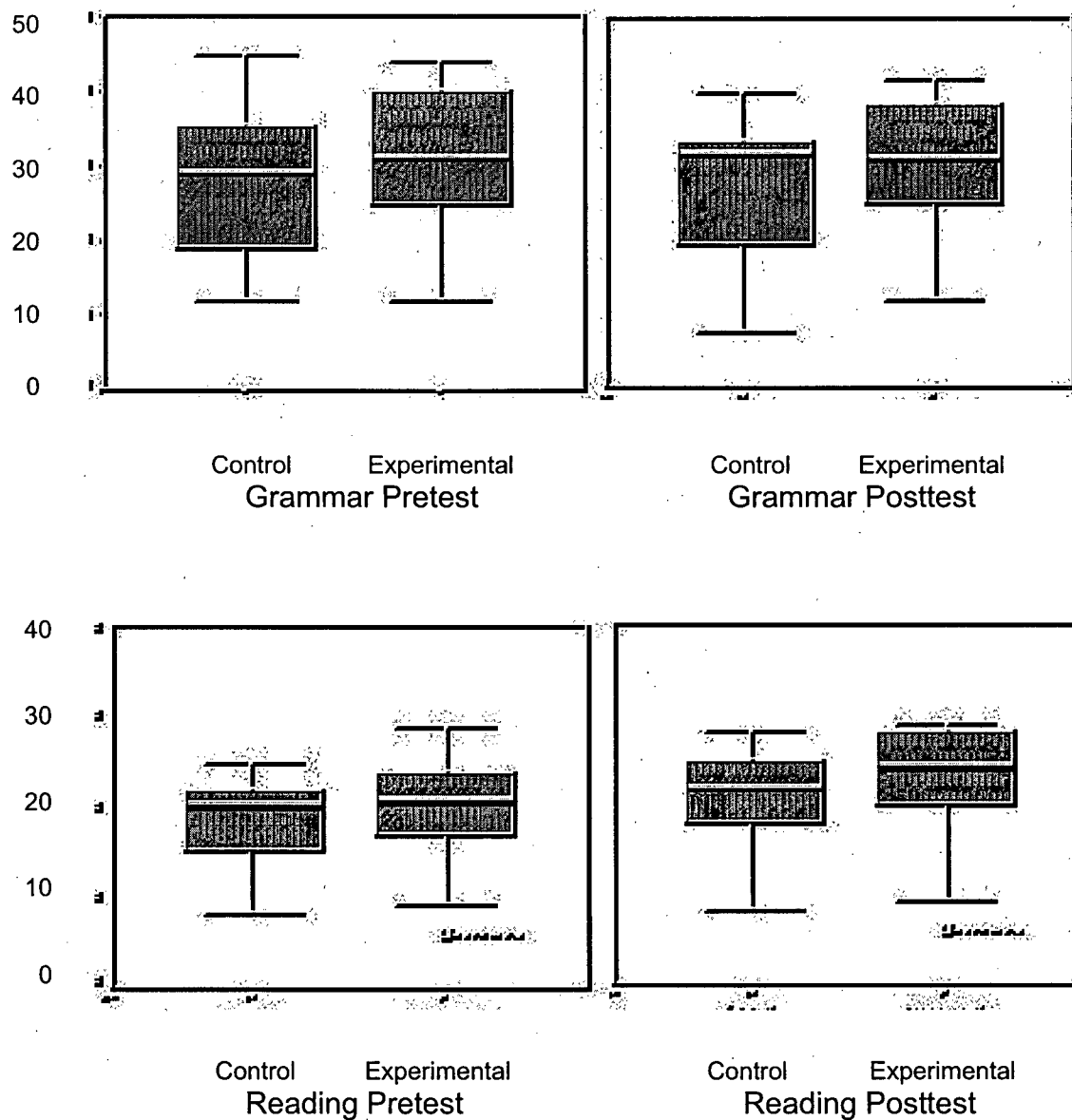
Findings from Grammar, Reading and Listening Skills Data

The mean increase across both classes on CFE scores as a combined average of both reading and grammar papers was 6.62 percent overall, or roughly an improvement of one percentage point per week of instruction. This is posited therefore as an optimal growth rate in language skills as represented by the dotted line in Figure 5.1. Given that instruction was allocated 1000 minutes per week, with approximately 17.25 percent of time lost to testing and holidays, a simple formula, based solely upon this data, suggests a mean anticipated rate of ESL acquisition in instructional contexts according to standardized assessment. A mean of 1 per cent per 1000 minutes of instruction was plotted using this formula; hypothetically, this implies complete proficiency after two years of instructional and cultural immersion. Mere postulation, this scenario is unlikely to play out in fact owing to the myriad individual variables for every case: nevertheless, the anticipated rate of acquisition provides a relative sense of norm-referenced expectations in adult ESL contexts. The consistency among both groups implies that this rate is more constant than a simple change in curricula could alter, yet clearly individual cases are affected, and can either flourish beyond the norm, or diminish under the greater or lesser demands of the instructional materials and methods. Appendices F and G show the result of the factor-analytic Mann Whitney test, and while the literature class increases in rank over time, a lack of statistically significant asymmetric disparity exists. This finding not only supports the LAD concept of learning (Chomsky, 1972), but implies that the optimal

growth rate of individual language skills remains fairly consistent across age groups. Students whose heritage language has many discontinuities with English may progress more slowly at first while the new system is being inculcated, but it is predicted that once a foundation of English literacy has been laid down, even these differences will regress toward the mean rate of optimal growth given adequate dedication on the part of the learner.

Another notable comparison presented in Figure 5.1 is the relationship of reading to grammatical ability. Clearly the students scored more highly on reading tests, and control group subjects improved notably in their reading skills over the course of instruction. As students in the Headway program specifically practiced reading and response in the standardized format, it is possible that the improvements in their skills may be more readily evaluated using standardized tests. It does not necessarily indicate a deficit in reading skills acquired through engagement with literature. Grammar in Use test papers are generally more heavily weighted than Reading papers. In FCE, Reading is allotted 35 total marks, while Grammar in Use is allotted 65, and on the whole, students found more difficulty with the latter. However, mean rate of learning was highly consistent between both classes, and showed low between-groups variance in independent T Tests. High within-groups variance on grammar scores made it evident that other factors were having an impact on correlation of growth rates between the control and academic class. This provides some evidence for proof of the null hypothesis in this study, and shows that basic grammatical acquisition rates under ESL instruction *are not decreased by literature instruction*, provided the curriculum is appropriate to the level of the students and is optimally employed in the instructional method.

Figure 5.2. Pretest/Posttest box plots comparing grammar and reading skills by group.

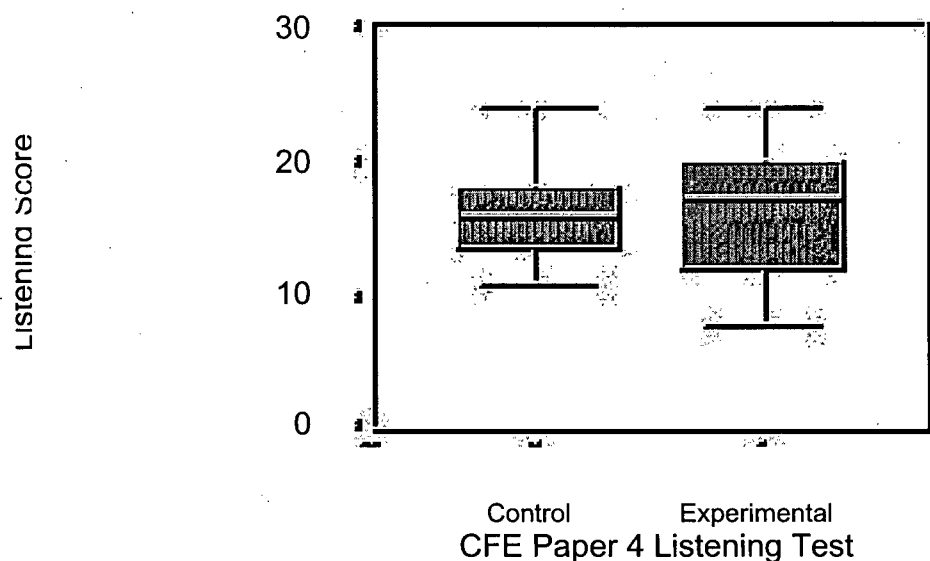


The advantage to the depiction of the results in Figure 5.2 using a box plot showing mean, standard deviation, and range, is that it allows a broader appreciation of

the changes which occurred during the course of this experiment. A different pattern emerges here, insofar as improvements in reading and grammar for the experimental group are notably more consistent than among the control group, whose mean increase in grammar is not reflected in the progress of the class as a whole. Grammar skills show that the control class on average had improved, yet this was at the expense of other students, whose scores may have decreased (true of three cases). Thus, there is indication of a more homogenous or common knowledge in the control group, which was either known by the student or not; students in the academic class tended to increase in proficiency as a group, from the pretest to posttest. Reading scores in Figure 5.2 also display a tendency for between-group mean scores to shift in relation to standard deviation, where the academic class standard deviation is situated at the top of the range. The improvement across both classes in reading test scores seems consistent. Other differences between the deviations and ranges in Figure 5.2 may be postulated as resulting from the different scale of scoring used in Paper 1, Reading (35), and Paper 3, Use of English (65).

The relationship between listening and reading scores can be quite closely seen in Figure 5.3 from the relative distributions between groups. Administered during the fifth week of instruction, the results reflect tendencies of both reading and grammar scores. A correlation matrix used for factor analysis and weighting of scores showed statistically significant correlations in the CFE listening test scores, $F(1, 26) = 6.65, p < .05$. When listening is factored against Reading, Grammar and Writing results, there is an increase in significance over time, with the greatest significance shown in posttest grammar scores.

Figure 5.3. Box plot for listening test by group.



The Significance of Listening

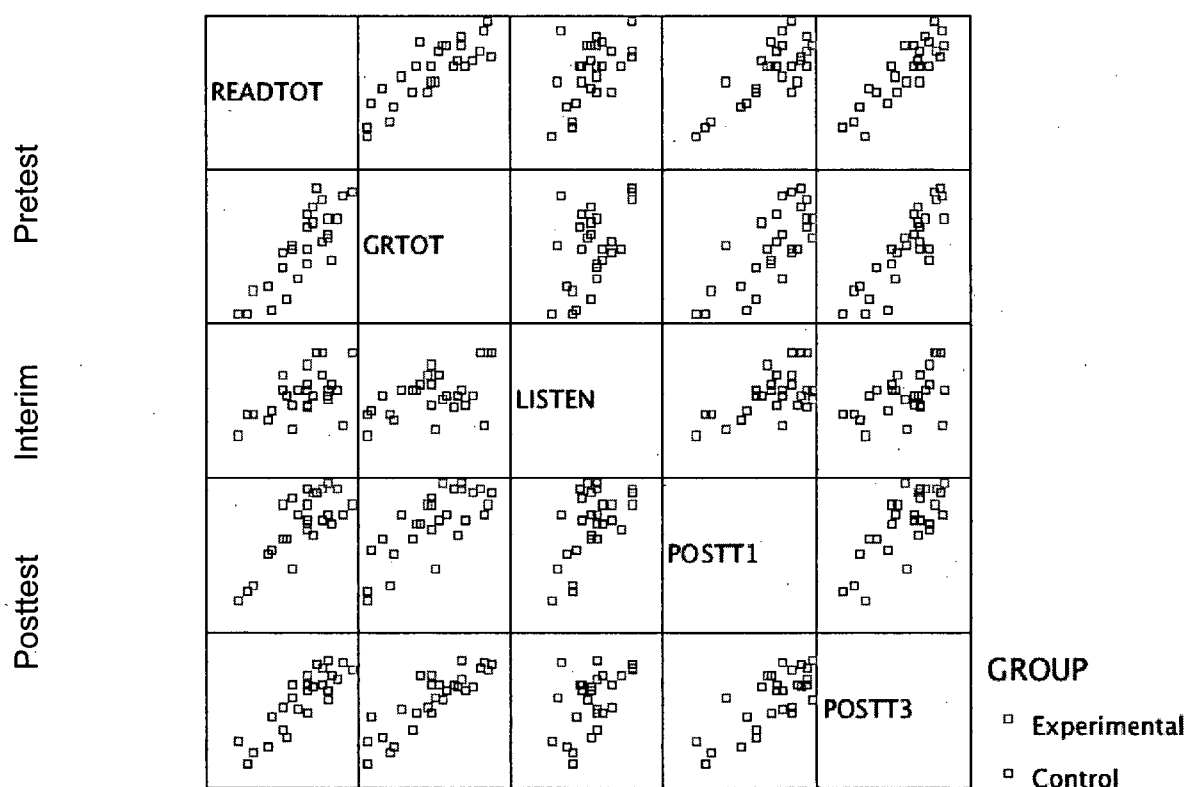
Discernable in the posttest reading results (p. 151), some factors were pushing the mean of the experimental class toward the upper limit of the control group's standard deviation. While there is no certainty to this theory, I have considered the possibility that familiarity with stories and poems read aloud, with rhythmic and stylistic expression, with literary nuance and implication, with vigor and cultural variety, filled with tropes of native speech, had given students across the range of abilities a deeper sense of text, and textual comprehension. Concurring with this supposition, a uniform rate of improvement in the academic class was also indicated through the interim listening test, while means for the control group show a tendency to shift in relation to central deviation. One explanation for this is the reliance on content-reduced texts for normative curricula. Results are more predictable within a narrow range of expectations, while a literature-

enriched curriculum allows for many non-deliberate learning functions (otherwise referred to herein as reciprocal learning functions) to occur, and supports a broader range of improvements across all three skills as presented in the previous Figures 5.2 and 5.3. The correlations between listening, grammar and reading scores are presented as a scatter plot matrix, with markers set according to groups, in Figure 5.4. From this diagram, it can be shown that a stronger correlation coefficient exists between listening skills and reading/grammar skills in the academic class than in the control class. This correlation appears to signify a higher degree of aural integration with phonological memory in grammar and vocabulary and comprehension.

The expansion of the verbal/aural component of the Academic class curriculum was intended to affect results by strengthening verbal skills and phonological memory (Goswami, 2000). Logan (1997) puts forward "Instance Theory," which explains that each discrete encounter with a language leaves a residual trace of upon the memory of the beholder: practicing the sounding-out of stylized texts embraces Instance theory as a method to achieve better correlations across grammatical and phonological functions of memory. Native English speakers rely on their phonological memory to provide solutions to language tasks, even in complex syntactic situations. Reading aloud not only provides dramatic entertainment, it helps fluent English speakers make choices according to *what sounds right*, or to clarify the meaning of something an author has written. Aural learning is perforce social, and within the socially constructed space of the classroom, it can be enhanced to compliment and compensate visual retention of grammar and vocabulary in memory. Good listening skills not only make for better readers, they make for better learners. Except for exam preparation practice tapes, in the adult international ESL

setting very little direct instruction, or training, is offered to aid basic listening skills. Yet listening skills may be a predictor of other communicative abilities, such as reading.

Figure 5.4. Scatter plot matrix showing correlations between listening skills and pretest/posttest grammar and reading scores represented by groups.



The direction of significance toward listening as a factor suggested in the correlation matrices, combined with the intent of my instructional procedure, prompted some immediate questions. If verbal engagement with stylistic texts was successful in positively influencing the rate of language acquisition, then it ought to exaggerate the

range of scores in posttests. This trend is again more apparent within the Academic class than in the Headway class. All other correlations, between grammar and reading scores, as depicted in the scatter plot matrix (*Figure 5.4*, p. 155), are in co-various distributions about the linear coefficient. Only in listening skills is there a significantly larger common correlation efficient in one group as opposed to the other. If this hypothesis is true, we can expect regular attendance and opportunities for verbal participation to be chief factors affecting the results. The hypothesis is thus expanded, to suggest an explanation for the increasing range of grammatical skills among the academic class when none were delivered through direct instruction: the participatory, auditory component in the experimental method, through enhancing phonological processing and memory, possibly engages an innate language acquisition potential of the learner.

To test this hypothesis further, data reduction by group was performed on all weighted data with listening as the dependent variable. This brought a further discovery, as evidence in support for the hypothesis. Factor analysis using alpha extraction with the Bartlett method for the experimental group with regression-processed data (see Factor Analysis Tables, Appendices H and I) yielded statistical significance $F = .042 (1, 27)$ in the coefficient matrix. Statistical significance was not produced using the same method with control group data. While none of this provides conclusive evidence in support of a theory of audiation—the importance of phonological processing to the LAD and the role of sounding to innate acquisition/comprehension skills—it nevertheless represents a longitudinal tendency affecting language development, which could be predicted to continue at the observed rate or even maximize over time: this may provide ESL educators with an important pedagogical insight.

The exploration of these findings has thus far only considered functional and receptive language abilities. As no speaking tests were given to students, this expressive domain shall remain underdeveloped by this research. Speaking tests provide formats, and have subjects respond to spoken and visual prompts. Like writing, there is an inevitable degree of subjectivity in these assessments. Cultural familiarity and accuracy of pronunciation influence grading well outside of functional considerations. Assessment is based on intuitive judgments of oral communicative competence, from a culturally loaded native speaker perspective: students are expected to display the proper development of a patterned response. Speaking tests give evaluators very little time to reflect on and refine their judgments. In one instance, a student who was predicted to fail an FCE speaking exam was asked to write out a response and memorize it. He was able to pass the speaking test using this method. Yet we know that this communicative skill, when proficient, is highly improvisatory. To analyse a spoken response structurally and semantically, it would be necessary to record and transcribe the words. A literary consciousness would then predominate in the reading activity, one which makes the speaker subservient to a preconceived text, thereby confounding the assessment of oral skills. There are distinct differences between orality and literacy, not just in production, but in perception (cf. Ong, 1982). It was therefore resolved that additional writing data would be collected for analysis, in lieu of trying to assess speaking skills with formulaic tests, especially as these tests require extensive explanation and rehearsal, neither of which were components in either curricula used in the study. These collected writings represent a qualitative source of data to broaden and conclude these findings.

Findings from Writing Data

Writing requires several reciprocal abilities with language to be operational simultaneously: motor functions for shaping letters; verbal functions for generating structure and meaning; reading functions for editing, reflecting and revising; and substructural grammatical awareness. Writing, like its companion in the expressive domain, speaking, must occur within the constraints of format, audience and topic of discourse, and these must also be accounted for in the analysis of findings. To address these issues, students were given both expository and narrative writing prompts: two of these prompts were copied from Cambridge Practice Tests (Harrison & Kerr, 1996), while another two writing prompts were generated by the instructors. The writing tests were administered at four stages: Pretest, Interim 1 (week three), Interim 2 (week 6), and Posttest. As subjectivity in assessment further confounds reliability of results, three independent markers used a standard five-band rubric adopted from the Cambridge FCE materials for evaluation of writing samples (see Appendix J). Half marks were permitted, and then scores were multiplied by two for a ten-point scale. All marking was done independently, and results were averaged for a three-score input variable. Narrative and expository samples were then merged, giving an average of six scores for pretest and posttest writing sample data.

Genre Demands on ESL Writing

Each genre makes specific linguistic and formal demands of writers, the standards of which are generic among cultures; nevertheless, the stylistic constraints on expression are highly dependent on sociocultural dynamics in identifying the audience the writer

seeks. A shift in cultural perspective makes the handling of idioms in a foreign language quite difficult, and strictly speaking fluency can only be acquired through interaction with the cultural product of that particular language. Rubrics often refer to the need for consistency in tone and register.

Table 5.1. Writing sample prompts used in pretest/posttest data collection procedures.

Pretest

1. No matter what people said about Alex, I knew he was a true friend.
2. Describe your favorite lesson at L.S.I.

Posttest

1. Becky was really surprised at what happened when...
2. Describe your best friend and why that person is your friend.

This implies that, a priori to the act of writing, the writer must posit a particular audience as the salient framework for their erudition, and that they must engage in a culturally-informed style, appropriate to their imagined reader. This is in many ways a much more complex set of required skills than is needed for multiple-choice grammar questions.

Error itself must be reconsidered, as the mere counting of grammatical mistakes can be very misleading. If student writers are employing a variety of linguistic devices to meet their specific goal, yet are employing them imperfectly, it shows little understanding of the learning process to consider this a failure of ability. Stylistic demands of narrative require the user to employ complicated verb aspects, such as the perfect aspect (auxiliary

verb *to have*) to relate simultaneous or sequential actions. Application of verbal aspects is much more difficult than identification of a perfective construction in a sentence printed in a test booklet. This is merely one example of the structural grammar awareness which can be readily evaluated in subjects simply through narrative prompts, such as those used in Pre/posttest 1 (see Table 5.1, p. 159).

Exposition requires the deployment of other linguistic knowledge related to abstraction, description, breadth of vocabulary, etc. Exposition emphasizes the expression of basic cause and effect relations through syntactic subordination, clausal linking and conditional propositions. As with narrative, exposition requires students to employ many different cognitive and metacognitive knowledge structures in order to clearly communicate their ideas in a sustained and organized fashion. ESL testing agencies set minimum word counts at 150-250 words. Even after adult ESL students are able to speak 250 words on a given topic with relative ease, the added formal concerns of writing expository prose may still make this seem a daunting task in the foreign language:

Despite the differences between writing narrative and writing exposition, much of the basic linguistic knowledge is transferable across genres, which are governed more by stylistic and formal considerations. Restated, familiarity with narrative structures will ultimately assist the writer in composing expository prose and vice versa. The crux of this issue—manipulation of the writer's voice to be appropriate to the demands of the audience—is that it is not possible to divorce content from formal aspects of style, and therefore no distinction can be made between level of functional awareness and the development of stylistic fluency. These form-content issues are confusing for those

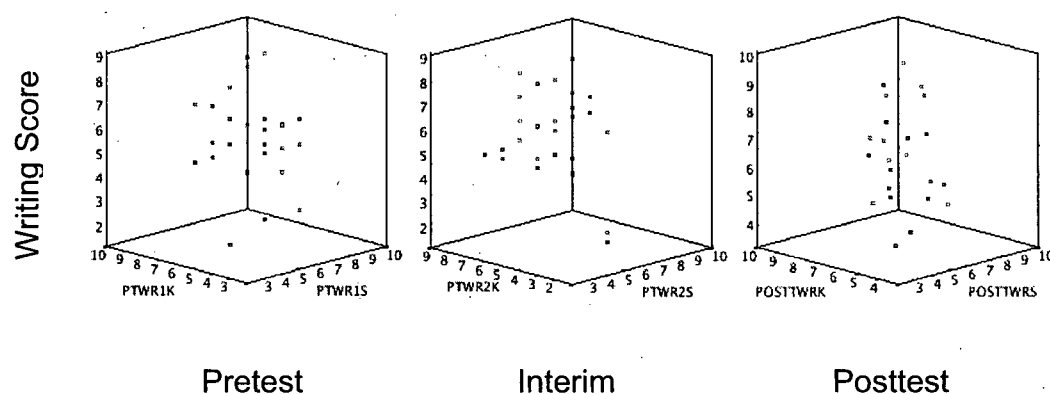
evaluating writing samples. How does dull, grammatically accurate writing equate with intriguing, stylistically risky writing? Which should receive the greater score?

Using 3-D scatter plots to correlate the scores of the three independent markers offers insight into the nature of subjective bias in marking, but also indicates a fairly steady regression effect. This regression may be due to the increasing proficiency of students with culturally determined expression, to which the markers respond more uniformly, as the dissonance between concepts and their delivery abates for the writer and reader alike. Data collection for this process was divided into three stages: pretest; interim; posttest. This visually animates not only the relative scores by group, but the centralizing tendencies, over time, of the different markers. Using regression coefficients from pretest/posttest writing scores, the scatter plots indicate that the scoring of writing samples became increasingly more uniform from pretest to posttest. The fact that marking was done independently, and shortly after the completion of the writing, suggests this presupposes the increased correlation in scores is, in part, due to the sample, as much as to any latent biases in the evaluators. In addition, the markers were each experienced and professionally qualified. The initial extreme of deviation between scores on a single sample was high as 30 percent (4 – 7 on a 10-point scale). As is shown in Figure 5.5, coincidence of scores was much higher in the posttest sample.

After the averaging of scores across markers and genres, we can see a progressive trend developing which reflects the data analysis of related English language skills. Using group means of scores based on the standard rubric for CFE Writing samples, the findings show the rate of improvement in writing ability over the eight-week period to be

almost identical to the mean rate of increase in reading and grammar scores over the same experimental period.

Figure 5.5. Pretest-Interim-Posttest 3-D scatter plots showing correlation of scores by the three independent evaluators on combined narrative/expository writing samples.



GROUP

- Experimental
- Control

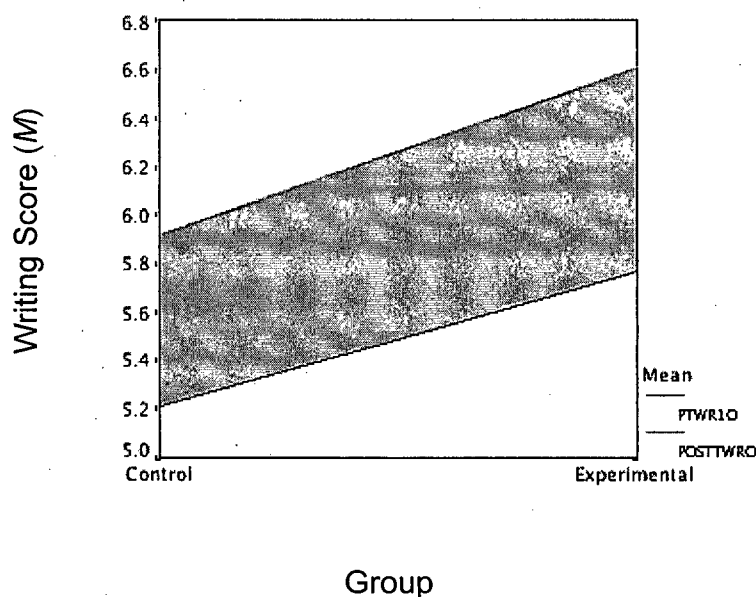
Once again, the score of the experimental group exceeds the control, in mean, range, and mean improvement from pretest to posttest. Significantly, the mean percent improvement in skills over all experimental subjects is 7 percent, only 0.2 percent higher than the cumulative increase noted in posttest grammar and reading skills assessments. With the calculated margin of error in excess of this difference, we can assume that the writing skills are in a fairly balanced reciprocal relationship with other skills in this particular ESL context. Although this tells little of the actual language growth in the user, it does

show a normative relation among the testing systems and the results presented herein, adding some additional degree of validity to the results and findings based on writing sample data.

Group Dynamics

Homogeneity of results in terms of the rate of growth among the various linguistic capacities of subjects tested in the experimental design, after regression effects had been factored into the results, signify that, given a margin of error variance equal to 1.03, a strong predictability is presented for common growth rates, regardless of curriculum, and that a small increase in rank is displayed by the experimental group over the control. This increase is negligible, and cannot be generalized without Type II error susceptibility, as many factors, both internal and external to the experimental paradigm, may have influenced the data and results. The hypothesis put forward here to account for differences in rate of acquisition between the experimental and control group subjects is that discrepancies result from the increased exposure to cultural informed stylistic texts and practice in articulation and auditing both for fluency and comprehension. The engagement with content-enriched learning materials adds metacognitive and metatextual awareness to the instructional benefits of an ESL program. Over time, these benefits can manifest in a variety of ways. One of the ways in which literature instruction in ESL benefits the learning process is through increasing phonological familiarity with normative models of cultural expression, and the attendant syntactic and grammatical frameworks which accommodate them.

Figure 5.6. Stacked Pretest/Posttest graph showing average mean scores from writing sample data delineated according to group.



Phonological familiarity with the target language had an impact not only on cultural sophistication of the learner, but on the rate of acquisition of functional principles governing use of English. As such, the benefits of utilizing literature in ESL curricula are twofold: they can improve metacognitive awareness of cultural values and norms, and they can accelerate the acquisition of functional grammar and vocabulary.

Variations between the experimental and control groups in discrete skills-based testing tells nothing of the content of these differences. This is in keeping with the original intention of this research, to gauge growth according to pro rata industrial standards, as stated in the introduction to this chapter. However, in order to more fully appreciate the quantitative variances in results, a different system was needed to analyze

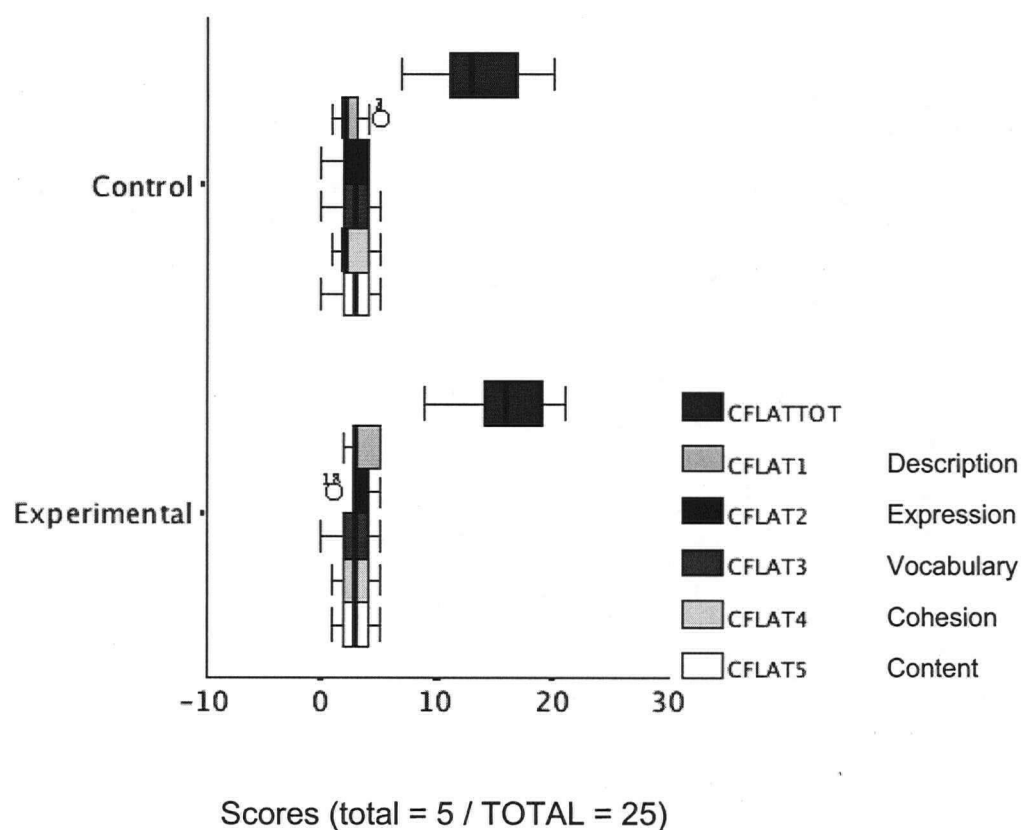
the data and proffer qualitative insights, while still remaining independent of course-specific content considerations. Again, writing samples proved useful as they exposed the range of individual student abilities, in conjunction with their generative coordination of linguistic notions. Generative coordination in writing refers to more than syntactic knowledge; it refers to stylistic composition by rhythmic ideological units associated with the voice, and entails breathing and emphasis, expression and personality, the embodied apperception of linguistic relations in English. Observing the successful acts of generative coordination in writing samples provides a measure of the cultural fluency and sophistication of the writer, not just of their linguistic knowledge and proficiency with Standard English.

Cultural Fluency Language Assessment Tool (CFLAT) Results on Writing Samples

As a qualitative/quantitative analysis tool, this method of stylistic assessment (see Appendix D) recognizes, up to limited frequency, the use of a variety of tropes and linguistic structures needed to coordinate ideas fluently in English. It gives each specified linguistic feature equal value, and categorizes them into the following Fluency Scales: Description; Expression; Vocabulary; Cohesion; and Content. Coordination of ideas implies the presence of all these tools, to varying degrees depending on the nature and genre of the writing task. They form a basis of devices central to all acts of communication. The evaluation process utilizes a continuous 150 word section from the writing sample and counts successful construction of stylistic features until a maximum of five is reached on the associated fluency scale. In this research data, the sum of the Five Fluency Scales was multiplied by 0.4 to match the ten-point scale used in the CFE

assessment procedure. This gave an equal weighting to the normative rubric writing scores and the CFLAT assessment of cultural fluency.

Figure 5.7. Box plots of CFLAT assessment of Posttest writing samples by means, standard deviation, and range clustered in groups.



The results, presented in Figure 5.7 (p. 166), show patterns which lend support to the theory that engagement with language, through repeated embodiment of stylistic language tropes, deepens innate functional systems involved in the acquisition of a language. Shown proportionally, the plots give some indication of group strengths and weaknesses in writing.

Figure 5.7 gives a useful visual portrayal of causes of variation between the group performance on tests. Cross correlation of CFLAT results with CFE posttest in reading, grammar, and listening show a higher correlation than those from individual markers working with rubrics $p=.045$ (3, 24). While the CFLAT takes more effort during assessment, from experience it does provide a more discrete and statistically consistent measure of ESL language use. Familiar patterns can easily be discerned. A comparison of group totals reveals the experimental group to be ahead of the control by a mean score of 2.6 (approximately 10%) with a smaller standard deviation, which is typical of other test results presented in these findings. However, from individual fluency scales we can see that the experimental class mean scores are central to the standard deviation and increase consistently across scales, while the Headway class mean scores appear to be less consistent. As well, there is a notable difference in language abilities related to description and cohesion. The descriptive style used in posttest writing samples seemed particular to the academic class, to the point that the external marker commented after grading that it served as a subtle indication of the group to which the writing sample belonged. Other stylistic features, such as complex sentences, also had a higher frequency of occurrence among members of the Academic class.

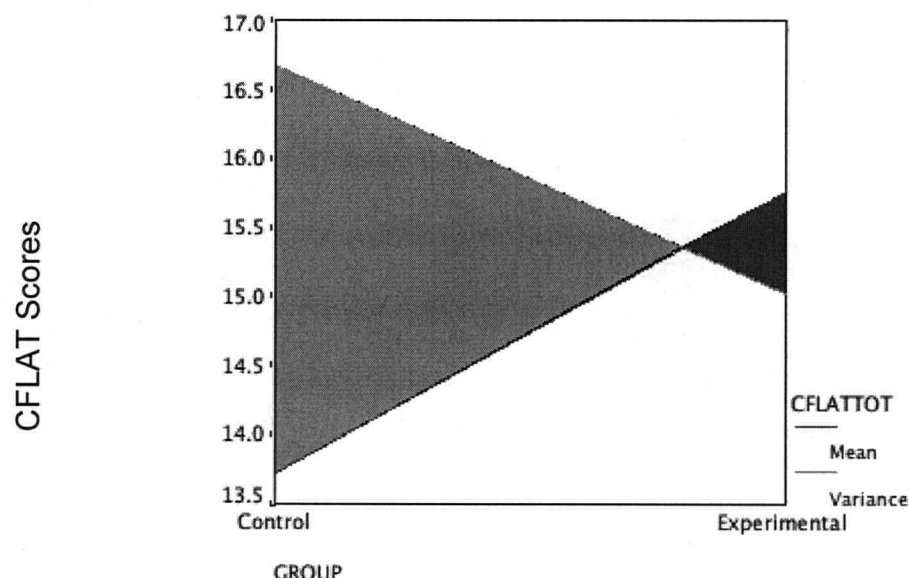
As noted previously, some of this difference is accounted for by engagement with stylistic texts which rely heavily on descriptive speech to convey settings, moods, or characters. Also, familiarity with longer passages of text would facilitate metastructural facility within the language. Even though these improvements are more content-dependent than other observations made so far, further comparison of group variance against mean scores on the CFLAT provides some evidence for the thesis, as literature

appears to have greater benefits among subjects, offering a broader reciprocity of communicative tools, and therefore facilitating a multitude of learning mechanisms for a variety of learning styles. Although the CFLAT has not been proven reliable at present, I feel it sheds some interesting light on the cultural relevance of this study. Literature alone would be unlikely to achieve these results, if it were not routinely embodied in the communicative social context of the ESL classroom. Active engagement with literature implicitly provides a multitude of user-governed tutorials in the construction of meaning and logical sense particular to the English language. It inverts the otherwise categorical process of language learning present in standard ESL curricula.

The evident disproportion displayed between groups in Figure 5.8 (p. 169) can be figuratively interpreted as the focusing effect which literature has on the ability to communicate successfully within its cultural terrain. Harnessed, this focusing effect accelerated the growth in expressive capability for adult ESL students from diverse backgrounds. This claim is in accordance with third party observations. The most consistent observation distinguishing the two classes was the remarkable confidence-boost the majority of students in the academic class experienced. Students readily seemed to come out of their shells, encouraged by others, guided by the ideas presented in literature: they became confident public speakers and group coordinators on projects. The closing section of this chapter will discuss the implications and conclusions to be drawn from the findings. While the analysis of findings has been perfunctory, the results, albeit from a marginally small sample, nonetheless implies that content-rich instructional texts do make some difference to processes of language acquisition. Furthermore, they show that the active engagement with stylistic expression equips learners with a well-rounded

and reciprocally interactive set of language skills to add their basic knowledge of semantics and linguistic functions.

Figure 5.8. Group Variance graph correlating deviations and means on CFLAT scores from posttest writing samples.



Implications of the Research

This study situates itself within a particular context—international adult ESL private schools) and the results are relevant primarily to this context. Some conclusions may be drawn concerning ESL education in general. Based on the results of the findings presented in this study, it is not possible to rationalize the exclusion of literature from ESL curricula. The challenges associated with integrating literature effectively in ESL classrooms may constitute a primary factor in preventing full inclusion of literature pedagogy in TESL teacher education, international private-school curricula, and practical

application. Another inhibitor of the inclusion of literary texts is the demand made upon teachers and students alike to meet proficiency standards as established by international ESL testing bodies, such as Cambridge, TOEFL, and other academic testing services.

According to the results on standardized practice tests administered during the course of this experimental study, it is apparent, within the confines of this small sample population ($N = 28$), that an equivalent rate of optimal growth in language skills (measured at approximately 1 percent improvement in mean score per 1000 minutes of instruction) was maintained across both control and experimental groups, regardless of differences in curricula or instructional method. This gives reasonable validity to the claim that language acquisition (innate processes) and learning (constructed processes) serve ESL students simultaneously, and that direct instruction in English grammar is not the only, nor the most successful, method of instruction appropriate in the adult international school ESL setting.

Effects of the experimental curriculum were clarified by group comparison of averaged scores on writing test samples taken at pretest, interim, and posttest phases of the study. This inquiry revealed a tendency for the literature-enriched curriculum and methods of engagement employed during instruction to facilitate learning across a broader range of linguistic functions, thereby making mean improvements in communicative competencies more equivalent among students. It was hypothesized that these effects are not resultant from the specific literature used in the experimental curriculum, but rather from the mode and method of engagement with culturally informed, stylized language. Stylized language can form the basis for using longer reading passages to accustom students to naturalized rhythms of English speech, and can

help students discover various linguistic strategies for the generative coordination of ideas. The incorporation of literary content into instructional materials also increases potential for student interest, self-motivated engagement, and self-directed continuation of the learning process beyond classroom walls. Within the classroom, it provides opportunities for students to engage with language in a playful and exploratory way, as they are less concerned with mistakes or errors, and more concerned with the imaginative potential of the texts they collectively embody, recast, and act out. This slightly greater degree of intellectual freedom in language learning pursuits increased the confidence of students to a level that third party observers noticed changes occurring during the course of study in the character of students who volunteered as research subjects. Additionally, a broader range of interpretative strategies may have been employed throughout the course of engagement with literary texts and related media.

Through the use of a Cultural Fluency Language Assessment Tool, it was shown that descriptive, expressive, and cohesive propensities of the experimental group increased more notably than in the control group. It was deduced from these findings that some language functions are central to phonological memory for cognitive processing, and that the phonological memory functions are enhanced through the use of stylistic texts when readings are verbalized with appropriate expression. This offers an alternative learning mechanism for those students whose learning style is less visually biased. Visual bias serves direct grammar instruction which uses lists, cloze exercises and multiple choice formats to develop language skills and lexical memory. Further, the shift in emphasis toward verbal and expressive behaviours has social benefits which were not measured in an empirical fashion, but would seem to be a consistent feature of enrollment

in the literature-based ESL course of instruction undertaken in this study. While these deductions and inferences about learning styles cannot be proven in context of the present experiment only, they do offer one possible explanation for the consistent achievement in basic English skills among students as a bi-product of social engagement with level-appropriate literary texts.

A main concern for teachers using literature in ESL classrooms is choice of text. These concerns include relative appropriateness and difficulty of both content and style. Choices must be sensitive to content which may be offensive to the students, but texts should also be interesting and engaging for students. Additionally, a curriculum needs an appropriate degree of intellectual, stylistic and lexical complexity, which should be adequately challenging, yet not daunting or inhibitive to student success and self-concept as an English user. Emphasizing the breadth of possible interpretations of any text may not suit standardized assessment, but it is a blessing to the instructional procedure. It allows for a multiplicity of perspectives, for layer after layer of scaffolded circumlocution around a theme. Imagining something from many different perspectives is a principle of clear thinking and decision-making. Also, a breadth of genres can be employed to accentuate different comprehension patterns and expressive models of communicative behaviours. This increases metacognitive awareness and structural fluency with larger, abstract notions and interrelated sequencing of actions. Even though no direct-form grammar instruction was used in the experimental curriculum, discussion of expressive units, such as the phrase and clause, word emphasis, and other tell-tale signs of literary voice and style were explored in particular depth. Word roots, and their lexical transformations, gave rise to many teachable moments wherein English could be explored

as an historical process, in a constant state of rebirth with every new speaker, no matter what their home or heritage.

Conclusion

Since the beginning of this experimental undertaking, I have wrestled personally with the assumption that language standards cannot provide accurate evaluations of fluency. Based on the finding in this study, I have thus put my enmity to rest, in so far as industry standard international ESL testing presents no indications to suggest that literature instruction and study does not serve as adequate preparation, while offering a multitude of secondary benefits as well. With the use of literature in ESL instruction, students are mentored by excellent language teachers in the form of wordsmiths, and the instructor is the exemplary link between them. My thesis supports theories of second language acquisition as an innate, even organic process, in the context of cultural immersion. Moreover, this benefit of cultural immersion in second language learning can be increased through *textual immersion*, which inculcates culturally determined styles of ideation along with content-based knowledge relevant to the process of socialization. The literature of English speaking cultures, and the multitude of cultures represented in translation, is an almost limitless resource for ESL education. Great models exist throughout world literature, a portion of which can be found in excellent English translations. From the Mayan *Popul Vuh* to Icelandic sagas to Vedic spells, to the koans of Zen epiphany and the aphorisms of Gertrude Stein, it is possible to find passages, excerpts, verses, tracts, snippets, which will envelope both teacher and student in a web

of fascination: being so inveigled, they will share not just words and rules, but an unforgettable experience.

A goal of most any teacher is to continually develop his or her own interests and understandings, and simultaneously to develop the instructional resources needed to make lessons relevant, interesting, and engaging for a broad diversity of students. Literature is invested with a wealth of graphic and visual resources to aid comprehension and provide thematic support to the sustained development of ideas. As random as the curricular development for use in this study was, being inspired in part by the chance acquisition of various selections prior to the study, it provided the basis for positive results which the standardized test findings were able to support. It seems available resources are being overlooked by teachers and policy makers in some settings, even with substantial research in the field of language acquisition on the benefit of engagement with a variety of text genres. For example, although I left class sets of the texts used in this study, along with a variety of adapted and illustrated books, on the resources shelves of the private ESL school in which I conducted this study, these resources have yet to be incorporated into any lesson plans.

A concluding observation with a view to proposing ways of extending this research is that there is a wealth of unexplored potential in developing the awareness, presence, and practical use of literature international ESL classrooms: certainly existing research on this topic (i.e., Brumfit and Carter, 1986; Carter, 1996; Lazar, 1993; Lier, 1996; Widdowson, 1990) has not had a substantial effect on practice, and this would suggest that further exploration of the matter is required. Further, additional research is

needed to explore the cultural dimensions of ESL acquisition and fluency, and to build a better understanding of the new global ESL culture.

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Consent:

I understand that my participation in this study is entirely voluntary and I may withdraw my consent at any time without penalty.

I have received a copy of the study description and consent form for my own records (please save this document in your files).

If you consent to participation in this study, please sign your name and write the date below:

Name of participant (print)_____

Signature of participant_____ Date:_____

Appendix C: Personal Data Information Sheet

1. Print your Full Name:

English nickname:

2. First Language: _____ Second Language: _____

3. Gender: Male Female

4. Date of Birth: YYMMDD ____/____/____

5. Country of Birth: _____

6. Have you lived or worked in a different country? Yes No

7. Number of siblings (brothers, sisters): _____, _____

8. Father or Mother's occupation: _____

9. Have you ever been married? Yes No

10. At home (NOT Vancouver), how many people live with you? _____

11. Number of family members who can speak English: _____

12. Number of years of formal study in English _____

13. Education

Name of Institution

a. Highschool Diploma

b. Certificate or Training Program

c. Bachelor Degree

d. Master Degree

e. Doctorate Degree

14. Which countries, besides Canada, have you visited in your life (max. 5)

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

d. _____

e. _____

15. How long do you plan to stay in Canada? _____

16. How much TV do you watch in one week?

None 1-2 hours 3-5 hours 5-10 hours 11+ hours

17. English speaking friendships outside L.S.I and homestay? Yes No

18. Do you want to live / work / study in North America? Yes No

19. Name a personal hero: _____

20. What is your favorite hobby: _____

21. If you were to do some pleasure reading in your first language, what kind of reading material would you choose? _____

22. Use three words to describe yourself:

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

23. If you were involved in making a movie would you want to be? (choose ONE only)

a. writer (creative)

b. producer (financial)

c. director (organizational)

d. camera (technical)

e. actor (emotional)

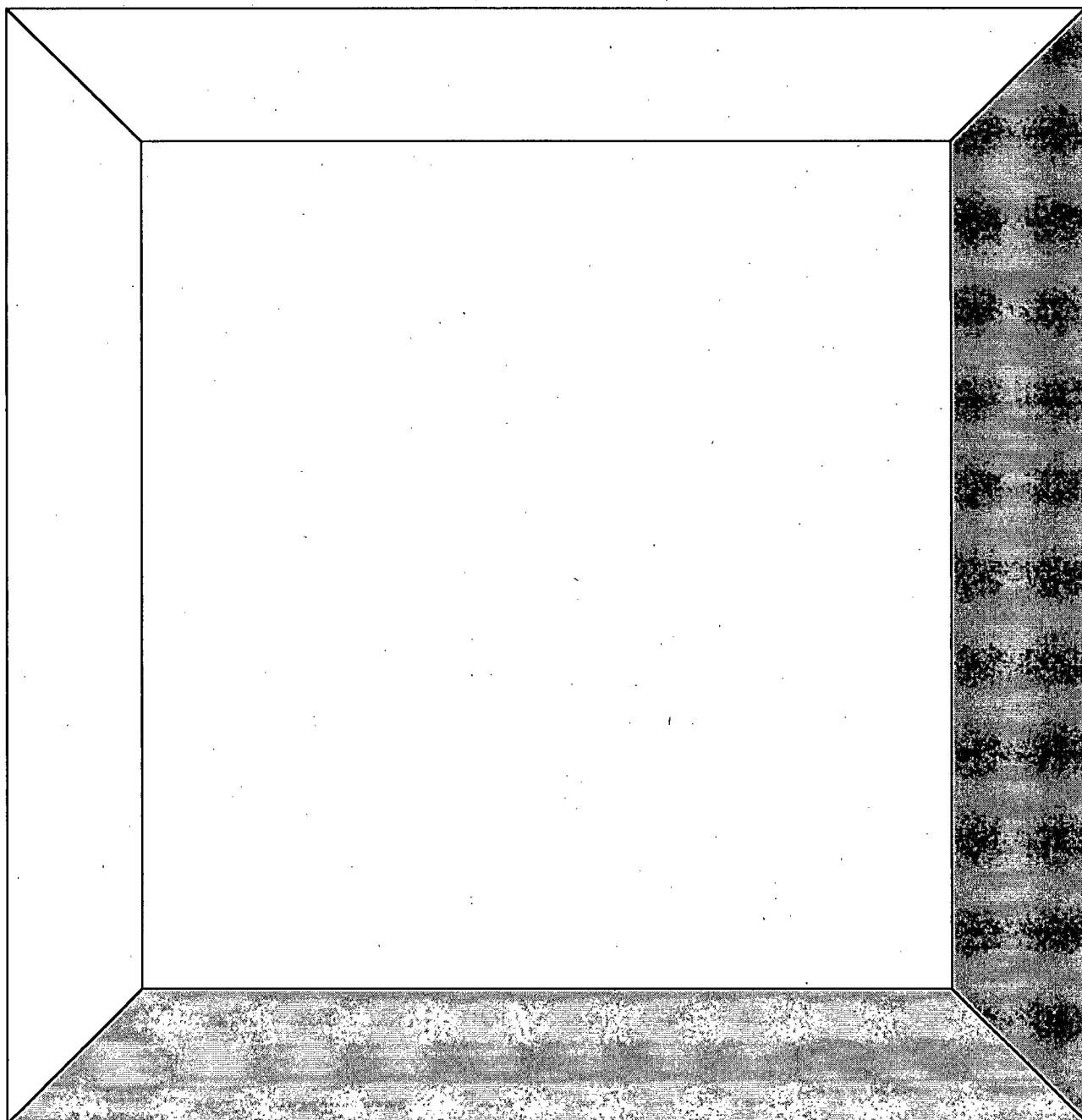
24. Self Evaluation:

Rate your strengths in English

a. Writing:	Bad	Not Bad	Good	Very Good	Excellent
b. Speaking:	Bad	Not Bad	Good	Very Good	Excellent
c. Reading:	Bad	Not Bad	Good	Very Good	Excellent
d. Listening:	Bad	Not Bad	Good	Very Good	Excellent
e. Grammar:	Bad	Not Bad	Good	Very Good	Excellent

25. If you could be anywhere right now, describe that place: (50 words)

26. Draw a Self-Portrait:



Appendix D

LINGUISTIC ITEM (1 point per use in 150 words)	EXAMPLE	FLUENCY SCALE
1. Orientation		
a. Partitive expression	book of angels, terror of tiny town	A
b. Multiword prepositions	without, up to, on top of,	C
c. Prepositional Verbs	according to, lead into, withholding	C
d. Phrasal Verbs	looking forward to, pigging out	A
e. Prepositional Phrases		A
i) Temporal (when)	in the morning, throughout the year	
ii) Spatial (where)	in the kitchen, over the garage	
iii) Agentitive (who)	by himself, by the younger sister,	
iv) Methodological (how)	with blue paint, along the edge	
2. Collocations		
a. noun and noun	tree-trunk, party guy, box cutter	B
b. verb and (article/pronoun) noun	having a blast, knowing your place,	B
c. adverb and adjective and noun	newly-minted coin, slowly brewed tea	B
d. adjective and verb and noun	home-cooked meal, newborn baby	B
e. adverb and verb and noun	recently taken photo, well behaved boy	B
f. gerund and adjective	walking home, going crazy, eating crow	B
3. Description		
a. Adjective sequences	quick-witted, smiling, old man	A
b. Comparative/superlative structures	more...than, better than, less...than	D
c. 2 nd state adjectives		C
i) Verbal adjectives	inventive, soothing,	
ii) Nominalizations of quality	blackness, heaviness, foolishness	
d. 3 rd state adjectives		C
Nominalizations of verbs	reactionary, emotional	

4. Modification

a. Quadrasyllabic intensifiers	actually, severally, responsibly	C
b. Pentasyllabic intensifiers	realistically, chaotically, exceptionally	C
c. Sentence adverbs		D
i) cause – result	because, due to, as a result of, in order to	
ii) addition	besides, furthermore, in addition	
iii) concession	however, nevertheless, yet, despite	

5. Nominalization

a. Generic noun used without pronoun	Life is..., the best thing about life	E
b. Generic plural noun	Statistics show,	D
c. Generic pronouns	nowhere, everyone, somewhat, anyhow	E

6. Style

a. Question words as clause subordinators	where, why, how, when, what, whose	D
b. Causative verbs	She made/had/let us do the test	B
c. Verbs in passive aspect	He had the mail delivered by horse	D
d. Sarcasm in the negative expression	He's not the most intelligent of men.	B
e. Conditional sentences	If..., Suppose he were, I wish...	A
f. Concurrent actions	While, during our visit, since he had left	D
g. Reported speech	He said "I will be going home."	B
h. Simile	like a rolling stone, hungry as a hippo	E
i. Metaphor	That man is a pig, you are my sunshine	E

7. Fluency Scales

A.	Description	Literal	1	2	3	4	5	Figurative
B.	Expression	Logical	1	2	3	4	5	Idiomatic
C.	Vocabulary	Easy	1	2	3	4	5	Difficult
D.	Cohesion	Simple	1	2	3	4	5	Complex
E.	Content	Concrete	1	2	3	4	5	Abstract

CULTURAL FLUENCY RATING

Static	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Organic
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Appendix E

Table of Approximate Equivalence Between English Language Examinations

IELTS	Cambridge	TOEFL	BEC	TOEIC	BULATS	STEP Eiken
9	CPE	670+/293+		990+	LEVEL 5	
8.5						
8						
7.5	CAE	600/250	BEC 3	890	LEVEL 4	1
7				810		
6.5				730		
6	FCE	530/197	BEC 2	660	LEVEL 3	Pre-1
5.5				590		
5				520		
4.5	PET	460/140		450	LEVEL 2	2
4				380		
3.5				310		
3	KET	400/97	BEC 1	220	LEVEL 1	Pre-2
2.5						
2						
1.5						
1						

IELTS= International English Language Testing Systems

Cambridge= University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate

BEC= Business English Certificate

BULATS= Business Language Testing Service

TOEFL=Test of English as a Foreign Language

Appendix F

	GROUP	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
READTOT	Control	14	13.00	182.00
	Experimental	14	16.00	224.00
	Total	28		
POSTT1	Control	14	12.79	179.00
	Experimental	14	16.21	227.00
	Total	28		
GRTOT	Control	14	13.04	182.50
	Experimental	14	15.96	223.50
	Total	28		
POSTT3	Control	14	12.96	181.50
	Experimental	14	16.04	224.50
	Total	28		
QI1	Control	14	14.86	208.00
	Experimental	14	14.14	198.00
	Total	28		
QI	Control	14	12.61	176.50
	Experimental	13	15.50	201.50
	Total	27		

Appendix G

	READTOT	POSTT1	GRTOT	POSTT3	QI1	QI
Mann-Whitney U	77.000	74.000	77.500	76.500	93.000	71.500
Wilcoxon W	182.000	179.000	182.500	181.500	198.000	176.500
Z	-.969	-1.105	-.943	-.989	-.232	-.954
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.333	.269	.346	.323	.816	.340
Exact Sig. [2*(1-tailed Sig.)]	.352	.285	.352	.329	.839	.350

a Not corrected for ties.

b Grouping Variable: GROUP

READTOT=Reading Pretest

POSTT1=Reading Posttest

GRTOT=Grammar Pretest

POSTT3=Grammar Posttest

QI1=Writing Pretest

QI=Writing Posttest

Appendix H

Table of Factor Analysis of raw scores dependent on Listening test result for the Experimental group.

Coefficients													
		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval for B		Correlations			Collinearity Statistics	
Model		B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound	Zero-order	Partial	Part	Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	20.945	8.109		2.583	.030	2.601	39.289					
	READTOT	.411	.472	.522	.870	.407	-.657	1.478	.486	.279	.215	.169	5.908
	GRTOT	-9.009E-03	.320	-.017	-.028	.978	-.732	.714	.468	-.009	-.007	.169	5.900
	QI1	-.709	.380	-.466	-1.866	.095	-1.570	.151	-.443	-.528	-.460	.976	1.025
2	(Constant)	5.174	5.067		1.021	.341	-6.808	17.156					
	READTOT	1.199	.299	1.524	4.009	.005	.492	1.906	.486	.835	.470	.095	10.536
	GRTOT	-.746	.199	-1.399	-3.754	.007	-1.216	-.276	.468	-.817	-.440	.099	10.129
	QI1	-1.078	.197	-.708	-5.480	.001	-1.544	-.613	-.443	-.901	-.642	.821	1.218
	TOEFL2	-.562	.167	-.710	-3.357	.012	-.957	-.166	.218	-.785	-.393	.307	3.257
	TOELF3	1.450	.267	1.179	5.429	.001	.819	2.082	.559	.899	.636	.291	3.440
3	(Constant)	4.116	6.937		.593	.585	-15.145	23.377					
	READTOT	1.274	.505	1.619	2.524	.065	-.127	2.674	.486	.784	.364	.050	19.820
	GRTOT	-.777	.265	-1.457	-2.929	.043	-1.514	-.041	.468	-.826	-.422	.084	11.921
	QI1	-1.196	.304	-.786	-3.928	.017	-2.041	-.351	-.443	-.891	-.566	.519	1.927
	TOEFL2	-.626	.228	-.791	-2.748	.051	-1.258	.006	.218	-.809	-.396	.251	3.987
	TOELF3	1.442	.363	1.173	3.968	.017	.433	2.451	.559	.893	.572	.238	4.207
	POSTT1	-.152	.246	-.222	-.619	.569	-.834	.530	.636	-.296	-.089	.161	6.204
	POSTT3	-7.906E-03	.194	-.017	-.041	.969	-.547	.531	.503	-.020	-.006	.123	8.139
	QI	.394	.605	.263	.651	.550	-1.285	2.073	.498	.310	.094	.128	7.840

Appendix I

Table of Factor Analysis of raw scores dependent on Listening test result for the Control group.

Coefficients													
		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval for B		Correlations			Collinearity Statistics	
Model		B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound	Zero-order	Partial	Part	Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	3.254	2.276		1.430	.183	-1.817	8.325					
	READTOT	-3.958E-02	.191	-.057	-.208	.840	-.464	.385	.656	-.066	-.031	.298	3.358
	GRTOT	-3.458E-03	.083	-.010	-.042	.968	-.189	.182	.582	-.013	-.006	.398	2.514
	QI1	.788	.208	.930	3.796	.004	.326	1.251	.878	.768	.572	.378	2.646
2	(Constant)	1.738	2.913		.597	.567	-4.980	8.456					
	READTOT	-.303	.210	-.439	-1.447	.186	-.786	.180	.656	-.455	-.193	.193	5.170
	GRTOT	-7.706E-02	.088	-.221	-.879	.405	-.279	.125	.582	-.297	-.117	.281	3.560
	QI1	.703	.189	.829	3.714	.006	.267	1.140	.878	.796	.495	.357	2.800
	TOEFL2	.116	.173	.259	.670	.522	-.284	.516	.719	.231	.089	.119	8.380
	TOELF3	.261	.191	.462	1.368	.209	-.179	.701	.779	.435	.182	.156	6.408
3	(Constant)	1.983	4.239		.468	.660	-8.913	12.880					
	READTOT	-.178	.235	-.257	-.757	.483	-.781	.425	.656	-.321	-.102	.156	6.398
	GRTOT	-5.587E-02	.114	-.160	-.492	.643	-.348	.236	.582	-.215	-.066	.170	5.888
	QI1	.706	.192	.833	3.670	.014	.212	1.201	.878	.854	.493	.350	2.854
	TOEFL2	.154	.236	.344	.654	.542	-.453	.762	.719	.281	.088	.065	15.373
	TOELF3	.292	.200	.516	1.463	.203	-.221	.805	.779	.547	.196	.145	6.910
	POSTT1	7.132E-02	.199	.113	.358	.735	-.441	.584	.513	.158	.048	.182	5.486
	POSTT3	-.117	.176	-.397	-.667	.534	-.569	.334	.595	-.286	-.090	.051	19.619
QI	-.135	.227	-.150	-.592	.580	-.719	.450	.205	-.256	-.079	.280	3.570	

Appendix J

Cambridge CFE Rubric for Evaluation of ESL Writing

Writing Part 3: General Mark scheme	
Band 5	<p>Very good attempt:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confident and ambitious use of language • Wide range of structures and vocabulary within the task set • Well organised and coherent, through use of simple linking devices • Errors are minor, due to ambition and non-impeding <p>Requires no effort by the reader</p>
Band 4	<p>Good attempt:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fairly ambitious use of language • More than adequate range of structures and vocabulary within the task set • Evidence of organisation and some linking of sentences • Some errors, generally non-impeding <p>Requires only a little effort by the reader</p>
Band 3	<p>Adequate attempt:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Language is unambitious, or if ambitious, flawed • Adequate range of structures and vocabulary • Some attempt at organisation; linking of sentences not always maintained • A number of errors may be present, but are mostly non-impeding <p>Requires some effort by the reader</p>
Band 2	<p>Inadequate attempt:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Language is simplistic/limited/repetitive • Inadequate range of structures and vocabulary • Some incoherence; erratic punctuation • Numerous errors, which sometimes impede communication <p>Requires considerable effort by the reader</p>
Band 1	<p>Poor attempt:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Severely restricted command of language • No evidence of range of structures and vocabulary • Seriously incoherent; absence of punctuation • Very poor control; difficult to understand <p>Requires excessive effort by the reader</p>
Band 0	<p>Achieves nothing:</p> <p>Language impossible to understand, or totally irrelevant to task</p>