

The Effective Use of the Language Laboratory in the Teaching of English as a Foreign Language in Taiwan

by Burt L. King

Preface

No one feels the least dubious about English having become an international language. It is universally considered as a gateway to mutual understanding and co-operation among nations throughout the world and it is widely used as a tool by individual nations to profit themselves by the progress of the world on the one hand and to achieve the commercial, cultural and diplomatic purposes on the other.

English was first introduced to the syllabuses of both junior and senior middle schools in China in 1925 and it has been taught as the first foreign language and as a compulsory subject ever since.

Before the 1940's English was taught in China chiefly as a tool to obtain the scientific knowledge from the Western countries. It was then that great emphasis was laid on the training of the ability to read while the other aspects of learning a language, such as, understanding speech, speaking and writing were treated apathetically, so that the pupils who left middle school with six years experience of study of English by and large remained unable to speak the English language, to understand it when spoken, or to write it correctly but quite capable of reading books three times as difficult as those read by the middle-school leavers nowadays.



In 1949 the Government of the Republic of China moved her seat to Taiwan, known as Formosa to the Western world, due to the fact that the Chinese Mainland was lost to the communists. Never before had she felt so badly in need of the use of English as a medium of communication with the free nations to seek their moral support in her struggle against communism and at the same time to expose to the world as a whole the real situation on the Chinese Mainland. In recent years her rapid economic growth, ranked the second in the world in 1968, booming international trade, increasing tourism, cultural interflow, sharing agricultural and industrial know-how with more than thirty of her friendly nations, resulted in the urgent need of the training of linguistic personnel, and that in turn affected the teaching of English in schools and institutes of higher education.

In Taiwan the pupil starts to learn English at the age of twelve, when he enters the junior middle school, the last three of the nine years of compulsory education. Another three years of English at senior middle school and one or two at college or university are required of him if he cares to continue his schooling after the compulsory stage.

The gradual change of linguistic pedagogy from conventional grammar-translation method to direct method and then lastly the present day linguistic approach ushered in the installment of language laboratories in Taiwan in 1960. National Taiwan Normal University was the first one which established its language laboratory in that year. It was followed then by many others and at present most of the eighty-five institutes of higher learning in Taiwan have language laboratories.

How to make the best use of the language laboratory in the teaching of English is a problem which has puzzled me in the past three years of my teaching of English by the use of the language laboratory and which I now

venture to deal with under the kind guidance of my highly experienced teacher, Mr. J. R. B. Vanstone, senior lecturer at Exeter University Institute of Education.

Chapter I

The Language Laboratory and Its Importance in the Language Teaching

It was Ralph H. Waltz of Ohio State University who first used the term "Language Laboratory" in 1930. What is a language laboratory? A language laboratory is a sound-proof room where the electronic and mechanical equipment specially designed for the learning and teaching of foreign languages is installed. The first important item of the language laboratory facilities is the teacher's console or the central control on which the teacher has a tape recorder, a record player and ancillary appliance to present the teaching material to the students, and from which the teacher supervises, by monitoring, and advises, by calling light, each of the students at work. The second important item is the students' booths with partitions which afford privacy for each student. In each of the box-like booths the third item, the headset, is provided. The students listen through the headset to the material released from the console.

By sophistication or organization the language laboratories can be classified into three main types:

1. The listen laboratory.

This type of language laboratory is the simplest and the cheapest. It consists of either

- a) A gramophone or tape recorder with loudspeaker output, or
- b) A headset through which the students listen to the teacher speaking through a microphone, or to the tape recorder or gramophone.

The cheapness and portability are obviously the two advantages of this type of laboratory, but they could hardly offset the great disadvantage which is that in such a laboratory the students respond in a chorus so that the sound production of individual students can by no means be detected.

2. The listen-speak laboratory.

In each booth of this type of laboratory a microphone attached to the headset is provided. This facility enables a student to listen to his own response as he makes it and to judge whether or not his response is correct. It also enables the teacher not only to monitor each students performance by turning a switch on his console but also to communicate with any student if so desired. The disadvantage is that the students themselves have no control of the material from which they are working; they cannot go back and repeat parts of it at will and if they wish to communicate with the teacher, they must either miss some of the material (which goes onward meanwhile) or else the teacher must stop the material for all the others.

3. The listen-speak-record laboratory.

It goes without saying that this type of language laboratory is much more useful than the two mentioned above. In addition to all that types 1 and 2 have, this type has a separate tape recorder for each booth. This makes it possible for each student to record simultaneously the master tape together with his own response to it and then he can check, by playing back his own tape, his response with the master tape. Once the lesson material and a student's response are both recorded onto the student's own tape, he can go on to practise at his own pace by playing back his tape, and he can stop his tape recorder in order to consult his teacher without missing any part of the lesson material; this type can be used individually and offers the students a chance to borrow from stock whatever master tape they wish to practise, and

devote themselves to private study, This is why the procedure is sometimes referred to as library use of the laboratory.

It is generally agreed in the academic circles that the language learning and the language teaching could hardly be overwhelmingly successful unless the language laboratory is used as a teaching device. Undoubtedly, so far as the language teaching is concerned, the blackboard and chalk has no longer been the sole teaching aid since the language laboratory was brought into the realm of the learning and teaching of foreign languages. As a matter of fact, this new teaching aid received and is still receiving more attention. The statistics given by John D. Turner in his book "Introduction to the Language Laboratory" states that in the year 1957 there were sixty-four institutes of higher education in the United States possessing and using the language laboratory and by the year 1967 the number had increased to seven hundred. Such a quick spreading of the language laboratories throughout the United States as well as a great many other countries testifies that the language laboratory is highly beneficial to the learning and teaching of foreign languages if wisely used.

Chapter 2

Training for Qualified Teachers in the Use of Language Laboratories

In order to benefit fully from such a course, the teachers should already be conversant with the methodology for teaching in the classroom. They will then be better prepared to adopt the procedures appropriate to the language laboratory and thus to exploit its potentialities.

A good classroom teacher is not necessarily a good laboratory teacher unless he has been fully trained in the use of the laboratory equipment. A teacher's mastery of the equipment means definitely that he can give all his energies and his rapt attention to the work of teaching; therefore, taking a little extra time getting to know the equipment first saves a great deal of laboratory time later.

In Taiwan the teachers of English are constantly under heavy demand. The shortage of English teachers is due partly to the rapid educational growth and partly to the lack of interest of the younger generation in the language studies, which, it is painfully true, holds out not such bright prospects as science studies.

In the university and college the situation is even worse because the prerequisite of being an English lecturer, like that of being the lecturer of any other subject, is so strict that no one with a B. A. degree in English could expect an appointment as an English lecturer. To be an English lecturer, one must either hold an M. A. degree in English, conferred by preferably an esteemed institution of an English-speaking country, or have at least four years' experience of being an English teaching assistant plus a thesis evaluated as creative by the Ministry of Education.

As the lecturer, either established or initial, is so highly qualified, his competent knowledge of English is not at all the thing which the director of a language laboratory needs to worry about. But what he is really concerned about is whether or not he should organize a short course in the operation of the laboratory for the initial teachers, who speak fluent English and have had training in applied linguistics and phonetics but without experience with language laboratory design and equipment. So far there is no such a training course offered by any of the language laboratories in Taiwan. The language laboratory directors attribute their hesitations to the fact few lecturers appear interested to attend such a course. It is strictly true that many lecturers who think these teaching aids are made so easy to use that they can learn to operate them in a matter of seconds do not regard it as necessary to sit for lectures on laboratory techniques. They will certainly be disillusioned as soon as they sit at the console; and consequently they will have to call the technician for help. My own three years' experience in laboratory teaching has convinced me that the training course in the use of the equipment is absolutely necessary.

The training course should be conducted a week before each academic year starts in late September and all the newly-appointed lecturers should be requested to attend. The following is a proposed outline of the course:

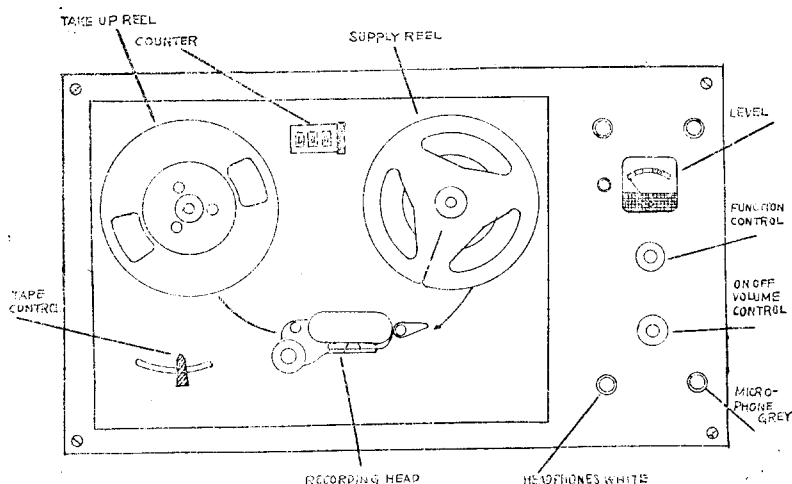
1. Lecture on the brief history, the recent development, and the utility of the language laboratory.
2. Lecture on language laboratory methodology. Here it should be stated that a language laboratory, no matter how useful it is in teaching languages, does not make things easier for the teachers. On the contrary, it demands from the teachers a great deal of more time and effort in programming material and preparing and copying tapes. The results produced by the

students may fall far short of the teacher's expectation if he gives no additional preparation time.

3. Distribution of a list of the language laboratory technical terms (see appendix) for the teacher's convenience of using nothing but English in the language laboratory.
4. Distribution of minute details of the operations together with a diagram (as figure 1, assuming the equipment is Monitor).
5. Lecture on, and demonstration of, how to operate the equipment.
6. Practice of using all the controls at the console as well as the student's booth.
7. Explanation of the regular routine for entering and leaving the console.
8. Explanation of how to use the bulk tape eraser. It is true that tape cleaning could be done by running the tapes through the master recorder with the volume control turned to zero, but this would be an extremely time wasting method. A bulk tape eraser can erase all sounds from a reel of tape in a few seconds. At the end of each laboratory period the outgoing students may be asked to clean the tapes with the bulk tape eraser for the convenience of the forthcoming ones.

Having attended a training course like this, a teacher knows not only how to operate the equipment on his own but also how to teach his students to use it. A well-organized training course is bound to be handsomely rewarded.

Figure 1
THE MONITOR STUDENT MACHINE.



OPERATION OF THE STUDENT MACHINE

Switch on machine with the volume control knob, and turn fully clockwise. With the tape control in the STOP position zero counter and set function control to DUPLICATE.

When instructed by the teacher push the pointed knob of the tape control to PLAY.

When your machine starts turning you speak after the phrases you hear in your headphones.

When the exercise has finished, turn the function control to PLAYBACK. Push the tape control to FAST REWIND for a moment then return it to STOP Do this several times until the COUNTER reads ZERO.

Push the tape control to PLAY and you will be able to hear yourself speaking.

After the exercise has finished, rewind your tapes to zero (as before). Turn the function control to LISTEN/RECORD and you can re-record your answers.

In this way you can keep re-recording your voice until you consider that your results are satisfactory. After each recording on LISTEN/RECORD, switch your function control to PLAYBACK, rewind to zero and push the tape control to the PLAY position.

Chapter 3

Instruction in Pronunciation and Intonation

The Oral Approach, which is based on the belief that the easiest way to learn a language is to start orally, is so far generally accepted as the most efficient method of teaching English. Its forerunners, Classical Method lingers on in all the schools at the secondary level. The schools cling to the traditional method not because they have a bias towards it but because they have to face the fact that a certain level of written English is required for getting a pass in the highly competitive common entrance examination to the university or the college while the spoken English is not required at all. (Perhaps because it is assumed that a high attainment in written English is evidence of competence in spoken English. Also it is more difficult to test spoken language.)

As mentioned before, the pupil begins the study of English, taught in Chinese medium for five periods a week, when he enters the junior middle school at the age of twelve. In the beginning he is taught the traditional orthography, and then reading, translating, and memorizing vocabulary, rules, conjugations of verbs, declension of nouns and adjectives, idiomatic expressions, etc. This learning process is repeated with little significant change throughout the three years of junior middle school and those of senior middle school. Oral use of English at this stage is by no means emphasized.

The university and college lose no chance to redress the balance between the previously much emphasized written forms and the less practised spoken forms of English as soon as the pupil comes as a freshman student. Oral English, drilled in the language laboratory, is timetabled two periods per week

per class throughout the freshman year and one the sophomore year at most universities and colleges.

Henry Sweet considered that a knowledge of phonetics was the first essential step in learning a foreign language, and no attempt should be made to advance in grammar and vocabulary until the sounds of the language have been mastered. It is true that speech is a matter of sounds. Unless we can produce and recognize the sounds of a language, speech in that language is impossible.

Although the students have had previous training in production of the English sounds in the secondary school, the shortage of time for the training and the shortage of teachers with perfect pronunciation leaves much to be desired. Instruction in pronunciation and intonation is, therefore, necessary.

In British Standard English there are 46 different speech sounds or phonemes, 21 single vowels and diphthongs and 25 consonants. They are represented by phonetic symbols as follows:

Phonetic Symbol	Example	Phonetic Symbol	Example
i:	seat	p	pale
i	sit	b	bale
e	bed	m	man
æ	bed	w	we
ɑ:	glass	f	ferry

Phonetic Symbol	Example	Phonetic Symbol	Example
ɒ	hot	v	very
ɔ:	ball	θ	thin
u	book	ð	their
u:	do	t	ten
ʌ	cup	d	dear
ə	again	l	lieu
ə:	bird	n	new
ei	name	r	red
ou	boat	s	sin
ai	fine	z	zoo
au	cow	ʃ	she
ɔi	boy	ʒ	pleasure
iə	here	tʃ	church
ɛə	chair	j	yes
uə	poor	dʒ	jump
ɔə	more	k	car
		g	go
		ŋ	thing
		h	hill
		hw	while

Drill for two weeks in these 46 English sounds should be given to the students in the language laboratory by gramophone records or tapes made by an English native speaker with Received Pronunciation (R. P. for short). At the same time the students' attention should be directed to the following sounds:

1) /θ/ and /ð/

These two sounds do not occur in Chinese at all and are replaced either by /t/ and /d/ in initial position or by /s/ in final position.

2) /s/, /ʃ/ and /ʒ/ are confused, /s/ being used for all three.

3) /e/ and /æ/ are confused, an intermediate vowel being used for both; the same vowel also replaces /ei/ before consonants.

4) /f/ and /v/

/v/, either in initial position or in final position, is often replaced by /f/ because it does not occur in Chinese.

5) /s/ and /ʃ/

The Taiwanese students may have difficulty pronouncing /s/ when it occurs in initial position; and they use /ʃ/ to replace it. For example: "I want to see (see) him" being replaced by "I want to (she) him".

6) /l/ and /n/

Students from Hunan and Canton provinces may have difficulty distinguishing between /l/ and /n/ in initial position; this leads to pronouncing light (lait) as night (nait), line (lain) as nine (nain) and vice versa. Chinese students as a whole replace /l/ in final position by /ə/; this leads to being unable to pronounce "hill" and "here" differently.

Our speech organs become accustomed to making sounds of our own mother tongue. To acquire certain of the sounds of a foreign language requires much physical practice, patience and time. Two weeks drill is certainly not long enough but a good start.

Having spent two weeks on trying to perfect pronunciation, the students should proceed to the English intonation. Intonation, which is more important for intelligibility than sounds, is the rise and fall of the voice in speaking—the "tune" of the voice. J. D. O'Connor, Reader in Phonetics in the University of

London, in his "Better English Pronunciation" says "We can say a word group definitely or we can say it hesitantly, we can say it angrily or kindly, we can say it with interest or without interest, and these differences are largely made by the tunes we use: the words do not change their meaning but the tune we use adds something to the words, and what it adds is the speaker's feelings at that moment;" It is absolutely true that much of the meaning of spoken language is conveyed by the tune to which it is said. For example, "Thank you" may be said in two ways:

Thank you.

This shows real gratitude.

Thank you.

This shows a rather casual acknowledgement of something not very important.

I beg your pardon? (angrily said)

What are you talking about? (angrily said)

The following are a few more examples:

- 1) Thank you very much.

This shows real gratitude.

Thank you very much.

This shows mere politeness.

- 2) What's that?

This indicates business-like question.

What's that?

This indicates a more friendly interest.

- 3) What's your name?

This sounds much more friendly than

What's your name?

- 4) We shall come and see you tomorrow.

This is an ordinary statement,

We shall come and see you tomorrow.

This implies that we would come, no matter what might happen.

- 5) a) He wants me to stay.

This implies that I am the one who has been asked.

- b) He wants me to stay.

This implies that he is the one who has asked me.

- c) He wants me to stay.

This implies that someone would like me to leave.

- d) He wants me to stay,

This implies that someone would like someone else to.

- e) He wants me to stay.

This implies that I intended to leave.

- 6) I shouldn't be surprised.

This is more casual, 'less interested, than

I shouldn't be surprised.

In each of the first three examples a falling or a rising intonation occurs on the same word in a sentence and conveys different shades of meaning. It is rather subtle. No definite rules can be followed except for the speaker's own experience. In each of the last three the shades of meaning are changed by stresses on different words in a sentence. It may well be said that we can change the shade of meaning by stressing a particular word or words which we wish to emphasize.

Although there are no rules to control the incidence of stress, there is a tendency, when making an ordinary statement, to make stresses succeed one another at approximately equal distances and at approximately regular intervals of time. For example:

I shall come and see you tomorrow.

The greater the number of syllables occurring between successive stresses, the more rapidly those syllables tend to be pronounced.

In a sentence if we feel only one idea is important we stress the word that embodies that idea. For example:

Talking wouldn't have been any good.

On the other hand if we feel many ideas are important we stress many words. For example:

Annie came early last summer.

A sentence is made up of both structure words and content words. In speech, as a rule, the structure words are not only unstressed but also spoken more quickly than the content words. For example:

curry and dinner.

the book on the chair.

in the nick of time.

What's that in the corner of the room?

"In", "on", "the", "and", "of" are structure words and they are spoken very quickly; while "what's", "that", "corner" and "room", "curry", "dinner", "book", "chair", "nick" and "time" are content words and they are stressed.

When one word modifies another, both words are usually stressed, for example:

'Next 'Sunday ; 'Hyde 'Park

'Bank 'Holiday ; 'Charnley 'Avenue

But the word "street" should not be stressed,

'High Street, not 'High 'Street,

Many words in English have two forms, strong and weak, for example:

He may (strong) come. (possibility)

He may (weak) come. (permission)

Me? (strong) Tell me. (weak)

Who? (strong) I'll tell you who (weak) did it.

Here is a list of words which have the two forms:

am, is, are, was, were, have, has, had, do, does, shall, should, will, would, can, could, must, you, he, she, we, me, him, her, his, us, them, who, and, a, an, the, not, at, for, from, of, to, but, as, than.

A word which is tied to another in connected speech is always pronounced weakly, for example:

in a minute

['in ə 'minɪt]

How do you do?

[ˈhaʊd ju ˈdu:]

Here the weak forms of “a” and “you” are used.

Practice is more important than theory. After giving instructions in the general principles of intonation, the teacher should begin formal exercises first on stress and rhythm and then on intonation. It may mislead some readers to see ‘stress and rhythm’ and ‘intonation’ suggested as separate exercises. In fact stress and intonation are intimately connected. It might be clearer to state this and then to add that, as a matter of teaching procedure, the student should concentrate first on stress and rhythm and then on intonation. In Taiwan the textbook widely used in the language laboratory is “English 900” in six volumes published by the Macmillan Company, New York, U. S. A. Each volume contains ten units and each unit begins with intonation practice. The model sentences given with intonation marks are of immediate use, yet one thing which is neglected and left to chance is that it gives no explanation of the meaning conveyed by a sentence so stressed or otherwise. It is strongly recommended that “Intensive Course in English” be adopted. This Intensive Course includes four volumes: Intermediate, Advanced I, Advanced II, and Specialized Studies. They were written and taped by the Materials Development Staff of English Language Services, Inc., Washington 6, D. C., U. S. A.

Chapter 4

Drills and Tests

The learning of a foreign language is almost entirely a matter of drill in the early stages. In the language laboratory most drills are made up of stimulus (master) and response (student) and divided into four main categories: phonological, morphological, syntactic, and lexical. No matter what teaching point a teacher is trying to put through to his students, he must bear in mind that the contents of the drill must be simple, interesting, realistic and limited to one teaching point and that too much wearisome repetition must be avoided.

The usual ways to conduct the drills are three:

1) Two-phase drill.

This consists of stimulus (p_1) and response (p_2). (p_1) is the tapescript spoken by the native voice on the tape; (p_2) is the student repeating what he hears from the tape. It is simple repetition of a text on key-words.

2) Three-phase drill.

The sequence of this is stimulus (P_1), attempted response (P_2) and correct response (P_3). (P_1) is the same as the (P_1) in (1); (P_2) is a pause or gapping for the student's attempted response; (P_3) is the correct response spoken by the native voice. This type of drill has many advantages. It elicits from the student an active part in the drill rather than ordinary mimicry; it provides for correct responses so that the student can make a comparison between his attempted response and the correct response, and then self-evaluate.

3) Four-phase drill.

The sequence of this is the same as (2) plus student's repetition of the correct response (P_4). The advantage of this type over (2) is that (P_4) provides reinforcement for the student. On the other hand it may be a disadvantage, because (P_4) can be tedious to those who are not so highly motivated. Choice between three-phase drill and four-phase drill depends very much on the age group of students. The older the group is, the more likely the four-phase drill is to be appreciated.

The make up of the drill varies in many ways. The following drills are commonly adopted in the language laboratories.

1) Phonemic-discrimination drills.

The phonemic discrimination is very important for understanding English. This drill is to train the student to hear the differences in sounds, like /i:/ in heat and / i / in hit; or differences in stress patterns, like a 'singing 'bird and a 'singing bird, or 'rocking 'chair (one designed to rock) and 'rocking chair (an ordinary chair that happens, perhaps through damage, to be rocking) or differences in intonation patterns, like It's snowing? and It's snowing. Performance of this drill involves the student in nothing but repetition of the words or sentences he hears from the tape.

2) Sentence pattern drills.

A sentence pattern is a typical arrangement of words in a sentence like

Subject	Verb	Object
I	touched	the sideboard

"I touched the sideboard" is a three-part sentence. For each of the three parts we can use a variety of substitutes. For example:

I	touched	the sideboard.
		cupboard.
		draining board.
		rug.
		carpet.
		stool.
		dining table.
		etc.

I	touched	the sideboard.
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He

She

We

You

They

The girl

I	touched	the sideboard.
	moved	
	turned over	
	wiped	
	washed	
	cleaned	
	stared at	

Based on this pattern, these three sets of substitutes can be combined to make $7 \times 7 \times 7$ different sentences.

The purpose is to train the student for using particular sentence patterns so that he can use them habitually whenever he wants to, answering mechanically the stimulus and filling forms, which have been learned, with his

own meaning.

To make the student aware of whether the sentence pattern drills being conducted are lexical, morphological or syntactic, the teacher can divide the drills into substitution drill, alternation being lexical and involving no change of the pattern; and mutation drill, being morphological and syntactic and involving all necessary changes. For example:

(a) Substitution drill

P₁: I have a knife.

Wallet

P₂: I have a wallet.

P₃: I have a wallet.

(b) Mutation drill

Tense:

P₁: I shall write her a letter.

Simple past

P₂: I wrote her a letter.

P₃: I wrote her a letter.

Negative:

P₁: I like the English weather.

Negative

P₂: I don't like the English weather.

P₃: I don't like the English weather.

Pronoun:

P₁: Michael and Ruth invited me to tea.

Pronoun:

P₂: They invited me to tea.

P₃: They invited me to tea.

Number and Plural

P₁: I have a five-penny stamp

Two

P₂: I have two five-penny stamps.

P₃: I have two five-penny stamps.

P₁: The farmer has a false tooth.

Three

P₂: The farmer has three false teeth.

P₃: The farmer has three false teeth.

3) Linking drill

The student is given two short sentences and asked to combine them. As a rule, each drill teaches only one point. If the drill is written to teach relative pronoun, conjunction should not be involved at the same time. For example:

Relative pronoun

P₁: The boy wears long hair and side whiskers.

He is a pop singer.

P₂: The boy who wears long hair and side whiskers is a pop singer.

P₃: The boy who wears long hair and side whiskers is a pop singer.

Conjunction

P₁: He was walking on the promenade.

He told me.

P₂: He told me (that) he was walking on the promenade.

P₃: He told me (that) he was walking on the promenade.

4) Creative answer

A taped short story is relayed to the student and questions are asked one by one with gapping in between for the student's response. The student answers the questions not in accordance with a certain pattern but in accordance with the

facts given in the story. For example, a story may be told about a hard-working farmer who would have earned one thousand pounds if the fruits he grew had not been frosted and questions may be asked:

P₁: How much money did the farmer earn?

P₂: He didn't earn any money.

P₂: He didn't earn any money.

P₁: Why didn't he earn any money?

P₂: Because the fruits he grew were frosted.

P₃: Because the fruits he grew were frosted.

5) Everyday dialogues.

The imitation exercise in the form of everyday conversation appeals to the student more than anything else because he is always delighted and encouraged to find he can press pieces of conversation he has just learned into immediate use.

Conversation between two people taped preferably by a man and a woman is released from the console for listen-and-repeat for the first time; the student says the man's part and takes the woman as his conversation partner for the second time; and vice versa for the third time. For example:

First time (repetition)

P₁: (Man): What did you have for breakfast today?

P₂: (Student): What did you have for breakfast?

P₁: (Woman): I had cereal, eggs and becon, and some toast.

P₂: (Student): I had cereal, eggs and bacon, and some toast.

Second time (participation)

P₁: (Man): What did you have for breakfast today?

P₂: (Student): I had cereal, eggs and bacon, and some toast.

Third time (participation)

P₁: (Student): What did you have for breakfast today?

P₂: (Woman): I had cereal, eggs and bacon, and some toast.

The conversation must be in situational English and highly repetitive. The student is sure to become discouraged and apathetic when he finds he can't employ in his daily life what he has learned. For instance, the example given above is deliberately not situational English in Taiwan because having cereal, eggs and bacon, and toast for breakfast is very rare. When asked "What did you have for breakfast today?" the student becomes tongue-tied not because he forgot what he has learned, but because what he usually has for breakfast is gruel (liquid food of rice boiled in water), eggs, fried peanuts, and pickles.

All the taped drill materials used in the language laboratories in Taiwan are imported and are not quite situational and practical. It would be better (at least in the early stages) for the learner if the teachers themselves write drills in situational English and have them taped by native English-speakers. But later the non-situational practice might be useful, especially for a student likely to travel to an environment where the English-type food is customary.

Testing is essential in effective teaching and learning. To the student it can be an incentive to devote himself more seriously to learning; it helps the teacher to gauge the students' progress and proficiency in English, to discover and correct difficulties, and to identify those who are the linguistically successful and those who are the linguistically backward, and need more individual attention. A test of five minutes should be given at the end of each laboratory period.

The types of test given below are intended for the use in the language laboratories.

(1) Phonemic-discrimination test.

It is used to measure the student's ability to discriminate the English sounds. For example:

(a) Tick the word on your answer sheet which rhymes with the word given.

Master: Men

(pause)

Answer sheet: (a) tan (b) ten (c) tin (d) ton

The correct answer is (b)

(b) Tick the word on your answer sheet which is the same as the word pronounced.

Master: Bed

(pause)

Answer sheet: (a) bad (b) bead (c) bed (d) bid

The correct answer is (c)

(2) Listening test.

It is used to evaluate the levels of the students' aural recognition of spoken English. It can be written in many different ways. It may be a piece of conversation between two people, an interesting passage or a short story presented to the students through their earphones and they are asked to select a response from multiple choice answers printed on an answer sheet. It can also be as simple as one sentence only. For example:

Tick the most appropriate answer.

Master: "I don't want any more tea," said John.

(pause)

Answer sheet: (a) John wants a little more tea.

(b) John doesn't want any more tea.

(c) John wants some more tea.

The correct answer is (b)

The sentence, the conversation, the passage or the short story should be

within the capacity of the students' understanding and should be spoken with native intonation and stress.

(3) Speaking test.

The students' pronunciation, intonation and fluency can be judged only by listening to them. There are three techniques for administering the test:

(a) Simple repetition of the model sentence.

For example:

Master: Do you like your egg scrambled or fried?

Student: Do you like your egg scrambled or fried?

(b) Answering questions concerning an illustration from the test booklet.

For example:

Master: what is the girl doing?

Student: She is queuing up for a bus.

(The test booklet contains a picture of a girl queuing up at a bus stop).

(c) Reading a text aloud.

The marking of a speaking test demands a lot of time and concentration from the teacher; therefore, the length of the test should be taken into consideration while the test is being prepared.

Chapter 5

Laboratory Operation and Monitoring

The whole of a laboratory period can be spent usefully and profitably if the teacher carefully spaces it out to fit in with different lengths of time needed for various teaching purposes.

The pattern of a fifty-minute laboratory period would be as follows:

- 1) Students arrive and settle in booths; the teacher does start-of-period chores: 5 minutes.
- 2) Each individual student listens and simultaneously copies the master and has his or her own response taped: 5 minutes.
- 3) The teacher monitors individual practice: 10 minutes.
- 4) Each individual student listens and simultaneously copies the second master and has his or her own response taped: 5 minutes.
- 5) The teacher monitors individual practice: 10 minutes.
- 6) The teacher summarizes the lesson with comments and makes announcement, if any: 5 minutes.
- 7) The teacher gives test: 5 minutes.
- 8) The students clear the booths and leave; the teacher does end-of-period chores: 5 minutes.

The above suggested operation pattern is liable to vary with the type of of practice and the intrinsic difficulty of the material, and the teacher should take into consideration the important principle of "change of activity" while making his own pattern to suit his own class.

Monitoring is vital part of laboratory teaching and demands great patience as well as full aural activity. During the practice time the teacher tunes in

to one student after another, grading each student's performance, correcting and jotting down individual mistakes. After completing circuit of the laboratory, the teacher switches to the first one again, listening briefly to the better students and staying tuned a little longer on the weak ones.

To check absences, to grade performance and to correct mistakes, a teacher needs a seating chart, a grade chart and a correction chart. If a teacher does enter different items on different charts, he will be busy travelling from one chart to another all the time. To make things easy a combination of the three charts will serve the purposes. The integrated chart can be called performance chart and the layout of it should correspond to the booths which, of course, corresponds to the layout of the console.

The layout of the performance chart of presumably 30 students is as follows:

Performance Chart

E 1	E 2	E 3
D 1	D 2	D 3
C 1	C 2	C 3
B 1	B 2	B 3
A 1	A 2	A 3

E 4	E 5	E 6
D 4	D 5	D 6
C 4	C 5	C 6
B 4	B 5	B 6
A 4	A 5	A 6

Console

Class _____ Section _____ Date _____ Teacher _____

The performance chart will be duplicated and available at the console. The teacher may use one for each period and file it at the conclusion of the period, for reference. For grading the teacher may use letter grade, such as A, B, C, and D representing Excellent, Good, Fair, and Poor respectively. A circle put under a certain number can show that the number/student concerned is absent.

Results from monitoring shown as (1) A5 absent (2) B2 difficulty in discriminating between "hill" and "here" (3) C4 graded "A" first, and "C" for the second monitoring and (4) D1 difficulty in pronouncing *ou*/*ou* differently, can be transcribed on the performance chart as follows:

Performance Chart

E 1	E 2	E 3	E 4	E 5	E 6
c:/c/ou					
D 1	D 2	D 3	D 4	D 5	D 6
			A/C		
C 1	C 2	C 3	C 4	C 5	C 6
	here/hill				
B 1	B 2	B 3	B 4	B 5	B 6
				○	
A 1	A 2	A 3	A 4	A 5	A 6

Console

Class _____ Section _____ Date _____ Teacher _____

While giving students final grades at the end of term, the teacher should take into consideration all the daily performances recorded on the performance chart.

An overworked teacher, sitting at the console, may be tempted to relax without being serious enough to carefully check the students' performance.

The chart will serve as a means to get away from such temptation and also a means to stimulate the student to better performance.

Laboratory Terminology

acoustic,
acoustic correction
acoustics
ambient noise
amplifier
audio-active laboratory
audito-active-comparative laboratory
auditory perception
auditory capacity
aural discrimination
average ear
blank tape
booth
bulk tape eraser
call facilities
capstan
capstan roller
console
console position
cubicle
desk space
disc (record)
dual-channel recording
earphone

erase head
erasure
external noise reduction
fast forward
feed spool (supply reel)
footage counter (tape position indicator: t.p.i.)
four-track
function control
glass front
gramophone
headphone
headset
headset-microphone
hiss
inches per second (ips)
indicator light
input socket
intercommunication
intercom and monitor switch
isolation
lab layout
lab time
leader strip (leader tape)
level
library laboratory
loop
loudspeaker

loudspeaker output
magnetic tape
maintainence kit
main power switch
master console
master question
master lesson
master tape
microphone (mike)
mimicry
menitor
motor noise
non-erasable
oral work
oxide dust
pads
partition
passive laboratory
playback
plug
portable tape-recorder
power supply
preparation room
prerecorded tape
pressure roller
programme selector
programme sources

projection screen
receiving slot (of the bulk eraser)
recorder
recording speed
recording head
record player
reel
reel-to-reel cassette
remote control
repetitive recordings
replay
re-record
resonance
response
rewind
rotating spool
row line selector
selector switch
self-criticism
sensitivity
single track (full track)
socket
sound absorbent material
sound insulation
sound-proof (sound proofed studio)
spool
student position

student recorder
switch
take-up spool (take-up reel)
tampering
tape
tape control
tape copier
tape deck (recording deck)
tape control
tape recorder
tapescript
tape splicing
tape threading
teaching tape
transmit
tape recorder
twin-track
two-way communication
virgin tape
visual command
volume control

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