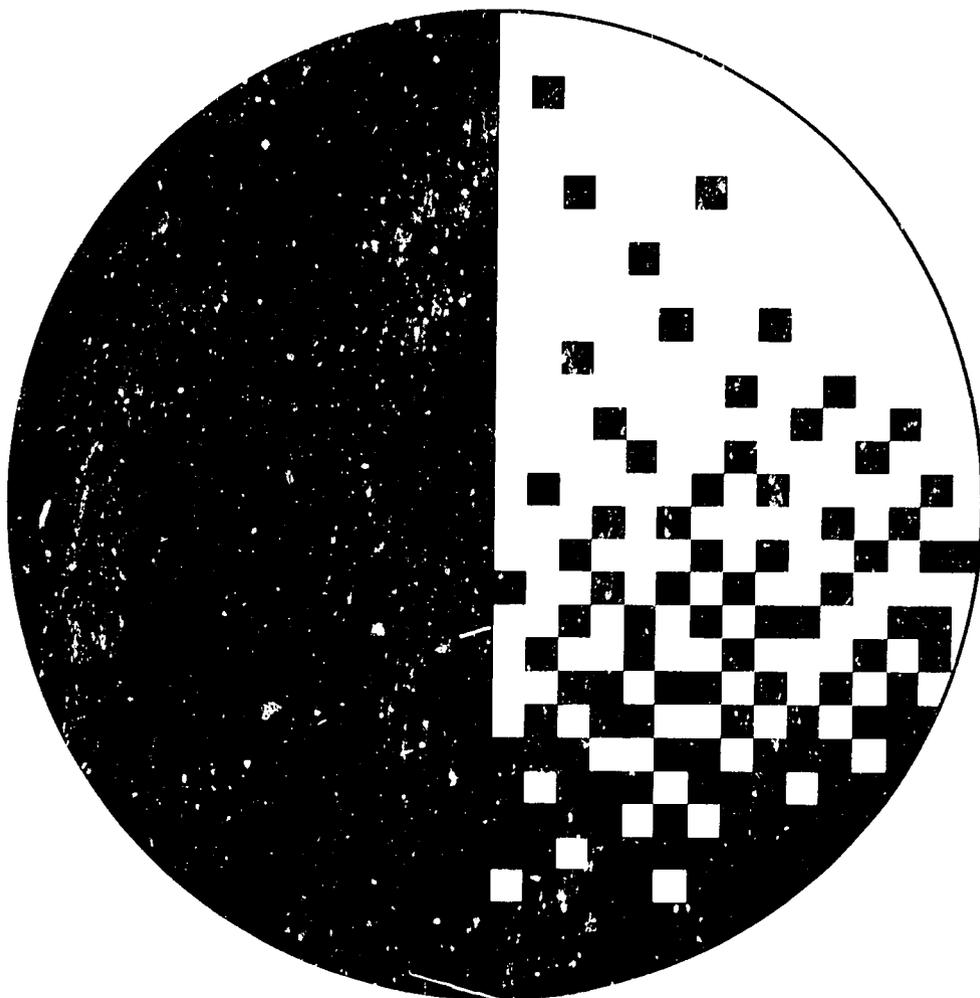


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National Association for Foreign Student Affairs

EDUCATION FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

English Language Training and Sponsored
Students from the Developing World



Carnegie Endowment for Peace Conference Center • Washington, D.C. • March 2, 1984

The National Association for Foreign Student Affairs (NAFSA) was founded in 1948 with the cooperation of academic institutions and government and private agencies to develop the knowledge and competence of persons concerned with international education. Its goal is the most effective operation of international educational interchange in an effort to assure maximum benefits for individuals, institutions and society. The Association serves as a source of professional training, as a guide to standards of performance, and as a voice for international educational exchange programs in governmental and educational circles. NAFSA membership has expanded in recent years to nearly 5,000 professionals and volunteers at over 1300 institutions which enroll 80% of the foreign students in the U.S.

As the NAFSA network has grown, its members have become more influential in communicating the important emphases and objectives related to the U.S. education of foreign students. The transfer of skills and knowledge, the implications of economic interdependence, and the long-term political and economic ties with developing countries are increasingly critical to NAFSAs and others in the field of international education. Where NAFSA believes it has been especially successful in its 35 years is in keeping these ideas in the forefront of its programming at the regional and national levels, and in involving a diverse constituency of individuals involved in educational interchange. One of the many ways that NAFSA has achieved this goal over the years has been through developing effective communication among governmental agencies, educational institutions, and public and private organizations.

The Education for International Development Seminars are made possible through a contract between the Office of International Training of the United States Agency for International Development (AID) and the National Association for Foreign Student Affairs (NAFSA).

Previous seminars have been held in conjunction with the Council of Graduate Schools (CGS), the National Association of State Universities and Land Grant Colleges (NASULGC), and the American Society for Engineering Education (ASEE). These seminars have focused on such topics as the relevance of U.S. education to students from developing countries, total costs of foreign students on U.S. campuses, the responsibilities of U.S. institutions and sponsoring agencies to the sponsored student, engineering education, and agricultural education.

Special thanks are extended to NAFSA's English Language Training Advisory Committee and the Office of International Training/AID for their support and assistance in the planning of the seminar.

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**ENGLISH LANGUAGE TRAINING AND SPONSORED
STUDENTS FROM THE DEVELOPING WORLD**

A Report of a Seminar

by

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May 1984

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Introduction

The seminar on English Language Training and Sponsored Students from the Developing World, held on March 2, 1984, is one of a series designed to examine different aspects of Education for International Development. They are made possible through a contract between the Office of International Training of the United States Agency for International Development (AID) and the National Association for Foreign Student Affairs (NAFSA).

The question of English language training has long been of concern to those working in the field of international educational interchange. It was early recognized by NAFSA as a key element in the education of foreign students in the United States and has been an item of continuing business on the agenda of the association since its first meeting in 1948. Professionals in the field acknowledge the progress that has been made in the post-war years but suggest that this is the result of slow and painful development, and that while we know far more about language acquisition and language learning than we did even ten years ago, we still have much to learn. Administrators from the Agency for International Development are also concerned to find solutions to persistent problems in the relationship of English language training to training for development, noting that the issues of yesterday appear to be those of today and fearing lest they become the issues of tomorrow.

Essentially, the question that is currently of most concern to sponsors, and is shared by those involved in English language training programs, is economics--how to reconcile the cost of English language training with the increasingly urgent need to provide training for development to the maximum number of participants in the shortest possible time. The problem is made more acute by the fact that rising cost factors within the United States mean that English language training in this country absorbs a disproportionate amount of the funds currently available for training programs. Finding solutions to the problem becomes even more critical at this time when new outreaches in the area of international development, such as the Central American Initiative, may call for even greater efforts to provide training programs. There is, therefore, renewed interest in finding the answers to such questions as: Is it necessary and cost effective to provide all participants in training programs with English language training in the United States? Is technology in home countries sufficiently advanced so that students can study by themselves in the home countries? Do we already have the knowledge and experience here in the United States to solve current problems through cooperative or combined activities? What further research is needed?

Because of the immediate need to seek solutions and find viable options, the seminar was very timely. It brought together representatives of U.S. and foreign government agencies involved in development training programs, private sponsors and those responsible for the administration of training programs for sponsored students, teachers of English as a second language, foreign student advisers, representatives of educational associations and of testing services, all of whom have a direct responsibility for some aspect of English language training or development training programs.

Although the subject of the seminar was English language training, and many of the participants were professionals in the field of language teaching and applied

linguistics, the purpose of the meeting was pragmatic rather than academic. Thus the discussions focused on an examination of the existing resources in the field, the ways in which improvements can be made in assessing the need for English language training, and the most effective and least expensive ways of meeting these needs, either in the students' home countries or in the United States, or in both. Because the discussions covered not only training but the way in which it is provided, they were conducted for the most part in laymen's terms rather than in technical language and this report is presented in similar fashion.

In preparing for the seminar the Advisory Committee defined the objectives which it hoped would be achieved:

- some understanding of the process of second language acquisition;
- identification of student variables that affect (a) proper placement, (b) length and success of program, (c) academic and programmatic goals;
- identification of key elements of various English language training programs;
- comparison of U.S.-based language programs with overseas training programs;
- examination of sponsors' goals and concerns;
- review of evaluation procedures and tests.

Although in a one-day seminar it was not possible to delve deeply into each of these areas, the report has been structured to follow the pattern set out by the Committee. In addition, two more topics emerged from the discussions and have -- the goals and concerns of teachers of English as a second language, --various recommendations.

The contents of the report are derived entirely from the contributions made in the seminar, both by those who presented papers, as indicated in the program that appears in the appendix, and those who participated in the discussions. In order to make the transition from a transcript to a narrative report, the information provided by the speakers and discussants has been arranged under the headings listed above. As none of the topics can be treated in isolation there is inevitably some duplication as the same factors may be relevant to a number of different concerns. Without making individual attributions, the rapporteur wishes to acknowledge with gratitude the assistance given by those who provided notes of their presentations and thus assisted greatly in the work of preparing an accurate account of the seminar. Any errors in arranging the information must be attributed to the rapporteur.

The Process of Second Language Acquisition

There are certain factors within the process of second language acquisition which are particularly relevant when the language acquisition is part of a development training program.

Learning a language is a life-time process. Even in their native language persons at any age can encounter new language learning experiences as, for example, struggling through the vocabulary involved in reading a textbook on an unfamiliar subject. This, together with the fact that learning a language and learning how to use a language are concurrent activities, indicates that second language acquisition is something which is continued rather than completed. This continuum has some significance in programs where language acquisition is not the primary purpose but is important only in so far as it enables the trainee to proceed with his or her

development training. The imperatives of available time and money will require a determination of that degree of proficiency which will suffice for the training program, a degree which will vary according to the demands of the kind of training or field of study. At the same time, the transition from the language program to the training program is by no means a terminal point as students will continue to develop language skills during their entire course of study (and, in fact, may require further formal language instruction during this period).

Because participants in development training programs are often in mid-career, it was suggested that for them second language acquisition falls into the realm of adult learning and that those teaching the language need to make their language programs into adult learning programs. Age is also a consideration in determining how participants are to be treated in learning a second language. Recognizing that motivation is a key element in the process of language acquisition, it was noted that it is difficult to maintain motivation for long periods when, as adults, the trainees are impatient to get started on what they consider most important--the training which they have come to the United States to acquire.

Within the developing world, training programs are reaching out into various levels of society to recruit participants who have had very few educational opportunities. In these circumstances the process of second language acquisition is affected by the degree to which participants are proficient in their native language, and those who are more or less illiterate in their own language will have much greater difficulty in acquiring a second one. In order to cope effectively with such groups it was suggested that teachers will require some knowledge of the native language and cultural patterns of the participants and noted that in some cases it may be necessary to include some bilingual approaches in the initial stages of instruction.

In summary it was pointed out that language learning is an active process and that not every one succeeds, or succeeds to the same degree, in learning a second language. The process of second language acquisition will thus depend not only on the variables within each individual, but success may also depend on the requirements of the program for which the language is being learned. It was noted that the best ESL programs can only provide the opportunity to learn; they cannot do the learning for the student, and thus a perfect success rate cannot be expected.

**Identification of Student Variables that Affect
(a) Proper Placement, (b) Length and Success of the
Program and (c) Academic and Programmatic Goals**

The question of student variables is of paramount importance because even when adequate funds and competent instruction are available in development training and English language training, the student remains the only uncontrolled factor; there is ultimately no way to predict with absolute accuracy which trainees will succeed in which fields. In the field of second language learning it was noted that the failure of a small percentage of students is inevitable, and it was also reported that sponsors encounter "non-language learners" after 9, 12, or even 18 months of intensive English training. At the same time, the Guidelines for the Use of TOEFL Scores warns that "the test is not designed to provide information about scholastic aptitude, motivation, language-learning aptitude, and/or cultural adaptability" (1983 edition, p. 4).

Because there is no "fail-safe" approach to education for international development, the remaining option is to define those individual characteristics which have proved to contribute to success in training programs and try to identify them within the participant selection process. If the sponsor and the receiving institution then seek to provide the most appropriate environment for training, the probability of success is, to that extent, increased. The availability of competent counseling during the training process to determine the course of, and find solutions to, individual problems is also an important factor in coping with student variables and further increasing the probability of success.

Among the individual variables affecting language learning are the following:

- self confidence--the willingness to try, to make mistakes and not be embarrassed (or immobilized) by initial failure;
- empathy--the willingness to listen and take instruction;
- age--and the ability (or lack thereof) to adjust;
- motivation;
- attitude--a positive interest, a desire to know.

In addition to these personal traits the question of academic background is also an important variable. It was noted that it is very difficult to deal in a second language with problems that one has not mastered in one's own and also that it is hard in later years to cope with new and unfamiliar learning styles.

Of all the student variables, motivation is perhaps the most significant and is also one which is more susceptible to influence. In learning English as a second language it was suggested that the attitude of sponsors can be of great importance. Insofar as sponsors see English language courses as an expensive and unwelcome preliminary to the implementation of the training program and fail to appreciate the immediate need for, and long term benefits of, language proficiency, the students are likely to share that view with a consequent diminishment in motivation. ESL teachers can contribute to motivation by infusing some elements of reality into the language program by including, for example, instruction in research methods, use of library resources, and (at more advanced levels) content from the discipline to be studied, and so on. Another factor which influences motivation and can be detrimental to the learning process is the frustration that results from the unexpected imposition of further language training on arrival at the institution. The fact that this impinges on the prescribed time limits of the training program and may also require some adjustment by the sponsor (in terms of time and budget) adds to the anxiety of the participant and to the pressures of what is, in any case, a trying experience. While working together to provide the most effective program, English teachers and sponsors can also be a beneficial influence to strengthen student motivation if the former will refuse to compromise on the proficiency standards required to begin academic work or training, and the latter will re-affirm the proper priority of ESL training in the total training program.

In reviewing the student variables in the process of selection and placement there is a relationship between the participants selected and the training program they are selected for. There is, for example, an obvious correlation between the length of training programs and the required degree of language proficiency. In short-term programs, proficiency in English prior to coming to the United States is

essential; in long-term programs (such as those leading to a degree), English language proficiency can be a progressive factor. Equally there is a correlation between the necessary extent of English language proficiency and the particular field of study or training for which the student is being prepared, some requiring a much greater degree than others (although in all there is a minimum requirement of what may be termed "survival English").

The inter-relationships between student variables and language learning on the one hand and development training program requirements on the other form a complex pattern and present a number of unanswered questions which will continue to earn the attention of both sponsors and teachers of English as a second language. It is a topic which should be included on the agenda of the follow-up meetings which are among the recommendations emanating from the seminar.

Key Elements of Various Language Training Programs

General Review

The nature of English language training programs, the differences in kind and content, and the need to choose the program most suited to particular needs were the issues raised repeatedly during the seminar. In this respect mention was made of the fallacious notion that all English language programs are essentially the same so that the least expensive is by definition the most cost-effective. It was pointed out, for example, that in addition to the more obvious of the standards which identify an acceptable program, those programs which are designed to offer realistic opportunities for students to use the language for academic or training purposes respond more effectively to sponsored students' needs than do those which concentrate on grammar, vocabulary or the preparation for TOEFL and other tests. The persistent problem of the time factor was raised as discussants noted that, irrespective of financial considerations and the sponsor's budgetary limitations, there was a major difficulty in persuading students to remain in language courses in the face of their mounting impatience to proceed to their training program. It was suggested that this might be overcome if there were a greater integration of the language training with the academic or technical training, so that the transition to the basic purpose of the training program could be made in a more timely fashion.

Other activities in the field

To give some perspective to the discussions there was a review of the characteristics and requirements of various other government-sponsored language training programs. In the foreign service of the U.S. Department of State language training is considered essential and is provided by the Foreign Service Institute until the required level of proficiency is achieved, with all instruction being given by native speakers of the language being studied. The Peace Corps, which devotes between 1/3 and 1/2 of its training budget to language training, favors in-country training, having found the use of native instructors in their home countries to be more successful and therefore more cost-effective. In the U.S.S.R. foreign students are provided with intensive language programs, followed by continuing training concurrent with other preparatory courses for their academic programs, and are paired with Russian roommates. Tutorial assistance is provided for those who have difficulty with the language. From the evidence of those who have studied in the U.S.S.R., very few students are sent home because of lack of proficiency in the language. The highly effective and well respected language programs of the British Council are well known in many countries around the world. They have

undoubtedly contributed to the number of foreign students who have gone to England to study. Over 50,000 students are currently learning English in Council centers, and approximately 960 teachers are employed. The fees received by the Council for its English teaching activities provide about 23% of its budget. The English language program of the Agency for International Development (AID)-- which is, of course, a major concern of the seminar--involves language study in the students' home countries until a required standard of proficiency is achieved, after which students are called forward for their training program in the United States, which may also include language training if proficiency is not completely adequate.

Selection of Programs

In reviewing the various individual language programs it was noted that selection of the proper program is complicated by the fact that there are over 200 Intensive English Language Programs in the United States. Both NAFSA and the Consortium of Intensive English Programs (CIEP) provide guidelines which can be of assistance in the selection process while the association known as TESOL (Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages) has begun to develop core standards and a checklist to evaluate programs in English as a second language (ESL) and English as a foreign language (EFL). The latest NAFSA publication, The Administration of Intensive English Language Programs (1982), edited by Ralph Pat Barrett, can also help one make a knowledgeable decision when choosing a program.

Program Descriptions

The salient features of different kinds of English language programs which were presented to the seminar are summarized briefly as follows:

IEP

A full-time Intensive English Program (IEP) is defined as a year-round program related to an institution of higher learning, offering at least 20 hours of supervised instruction per week. Programs offering a minimum of 10 hours of supervised instruction are considered to be semi-intensive, while those offering fewer than 10 hours are considered to be supplemental to a regular academic curriculum.

All of these programs have some similarities, in that they will regularly demonstrate most of the following characteristics:

- an institutional affiliation through some academic or administrative unit of the college or university (the important factor in this affiliation is the degree of autonomy granted in decision making);
- the commitment of the college or university to international education and the stated purpose of the English language program;
- a quality curriculum, generally divided according to skills or content area (e.g., reading, writing, speaking, listening and grammar) which are designed to be mutually reinforcing, offering instruction at approximately six levels, each designed to achieve goals that will permit a smooth transition from one level to the next. Special curricula may also offer English for Academic Purposes (EAP) or English for Special Purposes (ESP). The final result of a quality curriculum is the preparation of the student in the language skills needed to compete successfully in an academic or technical setting;
- administration by an ESL professional, with full- and part-time faculty, aided by adequately supervised teaching assistants;

- testing of students upon arrival using nationally recognized or locally developed tests to assess accurately the students' level of English and place them (both newly arrived and transfer students) in accordance with norms appropriate to their study programs at the institution;
- student services, including orientation programs and the use of outside resources for conversation and home hospitality programs, and counseling and placement services (noting that these cannot include guaranteed admission);
- a well balanced international, intercultural student body;
- proper implementation, good facilities, adequate information and reporting services and responsible record keeping.

Credit Courses in English

There are certain characteristics that differentiate Credit Courses in English (which may often carry transferable credits) from the more usual English language training courses, which are used specifically to prepare students for subsequent academic study or technical training. (Note: some universities do award credit, applicable toward an undergraduate degree, for intensive English courses.)

Some significant features of Credit Courses are as follows:

- in the context of English as a second language these courses are at a very advanced level: they focus usually on academic English (e.g., writing, composition, scientific and technical writing, etc.), not on study skills, conversation, test taking, etc.;
- as the courses must be approved for credit by the appropriate academic authority, they cannot be easily modified. Thus sponsors must know in advance what is offered and recognize that courses cannot be adjusted to their particular needs or interests;
- they usually carry grades and therefore figure in a student's Grade Point Average. This puts great pressure on the student as his or her entire study program may be impeded by lack of achievement in the English course;
- the courses may be required as a pre-requisite for other courses, even in short-term programs: an important factor to be taken into account by sponsors when planning short-term training programs.

Because of the special nature of Credit Courses in English there are certain problems for the university:

- courses are often in composition, and the institution may have no adequate test to determine students' proficiency in this area (such as writing samples collected under controlled conditions). In this case, some form of introductory instruction would be required for students unable to enter the advanced Credit Course, but the institution might be ill-prepared to provide this instruction;
- there is, therefore, an urgent need to screen out those students who cannot handle the composition course. In such circumstances, while recognizing the TOEFL limitations, some institutions require very high test scores on the assumption that there is a rough correlation between higher TOEFL scores and fewer problems in composition;
- the student visa for a foreign student requires a full course of study, determined as 12 hours; this means that a student who only requires 3 hours

of English must be enrolled for 9 hours in some other program.

It was noted that some of the difficulties listed above relate to those schools which only offer Credit Courses in English. Schools which also offer non-credit courses in English as a second language do have the flexibility to arrange programs that will take care of some of these problems.

English language programs in Community Colleges

Because of the nature of the community college and its function in providing educational programs that respond to the changing needs of the community, the community college is by definition an institution that specializes in diversity, both in its study programs and its student body. Normally, community colleges may serve to prepare students for entry in colleges and universities or may offer two-year terminal programs in various technical fields. In the field of English as a second language the programs provided are often seen as supplemental, offering the students the degree of English language proficiency they need to carry out their academic or technical programs. In this respect, because of the very close cooperation between those responsible for planning the academic or technical programs and those responsible for providing English language training, community colleges may be able to offer a combined program designed to meet specific training needs. This, together with the fact that programs are offered at various levels of instruction and that the costs of an educational program are relatively low, may mean that the community college offers the kind of English language training program that may respond very effectively to a sponsor's requirements. While considering these advantages, however, sponsors must also recognize that many community colleges are unable to provide the housing and other special foreign student services which assist these students in adjusting to life and study in the United States.

English for Special Purposes (ESP) Courses

English for Special Purposes, or ESP, courses are designed to meet the needs of those students who will be pursuing courses of study in fields which require a particular vocabulary and technical style, or who will be going directly into on-the-job situations where such special knowledge is needed in order to function effectively. There are currently two major areas of study, within each of which there are a number of sub-specialties. First there is the general field of Business/Management in which there will be courses in such specialized subjects as English for Banking, English for Hotel Management and so on. Then within the Scientific/Technical field there are such specialties as English for Aviation, English for Computer Technology, English for Medicine and so on. The courses do not deal with the subject matter per se but rather use the subject matter to provide the English appropriate for those working in the field.

ESP courses differ from the usual courses in English as a second language in that they assume the student has already achieved an intermediate level of proficiency in the language. From that level the ESP courses proceed to a review and refinement of general ESL instruction together with the special instruction in the English required for the particular subject area. The courses involve some 30 hours of study per week and offer instruction in special vocabulary, case studies and field trips, all designed to familiarize the student with the language pertinent to his or her future work or study.

Individual students or groups may enroll in existing courses. There may, however, be some problem in accommodating a wide variety of different needs and some limit is usually set to the degree of specialization that can be provided, unless, of course, funds are available to pay for personalized instruction. Arrangements can also be made for the special instruction of groups of 20 or more students, in which case the course can be designed to the sponsor's specifications and the content, length and cost of the course can be negotiated between the sponsor and the institution. It is recommended that there be some proportion between the size of the group and the size of the student body, as experience has shown that a large group of students from one country within a small institution can be the cause of problems for all concerned--the students, the sponsor, the institution and the local community.

The decision to take ESP courses rather than regular ESL courses will depend on the future plans of the student and the sponsor. If, following language training, the student will be going directly into some specialized training or straight onto the job, then ESP may be the most appropriate way to meet his or her needs. It has been stated that all language training is not an end in itself, but part of an on-going process to help people attain their professional goals. In this context ESP may be particularly useful, especially in the increasingly specialized fields which now exist.

Comparison of U.S.-Based Second Language Programs with Overseas Training Programs

From the information presented at the seminar it becomes apparent that any definitive comparison of U.S.-based language courses with those provided overseas is seriously hampered by the lack of hard facts. There is need for research and for further evaluation of English training programs both in the United States and in the foreign students' home countries. In the absence of ample information about individual programs in foreign countries, some evidence is available about the factors which may influence the effectiveness of these programs.

Questions were raised about in-country English language training regarding (1) the environment, the students having fewer opportunities to practice English and many more distractions to cope with in the home environment--especially at a time when they are preparing to go abroad; (2) the tendency to train for testing, a process which leads to inflated test scores and subsequent inadequate performance upon arrival at an institution in the United States; and (3) the lack of adequate quality control, it being noted that some teachers in home country English language training programs have to come regularly to the United States for English language training.

On the positive side it was noted that in-country English language training is much less expensive than that provided in the United States. There seems, therefore, to be some merit in seeking to achieve the highest possible level in proficiency that is obtainable through the in-country programs, thus reducing significantly the investment that may subsequently be required in the United States. Some corroboration of this need for "topping up" in the United States may be derived from the preliminary results of an inquiry into the English language training for the 18,000 Malaysian students now studying in the United States. These indicate that after language training in the home country they still found difficulty in their academic studies and their personal and social adjustment in the United States. Similar

observations were made among Thai students: in this case government-sponsored students receive no funding for ESL courses in the United States while privately-sponsored students may take their language courses in this country. It was also noted that those trained in the homeland had more problems in the United States both academically and in their adjustment. Thus training in the home country can be complemented by courses in the United States to bring the language proficiency to the required level. It was also noted that English language programs in the home country can perform a useful function in that they screen out those students with little language aptitude.

The obvious advantage of English language training in the United States is that the students are in an English-speaking environment, an advantage that can be exploited by use of the various services and programs, such as home hospitality, which are provided by the local community. Students are also stimulated by the proximity of their academic studies or technical training. There remains, however, the question as to whether English language training in the United States should be provided by special institutions or should be university-related. Each has its advantages: special institutions can be more responsive to specific needs while university-related courses can provide more opportunity for linkage between the language training program and the academic program. Each has its disadvantages as well: attending language courses at a special institution involves disruptive transfers to the university where further studies or training will be provided, while taking university-related language courses may result in competition for the student's interest and entails the danger of premature involvement in academic coursework before adequate language proficiency has been achieved. The discussion on the most advantageous site for English language training within the United States led to no consensus.

In seeking some basis for comparison between English language programs in the home country and those in the United States it was recognized that each has its own respective drawbacks and that there are some problems common to both. It was also acknowledged that there needs to be a closer relationship between the two, including a much more comprehensive exchange of information among those working in the field. It was suggested that an evaluation of the relative effectiveness of the different approaches to English language training, both in the United States and overseas, could be made by tracking the students who had participated in different programs to determine the success rate of each. The use of students for evaluative purposes was recommended by some groups but it was also noted that there are some dangers in relying too heavily on students themselves for this purpose. In evaluation programs involving students from the People's Republic of China it was reported that there was no systematic response and that the information provided was subjective, affected by the orientation students received and the environment in which they did their English language training.

Looking to the future of English language programs, whether in the United States or overseas, it was reported that the proposed Caribbean Initiative envisages scholarship programs that will include large numbers of educationally disadvantaged participants. The impact of this on the task of teaching English as a second language will be immense. It will require special efforts on the part of all those involved, both in the United States and the home countries, and may well require

some new approaches to developmental training programs, such as the initial use of bilingual education. In this respect it was recommended that efforts be made to profit by the experience of the Venezuelan development training program Gran Mariscal de Ayacucho, which also sought to include the educationally disadvantaged in its study abroad programs.

Sponsors' Goals and Concerns

The primary goal of the sponsor in the field of English language training and programming, which was clearly enunciated by AID and echoed by the other sponsoring agents, is to discover quality programs which will provide the necessary level of English language proficiency in the shortest time and at the least cost. In this way sponsors hope to solve the problem of how to make use of otherwise capable and suitable participants whose contribution to international development is prejudiced and even precluded solely by their lack of proficiency in the English language. The need is not new, and sponsors are aware that they have given insufficient attention to the language component of their training programs but feel that they can no longer deal on an ad hoc basis with persistent problems in this area. Seeking new answers, they look for new technology, such as ways to determine language aptitude accurately; new methods, such as the possibility of providing language training in stages; and new knowledge, such as the precise assessment of the degree of language proficiency required for specific tasks. Although these are goals shared by all those who are engaged in the provision of English language training, the urgency of the search is brought home to the sponsors by the imperative need to provide increasing training with decreasing resources.

The concerns of the sponsors may be summed up by the seven criteria which were set forth for training programs: the cost, the location, the length, the quality, the testing, the purpose, and the level of the training provided. Within the context of these major goals and concerns, there are a number of more immediate problems that need to be solved, or questions that need to be answered, if sponsors and those responsible for the English language training programs are to work together to provide the most effective training within the existing circumstances. Although it was not suggested that they constitute universal problems, the following items were reported during the course of the seminar as being of concern to the sponsors:

- there is a need for more guidance on the selection of the most appropriate English language training program. Sponsors with small staff find it particularly difficult to make an informed judgment of the more than 200 available programs;
- regarding both English language and other training programs there is a need for a clear disclosure of what the initial requirements are, what the courses will entail and whether they count as credit towards a degree;
- there is a need to know what the total English language skills needed for a particular course of study are, up to preparation of thesis and dissertation; the differentiation between the requirements of graduate and undergraduate courses should be made clear;
- the necessary channels of communication between sponsors and the institution should be identified; within the institution this involves the admissions office, the faculty and those responsible for English language training. Each group may require the same information about the student, while the sponsor may also require information from each of these elements in the

- institution;
- during the course of the English language training sponsors need to be kept informed about the student's progress, in particular receiving early warning about developing problems. They also need an evaluation to assist in proper placement when the course is completed. In this respect it was suggested that a simple progress report form be devised by sponsors which would be completed and returned by those responsible for the English language training, providing, of course, that the normal information constraints are observed.
 - after the initial English language program has been completed and the student is engaged in subsequent training there may be a need for additional language assistance. Sponsors need to be informed about how this assistance can be provided;
 - while acknowledging that some sponsors tend to underemphasize the need for English language training, it was pointed out that this problem can also exist on campus as sponsors receive confusing information from foreign student advisers who overestimate the student's language proficiency, or academic advisers who underestimate the extent to which lack of English language proficiency can hinder the student's ability to function in the classroom. Sponsors need to be assured that the various campus entities are in communication with each other;
 - there is a need for all those involved in training programs, both in the sponsoring agency and in the institution, to recognize the hidden value of English language proficiency in contributing to the quality of the learning experience;
 - realizing that no easy solution has yet been found, sponsors reiterated the difficulties which arise when there is an unexpected requirement for English language training after the training program has been planned and budgeted and the student has arrived on campus.

The Concerns of Teachers of English as a Second Language

During the course of the seminar it became clear that there were some specific concerns of those responsible for English language training which were not fully encompassed in the topics identified by the planning committee. These concerns focused mainly on relationships with the sponsors and to that extent were reflections of the sponsors' concerns, seen from the opposite point of view. This might be seen in the reference to the need for flexibility on the part of the sponsor in accommodating unanticipated requirements for English language training. While not discounting the importance of this need when it arises, it was agreed that in practical terms such flexibility was very hard to achieve. At the same time it was also suggested that sponsoring agents include on their staff someone who is familiar with English language testing and training and the available programs in the field. Presumably this might decrease the number of unexpected crises.

Teachers of English were also greatly concerned about the question of motivation and the recognition by the sponsor of the importance of English language proficiency in the training process--despite its cost to both sponsor and student. It was pointed out that the goal of their teaching is not only the achievement of a level of proficiency that will be adequate for subsequent academic studies or training (including the writing skills which are always needed irrespective of the field of study or training), but also to enable the students to cope with their social

and cultural adjustment to life in the United States and, eventually, to provide them with a valuable asset to take home.

Turning to procedural matters the need was expressed for a more comprehensive communication among all those who are involved in development training programs for sponsored students. Specifically it was noted that (1) it would be helpful to those conducting English language training courses to know the kind and extent of predeparture counseling that students receive in their home countries, and whether accompanying spouses are included in this orientation; (2) those administering language programs offering placement service after the English course is completed need the necessary academic transcripts from the sponsors; and (3) the progression from English language instruction to academic studies or to training requires a full and continuing exchange of information that should include the admissions office, the language-teaching faculty, the disciplinary faculty, the department representative and the sponsor.

The need to make a distinction between long-term and short-term training programs was stressed. It was noted that the language component varies when the overall length of training varies, a factor which may well affect student motivation. While the objectives of short-term training programs are generally quite specific and known, those of long-term programs, especially those leading to a degree, may not be so clearly stated. It was pointed out that this kind of information is essential to the teacher of English and should be provided as early as possible in the training program.

In examining some areas for improvement in the English language training it was noted that there is a need for "finer tuning" in English language courses to take into account differences in skill, level of proficiency and the prospective field of study. The question of the use of their native language by participants in English language courses was also discussed. It was suggested that while this has been generally considered to be counter-productive it can serve as a useful safety valve for the students. It was recommended that the use of native language by participants should neither be discarded nor abused during the course of English language training.

Referring to the question of sending sponsored groups of students and the capability of the English language program to deal with this it was noted that to do so effectively adequate planning time is essential. It was also suggested that to make group programming most responsive to student needs there must be some kind of communications network between and among sponsors and those involved in the administration of the English language training programs. This is particularly important in view of the growing trend towards the provision of English for Special Purposes.

Review of Evaluation Procedures and Tests

In education for international development and especially in the field of English language training in the United States any review of evaluation procedures and tests focuses on TOEFL as one instrument which has international recognition and global administration. Other nationally known tests are also used, mainly by institutions which also test students on arrival in this country. Although some institutions favor locally developed tests for this purpose, TOEFL is one of a

number of standardized tests (such as SAT, GRE, GMAT) which have been designed in the United States and are required by many U.S. institutions. While other tests are used either to determine scholastic aptitude or knowledge of a given subject, TOEFL does not fall into either of these categories; its major purpose is to evaluate the English language proficiency of persons whose native language is not English.

TOEFL is used almost exclusively for foreign students. The other tests are used primarily for U.S. students, although a number of institutions require them for their foreign students as well. The use of U.S. standardized tests in the foreign student admissions process has long been the subject of discussion, and the results of the tests must be interpreted with great care: there will be differences not only between foreign and American students but also among foreign students themselves.

While it was recognized that TOEFL is not a perfect instrument, it was also agreed that a number of the imperfections which are attributed to the test arise not from the test itself, but from the way it is used. It was emphasized that TOEFL is not a predictor of academic success, nor does it measure speaking ability (although a new test, the Test of Spoken English (TSE), has been designed for this purpose) or provide a direct measurement for writing ability. It is, however, an instrument of value that can help to detect major language problems and, if used correctly, with due consideration being given to all the information provided by the results of the three different sections of the test, it can provide useful information. Correlation of TOEFL scores with other test scores can provide valid indicators for the admission and placement of foreign students.

The question of evaluation and testing continues to be of concern to those responsible for developing the tests and to those who interpret the results. Close cooperation between the two groups will lead to the determination of more effective evaluation procedures. Necessary to this process will be an improvement in practices so that the test scores are correctly interpreted and properly used and continued research by TOEFL and other test developers to discover ways of achieving greater accuracy in the results. (In this respect it was noted that TOEFL is currently investigating the feasibility of computerized testing, although any use of such tests is not envisaged in the near future.)

At this time there are a number of problem areas that need attention:

- despite the insistence of ETS and the general acceptance that, in principle, rigid cut-off scores should not be set with respect to TOEFL scores, institutions which do not have programs in English as a second language point out that they find it impossible to avoid setting cut-off scores;
- the practice of training students specifically for TOEFL continues, especially in some foreign countries, although this results in inflated test scores and the consequent misrepresentation of actual ability. Because this practice is perhaps inevitable as long as foreign students see the test as a criterion for admission, strenuous efforts are needed to correct this notion and discourage "teaching to the test" (although it was noted that teaching standardized test techniques is proper and provides valuable preparation for study in the United States);
- the difference between performance on TOEFL taken overseas and the

results of re-tests taken on arrival is often due to time lag between the tests, as second language proficiency decreases rapidly through disuse. This suggests the need for some ways of maintaining familiarity with the language after TOEFL has been completed and while waiting to study abroad;

- a number of questions were raised about the relationship of English language proficiency to the subsequent field of study or training program, and it was suggested that sometimes the TOEFL score is given undue weight in relation to academic ability. It was also noted that in training for development the degree of English language proficiency will depend on the length and level of the training program, and it was suggested that there is need for more specialized guidance to make a proper evaluation of English language proficiency to discover what will suffice for the precise needs of the training program.

In addition to the discussion of the tests used for foreign students, information was provided about tests used in adult education. These included tests used for academic, vocational and survival English courses. A listing was provided of the published tests used for the advanced academic track--those planning to go to college--for the beginning and intermediate general and vocational track, and for the pre-literate and unschooled. Current research concerns in this specialized field include an examination of the validity of some listening tests that require a lot of reading in order to provide the answers, and the discovery of tests that will help to determine when students can work effectively in such jobs as home health aides, welders, mechanics, etc. It was noted that in this field the feasibility of computerized tests is also being explored.

Recommendations

The questions raised in the presentations and discussions, as recorded in this report, suggest a number of fields of inquiry or courses of action that might be developed following the seminar. Although there was no formal presentation of recommendations as part of the seminar, a number were made and accepted informally by the group as being worthy of record.

- I. A number of follow-up meetings were suggested:
 - at the college or university with many sponsored students, a meeting should be held to address the question of English language training for the sponsored students at that institution. Included would be teachers of English as a second language, admissions officers (preferably with some understanding of the field of English as a second language), department heads, faculty members and sponsors. (Such meetings might be organized by AID, NAFSA, and the NAFSA Field Service Program.);
 - at NAFSA national and regional conferences there should be included at least one session for sponsors and ESL intensive course personnel to exchange information on latest developments in the field, both in the United States and overseas;
 - at the national level further seminars should be organized, such as the one now completed, including representatives of the same groups but with expanded audiences to include admissions officers, administrators and graduate faculty involved in programs for sponsored students.

- II. There should be more communication between those involved in English language training programs in foreign countries and those in the United States. Far from being mutually exclusive, these activities at home and overseas offer many opportunities for cooperative efforts and joint endeavors. It was suggested that a combined program evaluation project might be an appropriate undertaking for this group.
- III. More research is needed. Specific research projects should be jointly undertaken by sponsors and by those directly involved in teaching English as a second language or administering programs in this field.
- IV. Consideration should be given to the greater use of students to provide language learning case histories and other information pertinent to the quality of various programs, the relative role of learning, etc., in discussions and workshops and in research relating to English language training.
- V. It was suggested that in future seminars those responsible for planning the meetings arrange for the preparation of a paper (or papers) for distribution in advance to the participants in which issues would be presented and problems analyzed. This would help identify those matters which are of particular concern and assist in moving the seminar toward specific proposals for future action.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE TRAINING AND SPONSORED STUDENTS

SEMINAR AGENDA

Thursday, March 1, 1984, NAFSA Office - 1860 19th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C.
7:00 - 8:00 p.m. - Registration/Reception

Friday, March 2, 1984, Carnegie Conference Center - 11 Dupont Circle, N.W., #800-Rm. A

- 8:30 Welcome - Piedad Robertson, Seminar Chair
Introduction - Robert Kaplan, NAFSA President
- 8:45 Review of Sponsors' Goals and Objectives in English Language Training
Dona Wolf - Office of International Training/AID
Doris Johnson - AMIDEAST/Partners
Nasir Zain - Embassy of Malaysia, Respondent
- 9:45 Coffee Break
- 10:00 Nature of Language Learning - David Eskey
Student Variables in Language Learning - Suzanne Peppin
- Small group discussions
Reports from group discussions
Discussion leaders: Elizabeth Chaffee, Robert Fox, George Eaton,
Nan Sussman, Paul Krueger, Allis Bens, Ralph Pat Barrett
- 12:00 Luncheon
Speaker: Ruth Zagorin, Agency Director for Human Resources,
Bureau of Science & Technology/AID
- 1:00 Comparisons of National Policies for Study Abroad - William Fish
- 1:15 Key Elements of Different ESL Programs - Patricia Byrd, Chair
Adelaide Heyde Parsons: Intensive English Programs
Janet Constantinides: ESL Programs for Credit
Diane Gabriel: Community College Programs
Rochelle Wechter: English for Specific Purposes
- 2:30 Review of Testing - Leslie Palmer, Chair
Russell Webster, Donna Ilyin, Sanford Jameson
- 3:15 Individual Responses to Seminar:
Hamdan Al-Ghamdi - Saudi Arabian Educational Mission
Paul Angelis - Southern Illinois University - Carbondale
Hattie Jarmon - Office of International Training/AID
- 3:30 Coffee Break
- 3:45 Summary - Hugh Jenkins, Seminar Rapporteur
- 4:00 Next Steps - Piedad Robertson and Dona Wolf
- 4:45 Written Evaluation
- 5:00 Reception - Carnegie Conference Center, 11 Dupont Circle, N.W.,
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