

# English Language Study Tour Abroad: Maximizing its Effectiveness in Helping Students Improve Communicative Competency

Yoshiko Takazawa

## Abstract

Since the Department of International Liberal Arts was established in 1990, the college has sent applicants who wanted to study English on study tours abroad — four times to New Zealand and twice to the United States. The writer was a chaperone on two times: one to the U.S. and one to New Zealand. This is a probe into what hinders students from effectively studying English abroad in a short term situation and, consequently, into what would be the most effective curriculum and/or program to best help these students improve their communicative ability in English. The study combines the personal experience of the writer with an analysis of replies to a questionnaire given to language school teachers in New Zealand. Based on this analysis and comparing the New Zealand program to that of a previous study tour to the U.S.,<sup>(1)</sup> one is led to the conclusion that both 'skill-learning' (Littlewood, 1992), which takes place in the ordinary classrooms situation, and 'natural learning' (Littlewood, op. cit.), which is more associated with ESL and immigrants, is the essential key to the study tour. This combination of formal and informal learning is what helps to make the study tour unique. In order to take advantage

of this uniqueness, a program which incorporates both of these learning aspects is needed in order to provide an ideal basis for developing students' communication skill in English.

## I. Outline of the Language Study Tour

The study tour is a two-unit course, which means the participants receive two units of college credit at the end of the tour. The total number of the participants in the 1995 spring New Zealand English language study tour was thirty-nine. The program was open to any student who wanted to take part without screening test or interviews. All students had studied English for seven years and were all women. Thirty-four out of the thirty-nine participants belonged to the Department of International Liberal Arts where they received instruction in spoken English by native speakers alone. In these classes, learning took place within learner-centered classes of fewer than 20 students each in which the main paradigm of interaction between teachers and students as well as interaction among students was pair-work and group work.

The period of the tour was four weeks, from February 18 to March 18, and the program was conducted at the same private language school as in the three previous New Zealand study tours. All students stayed with native host families and commuted to school by bus.

On the first day of the language school students were given a placement test<sup>(2)</sup> and an interview and then were divided into six groups according to the results. Formal English instruction consisted of two 90-minute classes in the morning — 57 hours total, and 18 hours of learning activities<sup>(3)</sup> outside the school. Seven teachers, including a

coordinator, were in charge of the six or seven student groups, with each teacher in charge of two groupes – one morning and one afternoon class, so that each student had an opportunity to be taught by two different teachers. Teachers followed course outlines entitled 'Weekly Plans' and 'Classes and Activities',<sup>(4)</sup> which were posted each Monday on the wall. Detailed 'homework & assessment records',<sup>(5)</sup> of each student as well as each student's 'Course Report',<sup>(6)</sup> were given at the end of the course. The following course books were used as class textbooks:

- Group 1- Mohamed, Sue and Acklam, Richard. 1992. *The Beginners' Choice*. Longman.
- Group 2- Walker, Swan. 1990. *The New Cambridge English Course*. Cambridge University Press.
- Group 3- Liz & John Soars. 1993. *Headway Elementary*. Oxford University Press.
- Group 4- Doff, Adrian and Jones, Christopher. 1991. *Language in Use a Pre-intermediate Course*. Cambridge University Press.
- Group 5- Mohamed, Sue and Acklam, Richard. 1993. *The Pre-Intermediate Choice*. Longman.
- Group 6- Liz & John Soars. 1991. *Headway Pre-intermediate*. Oxford University Press.

The teachers employed communicative teaching techniques, where students were encouraged to speak as much as possible through interaction with teachers and peers, in pairs, and in groups. Emphasis was placed on oral and aural skills, and students were encouraged to

speak in English and to use the English they had been taught. In addition to formal instruction, there were also three Saturdays set aside for one day bus trips and one Friday night reserved for a farewell party at which time the students were presented with certificates by their teachers.

## II. Responses to the Questionnaire<sup>(7)</sup>

A questionnaire was given to the language school teachers in charge of the thirty-nine students in order to detect problems found while teaching and to elicit comments. Evaluation was based on homework assignments, diaries, final presentations and participation.

### II.1. Question I: Skills students are most lacking

(Rank the following: 1 = least problems, 5 = most problems)

Response:

	T-1	T-1'	T-2	T-3	T-4	T-5	T-6
Grammar	4	3	0	1	2	2	3
Reading ability	3-4	1	1	2	1	3	3
Listening ability	3	4	5	3	5	2	3
Speaking ability	5	5	4	4	4	4	5
Vocabulary	3-4	2	3	2	2	4	2
Pronunciation	sen. 3 word 4	3	2	5	3	3	5
Other problems	see below					see below	see below

Other Problems:

- T-1: communication problem — being silent if they don't understand instructions or vocabulary, rather than asking/using dictionaries for vocabulary rather than listening and working it out for themselves
- T-5: Students were very capable in doing grammar exercises but had difficulty applying their grammar knowledge in less controlled situations.
- T-6: I found that the students wanted colloquial English vocabulary and practice and were not too concerned about grammar.

Table 1 shows that the teacher in charge of the top-level group finds her students to have the least problem in speaking, while the teachers in charge of the lowest level group find those students to be most lacking in speaking ability. The other teachers ranked speaking ability as most problematic, but they gave it a 4 instead of a 5 as with the lowest level class. Taken as a whole the six abilities ranked, from the most to least problematic are as follows: speaking ability, listening ability, pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar and reading.

## II.2. Question 2: Common mistakes which hinder communication

Responses:

Mistakes mentioned by teachers can be divided roughly into four categories — grammatical mistakes, pronunciation mistakes, pragmatic mistakes and cultural problems.

Grammatical mistakes:

- \* As grammatical mistakes, four teachers out of seven refer to misuse and/or omission of articles and prepositions. These two items, one teacher says, don't really hinder communication too much but are very common mistakes.
- \* Students do not add 's' at the end of the third-person-present-tense verb.
- \* Some students have difficulty with 'come/came' and 'go/went.'
- \* 'I am going to shopping.'
- \* Many students use "kindness" as an adjective instead of "kind."
- \* One of the teacher points out the fact that if sentences were not written down, the word order was very confused.

Pronunciation/phonological mistakes:

- \* Five teachers mention pronunciation. Three out of four teachers mention that the students add a vowel sound to words which end in consonants.
- \* Confusion of /l/ and /r/ (two teachers refer to this), /b/ and /v/, and /s/ and /th/

Pragmatic mistakes:

- \* Students directly or literally translate Japanese into English both in writing or speaking. One teacher even suggests that students use simpler words and expressions, claiming that they might be less accurate but more appropriate. If students do so, she thinks, they would not have their heads in a dictionary and they could practice real communication.

Cultural problems:

- \* One teacher says there was a reticence to speak. This implies that students are unsure the answers. This is not a mistake but in a learner-centered communicative class this kind of attitude becomes quite a hindrance to communication.
- \* Shyness and sitting passively, though not mistakes, are often hindrances.
- \* Students give one word answers. They need to extend their answers and then ask another question.

### II.3. Question 3: The length of the English study tour period

Responses:

One month is:

1. not useful—0, 2. too short—2, 3. short—3, 4. useful—3

Teacher 1: One month is useful, but five or six weeks would be even better. Students were beginning to get used to the classroom method and settling down to speak more and to improve! Another couple of weeks would see even more improvement.

Teacher 1': One month is short.

Teacher 2: One month is useful.

Teacher 3: One month is short. Ideally, six weeks would be great. It's a real shame that the holiday time in Japan doesn't allow for another two weeks, as I really feel that some students are just beginning to take off.

Teacher 4: One month is too short. Four weeks is useful, but five or six weeks would be better. The students are just beginning the gain

confidence in speaking and now they are going home.

Teacher 5: One month is useful. Ideally, a six-week period would be ideal. The last week is very much a wind down time.

Teacher 6: One month is short. Six weeks – two months maybe.

#### II.4. Question 4: Problems in teaching Japanese students

Responses:

1. Some teachers found students very passive and trained to receive information and therefore found it difficult to get them to work grammar rules for themselves.
2. Students were too concerned about accuracy. Some teachers encouraged students to have confidence in their ability and not to be afraid to make mistakes.
3. The majority of teachers (6 out to 7) mentioned that students should speak out, give their opinions, offer suggestions and disagree with each other. They found students silent in front of large groups and very reticent about talking in class. Students need to be more communicative and one teacher advises they should at least nod. Another teacher points out students should not rely on dictionaries and added that they should find out answers through discussion among themselves or interaction with teachers.

#### II.5. Question 5: What preparation should students make beforehand?

Responses:

A) from an educational point of view:

- \* Six teachers felt students should have more speaking and communication practice in class.



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They suggest some activities to help students speak out:

1. Practice situations or role plays through which students can express themselves more freely and focus on fluency more than accuracy.
2. Doing activities in pairs or groups without teacher control.
3. Encouraging students to ask questions or to stop the teacher if they do not understand.
4. Occasionally having lessons where only English is spoken.

- \* Students should understand that more than speaking “correct” English, experimenting with English and just talking is important and welcomed by the teachers.
- \* Students should know the English names for the parts of speech and other grammatical terms, grammatical tenses above all.
- \* Have students prepared for the teaching methods they will encounter and required to speak as much as possible.
- \* An awareness of New Zealand dialect would be helpful.

B) from a cultural point of view:

Students should:

1. be aware of customs and habits in New Zealand and the cultural differences between New Zealand and Japan.
2. know that in New Zealand it is considered impolite not to answer when spoken to.
3. Not sniff — it is more polite to blow your nose in New Zealand.
4. be familiar with the town they will visit (Christchurch) through

videos and maps.

5. have some information about meals — students felt there was too little for breakfast, and that dinner was too large and oily.
6. be encouraged to use their initiative in asking for help — perhaps as few basic phrases.
7. be prepared for the teaching methods. (Students might then make quicker progress.)

## II.6. Question 6: Expected classroom behavior

Responses:

- \* Students should speak English in class (5 teachers out of 7)  
(Only three teachers wrote 'no Japanese spoken in class', but other teachers took it as a matter of fact that the students should speak in English in class, because they were in class to improve their English communicative competence.)
- \* Teachers require students to take part in class activities — active class participation.

Suggestions for increasing active participation in class:

1. Ask questions.
2. Say what you think without being afraid of mistakes.
3. Volunteer answers when questions are put to the class.
4. Participate in discussions.
5. Be ready to disagree.
6. Work hard.
7. Respond and work things out for yourselves without guidance.
8. Be prepared. Say, "Sorry I don't know", "Could you repeat that word?"<sup>(8)</sup>

- \* Don't speak Japanese in class.

(Two reasons are mentioned. One, speaking Japanese in class is seen as rude by the teacher. Two, speaking only English will help them improve their English.)

- \* Only use dictionaries when completely lost.

- \* Don't be so anxious about mistakes.

(This was pointed out in Question 4 and Question 5 A, too.)

- \* Lastly one cultural point was raised: the inappropriateness of sniffing in public. The New Zealand teachers claimed it is better to just blow one's nose. In Japan although sniffing in class or in the presence of others isn't good manners, it is better than making an even louder noise by blowing your nose.

### III. Discussion

In this section the writer focuses on the problem of increasing communicative competence and what paradigm or curriculum can be found in order to help solve this problem in the framework of a language study tour. The greatest hindrance to effective English language learning seems to be students' reticence to speak English in class. In the responses to the questionnaire, speaking out in class was cited as the biggest problem for students. Teachers in charge of the students unanimously pointed out that they should be ready to say what they think and to take the initiative in answering questions, disagreeing, giving their opinions, offering suggestions, asking for clarification and so on. In short, taking the initiative and speaking out in English was the most highly regarded attitude for students in class. To teachers, Japanese students were regarded as shy, reticent, passive,

and not communicative. Students seemed to be afraid of making mistakes and when they were unsure of something they turned to dictionaries or just mused in silence. They did not seek interaction in English with teachers or peers and, in fact, they seemed to try to avoid this. They were waiting for information to be given to them rather than trying to work it out for themselves.

The Japanese Ministry of Education (Mombusho), made the fifth revision of the "Course of Study" in 1989. This was consequently put into practice in 1993.<sup>(9)</sup> One of the critical points of revision was to cultivate students' communicative competence in English and at the same time to cultivate the foundation for international understanding. Mombusho has been making subsequent efforts to encourage a more communicative methodology and AETs (Assistant English Teachers) are cooperating with JETs (Japanese English Teachers) to help students express themselves in English.

Most of the thirty-nine students from Chiba Keiai had previously classes by AETs. At the Junior College level they had all taken oral English classes in which native speakers of English were in charge and classes were conducted in English. Although students expressed a desire to improve their English and demonstrated their enthusiasm by taking part in the study tour, they were still passive in classes.

What is it that prevents these students from being communicative? We can explain this from two perspectives: one from a cultural point of view and the other from viewpoint of the students' English speaking ability.

Culturally, this reticent attitude can be explained by the obvious fact that the students were born and brought up in Japan where silence is

still valued on many occasions and where harmony is highly respected. People are rarely willing to express their opinions for fear of offending others and upsetting the harmony. This is a manifestation of the culture of what is often referred to as the culture of 'Sasshi' in which Japanese attempt to guess and understand others' feelings without openly discussing these. In anthropological terms, Japan is a 'High Context Culture' (E.T. Hall, 1976) and, as such, Japanese are trained rather not to express themselves too clearly even in Japanese. In addition, classroom behavior and the relationship between teacher and student is very different in Japan. Students are expected to learn passively and in silence. When they don't understand something, they wait until after class to privately ask the teacher rather than asking in front of the class. Harmony is important in the classroom as well as in society and students' behavior reflects this cultural value.

The second reason why students did not actively participate in class seems quite clear. They do not have a good command of English. 'The most important function of language is to facilitate communication with others.' (Littlewood, op. cit. P.9.) Students are eager to expedite communication but, because of poor communicative English skills, they are unable to do so. Even if they wanted to ask or say something, they lose their chance to speak because the language is not quickly at their command.

In examining these two points it is clear that the cultural reticence of speaking out inhibits effective acquisition of English. The only way to solve this problem is somehow to make students speak up. Thus, a curriculum/program in which they are forced to speak English appears essential and study tours to English-speaking foreign countries seem to

be the ideal setting for such a program.

In such cases, the curriculum must be made up of 'skill-learning' in class and 'natural-learning' outside of class. Littlewood (1992) describes 'target skills' in a typical school and the fact that these skills exist independently of the learner and have to be acquired in order to be able to communicate in English. The teacher expects students to practice these target skills in ways prescribed by them in class. This type of practice is clearly useful for beginners and is necessary for students at higher levels such as those in the Chiba Keiai group. Language school classes may be adequate for this type of learning in many cases.

Philosophy of language learning as a natural process ('natural learning'), according to Littlewood (1992), holds that language learning begins in the natural environment rather than in the classroom. Learners have to 'use their own powers of observation and generalization to make sense' of English. This 'natural learning' can be done best in activities outside of class and study tour taken by Chiba Keiai students to Wisconsin, the U.S. in 1994 offered a number of good examples of the effective use of this type of activity. The study tour included afternoon activities in which teachers at the language school allowed students to choose assignments<sup>(10)</sup> they were interested in. There were numerous assignments to choose from and students were not allowed to choose the same assignment as another student in the same group. On the first day students were allowed to do one assignment in pairs. However, on the second day no one in the same group was permitted to choose the same topic. Each student was required to go out into the town and gather specific information by walking around,

visiting the museum or the zoo, and other local places and asking various people for the information they needed. The following day each student was asked to give a presentation in front of her groupmates about her assignment with the teacher also asking questions. Through these activities, students were able to gain confidence in themselves and slowly began to take more initiative in learning and speaking out.

'Natural learning' was also observed to take place in the New Zealand program in the context of homestays with native speaking host families. During this tour, it was felt that although students experienced various difficulties immersed as they were in an English speaking environment, this was an ideal situation since they were under constant pressure to speak in English for a wide variety of communication purposes.

#### IV. Conclusion

The combination of a 'skill-learning' and 'natural-learning' program/curriculum was judged to be best suited to helping students overcome their reticence and increase their English communicative competency. Through this type of study tour students can hope to gain confidence in using English. This confidence will help them take even more initiative in speaking English which will, in turn, help them to maximize their English learning both inside and outside the classroom.

#### Notes

- (1) This study tour conducted at a private language school in Madison, Wisconsin, the U.S.A. in 1992. Twenty-first female students stayed at the school dormitory. Two students shared one room. The daily schedule was as follows: There were two ninety-minute classes in the morning. In the afternoon each student was required to choose an assignment for herself in

or around Madison, the capital of Wisconsin, a small university town. The period from 4:00 to 5:00 p.m. was allotted for assignments back at the dorm with teachers' help available. Game time with teachers was from 5:00 to 6:00 p.m. followed by supper taken with teachers.

- (2) Oxford Placement Test 2, *Grammar Test* Part 1 and 2 was used.
- (3) Students did their assignments outdoors together with their groupmates and accompanied by their teachers. The Six groups generally worked separately.

1 An assignment given to students at the Antarctic Center in Christchurch, N.Z.

- 1) Name one of Japan's stations in Antarctica?
- 2) List one part of the Antarctic Treaty?
- 3) Name one science study in Antarctica?
- 4) What was Gondwana?
- 5) a) Name the largest whale?  
b) Name the smallest whale?
- 6) List two of the foods taken by field parties?
- 7) Name the American station at the South Pole?
- 8) How many kilometres from New Zealand is Antarctica?
- 9) What does the Leopard seal eat?
- 10) Name the four penguins that live in Antarctica?
- 11) What is today's temperature at Syowa?

2 An assignment given to students at the Christchurch Fire Station

- 1. What number do you ring if there is a fire? \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. How many fire Engines do you see? \_\_\_\_\_
- 3. What colour are they? \_\_\_\_\_
- 4. Name 2 things on a Fire Engine e.g. hose \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 5. What does a fireman carry? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 6. What does a fireman wear on his head? \_\_\_\_\_  
on his feet? \_\_\_\_\_  
on his hands? \_\_\_\_\_
- 7. Is the uniform the same as a Japanese one? \_\_\_\_\_
- 8. How many fires have there been to this week? \_\_\_\_\_



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### 3 An assignment given to students at Art Galley

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Partner's name: \_\_\_\_\_

#### ART GALLERY

1. What's the name of the Art Gallery?

\_\_\_\_\_

2. What different signs can you see around the Art Gallery?

\_\_\_\_\_

3. Choose two things in the Art Gallery that you particularly like. What are they? (for example – photographs, paint sculptures etc).

Can you describe them? DON'T LET YOUR PARTNER SEE YOU DOING THIS.

a \_\_\_\_\_

b \_\_\_\_\_

Now, let your partner read 3 and try to find a. and b. to answer 4 & 5.

4. Who is the artist? (for both a and b)

a. \_\_\_\_\_

b. \_\_\_\_\_

5. When was it made? (what year)

a. \_\_\_\_\_

b. \_\_\_\_\_

6. Check you answers with youre partner.

7. Find 3 new words (you can use your dictionary.)

a) \_\_\_\_\_

b) \_\_\_\_\_

### 4 A TREASURE HUNT assignment

Win a prize if you have the fastest time and most correct answers!!!!

Time started \_\_\_\_\_ Time finished \_\_\_\_\_

1. Go out the front door of the building you are in.

What colour is the two storey house opposite? \_\_\_\_\_

2. Turn right and go down Kilmore Street, towards Hagley Park, until you come to the traffic lights. Turn left.

3. Go down this street, past the park and the bridge, until you come to a big stone building on your right. This is a school.

What is the name of it? \_\_\_\_\_

4. Keep walking until you see a statue on the right.

Who is the statue of? \_\_\_\_\_

5. Behind the statue is the Museum, look left.

Complete this saying "Lo these are \_\_\_\_\_"

6. Walk one block until you get to the corner of Rolleston Avenue and Hereford Street. Turn left into Hereford Street.

7. On your right is a large building with grey paint. This is the YMCA. Go into the main entrance and then into the cafeteria.

How much does it cost for a cup of coffee? \_\_\_\_\_

8. Walk across the road.

What is the name of the large old stone buildings opposite the YMCA? \_\_\_\_\_

9. Go through the black iron gate and walk towards the big tree, then turn right.

What are the names of the galleries? \_\_\_\_\_

What time do the galleries close? (Go inside.) \_\_\_\_\_

#### (4) One of the weekly plans

##### CHIBA KEIAI GROUP WEEKLYPLAN

Week beginning: 27/2/9

Teachers: Gail/Jane

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
am	Unit 2 p. 14,15,16 to be plural ·Opening times for shops (writing) Pre-positions with time go/get-listening ·dialogues-shopp-ing	Family-vocab, plural nouns+ possessive's average families ·speaking ·draw your partner's family tree Listening songs Unit 3 p. 18-20	Grammar-inverted questions. ·Reading-p.21 ·Making Cards (babies) ·Pronunciation-ages ·English in Action Unit 3 p. 20-22	Language Review p. 23 ·Getting to know you (2) ·asking questions. Writing letters-about yourself	Reading Can Koko talk? p. 4 Start Reading Feedback+review 0 the week
pm	Weather clothes vocab. shop dialogue	walk	Spot the difference+ (Kitchen vocab) prep. for Fire Station Visit	Fire Station	Free
*					
HW		Assignment Draw your family tree ·write family vocab. beside each name		Assignment: Finish letter writing	

\* = notes

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### (5) Homework & Assessment Record

#### CHIBA KEIAI Homework & Assessment Record

COURSE DATES: / / to / /

TUTORS: \_\_\_\_\_

NAME	ASSIGNMENT-DATA															
	21/2	23/2	28/2	3/3	7/3	9/3	14/3	15/3	*1	*2	*3	*4				*5
A	8	7	9	8	9	10	8	9	68	46	17	49				180
B	9	9	8	8	9	9	7	9	68	45	18	49				180
C	8	7	9	9	10	10	9	9	71	46	16	50				183
D	8	7	9	8	8	9	7	8.5	64.5	45	16	47				172.5
E	10	10	9	9	10	9	9	9	75	45	17	50				187
F	8	7	9	9	9	9	10	9	70	47	17	50				184
G	9	8	8	8	9	9	8	9	68	46	16	48				179

\*1 SUB-TOTAL/80

\*2 DIARY/50

\*3 FINAL PRESENTATION/20

\*4 PARTICIPATION/50

\*5 TOTAL/200

### (6) Course Report

#### COURSE REPORT

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

COURSE DATES: 20.02.95-17.03.95

CLASS LEVEL: Early Intermediate

#### TEACHER'S REPORT

\_\_\_\_\_ has been attending ILA South Pacific ILA as a member of the Chiba Keiai group, who have been working to improve their English in all areas in the 4 weeks they have been here.

\_\_\_\_\_ is a pleasant and humorous student with very real abilities in written and spoken English. Although not an initiator, she nevertheless contributed well to the class, and was supportive and motivated when working with other students.

Her basic grammatical knowledge and comprehension is good, and she did not hesitate to ask for clarification when needed, nor to pass it on. In spite of a tendency to relapse into her native language at first, she rapidly overcame this and her spoken English has improved in fluency and accuracy.

I would be surprised if \_\_\_\_\_ did not continue to learn English. She is both intelligent and motivated, and a pleasure to teach.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

## (7) Questionnaire

1. What do you think they are most lacking in?

(Please rank the following: 1 = least problems, 5 = most problems)

- |  |        |                     |        |
|--|--------|---------------------|--------|
| a) grammar                                 | (    ) | b) reading ability  | (    ) |
| c) listening ability                       | (    ) | d) speaking ability | (    ) |
| e) vocabulary                              | (    ) | f) pronunciation    | (    ) |
| g) other problems (please write in detail) |        |                     |        |

2. Would you please write at least 5 common mistakes, especially those which hinder communication?

3. The length of studying English here,

One month is:

- 1 not useful      2 too short      3 short      4 useful

If your answer is 2 or 3, please write the least time you think is necessary. Please bear in mind that the study tour is held during the students' free days from school.

(we have three long holidays a year - a 50 day summer vacation, a 20 day winter vacation and a 40 day spring vacation in our junior college.)

4. What problems do you find while teaching English to Japanese students compared with students from other countries such as Taiwan, Korea, Europe etc?

5. What preparation should they do beforehand?

- a) From an educational point of view?  
b) From a cultural point of view?

6. What classroom behavior do you expect? eg. speaking English in class, being punctual, asking questions during lessons etc.

(8) Chiba Keiai Junior College students were expected to have learned the following expressions in the first year Oral English.

- Pardon me?
- Sorry, I didn't hear you.
- How do you say (that) in English?
- How do you spell it?
- What does (that) mean?
- Sorry, I don't understand.
- I don't know.

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- h. I'm not sure, but I think...
- i. I don't remember.
- j. What's \_\_\_\_\_?
- k. Just a minute.
- l. I'm a little confused.
- m. Did you say \_\_\_\_\_?
- n. What did you say before/after \_\_\_\_\_?
- o. Is \_\_\_\_\_ the same as \_\_\_\_\_?

(9) Mombusho. *Kotogakko Gakushu-shido-yoryo Kaisetsu Gaikokugo-hen Eigo-hen*. Tokyo: Kyoiku Shuppan Kabushiki-gaisha, 1989.

(10) Some examples of assignments.

ASSIGNMENT: Community Survey, "Smoking"

*to survey*: to ask the opinions of a group's members in order to find out the majority's beliefs

In this exercise, the topic is given to you: "Smoking." Your job is to go out into the streets of Madison and find out information about this topic.

We have given you some questions. You must ask at least TEN (10) people these questions (and you must use your mouth! You may not ask them to write their answers).

You must also find out some "personal information" about the people you ask. For example, names, ages, jobs.

Then, after you have the information, please make some CONCLUSIONS: What does it mean?

\*\*\*\*\*

SMOKING

LOCATION: Where did you do this exercise? \_\_\_\_\_

THE PEOPLE: Please give me each person's name, age, and job (You should always ask DIFFERENT KINDS OF PEOPLE; do not ask only men or only women; do not ask only young people, etc.)

THE QUESTIONS:

1) Do you smoke? Yes No (How much? \_\_\_\_\_)

If no, do other people bother you when they smoke?

Yes No

- 2) Have you ever smoked? Yes No
- 3) Does any member of your family smoke? Yes No (How much? \_\_\_\_\_)
- 4) How many of your friends smoke? 0-10% 11-20% 21-30% 31-40% over 40%
- 5) In the United States now there are many new smoking laws. For example, In Madison, many places do not allow ANY smoking (like restaurants, libraries, etc.)
- Do you agree that the government should CONTROL smoking by laws? Yes No
- Why or why not? \_\_\_\_\_

RESULTS: Tell us briefly what the people said. For example, "Most people didn't smoke, but many of them have tried smoking before"; "Three people said that they didn't approve of smoking laws, but seven did approve of them"

CONCLUSIONS/PERSONAL OPINIONS: What did you learn from these answers? What conclusions can you make about people in the US?

COMPARE IT TO JAPAN: Is it the same in Japan? Similar? Different?

#### ASSIGNMENT — Picnic Point

This assignment involves a long, but very beautiful lake-side walk. What you have to do is to walk to Memorial Union and go down to the lake (Lake Mendota). There is a path that runs along the lake. Follow that path to the left (west) all the way to "Picnic Point," the very end of the path at the tip of the small peninsula. The whole walk there and back should take you 2 hours (it's about 4 miles/6.5km). Take along something to drink or a picnic lunch, if you wish, and perhaps an umbrella if it looks like rain. If you get stuck in the rain, you can easily walk to a road and take a bus back to Madison.

Please answer these questions and prepare to tell the class about your walk tomorrow!

1. What exactly does the large, brown sign at Picnic Point say? Write it here:
2. What are the names of the dormitories that you pass on the way?
3. What kind of boats do they have at the red and white boathouse that you pass?
4. What is the name of the large, white tennis stadium that is near the entrance to the path along the peninsula?
5. How many people did you see out at the point? What were they doing?

#### ASSIGNMENT — Bookstores

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If you like books, take this tour of Madison's best variety of bookstores. Visit each shop (they are all in the area of State St.) and find out what kind of books each one sells. Take notes on each one.

1. Shakespeare's Books, 18 N. Carroll St.
2. Shakti Bookshop, 320 State St.
3. Pic-a-book Store, 506 State St.
4. Mimosa Community Bookstore, 212 N. Henry St.
5. People's Bookstore, 458 W. Gilman St.
6. Canterbury Booksellers & Coffeehouse, 315 W. Gilman St.
7. Avol's Book Store, 240 W. Gilman St.
8. Brown's Book Shop, 673 State St.
9. Paul's Book Store, 670 State St.
10. The University Bookstore, 711 State St.
11. If you have time: Pooh Corner, 1843 Monroe St.

### ASSIGNMENT: "Eavesdropping" Exercise (General)

*to eavesdrop: to listen to a conversation without the other persons knowing that you are listening*

Your job is simple: Go out into the great big world of American English and LISTEN. Listen very closely to an English conversation somewhere, anywhere....

....for example, go to the supermarket. Or a cafe. A restaurant. The bus. Anywhere!! (The bus is always an excellent place to go!)

You should listen to (or even participate in) a conversation of AT LEAST 5 sentences. Try to write this conversation down.

Yes this will be difficult!!! Listening to American English is extremely difficult!!! You will probably not understand much of what you hear! But try to do your best. What we hope is for you to learn some new vocabulary!

### EAVESDROPPING CONVERSATION

1. Where did you listen to this conversation?
2. How many people did you listen to?

3. Did you speak at all? If yes, what did YOU say?
4. Please DESCRIBE the other people to me. I mean, were they OLD or YOUNG? MEN or WOMEN? Did they speak SLOWLY or FAST? Was one person EASIER to listen to than the others?
5. What was the MAIN TOPIC of their discussion?
6. DISCUSSION: Please write their conversation here

VOCABULARY: Many of the words that you write here the other students will not know. Please write down the definitions for the vocabulary that you used.

#### ASSIGNMENT: Library Exercise

##### VOCABULARY

CARD CATALOG — a way to organize all the books in the library using small cards. The cards have the book's title, author, or subject on it.

CALL NUMBER the letters and numbers on each book that help you find the book. (for example: RA 863.24 ac)

TO CARRY — to have (only used when talking about a library)

BEST SELLER — a very popular book: usually a new book

COVER STORY — the story that is pictured on the front of a magazine

FICTION — books that are not true (example: mysteries, science fiction, novels, etc.)

PERIODICALS — magazines and newspapers

PAMPHLET — a small book or booklet that gives you information

NON-FICTION — books that are true (example: science, history, etc.)

READER'S GUIDE TO PERIODICAL LITERATURE — large books that give the titles of magazine article. They are arranged by subject.

OVERDUE — (adjective) late to return. This is only about things or babies, especially books.

TOPIC — subject. What something is about.

TO RESERVE — to hold something to be used later (Example: to reserve a hotel room; to make a reservation)

Your assignment this time is a little bit more fun; it's in the Madison Public Library.

Your job is to answer all of the following questions as fast as you can. Use your map and ASK QUESTIONS!!!

"[     ]" = the place in the library (on the map) where you can find the information. [*newspapers*] means that the answers is found in the newspaper section



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### INFORMATION QUESTIONS:

- [*First floor*] How many copy machines are there on the first floor?
- [*Videocassette Rentals*, 2nd floor] How much does it cost to rent a video?
- [*newspapers*] How many newspapers does the library have from MILWAUKEE?
- [*card catalog*, *AUTHOR*] Does the library have the novel *The Trial* by Franz KAFKA? (Use "k")
- [*Foreign Language books and periodicals*] Give the call numbers for ANY Thai-English dictionary.
- [*Magazines*] What is the cover story for the "Smithsonian" magazine, April 1990?
- [*New Fiction*] How long can you check out (take out) new fiction?
- [*Magazines*] Does the library carry "Utne Reader" magazine?
- [*Adult NONfiction books*] What topic is covered under the numbers 737?
- [*Telephone Books*] What is the telephone number to Tom's parents? (Dale Huhti, Watertown, Wisconsin)
- [*Card catalog*, *author*] Who is the author of the only book on "cockroaches"?
- [*Children's room*] What is the topic under #959.7?
- Can you buy used books in the library?

EXTRA QUESTION: since the library is the home of READING BOOKS, I want you to do one more thing: Walk through the library and choose one book. Any book. I don't care what book is.

Your job is to give a spoken "Book Report" to the class tomorrow. You do NOT have to read the whole book, of course!!!! Just read a few pages or "skim" the whole book. Tell us what the subject is, what you think it's about, etc. etc.

(This is difficult, but it will be easier if you go to the Children's Room!!!!!!!!!!!!)

### ASSIGNMENT — Near East Side

You will be touring a nearby neighborhood which has very historic buildings. Walk out of WESLI, go left down Pinkney St. all the way to the lake. Turn left and walk down Wilson St. (it turns into Williamson St.). Look around this small neighborhood and answer the following questions. Tomorrow you will tell the class about all the places of interest that you found.

1. What is the nickname of Williamson St.?
2. What is the name of the cook at the Cleveland Cafe?
3. What is the name of the store where I can buy a futon?
4. Where can I take judo lessons?
5. What is the address of the Come Back Inn?
6. On what night of the week does the Cardinal Bar have latin music (salsa, merengue...)?
7. What is the name of the restaurant where I can eat German food?

8. On what special day does El Charro serve pollo con mole?
9. At what store can I have my shoes repaired?
10. Go over to Lake Monona. When are the water-skiing shows? How much does it cost to rent rollerblades?

#### ASSIGNMENT — Not Just Another Burger

For this assignment you need two things: 1) an open mind! and 2) an appetite for a hamburger! But don't eat the first hamburger you see! As we all know, hamburgers and french fries are considered to be true American food. What you have to do this afternoon is to find out what a real hamburger is. Is it just junk-food from MacDonalds? Is there any other kind of burger out there?

1. Visit the following restaurants.
2. Find out what kind of hamburgers they serve. (Are they fast-food, a full meal, served on a Kaiser roll...?)
3. Write down what kind of atmosphere each restaurant has (fast-food, old-fashioned, ethnic...?)
4. If you would like to taste a burger, go back to your favorite restaurant and try one! Or compare two different restaurants. Be ready to tell the class what you learned about this classic American food.

Wilson Street Grill, 217 S. Hamilton St.

MacDonald's, Mifflin Street on the Capital Square

Dotty Dumplings Dowry, 116 N. Fairchild St.

Piazza Tavern and Grill, 319 N. Henry St.

Wendy's, 661 State St.

Der Rathskeller at the Memorial Union, 800 Langdon St.

Monty's Blue Plate Diner, 2089 Atwood Ave., 244-8280 (You will have to walk a long way or take a bus to Monty's)

#### ASSIGNMENT — Scavenger Hunt

"Nature"

For this activity, you may look anywhere in Madison. You must find all of the things on this list. Some of the things you can bring to class, other things you can find out about and tell the class. Do NOT buy anything. Be creative! How about a picture, a menu, an ad...? Did you look in stores or restaurants? Did you ask someone?

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a raccoon  
a skunk  
a chipmunk  
a crocodile  
a dandelion  
a rose  
a Maple leaf  
an oak leaf  
a four-leaf clover  
Arm 'n Hammer soap  
a condom  
recyclable plastic  
veggies  
senior citizen  
polluted water

### Extra Credit

Find out what a "helicopter" is.  
Bring one to class if you can  
find one on the ground some-  
where.

(Hint: It's NOT a machine!!)

Write a couple of sentences for each word or phrase above. Explain exactly what it means!!

## References

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