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How Can I See That My Students Are Learning? Explorations and Observations in an Advanced-Level English Class

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How can I see that my students are learning?

Explorations and observations in an advanced-level English class

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Abstract

The purpose of this project was to explore ways to answer the question, "What did the students learn and how do I know?" in an advanced-level English class. Counseling-Learning/Community Language Learning's SARD paradigm (Security, Attention, Assertion, Retention, Reflection, and Discrimination) was used as the framework for lesson planning and reflection after each lesson.

Data was collected in a teaching journal using the standard action research methods of lesson planning, teaching the lesson, reflecting on it, and making a new plan based on the reflections.

It was found that using the SARD paradigm was an effective way to observe that each student was learning and what each student was learning.

ERIC descriptors:

Counseling-Learning/Community Language Learning (CL/CLL)
Reflective teaching
Classroom research
Action research

Table of Contents

Preface

Exploratory practice is the term Allwright (1998a) uses to describe the process of investigating the puzzles, both positive and negative, of language teaching and learning. In this sense "puzzling" is best used in its verb form. The question under scrutiny is puzzled through to a deeper sense of understanding and not necessarily to a definitive answer or solution. In typical action research, problems are identified for which solutions are sought. By contrast, in exploratory practice, the emphasis is on understanding the puzzle with all its implications.

Naming the questions and difficulties experienced in teaching as puzzles rather than problems helps us to take heart as we seek deeper understandings of ourselves, our students, and the learning that takes place when we get together in a classroom. Palmer (1990, 2000) writes, "Taking heart means overcoming the fears that block good teaching and learning." No teacher is immune to self-doubt, but the source of these doubts is a fear that can paralyze us and tempt us to avoid the puzzles that could teach us so much if we truly sought for a deeper understanding of them. Fear loves the status quo as Angelou (1998) once said:

> Sometimes we become lethargic out of fear. It's not really laziness so much as it is timidity. We'd rather bear the ills we have than fly to others that we know not of, when in truth the place where one is standing may be untenable, it may be dangerous, it may be stultifying, and it's better to just step on. You know, you have to move. (p. 39)

Palmer (ibid) describes what it is we need to break away from the fear that can make us lethargic and timid. "Good teaching requires courage—the courage to explore one's ignorance as well as one's insight, to yield some control in order to empower the group, to evoke other people's lives as well as reveal one's own."

This project grew out of a question that I found very difficult, indeed practically impossible, to answer two years ago during the Interim Year Teaching Practicum (IYTP). One aspect of the IYTP experience was the development of my skills as a reflective teacher. This involved consciously reflecting after my classes and answering questions like, "What went well and why?" and "What didn't go well and why?" The question I found most difficult was "What did the students learn and how do I know?" It was elusive and vexing, and although I knew it was important, my answer more often than not was a reluctant, "I don't really know." The inability to answer this question led to another born of fear. What kind of a teacher was I if I couldn't answer such an apparently simple question? The impetus I needed to take heart and explore the puzzle before me was provided when I put together Allwright's concept of exploratory practice, Palmer's insight into fear and courage, and Angelou's matter of fact advice. As Palmer (1998) writes;

> When you love your work...—and many teachers do—the only way to get out of trouble is to go deeper in. We must enter, not evade, the tangles of teaching so we can understand them better and negotiate them with more grace, not only to guard our own spirits but also to serve our students well (p.2).

Towards the end of the IYTP an experience I had in an Advanced-level night program class provided some light and insight into the nature of this question about learning. I wrote in one of my reports:

> One of the things I love about teaching advanced level students is being able to discuss the learning process and issues related to learning languages. At the beginning of one class I wrote this question on the blackboard "How do you know if you've learned a new word or expression?" (When I wrote it up there I wasn't sure if I would initiate a discussion about it or simply leave it as something for them to think about. I'm glad that I went out on a limb and discussed the idea with the class.) After greeting the students and chatting together for a few minutes, I

2

asked them what they thought about the question. Two students willingly gave answers; others nodded, looked thoughtful, and otherwise indicated agreement with the two brave souls who spoke up. (Perhaps it was something they hadn't thought about before.) One student (a high school English teacher) said that for him recognition was the key to having learned a new word or expression, even if he wasn't yet confident in his ability to use the word or phrase correctly in conversation or writing. Another student agreed that understanding was important, but for her being able to use the new word(s) was also an important sign that she had learned something new.

As I think about these answers and my reflective practice, my first instinct is that knowing that students have different perceptions about what they learned makes "what did the students learn and how do I know?" easier, *and* more difficult, to answer. It's easier because the standard of recognition is not as high as that of fluency, which is what I had been using. In other words, the "What did the students learn?" question was the equivalent to me of "What have the students become fluent in during this class?" It's more difficult though because it's not as easy to know if students will recognize the language worked on during the class at some unknown point in the future, although recycling that language in a future class period might provide some clues (March, 1999).

By the end of my IYTP I had concluded the following about learning: each student is learning something different, each student probably has different ideas about what they are learning, and each student has different standards for acknowledging or recognizing that they have learned something and what it is that they have learned. But coming to these realizations had not made answering the question of "What did the students learn and how do I know?" any easier. In fact they seemed to complicate the matter. If each student is

3

learning something different, or the same thing at a different pace, how can I possibly be

expected to see it all, let alone jot it all down in my teaching journal?

Theoretical Underpinnings of the Project

Because of the compelling nature of these questions, I decided to focus on the issue of learning in my IPP work. Although I did not expect to discover the definitive answers, one of the goals of this project was to explore these puzzles as fully as possible and, as is the nature of life, also examine the new questions that inevitably arose in the process of this exploration. In this first chapter, I will describe the two separate yet complimentary views of learning that are the theoretical underpinnings of this study: Stevick's insights into memory and learning and Curran's description of the principles of Community Language Learning (CLL). Because it played a key role in this project, I will also summarize CLL's SARD paradigm which describes six qualities integral to the learning process. In the second chapter I will explain the context of the project and its major components.

Stevick's view of memory and learning

Stevick's (1998) view of memory and learning sheds light on why seeing what students have learned is so difficult. In his explorations of how the brain works, he compares memory and learning and describes learning as the changeable aspect of memory. "...[W]hen we're thinking about the lasting nature of those inner resources [of the brain], we talk about **memory**, and when we're thinking about their changeability, we talk about **learning**" (p.7).

Stevick describes "short-term memory" (STM) as being about 20 seconds in duration and having no permanent contents of its own. "...'Long-term memory' (LTM) [is] the name for all the rest of memory in general, whether two minutes later or two days later or two years later" (ibid, p.11). In the classroom, one of the pitfalls of testing is not being sure whether the answers on the test paper have been retrieved from LTM, and so have been adequately learned, or were crammed into STM only, and so will likely be forgotten soon after the test is completed. Stevick makes a further distinction between what he calls

"permanent memory" (PM) and "holding memory" (HM) which he places at opposite ends of a continuum in LTM. There is no qualitative difference between PM and HM, but it is apparent from brain research that the strong connection between affect and memory impacts where along the PM-HM continuum an experience is placed. This is important for language teachers because,

> ...learning involves changes in long term memory, whether in the permanent memory end or in the holding memory end or in both. The goal in a language course is to get the learners to modify their permanent memory resources to reflect what new forms usually go with what meanings (simple, complex, or abstract), and also with what other forms and expectations. *Permanent memory is organized around affective data. Changes in permanent memory resources are products both of what comes in through the senses, much of which has its source in other people, and of what happens in working memory.* [italics added] Holding memory can be a valuable source of content for working memory, and this content can contribute to the shaping of permanent memory, but changes in holding memory are no substitute for changes in permanent memory. (ibid, p. 15)

The idea that there are different kinds of memory complicates the question of what students have learned. How long do students have to remember something before we can assume that it has been learned? Until the end of class? Until the end of the course? What are some of the implications of affective data playing such a key role in organizing permanent memory? One important implication for the classroom setting is the social aspect of language. Stevick explains that other people are often the source of the sensory data which produce changes in permanent memory:

> So while the locus of the *memories* is inside the head of individuals, the learning is largely a result of interactions between and among them. It is in this sense that we talk about negotiation of meanings, and about learning as a social act. Compare

Freire's dictum that dialog is not just a technique used by teachers; more, it is "a way of knowing." (ibid, pp. 5-6)

To sum up, several points become clear. First of all, memory is complicated, individual, and affective/emotional. In addition, learning is the changeable aspect of memory and generally takes place in a social context. When people get together, in a classroom for example, the setting is ripe for learning.

Community Language Learning

The first of the two most basic principles of Community Language Learning (CLL) is that " '[l]earning is persons', which means that both teacher and learner(s) must make a commitment of trust to one another and the learning process" (Larsen-Freeman, 1986). As Curran (1976) describes it:

> The learning process is, therefore, not thought of as simply an acquiring of defined bodies of knowledge and skills, nor as a "games-we-play" adversary relationship, but as an interaction or "interflow" of persons. Teachers and students are both seen in their total personalities, deeply engaged together in the learning process. They are considered to have not only intellectual capabilities, but emotional and somatic reactions as well—all invested in the relationship. (p.2)

Learning is not only persons, but "whole persons," another of Curran's expressions. Both the teacher and students come to the experience in all their ways of being: physical, emotional, and intellectual.

Stevick's four basic facts of the nature of the whole learner complement the CLL description of the whole learner. The first fact is that learning is something that the learner does and does best when the teacher is not hovering too much over him/her. Secondly, the physical, emotional, and cognitive aspects of the learner are all important, and they all affect each other. The people in the classroom all affect each other as well, and together they make up a community. Finally, the needs of the whole learner are not just achievement and

7

approval, but also such things as, security, predictability, group membership, and the feeling of being part of something meaningful (Curran, 1998). When using this framework the learner "...is no longer seen as learning in isolation and competition with others. He learns in and through them" (Curran, 1972).

The second principle of CLL is that "'learning is dynamic and creative,' which means that learning is a living and developmental process" (Larsen-Freeman, 1986). Learning is unique to each individual, since each creative participant who comes to the learning experience is affected differently depending on all his/her previous life experiences. Curran (1976) describes what has been learned as "learnia", in contrast to the term "knowia" which is the knowledge which the teacher in her role as "knower" provides. He explains:

> ...while there may be one source of "knowia," the teacher, there will be as many "learniae" as there are students who hear. Each student must filter through his own uniqueness what he "receives" from the teacher, then, if he is to be genuinely and totally self-engaged and interested." (p.14)

In CLL this phenomenon is accepted and celebrated. It is expected that each student will be learning something different, and so the learning environment is structured to accommodate and encourage it.

The Elements of SARD

Another essential aspect of CLL is the SARD paradigm which describes six qualities integral to the learning process. The Security of a classroom in which each learner is welcomed and accepted is an important prerequisite for the interactions between and among the whole persons in the class. Focusing on Security, plus the elements of Attention, Assertion, Retention, Reflection and Discrimination, both in lesson planning and when . looking at ongoing and structured feedback helped me see that the students were learning *and* provided insight into what it was they were learning.

8

Security

The core, foundational element in the SARD acronym is Security. "As 'whole persons,' (i.e. physical, emotional, and intellectual beings), we seem to learn best in an atmosphere of personal 'Security'" (ibid). When each person, including the teacher or knower, in the classroom feels secure, then an attitude of willing openness prevails which leads to a kind of "security equilibrium" among the group members. This equilibrium includes having one's contributions accepted and valued, as well as not being threatened by the knowledge and ability of the others in the classroom. Therefore, personal security sets the psychological tone of the learning experience and determines the level of group security attained. This is the social context of learning that Stevick refers to.

Attention

The element of Attention addresses the interest of the activity, the time allotted for the activity, and its level of difficulty (Miller, et al., 1998). Though it might seem obvious, it is fundamentally true that if a topic is uninteresting to students, if too much or too little time is spent on an activity, or if the task is too easy or too difficult, genuine learning cannot take place. This is why it is essential to address these issues when lesson planning. It could also be the reason why lessons or activities that are supposed to be "failsafe" actually do not work with some classes but do with others. When they are genuinely interested, students will invest themselves in the form of their time and energy in the classroom activities. Only then will they "pay attention." Curran (1976) writes,

> ...real learning takes place somewhere on a continuum between newness and
> boredom: something too new is also too strange for us to hold in memory,
> whereas, something too familiar can deteriorate into boredom before we can learn it
> adequately. (p. 7)

The first step in the learning process is the "Hmm, this is interesting" thought when presented with new material. When the learner's innate curiosity is piqued, learning

can begin. Inattention does not necessarily mean that the learner is completely disengaged, however. Curran explains that inattention is natural and suggests setting more than one task for the learners, so that "...when [their] attention with one particular task fades, [they] can turn to an immediately available alternative" (ibid).

Aggression/Assertion

The SARD paradigm uses one "A" to represent both Attention and Aggression/Assertion because Curran described the latter as falling within the scope of the former. Aggression/Assertion deals with students taking action and engaging with the language (Miller, et al., 1998). This can take place after the material has grabbed their attention. Curran describes how a child will aggressively and eagerly learn something new and then assert himself by teaching it to someone else. However, a child must learn not only to assert himself but also to curb this self-assertion in order to balance it with the need to harmoniously co-exist with other members of his community. Just as this is important for children, so

> ...[an] adult is then also encouraged to learn aggressively and assert his
> knowledge—supported by the community around him. At the same time, each
> individual experiences a committed awareness of, and concern for, the community
> he is engaged with. (ibid)

In the ideal situation described by Curran, the learner will always balance his/her own need for self-assertion with the well-being of the others in the classroom, being mindful of their own inherent need for Security and the acceptance of their own forms of self-assertion. Although Curran used both Aggression and Assertion, I have used "Assertion" to describe the ideas of both learner aggression and self-assertion throughout this paper.

10

Retention

The "R" in SARD also represents two elements. Retention very simply is "the absorption of material leading to automatic retrieval" (ibid). This must be one of the goals of any language class though it is not always easy to observe. How can we see that the language has really been absorbed into permanent long-term memory and is not simply being recalled from the holding memory?

Reflection

The element of Reflection involves "a cognitive 'sorting out' the language and an affective 'feeling about' the language experience" (ibid). Curran (1976) writes that Reflection supports its conjoined element Retention because it "allows the 'learning space' that a student needs to make the learning material his own." The three aspects of the whole learner—physical, emotional, and intellectual—come together here with cognitive and affective reflection upon the somatic input. In the CLL approach to teaching and learning language, grammar rules and vocabulary extension come out of the language that students have already used to communicate with each other. Curran describes the nature of one group's reflections:

> What emerged was the realization that, while life, in terms of a foreign language communication, is spontaneous, free, personal and intense and so is emotional and somatic as well as intellectual and voluntary, it is not without some internal form or order. Upon abstraction and reflection, one grows to see this internal form and order as being basically necessary for adequate communication and understanding. (ibid, p. 17)

Discrimination

Discrimination involves the "identification of elements of the language and how to use them" (Miller, et al., 1998). In other words,

In order to master a language, the student must accurately identify the sounds he is

hearing, their meanings as words, and their grammatical usage. Without conscious

concentration on such discrimination, persons may assume they know something

when, in fact, they still do not." (Curran, 1976, p. 8)

More simply put, it is "sorting out the differences among target language forms" (Larsen-Freeman, 1998).

Further Implications of SARD

The SARD elements have been described as simply addressing the personal

commitment of the learner and not describing the cognitive and psycholinguistic processes

involved in learning (Richards & Rodgers, 1986). However, when Curran describes what he

calls the "psychizing process" he makes a connection between the element of Retention

and long-term memory.

> ...[to] 'psychize' certain learning material—a phrase or particular construction in a
>
> foreign language, say—means to have so internalized it, that it can be utilized
>
> without effort. It is always immediately available. This would be the final
>
> determining factor in long-term memory. (ibid, p. 8-9)

Of course, Curran's description doesn't examine how this happens, simply that it does

happen, but he goes beyond the learner's personal commitment and touches on the very

important issues of long-term memory.

Stevick (1998) himself connects the components of SARD and his own ideas about

learning and memory. He sees the first three elements as evidence of the affective nature of

learning.

> To the extent, and on the levels that one feels secure, one is able and willing to
>
> Assert oneself—one's existing purposes, motivations and needs as well as one's
>
> existing cognitive resources—into what is going on, and to give it Attention. This is
>
> clearly related to...the centrality of "affect" in learning. (p. 69)

12

The last three elements are concerned with the process of learning and how material is transferred to the memory.

> One is best able to Reflect on, and so to Retain, material that has been the object of attention....[C]ognitive networks that include strong elements of affect are more likely to bring appropriate verbal and nonverbal imagery onto the "worktable" of working memory... As one retains material and reflects on it, one is able to respond to new Differences. (What one has noticed on the worktable becomes available for incorporation into one's inner resources.) (ibid)

Stevick sums up further:

> ...one can't learn to tell the difference between things unless one can remember them; one can remember them best if one has somehow been involved with them; and one hesitates to get involved where one feels unsafe. (ibid)

It was while reading and thinking about the ideas presented by Stevick and CLL that I made the decision to change the question I had been puzzling over. "What have my students learned?" had limited my focus because I had been looking for a completed act in something that is a process. The question as posed in the perfect tense implied some kind of magical before and after change that eluded me. As if I, as the teacher/magician, could say to my students, "Now you don't know it" and then, after implementing a wonderful lesson plan, "Now you do know it! Let's assess and find out whether it got through to you." Or as Stevick describes it, "Now try to do this so I can tell you how you did" (ibid, p. 37).

I realized that if learning is a process, then the question asked about it should probably reflect its progressive nature. Perhaps a more promising question to ask would be, "How can I see what my students are learning?" or even, "How can I see *that* my students are learning?" By expanding the idea of learning my whole project was complicated, yet simplified. Because finding an answer to either one of these questions implies more than simply the application of an assessment/skills test at the beginning and end of the course,

13

the whole project was complicated. Yet, in seeing learning in the more realistic light of it being a process rather than the retention of knowledge and facts, the whole project was simplified because it automatically became more realistic. It was not just a question of what the students remember, but especially, what they are learning. What is it they are processing or working on—be it in working memory or already stored somewhere along the PM-HM continuum in LTM? Is positive change taking place? How can I observe that change? What about the learning process is observable, and how best can it be observed?

In order to "puzzle out" these questions I planned a research project with a simple premise and Allwright's exploratory practice as its foundation. What would happen to my understanding of student learning if I used the SARD framework to structure my observations and reflections? What of my students' learning would I be able to see more clearly?

Context & Explanation of the Project

This project was carried out in an advanced-level conversation class in a Continuing Education program during one ten-week term with 80-minute lessons held once a week. The maximum enrollment was 15 students. A textbook was not used, rather I was responsible for supplying the authentic materials (e.g., newspaper articles, essays, video clips) used in the lessons. The Oral Proficiencies of the students in this class ranged from Intermediate-High to Advanced-Plus in the ACTFL guidelines. In terms of dependence on the teacher all of the students were in CLL's Stage 4 or 5, the two most independent stages. They were highly independent and motivated learners.

Since they had been members of classes I had taught in previous terms, 11 of the 15 students were familiar to me. One of the reasons I decided to focus on this class was their willingness to try new activities and discuss issues related to language learning. The core group of students enrolled in the class was very motivated; for example, many of them regularly carried out an optional homework writing assignment.

The second reason I chose to focus on this class resulted from a workshop on teaching advanced students that I had attended the previous autumn at a local language school. The workshop leader admitted that he did not think that he could teach his advanced students anything new. Rather he was providing opportunities for his students to maintain their current level of English. As a native speaker and someone who has not given up on improving her own knowledge and skills in English, I could not accept his premise that advanced speakers of English can learn nothing new. I sensed that learning was taking place in my own advanced class but, as stated earlier, it was elusive and hard for me to see. I wanted to find a way to observe and understand my students' learning more clearly.

One of my main goals for this class was to create and maintain a supportive and enjoyable learning environment. It seemed clear that security would be the first thing that needed to be addressed. I had taught this class for over a year (this was the fifth term) and

15

there were a number of students who had re-enrolled in the class every term since I had begun to teach it. Although it is wonderful to get to know the learners over the course of several terms, this situation does pose challenges as well. The most crucial need was integrating the newcomers while acknowledging the returning students and the relationship we had established. As the teacher, I had to find a way to enlarge the circle and welcome the new students into it.

At the beginning of the course, I set the following goals based on the KASA (Knowledge, Attitude, Skills, and Awareness) paradigm. I decided that I wanted:

- to provide situations in which the learners' knowledge of grammar, idioms, and expressions (i.e. natural English) could expand, as well as to help them develop their skills at sentence formation and self correction.

- to foster an attitude of fun and the sense that learning is an adventure.

- the learners to gain an awareness of how much they do know and the possibilities for new learning and growth.

However, I felt that the students' goals should take precedence over mine. Whatever I planned to do in class had to support the goals that the learners set for themselves based on what they felt they needed to work on during the term. At the end of the first class I distributed index cards and asked the students to answer the following questions:

- What skill do you want to learn/improve in this course?

- How will you know you've achieved it?

- How can I help you in this class?

I collected the cards at the end of the class and used the goals the students had set as guidelines in subsequent lesson preparation (see Appendix B).

The descriptions of the lessons have been divided into three chapters. In Chapter 3 (Lessons 1-3), I focused on setting the tone and atmosphere for the course. I was also discovering how best to use the SARD focus. Chapter 4 (Lessons 4-6) shows a lot of learning and trying of new ideas and activities. The lessons included in Chapter 5 (Lessons

16

7-10), coincided with a slump in attendance. I had also become quite fatigued, however several useful insights became apparent because of what I did not do.

The write-up of each lesson is divided into sections. First, there is an outline of the goals for the lesson and the activities or materials used. Appendix A gives an outline of the entire course, including the goals, materials, and SARD focus of each lesson. Secondly, there is a description of the lesson itself. The third section is an analysis of the lesson based on the SARD framework. The comments that I wrote during or after the lesson are in italics. Finally, I describe the actions I planned to take based on what I had learned. This includes actions in relation to language teaching as well as actions in relation to this project.

Lesson 1: April 19

Goals

- to establish the inner security of each learner so that they will feel comfortable taking risks

- to build community among the learners so they will support the others as whole persons in the learning process

- to set the challenge of an advanced-level course

Activities

- One Lie, Two Truths

- introduction to and explanation of the course and this project

- student goal-setting

Description

I started the class by taking attendance, greeting each student, and taking the names of the new ones. In this class the desks are arranged in a circle, so I simply go around the circle greeting each student in turn. After that I gave a very brief self-introduction, telling the class my name and writing it on the blackboard. I mentioned that I am from Canada, that I have been living in Japan for eight and a half years, six of them in Sapporo, and that I enjoy cycling and watching movies. When I asked if there were any questions for me, only two students responded—"Where are you from in Canada?" and "Where in Japan did you live before you came to Sapporo?" This was not surprising as most of the students already knew me from previous classes. Also it is not easy for new students to speak up and ask questions their first time in a class.

Because of the high number of returning students, planning the first class activity was a challenge. In the past I had done variations on the classic self-introductions that students generally seem to expect in any first class. But any kind of self-introduction can be rather boring and artificial when you are introducing yourself to someone who has been your classmate previously. It is difficult to keep coming up with meaningful variations of the same activity. For this lesson, I chose to do an activity called "Two Truths, One Lie." It is a fun way to talk about oneself, while allowing participants to reveal as much or as little about themselves as they wish. To introduce the activity, I wrote the following three sentences about myself on the blackboard, only two of which were true:

1. I have three nieces and four nephews.

2. I saw dolphins in the Aegean Sea in Greece.

3. I've taken the subway in 13 cities around the world.

The students had to ask me questions about each statement and try to figure out which one was the lie. After five minutes or so a vote was taken, and we found out that I was not very good at fooling them. All but two students correctly identified #2 as the lie. After this introduction I gave the students five to ten minutes to write down three sentences about themselves. During this time I circulated, answering questions and correcting grammar and spelling mistakes. Then students formed small groups in which they read their three sentences and answered questions from the others. This lasted about 30 minutes. I moved from group to group joining in as much as possible and helping with question formation. The students were very talkative and relaxed.

As the previous activity was winding down, I wrote several acronyms (i.e., SARD, CLL, ACTFL, STM, LTM, HM, PM) on the blackboard. I also wrote the question, "How can I see what/that my students are learning?" Then I made an attempt to describe this project and some of the elements that would be involved. I explained that this class was going to be the focus of the project because they [the students] had always seemed to be interested in talking about language learning issues. I mentioned that most studies focus on

lower level language acquisition and do not deal with learners at the advanced level. Most importantly, I was really curious about how I could see learning happening in the classroom and told them that I would be using various ways to try to observe their learning. I explained some of the features of the ACTFL guidelines; namely that the ability to use communication strategies and build on previous knowledge are key differences between learners who move on to the Superior level and those who remain at the Intermediate level. Although I did not have enough time to explain the SARD elements, I did summarize Stevick's explanation of short-term and long-term memory and the ideas of holding and permanent memory. Several students asked questions related to the ACTFL guidelines. (Perhaps they were curious about where they might be rated.) K. M. commented that he did not think it was possible to observe learning in the classroom because his learning took place outside of the classroom when he studied on his own. (Was he implying that class time was simply conversation/discussion practice for him?)

We then took ten minutes for students to write answers on index cards to the following questions:

- What skill do you want to learn/improve in this course?
- How will you know you've achieved it?
- How can I help you in this class?

I collected the cards at the end of the class. These student-set goals were then used in subsequent lesson preparation (see Appendix A).

Finally, I explained the optional writing homework which had become a key activity for any class I taught in the night program. In a course such as this one, students practice the skills of speaking and listening in class and read various articles for homework. However they usually have no opportunity to do any writing in English. With the optional writing homework students have a chance to develop their writing skills. The premise is simple. Students can write a composition of any length on any topic and hand it in to me. I comment on the content and then, depending on their preference, do one of two things

before returning their composition: correct the errors or simply circle the errors. If they ask me to circle the errors, they then self-correct their own errors, perhaps explain why they made them, and return it to me for a second check. (An analysis of what I observed through this homework is included in the fifth chapter.)

Analysis

I feel that the "Two Truths, One Lie" activity helped to re-establish Security in the classroom because it was simple, easy to understand, and relatively non-threatening. It is a kind of structured free conversation, i.e., free conversation with a task. Students, even returning students, tend to be especially nervous and worried in the first lesson of a new term. As the teacher, I am not immune to these anxious feelings myself. In this activity students could choose what they wanted others to know about themselves. They had time to prepare their three sentences and to receive linguistic support from me before they shared their sentences. They were not called on to talk about themselves in front of the entire class, but rather could do so in the safer environment of a small group. Communicating directly with others in the class also helped to set the challenge for both new and returning students. The new students could judge if their English ability measured up to the others and whether they had chosen the right level for themselves. In fact, after this first lesson, one woman decided to move to an intermediate-level class I teach on a different evening.

My attitude is also an important part in establishing Security. When new students see that I am interested in my returning students and remember things they have told me about their lives, it can help them feel like this class is a place they want to be. Of course, welcoming the new students and being friendly to them is crucial as well.

I was very focused on Security at this point. Although I did notice some of the other SARD elements, the comments I wrote after the lesson show how unsure I was about them. About Attention I wrote: *They learned things about each other (maybe me too?). They were focused and thinking about their partners.* I noticed Aggression when several students who

21

asked me questions about this project seemed especially interested in how the ACTFL guidelines might apply to themselves. I also thought that perhaps, during the time they had taken to write three sentences about themselves, I could see Attention and Aggression as they were deciding their two truths and one lie and how best to write them. Now I see that the students also exhibited Retention when they recalled the sentences that they and the others had written. And Discrimination was needed when they asked for linguistic help as they wrote their three sentences.

Actions

Security, once established, must be continuously maintained. One way I tried to do this throughout the course was to go around the circle at the beginning of the class greeting each student by name and just asking, "What's new?" In this way I could give each one a chance to share something that was going on in their lives. Greeting students by their given name (not family name) draws them into the circle, acknowledges their presence, and shows them that simply by attending they have contributed to the class. By greeting the student by his or her first name, I am probably the first person that day who has called them by their given name, especially if they are over 40 and have been at work all day. At their workplace they are probably addressed as "Sato-san" or "Tanaka-san", but in English class they are "Hanako" or "Taro." Perhaps this kind of greeting helps to establish the classroom atmosphere and activate their English-speaking identity. Whenever I meet a new student I first establish how to address them. Although in the past I have had older students who prefer to be called by their family name, in this group each student had asked to be called by their given name.

This simple routine also gave the students time to get focused and start thinking in English again. In a previous term H. H. (one of the core members of the group) had once commented that he would like to just listen to English for 30 minutes or so at the beginning of the class as an opportunity to get warmed up before he would have to speak. His idea is

not so practical for an 80-minute class, but perhaps this routine provided some of what H. H. was looking for. By listening to the rest of us talk in English about what was new in our lives, he could get *somewhat* warmed up before he was called on to speak.

As the term went on, it became obvious to me that the students were expecting to answer the "What's new?" question and so were preparing something to talk about. This preparation was not usually written, although at times new words were located/checked in dictionaries beforehand. Rather it seemed that some of the mental focusing was taking place before the beginning of the lesson. The conversations themselves, although initiated by me, did not necessarily remain one-on-one and merely observed in silence by the other students. They all showed Attention and Assertion by joining in the conversations with questions and comments for the student in the spotlight. This was especially true when attendance was low.

In this first lesson I had been most concerned with Security and focused on it in my reflections. I was also pretty sure that I had seen some of the other elements in this lesson, though I was not yet clear about how best to examine the students' learning using them. I decided to reflect in the same way after the next lesson to find out if I would be able to recognize the other elements in my observations.

Lesson 2: April 26

Goals

- students will be able to identify and discover personally useful language learning strategies

Materials

- language learning strategies handout & Strategies Search Game (Oxford, 1990)

Description

Community was built with a 15-minute warm-up conversation.

The previous week I had handed out copies of a language learning strategies outline and told the students that we would be discussing them in tonight's class. This was an outline of the 62 strategies identified by Oxford, divided into categories and sub-categories. First we looked over the paper together and I asked if there were any strategies that they did not understand or that they were not sure about. There were a few questions about words such as "metacognitive" and "recombining" and what the difference was between "clarification" and "verification".

The students then discussed the following questions in two groups of four:

- Which strategies do you use now?
- Which ones would you like to try?

After about 15 minutes, we began the Strategies Search Game. In this activity various situations about language learning are printed on cards. The students must decide which language learning strategies are best suited for the situations printed on the cards. Finally, I asked each group to choose one of the situations they had discussed and present it to the other group, sharing the strategies they felt were needed in that situation.

Analysis

After the class I noted the following observations based on the SARD paradigm.

Security

Students are relaxed from the beginning. Security is established through the routine of greeting everyone. This could also have been because all those who attended that evening had re-enrolled in the class from the previous term.

Attention

I noticed the students' Attention in their interactions with group members and their referrals to the handout. I could see that they were engaged and interested in the topic during the initial discussion in which they identified language learning strategies that they currently use. But I also noted that *...intense discussion is not their forte, nor is jumping into something—lots of silence precedes discussion.* And concluded that *I should've given them the assignment to identify strategies they used as part of their homework. I thought it'd be much easier for them to make that jump, but it seemed difficult.* I assumed that the students would naturally look for strategies that they used as they read the paper, but actually assigning them that task would have helped their focus. I felt that I might have given too much time to the task of discussing which strategies are currently used and wrote afterwards: *It seems that each time I thought to move on, voices would rise up again.*

In the Strategies Search Game, I could see that they were thinking about and working with the idea of applying certain strategies to specific situations. Yet I noted that *lots of hesitation indicates a lack of familiarity with strategies and not necessarily a lack of interest. (T. S. hadn't seen the paper until tonight, which didn't help her characteristic quietness.)* Perhaps there were too many new concepts for them to keep track of so they could not really get into the activity.

Assertion

I observed Assertion when the learners were engaged in applying language learning strategies to different situations presented on cards. They were taking action and engaging with the language.

Retention

The comment that I wrote after this lesson, *Don't know*, shows my uncertainty about observing Retention. I saw no obvious signs that it was taking place. This could have been

because there was too much material to remember in a short time. Also it seems when learners have papers to refer to they are less likely to try to say anything from memory. They will refer to the paper, perhaps to support their need for accuracy over fluency or perhaps because their need for accuracy is greater than their need for fluency.

Reflection

Reflection—this one is tough. Perhaps the "Which ones (i.e. language learning strategies) do you use?" question, which was hard to get a response for. In hindsight I agree with this preliminary assessment. The task of analyzing how one learns and which strategies one uses to learn is a cognitive sorting out of the language in its stepping away from the learning experience and looking at it from a different, more objective, perspective.

Discrimination

Does this one apply? was the simple comment after this lesson. At the time I thought that it did not, since I was using a specifically linguistic definition of Discrimination. But sorting out the differences between language learning strategies actually requires strong Discrimination at the metacognitive level in the sense of deciding which one(s) would be most useful in each situation.

Actions

Until this point I had been planning to use the ACTFL guidelines and language learning strategies as major components of this project. After the second class I realized that I could more productively and realistically deal with my inquiry by keeping my focus on planning and observing my lessons through the framework of SARD. I decided that this would be the best way to stick with my original puzzle of what about learning is observable for, as Freeman (1998) writes:

It is important to reiterate that the inquiry and the research question are not one and the same. The research question or puzzle is a point of entry into the inquiry. It expresses the inquiry in a form that allows you to investigate it, take action to understand it, and collect information that may shed light on it. In the course of doing this work, you may well find another way to phrase the question, another puzzle, that provides a more fruitful entry point into the inquiry. Thus the question or puzzle may well redefine itself; however, the inquiry remains constant. For this reason, sticking *with* the inquiry does not mean sticking *to* the specifics of the research question. The inquiry houses the question, and the question furnishes the inquiry with specific direction. Indeed, more often than not, the specifics of the research question will change through the work of data collection and analysis. However these shifts can—and should—be traced back to the inquiry itself. (Freeman, p. 91)

Inspired by Samway's "But It's Hard to Keep Fieldnotes While Also Teaching" and Freeman's description of data collection techniques (1998), I developed a chart with which to collect data—with the SARD elements (except for Security) as column headings and a row for each student's name (see Appendix C) and began using it from the third lesson. On it I hand-wrote each student's goals for the course, as well as brief explanations of each of the elements. The previous year I had discovered that the question "What did the students learn and how do I know they learned it?" is so challenging to answer because each student is learning something different, has different ideas about what they are learning, and has different standards for acknowledging or recognizing that they have learned something. I wanted to agree that:

What the teacher teaches and what each student learns overlaps but are never the same. Like a set of overlapping ovals that each extend beyond the common center. We do need to be concerned with the common center...but we also need to provide

a place for the uncommon parts of the ovals that make the classroom learning vital

for T and Ss. (Mennell, 1998)

The chart would help me keep track of each students' individual learning, rather than seeing what was happening in the classroom as one lump of learning. It would also help me focus on what I wanted to accomplish in each lesson in terms of meeting the students' goals as well as observing their learning.

Most of the remaining lessons in the term were based on discussing newspaper or magazine articles. In these lessons I used the same basic framework which I altered for the lessons in which articles were not used. After the initial chat, I followed a simple four-step structure:

A. Warm up/background schema. For example, students made a mind map of the main ideas of the article in order to share it with a classmate who had been absent the previous week.

B. Work with the material. For example, students reviewed the ideas in the article or shared new words learned the previous week.

C. Develop the ideas further. For example, students brainstormed solutions to problems raised in the article or applied the ideas to their own lives.

D. Work with the language. For example, students asked questions about new words or expressions in the article, or I taught the meanings of idioms from the article.

This framework was intended as an aid in planning and developing activities that would help me observe student learning in terms of the different elements of SARD. In A and B I always addressed the elements of Attention and Assertion, whereas, in C and D I alternated the focus between Retention, Reflection, and Discrimination.

Lesson 3: May 10

Goals

- students will be able to summarize and give the main points of an article and discuss how they are personally affected by the topic

Materials

- "Jobs Are Taking a Deadly Toll on the Japanese" (*Los Angeles Times World Report in The Daily Yomiuri,* April 24, 2000)

Description

I took attendance and we chatted for about 15 minutes.

A. Warm up: background schema

I wrote the article's two headlines "Jobs Are Taking a Deadly Toll on the Japanese" and "STRESS: Battling Anxiety Is a Growth Business in Japan" on the blackboard and gave the students five minutes to do one of the following tasks individually. Those who had read the article could spend the time summarizing the main points or drawing a mind map of the article. Those who had not read the article could either predict what it might be about or think and write about stress in their own life.

B. Work with the article

First the students worked in small groups comparing their answers. Two students who had not read the article worked together. The others formed a group of three and a group of four and I asked them to use the question "What would you need to tell someone about this article?" to guide their discussion.

After that the two students who were not familiar with the article (K. M. & A. A.) each joined one of the other groups. The readers then worked together to explain the article

to them. *It helped that K. M. and A. A. were both quite high-level. They were able to contribute to the discussion from their own background and linguistic schema.*

Before the discussions were finished, I wrote three questions on the board. The first two referred to information presented in the article:

- What are the causes of stress?

- What are some ways to relieve stress?

- What are some solutions to the problem?

When we all came back into the whole group and I asked for answers to the questions about the article they were quickly given.

C. Brainstorm solutions

We then made new groups of three to think of answers to the third question. Although I had suggested individual brainstorming first, each group began their discussions immediately. They continued for about ten minutes.

We came back into the whole group once again to share suggestions. Only two were offered. A. A. suggested that we should try to change ourselves by leaving our stress at work and relaxing on the weekend. Y. T. suggested changing the law to limit working time to 40 hours per week.

D. Vocabulary questions & idioms from the article

While they were finishing the previous discussion, I wrote the following idioms from the article on the board:

* to slug someone   * someone worth his salt

* to deck someone   * fight or flight

* to float/go belly up   * _____ is the mother of invention

* to root for

I asked the class what the terms meant and most of the idioms were identified by someone. H. H. explained several and also asked whether "turbulent mind" had the same meaning as "stress." We had a good discussion about "salt" and the origin of the idiom which comes from Roman times (when soldiers were paid they were able to buy salt—a precious item used to preserve food.) T. S. mentioned a story from Japanese history about a famous fight over salt, and Y. T. brought up the expression "the salt of the earth" which comes from the Bible.

I then handed out the article for the following week and apologized for giving them two negative articles about Japan in a row. I promised a positive one the next time. I showed them an article I had recently published in the journal *The Language Teacher* (Luth, 2000). They were impressed and several of them asked for copies.

Analysis

Security

Before this lesson I had wondered if the warm-up chat was useful, especially since some students are much more talkative than others. *I did go around with the welcoming of each student. I think it's fine as long as I don't spend too much time with one person. Tonight M. I. talked for awhile because she'd come back from Turkey, but other students asked her questions too, so it was fine, natural. Anyway, it brings everyone in and gets them warmed up. And I think it's important to acknowledge everyone's presence.*

Attention

Giving the students five minutes to either summarize the main points of the article or brainstorm about stress they experience in their own lives seemed to be useful for them. *Students had this time to get focused. Five minutes gives them the time that they need. When I've put them in small groups or pairs right away they often are silent for awhile, so why not grant that to them right away?*

It is not easy to separate the different SARD elements as they are interconnected and support each other. The fact that I gave the learners five minutes to prepare certainly aided their Attention to the activity, but I believe it also enhanced their Security because they were given adequate time to review the article and reaquaint themselves with its major points. It probably also help their Retention as the vocabulary is met again.

During this lesson, the first day I used the chart (see Appendix D for the complete chart for this lesson), I wrote in the Attention column that there was, *high interest from everyone. I can't let K. M.'s scowls intimidate me. I think he just does that when he's thinking.* Students have different styles of paying attention—it is important for teachers to step back and let each student work in the style that best suits him or her. From this lesson I began the practice of writing on the blackboard several discussion questions or different tasks related to the topic. The students could choose to discuss the questions or do the activities that interested them. This would also help them maintain Attention.

Assertion/Reflection

On the chart for this lesson, I checked the learner's box when I felt that I had observed his/her Assertion during the first activities. Each student received a check. Then I formed new groups of three to think of answers to the third question, "What are some solutions to the problems of stress?" The learners did not first brainstorm answers individually, as they sometimes do. In my reflection I wrote: *They were warmed up? A sign of Assertion and Reflection...I noticed that students were talking about their own experiences. I recall overhearing comments about reflexology, aromatherapy, and massage. Also Y. T. said to K. M. something like, "You must experience a lot of stress at your company." Does this show Reflection, (as in feeling about or internalizing) or Assertion?*

Retention

I noticed Retention at the end of part C in the lesson. When the students had finished discussing the main points of the article and had explained it to the two who had not read it, I brought everyone back into the whole group and asked for answers to the first two of three questions written on the board. The five students whose "Retention boxes" are checked on the form for this lesson contributed answers to one or both of the questions quickly, without the referring to the article which often accompanies this kind of whole group summary of the topic. This looked like Retention to me, although it was not clear whether it was rooted in short-term or long-term memory. It seems to have stayed in for more than 20 seconds though!

Actions

At this point in the project I had some questions about the nature of Reflection, especially the difficulty of differentiating it from Assertion. I commented on this when I saw how the learners were applying the ideas in the article to their own lives and wrote, *Does this show Reflection, (as in feeling about or internalizing) or Assertion?*

In hindsight, I think that these examples show more evidence of Assertion than they do Reflection. Simply talking about oneself does not necessarily denote that one is reflecting in the CLL sense of "an affective feeling about the language." The learners were applying ideas and situations from an external source to their own lives and experiences which implies a kind of "reflection." But does that imply Reflection of the language learning sort just because it is done in a language classroom in the target language?

Since the chart had been a useful tool in this lesson, I planned to use it in the same way in the next one. I also decided that predicting the elements that I would see during each activity would be a useful way to clarify some of the differences between Assertion and Reflection.

Lessons 4-6

Lesson 4: May 17

Goals

- students will examine and discuss the reasons why more high school students are dropping out of school
- students will critically examine statistics comparing high school students in three countries

Materials

- "Student dropout rate on rise" (*Asahi Evening News*, April 18, 2000)
- "Poll shows Japanese students study least" (*The Daily Yomiuri*, March 18, 2000)

Description

I took attendance and we chatted for about 15 minutes. (Security)

In this lesson we discussed two newspaper articles about issues involving high school students. The first article was about students who had to quit senior high school because their families could not afford the tuition payments. (In Japan, education is compulsory until the end of the ninth grade, i.e., the last year of junior high school. Most students continue studying at the senior high school level, but there is not enough room in public high schools for all students of high school age. Private high schools are generally willing to admit any student as long as they can meet the tuition requirements.) The second article compared the results of a survey that had been conducted among junior and senior high school students in China, the United States, and Japan.

A. Warm up: background schema (Attention & Assertion)

I wrote the following questions on the blackboard:

- How has the education system changed since you were a high school student?

- How has the education system changed in the last 20 years?

- Did the problem of students not being able to afford school tuition fees exist when you were a student?

The students discussed the questions in small groups for about five minutes. Because those present ranged in age from their mid-twenties to mid-fifties, a variety of perspectives and opinions was represented.

B. Work with the article (Attention)

After the initial discussion, I added several questions that referred directly to the article.

- What are the main points of the article?/How would you summarize the article?

- What does it tell us about the Japanese education system?

- How would you explain the difference between public and private schools to someone not familiar with the Japanese education sytem? i.e., Why can't these students simply go to a public school?

Students discussed the answers to these questions in pairs for about 10 minutes.

C. Ideas for change (Assertion & Retention)

The students remained in the same pairs for another five minutes and discussed ideas they had for solutions to the problem presented in the article. We then shared our solutions, as well as other comments, in the whole group.

D. Work with the second article: critical thinking (Attention, Assertion, & Reflection)

At this point we looked at the second article, "Poll shows Japanese students study least" which presented research conducted by the Japan Youth Research Institute. I led the students in a critical look at the statistics presented and how they might contain inaccuracies.

A quote that I had read recently "There are three kinds of lies: lies, damn lies and statistics" (attributed to Benjamin Disraeli), became the basis for our discussion as we answered the question "In what ways do these statistics lie (i.e. they don't tell the whole truth)?"

I raised the following issues as initial examples. First, the survey was conducted on 2,000 students from each country, even though the total population for each country differs widely. Secondly, the questions asked in the survey tended to focus on what are perceived to be problem areas among Japanese students, including the number of hours spent on homework outside of class, cellular phone use, and the use of hair dye or color. These simply might not be issues of concern in the United States or China. Other points were raised by the students as we continued the discussion in the whole group. The article does not mention how many hours students spend at school in each country. It also does not mention internet use among students, which could be more prevalent among American students than cellular phone use. Also, quite different statistics would have been gathered had the survey included questions on Communist party membership or in-school gun violence.

After brief discussions in small groups, a few more issues were raised in the whole group. First, if the time spent in school was self-reported by the students the estimates could be inflated. Second, in Japan, students who plan to attend university usually attend more academically-oriented schools and are likely to spend more time at school, therefore the kind of high school attended by the students surveyed is also an important issue. Finally, cultural differences between the three countries were also seen as being a possible contributing factor to the differing results.

D. Work with the language (Discrimination)

There was only one question related to the vocabulary of the two articles: the meaning of the word "steeplejack." (The articles used in this lesson, both translations from the original Japanese, did not lend themselves to the kind of vocabulary building that was

possible in the previous lesson. Articles originally published in Japanese parent newspapers tend to be written in simpler English without the kinds of idioms that were found in the article discussed the previous week. For that reason I do not think that they can really be considered authentic materials.)

I gave the students copies of the article I had recently published, although I did not ask them to read it for homework. Their actual homework assignment was to record the new English words they learned during the week and to be able to explain their meanings. We had done this twice in previous terms and the learners were usually quite motivated and interested in what the others would teach them and what they in turn could teach their classmates.

Analysis

The SARD form is a useful way to keep everyone's goals in front of me, as well as the "ARD" elements in mind. I find myself wishing I had a little clearer idea of what each element encompasses. That would help me in my observations. Right now I have a lot of questions on my form because I'm not sure if what I've observed illustrates that element or not. Looking at my notes, I see that I have some information about the elements, but not much. I was just thinking that Attention and Assertion seem easiest to observe, maybe because they cover the kinds of things that I (teachers in general) usually observe. These are the things we naturally look for when doing something in class. But Retention, Reflection, and Discrimination are more difficult to see because they deal with the learning process itself which we don't usually look at in the classroom.

Attention/Assertion

In the lesson plan I predicted that the discussion of how the education system had changed since the learners were in high school would address both Attention and Assertion as it would help them engage with the topic and the language involved. Approaching the

issue from their own experience would involve the whole learners' emotional sides since the years spent in high school are seen as a very important time of life for Japanese. High school is the place where most people meet their life-long close circle of friends.

The level was suitable for everyone and they were engaged in the topic. On the chart I wrote a "yes" for each learner when I sensed that they were engaged with the first article (See Appendix E for the chart for this lesson). I later realized that although the students were interested in discussing the issues, the language of the first article was actually quite simple and had not been very challenging for them to read. I also expected that the learners would show Assertion while brainstorming ideas for change. On the chart I wrote that the students who contributed to the whole class discussion (6 of the 8 present) showed signs of Assertion because I could see that they were engaged in the topic and ready to assert themselves "through what they have learned." (Curran, 1976)

After our initial discussion about the second article, the students worked with different partners and tried to find other ways that the survey might be inaccurate. Although the whole group discussion had been quite good, I followed my original lesson plan and continued the activity in small groups because I wanted to give the quieter students a chance to speak out as well. However, it seemed that the animation and energy of our initial discussion did not transfer to their new groups. Perhaps they had already contributed their best ideas. Perhaps each new group formation takes some adjusting to re-establish the Security, Attention, and Assertion needed to work well, even if the students have worked together many times before. It was difficult for me to see the Assertion of the less outspoken students. It seems that I needed students to produce something in order for me to see their learning.

Retention

Yes, but when did he learn it? This comment refers to a particular student and raises the important issue of whether what appeared to have been retained was previous knowledge

and therefore simply remembered. K. M. knows what is going on in Japan and the world and can speak off the top of his head about the issues involved in current events. How is it possible for me to know whether what has been recalled was learned during the lesson? It is interesting to note that this is the same man who thought that it would be very difficult to actually observe learning in the classroom. He was certainly correct on this occasion.

Reflection

Was Reflection taking place when I brought up the critical look at the statistics or was it back to Assertion again? So, I could see the learning in those who contributed to the discussion, but not in the two quiet ones. This is connected with what I wrote above about Assertion and that it is difficult to see the learning in the quieter students. At the time, I thought that there was the potential for Reflection as the learners attempted to think critically about the kind of information gathered in the poll and the language used to report the results. It may have been difficult for them to come up with more examples because they do not usually question what they read in newspapers. This activity compelled them to approach the information with a skeptical western mind-set, one which does not come naturally to them.

Now I am not so sure if this look at the statistics can really be described as Reflection. The students were attempting to think critically about the *content* of the article describing the survey. To do this task they had to look closely at the wording of the article, but does it mean that they were sorting things out linguistically?

Discrimination

How can I see this in one short class period? At this point I found it quite difficult to see how it would be possible to recognize Discrimination during a lesson. In my lesson plan I had speculated that I might see Discrimination when we looked at new words from the article. However, the paucity of new vocabulary meant that I would have to wait for a

future lesson to see if this was an accurate prediction. Because a number of students were regularly doing the optional writing homework, I thought that their compositions might be the ideal (and only) way to see Discrimination.

Actions

If, as Stevick has said, learning is the changing aspect of memory, then do these elements of Retention, Reflection, and Discrimination show the kinds of changes that take place in the learning process? Perhaps I could see these aspects of learning best if I do activities that support or presume that the element in question has taken or is taking place."

I thought that one sign that Retention was taking place might be if the students were able to discuss the issues presented in an article without referring to it. Another good sign of Retention would be if students could naturally use new vocabulary or expressions in conversation or discussion. *Can I simply assume that if these things are taking place then the students' goals are being met? No—the activities we do need to be geared to the students' goals.* The most common student goal (set by 5 of 11 students) was the learning of new vocabulary. Because of that, I decided to plan lessons that would focus specifically on one or more of the last three elements. I focused specifically on Retention in the next lesson.

Lesson 5: May 24

Goals

- to reinforce that learning can take place both outside and inside the classroom
- students will share new vocabulary they learned the previous week and use it in spontaneous conversations

<u>Materials</u>

- students' new vocabulary
- "Throw a Conversation" activity

<div align="center"><u>Description</u></div>

During the warm-up chat, two new vocabulary items came up "rhubarb" and "twiddling your thumbs."

A. Warm up: working with new vocabulary

The students each took about five minutes to explain the new words they had learned the previous week in small groups. They used the following questions as guides to their explanations:

- Where did you find or learn the new word or expression?
- What does it mean or what is another way to say it?
- Why did it strike you?

A few had not done the assignment, because either they had been absent the previous week or they have little time for homework. I tried to balance the groups and encouraged those who had not done the homework to try to recall and share words they had learned recently.

B. Sharing new vocabulary in whole group

It took about ten minutes for each student to write one of their new words on the board and explain its meaning to the whole class. These were "to count on (v.)," "to run counter to (v.)," "incumbent (n.)," "to color-code (v.)," and "den (n.)."

C. Throw a Conversation activity: Retention

I extended this vocabulary work with a simple activity based on the assumption that Retention was taking place if students could use the vocabulary they had just learned with

relative ease. Throw a Conversation (Sion, ed. 1985) is one of my staple activities, though I had not used it in this class before. The game is based on a chart drawn on the blackboard and dice throws determine the topic, length of time, and various other aspects of a conversation. I drew a table on the board (see Figure 1) soliciting the topics from the class and filling in the number of minutes and new vocabulary words myself.

Figure 1

Throw	Topic	# of minutes	# of words
•	your childhood	2	1
••	tonight's dinner	3	2
•••	plans for the weekend	4	3
••••	pidgen English	5	3
•••••	stress	4	2
••••••	sports	3	1

Because eight students were present, we made two groups of three and one pair. I distributed small cards on which they wrote the vocabulary words that were on the board—one card for each word. These included five of the vocabulary items we had learned in the third lesson "to slug/deck someone (v.)," "to go belly up (v.)," "to root for something/someone (v.)," "to be worth one's salt (v.)," and "necessity is the mother of invention (saying)" for a total of ten words or expressions. In their groups the learners rolled a die three times: first to determine the topic, then, the number of minutes they would speak about that topic, and last, how many words each student would choose from the pile of cards and try to work into the conversation. It took about ten minutes to set up this activity, leaving 25 minutes for the activity itself. At the end of the class, I explained to the students that in this lesson I had been trying to see Retention, or "the absorption of material

42

leading to automatic retrieval" (Miller, et al., 1998) and that I believed that I had seen it when they were able to use the new vocabulary in the final activity.

Several of the students mentioned my recently published article which I had given to them the previous week. Of the eight students present, six voted in favor of discussing it the following week and we decided to do so. Since I had already made copies of a different article about the Love Bug computer virus, "School for Hackers" (*Time*, May 22, 2000), I distributed it for the lesson to be held two weeks later. Those students who could not attend the following class would still be able to prepare for the one after that.

Analysis

Security

I'm liking the dynamics when we go from pairs to groups to whole group and back again. It seems to make the time go quickly and keeps things energized. Perhaps this is a security issue? That they won't be stranded talking about a five minute question for too long. This observation reminded me of a comment from a final course evaluation the previous year. The learner had written something to the effect that, "It's not enough to just let the students talk." Sticking to time limits and changing the focus of an activity and/or the learners' task helps avoid the tendency to expect students to keep on talking simply because they are able to.

At the beginning of the term, my understanding of Security was limited to the need of the students to feel that they belong to, and are valued by, the whole group. I thought this feeling could be re-established at the beginning of each lesson with a warm-up chat. But in the previous lesson I had noticed that the students needed some time to adjust and re-focus whenever they formed new groups, which is at least partially connected to the issue of Security. In this lesson it appeared that the students' Security, Attention, and Assertion were maintained when I changed the groups and tasks and kept to the time limit I gave for each task.

Attention

This element seemed most noticeable at the beginning of activities. For example, I observed Attention when the learners were sharing the new vocabulary they had learned as well as when they were negotiating how to play Throw a Conversation. There was high interest in the challenge of the latter activity as group members worked together and tried to help each other use the required words in each round. The groups of three seemed to be more successful than the pair. This might be because in a group of three, if the speaker cannot think of a way to use a word or expression either of the other two partners could try to help. It could also have been because one member of the duo, A. A.,was very tired that evening. Despite her strong speaking abilities, she had difficulty with the creative thinking needed for the activity.

At this point I was beginning to really see the importance of Attention as it was becoming apparent to me that it is this the basis for the other elements. I wondered whether it would be possible to see the others without first achieving Attention.

Assertion

The truth of Curran's qualifying idea about Assertion, that learners must balance their own need for self-assertion with the well-being of the others in the classroom, became apparent to me after the following incident. While the students were writing their new words on the blackboard, K. M. commented to me that "to count on" was too easy. I told him that people learn vocabulary at different rates and different times. I felt he was implying that his time was being wasted by the student who had learned that vocabulary item and decided to share it with the rest of the class. It was obvious that for this man, considered to be the strongest English speaker in the class, self-assertion and aggression outweighed the need for community. The woman who shared the verb "count on" had weaker English skills and considerably less self-confidence. Such a comment could have been quite devastating had

she overheard it. This illustrates the challenge of guiding adult learners to the kind of community that is so essential for learning in a classroom.

<u>Retention</u>

On the chart for this lesson I wrote a simple *yes* when I saw that each student was able to use the words they had drawn. T. Y. received a *pretty good* and N. K. a *not as good.* For K. M. I wrote *yes, he said it was easy, but what was new for him?* Besides the word he himself had written on the board, there were only one or two others that were new for him. It seems that he has little difficulty internalizing new words and their meanings and then using them in conversation. Is this an indication of his learning style, the fact that he studies a lot and is used to learning new vocabulary, the high level in English that he has achieved through all his hard work, or a combination of these factors?

Generally, it seemed that they could use the words that they drew. Of course, those that had seen the article about stress where the idioms came from had an easier time of it. This activity doesn't really show automatic retrieval, but the language classroom is an artificial environment, so I think it's OK. Later in my reflections I wondered, *So, is what I saw 'Retention'? Yes, I think so, though it was limited by the parameters of the activity and this kind of class. They were juggling the new vocabulary and the topic—I think the time limit went out the window. Different students might find it motivating, but they didn't seem to need it.*

That the vocabulary work we had done in previous lessons at least deposited new words and expressions somewhere along the working memory continuum seemed apparent. The students who had been present when the review vocabulary was first introduced could use the expressions with ease in their conversations. The words and their meanings had been retained, and though I am not sure if the students would have been able to retrieve and use them without cues, they were able to do so when they saw them on the blackboard. The two learners who had been absent when the review idioms had first been introduced had

difficulty using those idioms, even after their group members had tried to explain and clarify the meanings. It would have been a good idea to include the two vocabulary items ("rhubarb" and "twiddling one's thumbs") learned in the warm-up chat at the beginning of class. It would have evened the playing ground somewhat if there had been some words which no one had known prior to that evening.

Actions

The article I had recently published, "Student Interlanguage and Classroom Practice," (Luth, 2000) lent itself well to reflecting on one's own language acquisition. Because of the interest in discussing this article, I decided that the next lesson would focus on Reflection. Since I had some questions about distinguishing the differences between Assertion and Reflection, I was especially curious to find out whether it would be possible to see Reflection in something other than a typical CLL-style feedback session.

Lesson 6: May 31

Goals

- students will gain an understanding of some of the issues involved in second language acquisition
- students will reflect on their language learning

Materials

- "Student Interlanguage and Classroom Practice" (*The Language Teacher*, 24:5)

Description

The students were eager to start talking about the article they had read for this lesson. When I entered the classroom they were asking each other about some of the terminology from the article. After an abbreviated chat we started discussing the article.

A. Warm up: linguistic & background schema

Because the article contained quite a few terms related to second language acquisition, I wrote a number of the terms on the board and had the learners discuss their meanings in pairs. Although I usually plan to do this kind of language work at the end of the lesson, I felt that it was necessary to ensure that everyone understood the key concepts before they applied them to their own experience. The terms I initially wrote were: "scouting & trailing," "backsliding," "pidgin," "interlanguage (IL)," and "SLA." This activity went on longer than I had expected because of questions about other words as well, such as "fossilization" and "creole." There was also a question about the differences between "scouting & trailing" and "backsliding." After discussions in pairs we came back to the whole group and went over the terms once more to make sure that everyone clearly understood each one.

B. Work with the article

To guide discussion about the article, I wrote the following question on the blackboard:

- What surprised/challenged/interested you in this article?

The students began to discuss their answers to this question and I realized that they were already applying the concepts to their own experience. Since I had planned this as the next step in the discussion, I added two more guiding questions:

- How did the ideas fit your experience?

- What can you apply to your own situation?

C. Apply it to other situations & to themselves

After about ten minutes, I added a new set of questions to the blackboard:

- What advice could you give a teacher of elementary school? ...high school?

  ...a mixed-level class? ...a high level advanced conversation class?

47

The students switched partners to briefly discuss the previous questions and then talk about the new set. However, they seemed more interested in exploring how the concepts applied to their own experiences and those of their partners. The discussion of the initial questions went on for quite awhile and neither of the pairs got around to these new questions.

Finally, I brought the two pairs into the whole group to share their answers with everyone. I felt that, because of the high interest in the topic, explaining their ideas and answers once more would be a good chance for fluency practice. It would also provide the opportunity to hear the ideas of the classmate they had not been partnered with.

D. Language questions

Because of the opening activity and the subsequent discussion of the terminology used in the article, it was not necessary to use any time at the end of the lesson for language questions. Students had had ample opportunity during the lesson to ask questions about vocabulary.

At the end of the class, I handed out a second article, "Lair of the Love Bug" (*Newsweek,* May 22, 2000), to discuss in the following lesson.

<div align="center">Analysis</div>

Security

When only four of the eight students from the previous lesson attended this class I had to wonder about their sincerity in the decision to read and discuss my article. However, the low attendance helped the atmosphere and security in the classroom as students were not afraid to speak up in the whole group. It was gratifying for me to know that the ideas in the article could not only help them all as language learners but also Y. T. and H. H. as high school teachers. Perhaps these reflections touch on my own need for Security. I was a little

worried when only four students attended the lesson in which my article was to be discussed.

Attention/Assertion

I noticed that *putting terms from the article on the blackboard was a good way to get into the article in a neutral way.* This helped their Attention and Assertion because most of the words I had written on the board at the beginning of the lesson happened to be vocabulary that they wanted to have clarified. Discussing and explaining the vocabulary first gave the students more confidence when they needed to use those terms in their subsequent discussions.

Reflection

Can Reflection be seen only in a feedback session? This question, which I had asked myself while reviewing the concepts involved in SARD a few weeks earlier, could now be answered with a resounding "No." This lesson was a veritable feast of Reflection. Although students shared the following comments during our whole class discussion at the end of the lesson, they were conclusions that had been made earlier, either while reading the article or discussing it in class.

There was a lot of Reflection in the affective way of feeling about the language. T. Y. shared that the article had given her a framework or way to look at the nature of her progress. She could see that at different stages of her learning she was working on different aspects of the language, like verb tenses, prepositions, or articles. She also commented on how her ability to self-monitor her English had improved, so that she can say "that sounds strange," after she has said something that she believes to be incorrect. She also said, "I think I'm speaking English, but really I'm speaking an interlanguage." She is a very perceptive learner.

49

Y. T. said that even though she is a high school teacher, this was the first time for her to be conscious of interlanguage. She said that at this point in her English development, it would be useful for her to think in "easy English"and not in Japanese before she speaks. She also applied what she had learned from the article to her own high school classroom. She had noticed that if students are interested in something, they will learn it because they want to use it. She remembered a specific example in which a student had written, "They make me happy," a fairly complicated grammatical structure. This same student then went on to make other, much simpler, mistakes.

H. H. also applied the ideas to his job as an English teacher. He said that Japanese teachers do not usually think of the process of learning English. They simply wait for their students to learn, but they should not just wait for this learning to happen. He also said that he is waiting for himself to learn!

N. K. said that she needs someone to correct her mistakes. But when her mistakes are corrected, she still makes the same ones over and over. Perhaps she is not yet at the level of T. Y. who is able to catch at least some of her mistakes? *Is the ability to catch one's own mistakes a skill or an attitude?*

There was also some cognitive sorting out of the language. This was especially apparent when the students were discussing the terminology from the article. For example, one pair asked about the difference between "scouting & trailing" and "backsliding." The following question is another good example of this sorting out. H. H. asked whether "Japanese-English" could be considered a "pidgin English." I explained that the term "Japanese-English" usually refers to words or expressions taken from English and used in Japanese, either with the original meaning or more often with an altered meaning. Thus it is Japanese that has its source in English. Languages commonly adopt words in this way. H. H.'s idea of Japanese-English seemed to be what Japanese speakers usually produce with their stereotypical problems of "l" vs "r" and word order problems. But, according to the

definition, that is not a pidgin, simply an early stage of interlanguage in which the target language produced is still strongly influenced by the mother tongue.

Actions

Richards & Rogers describe the SARD elements and say that they "address not the psycholinguistic and cognitive processes involved in second language acquisition, but rather the personal commitments that learners need to make before language acquisition processes can operate" (Richards & Rodgers, 1986) I think that observing these elements shows that psycholinguistic and cognitive development and learning is taking place.

Although I once again reviewed the SARD elements after this lesson, I was at a loss as to how to apply what I was learning in the next lesson. I felt compelled to use the article that I had handed out in the prior class although the topic was not timely anymore and it did not fit in very well with what I had been discovering about learning. Although I had developed a useful framework to guide my lesson planning and observations, I did not make a very clear lesson plan for the following week. The next two lessons reverted to a simple focus on Attention and Assertion.

Lessons 7-10

Lesson 7: June 7

Goals

- students will review and practice circumlocution expressions

- students will discuss the articles about the Love Bug computer virus and talk about the
  role of the Internet in their lives

Materials

- "School for Hackers" (*Time,* May 22, 2000)

- "Lair of the Love Bug" (*Newsweek,* May 22, 2000)

Description

A. Lesson warm up

As a change of pace after the small talk at the beginning of the class, we did an
activity that focused on circumlocution and speed using cards on which were printed the
name of a category and eight items in it. For example, the category "Things on a Farm"
included the following examples: barn, corn, cow, tractor, fence, farmer, grass, and chickens.
When I used this category as an example the class was able to guess five of the eight words
I described within a time limit of one minute. I then solicited the expressions and
information I had used to describe the words and wrote them on the board. The expressions
used were: "It's made (out) of/from..." and "It's used for...." The information was:
category (although not the one given on the card), size, and color.

Each student received two cards to describe to a partner. Because the students were
in pairs, I expected the activity to be finished rather quickly. However, one pair stuck to the
time limit of one minute per category and soon finished their lists. The other pair
acknowledged the time limit when it was up but continued describing words until they had

all been guessed. As the time limit had been introduced simply in order to increase the challenge and interest, and this second pair was actually getting more practice in circumlocution, I gave each person in the first pair a new card and both pairs were able to finish at about the same time. Finally, each student chose one of their categories to describe to the whole group.

B. Work with the articles: background schema

The topic of the two articles was the computer virus "Love Bug" which had wreaked havoc on computer systems weeks earlier. I decided to work with the articles, even though the topic wasn't as timely anymore, because several students had missed the interceding class and would likely have read the first article and then not been able to discuss it.

Students took about 15 minutes to summarize the main points of the articles and look for differences in style and content. To introduce the second task I pointed out some differences that I had noticed. First, the tone of the *Newsweek* article seemed more casual and almost flippant at times. Second, besides explaining the situation surrounding the Love Bug computer virus, the *Time* article discussed other possible international sources of politically motivated hackers, such as Pakistan, Serbia, and China.

C. Work with the material: debate or discuss

At this point I gave the students two options. They could either debate the statement "The Internet should be free for everyone," or they could discuss the question "How has the Internet changed your life?" Both pairs discussed both topics and did not debate.

D. Work with the language

There were quite a few questions about words and expressions. The following words and expressions come from the *Time* article: "the school's dean **fumed**," "the

proposal's **mangled syntax**," "a **hacktivist**", "political **activism**," "the **nom de hack**," and "It's an **up-by-the-bootstraps** kind of place." The *Newsweek* article was the source of these words and expressions: "The thesis is...**a smoking gun**," "a **Robin Hood motive**," and "any Juan can get world-class education like **any Tom, Dick or Harry**."

Analysis

Security

The truth that Security has to be addressed in each activity and cannot simply be re-established at the beginning of a lesson, could once again be clearly seen in this lesson. The Security of the opening small talk session and the energy of the circumlocution game quickly dissipated once the articles were referred to. For the second week in a row, attendance was at a term low of four. This affected my own sense of Security, making me wonder why the other students were not coming to class. Although each student probably has different and very personal reasons (from illness to work to family circumstances), it was easy for me to blame poor attendance on myself.

Attention

I saw Attention when the students were playing the circumlocution game. The students had to pay Attention to their partners and also concentrate and focus on how best to describe their own words. The time limit was added to raise the challenge for those who might have found it easy. Even I was not able to describe all eight of the words in one minute.

What happened today seems to indicate that without Attention and Assertion the other elements won't come. I had thought at one point that this class was immune to boring topics, that they would be interested in talking about anything and everything. But the students ran out of things to say, both when they were trying to find similarities and

differences between the two articles, and also when they were talking about the role of the Internet in their lives. In our final whole group discussion, it was quite apparent to me, by the silence and pauses, that this had not been a very successful learning experience for them.

Now I see that there were several reasons for this. The first task that I gave was unclear and not very doable because there really was not that much difference between the two articles. Although most of the students agreed that *Newsweek* magazine was easier to read, both articles presented the same basic facts about the case. Secondly, the follow up discussion questions about the Internet were only indirectly related to the topic, although the idea that "the Internet should be free for everyone," was one of the motives for the young man who designed the Love Bug computer virus. So what the learners were doing with the articles at first, summarizing and then comparing and contrasting, did not prepare them for the next task.

From this experience I learned that Attention is the foundation of a lesson and cannot simply be assumed. It must be planned for. It is quite apparent to me now that simply providing some activities related to an article does not guarantee that learning will happen.

Assertion

Because of the lack of Attention in this lesson, I also did not notice much Assertion. Therefore I could not see much of any kind of learning.

Actions

I realized that it was important to use articles about topics that the students were interested in and would have knowledge about. It seemed to me that a topic for which they had the background schema was a key prerequisite for the Attention and Assertion that was lacking in this lesson. For the next lesson, I chose three articles written from different

perspectives that dealt with various aspects of the upcoming national elections. At this point I remained focused on Security, Attention, and Assertion issues.

Lesson 8: June 21

Goals

- students will discuss the upcoming national elections and propose changes to the political system

Materials

- "Why Japan's Economy Lags" (*Los Angeles Times World Report in The Daily Yomiuri,* May 15, 2000)
- "Civic groups target undesirable politicians" (*The Daily Yomiuri,* June 5, 2000)
- "Brace for change if LDP loses" (*Business Times,* Singapore; reprinted in *The Daily Yomiuri,* June 6, 2000)

Description

A. Warm up: background schema

After the initial warm-up small talk, in which the expression "to stick your foot in your mouth" came up, we continued with a ten-minute whole group discussion about the latest developments in the election campaign and the general thinking in the media about what would happen on election day, June 25, just four days after this lesson.

B. Work with the material

I gave the students a few minutes to review the *Los Angeles Times* article, which provided an American perspective, and then asked them to summarize its main points with their partner. I also asked them to discuss whether they agreed with the author, for example, in his assertion that Japan needs "a third opening" to restructure the economy and make it

56

more open to globalization. After ten minutes we regrouped and talked about these same points together. The students who spoke out in the whole group agreed that a change in the ruling political party might be a good thing for Japan. (The Liberal Democratic Party or LDP has held power almost continuously since the end of World War II.) But they were pessimistic (rightly so, as it turned out) about such a change actually occurring.

C. Develop the ideas further

At this point we changed the groups and the students discussed the following questions with their new partners.

- What do you think needs to change in Japan? How?
- Do you think the civic groups have the right idea?
- What do think will happen if the LDP wins? What if it loses?
- Are you optimistic or pessimistic about the future?

After 15 minutes of discussion students reported back to the whole group. The discussions in small groups had been animated. However it seemed that no concrete problems were identified nor were solutions put forward. The students were reluctant to speak out in the whole group. This might be because politics is regarded as somewhat of a taboo subject in Japan. It was generally believed that Japan's economic system needed to be changed and Y.T. was very impressed by the civic groups trying to expose corrupt politicians so that they would not be re-elected. But the discussion did not get any deeper than that.

D. Work with the language

Finally, students had questions about the following words and expressions. The first word comes from the *Singapore Times* and the rest from the *L. A. Times:* "this **atavistic** notion of Japan's future," "to play **intraparty musical chairs**," "to keep the economy **chugging** along," "such **pump priming**," "**special-interest** constituencies," "political

57

foot-dragging," "most **withered on the vine**," "the **ironically named** Clean

Government Party (Komeito)," "**steroid injections** of public-works projects," and

"**wiseacres** in the Japanese press." As usual, I asked others in the class if they could

explain the sentences or words before I did so.

Analysis

Security/Assertion

The element of Security exists on a variety of levels. Students need to be

comfortable with each other and not feel threatened by the others in the class. Students need

to be familiar with a topic and have the background schema to be able to discuss it. But

Security can still be threatened when one does not feel comfortable talking about a certain

topic. I sensed this lack of comfort in tonight's class.

In order to feel secure in a conversation, native English speakers usually need to feel

acknowledged and understood, but not necessarily agreed with. If these parameters exist,

native English speakers generally feel comfortable agreeing and disagreeing about sensitive

topics such as politics. In Japanese culture, group consensus takes precedence over each

individual point of view being heard. Perhaps in this lesson the task of identifying problems

in the political system and proposing solutions to those problems clashed with the students'

inherent impulse to look for the common ground among themselves. Although they have the

English skills required to discuss the topic, their discussion was filtered through Japanese

sensibilities. It seems the ability to use English does not simply cancel out the learners'

cultural backgrounds, and the ability to think in English does not necessarily mean the

ability to think in a western way.

This illuminates the connection between Security and Assertion. Attention was

apparent in that the students were quite interested in the topic. But their lack of Security in

presenting their ideas in a way natural to a native English speaker inhibited the Assertion

necessary for the task to be completed in the way I had planned. Curran (1976) described this balancing act between Security and Assertion:

> An adult is then also encouraged to learn aggressively and assert his knowledge— supported by the community around him. At the same time, each individual experiences a committed awareness of, and concern for, the community he is engaged with. This provides a learning structure balanced between the forces of self-assertion and the need to belong. (p. 7)

In this lesson it seemed that the community the learners were most aware of belonging to was Japanese society. Its norms dictated the balance "between the forces of self-assertion and the need to belong" and took precedence over any need of the students to assert their own opinions.

Attention

Attention was quite evident as this was a timely topic and one about which the students have a lot of background knowledge. They were also quite interested in reading about Japan from an American point of view and seemed surprised that Japan is closely watched by Asian countries like Singapore as well. But because of the reasons stated above, this Attention remained dead in the water. It did not lead to any substantial learning that I could see.

Actions

The conclusions made above are clear to me now, although at the time they were not. I simply decided to provide a less controversial topic for the next lesson—one that would provide more opportunity for the students to work together.

Lesson 9: June 28

Goals

- students will be able to use ideas from the article discussed as the basis for planning an ecotourism project in Japan

Materials

- "Safaris and Sensitivity" (*Newsweek,* June 5, 2000)

Description

We began with the usual time for small talk and discussed the election results from the previous week. The students were not surprised that, although the ruling LDP's total number of seats was reduced, they still won more seats than any other party.

A. Warm up & work with the language: background & linguistic schema

I decided to take up questions about new words and expressions as part of the warm up, since the activity I planned for later in the lesson would take us away from a direct focus on the article. Students had questions about the following words and sentences: "**throngs of travelers,**" "with the mass marketing came a **backlash,**" "**horror stories** about," "**the idealistic notion at ecotourism's core**—that opening the planet's last wild places to tourism can be the best way to preserve them," "**nontouristy interactions with local people,**" "It's enriching to meet people when they're not just bringing you cocktails.", "**orthinologist,**" "How can travelers tell whether **they're inadvertently trashing the spot they want to protect?**", and "**PowerBar wrappers.**" As I often did, before explaining these vocabulary items myself, I invited others in the class to do so if they knew them.

B. Work with the material

In order to focus on the ideas presented in the article, I asked the students to tell the others in their small group which place described in the article they would most like to visit. They also looked for the pros and cons of ecotourism presented in the article. After ten minutes the groups dictated the pros and cons they had discovered, and I wrote them on the board.

Pros:

- natives run the business—local control
- a way to earn money to protect the environment
- provides jobs for local people
- stops the killing of wildlife

Cons:

- the underbrush gets trampled
- affects the wildlife—habitats and living conditions change
- native people are affected—culture and lifestyle changes

C. Develop the ideas further

As the students now had a thorough understanding of the basic policies of ecotourism, I told them that they had been commissioned by the Ministry of Tourism to make a plan to develop an ecotourism project in Japan. The conditions for the project were similar to those given in the article: people should be able to see and experience nature, the plants and ecosystem should be showcased and not harmed, and it should be controlled locally, not by bureaucrats in Tokyo. As possibilities I suggested looking for monkeys in the Japan Alps or bear-watching in Hokkaido. I also wrote the following guiding questions on the board:

- Place: what will people see and do there?
- Accomodations: where will they stay?

- What will they learn?

- How will it be different from what exists now?

This final task proved to be quite difficult for the students. Instead of coming up with new plans, both groups reported on ecotourism projects that already exist in Hokkaido. One group described an area called Opoidake where a lot of wildflowers grow. They suggested that walkways could be built so that tourists could enjoy the beautiful flowers without trampling them. The other group described Kamui-waka, a waterfall in eastern Hokkaido which people climb up wearing special shoes. Tourists get there by bus and stay in the nearby youth hostel.

Analysis

Security

The conversation at the beginning was good—everyone contributing and with a smaller group the shyer ones like N. K. and M. I. speak out more. It's great when it's like a discussion or conversation with students asking each other questions. That means they're interested in each other. There's a high security level and a feeling of connectedness and bonding.

Attention

Having a realistic and well thought out lesson plan is important because it gives all of us in the classroom the possibility of feeling successful after the lesson. I realized once again how even a rough estimate of the time needed for each activity helps me to provide time for students' Attention to kick in, keeps us all on track, and allows for enough time for each activity. I also noticed in this lesson how the students often need some quiet time to consult the article before answering questions about it. Sometimes students show their , Attention in their silence, and it is essential to provide room for that silence.

<u>Assertion</u>

The students were definitely interested in the topic; however, this interest was not enough to generate lots of original and creative ideas. Japan is a very developed country in which domestic tourism is quite common. But over-development is rampant, and the ideas of ecotourism as practiced in Japan usually refers to outdoor adventures tours such as white-water kayaking. Perhaps it was too challenging for the students to bridge that gap between what already exists in Japan and the kind of ecotourism described in the article.

<u>Actions</u>

I had observed nothing beyond the three elements of Security, Attention, and Assertion in the previous three lessons. After the ninth lesson I thought about how the questions "What can the students do now that they could not do at the beginning of class?" or "What can they do better?" were good ways of thinking about learning. *These are good indications of learning because of the feeling students have when they leave the classroom. Perhaps I should not simply focus on the feeling that students have, but more so on why they are feeling that way. Is it simply because they enjoyed themselves in class, or is it because they know that they learned something and so their time and money was well-spent?* I decided to end the term with an activity in which the students would be able to clearly see that their ability to do a task in English had improved during the span of one lesson.

<u>Lesson 10: July 5</u>

<u>Goal</u>

- students will be able to retell a short anecdote several times and see improvement each time

<u>Materials</u>

- index cards with a different humorous real-life anecdote from *Reader's Digest* magazine on each

<u>Description</u>

As part of the initial chatting time, we discussed humor and how what is considered funny in Japan might not be seen as funny in Canada and vice versa. I gave the students a copy of a cartoon. In it three chickens are standing on the near side of a two-lane highway. On the far side of the street is a building displaying a sign that says "Road Crossing Seminar." One of the chickens says to the others, "How are we supposed to get there?" When I asked the students why this cartoon was funny they could easily see that if the chickens were able to cross the road they would not need to go to the seminar. But when I asked them if they knew why the artist chose to use chickens and not cows or pigs they were not sure. They speculated that perhaps it was because chickens cannot fly or because they are cowardly birds. "Roads are for people, not for chickens," said Y.T., implying that it was slightly absurd that chickens would have to worry about such things.

At this point I told them the well-known North American children's riddle on which this cartoon is based. "Q: Why did the chicken cross the road? A: To get to the other side." I explained that for a native English speaker this cartoon is funny on two levels. The students had already explained one level—if the chickens were able to cross the road they would not need to attend the seminar. The other level is the instant recognition that occurs when we see the chickens by the side of the road. In fact, the cartoon would not be half as funny if the artist had used another kind of animal.

We then began the evening's main activity. I gave each student a short anecdote from *Reader's Digest* magazine and explained that they should read it through, then ask about new vocabulary items after which they would retell it to several successive partners from memory. Each story was about five to seven sentences long and described a real-life

humorous incident experienced by the author. I hoped that the humor in each story would be universal and not culturally specific. It took about 15 minutes for the students to read through their stories, write the new words the blackboard, and for us to go over that vocabulary in the whole group. I explained each word briefly within the context of its story after first checking whether anyone else was able to explain it. This allowed everyone to be exposed to the new vocabulary, which would help their comprehension when listening to the story. It also gave them an idea of what the others' stories were about and pricked their interest in hearing those stories. The words on the board were "barrette (n)," "to defuse (v)," "piques (n)," and "canine (adj, n)." I added "property dispute," "instalments," and "balance (n)" from my own story as I thought the students would not be familiar with them.

The format was simple—the students told each other their stories, retold the story their partner had just told them to check comprehension, and then read their partner's story if they had difficulty understanding it. After the first round of story-telling, I wrote the following goal on the board: "Do it better next time." I phrased the goal vaguely so that each student would interpret it in a way that would be most useful to him/her. There was an odd number of students in this lesson, so I also joined the activity and retold a short story. Because of this I was not able to observe the students I did not work with, but it was good to be able to work one on one with three of them. There was enough time to tell our stories to three others.

Finally, we talked together about what they felt they were able to do better each time. We also discussed whether the humor in the stories was culturally-based or universal. We agreed that the story I had chosen to retell, which I quickly summarized for those who had not yet heard it, contained very culturally specific humor—the punchline being the idea that people cannot believe that a kind lawyer exists. None of the three people that I told it to understood the story until I explained the background schema of the stereotypical greedy,

65

self-serving lawyer. The humor in the other stories was more universal and easier for them to appreciate.

Analysis

Security

Although the task was challenging, Security was evident throughout the lesson. The students were comfortable with writing words they did not understand on the board and also with retelling their stories to their partners. They encouraged their partners and tried to help each other in the story telling time by rephrasing what their partners had said and asking questions about things which were not clear to them.

Attention/Assertion

Attention and Assertion were apparent at every stage of the lesson. The students were involved in the discussion about humor and culture at the beginning of the lesson. They were eager to read and understand their own stories as well as listen to those of their partners. The students showed Assertion as they each read their story, clarified its meaning and tried to remember it clearly enough to retell. In this way they made the story their own, since each one was different. The story-telling task was challenging, but it had built-in success indicators that were personal and unique to each student. They could judge their own ability to improve each telling of their story and in this way set their own level of difficulty. No one was in the position to evaluate another's success in meeting the "do it better next time" goal. Retelling the story only three times kept the task fresh and new, although the students were disappointed when we had to stop because we were coming to the end of the lesson.

66

Retention/Reflection/Discrimination

The SARD elements have been visually depicted as a group of six interlocking circles, an image which emphasizes the distinct yet interdependent quality of each element. It also illustrates how it can be difficult at times to categorize student learning. Some elements are more closely connected—the two pairs that begin with common letters illustrate that connection—yet connections exist between all the elements. Without Attention, Retention is impossible. When Assertion is not evident, it is unlikely that Reflection will take place. Perhaps a good visual to illustrate this interconnectedness would be a six-pointed star with an element at each point and lines drawn to connect each point with all the other points.

As I analyzed this lesson, a lot of observations did not fit neatly into the SARD framework but spilled over into more than one category (See Appendix F for the chart for this lesson). Some students had difficulty with Discrimination which in turn hindered their Reflection and Retention. Two students ascribed their ability to retell their story better each time to quite different reasons. It truly was a lesson in which each student was working on and learning something different.

Because of simple grammatical misunderstandings, several of the students did not clearly understand their story or why it was supposed to be funny. I erroneously thought that because the stories were quite short the students would be able to understand them easily. But *Reader's Digest* anecdotes tend to be written in a conversational, casual style that often uses unfamiliar phrasal verbs or unclear antecedents. For example, N. K.'s story contained the sentence "He then locked up his cash register, crossed the shop, unlocked the post office door and stood behind the counter." She read this as meaning that the man actually left the shop and crossed the street. Because of this she missed the point of the story which was that the general store and post office were in the same room but that the clerk did not answer questions related to the post office when he was standing behind the store counter. Before we began telling the stories all of the students said that they

understood their own stories. It was not until she was my partner that I realized that N. K. had not clearly understood hers.

Reader's Digest anecdotes are also quite condensed, using the fewest words possible to tell the incident. M. I.'s story was about a dog who jumped from his owner's truck into a friend's car which happened to be pulled up next to it at an intersection. When the other drivers waiting at the intersection saw this, they quickly rolled up their own car windows. Two simple things hindered M. I.'s comprehension: the dog's name was Jack and the word "dog" was not used in the story. Jack was described as "a friendly canine companion". At first she did not realize that Jack was a dog and wondered why a man would jump into someone else's car! These two examples show how both N. K. and M. I. had difficulty with the Discrimination necessary for the task. This in turn hindered their ability to reflect in the "cognitive sorting out" sense as well as their Retention.

The students whom I was partnered with did not use the new words that they had put on the board, instead using synonyms or circumlocution to avoid the unfamiliar vocabulary. Y. T. used synonyms for the words "barrette" and "defuse". M. I. did not use the word "canine" because "dog" really was more appropriate in telling the story. H. H. understandably did not use the word "pique" as it appeared in the short headline above his story and was not actually in the story itself. The students probably used circumlocution because they were still sorting out the new vocabulary and were not yet comfortable with using it.

Reflection was observable when we discussed whether we had met the goal of being able to tell the story better each time and why. We all reported that we felt we had met this goal, and two students tried to explain their reasons why. H. H. said that it was because he could "build his grammar," indicating that accuracy is important to him. It seems that being able to improve his grammatical accuracy in each retelling of his story helped him to meet the goal. His Discrimination supported his Retention. H. Y. commented that as she got more practice in telling her story she did not have to think about *how* to tell the story, a sign

68

that perhaps fluency is more of an issue for her. In her case it was not thinking about how to tell the story that led to greater fluency. Of course, she was probably both retaining the meanings of the words as well as remembering the grammar necessary, but it seems that in her case Retention was supporting Discrimination.

Each student had different reasons for saying that they could do the task better each time because they used different ways to measure their success. Each student learned something new. Each student learned something different. In both cases, however, they showed Reflection as they thought about their language experience, learned from it, and improved in the task.

Conclusion

The main catalyst for this study was to further investigate the realization that learning is a diverse and multi-faceted entity. Through the data gathered in this study, it is evident that students in the same classroom often have different ideas about what they are learning in a particular lesson. They also have different standards for recognizing or acknowledging that they have learned something and what it is they have learned. The reasons for this can be clearly seen in light of Stevick's (1998) description of memory and learning. He describes memory as complicated, individual, and emotional, and learning as the changeable aspect of memory. Memory is complicated because it is "...organized around affective data. Changes in permanent memory resources are products both of what comes in through the senses, much of which has its source in other people, and of what happens in working memory" (p. 15). Memory is individual because each of us approaches life in our own unique way due to a variety of factors, including personality and previous life experiences. Shared experiences do not necessarily lead to similar memories or emotional responses. In the same way, students approach the language classroom with differing degrees of personal motivation and attitudes based on past life and learning experiences as well as aptitudes for learning languages. Therefore, what each student needs to learn and how each student learns is dissimilar. Learning is individual. Use of the SARD framework for analysis of the lessons reinforced and deepened my understanding of how different each student's learning experience was. The students did not always attain each element at the same time, nor did each of them always exhibit the same elements their classmates did.

It was not always easy to interpret what I was observing in light of the SARD framework or to distinguish the differences between the elements. At times I wondered if what I had observed was Attention or Retention, at other times I could not tell if I had seen Reflection or Discrimination. Learning is complex. However, familiarity with what each

element entails made it easier to see the difference between them by the end of the project. Although, as expected, this project has led to new questions, by the end of it I had gained a number of new insights into the elements of the SARD framework.

Security is not something to establish just in the first class of a term or at the beginning of a lesson; it must be built into every activity. This includes giving students time to familiarize themselves with a new task, as well as adhering to the time limits set for it. Balancing the need for Security with the challenge to break out of the familiar and do something different is also important. Security should not be seen as synonymous with the status quo, but rather with supported risk-taking.

Attention is one of the primary considerations of overall course planning, as well as day-to-day lesson planning. As a teacher it is my responsibility to provide activities and classes that have the potential to maximize the students' learning. Of course, students are responsible for paying attention and staying focused on the lesson, but I can meet them more than halfway by providing materials that intrigue and stimulate. If I plan to hear, "Hmm, this is interesting," at least once in every class, I will help start my students' learning process.

Assertion is also an essential consideration in lesson planning. Students must be able to actively engage in the material and the language to be learned. They need a way into the material by seeing the connections between what they already know and what is new for them. They also need to be given the chance to show what they have learned and to stand out from the rest of the class every now and then.

Regular review and practice is one way to ensure that Retention is happening. Students need to be encouraged to use the new vocabulary they have learned, which could be done deliberately in activities like "Throw a Conversation." One lingering question I have about Retention is whether it is a process or a finished event. Can something cease to be retained? When we have learned something and it is stored in our long-term memory and then forgotten, is it gone from our memory or just hiding somewhere—maybe behind

71

something learned more recently? To use the computer analogy so popular in recent descriptions of the brain—is what we have learned earlier erased and written over by new input or is it buried somewhere on the hard drive and unretrievable because the name of the file has been forgotten?

Discussing language learning issues can help students' Reflection on their affective feeling about the language being learned. In the same vein, when students see that their feedback is used in planning future classes, their motivation is given a boost and their feeling of security enhanced. Students' efforts to cognitively sort out the language also need to be supported, for example by identifying the part of speech of a vocabulary item or appropriate contexts for new idioms.

During this project I saw the element of Discrimination most consistently in the student-generated and student-invested optional writing homework. "What are the errors I make and why do I make them?" are important questions for students to ask if they are going to sort out how to use the language forms. This is not so easily done in a large group, since what students need to work on is highly individual.

It is essential while lesson planning to take each of these elements into account; however, I realized that I had not done so consistently during this project. I noticed that the kinds of goals I had set partially determined the elements that I would be able to see during the lesson. I was able to observe Security, Attention, and Assertion even with basic coverage or activity objectives, but lessons based on behavioral objectives had more potential for observing learning if they included the elements of Retention, Reflection, and Discrimination. It is possible to see learning in the classroom if one plans for it. Part of effective planning is setting goals that focus on student learning, not simply the material to be covered.

Over the course of this term I have realized that Attention and Assertion deal with the doing-something-with-the-language aspect of learning. They are what I naturally look for when doing something in class. Are the students engaged? Are they enjoying

72

themselves? Are they staying in English and not lapsing into Japanese? But all too often I have stayed at this point. As long as the students were engaged and enjoying themselves then I believed that the class had been successful. As I wrote in my journal on May 17, *"I was just thinking that Attention and Assertion seem easiest to observe, maybe because they cover the kinds of things that I (teachers in general) usually observe."* It seems even more obvious to me now that my question of how can I see **that** my students are learning is answered when I observe Attention and Assertion. These two elements work in tandem to create the optimum atmosphere for learning. When students are engaged with the language and interested in what they are doing, the material or new language is brought to short-term memory (STM) which is the prerequisite for the next step, transference to holding memory (HM) and then to permanent memory (PM). They also reveal the motivation that is so necessary as the starting point of learning.

If observing Attention and Assertion in a class can provide answers to the question of how I can know **that** my students are learning, it is in the observation of the elements of Retention, Reflection, and Discrimination that I can really see **what** my students are learning, that is, the learning process itself. I have found them to be the most difficult to observe, but they are ultimately the most rewarding for both students and teachers because they indicate that the material is being transferred to PM. Because of the difficulty of seeing these elements, it is not surprising that I have often stopped at Attention and Assertion. But each element is essential to the learning process, the affective qualities of Security, Attention, and Assertion providing the basis for the more permanent work of Retention, Reflection, and Discrimination.

It is impossible to peer inside our students' brains to see what has been learned and how long it will stay there. After all, Stevick's description of memory as being on a continuum from STM through HM to PM is a useful metaphor, but not an actual physical description of how the brain works. However, when I plan to see Security, Attention, Assertion, Retention, Reflection, and Discrimination in my lessons, then I am effectively

73

using the tools I need to answer the question, "What have my students learned and how do I know?" I can see both **that** my students are learning and **what** they are learning.

Appendix A

Hokusei Tandai Night Program Advanced English Course Syllabus: April - July 2000

Date	Goals	Materials/Activities
April 19	• to establish the inner security of each learner so that they will feel comfortable taking risks • to build community among the learners so they will support the others as whole persons in the learning process • to set the challenge of an advanced-level course	• One Lie, Two Truths • introduction to and explanation of the course and this project • student goal-setting
April 26	• students will be able to identify and discover personally useful language learning strategies	• language learning strategies handout & Strategies Search Game (Oxford, 1990)
May 10	• students will be able to summarize and give the main points of an article and discuss how they are personally affected by the topic	• "Jobs Are Taking a Deadly Toll on the Japanese" (*Los Angeles Times World Report in The Daily Yomiuri*, April 24, 2000)
May 17	• students will examine and discuss the reasons why more high school students are dropping out of school • students will critically examine statistics comparing high school students in three countries	• "Student dropout rate on rise" (*Asahi Evening News*, April 18, 2000) • "Poll shows Japanese students study least" (*The Daily Yomiuri*, March 18, 2000)
May 24	• to reinforce that learning can take place both outside and inside the classroom • students will share new vocabulary they learned the previous week and use it in spontaneous conversations	• students' new vocabulary • "Throw a Conversation" activity

Appendix A

Course Syllabus continued

Date	Goals	Materials/Activities
May 31	• students will gain an understanding of some of the issues involved in second language acquisition • students will reflect on their language learning	• "Student Interlanguage and Classroom Practice" (*The Language Teacher*, 24:5)
June 7	• students will review and practice circumlocution expressions • students will discuss the articles about the Love Bug computer virus and talk about the role of the Internet in their lives	• "School for Hackers" (*Time*, May 22, 2000) • "Lair of the Love Bug" (*Newsweek*, May 22, 2000)
June 21	• students will discuss the upcoming national elections and propose changes to the political system	• "Why Japan's Economy Lags" (*Los Angeles Times World Report* in *The Daily Yomiuri*, May 15, 2000) • "Civic groups target undesirable politicians" (*The Daily Yomiuri*, June 5, 2000) • "Brace for change if LDP loses" (*Business Times*, Singapore; reprinted in *The Daily Yomiuri*, June 6, 2000)
June 28	• students will be able to use ideas from the article discussed as the basis for planning an ecotourism project in Japan	• "Safaris and Sensitivity" (*Newsweek*, June 5, 2000)
July 5	• students will be able to retell a short anecdote several times and see improvement each time	• index cards with a different humorous real-life anecdote from *Reader's Digest* magazine on each

Appendix B

Student Goals

Students' initials	What skill do you want to learn/improve in this course?	How will you know you've achieved it?	How can I help you in this class?
T. Y.	vocab in current English (newspaper, magazine) It's a good way for me to talk about news to improve my vocab. If we talk about Mt. Usu, we learn new words such as volcano…	I will know when I use new words in other classes. Maybe we can talk a little about what we learned a week before.	I'd appreciate it very much if you could give synonyms and differences in meanings when we learn new words.
H. Y.	I want to learn how to talk about something difficult for me (for example, politics or something I don't know so much about.) I'm not good at saying my ideas logically, ex-plaining why I think this way or that way.	By knowing if I can think quickly the ways I need to explain my ideas about topics. (ways or ideas to back my explanation up)	Please tell me some strategies that can help me build up ideas [for] discussion in class.
Y. T.	I want to learn more vocabularies and to have more chances to speak natural and fluent English.	From now on I'll make a vocaburary notebook and check the words. I'll try to have chances to speak or listen [to] natural English.	Please teach or give us much information as before.
T. S.	absent in the first class		
K. M.	I'd like to gain impetus for learning/leveling up my English.	Never reach my goal in a short time.	Give me stimulation.
N. K.	I want to learn words and phrases. I just stand a start line. I should study more.	I can use the words or phrases naturally when I speak.	Please bring some new topic or paper to the class and explain them.
M. I.	I'd like to learn listening. I want to hear natural speed English. I want to speak proper English in many situations.	If I understand news programs or English movies that I could not catch before.	Please bring listening materials (video/radio?)

Appendix B continued

Student Goals

Student's initials	What skill do you want to learn/improve in this course?	How will you know you've achieved it?	How can I help you in this class?
H. H.	To come to study between classes, in other words, build up the habit of learning.	Fluency in English, both in speaking and writing.	1. Through correcting my essays 2. Encouraging when you're not tired!
S. F.	I would like keep my ears for discussion.	When I can discuss about my field with English easily.	Please let me know how to debate.
S. A.	Actually why I attend this course is simply because I wanted to keep my speaking ability which I've gained in the States, but as I know by myself I have very few vocabluary (sp?), so hopefully I could improve this.	I know I should not scare to use new words each time I speak English. Moreover, I should know the meaning of those new words through English, not Japanese.	I guess you can help me unless you speak Japanese. :-) Well, you can help me by using idioms and tell me the meaning of them.
A. A.	What I want to learn in this class is... Try to speak in English and built English sentences simultaneously in my mind.	To reach my goal, I need to listen to English spoken by native English speakers and memorize correct word order, phrases, and expressions.	If you would introduce me some good books and papers, it would be very much appreciated.
M. G.	My goal: reading skill, vocabrury, pronunciation	When I can understand tough article without thinking.	Introduce lots of useful words and idioms in a class.
Y. F.	absent in the first class		
T. U.	absent in the first class		

Appendix C: SARD chart

Students' Initials	Attention	Aggression	Retention	Reflection	Discrimination
T. Y.					
H. Y.					
Y. T.					
T. S.					
K. M.					
N. K.					
M. I.					
H. H.					
S. F.					
S. A.					
A. A.					
M. G.					
Y. F.					
T. U.					

Appendix D: SARD chart for May 10

May 10

Column header annotations:
- Attention — the interest of the activity, time allotted, level of difficulty
- Aggression/Assertion — Sts taking action/emerging into the language
- Retention — absorption of material leading to automatic retrieval
- Reflection — cognitive "sitting out" of the lang / affective "feeling about the lang. exp."
- Discrimination — cognitive "sitting out" of the "identification of the elements of the lang. and how to use them."

	Attention	Aggression/Assertion	Retention	Reflection	Discrimination
	high interest from everyone. I can't let Kunichi's scowls intimidate me. I think he just does that when he's thinking.		full whole class		
T.Y. learn vocab. in current English		✓	✓		
H.V. learn to talk about difficult topics		✓	✓		
Y.T. learn more vocab. more chances to speak		✓	✓		
T.S.		✓			
K.M. Gain impetus for reading, leveling-up English		✓			
N.K. learn words and phrases		✓			
M.I. listening, be able to speak natural English		✓	✓		
H.H. study between classes, the "habit of learning"		✓	✓		
S.F. keep my ears for discussion					
S.A. improve vocabulary, idioms					
A.A. speak in English, think in English		✓			
M.G. reading skills, vocabulary, pronunciation					
Y.F.					
T.U.					

Appendix E: SARD chart for May 17

5/17	Can I find more description of these terms?	Attention (the interest of the activity, time allotted, level of difficulty)	Aggression/Assertion (engaging in the language)	Retention (absorption of mat'l leading to automatic retrieval)	Reflection (cognitive "sorting out" affective "feeling about")	Discrimination (identification of the elements of the lang. and how to use them)
T.Y.	learn vocab. in current English	yes, I into it			Was this taking	How can I see this in a short class period?
H.Y.	learn to talk about difficult topics	yes the level was suitable	they contributed to the	or was it back to Assertion	when place	
Y.T.	learn more vocab, more chances to speak	yes	whole group discussion	again?	brought up the critical	
T.S.					look at the statistics?	
K.M.	gain impetus for reading, leveling-up English	yes, for everyone		yes, but were differ? learn it?		
N.K.	learn words and phrases	they were engaged in the	whole class discussion?			
M.I.	listening to, able to hear natural English	yes	yes, but in whole class discussion?			
H.H.	study between the classes, the habit of learning	yes, topic	contributed to the		So I could see the in those who contributed	
S.F.	keep my ears for discussion	yes	whole class discussion		to the discussion but not the too quiet ones?	
S.A.	improve vocabulary, idioms					
A.A.	speak in English, think in English					
M.G.	reading skills, vocabulary, pronunciation					
Y.F.						
T.U.						

81

Appendix F: SARD chart for July 5

July 5

humour
discussion 1:10 · do the data story 27 - finished
story A checking vols....

	Attention	Aggression	Retention	Reflection	Discrimination
T.Y.				didn't have to	
H.Y.	✓			"no idea about how to tell"	
Y.T.	and is forgegle cowardly bird ✓			the story ☺	some vb problems
T.S.					
K.M.					
N.K.	✓ + fly → has to cross to go to seminar	veaa			"crossed the shop"
M.I.		could tell the story something? ☺		I could build my grammar	✗
S.F.	if they H.H. → then don't cross then cross				
S.A.					
A.A.					
M.G.					
Y.F.					
T.U.					

Piques
canine
(K-9)
feline - cats
bovine - cows
equine - horses
equestrian

defuse (v)
(barrette (n))

property dispute
installments
balance

82

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