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Using and Teaching Language in an Emerging World Culture

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USING AND TEACHING LANGUAGE

IN AN

EMERGING WORLD CULTURE

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ABSTRACT

Language does not exist in a vacuum. It interacts with culture and thought both as an actor and a reaction; world view both influences language and is influenced by it. Language has a unique and powerful role to play as the world's cultures increase their contact and their need to communicate with each other. The power and limitations of language shape its role in an emerging world culture. Meanwhile, as modern thought becomes more holistic and integrative, language teaching emphasizes more cultural and cognitive aspects of communication, rather than the purely linguistic aspects.

ERIC Descriptors

Communicative Competence
Global Approach
Second Language Instruction
Language Planning

Other Desciptors

Language and World View
Language in Society
Language and Attitude
International Language

PREFACE

This project was first inspired by the idea of selecting a world-wide auxiliary language, which is one of the major teachings of the Baha'i Faith. As I delved into the implications of such a selection from the viewpoint of language teaching, I began to see how language is both an inner influence, in thought, and an outer influence, in social relationships. Language is also limited, giving way to other aspects of communication and social interaction. It is important for the foreign language teacher to be aware of both the power of language and its limitations, since they have a direct bearing on the ways in which language can be approached in the classroom.

One limitation of language can be seen in any attempt to select an auxiliary language as an aid to world peace and world unity. The shift of consciousness from a divisive world view based on national autonomy to a holistic one based on world unity, which I believe must take place before peace can be established, appears to be primarily spiritual in nature, transcending language. An auxiliary language cannot be selected or used efficiently until concern for one's personal or national well-being gives way to concern for the good of the whole world. Meanwhile, the potential power of language to aid in forging a peaceful society must wait for conceptual developments in the current social sphere. It is the relationship between world view, as it is reflected in current thought, and language, which is under investigation in the following pages.

I would like to thank several people for helping me bring this project to its present form: Dr. Alvino Fantini, for listening to the early versions of my ideas and helping me to develop and refine them; Mary Ann

Barnes, for helping me to say what I really meant before reworking the final draft; and Dr. Margit Nordberg Lassen, my mother, for listening ENDLESSLY to my ideas and for sharing her ideas relevant to physics.

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INTRODUCTION

I still remember the day that someone introduced me to the idea that words are arbitrary. It confirmed what I had always felt, that language is an artificial structure which reconstructs what I feel or perceive inside in order to show it to the rest of the world. Like an impressionistic painting, the words never actually showed what was really inside, but the feeling was similar and so the words seemed to serve their purpose. What bothered me more was the limiting factor -- how DOES the artist convey a three or four-dimensional image on a two-dimensional canvas? How does the speaker or writer convey a flood of thoughts, which come crashing onto the shores of language like great, foamy waves, in a linear, syllable-by-syllable language?

That's what I thought of during the explanation. What the professor actually said was this: we perceive the world as a whole. Our mind then helps us to understand and remember what we perceive through the use of categories and labels. So, there may indeed exist the vast spectrum of different green colors my heart feels while looking at a pasture in springtime; but my English-speaking mind will store them all verbally by probably using no more than six or seven labels.

This seems a shame from the aesthetic point of view, but the world would indeed be a confusing place if we did not have categories and labels of some kind. They provide us with a continuity between one experience and the next. How many of us, for example, would survive a weekend trip to New York City if we failed to categorize certain four-wheeled vehicles as cars and trucks and associate them with the possibility of getting run over and killed?

The points where words divide up perception into manageable pieces seem to me to be the very places where the language-influenced perceptions in different languages start to differ. The way speakers of different languages describe the world is different, not because their eyes and ears are physically different, but because their minds perceive and categorize differently. The mind tends to record and analyze that which it has names for and to largely ignore that which does not "make sense" according to its linguistic expectations or past experience. There must exist some level, however, before language touches perception, where that which exists is objective. An objective universe -- which, unfortunately, seems to be largely inaccessible to the verbal mind.

The idea of arbitrariness is useful in looking at language, though. There are two types of categories as I see it, one natural and one invented by people. The first is largely universal and exists in similar forms across languages and cultures, while the other is much more dependent on cultural values for meaning. For example, natural divisions are those we make between land and sea, male and female, animal and human. As thought becomes more abstract, though, the categorizing becomes less obvious. Some simple examples of more culturally influenced categories are "big", "small", "young", "old", "loud" and "soft". Where does young end and old begin? The categories are much more dependent on context and are, therefore, somewhat arbitrary in their definition across cultures.

In this paper I would like to examine two such linguistic divisions which we make in English today. First, I would like to look at how we divide the branches of knowledge currently studied in schools and universities. Where does psychology end and sociology begin? Where does chemistry end and biology begin? If something is discovered in one field,

what bearing does that have on the other fields, if any? I hope to show that these categories we use in daily speech, while useful, are not so obvious as to merit the absoluteness with which we use them. They are really just convenient words which, like any others, divide up reality so that we can think and talk about it.

The second division I would like to look at is the one between language and communication. Language, even if used in the broad sense to mean all the signals consciously sent from one human being to another, cannot be said to include all that is meant by "communication". Where does language end and the nebulous realm of communication take over? And why is the nature of communicative competence so elusive to language teachers?

These are, of course, big questions. Rather than attempt to find clear and absolute answers to them, I would like to use them as a springboard for a discussion of current trends in thought and how those trends affect language learning and teaching. Semantic details can be argued and might lead to no conclusions, but the principle of language as arbitrary divisions can help us trace back to a level of perception where some of the categories cease to exist and can give us a more holistic viewpoint on some key concepts in language teaching.

There has been a great deal said about holistic approaches lately, in many different fields. As I understand it, looking at something holistically is integrative rather than divisive; it seeks out commonalities and sees differences in a relational, rather than conflicting, way. For example, the colors black and white can be seen as the extreme expressions of a continuous range of color (gray), rather than as self-contained entities which bear no relationship to one another. This is a trend hitting many areas of study at the same time. Recently, some writers have even looked at the phenomenon of holistic thought, the trend toward integrative

approaches, and have linked the fields of knowledge together. These books are a search for a greater understanding of thought, discovery and progress as it expresses itself in the conceptual trends of the twentieth century. Furthermore, examining the search for knowledge as a single search takes the examiner past the limitations imposed by seeing different academic disciplines as separate and allows them to apply the discoveries of one field to others in relevant ways.

In this paper I will seek to develop three major themes concerning language and thought. First, western society's view of the world is in a state of transition, moving from categorizing to integration. Labeling observable phenomena has been useful in past efforts to acquire knowledge about the world, but recent discoveries within arts and sciences are now leading us to look at the relationships between previously labeled phenomena and seek out a view of the whole. This can happen within a given field on the level, for example, of discovering the interrelationships between different vitamins in the human body and how that interrelatedness affects the function of each separate vitamin. It can also happen across disciplines, showing, for example, how psychological health affects physical health, how social structures affect psychological make-up, or how cultural values affect linguistic expression, and so on. Finally, it happens on a social, global level. As cultural, economic and personal contacts increase across nations and cultures, and current theories continue to explain cultural differences, a view of the world as an interrelated social system is emerging.

My second theme is that language has a unique role to play in this transition because of its importance to communication and thought. It seems obvious that since scientific information is almost exclusively expressed verbally, and cross-cultural interchange often occurs on the

verbal level, language deserves a great deal of attention in completing the transition to an integrated informational and social system on the world level. Exactly to what extent language influences thought is debatable, but the indispensability of its role in everyday communication is less so. In this section, I will explore some issues concerning language structure and thinking as well as the feasibility of using one language to unite the global social system and provide a link between all cultures.

Thirdly, I will look specifically at language teaching and how it fits into the structure of this transitional period. Briefly, language teaching is in a stage of experimentation and discovery in response to new ideas born out of the current integrative process. Language has been seen in more relative and complex terms in recent times, and teaching approaches have sought to tap more resources within the student. What many approaches have in common is the realization that language is more than a verbal code to be deciphered intellectually, without regard for thought processes. To varying degrees and in varying styles, the approaches seek to tap an inner resource in the student, yet few venture to define the nature of that inner resource. The idea that language interacts with the rest of human experience has emerged in the language field, and teachers are in the adventuresome process of unraveling the new mysteries when language and language learning are being seen in a completely new light.

This paper is written in the spirit of that unraveling. It is an attempt to understand the role of new approaches, some radically different from each other, which keep being developed in this flourishing field. If, in fact, as I believe, the field is moving towards an integration with other fields, we can best promote that integration and the pursuit of our own knowledge through demonstrating a new attitude towards know-

ledge in the language field. It may be time to complement dividing and labeling language with a look towards other fields for guidance. If knowledge is one entity, categorized somewhat arbitrarily by our language, the discoveries we seek to make in our own field may find their roots in discoveries previously made in other fields of study. As a field, we may need to start looking outside ourselves for answers.

One of the most highly developed skills in contemporary Western civilization is dissection: the split-up of problems into their smallest possible components. We are good at it. So good, we often forget to put the pieces back together again.

-- Alvin Toffler in Order Out of Chaos

I

MOVING TOWARDS INTEGRATION

Did you ever try to bake a cake with all the ingredients except baking soda? It doesn't work. In fact, the result doesn't even resemble what happens if you include that small, vital ingredient. To the uninitiated, this seems to defy logic. After all, flour, butter, sugar, eggs and chocolate all mixed together and baked are almost the same thing as all of them with a little baking soda added. The key is that a cake in the making operates as a system. The whole is greater than the sum of its parts, if the ingredients are combined properly. Otherwise, while the combination of the ingredients still forms something different than the sum of its parts, the desired reaction will not take place at all.

This is a rather mundane example of what Fritjof Capra calls the systems view of life in his book, The Turning Point. "Systems theory," he says, "looks at the world in terms of the interrelatedness and interdependence of all phenomena, and in this framework an integrated whole whose properties cannot be reduced to those of its parts is called a system. Living organisms, societies and ecosystems are all systems."[1] I find Capra's distinction between a mechanical view and a systems view of life valuable, because it introduces the idea of a transition from a divisive world view to one which seeks to integrate.

New Physics Brings a New View

The mechanical view, according to Capra, stems out of the widespread acceptance of Newtonian physics. In the fertile scientific era of the

seventeenth century, the traditional image of an "organic, living, and spiritual universe" gave in to the notion of "world as machine". Descartes' method of deductive reasoning, which aims to "understand complex phenomena by examining their constituent parts", gained precedence over the more inductive reasoning which had prevailed before.[2] This gave birth to such notions as the separation of mind and body and the idea that natural phenomena operate like machines. One result this divisive tendancy encouraged in Newtonian physics was the division between space and time. All these developments and divisions have, of course, been extremely valuable to our collective understanding of the universe, since they form the basis of the scientific discoveries which have occurred over a period of several centuries in the western world. My point is only that they are not absolute, were created in the human mind, and can be transcended.

Before going on to the systems view, I would like to touch on one other aspect of this mechanical world view. Capra discusses the effect that Cartesian divisions, in particular the separation between spirit and matter, continue to have on modern western thought:

> This picture of a perfect world-machine implied an external creator; a monarchical god who ruled the world from above by imposing his divine law on it. The physical phenomena themselves were not thought to be divine in any sense, and when science made it more and more difficult to believe in such a god, the divine disappeared completely from the scientific world view, leaving behind the spiritual vacuum that has become characteristic of the mainstream of our culture. The philosophical basis of the secularization of nature was the Cartesian division between spirit and matter. As a consequence of this division, the world was believed to be a mechanical system that could be described objectively, without ever mentioning the human observer, and such an objective description of nature became the ideal of science.[3]

This brief description of Capra's mechanical world view brings out some of its aspects which have been questioned in recent times. With the development of the theory of relativity, the implications of the world

view based on Cartesian thought and Newtonian physics have had to be entirely reexamined. The need for a reexamination was seen most clearly in the field of physics, of course, but it has also extended to those fields of science where the mechanical view has been prevalent. This may well include just about all areas which describe human and physical phenomena. With the movement towards quantification and "scientific" approaches, the mechanical way of thinking has become a powerful force in western thinking. As Capra points out, "The other sciences accepted the mechanistic and reductionistic views of classical physics as the correct description of reality and modeled their own theories accordingly. Whenever psychologists, sociologists or economists wanted to be scientific, they naturally turned toward the basic concepts of Newtonian physics."[4] This removed the element of spirituality from the modern scientific view of human beings and human society.

The mechanical force in scientific thought, which divides and quantifies, is increasingly being challenged by an integrative view which Capra terms the "systems view of life". While recognizing component parts, this view transcends the sum of parts and maintains that whole systems, as distinct from their components, have unique qualities. Integration is seen in the simple example of chocolate cake, where the flour and eggs can no longer be separated from the whole and where a small component such as baking soda has a profound effect on the whole. In fact, according to the systems view, integration occurs on all levels of nature and is a basic structure from which to perceive it.

Conceptual Integration

Briefly, systems theory says that, just as Newtonian physics was

useful and could be applied to different fields to form an entire world view, so can Einsteinian physics, based on relativity and interrelatedness, affect our entire outlook. Along with this new world view, Capra foresees a radical change in thinking on a global level, which we are moving towards at the present time:

> The new vision of reality we have been talking about is based on awareness of the essential interrelatedness and interdependence of all phenomena -- physical, biological, psychological, social and cultural. It transcends current disciplinary and conceptual boundaries and will be pursued within new institutions. At the present there is no well-established framework, either conceptual or institutional, that would accomodate the formulation of the new paradigm, but the outlines of such a framework are already being shaped by many individuals, communities, and networks that are developing new ways of thinking and organizing themselves according to new principles.[5]

My intention here is not to prove the systems theory, since I think that Capra does a convincing job of that for those who are interested, but rather to use it in seeking out relationships between similar trends in different disciplines of study and ultimately look at language study from this viewpoint. The outward manifestations of a systems view will still be different in different fields; the biologists will still be discussing living entities, and the anthropologists will still deal with cultural descriptions; the underlying principles will be the same, however. Recent discoveries are establishing a trend towards integrating different elements of the system being studied and showing that their interaction is as significant as their individual functions. A brief overview of some examples may be useful here:

Relationship as Actor

Doctors are increasingly looking toward mental attitude as a source for healing physical ailments. Practices which try to decrease mental stress in the patient are being intertwined with physical treatments of

disease in order to maximize the healing process. Meanwhile, psychologists are acknowledging the role of physical health in emotional well-being. Schizophrenics used to be locked up as hopeless when they failed to respond to purely psychological methods of treatment. With the discovery of possible chemical causes for schizophrenia, the treatment began to incorporate both the emotional and physical components. Similarly, overactive children are successfully being treated through a modified diet low in sugar and artificial additives. With such treatment, many of their seemingly "emotional problems" have been reduced or eliminated.

Thus, it is the relationship between the physical well-being and the emotional well-being which is the real catalyst for health. Neither type of health can be complete without the other. For example, mental stress can have such widespread physical effects that, even if the body is supplied with all the physical components of health, the body will be unable to process them in a way to produce a truly healthy system. Likewise, a person can be emotionally contented and satisfied, but with a minute change in the chemical make-up of the body, the same person can fall into a deep depression. For a convincing example of chemistry's power to affect mood, we only have to look at the drastic personality changes that occur in some women suffering from premenstrual syndrome. With dietary modifications and, occasionally, hormonal treatments, emotional fluctuations have recently been reduced in many such women. As a scientific society, seeped in a tradition of division, we do not yet have a name for this force of health which is the integrative process between physical and emotional well-being. Perhaps, for now, we can call it the balance between the two. This, however, does not recognize it as an active force in its own right.

The Relevant Observer

Another interaction currently being investigated is the role of the human observer in observations which are intended to be objective. This is being investigated in physics experiments where the physical presence of the observer, the experimenter, is interacting with the surrounding energy and is interfering with the minute emissions of energy being measured in the experiment. But the relevance of the observer is perhaps most clearly seen in anthropology. The moment a member from a foreign cultural system enters a culture with the intent to study it, his or her very presence has already changed and modified that system to some degree. The foreigner manifests, as a cultural being, ideas, attitudes and physical aspects which begin to have an impact on the studied culture from the first moment he or she comes into contact with it.

In addition to the straightforward impact of the observer on a system due to physical presence, we also have to consider that the observer is a human being, who perceives as a function of senses and mind interacting. The mind remembers and records selectively, organizing stimuli based on past experience. Measures can be built into an experiment to encourage a high degree of impartiality, and without that, we could not have come as far as we have in traditional sciences. At some point, however, the necessity for interpretation emerges. This is when one tries to discover the significance of whatever was observed, ties it to past experience, and tests it against that which one trusts to be true. Thus, the human mind enters, along with an individual's past experience and expectations.

This is most obvious in cross-cultural interpretation of gestures and actions. Take , for example, the image of a red-faced man, both fists raised resolutely above his head, walking directly towards another man, all the while shaking his fists rhythmically in the air above him. One

might observe from a distance that he was angry and was going to attack the second man. Someone familiar with the system, however, would take into account that this was occurring on a soccer field and that both men were wearing the same color jersey as the one who had just scored a goal. Not all cultures would demonstrate triumph in this way. An observer who was familiar with the culture and the situation, who knew what to look for, would interpret this differently than someone to whom some key components of the system would seem irrelevant.

Social Integration

So far, we have examined how the systems view can been seen from within specific fields of study and across more than one field. In the interest of relating this idea to language and language learning, I would like to look at its implications in view of the current development of culture. More specifically, I would like to ponder the implications of the interaction between cultures if each culture is seen as a system.

Culturally, the world seems to be shrinking and expanding at the same time. Contact between people from different parts of the globe and from radically different cultures is made more and more frequent through modern technological advances. In a sense, cultures are not as far apart physically as they once were, because they are more accessible to each other. It is possible to travel to many different countries in one lifetime. Meanwhile, as cultures are coming into contact, that very interaction is producing new cultural systems. Because cultures operate as systems, interaction between them is dynamic (active) rather than reactive (passive). In other words, something new happens when two or more cultures come into contact, which is different from a mere combination of

them. The ideas generated when people of different backgrounds share experiences and insights are often greater than the sum of the collective thoughts each individual had before the meeting impacted their thinking. So, the norms arrived at in intercultural communities are often different than a square compromise between their respective customs. And, finally, languages which interact when cultures meet have a way of influencing each other to the point where that influence becomes a distinguishable language in and of itself.

Since countries, which we can broadly associate with cultural entities, are coming into closer contact, this interactive process is happening on an ever more complex level. Countries have always had contacts with their neighbors and thus had access to a number of different cultural systems, but the scope of the contact is greater in the twentieth century. Rather than a handful of cultural systems from the same region sharing their ideas and beliefs on an often one-to-one basis, there is a pooling of experiences and values on a global level. News, scientific discoveries, and even television programs are shared across nations, and a great number of nations share these experiences with each other. One dimension of this widespread cultural interaction are the various culturally based reactions to the experiences being shared. Those reactions to the common experience, in turn, lead to a realization of cultural differences.

The implications of applying a systems view to intercultural contact are complex and numerous. As I look at the "shrinking world", where experiences are shared internationally, I imagine the eventual result of that to resemble the contact of two or three cultures in the past, but with a complexity which is multiplied geometrically with each culture added to the world interaction. Therefore, rather than describe the individual aspects of culture which this interaction touches and influences, I would

like to limit the focus here to viewing culture as a system and recognizing that, when systems combine, they produce a result which is greater than the sum of its parts. For me, this idea is key, because it implies that the result of the current global intermingling of cultures will not be a meshing or interweaving of the original cultures, but the development of a totally new cultural system on the global level. This does not mean the elimination of national or regional cultures, since not all the experiences shared on a regional level are shared internationally, but it does mean the birth of a new force born out of the experiences shared among cultures.

The force of the resulting global system is an example of the "relationship as actor", which occurs in systems. This force, in turn, influences its constituent parts. Again, the comparison to mixing a batter can serve to illustrate the relationship between the constituent systems (regional cultures) and the new system born out of the relationship (the global culture). If you mix just eggs and milk, you have the makings of an omelette. And if you mix flour and water you get a bland paste. Likewise, mixing chocolate, milk and sugar together makes chocolate milk. All of these results are different, depending on their constituents. Now, when all the ingredients for cake are combined, something much more dynamic happens; the combination of all the ingredients no longer resembles any one of its components. It can be compared to what happens when many cultures come into contact with each other simultaneously. Still, you do not need to mix ALL the flour, sugar, eggs and so on into the system. The individual ingredients can still exist outside the system, as can the various combinations of them. Similarly, the emergence of a world culture does not imply the elimination of national or regional cultural characteristics.

One example of a nationally unified culture which encompasses many different cultures within it is the United States. Within one country, with a unified communication system and some accepted social customs, a great number of cultures coexist and interact. Some immigrants arrive and take on the characteristics of what they perceive to be the national culture quickly. Others live in groups where they maintain to a greater or lesser degree the cultural habits of the place they came from. This is evident in some areas where even the street signs and food stores reflect a distinct cultural system of a different country. And yet, the current relationships between cultures in the United States cannot necessarily be seen as a model for future interactions between nations. There is one thing which keeps the United States from demonstrating the full impact of the systems reaction between cultures described above. That is the domination of one cultural group above all the rest. The system as a whole still reflects, mostly, the characteristics of the traditional Anglo-Saxon viewpoint. This is not an undesirable viewpoint, in and of itself, but its domination does mean that instead of blending together to form a new cultural entity in the full sense, the diverse cultural components adjust themselves to the Anglo-Saxon model when wishing to become part of the overlaying, national cultural system.

The reaction is limited, because the interaction is primarily between one culture and the rest instead of equally between all the component cultures. Visually, I see the difference like this, where the circles represent component cultures and the lines, the interaction between them:

fig. A

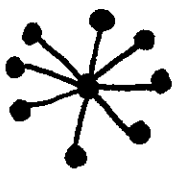
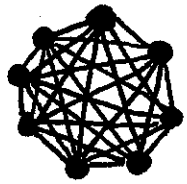


fig. B



In figure B, the numerous contacts, which act as "relationship-actors", influence each other over time, leading to more and more dynamic relationships between cultural systems. The connections in figure A, on the other hand, are separate and static. The present state of affairs in the United States seems to be somewhere between those illustrated in figures A and B, since non-Anglo-Saxon cultures do interact with each other, but I would still maintain that the system is primarily concentric rather than truly integrated.

This concept is important, because it presents two possibilities of how cultural integration can take place. On the world level, one could argue that the resulting union from the different cultures will resemble the concentric model of the United States rather than the integrative one described earlier. This is indeed probable if one national or racial group dominates over the whole. As figure A demonstrates, the quality of the integration in such a system is not any different from that which occurs when only two cultural systems come together. Each line on the diagram may represent a dynamic relationship between two systems, but it will not reflect the union of all the cultural systems present. A truly global integration of cultures is dependent on the equitable participation of all the constituent cultures.

This concept will be significant in the next chapter as we look at communication in a global cultural system. Therefore, let us consider two aspects of equality which come into play when cultures interact. The first, as demonstrated above, is the equality of opportunity for a component to interact with the system. If the viewpoint of only one culture is shared with all the rest, the potential contributions of the others cannot be tapped. The second aspect is the value placed on each group's contribution, whether intellectual, moral or aesthetic. Even when all

the cultures share, if some groups' contributions are valued above the rest, the interaction will be lopsided. If one group is seen as intellectually or morally inferior, for example, that group's contribution will, in effect, be discounted. In summary, the equity required for a dynamic world culture to emerge exists on both the external level of opportunity and the internal level of attitude.

TREES

I think that I shall never see
A poem lovely as a tree.

A tree whose hungry mouth is pressed
Against the earth's sweet flowing breast;

A tree that looks at God all day
And lifts her leafy arms to pray;

A tree that may in summer wear
A nest of robins in her hair;

Upon whose bosom snow has lain;
Who intimately lives with rain.

Poems are made by fools like me,
But only God can make a tree.

-- Joyce Kilmer
in
The Home Book of Verse

II

LANGUAGE IN A CHANGING SOCIETY

Let us now turn to the role of language in the transition from divisive to integrated concepts and from a divided to an integrated global social system. If the pursuit of knowledge will, as Capra suggests, be carried out in an increasingly interdisciplinary manner, we will need language to describe that process. So far, the common labeling technique has been to conjoin the names of disciplines in order to label that which is somehow seen as a combination of the two. Thus, sociolinguistics, anthrolinguistics and psycholinguistics derive their names. This works well for the present, but if the integrative tendency across disciplines continues, it is conceivable that we will soon have such subdivisions as sociopsychoanthropological linguistics or physiopsychosociological medicine. It is not surprising that the word "holistic" has become so popular as an all-encompassing term among people who cross disciplinary lines to pursue insight!

It is generally accepted that language develops to serve the needs of its users. Therefore, there is no doubt that our language will someday adequately describe the integrative process if it continues, even though it may do so somewhat clumsily at first. English has survived many revolutions before, not the least of which were the industrial revolution of the last century and the informational revolution which came along with the development of computers in this century. People may question if ours is in fact the same language as that of George Washington and John Adams, but at no point has any believer in this gained enough support from its users to convince them to change its name.

Language is, above all, a system. Since we have seen that culture also fits into the systems model, their relationship is doubly complex. It is the interaction between two systems, each replete with interrelationships and relationship-actors of its own. Therefore, to look for THE relationship between language and culture, a definable and constant link between the two, may be in vain. Other systems do not act in a way to produce a static relationship when combined, so linguistic and cultural systems probably won't, either. Back to a mundane example: if chocolate cake batter were combined with vanilla cake batter, the result would be a new type of cake batter. It would be very difficult then to say that the vanilla batter did such and such to the new system, while the chocolate batter did another thing. One would have to go down to the chemical level to determine exactly what did what and could not look at either component system as a whole in the final result. In fact, if someone did assert the influence of one or the other batter, they would probably be referring to the chemical properties of the batter and not to the entity as a whole.

The Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis

If we want to examine the relationship between language and culture, we can likewise break them down and examine their properties. This is what Benjamin Lee Whorf and Edward Sapir did to form their now-famous hypothesis. As I understand it, the Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis asserts that cultural perception and reasoning are structured and limited by linguistic structure. Therefore, Hopi Indians and Anglo-Saxon Americans perceive the world differently based on the linguistic structures of their respective languages. It may be useful to look at this intriguing assertion more closely.

One clear expression of this idea is found in Whorf's essay, "Language, Mind and Reality", in which he explains the difference in Hopi and English sentences and how that affects their speakers' views of actions. In English, each sentence must have a subject; therefore, each action implies an actor. Whorf uses the example of a flash, such as lightning. We can say, "a light flashed", which clearly attributes the act of flashing to an actor, but even the statement, "it flashed" implies an actor because it contains a subject. The flash and the act of flashing are separate. This is contrasted in Hopi, which requires no subject in its sentence structure. In that language, this type of occurrence can be described by just one word, "rehpi". There is no subject and, therefore, no act of doing; the light and the flashing are the same. Whorf goes on to conclude that, "Scientific language, being founded on western Indo-European and not on Hopi, does as we do, sees sometimes actions and forces where there may be only states."[6] In other words, our language makes a division in the universe where Hopi doesn't and where it may be useful not to have one.

This concept has extensive implications for global thought if our social system is moving towards an integration between nations and languages. When these divergent types of thinking come together and interact, will our view of the universe be a simple combination or compromise of viewpoints? Probably not. It seems more probable that the different ways of thinking, encouraged by the various national languages, will combine to form a whole and to forge a direction for future thought which cannot be discerned from examining its parts. It may be interesting to examine the thinking of other cultures and compare it to ours, and this is indeed the beginning stage of the collective reaction when cultural systems unite. The ultimate reaction, however, because systems combine

to form new systems, will probably move thinking along completely new lines.

A Weaker Version

Some linguists find the Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis restricting, since it asserts that language limits perception. According to the extreme version of this idea, English speakers will always assume actors along with states, because their language predisposes them to the thought. If this were true, I wonder if an Indo-European speaker such as Albert Einstein could have come up with a theory such as relativity, or if a myriad of other modern inventions and theories, which transcend traditional western logic, could have been developed in the West. We could perhaps write off cases like Einstein as exceptions to the normal natural laws. I prefer to see his thinking as an example of transcendence of linguistic limitations. Perhaps his mathematical language is what allowed him to do it. In any case, the fact that he spoke German, rather than some other language, did not seem to restrict him in an absolute way.

Therefore, while the Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis describes a component in the relationship between language and thinking, the conclusion that certain thought is made impossible by language seems to be too broad for describing what actually goes on. Today, many people prefer a weaker version of the original hypothesis, which argues that language influences thought but does not limit it absolutely. Whorf's original conclusion certainly seems feasible if we look at the relationship between language structure and its impact on scientific thought alone. It descibes a component, but fails, it seems to me, to describe the whole reality of thinking that goes on and is expressed through a linguistic framework. It does

not address discoveries made in science and philosophy which require new terms to describe them. Compound words, which are becoming prevalent in expression today, are terms for new concepts. The word, "anthrolinguistics", for example, contains elements of both anthropology and linguistics, but it is actually a new perception originating from their union. To me, this implies that there is another aspect of thinking, a creative element transcending linguistic considerations, which the Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis does not address.

Limitations of Language

This brings us to the topic of the thoughts that people have which they "cannot put into words". If human thinking were confined to linguistic structures, this phenomenon could best be explained by a temporary memory lapse of vobabulary and syntactic structures. That's not what it feels like when that happens, to me anyway. It is more like the dilemma of choosing the lesser linguistic evil, trying to choose the linguistic mechanism which will slant the idea the least and convey it to the listener in the purest form possible. Trying to describe colors presents this type of difficulty. The eyes may take in a spectrum of different colors while looking at a tree, but the language may simply categorize them into three sections: green, light green and dark green. For those who pursue it, there is avocado, spring green, olive, and so on. When someone describes something to me as "spring green", I may have thousands of greens in my memory associated with that seasonal description. As a listener, I have to guess at what type of perception would cause the speaker to approximate it in such a way, and then try to duplicate that in my own mind. These dilemmas attest to the fact that something beyond verbal reasoning

happens when we think. While our ideas often fit neatly into linguistic structures, and sometimes even originate in words, there also exists something else, which to my knowledge has not been thoroughly defined yet.

In order to begin to understand this, and see its implications in communication, I find it useful to look outside the Cartesian model which, as we saw earlier, makes a division between spirit and matter. Since the systems view rejects the idea that nature operates as a machine and allows for complex interrelationships to occur, there is no reason to assume that the mind is limited to the logic and simple manipulation it performs according to the mechanical view. Under the machine-world model, as I understand it, perceptions are approached as discrete units which are organized by the mind. Creativity is a manipulation of their sequencing and ordering and, therefore, new thoughts can be directly traced back to some preceding cause. Since the law of cause and effect operates directly, behavior and thought can be predicted and manipulated through the environment. This is logical, and examples of such occurrences abound, but the idea discounts the mind's ability to transcend and affect the environment as well as react to it.

To me, such a view fails to take into account some key aspects of human thinking and of simply being human. If this behavioristic view held true under all circumstances, it would be impossible for people to transcend their psychological backgrounds. The alcoholic would never recover, the criminal would never become just, and the beaten child would always grow up to abuse its offspring. The behavioristic view often does hold true, but without the existence of some other aspect of human thinking, it would always hold true, WITHOUT EXCEPTION. The fact that exceptions do arise, in which a person's background seems to overwhelmingly predispose them to think and act in opposite ways from how they actually do, shows that

the mind does something more than predictably react to its environment. There is an inner force which influences the processing of external factors and sometimes asserts itself to override them.

The recognition of a creative inner force can only be reconciled with scientific thought outside of the machine-world paradigm, since it transcends the separation of spirit and matter. If, as linguists, we take this one step further and look at the expression that results from thinking, it too must be seen from outside the Cartesian model. When the inner creative force combines with thoughts originating from external factors, the result is an expression of their union. This might explain why people find certain ideas difficult to put into words and brings us to one difference between language and communication. In the machine-world paradigm, non-verbal thoughts can hardly exist, much less be communicated to other people. Yet, people speak of music as a language and of "understanding" art. When asking an artist to translate their artistic expression into verbal language, we verbal types are usually met with indignant stares which silently shout, "Ridiculous! That's impossible, obviously!". This is sometimes the verbal reaction as well. What part of the human being art touches or what its message is often defy verbal explanations, but to those who are sensitive to its influence, art does "say" something and influence the person coming into contact with it. To deny the existence of creative thought is to deny that music and art really mean something and communicate something between the artist and the observer. To me, it seems clear that music and art do communicate something, even though I cannot describe what that something is in words.

Language as a Bridge

We have now touched upon three aspects of language: its mutable tendency, its influence on rational thought (and therefore on traditional scientific thought), and its limitations in thinking and communication. From these qualities of language, we can discern some idea of its function in the process of moving from a society of the machine-world mentality to a systems-oriented society, which sees the interrelationships and interdependence of concepts. Language is a system influenced by thought which can also, in turn, influence thought. It is thus an actor and a reaction at the same time. Its domain is, however, limited; it is not the alpha and omega of all communication. Now, if we look at the world's cultures as complex systems and follow their trend towards physical and conceptual integration, we can infer a role for language which is both unique and powerful.

The most immediate linguistic issue if we look at the emerging interaction between cultures is the need to communicate. When people get together, they naturally want to talk to each other. Much has been written and proposed on the subject of international communication in relation to the movement towards increased contact across nations. It may be interesting to consider not the immediate situation which, as mentioned, can be seen as a transitional period in building a systems-oriented society, but rather where these current developments seem to be leading. As the various linguistic and cultural groups come into closer and closer contact, due to the technological, economic and personal links now being strengthened, the systems will all relate to each other. Since relationships between systems are dynamic rather than stagnant, it is predictable that a new system will emerge, bringing with it unique qualities and needs.

We likewise need to look at language in this new social system as a new system which will develop to serve the still emerging conceptual and cultural needs of a world society. The existing national languages have been molded to serve the conceptual needs of existent cultural systems, while a new, world-wide cultural system is emerging, in need of a language to serve it.

Let us look at the conceptual integration across cultures: when two people who see issues differently discuss their viewpoints with each other, new realizations are often attained by one or both of the two parties, and new ideas emerge as a result of the meeting. Thus, the result of their interaction contains ideas not formerly found in the individual thinking of either party. This is an everyday example of what seems to happen when thinkers from different cultures and in different fields come together to discuss their ideas. As the trend towards international contact and holistic approaches continues, and technological advances make it easier to gain access to divergent ways of thinking, the result will be a new set of ideas which could only come from the component cultural conceptions but which is neither a combination of them or a compromise between them. These new concepts need names.

So we have societal systems joining to create a dynamic relationship between them, as well as conceptual expressions based on different linguistic structures, joining to create a conceptual framework which is also dynamic. In concrete terms, these can be called a world culture and a world language, although those terms may presently imply meanings other than the ones intended here. In this sense, a world culture is the recognition that, as cultural systems come together in closer and closer contact, a new system emerges which is different from the sum of its parts. A world language, likewise, is the recognition that such a new cultural

and conceptual system cannot be adequately served by a combination of or compromise between the existing national languages as they now stand. As new concepts arise, the linguistic code(s) must adapt to provide adequate communication.

Language will eventually become a reaction to the integrative process; but at present, it is already an actor in it. Most clearly, language serves as a link between the different cultures to facilitate the interchange of ideas. Secondly, as seen from the Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis, the structure of a language may influence the type of thoughts most easily expressed in itself. This seems to suggest that we need to predict the type of thoughts we intend to have in this new system and, based on that information, carefully choose or invent the language which expresses those ideas the best. This is one aspect of the arguments often put forth by people proposing one language over others for international use.

Ultimately, though, there is no doubt that any language could adjust itself to the ideas brought forth in the new conceptual system, since languages all develop to suit their cultures. The immediately pressing issue, meanwhile, is using language as a bridge across different cultural ideas. Before language can become the result of the integration, it needs to play an active role in it, since the interchange of ideas requires some sort of linguistic and conceptual link.

At present this is being done by using a variety of languages. When two speakers wish to interact, they decide on a common national language or one of several popular languages now being used for interlinguistic communication. This works well in the immediate sense of their personal interaction, but it is limited, because not all people have access to all the ideas presented. The ramifications of this are particularly evident when the interchange involves scientific knowledge or other in-

formation of common interest. For example, Spanish speakers may be aware of the ideas being generated in Central and South America and in several other countries, but may have very limited contact with the ideas of the Far East, which are usually translated into English. Similarly, speakers of English may have access to the ideas of a number of countries which use English for international communication, but they by no means have access to the ideas generated in non-English speaking circles. There is a tendency, especially among the speakers of widely used languages, to assume that all relevant information will be translated for speakers of different languages. Practically speaking, however, all the scientific and literary information which is relevant to many different peoples cannot all be translated into all the languages being used, even if we narrow them down to eight or ten. Interpretation also adds a barrier if the linguistic interchange is verbal. One solution for this would be to use one international auxiliary language, so that each person would keep their native tongue but use a common global language to communicate across linguistic lines.

English

Since English is being used very frequently as common ground in international interchange, some people see it gradually moving into the role of an auxiliary international language (or already there). Again, a systems view can shed light on the nature of this transition. If the goal is an integration of ideas which stem from different cultural and linguistic roots, since diverse input is needed in order to produce a dynamic relationship and bring the common pool of knowledge closer to reflecting a unified understanding, an auxiliary language must encourage the expression

of a wide range of ideas. So far, in English, people have been encouraged to adjust the expression of their ideas to some rigid western standards when learning the language, with the intent that they speak "good English". Often, speaking "good English" has meant to not rock the conceptual boat of the culture the language was originally developed to serve. For example, when an idea originating from a different conceptual framework gets expressed in English, it may sound "foreign" to native speakers. This is natural, but it may sound foreign more because the native speakers are unfamiliar with the concept than because it is expressed ungrammatically. Until this distinction is made by native speakers, an acceptable expression in English will continue to depend on its adherence to western conceptual standards.

So, in a sense, English is not an international language at all. It is a national language with a national conceptual base, and non-native speakers have to adjust their expression to that framework; their linguistic attainment is judged by the degree of their adherence to western conceptual guidelines. The more it sounds like an English or American person said it, the more fluent it is judged. The problem, then, is not so much linguistic as attitudinal. It resembles the cultural description of the United States we looked at earlier, where interchange is happening in a concentric way.

In order to develop the truly international language needed, we need to keep in mind the goal of providing a link between the vastly different ways of thinking present in the cultural components of the world system starting to emerge. A predominence of one group over all the rest will not tap the human resources and will only make available the knowledge of that group of people to the others. For a national language, such as English, to become truly international as an integrative tool, its speakers

need to tolerate a greater diversity of expression in it and not confuse habits of expression with the essence of their language. No language can hope to immediately be able to describe all the concepts of a world system which is, itself, still emerging. For language to serve as a bridge at its present stage of development, a need for a period of cumbersome expression and linguistic experimentation has to be recognized. This falls more into the attitudinal than purely intellectual realm of interaction, since it requires speakers to be patient with each other as each tries to fit into the new language concepts it is not yet suited for.

Societal Implications

The third and final aspect of language originally demarcated can be useful here. The fostering of an accepting attitude towards the cumbersome period in the nascent international language can be aided by an awareness of the limitations of language. Sometimes, especially at the beginning, music, art and other forms of extra-linguistic communication may need to fill in where words fail. This spiritual connection, which requires no words or common intellectual base, may seem a strange concept on which to base an international communication system, since present thinking is only beginning to move away from the Cartesian model with its separation of spirit and matter. It seems less strange when seen as a natural progression in an integrated view of perception, thinking and communication.

Tolerance and extra-linguistic connections would allow, eventually, for the bridging of a large variety of concepts in one language, but there is another problem. The people currently learning to use an international

language of any kind are usually people of highly educated classes. This means that the ideas being shared mostly stem from people with similar educational backgrounds and social standing. While there are many different types of education in the world, which result in different ways of seeing things, this nevertheless leaves out the majority of the world's people and their views and opinions; even the proper attitude for using an international language, unless that attitude were extended to the educational realm of society, could not solve this. An international language which will push forward the conceptual transformation now becoming technologically possible, needs to be for all people. In order to achieve a truly integrated social system, a manner must be divised to provide this language to everyone, so that all may contribute to the total system, instead of just certain elite groups.

Since an integrative world view encompasses all fields, there are many social, as well as economic, scientific and religious implications for such a view. It is the basis for a whole way of seeing the world, which I have tried to limit in this chapter and apply only to the field of language study; but a discussion of an integrative, holistic viewpoint cannot ignore implications which fall in the domain of other fields. The developments move together without regard for title, so it is impossible to consider an international communication system without considering the changes in outlook which will happen as the different views of the world meet. One quality not always mentioned in regard to communication, but touched upon in this chapter, is the role of attitude. Without the willingness to communicate, we can be sure that the quality of the interaction entered into will be very poor. Likewise, without the willingness to have members of all cultural groups interact as equals, such interaction will not occur. And, finally, on an internal level, without the

willingness to allow our intellectual, emotional and spiritual faculties to interact with each other and affect our outlook, we will cling to an old, divisive conceptual framework, which may be not only obsolete but also a hindrance to the emergence of a more advanced conceptual framework and a more advanced social system.

Wherever there's creativity on a large scale there's life, and I, anyway, can't plot life. I just join in.

-- Sylvia Ashton-Warner
in Teacher

III

A TRANSITION IN LANGUAGE TEACHING

The transitional period we have been discussing, which currently is seen in a trend towards integration of concepts, is widely reflected in the language teaching field. There is a movement towards viewing teaching as an interactive process between teachers and students, rather than a mere channel to convey the teachers' knowledge to the students, and there is a tapping of resources for learning in the students that some traditional approaches passed over. Teachers are also recognizing the importance of each skill area of language (speaking, listening, reading and writing) and are investigating the roles of each one in language learning. Likewise, the importance now being placed on cultural perspectives in language expression is making that part of the language instruction. In short, language is being looked at within the larger context of communication, and languages are emphasizing communication skills and using language rather than talking about the structure of language.

Communicative Competence

The movement towards an integrated approach to language learning and teaching can be placed under the broad heading of promoting communicative competence. It recognizes that the ability to communicate involves more than linguistic ability, which has been the primary emphasis in teaching approaches in the past. Since the goal of language classes is communication, the messages people send with their gestures, eye contact, tone of voice and other physical factors, both verbal and non-verbal, must

be addressed. This also holds true for cultural ways of thinking, whose shared perspective between native speakers is often the root of meaning for the actual words they say. For example, a second language speaker may understand every word in a joke told by a native speaker and still not understand the punch line. Many aspects of human interaction, outside of the linguistic element, have now entered the language classrooms of teachers who recognize the limited role of verbal language in communication.

There are innumerable aspects of communication which language teachers are currently striving to integrate with verbal language in their language classrooms. This complexity of vision and approach brought on by the emphasis on communication can be compared to what happened in science in response to the new physics. After the theory of relativity and quantum theory were developed, suddenly a whole new set of issues emerged and made the field of physics seem immeasurably more complex than previously imagined. In allowing language to be approached within its context of communication, language teaching has taken a similar step, and it may be interesting to note some of the issues currently being grappled with. Since issues are still emerging and are seen in so many areas of the language teaching field, it would be an overwhelming task to attempt an overview of the integrative approaches in use today. It may be useful, though, to look at a few of the more recently developed approaches and how each treats the complex new issues in language learning and teaching. The remainder of this chapter will be devoted to a brief look at some language teaching approaches.

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Specific Approaches

The following pages are not an attempt to comprehensively descibe the teaching approaches being dealt with. Instead, an effort is made to use each approach as an example of the integrative process currently happening in many fields and to point out elements in each approach which reflect an application of integrative concepts. These concepts may include the interdependence of intellectual and emotional aspects of the mind, as in Community Language Learning, or the interaction between brain research and language learning, as in the ACT Approach. It is important to keep in mind that the following approaches are by no means the only ones to currently apply integrative concepts, nor are they necessarily exclusive of each other. There are many educators and students who, as they become aware of the value of uniting understanding from various fields and concepts, are seeking to apply the principle of integration to language learning and teaching.

The ACT Approach

Four main influences contributed to the development of this approach, according to its founder, Lynn Dhority:

-- the holistic models of human development of Carl Jung and Roberto Assagioli.

-- contemporary brain research and its application.

-- Suggestopedia, a model for teaching and learning developed by Georgi Lozanov.

-- the psycholinguistic research of Stephen Krashen and Tracy Terrell.[7]

In an introductory book called Acquisition Through Creative Teaching, Dhority emphasizes the goal of "authentic communication" in language teaching. The four influences he cites reflect a holistic approach across several disciplines; it seeks to integrate relevant knowledge from psychology, medicine and linguistics with language teaching, as well as draw upon the holistic model earlier offered by Lozanov.

Dhority discusses advancements in each of these fields and their implications for language teaching. For example, he cites the scientific ideas of Leslie Hart. In Human Brain and Human Learning, she argues that "the human brain is not organized or designed for linear, one-path thought," but rather "operates by simultaneously going down many paths."[8] This leads Dhority to the following conclusion:

> The implications of Hart's theories for educators are many, but perhaps the most obvious is the possibility of to (sic.) transforming our 'low input' classrooms into rich, multimodal, reality saturated environments, enabling the brain to do what comes naturally.[9]

The actual method is characterized by a presentation of language in a natural, complete way, combined with input from many directions which suggest success. This suggestion stems from the roles of the physical environment, the materials used and, most importantly, the teacher. The physical environment should be "aesthetically pleasant, attractive, colorful, comfortable, and engaging to the senses."[10] The teacher, as the main contributor to the atmosphere of the class, is actively becoming conscious of the avenues of suggestion he or she always uses unconsciously and manipulating that consciousness to promote purpose and creativity in the students. Lastly, the materials used can themselves contain positive suggestions and models for success in their content.

It is interesting to note, in light of the ideas presented in earlier sections, that Dhority acknowledges a current transition in thinking

that touches reasoning across fields and sees the trend continuing:

> Let us note that we may be emerging from a period where scientific experimentation on how people learn has introduced rigorous experimental controls in an effort to exclude "subjective" factors such as the "teacher" in order to measure what "objectively" happens using a certain method. Investigators and thinkers within the scientific community are beginning to acknowledge the essential, critically important and even desirable ingredient of subjective factors (persons/teachers/researchers).[11]

The Natural Approach

Tracy Terrell, who developed this approach, emphasizes that communicative competence is the goal for language instruction. Furthermore, it is not the goal at some far-off conclusion foreseen at the start; it is the goal throughout. Therefore, language teaching should allow students to express ideas in complex language from the very beginning. Grammatical presentation should seek to modify and improve the students' understanding of the grammatical aspects of language rather than seek to build it in a logical, rule-by-rule manner.

These ideas stem from the recognition of the role of language (communication) and of scientific findings about second language learning. "In natural L2 acquisition," he says, "the output is as varied as possible and expresses quite complex ideas at all times. It is the grammaticality of the utterance which increases with time and experience."[12] The Natural Approach is, in part, a recognition of this process and an application of the natural phenomenon to the classroom.

Terrell also relates learning to psychological and sociological issues. He states that language learning happens when there is a real need for the language and a motivation for learning it. A social need for verbal communication can often act to motivate students to open them-

selves up mentally to acquire language, and this factor is incorporated into the Natural Approach. Also, based on research dealing with the differences in child and adult L2 acquisition, it places primary importance on the attitude of the student towards the target language and culture. Terrell states that the research "indicates that a positive attitude with regard to affective variables not only may be necessary to acquire language, but that it may actually function independently of factors such as aptitude and intelligence."[13]

The classroom application of this approach centers around evoking real communication in the L2. The elements of explanation and practice, emphasized in conventional methods, are confined for the most part to work done out of class. Grammatical explanations and drills which emphasize form are not the primary focus of the class; the entire class period is used to apply the language.

In attempting to provide for optimal learning in a way which happens outside of classrooms, the classroom activities emphasize three factors. Firstly, they should all focus on content rather than form and serve the primary goal of communication. Secondly, error correction should be done only on written assignments focusing on form; correction of speech errors interferes with the student's attitude and confidence and should therefore be avoided. Thirdly, the students should be allowed to respond however they feel comfortable, in their L1, L2 or a mixture of the two. As these primary factors demonstrate, the affective elements, based on psychology and scientific reasonings, are emphasized in this approach. It reaches far beyond the strictly linguistic considerations emphasized in conventional approaches.

This approach is interesting, because it attempts to transpose an entire set of principles from one humanistic field to another. The skills and relationships from counseling are applied to language instruction and serve as a base for communication in the approach. In presenting the results of a three-year research project testing this method, Charles Curran makes several statements which provide strong links between the counselor-client relationship and the language learner-language expert relationship. These relationships are based on the similarity in the issues involved in learning a foreign language and going through counseling. One impetus for trying out this approach, according to Curran, is the notion that "the problems a person faces and overcomes in the process of learning a foreign language were conceived as similar to the problems one faces and overcomes in a personal counseling process."[14]

He elaborates on what those problems are in this comment on the language counselor's role: "The counselor's whole manner must convey the same deep empathy for the language client's beginning threatened state and must at the same time provide him with increased security and more adequate means for coping with his linguistic anxiety and threat."[15]

He reasons that, based on a counseling relationship, the negative affective factors hindering L2 learning will be reduced or eliminated and that learning will thus be enhanced. The psychological terms are directly transferred to language teaching, so the goal, rather than being called "communicative competence" is called "language independence". The method actually takes the language client through a psychological process, where the vehicle and the primary animator of the process is the foreign language. "The actual methodology was therefore devised so as

to create relationships with the language counselor which enable the client to grow linguistically from a state of dependency, insecurity and inadequacy to an increasingly independent, self-directed and responsible use of one or more foreign languages."[16]

Silent Way

The Silent Way has a deep philosophical base. There are many reasons presented for the various techniques used in it. For the purpose of demonstrating its reflection of the integrative process we are investigating here, I would like to limit this discussion to one element in how learning is seen in this approach. The ideas presented in Caleb Gattengo's presentations of this approach are complex, and this discussion of them reflects my own understanding of them.

Learning happens on both conscious and unconscious levels. The conscious one requires energy and effort. In a sense, this can be seen as the traditional view of classroom learning. The students strive to learn words and then retain them. One natural and frequent result of this is forgetting. The deeper level of learning, however, is where the new information is assimilated into the student's way of thinking. This is what happens when learning a first language. The assimilation of words and structures and sound is so complete that the language is not consciously brought into the memory when used. It is "remembered" in the everyday sense of the word, but not in the sense of an energy-consuming, conscious process. This deep assimilation is also possible in L2 learning, but it does not happen immediately, in the classroom. As Earl Stevick explains the Silent Way's perspective on this:

> All of this forming, assembling, examining, sorting, recasting and assimilating of images requires time and a great deal of energy. Moreover, the work is delicate. Most of us find it hard to carry out this work successfully at the same time when new inputs are constantly coming in through the senses. For this reason, the mind does much of this work during sleep.[17]

On a techniques level, this often means allowing unclear matters from one day in the classroom to be left "as is" until the next day, with the trust that many of them will be clarified by the mind in its natural process of sleep. Thus principles derived from how the brain seems to work and how information is retained are being applied to language teaching here, to the extent that the natural process of sleep is having an influence on what happens within the foreign language classroom!

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As is evident from this short overview of approaches, many aspects of their branching out from traditional limitations overlap. This suggests that they are all moving in a similar direction but that the realm they are entering has many aspects to investigate. They all seek to promote communication, but the diversity of rationale and techniques between them indicates some of the complexity that goal entails for teachers. These various developments collectively integrate findings from many different fields, at one time or another demonstrating the links between scientific research in psychology, sociology, medicine and linguistics.

The language field, and western scientific thinking as a whole, are not yet at the stage where this integrative process will yield its finest fruits. If the systems view is applied to language teaching, which through its recent emphasis on communicative competence seems to demonstrate a widespread transition towards integrative approaches, the impli-

cations can help teachers develop more effective methods. Seeing where a systems view leads conceptually and socially can also help teachers see the overall direction in which thinking in the field is headed. But whatever the far-reaching conceptual and social implications of the systems view will prove to be, the application of its integrative principles to language teaching at the present can be a useful tool in promoting communicative competence in language learners.

The earth is but one country,

and mankind its citizens.

-- Baha'u'llah

CONCLUSION

As mentioned earlier, the ideas discussed in this paper have far-reaching implications on the levels of language, thinking and society. So far, I have attempted to limit the discussion to stay within contemporary academic guidelines. For example, I have cited very few instances of intuition or of "sensing" that something is right as proof for any of the arguments. As scientific reasoning prescribes, I have attempted to exclude my own broader perspective and personal inclinations from an academic discussion and to remain objective. In other words, the discussion has stayed within the confines of the traditional scientific view that the observer is irrelevant.

However, by ending there, without putting the parts of the discussion together again into a whole perspective, I would, in effect, be reducing a holistic concept to a linear one. We have dealt with only that which fits into the confines of logic and reasoning, and I have temporarily excluded the result of the rest of my life experience as a participator in the world's social and linguistic system.

If we step outside of that structure and consider the relevancy of the observer as part of the system, the past experiences of the observer become important. To put it more concretely, we have all been using language in our thinking and social interactions all our lives, and our relationship with it did not begin with this conscious analysis. Those long-term experiences provide the link between the conscious, linear arguments and the outlook they stem from. That outlook is the context within which logical statements and arguments grow and cannot be separated from them. The viewpoints arrived at throughout life, formed by unique experiences

and perceptions, can also not be presented and proven in the same way as arguments can. Instead, they can only be shared, to be compared by readers and listeners to their own perspectives; intuitively, rationally, emotionally and spiritually. Therefore, that which is presented here is my personal holistic view, given more in the spirit of showing the source of the preceding discussion and its context than as the one and only way to make sense of the ideas presented.

To me, the most exciting aspect of language is its connection to world peace. Since the primary inspiration for the ideas presented throughout this paper comes from the Baha'i Faith, and since language is only one aspect of society dealt with in the Baha'i Faith, a broad perspective of the issues raised earlier must include the context given to language within the Baha'i belief system.

Choosing or inventing an international auxiliary language is one in a series of social and spiritual principles which Baha'is believe have been given by God to ensure the peace and unification of human society. It cannot work in isolation, and is not a panacea in its own right, but works together with other principles in the context of a world peace which is inevitably approaching. The Baha'i perspective of this evolution can be summarized as follows:

> Unification of the whole of mankind is the hall-mark of the stage which human society is now approaching. Unity of family, of tribe, of city-state, and nation have been successively attempted and fully established. World unity is the goal towards which a harassed humanity is striving. Nation-building has come to an end. The anarchy inherent in state sovereignty is moving towards a climax. A world, growing to maturity, must abandon this fetish, recognize the oneness and wholeness of human relationships, and establish once for all the machinery that can best incarnate this fundamental principle of its life.[18]

Whether this transition towards world unity and peace happens peacefully, as the result of human reflection and cooperation, or after humanity comes

face to face with the consequences of disunity and hatred, is the choice mankind faces during this century.

There are a number of social principles which must work together with the establishment of a universal auxiliary language to bring about world peace:

1. Racial prejudice must be abolished. "Its practice perpetrates too outrageous a violation of the dignity of human beings to be countenanced under any pretext."[19]

2. The extremes of wealth and poverty must be abolished, so that some people do not live in extreme luxury while others cannot survive.

3. The concept of world citizenship must be promoted, since the advantage of each nation is best served by promoting the good of the whole.

4. Religious strife must be eliminated and the spirit of mutual forbearance strengthened.

5. Women and men must be regarded as equal. "Only as women are welcomed into full partnership in all fields of human endeavour will the moral and psychological climate be created in which international peace can emerge."[20]

6. The cause of universal education world-wide must be supported and strengthened. One reason is that ignorance is often a root cause of prejudice.

Peace cannot be brought about through purely political means, through treaties and legislation. Its basis is spiritual and its main builders, the individual members of society. This is where language comes into play, because it provides a link between individuals: "A fundamental lack of communication between peoples seriously undermines efforts towards peace. Adopting an international auxiliary language would go far to resolving this problem and necessitates the most urgent attention."[21] In a world which is both spiritual and social in nature, language has a unique role

to play. It touches us rationally, emotionally and socially and can be used as a powerful tool for promoting world peace at the present stage of human evolution.

ENDNOTES

1. Fritjof Capra, The Turning Point (1982; rpt. New York: Bantam Books, Inc., 1983), p.43.

2. Ibid., pp.53-59.

3. Ibid., p.66.

4. Ibid., p.47.

5. Ibid., p.265.

6. John B. Carroll, ed., Language, Thought and Reality (1956; rpt. Cambridge: The M.I.T. Press, 1982), p.263.

7. Lynn Dhority, Acquisition Through Creative Teaching (Sharon: Center for Continuing Development, 1984), p.Forward:2.

8. Ibid., p.1:2.

9. Ibid., p.1:3.

10. Ibid., p.4:7.

11. Ibid., p.4:7.

12. Robert W. Blair, ed., Innovative Approaches (Rowley: Newbury House Publishers, Inc., 1982), p.162.

13. Ibid., p.163.

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15. Ibid., p.121.

16. Ibid., p.122.

17. Earl W. Stevick, Teaching Languages: A Way and Ways (Rowley: Newbury House Publishers, Inc., 1980), p.41.

18. Shoghi Effendi, The World Order of Baha'u'llah (1938; rpt. Wilmette: Baha'i Publishing Trust, 1982), p.202.

19. The Universal House of Justice, The Promise of World Peace (Wilmette: Baha'i Publishing Trust, 1985), p.10.

20. Ibid., p.12.

21. Ibid., p.12.

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