in Arnold 99
AFFECT IN LANG LEARNING

The Humanistic Exercise

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You are all familiar with the ....-fill exercise of .....this is a fairly typical example.
As you read .....lines, all over the world students are working their ..... through kilometres of gap-..... exercises, whether they be first year .....at Malaysian universities or candidates sitting the Cambridge exams anywhere ....the world.
The purpose of this extremely widespread activity that gives many learners and teachers a sense of authoritative security, is strictly linguistic in its nature: it tests knowledge of vocabulary, collocation, grammar and spelling.

It sits comfortably within what Carl Rogers (83) describes as the traditional paradigm of education : " Education has traditionally thought of learning
as an orderly type of cognitive, left-brain activity. The left hemisphere of the brain tends to function in ways that are logical and linear. It goes step-by-step, in a straight line, emphasising the parts, the details that make up the whole. It accepts only what is sure and clear. It deals in ideas and concepts. It is associated with the masculine aspects of life. This is the only kind of functioning that is acceptable to our schools and colleges. "

The gap-fill exercise calls on the student to work logically and linearly and emphasises the parts that go to make up the whole. It is a clear exemplification, at activity level, of what Rogers is saying about the whole mindset of traditional education.

Various forms of translation activity belong to the same, no-nonsense, male pedagogy:

Please translate the following sentence first literally and then adequately from Latin into English:
HIS REBUS FACTIS, OPPIDUM GALLORUM CAESAR OPPUGNAVIT
These things having been done, the city of the Gauls Caesar took by storm
When he had accomplished these things, Caesar took the city of the Gauls by storm.

The above grammar-translation exercise is the staple sort of exercise in language classes round the globe, both in places where teachers have heard of "communicative methodology " and in places where they have not , for example among the more elderly of China's 400,000 secondary teachers of English.
All over the world language teachers use the mother tongue to explain grammar and to get the meaning of the foreign language sentences across.

Another wide-spread exercise that focuses entirely on language as its object is choral reading. In several classes in South Korea I heard students reciting the lesson in slow unison with their teacher. This kind of reading can lead to memorising the text as a whole, especially if the text is repeated often enough. This is certainly one way to

take a language on board; it is the way that Muslims round the world come into possession of the Koran which must always be in Arabic. It was also the way Roman Catholics used to learn the Latin liturgy until it was replaced by modern language versions in the mid-sixties. I was brought up in this auditory learning tradition and today can effortlessly produce acres of church Latin. The problem is that if I want to retrieve a sentence from the middle of a prayer I have to start reciting it from the beginning. You may need to do the same if you know the alphabet by heart as a sound sequence : which comes first , 'j' or 'h'?

Choral repetition is of course very different from gap-fill or the typical translation exercise in that it is not at all analytical or logical. The aim is to memorise the text as it stands and sometimes without the meaning being clear to the learners. What the three exercises have in common is that nobody is speaking or writing to anybody; no interpersonal communication is taking place and so it arguable that the learners are dealing with strings of words and not with language at all.

THE COMMUNICATIVE EXERCISE

When you fill in gaps in a text, when you translate a piece of text to which you have no special relationship, when you read aloud/recite/ chant a textbook passage you are not involved in one-to-one interaction with another person and so the social aspect of language is missing. Some would say that this is as odd as thinking of music without reference to sound.

The simple hallmark of the communicative exercise is that that you are saying something to another person in the target language.

The most successful version of the communicative exercise is when students are given a task and have to interact verbally to carry it out. An example will serve here:

Imagine two students sitting back to back. Each of them has a picture that the other student cannot see. The pictures are identical except that the second one has ten details missing. The students' task is to discover what the differences between the two pictures are.

This sort of information gap exercise is mildly interesting and has enough ludic appeal to create a gentle level of energy in most students. Such exercises wear thin when over-used.

A less linguistically and psychologically successful communicative activity is one where

students are asked to talk one-to-one about personal matters but in the context of artificial language work, often in the context of a coursebook unit. Let us take a typical unit on THE FAMILY in a lower level coursebook. The unit starts with a genealogical tree of a fictitious family. Often no attempt has been made to characterise any of the people whose names appear on the tree. The students listen to a cassette about the names on the tree and then the teacher asks questions like:

" How many sisters does John have?" " Is Mary John's aunt?"

All of the above is psychologically contentless information and is clearly only there to somehow "carry" the language exponents the unit is designed to teach. After half an hour's work of this humanly empty sort students are typically asked

to work in pairs and ask each other about their real families. This should mean that they are now using the target language to speak about affectively important things but the shadow of the first half hour's psychological vacuity hangs over them. Often they will exchange what is essentially powerful information, like the number of sisters they have, , but in a mood of relative communicational apathy. When the teacher comes round listening to the pairwork they have a shrewd idea she is not too interested in their families but is listening out for correct use of English personal adjectives. Though the information being exchanged at this "transfer " stage in the lesson can be powerful and important in itself, it is emptied of meaning by the focus of the whole lesson being narrowly linguistic and form-focused.

We have looked at task-orientated communicative exercises and ones that occur in the behaviouristically inspired coursebook following on from presentation and controlled practice. Stage three, the communicative stage, is sometimes referred to as "transfer to the student's own life '. We have seen how students may find it hard to change gear from vacuous language-like behaviour to energetic, motivated exchange of real, personal information.

A third type of communicative exercise is the rehearsal activity in which students try out the language they might need in future situations that may take place in the target language, situations like ordering food in a restaurant, booking into a hotel or getting information in a railway station.
These exercises have high face value, especially if the student is shortly to go to a target language country and is likely to be in such situations. Extrovert students will sometimes fill such role-plays with energy and give the teacher the impression of a buzzing classroom.
And yet such role-plays have a lot missing : they are dummy runs, they are the apprentice pilot on the simulator, not at the controls of a seven four seven, in fact they afford their players much less virtual reality than a simulator does. Here is what Lindstromberg (1990) has to say about rehearsal activities :
" ...people learn a language better if their experience in it is as full of meaning and as rich in images as possible. Meaning and mental images come only when connection is made with the learners' own world of experience. The greater the connection, the better the learning. ..... Most language learning activities are seriously lacking in this area. Take, for example, a role-play in which learners are expected to imagine they are in no particular train station speaking about departure times for imaginary trains going to arbitrary destinations. This is real and meaningful language use only in the sense that the picture of a flower is a flower. "

While the entirely formal language focused exercises, like gap-fill, that I described at the start of this chapter, constitute the staple diet of the majority of the world's language learners from Hokkaido to Djakarta and from Alma Ati to Lima, the Anglo-North American sub-orthodoxy of communicative language teaching is to be found in secondary school text books across Europe and is implemented in private sector schools right round the world. It is the orthodoxy that agencies like the British Council spend millions promoting and that university training departments set before apprentice teachers in those places where such training exists. It is the sub-orthodoxy of communicative language teaching that makes rivers of ink flow- the grammar-

translation teachers just quietly do their work and do not feel the need to enter into debates; they do the job the way it has been done, is done and will be done.

THE HUMANISTIC EXERCISE

So what is the difference between a communicative exercise and a humanistic one?

The humanistic exercise is likely to be used in a classroom where the teacher has a strong awareness of group process and how this affects learning. This teacher will have started the course with activities that allow the students to get to know each other. This teacher will realise that the mood of the class has to be taken into account when fantasising lesson plans and that the success of a certain sets of activities can crucially depend on whether a group of l4 year-olds have just come from vaulting in the gym or working in maths in self study mode or scribbling down geography with a note dictator.

The teacher will be the sort of person who is aware she is teaching 40 individuals, not a great mass. She is likely to be a good observer and a good, empathetic listener.

If the humanistic exercise is to be relevant and adequate to the task of offering students a new experience of themselves then the teacher's attitude must be positive, their person skills good and their training adequate.

Properly used, humanistic exercises are not Friday afternoon fillers (Thursday afternoon in the Arab world.) Of course they do get used as fillers to liven up communicative work , but this use is trivial and uninteresting. When teachers use humanistic activities in this way, out of context and as polyfiller, they often find them upsetting and irrelevant.

Let us now have a look at the reaction of a class of Austrian l4 yearolds to a humanistic exercise aimed at offering them fluency and self-expression practice (taken from Puchta l993). This activity also led into intensive reading of a newspaper story about teenagers crushed by crowd pressure at a pop concert.

The teacher lay a circle of rope (seven metres long) down on the floor in the centre of the classroom He asked all 27 children to step inside it. As the teacher pulled the rope in tighter a couple of students, without being asked, helped the teacher raise the rope so that it encircled the whole group at waist level. These were the instructions he gave: " Would you close your eyes now please ? Whatever you feel or notice, don't open your eyes. Just concentrate on your feelings. "

Gradually the teacher drew the rope in so that people were tightly pressed together.

The next stage of the activity was for the students to fill the board with words that described their feelings.

This dialogue then ensued

Teacher: What about lovely ? Who wrote that?
St 1 : I had a lovely feeling when we were all so....
T: .... together, you mean?
St 1: Yes.
T: Interesting. So you did not mind that. Did you all have positive feelings?

Sts: (some, hesitating) Yes.
T: Could you describe your feelings a bit more. Tell me what was positive about them?
St 2: I think we were all one big person, I think. We all were in the circle and the circle was so than a.....than a, not a line, a wall round us and, I think, we all like to be in the class and so we are a big group.
T: Fantastic! And who wrote light?
St 3 : I.
T: What do you mean by that?
St 3: Er... when I closed my eyes, I had no feeling of small.... I was out, I was not in, I mean I was not in the middle of the circle.
T : So you didn't feel the pressure so much?
St 3: No.

The conversation then went off into reflection on other tightly packed situations:

St 9: In the lift there are also many people.
T: Where?
St 9: In the lift. I think what K said about the hospital. In the hospital are lifts which are big and there are so many people in them and this was the feeling I had last.....

Puchta and Schratz comment : " The students were thoroughly involved - not just cognitively but emotionally as well - and they had the opportunity to air both positive and negative feelings."
In the next stage of the lesson the students read the passage about the kids crushed during a pop concert. in Melbourne.

The above extract from the work of Puchta and Schratz illustrates at exercise level, at micro level, what Carl Rogers says in his overview of whole-person or humanistic teaching (Rogers l983):
" To involve the whole person in learning means to set free and utilise the right brain. The right hemisphere functions in a quite different way from the left. It is intuitive. It grasps the essence before it understands the details. It takes in a whole gestalt, the total configuration. I t operates in metaphors. It is aesthetic rather than logical. It makes creative leaps. It is the way of the artist, of the creative scientist. It is associated with the feminine qualities of life. "
The Austrian teacher gave his l4 year-olds an experience that they will have processed in the ways that Rogers describes above which then fed into and enriched the reading of the target language text. He put them in a position to make the external text their own and to experience it in the light of their own experience of being squashed together.
The differences between the rope-to-reading exercise and the three communicative exercises outlined above are striking:
- the heart of the humanistic exercise is a personal experience and a group experience in the here and now; which is where the language flows from. The children speak to the teacher because they have something to express, something that has welled up from their emotions. This is completely different from students rehearsing language

for a future situation or producing personal information only because they are meant to personalise language previously practised around a third person, coursebook situation of no significance at all..

- In the humanistic exercise the quality of the students' language is excellent..... they are trying to say things they cannot yet express clearly in English and several of the teacher's interventions are genuinely to clarify meaning rather than to correct mistakes.

In communicative exercises it is rare for students to feel an internal emotional pressure such that they have to over-stretch themselves and grasp for language they do not yet have. In communicative exercises most of what is said is easily predictable and at or below their level. of linguistic competence.

- In the rope exercise the l4 year olds may well have learnt new things about each other in terms of physical reactions while being " crushed ", in terms of things said to the teacher in the target language , and in terms of after-class conversations in German with classmates and their families. Finding out interesting things about yourself and about others is a natural part of humanistic language work.
- In the humanistic exercise it is easy for the teacher to be genuinely interested in the students' replies to his questions. He has no way of knowing what they may come up with in reaction to the rope activity. How can he get bored with his job if he is provoking the unexpected, the spontaneous, the new?
- In the humanistic exercise there is acknowledgement that the students bring bodies to class. During the activity they leave their chairs, they stand and move, they crowd together and jostle, they go and write on the board (during the brain-storming). With teenagers and with some adults the need to up and move comes near the bottom on a Maslowian pyramid of needs, which means it has strong priority.

The way a good humanistic language exercise works is the same way many good primary school exercises work and I have noticed that primary school teachers are often natural humanistic thinkers. You don't have to persuade them that children need to live through genuine experiences and that the best learning comes out of experience. You don't have to persuade them that kids have brought their bodies to class and need movement. You don't have to persuade them that fun and novelty are central to fast , effective learning.

The above paragraph might seem to suggest that humanistic teaching is just common sense, which sadly, in not the case. If it were, then humanistic thinking would have swept the language teaching world in the last twenty five years, which it certainly has not. done yet. While the grammar-translation gap-filling teachers and students number millions round the globe, and communicative teachers and students number hundreds of thousands, humanistically inclined teachers and students are counted in mere thousands. I mention the students here because their attitudes and expectations are moulded by the way the profession trains them, and once trained they can be very conservative. I recently received a letter from a Japanese teacher who wants to introduce communicative exercises into his secondary classroom in Japan, following six months in training in UK. He writes sadly that his students go through the motions of communicative exercises but that they are still entrenched in the earlier paradigm of language as a pure object of intellectual study. There is, in his mind, no question of introducing humanistic thinking into his classroom, and yet he has marvellous, deeply

human rapport with his students when they meet in school clubs and on week-end trips (Japanese secondary teachers put in many out of class hours with their students.)

It is important that those of us who believe in humanistic language teaching should be realistic about how minutely small our movement is when seen on the world stage. Let me give you some examples: If I take X language school in Cambridge, where I used to teach, out of a permanent teaching staff of ten there is one person there now who is committed to humanistic teaching. How many private institutes in UK offer humanistically oriented teacher training courses? International House in Hastings does and Pilgrims do- maybe there are some others? If some one asks me if I know of an MA in TEFL course in the UK which is inspired by humanistic thinking I shuffle my feet and begin to tell them about the MA program run by The Experiment in International Living in Brattleboro, Vermont. There the students actually have space and time to really study the work of Gattegno, Curran and Rogers. But this person asked me about MA courses in the United Kingdom?

CRITICISMS OF THE HUMANISTIC EXERCISE

Let us divide the criticism of the humanistic exercise into two parts: criticism from within the humanistic belief system and criticism from outside.
A powerful internal critic is Bernard Dufeu who has worked unceasingly over the last twenty five years to move humanistic thinking forward and whose book, Teaching Myself , stands with Stevick's work at the centre of the humanistic movement in language teaching.
In a recent survey of alternative approaches (Silent Way etc...) Dufeu warns of what he sees as lacking in current humanistic language work (which he calls the 'relational approach') He has this to say (Dufeu 1996):
" the relational approach has created some excellent but isolated techniques. It lacks an overall vision that would offer a progression for the learner based on relational and linguistic criteria and accompanied by a rich selection of exercises. Currently teachers only have isolated exercises that make up a very incomplete mosaic and very few of them are for complete beginners. There is no progression in the activities to allow a real entry into the target language and the first fifty hours are really problematic. "

I agree with Bernard that the last twenty five years has seen an explosion of creative exercises (think only of the dozen or more brilliant resource books by Alan Maley and Alan Duff in EFL) and that less attention has been given to how to bring them into coherent sequences that help learners rather than confuse them. The problem here is that, outside the concrete reality of a given group of learners , it is hard to define what the "relational and linguistic criteria" would be. If we are thinking of multinational classes then we would have add "cultural criteria".
Yes, there is work yet to be done. Maybe Bernard's next book will be on these criteria?

Let us turn now to criticisms of humanistic exercises from outside. Some of the criticism is simply stupid and mis-informed and does not need to detain us. There are

folk who describe humanistic language work as "flaky" and "wayout" and there are others who treat it with derision. I remember one trainer who wanted to send up humanistic work with a group of very senior trainees. He asked them to write their names on a small piece of paper; " now roll the paper carefully up into a small ball"

" Extend your tongue and place the paper on it "
" Draw your tongue back into your mouth "
" Savour the paper ball "
" Roll it round your mouth "
" Now please swallow the ball of paper "

The trainer congratulated those who refused to follow that last instruction! His tasteless game was meant to illustrate the absurdity of humanistic exercises and went down with that group like a lead balloon.

More interesting outside criticism comes in Legutke and Thomas, 1991. These two authors tried an exercise from Grammar in Action Again, Frank and Rinvolucri, with 11th, 12th and 13th grades in the German high school. In the exercise learners are each asked to choose half a dozen groupings they belong to or have belonged to. Each person then draws a shape for each of the collectives and marks with a cross their own relationship to and within the group. Students then explain their drawings to each other.

Here is some of the learner reaction that Legutke and Thomas report:

" Participants agreed with Frank and Rinvolucri that the exercise opened up an interesting and unusual perspective on their own personality and as a result could be quite motivating.

However, some participants repeatedly emphasised the point that when they drew their shapes they experienced in part strong emotions, and time and again quite surprising outlines emerged on the paper. Subconscious or semi-conscious contexts were uncovered this way . In many cases, particularly with non-adult learners, this procedure has been accompanied variously by painful emotions because it exposed desires of group belonging or positions of being placed on the outside of the group. The inner dynamic of the exercise forced learners into momentary undesired public exposure. "

The matters raised by these two authors are serious and well worth dealing with. For me they bring up the following questions about the class groups in question:

- was this their first exposure to this kind of exercise?
- what did the class teachers feel about using such exercises?
- what kind of relationship did each teacher have with his/her group?
- what had been done in the past to promote an atmosphere of openness and trust in each group?
- were the classes aware that they were taking part in a sort of experimental situation?

Though I don't have answers to these questions it is clear that since the activity caused distress to some of the students it was not a good choice for this point in their group process. That learners should not leave the humanistic classroom in an unresolved state of upset, goes without saying.

The points brought up by Legutke and Howard link back to Dufeu's worry about there being no adequate "relational" " framework that individual exercises can be fitted into. Dufeu suggests that the creation of a harmonious progression over days and weeks at the moment depends on the knowledge and skill of the teacher. I think it always will and I doubt if anyone can come up with a magic formula to obviate this reliance on the teacher knowing their job.

THREE AREAS OF HUMANISTIC EXERCISES

When a teacher works with a class in a humanistic frame of mind they will have three main areas of focus. These are the three:
- the task (in our case this is language learning)
- the mood of the group in the here and now
- individual stuff that surfaces from the students' pasts.

I want to divide humanistic exercises up into ones that deal with these three areas.

1. Exercises for language learning (the task)

Since there are large numbers of these which many readers of this book will be familiar with I will give only a couple of examples that make clear that a humanistic exercise can have a very detailed and precise linguistic focus.

A. Passing a word or phrase round the circle

Ask the students to stand in a circle and tell them they are going to pass an object round the circle and this object will be a word or phrase.
Cup your hands and mentally concentrate on the word you are going to pass to your neighbour in the circle. Get a feel of the word in your mind. Pass the word and say the word so that everybody can hear. Make sure you co-ordinate the passing with your hands and the saying so that they form one act of careful giving.
In turn each student passes the word to their neighbour both verbally and manually.
The linguistic focus of this exercise is on hard sounds in the target language and on specific intonation patterns you feel the students need to get their minds round.
If a student gets the sounds wrong, you gently cross the circle and "take" the word from the next person round the circle. You give the word back to a person in the circle upstream of the mistake maker so that the person with the problem can hear the word a couple of times more and then can have another go at it. This gentle, indirect form of correction is less likely to block the person with the pronunciation problem than direct correction would.

B. Comparing sub-routines (present simple first and third persons)

Ask each student to think of the last seven things they typically do before leaving their house or flat. Ask them to write these down (they will probably need help with vocabulary).

Now ask them to bring to mind a person they know well, a family member or a close friend. Ask them to write down the last seven things this person does before leaving their house or flat.
The students now work in groups of three comparing the sub-routines. Sometimes they are struck by differences in sub-routine between them and the other person they have chosen. As they read out their sentences to each other they are practising very precise grammar points (first and third persons singular, present simple).

The general point I am making is that a skilled teacher can use humanistic exercises to work on nitty-gritty aspects of the language. This teacher can be just as strictly "on task " as her colleagues working with gap-fills or with communicative exercises. The difference lies in the human dimension. In the two exercises above the students are relating to each other in a whole person way, in the first one very physically and in the second one more verbally. The symbolic aspect of the first exercise is very powerful as the students are carefully giving and receiving nuggets of the target language.

2. Exercises that work on the here and now of the group

Since a teacher working humanistically will have warmed-up students in their care it makes sense to keep a close eye on the weather in the group. The teacher needs to know where they are and something of how they feel. Is this a honeymoon period in which everybody is getting on well with other people or are some people moving towards storm? Is the group in a post-storm period when some of the anger and frustration participants have experienced has blown itself out?
I want to look at one exercise that helps the teacher gauge the mood people are in and another that modifies the way the group are feeling.

A. Weather Forecasting

Ask each student to think of themself as a weather system and to prepare to express their here and now mood in a meteorological metaphor. Also ask them to give a weather forecast for the rest of the day. One student might say:
" there is a mist everywhere this morning with patches of fog. It is cold and there is no wind. Later in the day there will be a breeze and the sun will come out "

This short exercise gives the teacher a pretty clear idea of how people feel right now and sometimes participants offer nuggets of information about themselves in this type of metaphorical activity that take on considerable significance later in a course.
It goes without saying that the teacher's focus is on taking in the plethora of information the exercise throws up and of retaining at least some of it for use later in the course.

B. Breathing in rhythm

Everybody is seated in a circle so they can see each other. Ask one person to notice their breathing but not to change it. Ask this person to follow their own breathing by

raising and lowering a hand. Ask everybody in the circle to raise and lower their own hand in rhythm with the first person. This person then looks at the person on their left who takes over the breathing leadership, raising and lowering their hand in rhythm with their own breathing. Everybody follows the second leader and so on round the group. (If you have more than 15-16 students, it is good to have two or more circles working simultaneously- it is hard work following the breathing of even 10 other people)

This exercise that I learnt from Bernard Dufeu is a marvellous one to help create or to celebrate harmony in a group. If the group mood is not for harmony the exercise is a useful catalyst for the start of a period of storming. If people are feeling angry then a "togetherness " activity of this depth brings them to a point where they need to interrupt "task " and really speak about what is on their mind, or at least some of it. (since "task" is language learning , the expression of their frustrations via the target language will be one of the most valuable language exercises on their course. There is no question of "rehearsal " here.)

3. Exercises that work on stuff from people's pasts

Whenever a teacher walks into a class with 30 participants she faces 30 here-and - nows and also 30 complex , walking histories. Frequently those histories will be conditioning what is really happening when the student and the teacher think they are on task. Let me offer a concrete and technical example:
Sergei was a Baltic shipping agent whom I taught one-to-one. He told me that we had 10 afternoons (over a fortnight) to try and solve his writing problem. As a speaker he was able upper intermediate; as a writer he was a hesitant, foot-tapping ,lower intermediate mess. As we worked it became apparent to Sergei that he had a similar problem in his native Russian and that he could now link this with a mother tongue teacher he had had in middle school. She disliked him, put him down, punished him and gave him unfair marks. (He checked this out by copying a classmate's composition almost verbatim : she gave him a D and the classmate an A!) It was clear that Sergei's linguistic past was obstructing his present like a blood clot blocking an artery. The sadistic teacher had broken the little boy's confidence in himself in this area. She had efficiently created a problem where there had been none. (Sergei left after that fortnight writing fluent faxes in English, but how that happened is another story)

I want to suggest one exercise that is useful near the beginning of a group to bring out stuff from the participants' past which can get in the way of them meeting each other effectively.

Dealing with Projections

Bring a large soft-ball to class and put it in the middle of the circle. Tell people to look around the group and see if anybody here reminds them of anybody they have

known from before. When a person sees someone in the group who is like someone they already know, they pick up the ball, throw it to the person and say:
" you remind me of..... because 1, 2, 3 .... and
" you are different from/to .... because.....
In a group of 20 people between six and ten people will have projections they feel able to share. These will tend to be positive ones.
The exercise , if it is used early in the life a group, will not be important in itself. Its importance lies in giving people permission to think and talk about projection, Often students become aware of much more powerful and serious projections days after this little exercise has been done in class.
Let me give e you an example of a powerful projection that this exercise released. We did the exercise on the first Tuesday of a two week course. On the Friday of that week Charlie told me that he had now finally disentangled me in his mind from a theatre director I reminded him of. This man was a person he both respected
and loathed and I looked like him, moved like him and spoke like him! Charlie felt a lot more comfortable in my class once he had really prised my image away from the other man 's in his head. Sorting us out mentally, turned a painful course into a good course for Charlie.
After strong experiences like this I am acutely aware, when I meet a new group, that I am meeting X number of here-and-nows but also x number of walking histories. I ignore these latter at my peril.

WHERE DO HUMANISTIC ACTIVITIES COME FROM ?

Opponents of the humanistic trend in language teaching will tell you that a teacher goes on a couple of therapy week-ends and brings some dangerous techniques back to her class which she then uses recklessly and fecklessly with her students. To support this point of view they will tell you that some of the techniques in Caring and Sharing in the Foreign Language Classroom are taken straight from therapy and could be very dangerous in the hands of an unskilled person. (So, incidentally, could a breadknife)

The sources of the humanistic exercise are many and varied. Some activities come from a teacher looking with fresh eyes at an age-old area , like, say ,dictation. Some exercises come from identifiable feeder fields, like drama training. Some are devised in response to a student need that the teacher does not yet have a tool for in her kit bag. She forges a new instrument to cope with the student need. Some activities arise from ordinary life experiences in which the teacher suddenly sees the beginning of a useful exercise.
Let me start with this last category.

Exercises that come from life experience

Imagine a train going out of London : four seats, two and two, facing each other. Seth and I took the two aisles seats. A young man with his head shaved, smelly socks and a kitbag lay sprawled over the two seats next to the window. It took him five minutes to move his dirty boot over, away from my elbow. As the train swayed through the

suburbs I built up a ferocious mental caricature of this bastard of a skinhead. All my stereotyping and racialist mental machinery was working overtime. After about 20 minutes the guy straightened himself up and , very skilfully picked up on something I had said to Seth l0 minutes before. I liked his voice immediately and very soon Seth and I were in full conversation with him. My absurd , negative first impression gurgled down the plug hole like used bathwater.
From this experience and from discussion with colleagues comes this exercise that could be used in the first five hours of a group coming together .

the e teacher tells the students of a time when she had a very wrong first impression of some one (could be positive or negative)

The students then think of a time when either they got a wrong first impression of someone or someone got a wrong first impression of them. They work on this in threes
The teacher then rounds off the exercise by giving out a text on wrong first impressions.

Though apparently about the past of people in the learning group this activity is really focused on the here-and-now of the group, as people try and sort out their first impressions of each other.

Exercises devised in response to student need.

A good example of a whole set of exercises that was motivated by student need is Letters (Burbidge et al., l996). The authors of this book worked intensively with Japanese second and fourth year university students and found that these young women could express themselves much better on the page than they could orally. Writing letters to them, receiving letters from them and getting them to write letters to each other was a perfect way of getting them to use the English that they knew in the channel that felt most comfortable to them. Once their confidence had been built up this way it was possible to help them to make the transition to meaningful oral communication. With these students it was certainly a case of their written fluency leading them later to oral fluency. Without the initial oral silence and relative written eloquence of those Gifu students, the useful exercises in Letters might never have been devised.

Exercises that come from feeder fields

Andrew Wright, Don Byrne , Alan Maley and Alan Duff were probably among the first EFL teachers to bring over ideas from other fields to enrich their language teaching. These pioneers, working in the 60's and 70's, launched the resource book genre in EFL, a category of book which has been the vehicle for the transmission of humanistic ideas and exercises for the last 30 years.
There are many streams that feed the language teaching lake. Here are a few of them:

Drama
Alan Maley and Alan Duff, drawing heavily on Viola Spolin's work, brought a whole range of drama and actor training techniques into EFL. Their book, Drama Techniques in Language Teaching , first came out in 1978 and is still a strong seller.

Pychodrama
Bernard Dufeu has drawn on the work of Jacob Moreno and Willy Urbain to create a completely new approach to teaching beginners : linguistic Psychodramaturgy. This is arguably the most complex and complete approach to teaching adult beginners yet conceived. It is packed with frames and activities that can be used by a teacher who does not necessarily buy the whole approach.
Among the main techniques brought across from psychodrama and its daughter, Gestalt, are the ideas of role-reversal and doubling. These have now been used by many writers of humanistic language teaching exercises.

Graphology
In the same way that voice carries the primary expression of language, its oral form, handwrting carries its secondary expression, the written form. Ideas culled from graphology started appearing in EFL magazines in 1996 -7. There is still much to be learnt and invented from the largely French-dominated field of graphology.

Maths
The Silent Way and the whole of Gattegno's thinking about language springs directly from mathematical thinking. All the open-ended, semantically free sentence-manipulation exercises , which are so different from gap-fills, come from the area of mathematical creativity. (Section 2 of Grammar Games is full of these)

Neuro-linguistic-Programming
A growing body of EFL teachers have taken initial training courses in NLP and have turned some of its rich range of exercises to language teaching use. NLP is still a rapidly developing field and we have so far only seen the beginnings of its adaptation to language teaching ends.

The above listing of feeder areas is not exhaustive but shows some of the pastures in which adventurous language teachers have grazed. My hunch is that the borrowings and adaptations of the past 25 years have been so thrilling and so fruitful, long term, that many more feeder fields not yet approached will be pressed into EFL service over the first 20 years of the 2lst century.

Exercises that come from a new look at an old area

In the 80's John Morgan and I stumbled on the fact that when we told stories to language students, some of them responded with a depth of feeling we did not at first understand. I remember an Italian business man who stopped me telling Little Red Riding Hood at the point where the little girl says " what big teeth you've got! "

" Basta " he shouted. He later explained that his three year-old stopped him at this point in wide-eyed anticipatory terror. For an instant he seemed to have become a copy of the little girl in a safe and linguistically useful regression.
We were late comers to the age-old tradition of oral story-telling and the book we did in 1983 (Once Upon a Time) has been useful to a whole swathe of language teachers who wanted to look at the old with new eyes, first ours and then theirs. The great thing about taking a new look at something very old and familiar is that new angles are genuinely shocking and exciting.

THE FUTURE SPREAD OF HUMANISTIC IDEAS

I have happily poured my professional life so far into active participation in the humanistic language teaching movement, a movement parallel to community architecture and to the thinking of divorce lawyers who push their clients towards reconciliation rather than litigation. My own belief in the rightness of this approach to language learners grows more firm from year to year.
And yet I know that the resource book genre, the main print carrier of these ideas, still only reaches a tiny minority of the language teaching professionals. In a 10 year period the average Cambridge resource list title will sell around 25,000 copies, which is a drop in the language teaching ocean. And Cambridge are the best marketers of this genre.

For me the big question is how to reach the great majority of language teachers out there beyond the cosy orthodoxy of the communicative approach that surrounds us here in little Europe. How do we reach the choral readers, the gap-fillers and the grammar-translators in the huge countries of the East and the South?

Perhaps one way to reach them is to accept the methodology that is so normal in their societies that they do not remotely see it as a methodology., as a matter of choice. They see it as a given, a part of nature. If this hypothesis is correct than a good way for humanistic methodologists to work is to set themselves the task of humanising grammar -translation so that it becomes a whole person activity. The humanistic frame of mind can come to inform any technology of language teaching, which is what the grammar -translation way is.

This article has looked at what has happened over the last 25 years .What will happen over the next 25 ?

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