

the chapter then proceeds with some extremely useful advice to teachers of EFL, under these headings: 'Performance Targets, Priorities, RP High Acceptability, Minimum General Intelligibility and Teaching Methods'.

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Graham Bushnell and Fiona Morel. *Think Aloud*. London: Evans Brothers Limited, 1980. Student's Book: 88 pp., £1,90; Teacher's Book: xxiii + 88 pp., £4,00; Cassette: £5,50.

David Cotton. *International Business Topics*. London. Evans Brothers Limited, 1980. 174 pp.

Mark Fletcher and Roger Hargreaves. *Activating Vocabulary*. London: Evans Brothers Limited, 1980. 93 pp., £1,90.

It has long been a sorry axiom — especially for the idealistic teacher — that interesting and effective learning techniques take up a great deal of time. This is especially so in respect of dialogues as they apply to foreign and second language students of English. In many cases the teacher, faced with large classes and a full programme of lessons, has of necessity to fall back on improvisations which turn out to be little more than memory tests — with teacher performing and student supposedly learning. The end result is an exhausted (and frustrated) teacher and a group of puzzled students who, with all the will in the world, are unable really to ascertain what is expected of them.

This need no longer be so. Graham Bushnell and Fiona Morel, realizing that there is often 'no formalized link-up between the stimulus ... and the student's version', have come up with a series of programmes that allow the teacher to control student response. In answer to three important questions — *What is the language item?*, *What does the student want to say?* and *How much is he going to say?* — they have devised a new approach. The theory behind this English workshop is based on three ideas, all fundamental to the workings of the programme:

The teacher

For the teacher, a 'script' is not enough. Even if it is selected from a course book that the teacher is currently using and therefore relevant to the particular teaching programme, a script standing on its own without a *strict*

presentation method will not help a teacher launch an improvisation in class. This is perhaps one of the reasons why so many 'dialogues' from course books are treated as a straight text to be read or listened to as comprehension passages. It goes without saying that the teacher should be totally at ease with his material and that all his energy should be directed to the preparation behind the script and *not* the performance of it.

The student

The student must not be confronted immediately with the script, whether he listens to it or whether he reads it. This only encourages feats of memory and has nothing to do with the individual student's ability to express himself on his own in English. *The script should therefore be approached in stages*, so that the student in fact 'invents' the script or 'discovers' the script before he meets it in its entirety. He reacts to visual and aural stimuli and builds up the dialogue from the skeleton of the situation, the teacher eliciting the content progressively from the students. This is the Workshop method and is explained step by step further below.

The language item

An improvisation *cannot* teach new material. Although the teacher may not be able to avoid the odd new vocabulary item, the value of an improvisation is to show the student what he already 'knows' and has never been able to put into practice. It shows the student the flexibility and the limitations of his English.

(pp. vi-vii)

Think Aloud evolved from weekly improvisation sessions (or 'workshops' to use the new vogue word) which the authors conducted at the International Language Centre Club in Paris. There are twenty-two sketches in the 'Student's Book', each carefully and painstakingly outlined for the benefit of both teacher and student in the 'Teacher's Book'. One has no hesitation in agreeing with the publisher's 'blurb' that the programme is built around a 'unique method of presentation'. It is unique in that the teacher has very little preparation and is carefully advised at every step; non-verbal communication — mime, gesture, facial expression and stress — is taught simultaneously with verbal expression; there is an outstanding cassette that accompanies the programme, containing intonation patterns, the role-play dialogues and the complete spoken dialogues. It is unique in one further attribute: at every step the teacher is able to see whether he is fulfilling the general, specific and instructional objectives of second and foreign language teaching.

International Business Topics (unlike *Think Aloud*, which is aimed at intermediate students) has been graded as 'advanced level', and rightly so — as those who have a command of the language should derive the most 'benefit from the book'. The main aims, as David Cotton informs the reader in his introduction, are to:

- (i) develop the skill in comprehending business texts;
- (ii) enrich vocabulary and understanding of specialist terms;
- (iii) provide practice in speaking and writing English.

The Contents page makes fascinating reading, with topics ranging from 'Multinationals' to 'The Japanese approach to business' and from 'Bribery — an inevitable evil?' to 'Copyright — audio and video recording'. Cotton has obviously gone to some trouble to ensure the whetting of student appetites. To facilitate digestion he provides concise directions as to how his texts should be used and tops this off with a detailed key to selected exercises. His approach, furthermore, has many delightful aspects. Not for him the stodgy literary comprehension piece — instead he confronts the student with the idiom and idiosyncrasies of the business world. The 'preparation' for the 'Bribery' extract asks students to supply the common ground held by 'graft', 'payola', 'slush money', 'speed money' (India), 'dash' (Nigeria) and then poses the ethical question: 'Is bribery in business inevitable or can it be eliminated?' There are many more examples of the author's refreshing outlook. Our technicians and colleges would do well to inspect the book more closely. Funny as this may seem, it also makes excellent bed-time reading!

Activating Vocabulary is the second of four books in the new *Evans Functional Units* series, and is designed 'for lower intermediate or advanced students'. The premise behind the book is that students should generate and build their own vocabulary and — moreover — work together with others in this process. It is bound to be useful, although — once again — one will have to question the effectiveness (for our students) of a programme in which situational dialogues are based on British rather than South African experience.

A.D.A.

Joy Parkinson. *English for Doctors and Nurses*. London: Evans Brothers Ltd, 1980. £2,75.

Joy Parkinson's *English for Doctors and Nurses* was written with