FOREIGN TEACHING ASSISTANT PILOT PROJECT
SUMMER 1987

OVERALL PLAN

Each year at the University of Hawaii, a large number of international students enter graduate programs as teaching assistants (TAs). The majority of these students are science majors and come from countries in Asia. As part of the orientation process for these new teaching assistants, the University of Hawaii is offering a two week preparation program (scheduled for August 10 to 19, 1987) which includes modules on Cultural Orientation, Oral Skills, and Classroom Management. The components of the modules are as follows:

Cultural Orientation
- The American university environment
- Classroom expectations of the American student
- General orientation to American culture in the Hawaiian context

Oral Skills
- Lecture style and appropriate level of formality
- Developing fluent and natural speech in English
- Improving and compensating for accent so that students can fully understand the content of instruction

Classroom Management
- Teaching style and approaches
- Responding to student questions and facilitating discussions and other forms of interaction
- Planning for efficient use of time both inside and outside class

This program will offer three sections of no more than 25 students each taught by members of the staff of the Department of English as a Second Language under the coordination of the
Director of the English Language Institute. Classes will meet four hours per day, with only Sunday free, for a total of 36 contact hours as follows:

- **9:00 - 10:20**  
  **Session One**

- **10:20 - 10:30**  
  **Break**

- **10:30 - 11:50**  
  **Session Two**

- **11:50 - 12:40**  
  **Lunch**

- **12:40 - 2:00**  
  **Session Three**

- **2:00 -->**  
  **Individualized Language Lab (optional)**

Class time will include lecture, discussion, group exercises, as well as audio and video taping of practice teaching activities. These activities will all be geared toward helping the international teaching assistant acclimate to the new environment and prepare for teaching in an American classroom.

**ACCOMPLISHED TO DATE**

Beginning in January 1987, four students in the ESL 630 course (Language Curriculum Design) agreed to do a needs analysis and set tentative objectives for the August pilot workshop as their course project. These students (including one Chinese English teacher, whose husband is a foreign TA) have done an extensive review of the literature on training foreign TAs. In the process, they identified more than 15 universities and colleges that have existing programs for training foreign TAs. Ten of these institutions, when contacted, cooperated by sending useful information on their course offerings, their general policies vis a vis foreign TAs, etc. All of this information was utilized in the development of interview procedures and a questionnaire for analyzing the needs of foreign TAs on the Manoa
Interviews were subsequently conducted with 30 randomly selected foreign TAs from across the campus. In addition, a questionnaire was administered to the students of the above TAs. On-site classroom observations of the foreign TAs teaching their classes were also be carried out. The needs analysis team, under the guidance of Professors Brown and Richards, produced a report of the analyses and results of this project in May 1987. This report effectively focused on the needs of foreign TAs and provided a thorough, though tentative, set of objectives, which have served as the basis for developing the August foreign TA training project.

During the period between May 18 and June 12, three graduate assistants in the Department of ESL (Dominique Buckley, Graham Crookes, and Gail Kimzin) each worked twenty hours per week planning, developing and coordinating the curricula for each of the three components of the August pilot project (see Appendices A, B & C for scope and sequence plans for each of the three modules). This was done under the guidance and supervision of three professors from the Department of ESL department (Brown, Chaudron and Pennington). Each professor took primary responsibility for one component. Brown also took responsibility for the overall coordination of the project.

STILL TO BE DONE

One week before the actual teaching begins (August 3 - 7), the three TAs and three professors will work together for twenty
hours to finalize all last minute curriculum issues and prepare for the first week of instruction. Instruction will then be delivered as described above during the period between August 10 and 19. Following instruction (August 19 to 24), time will be devoted to evaluation of the effectiveness of the pilot project and production of an evaluation report.

Based on what we learn in this pilot project, work will continue in the Fall semester 1987 on the curriculum and materials for an English Language Institute course, ELI 98, which has been approved for Spring semester 1988.
**BUDGET**

**PERSONNEL**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>May 18 - Jun 12</th>
<th>Hours</th>
<th>Rate</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3 Graduate Students</td>
<td>70 hours each</td>
<td>$5.80</td>
<td></td>
<td>$1218.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>20 hours each</td>
<td>$5.80</td>
<td></td>
<td>348.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>40 hours each</td>
<td>$5.80</td>
<td></td>
<td>696.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>20 hours each</td>
<td>$5.80</td>
<td></td>
<td>348.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Workstudy Typist</td>
<td>50 hours</td>
<td>$4.10</td>
<td></td>
<td>205.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>50 hours</td>
<td>$4.10</td>
<td></td>
<td>205.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Faculty Compensation** (Brown, Chaudron, Pennington, & Rickard)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>May 18 - Jun 12</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3 @ $250 to develop curriculum and materials, and to train graduate assistants</td>
<td>$750.00 *</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Brown, Chaudron &amp; Pennington May 18 - June 12)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 @ $250 to supervise teaching and evaluation</td>
<td>$750.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Brown, Chaudron &amp; Pennington Aug 3 - 24)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 @ $500 to supervise the pilot project</td>
<td>$500.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Brown Aug 3 - 24)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 @ $250 to do all in-class video taping</td>
<td>$250.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Rickard Aug 3 - 24)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SUPPLIES AND SERVICES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>May 18 - June 12</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Paper</td>
<td></td>
<td>$40.00 *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Video cassettes (90 min.) @ $10.00 x 25</td>
<td></td>
<td>$250.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Copying services</td>
<td></td>
<td>$100.00 *</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TOTAL BUDGET**

$5660.00

*Fiscal year 1986-1987 (Subtotal = $2313.00).*
APPENDIX A

ORAL SKILLS MODULE  DOMINIQUE BUCKLEY

SCOPE AND SEQUENCE

Improving oral skills in nine daily sessions seems an unattainable goal. Yet, it can be realistic when the focus is on key elements and problem areas -- especially with the overlapping support and reinforcement of the classroom management and cultural orientation sections of this project. The emphasis in the oral skills section of this program will be on developing perception and strategies to improve and compensate for still developing oral skills so that the FTAs will possess the tools to continue their progress beyond the nine sessions. The needs analysis indicated that the FTAs duties at the university will include brief lectures, demonstrations, and guiding students in a laboratory setting. To fulfill these tasks the FTAs will need practice in global English language skills. They will need to express themselves clearly and understand the questions posed by their students. They will also require familiarity with the language of the university setting and local dialects. And, they will need to develop confidence in comprehending and producing spontaneous speech.

The following summary includes the objectives of the course, tentative lesson plans and a description of the activities designed to meet these objectives.

OBJECTIVE 1 : Developing awareness

The main goal here is to aid the FTAs in recognizing their individual strong and weak points in order to improve the areas that will most greatly benefit them. They also require the awareness to realize the importance and necessity of improvements. The FTAs will develop self analysis techniques by listening to pre-recorded samples of non-native speech and then applying them to their own speech. They will learn to maximize their strengths and compensate for their weaknesses. They will compare their native languages to English for similarities and differences. The students will actively attend to pronunciation, will be encouraged to adapt to and imitate the American way of speaking as much as possible.

OBJECTIVE 2 : Lecture style and level of formality

To familiarize the FTAs with the appropriate lecture styles of large classes and small groups, a videotape entitled Speaking Effectively will be viewed and discussed. The focus will be on register which includes vocabulary, intonation patterns and features of voice quality. Role plays will be useful in learning
manner of address to students, peers and professors.

OBJECTIVE 3: Natural and fluent speech

This section will be most emphasized in the course. Each lesson will focus on one individual level, starting from the smallest unit of speech, i.e., the phoneme and moving to the larger units of stress and intonation. These elements will build on each other rather than being dealt with separately and will integrate with the other objectives.

Phonemes
Attention to the pronunciation of word final sounds and reduced vowels will be emphasized as these are most often responsible for miscommunication.

Syllable, word and phrase stress
Stress plays an important role in English. The students will come to realize that English is a syllable timed language and what the implications are. The stress patterns of a multi-word phrase can be identical to that of poly-syllabic words:
- economics = in the comics, across = are crossed,
- approximate = a box of it, understand = in the sand,
- consideration = has been a nation.

Discrimination practice on constrastive and emphatic stress:
- I disa' gree vs. I' disagree vs. ' I disagree.

Recognition of stress in noun compounds vs. noun phrases:
- blackboard vs. black board

Nouns vs. adjectives: - correlate, estimate, alternate.

Nouns vs. verbs: - result, insult, import.

Contractions
Understanding contractions and knowing their appropriate uses:
- hafta, wanna, usta,
- greetings; gooby
- negative modals; won’, don’,
- shortened words; ‘cause.

Reductions
In informal, rapid and obligatory contexts. Focus will be on reduced vowels in unstressed positions.

Assimilations
Other vowel and consonant changes resulting from casual style, reduced or rapid speech, e.g., palatalization.

Intonation
The seven basic contours will be examined with a focus on use and meaning. The six patterns of stress and rhythm will be introduced and practiced.
Pauses and pause fillers
The length, position and effect of pauses for production and comprehension will be examined. The typical American pause fillers necessary for fluent speech will be taught. The extra-linguistic effects and meanings of certain fillers along with their use as substitutes for tag questions will be taught.

Voice quality
The typical features of English voice quality including volume, speed, pace, rhythm and range will be practiced.

OBJECTIVE 4 : Understanding their students
Understanding student slang and deciphering local varieties of speech (HCE) will be practiced. Techniques on how to focus on important words, words known to them and inferencing the meaning of unknown words will be emphasized. Understanding student questions can be facilitated by using common expressions to elicit more information or to ask for clarification. These strategies are useful both for comprehension and production.

OBJECTIVE 5 : Improving and compensating
Once the FTAs have realized their weaknesses and are on their way toward improvement, strategies to compensate for their shortcomings will be useful. Gestures, features of voice quality, general enthusiasm, preparation and humour, along practicing key vocabulary items that are field specific, can offset a less than perfect accent. Reinforcement with visual aids such as handouts can also be compensatory.

PLANNED ACTIVITIES
Over thirty five activities have been planned. Implementation will be based on individual needs and group levels.
General description of task types:

- extensive audio use:
  - visits to the language laboratory
  - Academic Listening audio tape and work book exercises (Dunkel and Pialorsi),
  - demo-tapes of pre-recorded non-native speakers,
  - practice tapes created by the F.T.A.s
  - local speech and HCE recordings.
  - Clear Speech audio tapes and work sheets (J. Gilbert)

- Video presentations: analysis of student videos (from classroom management section), viewing of "Speaking Effectively".
- dictation for reduced speech, stress, information emphasis.
- reading aloud: tongue twisters, announcements, short technical texts.

- dictionary exercises for determining level of formality, word stress, pronouncing new words and usage.
- information gap exercises for voice quality, reception skills.

- drills, repetition, matching exercises (intonation patterns, new vocabulary).

- group and pair work (focusing on negotiation)

- homework: observation and practice, extra lab work if desired or recommended.

- individual presentations, role play and simulations

TENTATIVE LESSON PLANS

LESSON 1
- determining problem areas: general and individual
- developing awareness: kinesthetic and contrastive
- focus on phonemes: consonant clusters: -ed, -es, -kt, -tth, reduced vowels: mostly schwa
- introduce key terms: voice quality, stress, intonation
- overview of course
- course objectives

LESSON 2
- contrastive analysis
- listening to samples of non-native speech
- developing analysis/ perception techniques
- their suggestions for improvements for these speakers
- identifying false cognates: general and field specific

LESSON 3
- "Speaking Effectively": 21 min. video
- non-verbal gestures and expressions
- syllable stress
- self evaluation of initial recording

LESSON 4
- word stress
- phrase stress
- emphatic and contrastive stress
- six basic rhythm and stress patterns
- numerals, abbreviations
- short presentations (live)
LESSON 5
- intonation: seven basic contours
- visi-pitch demonstration in lab
  (the V.P. is a computer attachment that displays the vocal pitch of the user on a monitor or large screen)

LESSON 6
- voice quality: range, volume, speed, pauses, pause fillers
- silence: hearing what's not there and in between the lines

LESSON 7
- understanding and producing questions
- eliciting/asking for clarification
- contractions, assimilations
- local speech: "mild" Hawaiian Creole English (intonation and phonemes)
- American slang

LESSON 8
- spontaneous speech: production and comprehension
- rapid speech
- inferencing the unknown
- re-analysis of videos taped in classroom management (linguistic)

LESSON 9
- compensation techniques
- suggestions for continued improvements
- listening to final cassette recording and comparison to first
SCOPE AND SEQUENCE

Goals

On completing the course, students will be able to

1) give a lecture fluently and comprehensibly;
2) elicit student questions appropriately and comprehensibly;
3) respond comprehensibly and fluently to students' questions;
4) deal with problematic classroom interaction.

Day 1

- introduction to Classroom Management module
- administration of in-class participant information questionnaire
- the self-introduction and the course introduction: discussion of how this is accomplished in US universities and elsewhere
- group exercise: preparation and delivery of intros; class presentation; peer and instructor feedback.

See Byrd et al., pp. 14-17.

Day 2

- the concept of 'teaching style': instructor modelling followed by discussion
- characteristics of good and bad teachers
- development of self-critical techniques
- the lecture: brief presentation by instructor
- the explanation: a major element of the lecture
  group exercise: developing and delivering explanations

See Byrd et al., pp. 35-6; 46-54; 56-61.
Day 3
- planning
  a) the course (discussion of departmental requirements)
  b) the lesson/lecture (elements of the lecture)
     pair exercise - joint development of lecture
     followed by class comparisons of plans
  c) homework/assignments (discussion of responsibilities of TAs)

See Byrd et al, pp. 63-65

Day 4
- the lecture
  a) observation of videotaped lecture
  b) detailed critique (verbal and non-verbal language, use of
     rhetorical devices, summaries, outlines, etc.)
  c) group exercise: re-write/repair observed lecture

See Byrd et al, pp. 41-2; 67; 76-81

Day 5
- the lecture
  a) deliver previously prepared lecture, and record on videotape
  b) peer and self-criticism

See Byrd et al, p. 66 and passim

Day 6
- the handling and use of questions
  a) brief presentation by instructor
  b) review of US faculty lecture(s)
  c) class exercise: mini-explanations with focus on using and
     responding to questions
- the use of AV aids
  
a) the US scene versus elsewhere

b) departmental (and discipline) variation in use

c) practical pitfalls with UH's own system:
   brief hands-on experience

See Byrd et al, pp. 90–95; 43–45

Day 7
- the discussion
  
a) rationale for using discussions (brief instructor presentation)

b) examination of the problems of running discussions

c) small group roleplays, rotating roles (audiotaped)

d) small group critiques, based on audiotaped segments

See Byrd et al, pp. 68–72

Day 8
- "discipline problems": a cross-cultural pooling of experience

- small group exercises focusing on any one of the points dealt
  with earlier in the course: a final opportunity to get some
  practice and feedback.

Day 9
- evaluation of the course
This is a pilot course, both oral evaluation guided by the
instructor, and written feedback (based on a detailed
questionnaire to be developed by J. D. Brown) will be
solicited.

- students tested for achievement
CULTURAL ORIENTATION MODULE

APPENDIX C

GAIL H. KIMZIN

SCOPE AND SEQUENCE

Day 1. Focus: U.S. Education System

Microskills

a) understand the U.S. educational system levels (e.g., nursery, elementary, junior high school, high school, junior/community college, university)

b) familiarize oneself with names and brief descriptors of local high schools, community colleges, colleges/universities.

Activities

a) complete matrix comparing educational systems in U.S. and home country (Byrd et al, p.20)

b) scan Star Bulletin's recent section on high schools and post secondary institutions on Oahu

Day 2. Focus: U.H. Administration, Admissions, and Graduation Requirements

Microskills

a) develop an understanding of the university's administration hierarchy

b) know university admission requirements, resident and non-resident status and fees

c) familiarize oneself with the contents of the UH undergraduate and graduate catalogs

d) know prerequisites and core curriculum courses in one's own department

Activities

a) peruse undergraduate catalog to fill in tables of admission requirements, costs, etc.

b) scan brochures from university admissions or brochures from own department
Day 3. Focus: Campus Resources and Services

Microskills

a) become acquainted with resources to enhance TA teaching

b) serve as a resource for university assistance available to students

Activities

a) visit IRSC, Keller Hall Computing Center, Audio-Visual Center at Sinclair Library

b) refer to undergraduate catalog or other university publications about services provided by Writer's Workshop, Writing Lab, Speech Confidence Lab, Math Lab, Lecture Notes Series, etc.

c) role play placing a packet order through Ditto Copies, Kinko's etc.

Day 4. Focus: Departmental Hierarchy, Staff Positions, and Responsibilities

Microskills

a) distinguish among graduate assistant, lecturer, associate professor, assistant professor and full professor

b) identify position titles and their respective faculty within one's own department

c) find out faculty members' names, position, responsibilities, and areas of expertise

d) know "who you go to for what"

Activities

a) complete a flow chart of departmental hierarchy to include names and position titles
b) fill out directory (Byrd et al. p. 28-30) with name, professional status, courses, other duties, area of expertise, office no. & phone

c) conduct a search in one's own department to fill out a questionnaire regarding the faculty and staff responsible for the following: supplies, extra keys, textbooks, room requisition, AV equipment, students' personal information, mail box, mail service [business (who pays?), personal], parking stickers, insurance, etc.

Day 5. Focus: American University/Classroom Environment

Microskills

a) discuss TAs' stereotypes/preconceptions of American students

b) discuss classroom issues that affect teaching and learning (e.g., class size, homework policies, students' ability level)

c) recognize possible sensitive issues and appropriate ways to deal with them.

Activities

a) react to students' explanations of classroom appropriate and inappropriate behavior

b) rank order common learning activities from most to least effective and discuss their pros and cons

Day 6. Focus: U.S. Grading System

Microskills

a) draw parallels between U.S. letter grade and home country's grading system

b) understand university, department, and professors' policies on grading

c) consider possible quantitative and qualitative factors that comprise the final grade
d) consider ways to deal with cheating and plagiarism

Activities

a) review university policy on grading

b) list different quantitative (e.g., homework assignments, midterm tests, pop quizzes) and qualitative (participation, effort, improvement) factors that might comprise a final grade. Discuss the validity of each

c) contrast paraphrased and plagiarized student papers

d) consider classroom and/or testing procedures that reduce or eliminate cheating

Day 7. Focus: Student Expectations of the University, Professors, and TAs

Microskills

a) understand the concept of students as "paying consumers of the product of education"

b) create an awareness of students' expectations of TAs

c) address misconceptions of both foreign TAs and their students

d) understand the need to provide external motivation and possible strategies

Activities

a) react to recorded dialogs in which a communication breakdown occurs between a TA and a student

b) list techniques to motivate students and choose the most appropriate according to different prescribed situations

Day 8. Focus: Teaching Evaluations

Microskills

a) discuss methods for teacher evaluations (e.g., student questionnaire, self-analysis, peer observations,
videotaping, supervising professor's observations and evaluations)

Activities
a) become familiar with different ratings, observation guides
b) complete a self-analysis questionnaire

Day 9. Focus: University TA Policies and Organizations

Microskills
a) understand university policy on TAs in regards to 1/2 or 1/4 time positions, appointment, reappointment, insurance benefits, tax status
b) familiarize oneself with the function and service of the Graduate Student Organization (GSO)

Activities
a) list questions beforehand to address the guest speaker
b) listen to a guest speaker from the GSO and/or other GA/TA/RA representative

REFERENCE