

Teaching Conversation and Negotiation Skills in English
Using Teacher-Made, Semi-Scripted Conversation Models (*New Zealand*)

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Statement of the Issue

For many years now I have been teaching English as an additional language to adult migrants and refugees from Asia, South America, Europe, the Middle East and Africa in a New Zealand tertiary institution. I believe that it is vital that my students learn the skills and cultural norms of conversation and negotiation in the local variety of English as quickly and as efficiently as possible. It is therefore important that the models from which they learn are close to the language of the context in which they will be living, so that they do not have to 're-learn' in the 'real' world.

The challenge for the teacher is to find readily accessible, authentic (ie real world) samples of the target language suitable for classroom use and to devise appropriate activities to facilitate this learning. Learners are surrounded by 'authentic' language in their daily lives but it is heard fleetingly, and simple absorption by exposure is not the most efficient way of learning, as the data is too complex and seldom has the built-in redundancy necessary for efficient learning. One could presumably record the language of the street and use it in the classroom, but there are ethical and practical barriers to this. Even if recorded samples of actual language use could be used (and some theorists advocate this), the data may be too complex for most learners to handle in the classroom. Textbooks provide models, but they are not always very authentic and they may be derived from a context that is very different from the one in which the learner is to live. The many parts of the English speaking world have varying linguistic and cultural norms for casual conversation and other genres such as negotiation and service encounters, and the transfer of language and socio-cultural strategies from a different part of the world has the potential to lead to miscommunication. Even Australian models do not reflect the particular blend of Pacific and Asian culture that contributes to the New Zealand context today.

Literature Review

I will briefly survey the literature that most influenced my approach to addressing this issue.

In an article introducing *Teachers' Voices 6* (de Silva Joyce & Slade, 2000), Helen de Silva Joyce and Diana Slade summarize the literature to date on analyzing and teaching casual conversation, outlining the problems that arise from using the scripted dialogues often found in traditional

textbooks as models. They point out that these dialogues are often based on the grammar of written language, omit or distort many of the important features of real life oral interaction and fail to model longer turns which are so often part of natural conversation in English. They ignore the insights gained from recent linguistic analysis of the features of casual conversation (Burns, 2001; Eggins & Slade, 1997). In the same article de Silva Joyce and Slade describe how the features of conversational genres can be taught, using a methodology called the teaching/learning cycle (see de Silva Joyce & Slade, 2000 pxiii) with an authentic model to help learners identify the stages of the genre (the organizational sequence of a typical exchange) and the key language features within it. In addition they point out the importance of teaching the micro aspects of discourse (for example formulaic expressions used in conversation, typical question and answer responses and turn-taking) and describe the typical problems learners have with these.

In the same volume Butterworth (2000) explains how it was possible to create authentic models for classroom use for lower level learners from semi-scripted role-played dialogues. The semi-scripting involved giving native speakers a scenario based on real life interactions he had encountered and asking them to role-play an exchange without a word for word script. He then recorded the role-plays and transcribed them, later abridging them for classroom use with lower level learners.

Carter and McCarthy (1995) Carter, Hughes and McCarthy (1998) and Barraja-Rohan (1997) also advocate the use of authentic models to teach the norms of spoken English. Carter and his colleagues suggest that learners should be encouraged to undertake consciousness-raising activities such as looking at naturalistic data, discussing it, and creating their own or the group's rule for the features they notice. In addition, Barraja-Rohan emphasizes the importance of helping learners to discuss cross cultural differences in norms of interaction. She advocates the use of role-play after initial exposure to the authentic data to practise the language and further explore differences in cultural norms. The teaching of socio cultural norms as an essential part of the teaching of conversational genres based on naturalistic data is also advocated by Liddicoat (1997).

Finally McCarthy and Carter (2001) argue that while corpora and naturalistic data should inform teaching, they should not control it. Teachability, learnability and relevance to the learner should also play a part in the decisions made by teachers.

Procedures

Inspired by the literature I had been reading I decided early in 2003 to try to find more authentic models for my teaching of conversational and negotiation skills to adult migrants and refugees at a pre-intermediate to intermediate level in New Zealand. I will describe later in this chapter how I first used published Australian materials and then went on to develop my own. In order to facilitate the development of my teaching in the use of these models, I decided to engage in some action research. I collected and analyzed data to find out if the materials (both the published and teacher-made) directly or indirectly helped to improve learners' skills, and which activities facilitated the improvement, as well as how practical they were to use in the classroom. In carrying out the research I learned much about teaching from models and also about the process of teacher action research. I initially carried out two cycles while teaching conversational genres in semesters one and two 2003. I then carried out a third cycle while teaching the language of negotiation (in semester two 2005). In the second and third cycles I tried to improve my teaching practice based on the findings of the last, and in the third cycle I made improvements to my research methodology and data gathering tools.

Student Profile

The students in the three classes were adult male and female permanent immigrants aged from late teens to mid fifties. They were at a minimum level (roughly equivalent to IELTS 4.5 General) but some had individual skills well below or well above this level. Table 1 gives a brief summary of the numbers in class, countries of origin, and time in New Zealand:

Table 1

	Semester 1 2003	Semester 2 2003	Semester 2 2005
Number in class	22	19	24
Time in NZ at enrolment	6 mths–6 yrs no data for one student who had been in NZ for at least two years	5 days–4 yrs	9 mths–17 yrs
In NZ less than 1 year	6	9	3
Countries of origin			
Mainland China	11	6	5

Iran	1		2
Somalia	1	1	1
Taiwan	2	2	1
Korea	1	2	4
Thailand	3		1
Sri Lanka	2	1	1
Vietnam	1		
Turkey		2	
Japan		1	1
Indonesia		2	
Cambodia		1	
Jordan		1	
Ethiopia			3
Malaysia			1
Serbia			1
Afghanistan			1
Tonga			1
Hong Kong			1

The Materials

In the first cycle I used unscripted or semi-scripted Australian conversations from *Beach St 2* (Delaruelle, 2001) and *Listening to Australia Intermediate* (Brawn, 2002). The norms of oral interaction in New Zealand and Australian English are very close, so these texts were useful, but there were differences in context and cultural norms between these and the types of conversations needed by my New Zealand learners.

While using the Australian samples, I therefore began to make models of my own to supplement them, also writing transcripts and worksheets with activities for learners. The methodology owed much to Butterworth's semi-scripting. From my experience, and from my knowledge of the kinds of interactions my learners were most likely to encounter in their daily lives, scenarios were written. Native English speaking EAL (English as an Additional Language) teachers were then asked to role-play themselves in these scenarios—a fictional but relevant and natural situation in which a problem was discussed. They discussed, for example, how to find a parking place in the

city in the evening without paying and how to ensure teenagers observed their curfews. I recorded all the conversations except the first with no prior rehearsal, as I wanted the language to have as many of the features of natural conversation as possible. I then transcribed them, looked at the resulting language, picked out the features that I thought would be of most use for learners to 'notice', and created an accompanying worksheet with questions about the key vocabulary, discourse and other linguistic features and socio-cultural underpinnings of the language used in the models. The linguistic awareness I needed to identify the key features came from my reading of Eggins and Slade (1997), Burns (2001) and Pawley and Syder (1983). Later I recorded another set of role-played semi-scripted dialogues to teach the norms of negotiation. Further dialogues were recorded in 2005 for teaching the basic conversational genre.

In the first cycle I needed to find further naturalistic data on which to base my teaching because the material from the Australian books did not demonstrate fully the features of the genre I was teaching and researching, and I hadn't yet completed the recording of the teacher made models. As there was no known published authentic New Zealand material suitable for this level and I wanted to avoid relying on less authentic sources, I listened to conversations between native speakers. I also occasionally did a demonstration role-play in the classroom with more competent learners. For the second and third cycle I used my own newly-created models and materials, supplemented with some Australian material.

Using the Authentic Data in the Teaching

From my experience teaching over many years I have discovered that there are certain basic conversation skills that learners at this level rarely have. One is an ease and fluency in using questions to elicit information from a conversation partner. In addition they are rarely able to use conversational discourse markers (for example, 'well', 'so', 'anyway'), or manage long turns and natural transitions in conversation.

In all three semesters, the skills I decided to focus on were those identified as weak in both the pre-tests and the initial self assessments.

First Cycle: Basic Conversation with Long Turns

After revising the conversational skills learners had already learned at the intermediate level, I began to address the weaknesses I had identified in the pre-test - using stock formulaic questions and conversational discourse markers to enhance fluency.

The only models available to me at this stage were the Australian ones, and these samples did not offer sufficient data on the use of questions in small talk, so I had to draw on my familiarity with the natural interactions I heard as a native speaker. I presented to learners the kinds of statements which typically occur in a natural conversation, particularly in small talk—for example ‘I’m from Korea’, ‘I went to the movies last night’—and invited them to create follow-up questions which were then put on the board, examined and modified to make them more ‘native-like’. This introduced learners to the formulaic and cultural nature of ‘follow-up’ conversational questions used to elicit information. We next brainstormed questions to initiate a topic in conversation and found that they also tended to be formulaic. I encouraged learners to memorize this formulaic language to increase their fluency in conversation, and we used role-play to practise in the classroom.

To teach the use of discourse markers, I made copies of the transcripts of the Australian textbook samples mentioned above and took them to class. I asked learners to find samples of the use of ‘and’, ‘so’, ‘anyway’ and ‘well’ as discourse markers in the texts and try to work out what their meaning or effect was in the context. Most already knew from their intermediate studies how to use ‘anyway’ to change the subject. But analysis of the use of other markers proved too hard for students at this level. They didn’t have the language to explain even if they could see what was happening, so I helped them articulate the meaning or effect of the discourse marker in each case. In subsequent semesters I asked them to find the markers, but explained the meaning to them, and followed up with short dialogue practice in which they used them in the same way. For ‘actually’ I did a role-play with a fluent student and asked the other students to listen for discourse markers. It is interesting that the students did not hear the discourse marker until I pointed it out to them. I hoped that a new awareness would help more noticing and therefore more rapid acquisition of all these common markers and thence more fluency in conversation.

Finally, to practice both skills simultaneously in a simulated situation, students did role-plays in groups of three. Two conversed while the other one rated them using the final assessment criteria.

During the course of the teaching I also used the models from the two Australian textbooks to enhance their familiarity with basic exchanges and conversational vocabulary in English.

All these activities were directly or indirectly based on information about the language gathered from observation and analysis of naturalistic data, either in published materials or in the immediate environment. Learning was reinforced by classroom role-play practice.

Second Cycle: Conversation with Transitions

Models used in this cycle included some of the teacher-made semi-scripted dialogues which were now available, one model from *Beach St 2*, and a role-play with a competent student. The skill I was focusing on was the staging of transitions from small talk to the requesting and giving of advice. Before they started this unit learners had already been taught and tested on the norms of basic conversational exchanges.

Learners initially listened to a tape of one of the New Zealand models in the language lab and answered questions on comprehension, conversational vocabulary and discourse strategies. A transcript was given to the students so that they could identify examples of the different features.

I then presented another model in the form of a role-play with a competent student, and gave the learners a worksheet describing three strategies for transition. These strategies were based on my analysis of the staging and language of the semi-scripted dialogues. They practised the transitions using the different strategies. I later asked some learners to demonstrate and the class discussed the conversation strategies used. They then did further role-play of a complete conversation in which they requested and gave advice about a family, health, study or money problem of their choice, using a self-assessment checklist. Additional listening exercises were also completed using the teacher-made and *Beach St* models together with worksheets similar to the one used with the first model. Before the final assessment was given there was a final role-play practice in threes as for the first competency and volunteers did a demonstration for the class with the class rating them on the assessment criteria.

In this cycle I had more suitable recorded models available and so I did not have to rely so much on the less accessible data derived from listening to native speakers. The teaching was based on a study of the semi-scripted dialogues, but I modified my approach. This time I asked learners to find the features, but I explained them. As in the first cycle practice using role-play was an important part of the teaching.

Third Cycle: Negotiation

For the teaching of negotiation the focus was on strategies and language for getting attention, introducing the situation, and insisting. In this cycle I used three semi-scripted teacher-made dialogues which included a negotiation with a librarian, an employer and a teacher, one model from *Beach St 2* involving a negotiation with a real estate agent, and some demonstrations with competent learners.

Consciousness raising activities again included listening to the models and answering written comprehension questions, as well as questions about vocabulary, linguistic features, staging and negotiation strategies (for example getting attention appropriately where necessary, stating the problem in general and then in detail, insisting using softeners, offering compromises, and checking the outcome). There was also classroom discussion of the context, the participants, the power relations, the situations and their influence on the politeness strategies used (or in some cases not used), and the language used for each of the strategies in the models.

Learners did paired practice of each stage in the negotiation, using a further teacher-created worksheet summarizing the language and the staging of negotiation. This worksheet was based on an analysis of the language used in the samples and observed in natural interaction. Next was paired practice of the whole negotiation using everyday situations that learners chose from a worksheet. I also used one written worksheet from an Australian textbook to practice the language of indirect requests and a further teacher created worksheet to practise, in paired dialogues, the use of the relevant discourse markers.

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Further reinforcement of the learning took the form of demonstration role-plays between the teacher and volunteers, based on situations they had encountered in their own lives. Later I encouraged the class to coach the volunteer at difficult points in the encounter. Towards the end of the teaching, there was further discussion of the ways in which the language and staging of negotiations, in particular the beginning of the exchange, can be affected by the power relations of the participants and the situation. Finally there was the usual three-way role-play task.

Again, models from authentic or simulated authentic interactions were directly or indirectly the basis of nearly all the activities. Classroom discussion and teacher–student role-play played a greater part in the teaching in this cycle, but paired role-play practice was again the basic strategy for reinforcing and developing skills.

The Action Research Data

For all three cycles the data collection tools were learner pre- and post-tests, learner pre- and post-written self-assessments, a student survey and a reflective journal I kept while teaching. Samples of assessment and survey tools are in Appendices 1–3.

The pre-tests of the first two cycles consisted of paired role-play in which learners used the target language and were observed using a simple checklist of the key features of the language. Learners were rated competent (at the exit level of the competency according to the criteria to be used in the post-test), somewhat competent, or not competent in each skill. The pretest for the third cycle consisted of a role-played negotiation in which I played the ‘gate-keeper’. This time I made a recording and used it to check the data in the checklist.

The post-tests were the normal institutional summative assessment for the competencies and consisted of paired learner role-play or (in the case of the negotiation) teacher–student role-play. All role-plays were based on everyday situations. These were recorded. Students were assessed using a standard checklist and the data checked later from the recordings.

The student self assessments consisted of a checklist in which learners rated their skills by answering ‘Yes’ ‘Sometimes’ or ‘No’ to a series of ‘Can you.....’ questions (see Appendix 3). The same checklist was completed by learners before and after the teaching period. After reflecting on the results of the self assessments in the first two cycles, I ran the final self-assessment in the third cycle, before the results of the teacher assessment were available, to ensure the results did not influence the self–assessment.

The survey was filled in at the same time as the post self assessment. Learners were asked if they thought their skills had improved and were asked to select from a list of activities the ones they thought had helped, and also to identify which two had most helped in their improvement. For the final cycle, the description of activities was made more specific in order to get more accurate data. The lists mentioned all the types of activities used in the teaching of each unit. They included those which directly involved the use of models such as ‘listening to negotiation tapes’ and ‘studying transcripts of negotiating conversations’, as well as some that were less directly linked (for example ‘practice in the classroom with a partner’ and ‘information from the teacher’). They also included some other activities that might have facilitated improvements such as ‘practice outside the classroom’ and ‘listening to people outside the classroom’.

I used a reflective journal to record what I did in each lesson and my perceptions of the usefulness and effectiveness of each activity as well as the progress learners were making.

Results

For each cycle I provide two analyses. Table 2 shows the number of students who met the criteria for competence and whose rating improved in the target skills in each cycle. I measured improvement by comparing the rating for each individual student in the relevant pre-tests and post-tests. The number improving did not always equate to the difference between the number competent on the pre-test and the number competent on the post-test. Improvement could be from ‘not competent’ to ‘somewhat/sometimes competent’ or ‘competent’ or from ‘somewhat/sometimes competent’ to ‘competent’.

Table 2: Teacher Pre- and Post-Tests and Student Initial and Final Self Assessments

First Cycle—Elicitation and use of discourse markers in basic conversation. Total number of students =18

Skill	Competent on teacher pre-test	Competent on teacher post-test	Number improved according to teacher	Competent in student initial self assessment	Competent in student final self assessment	Number improved according to student self assessment
Elicitation	2	17	16	2	12	11
Discourse markers	2	15	16	3	11	8

Second Cycle—Making conversational transitions in request for advice. Total number of students =12

Skill	Competent on teacher pre-test	Competent on teacher post-test	Number improved according	Competent in student initial self	Competent in student final self	Number improved according
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			to teacher	assessment	assessment	to student self assessment
Successful and appropriate transition	3	10	7	7	11*	4*

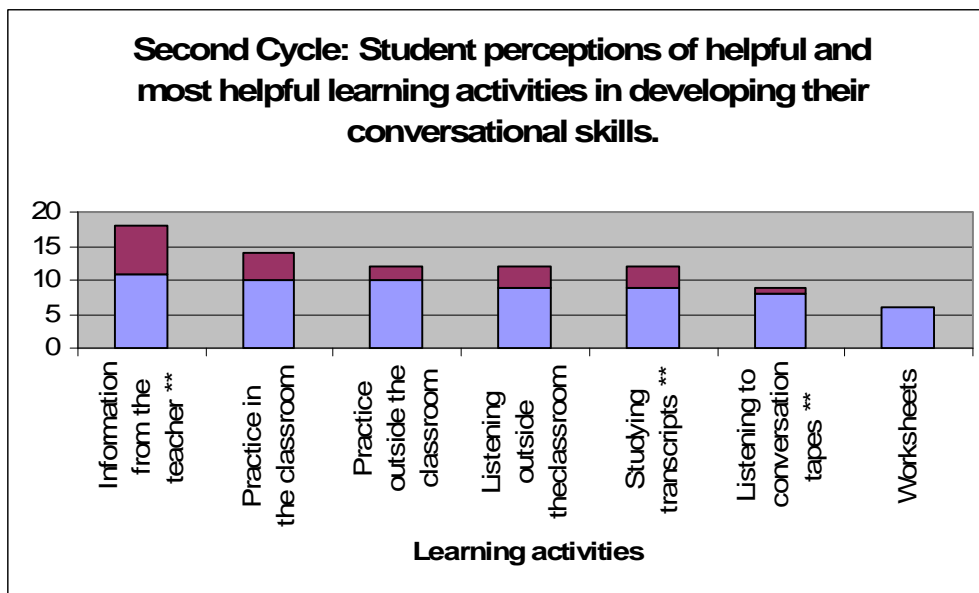
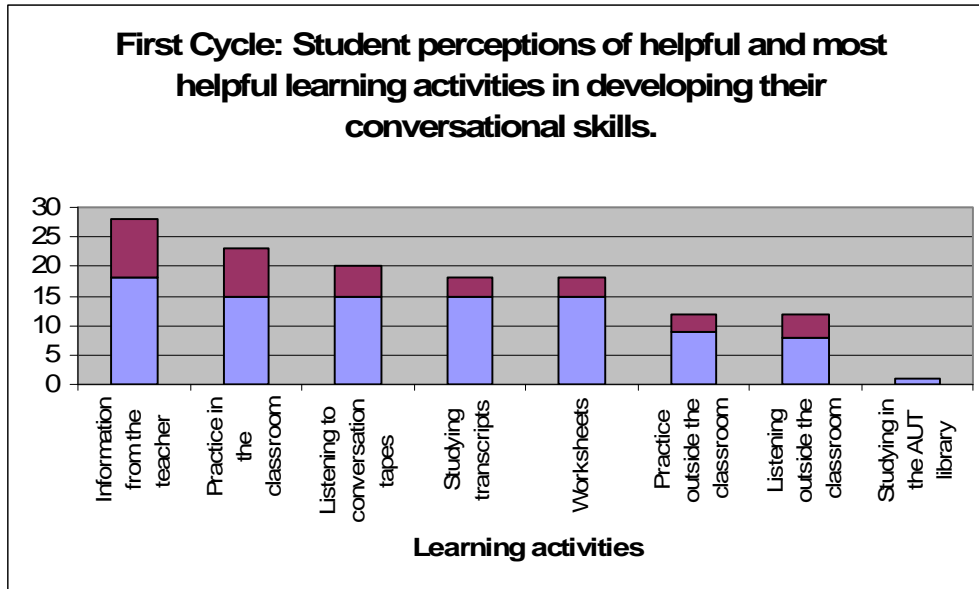
* including one student who ticked both 'yes' and 'sometimes' on the post -test

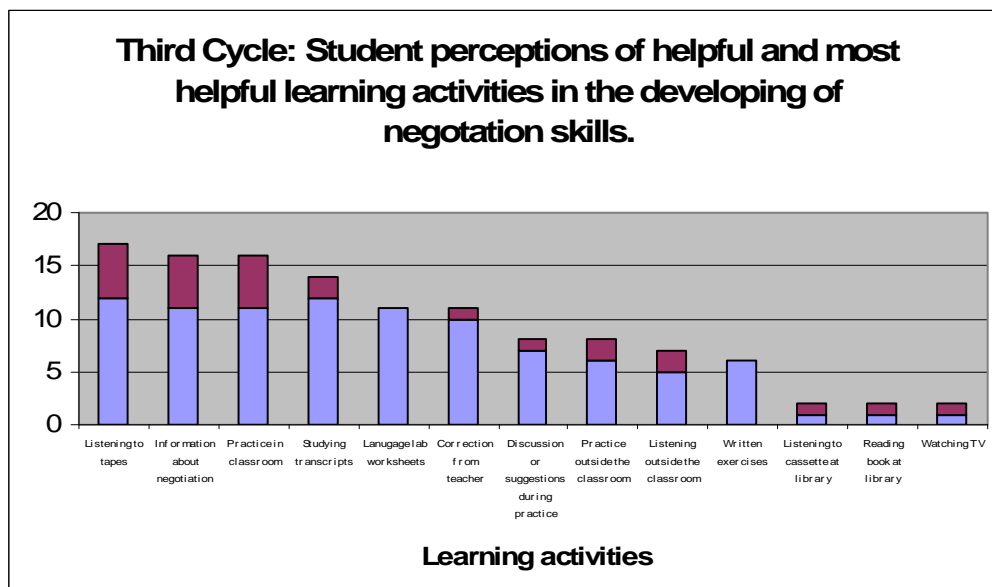
Third Cycle—Developing Negotiation Skills. Total number of students = 15

Skill	Competent on teacher pretest	Competent on teacher Post-test	Number improved according to the teacher	Competent in student initial self assessment	Competent in student final self assessment	Number improved according to the student
Gets attention politely	5	15	10	9	12	3
Introduces problem appropriately	5	14	10	9	10	4
Insists/argues politely, using further explanations	3 (2 not attempted)	14	13	4	7	2

Figure 1 summarizes the results of the surveys in which learners were asked to tick any number of a list of activities which had, in their opinion, helped them and to list which *two* had helped them most towards any improvement in their skills. I included in the data only those students who had done both the pre- and post- tests and self-assessments and the survey and who had also consented to participation. The graphs represent the number of students who perceived the activities as helpful (lower part of bar) plus the number who selected them as one of two most helpful (upper part of bar).

Figure 1: Results of Student Surveys





Notes

1. Two students in the second cycle did not respond to the ‘most helped’ part of the survey and one listed only one activity on the ‘most helped’ section.
2. **Includes one student who chose three items instead of two
3. Two students in the third cycle gave irrelevant responses in the ‘Most helped’ section. These were not counted.

In all three semesters the teacher assessment showed there was considerable improvement in the weakest skills, although the student data show a lower perception of improvement for all cycles, particularly in cycle two, partly because students rated themselves higher on the pretest. The proportion judged competent in these skills at the end of teaching was also high, ranging from 83% to 100%.

The surveys were designed to show what activities might have led to the improvements. However, it became clear when I analyzed the results of the first two cycles that the wording of the survey needed tightening. I learned how important it is for the teacher researcher to fine-tune data gathering tools. In the third cycle I made the descriptions of activities and the instructions more precise and ensured that students completed the survey as instructed. The results from this cycle were easier to collate and interpret and are likely to be more reliable.

In spite of this the results in the three cycles are similar. In all cycles information from the teacher, practice in the classroom, listening to tapes and studying transcripts are among activities

that more than two thirds of students say helped them, with worksheets also chosen by more than two thirds in cycles one and three. It is interesting that listening to tapes was seen as helpful in the improvement of negotiation skills by more students than information from the teacher in cycle three. This is a reversal of the ranking in cycles one and two, and may reflect the greater focus on the tapes and tapescripts in this cycle and my confidence in using the naturalistic data.

To summarize, then, a significant proportion of students showed improvement, and the survey data show that it is likely that the authentic materials, directly through listening to the tapes and studying transcripts and indirectly through teacher information in all cycles and worksheets in cycles one and three, also helped in this improvement. Practice in the classroom was also shown to be a very important contributor to improvement in all cycles.

Reflection

My experience during the conduct of these studies and since strongly indicates that it is both practical and realistic as well as effective to use teacher-made, semi-scripted materials. Learners enjoy listening to the teacher-made tapes and find them interesting, recognizing the participants, the context, and the situations. Choosing the situation and recording the tapes are straightforward and enjoyable, and although transcription is time-consuming, the worksheets can be created in draft form, trialed and developed over time.

During this process I have also learnt much about teaching with the naturalistic semi-scripted models. I have learned to trust the data in them and have progressively worked more directly with the tapes and transcripts, becoming gradually less worried that learners would find them too complex. As a result of this research I have also revised my worksheets to make them easier for learners to use. This has involved better layout and indexing to the tapescripts, shortening some worksheets that were too lengthy, more careful selection of language features to focus on, and less use of complex and abstract language. In the second and particularly in the third cycle as a response to learner feedback, I also increased the proportion of practice time. In the third cycle there was more classroom discussion of cultural aspects. I also linked the practice role-play to the tapes by using similar situations so that learners were encouraged to review the models and learn more directly from them. The higher ranking of the use of tapes and tape scripts in the survey data indicates that learners in this cycle were engaging more with the models. I intend to continue this practice.

I would like to create more materials to help learners notice more of the cultural features of the interaction. Socio-cultural discussion to date has been teacher led and learners would benefit from more independent observation and reflection followed by classroom discussion.

Although some of the theorists recommend that the students analyze the models in the classroom (Barraja-Rohan, 1997; Carter & McCarthy, 1993; McCarthy, 1998). I have continued, as I did in the first semester, to find this to be too difficult as an introductory exercise for most students at this level. I have found it best to ask the students to find examples of different features, but initially explain them to learners myself. This ensures the necessary noticing of the features without making the exercise too academic. The same features can later be identified and justified by students in other texts. Learning is further reinforced for some when they hear them in conversation outside the classroom.

During these three cycles I have also refined my research practice. Because I was not able to fully analyze the data from the first two cycles and learn from this experience until after the second cycle, this refinement of my research practice did not happen until the third cycle. Firstly I discovered the importance of making recordings of the pre-test as well as the post-test in order to check data and this was done for the third cycle out of class time. I also learned the necessity for clear and unambiguous wording in the surveys. The wording of the survey in the third cycle was much tighter and the results more easily interpreted and trustworthy as a result.. To elucidate some responses follow-up interviews would have been helpful but I did not have the resources or the time to do this. In all cycles I learned again that careful and trustworthy research takes more time than anticipated. However I am convinced that the gathering of data facilitated more focused and rapid development of my teaching.

It has been very rewarding and interesting to work with learners using the semi-scripted, more authentic models that are embedded in the New Zealand context. I would recommend that teachers try making their own models relating to the situations and the context of the culture in which learners will need to use their English, and work with them in the classroom. Let students listen to them, understand and absorb them, and devise carefully scaffolded exercises to help them notice the features which occur in the models. It has become evident to me that 'noticing' is also an important step for learners in incorporating these features into their own language. And of course this study has highlighted yet again what we all know from experience—the importance of sufficient practice in the acquisition of language skills.

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Biodata

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APPENDICES

These appendices represent sample pre- and post teacher assessment tools and student self assessments and surveys for the three cycles. The format for the teacher and self assessment tools was similar in each cycle. Two samples of the student survey are included to show two points in the spectrum of development.

Appendix 1: Pre-Test—Second Cycle, Semester 2, 2003

Diagnostic analysis of the competency of FTHI#2 students in selected areas of conversational competence. Semester 2 2003

Students were instructed to start a conversation with a fellow student. They were required to introduce a topic into the conversation on which they wished to seek opinion and advice. Broad topic areas of interest and concern to new adult immigrants were suggested by the teacher. The teacher listened and rated each student on the skills in the following checklist using the code below.

SKILLS	Students																			
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
1. Engages in adequate small talk at beginning of conversation																				
2. Uses appropriate language to manage transition to discussion topic (feedback to acknowledge previous conversation, discourse marker, general statement)																				
3. Waits for feedback and starts explanation with suitable discourse marker (e.g. “Well....”)																				

Code
Not at all – N

Sometimes, to some extent – S
 Competent at exit HI (High Intermediate) level – C
 Did not arise in the conversation heard – ?
Appendix 2: Post-Test—First Cycle, Semester 1, 2003

LEARNER ASSESSMENT TASK SHEET: ENGLISH HIGH INTERMEDIATE
COMPETENCY 1: CAN PARTICIPATE IN EXTENDED CASUAL CONVERSATIONS

NAME OF LEARNER:

TASK INSTRUCTIONS :

Start a conversation with your partner, make small talk, then exchange information or opinions about past travel or sightseeing OR smoking and drugs OR food and restaurants. Keep the conversation going for at least 6 minutes. Then on a signal from the teacher finish the conversation politely.

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA	A	PA	NA
Asks for and provides relevant information or opinions : any of – past travel and sightseeing, smoking and drugs, food and restaurants.			
Is able to manage a conversation and keep it going for 6 minutes : opening, small talk, turn-taking, responding to questions, remarks etc, transitions, closing, appropriate behaviour. *			
Elicits information successfully.			
Gives information, gives opinions or tells stories in extended turns.			
Uses vocabulary relevant to the topic			
Speaks fluently with few hesitations using some conversational discourse markers.			
Grammatical structures appropriate and grammatical errors no barrier to communication			
Pronounces words adequately for easy understanding			
Can understand and respond to comprehensible remarks and questions from partner and seeks clarification where necessary and appropriate.			

* Compulsory criterion – PA for this and the assessment if more than one of these items missing.

A = Achieved

PA = Partly Achieved

NA = Not Attempted

Appendix 3: Student Self Assessment—First Cycle, and Student Surveys—First and Third Cycles

The first part formed all of the initial self assessment and the first part of the post self assessment.

The second part was given only in the post self assessment.

First Cycle, Semester 1 2003

Conversation Self Assessment

Can you carry out a casual conversation in English?

Can you do these things? Tick the boxes:

	Yes No	Sometimes
Start a conversation <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Speak fluently in conversation, using discourse markers (e.g well, anyway, so, listen. look, now) <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Find the right question to get information from my partner <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Know when it is my turn to speak <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Give feedback in conversation <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Keep a conversation going for 6 mins <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Know how to be polite <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tell a story <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

- Give an opinion
-
- Check if I don't understand
-
- Finish a conversation politely
-

Part 2

Did your casual conversation in English improve this term? Yes No

If you ticked yes, please tick the things that helped you to improve:

- practice outside the classroom
- information from the teacher about English conversation (spoken, board or worksheets)
- listening to people talk outside the classroom
- practice in the classroom with a partner
- listening to conversation tapes
- studying transcripts of casual conversation
- worksheet written exercises about casual conversation
- other

Please write here the **two** things that helped you the most:

.....

.....

.....

Third Cycle, Semester 2, 2005

Part 2

Did your negotiation skills in English improve this term? Yes No

If you ticked yes, please tick the things that helped you to improve:

- practice outside the classroom
- listening to people outside the classroom

- information about English negotiation.

If you ticked this please also tick where the helpful information came from:

- spoken in the classroom
- written on the board
- written in textbooks
- written in worksheets
- practice in the classroom with a partner
- feedback or correction from the teacher during classroom practice with a partner
- discussion or class suggestions while a student practises with the teacher
- listening to negotiation tapes
- studying transcripts of negotiating conversations
- language lab worksheets about negotiation
- written exercises about negotiating language (not language lab)
- other

Please write here the **two** things that helped you the most:

.....
.....