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The Spirituality of Second Language Acquisition

BAXTER JACKSON
Microsoft Corporation GTCS

ABSTRACT

Parallels between the reconstruction of self in Alcoholics Anonymous and the reconstruction of self in second language acquisition are drawn out and examined in three areas: ego deflation, identification at depth, and mutual assistance. These spiritual principles are shown to be theoretically and empirically supported in SLA literature and research. From these principles, learner strategies for dealing with affective factors that facilitate SLA and promote the formation of a new linguistic and cultural identity are outlined for immediate classroom implementation.

AN AWAKENING

The psychologist William James described it as a "vast change in feeling and outlook that develops slowly over a period of time." Robinson-Struart & Nocon (1996: 432) describe it as "a process that penetrates deeply into one's patterns of thinking, feeling, acting, being in the world, relating to where one is, and who one meets." Socioculturalists argue that "it does not exist within people but is constructed between them in interaction" (Pavlenko & Lantolf 2000: 171). Still others refer to it as a profound alteration in their reaction to life that could not have been brought about by themselves alone. According to Pavlenko's analysis of the hermeneutic research in SLA, its first stage involves the loss of all perspective, frame of reference, and inner voice. Its' second stage of recovery involves the subsequent appropriation of other voices, the emergence of a new voice

(often first in writing), a reconstruction of the past from the new perspective, and a continuous growth into new positions and subjectivities (Pavlenko & Lantolf 2000: 162). This is the process of the creation of a new identity that is just as essential to acquiring a second language as it is to recovering from alcoholism.

INSPIRATION

This paper was inspired by Dr. Buckley's *A Framework for Understanding Crosscultural Issues in the Second Language Classroom* and by my own experiences in A. A. Thanks to Buckley's article, and Brake & Walker's Cultural Orientation Framework Wheel, I was finally able to systematically categorize all the differences that I had noted between American values and those I was coming to call my own. Out of the ten variables in the framework only communication, space and power somewhat overlapped but even there, there were clear distinctions. From these conflicting value systems I designed a qualitative study of the acculturation process in our anonymous society in which I found a positive correlation between the degree to which our suggestions for acculturation were adopted and the degree to which members had accepted the new values. I showed how a second language learner could use these same suggestions for purposes of their own acculturation in a foreign country. Finally, I suggested how the L2 Steps could be used by an ESL learner to gain in communicative competence. I did not, however, show how the spiritual principles of the program are theoretically and empirically supported in the SLA literature and research. To fill this gap and show how spiritual principles can inform pedagogical decisions in a language classroom where the students have reached at least an intermediate threshold of communicative competency are the aims of this paper.

A road map

As A. A. cofounder Bill W. did in 1958 at his presentation to the New York City Medical Society, so will I distill the Twelve Steps of Recovery into the three spiritual principles that he discovered

in his struggle to recreate himself: Ego deflation, identification at depth, and mutual assistance. This paper will be organized around these three principles. First of all, I will describe each spiritual principle by giving a brief history of it, and explain why it's important for recovery. Next, I'll show where the spiritual principle is found in SLA theory and research and explain what it means to a second language learner. Finally, I will synthesize the three spiritual principles into one unifying trinity that completes for the learner the process of developing a new cultural and linguistic identity. Before we begin our excursion, let's examine three assumptions.

THREE ASSUMPTIONS

Learning a foreign language is a spiritual experience

The AA framework is (self-admittedly) spiritually based. While there are as many definitions of spirituality as there are concepts that bind it to other ideas, for our purposes here, spirituality is defined as the channeling of thoughts, feelings and will into meaningful activities that help us to make sense of the world around us. The logic behind this assumption is as follows:

- **Major premise**: Spirituality is the search for meaning.
- **Minor premise**: Learning another language is the search for meaning in a foreign culture.
- **Conclusion**: Learning a foreign language is a spiritual experience.

Knowledge alone will avail us nothing.

With the information presented here, I hope to shed new light on the process of developing a new identity that is essential for SLA. Once informed, the reader will be more capable of guiding their students through the process of the reconstruction of self, of facilitating the activities outlined here that encourage ego deflation, identification at depth, and mutual assistance and that make the process possible. If the knowledge acquired here is not consciously and consistently applied, it will, however, avail us nothing.

A learner's first language and culture does not equate to the problem of alcoholism.

As will be demonstrated, the formation of a new identity within the SLA context is strikingly similar to the reconstruction of self in A. A. However, the catalyst for the reconstruction is as distinct as the contexts are. With alcoholics, the catalyst for change is hitting an emotional, physical, and spiritual bottom brought about by alcoholism. For a second language learner, the catalyst for change is brought about by culture shock. This key difference is highlighted so that the reader will not mistakenly assume that a learner's first language and culture are being equated to the problem of alcoholism. Parallels are drawn only in terms of this process, not in the causes and conditions that lead to the transformation itself.

EGO DEFLATION

Without the admission of powerlessness that deflates the ego and makes one willing to take the actions necessary to bring about a vast change in feeling and outlook, recovering from alcoholism would be impossible. For those who live in a fantasy world of denial and suffer from delusions of grandeur, ego permeability means in recovery vernacular "getting right sized" or "gaining in humility." When one has accepted in their innermost self who they really are "the ability to temporarily give up [one's] separateness of identity from others" is not so frightening (Guiora, Benjamin, Brannon, Dull & Scovel 1972: 427). Pavlenko (2000) confirms Guiora's view on the reconstruction of self noting that this stage of acculturation – in which one is able to subsume the individual personality to the group – is characterized by the appropriation of their voices. The appropriation, however, will not occur until ego dissolution has.

In SLA theory and research, ego deflation is known as ego permeability. Guiora's definition of ego permeability is inextricably intertwined with his earlier empirical study on the role of empathy in pronunciation in which he found that "empathetic capacity [was] critically dependent upon the "flexibility of the psychic processes" which function to regulate

self-object boundaries" (Guiora et al. 1972: 421). In other words, the more porous the ego, the more empathetic one will be and the more authentic pronunciation will become. Ironically enough, Guiora's multidimensional quantitative study on ego permeability "examined the effects of alcohol on the ability of college students to pronounce words and phrases in a foreign and totally unknown language" (Guiora & Acton 1979: 201). In SLA circles, Guirora's study is known "as tying one on in Thai."

The results showed that there was a highly significant effect due to the alcohol ingested on pronunciation authenticity on the Standard Thai Procedure (STP) test. The subjects who drank one and a half ounces of alcohol scored significantly higher than those who had the placebo ($t = 4.47$; $a<0.01$) On the digit symbol test, there was a slight decline in performance that was non-significant ($F = 1.0$; N.S.). For those who consumed varying amounts of alcohol on a totally empty stomach no significant effect was noted in terms of performance on either test ($F = 1.0$; N.S.) In other words, their findings were congruent with their hypothesis. Alcohol does indeed induce ego permeability and leads to more authentic pronunciation.

The implications from Guiora's study are clear. If "learning a second language requires the adoption of word sounds, pronunciations, word orders, and other behavioral and cognitive features that are part of the target culture" and if non-permeable ego walls block their entrance, then to achieve cultural and linguistic competence, ego walls must be made permeable (Masgoret & Gardner 2003: 126). This does not mean that the second language learner needs to have a "weak ego and an attenuated sense of self, or that strong and clear ego boundaries are antithetical to empathy" to achieve SLA (Guiora & Acton 1979: 199). Ego permeability simply means having an unambiguous, realistic idea of self and what needs to be accomplished to facilitate SLA.

For ESL learners, ego permeability means lowering their guard enough and letting go of a part of who they were to become who they "could" be through increased participation. The loss and subsequent recovery of the new self is well documented in case studies of adult second language learners.

(Peirce 1995; Polanyi 1995; Siegal 1995; Norton 1997; Schumann 1998). These studies have not focused on developing some degree of proficiency in language as a code (See Schmidt & Frota (1986) for a seminal example of this kind of study) but rather as a border crossing into the domain where selves and worlds are reconstructed. Pavlenko's description of the reconstruction of self as the loss of all perspective, frame of reference, and inner voice, subsequent appropriation of other voices, an emergence of a new voice, a reconstruction of the past from the new perspective, is paralleled in the 44 case studies in the *Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous* (Pavlenko & Lantolf 2000: 162). Both agree that a solid foundation for the reconstruction of self is built on ego permeability. With it one can embrace the beginning of the end, or at the very least, be prepared for Durkheim's third stage of culture shock known as "anomie" in which feelings of being neither here nor there, of being neither able to act nor refrain from acting, predominate.

IDENTIFICATION AT DEPTH

Anomie is analogous to hitting bottom. In both contexts, it is the beginning of the reconstruction, through empathy and ego permeability of what Higgins (1987) called our possible and ideal selves. "Possible selves represent individuals' ideas of what they might become, what they would like to become and, what they are afraid of becoming, and thus provides a conceptual link between cognition and motivation" (Higgins 320). In our case, the link between cognition (thinking of ourselves as we actually are) and motivation (wanting to become our ideal selves) is the second cardinal principle in the recovery process, identification at depth.

At the meeting level, "psychological and emotional identification" happens when a member listens for the similarities between themselves and the chairperson's story of what it was like, what happened, and what it's like now (Doryei 2003: 5). According to Masgoret & Gardner (2003), this is a core aspect of an integrative disposition. By deeply identifying with the person speaking (in accordance with Gardner's original

conceptualization of the role of motivation in group integration) one emotionally recalls their own struggle. "It is an identification process between the individual's self concept and the speaker's" (Doryei 2003: 6). The second part of the chairperson's story – what happened – serves the same function as the first. The last part of the story places the goal in sight. An ESL learner, by deeply identifying with someone else's struggle to grow in communicative competence as they hope to, will come to believe that it is possible for them to achieve communicative competence just as a member of the Fellowship comes to believe that he too can achieve sobriety.

Gardner's Motivation Theory and the concept of integrativeness form the theoretical and empirical backbone in the SLA literature that supports the second spiritual principle of identification at depth. "An integrative motivational orientation concerns a positive interpersonal/affective disposition towards the L2 group and the desire to interact with and even become similar to valued members of that community" (Dornyei 2003: 5). Based on the meta-analysis of 75 different studies involving 10,489 individuals on correlations between five attitude/motivation variables from Gardner's socioeducational model, Masgoret & Gardner (2003) concluded that "there is strong support for the proposition that integrative motivation promotes successful SLA as has been proposed and shown in many studies. There is no support for the alternative hypothesis that the relationships are inconsistent" (Masgoret & Gardner 2003: 154).

Gardner's concept of integrativeness and the uniqueness of the 12 Step program lies in Chapter 5 of the Big Book, *How it Works*. It is not the spiritual principles themselves (for they are ancient) that makes the program unique so much as the way they are presented. They are reports of actions taken, rather than rules not to be broken. The reporting is clear and unmistakable. "Here are the steps we took," say those who have gone before. The newcomer finally sees that he too must take these steps before he is entitled to report on them. And in an atmosphere where the constant subject is "What I did" and "What I think" no one can long resist the temptation to get in on the action. The language

and the transparent method in which the steps are presented encourage first identification at depth, and then action. Without this identification at depth, the action that it prompts, ego deflation, and the final portion of the triunal solution, mutual assistance, which I will now discuss, the trinity for the recreation of self would fall apart.

MUTUAL ASSISTANCE

A sponsor is someone who shows a newcomer how to take the 12 steps of recovery. By listening, giving suggestions, telling what works for them, pointing out trouble spots, and helping their "sponsee" to decide what to do, they are a vital part of the program of recovery. With ESL learners, a sponsor would be what Acton (1984) refers to as, a cultural informant. A cultural informant, in this case, would be an ESL learner who has achieved some degree of communicative competence and helps ESL learners – as the non-native English speaking tutors did in Lantolf & Aljaafreh's (1995) study – to progress in the zone of proximal development through developmentally appropriate assistance. When the cultural informant gives away the knowledge he has about how he developed communicative and cultural competence to other ESL learners who are willing to receive it, he internalizes the interpsychological knowledge he has gained through interaction into intrapsychological knowledge. This process transforms the language into a cognitive tool for the informant by which he can negotiate syntax and semantics simultaneously. When a learner realizes that by giving away what they cannot not keep, they gain what they can't lose, life takes on new meaning and the transformation of self is well under way.

To cement the connection between two learners helping each other acquire a second language and two members of the Fellowship helping each other recover from alcoholism, a careful look at the empirical research on collaborative dialogue, scaffolding, and the zone of proximal development follows.

Swain, in her article on collaborative dialogue, compiles some of the most compelling evidence for what Tharp &

Gallimore (1991); Poole & Patthey-Chavez (1994) called assisted performance. She begins with Talyzina's (1981) quantitative leap into Vygotskian theory. Using the same theoretical framework, Talyzina did an experiment on the development of basic geometrical concepts with Russian fifth graders. The theoretical framework for transforming material forms of activity into mental ones was identified as the following:

1. A material action stage in which language is used primarily to draw attention to the concepts being taught.
2. An external speech stage in which participants talk about what they are doing.
3. A final mental action stage in which steps one and two are internalized.

In their experiment, she omitted step two from a comparison group of students. The comparison group was outperformed by the other groups and the material evidence that verbalization mediates the internalization of external activity was born.

In 1994 Holunga, a doctoral student working under Swain's tutelage, replicated Talyzina's experiment with three groups of advanced ESL students. The first group, the metacognitive verbalization group (MV) received 15 hours of instruction on metacognitive startegies such as predicting, planning, monitoring and evaluating. They had to (unlike the other two groups) verbalize the strategies they were using to solve the problem. The second group (the M group) received training on metacognitive strategies but were not taught to verbalize them. The third group (the C group) only received instruction on the verb forms that all three groups were tested on in pre, post, and delayed post tests and upon which statistical analysis via an analysis of covariance with the pretest scores as the covariate was performed. The tests consisted of a series of discrete item questions in an interview format and three open-ended questions, which were designed to elicit the specific verb form use.

The results paralleled Talyzina's. Swain summarizes Holunga's findings: "The analyses revealed that the MV group made significant gains from pre- to post tests in all four tests; the

M group made significant gains in only the discrete item questions and the C group showed no improvement on any of the four tests. Furthermore, both the MV and M groups' level of performance at the post test level was maintained through to the delayed post tests four weeks later" (Swain 2000: 109). Verbalization in interaction, leads to internalization.

Ohta's (1995) research on the zone of proximal development further buttresses the importance and value of learner helping learner and Bill W's theory that only an alcoholic can help an alcoholic. Ohta showed how social processes allow the language to become a cognitive tool for the individual by which they "can negotiate syntax and semantics simultaneously and attain higher levels of performance than they could alone" (Ohta 2000: 54).

How did she go about proving this? With a holistically qualitative methodology based upon Vygotskian psycholinguistic theory, and close transcription and analysis of two second language learners of Japanese, Ohta shows how the less proficient learner dramatically improved with the difficult desiderative construction in Japanese. Her improvement is attributed to the ability of her partner to pick-up on her subtle bids for assistance and is supported by the narrow transcription of their interaction. Vygotsky's ZPD theory specifies that development cannot occur if too much assistance is provided or the task is too easy. The assistance the more proficient learner provided during the roleplay and the translation task (the communicative interview task was a solo endeavor) was developmentally appropriate for her level of Japanese. It was because of this developmentally appropriate assistance that she was "able to accomplish with ease by herself what she could not do before without assistance. These gains remain in the follow-up interview task performance, and when she reports her findings to the teacher" (Ohta 2000: 75).

By drawing on previous research and other studies Swain and Ohta clearly demonstrate by example how collaborative dialogue in the zone of proximal development mediates joint problem solving, knowledge building and allows learners to outstrip individual performance. The research and theory in SLA clearly support the paradox that St. Francis uncovered hundreds

of years ago, Bill W. rediscovered, and which is, in essence, Step 12, that it is by giving that one receives. This idea of mutual assistance adds the final component to the spiritual synthesis of ego deflation and identification at depth and thus forms an unshakeable triunal foundation for the reconstruction of self.

Having shown how spiritual principles are theoretically and empirically supported in the SLA literature and research, one question remains. How exactly do we use these spiritual principles of ego deflation, identification at depth, and mutual assistance to inform our pedagogical decisions and assist our students in creating a new identity for themselves within the target culture?

AN OVERVIEW OF THE PEDAGOGICAL APPLICATION OF SPIRITUAL PRINCIPLES

By first preparing our students for the change to come, as done in Steps One through Three of a Twelve Step program, and in the first part of Acton's (1984) method for changing fossilized pronunciation, the ground work for the transformation is laid. A careful analysis of the learner's resources and current abilities via an oral diagnostic follows. This step is followed immediately by an opportunity to deeply identify with a more advanced learner who acts as a tutor as in Lantolf & Aljaafreh's 1995 study. The inductee now becomes the inductor, and passes it on to the next learner. This is final part of our course of action, mutual assistance.

PREPARING FOR CHANGE

Before the walls of the learner's language ego can be made more permeable so that they can experience a vast change in feeling and outlook through the development of an English language persona, they need to be familiar with two key concepts from Neurolinguistic Programming (NLP), *inside-out* change and *outside-in* change.

Inside-out change deals with the relationship between internal, emotional states, pronunciation accuracy, and the

learner's ability to take on aspects of the target language culture such as gestures, facial expressions and even style of dress. If the learner is worried about making mistakes or appearing foolish, intelligibility will be plagued by inaccuracies while communication and the development of an English language ego will, if it happens at all, be severely handicapped. However, if the learner is taught a few simple monitoring strategies to deal with the stress that comes from speaking a foreign language they can make "immediate, perceptible changes which are interpreted by [members of the target language culture] as changes in personality" (Acton 1984: 75). Three techniques from NLP, "guided imagery," "anchoring" and "reframing" are the means by which a learner's ego may be made more permeable. These techniques are explained in more detail in the sections on identification at depth, and mutual assistance.

Outside-in change is the phenomenon of external activity – such as speaking – affecting internal states of emotion. It is the basis for the lie detector test and the keystone of most voice training and public speaking classes (Horvath 1978; Lessac 1967). When learners internalize, through conscious application, the idea that that pronunciation specifically and speaking in general are both the cause and effect of emotional states, they are poised and ready to integrate what they may be able to do in isolation with specific sounds, in connected, spontaneous speech (Talyzina 1981).

EGO DEFLATION IN THE ESL CLASSROOM

If the learner is to develop a clear sense of identity within the target culture, an appropriate degree of permeability of language ego boundaries is crucial (Guiora et al. 1972). The first step towards the deflation of the ego and the eventual re-inflation of a new language ego is a recorded diagnostic oral reading and analysis. The diagnostic reading aims to identify specific sounds that impede intelligibility while complementing the holistic score given by the videotaped Speaking Proficiency English Assessment Kit (SPEAK) in all four categories of communicative competence: functional, sociolinguistic,

discourse, and linguistic competence (Canale & Swain 1985). Just as the oral reading and analysis sets the stage for individual, out of class exercises that follow and are designed to develop learner autonomy, so does the video taped portion of the SPEAK with later exercises on non-verbal correlates of pronunciation found to commonly accompany certain intonation contours (Bolinger 1983). In this way, the learner is given a complete, accurate portrait of themselves as second language learners, a means to measure the development of an English speaking personality, and a taste of the rather unorthodox procedures that follow.

MUTUAL ASSISTANCE IN-CLASS

After the diagnostic tests/needs analysis, the teacher meets with each learner to discuss their results and to formulate a personalized action plan implemented in class with the assistance of a non-native but more expert tutor and outside of class in the context of the learners' work environment with a cultural informant. This teacher/student meeting presupposes an intermediate level of communicative competence. In the classroom context, this is what Acton calls "Supervised Contract Language Learning" (Acton 1984: 73).

GUIDED IMAGERY

After students are familiar with *inside-out* and *outside-in* change, each class begins with a relaxation technique to lower the affective filter. With the lights turned down, Baroque music in the background, students stand with their hands on their diaphragms breathing deeply in and out as instructed. The instructor's job is to use words to get them in a more relaxed state through guided imagery. The teacher can write their own guided imagery texts or find many such texts online. The idea is to get learners into the proper mental set to deeply identify with a fellow learner who has achieved a degree of communicative competence that they aim to achieve.

Guided imagery is rooted in Neurolinguistic programming (NLP). NLP concerns itself with the connection between body, thoughts, and emotions. It is based on the premise that only through changes in one of these elements can changes in the others occur. Achieving an understanding of the neurological processes occurring in us as at any given time and finding methods of altering one's state are key in affecting a personality change (Grinder 1975, 1979, 1983; Jensen 1988). Guided imagery is one such technique. A description of its correlates, anchoring, post-hoc monitoring, and reframing, follow.

ANCHORING

Once the desired state is affected, students "anchor" the state for future recall by marking their state in some manner. With second language learners, emotional recall is triggered by listening for the similarities between the chairperson's story and their own. The feeling that Durkheim calls Anomie – being neither able to act nor refrain from acting is continually re-anchored through the processes of identification at depth with others who have struggled to recreate themselves. Anchoring means asking students to associate a particular state (e.g., relaxation, attentiveness) to a particular location within the classroom, or by asking them to mark the state, by squeezing their wrists, for example. Learners choose their own way of marking this state of consciousness because the neurological pathway to change should be as unique as their fingerprints. Once anchored, states can be recalled at will by activating the trigger mechanism.

DYADS &TRIADS

Once in a relaxed/open state, student dyads meet to discuss the areas of their contracts that they have been able to accomplish during the week outside of class to improve their communicative competence. During this time the teacher may review students' oral dialogue journals and recorded readings which aim at promoting fluency and accuracy. See Appendix I and II for instructions on how to implement these two innovative ideas.

Having shared strategies, successes and failures from the past week with one another, students now split into triads to practice attending skills (Ivey 1971). Each student assumes a role and alternates until everyone has had a chance to play each part of "speaker," "attender" and "observer." The speaker's job is to improve and practice in a controlled environment the techniques shared with their partner in the first part of class. The attender helps the speaker along by backchanneling and providing developmentally appropriate assistance when needed while the observer provides feedback to both so that all may learn how to actively apply self-monitoring strategies through peer correction.

POST-HOC MONITORING

For developing post hoc monitoring strategies, and interlocutor empathy, the triad is crucial. While the observer's role in the triad may seem extraneous, it is essential in developing the ability to review one's speech just after the fact and to suppress the urge to self-correct while speaking so that the learner notices their mistakes without the affective consequences. Because noticing the mistakes of others is much easier than noticing one's own mistakes, the triad enables the learner to transition from pointing the finger at others to pointing the finger at themselves. The learner is most likely to notice areas in "others" where they "themselves" need improvement.

IDENTIFICATION AT DEPTH

Testimonials from learners who have had a cultural and linguistic transformation are integral for identification at depth. To encourage what Gardner calls integrative motivation, a preamble outlining the concepts upon which the class is built is read before the students listen to 15-20 minutes of testimony from a language learner who has gained in communicative competence by following the principles outlined here. When the class is just getting started, a chairperson will have to be drawn from outside of the classroom context. The chairperson relates what it was like, what happened and what it's like now. The remaining 30

minutes is open discussion. By identifying with the person's struggle to grow in communicative competence, and to develop an English speaking identity the other learners will come to believe that it is possible for them to achieve communicative competence and recreate themselves in the new target culture and language as well. In addition to having members come to believe, the testimony will be a means by which they may select a tutor to assist them in their contract work and show them how to transform themselves within the target culture and language.

NON-VERBAL CORRELATES OF COMMUNICATION

The non-verbal correlates of communication that assist the learner in making those "immediate, perceptible changes interpreted by others as changes in personality" are developed by three techniques: "mirroring," "tracking," and "shadowing" (Acton 1984: 75). "*Mirroring* is repeating simultaneously with a speaker (in person or on video) while imitating all the speakers' gestures, eye movements, and body posturing. *Tracking* is when a student repeats simultaneously with a speaker but does not mirror their movements [while] *shadowing* is the same as tracking only the learner repeats just slightly after the speaker" (Celce-Murcia, Brinton, Goodwin 2004: 310). All these techniques force the learner "to focus on intonation contours, stress, and rhythm independent to some degree of lexical content" (Acton 1984: 77) The teacher should experiment with these techniques and combinations of video recordings to find which ones best suit their students learning styles and communicative needs. Pavlenko (2000) calls this the second stage of recovery, the appropriation of other voices. In SLA, the appropriation of other voices always precedes the emergence of a new one.

REFRAMING

Reframing means changing the context that surrounds a given event. For our learners it means visualizing themselves as a person with a completely American accent. For a certain amount

of time each week students will assume the role of their English speaking persona. At first, this may be just ten minutes a day; the learner sets their own pace. As they progress, the time should extend until they are "in character" almost all day in a specific context like work, for example. In this way they will soon be able to slip in and out of the new identity to fit their communicative needs as they arise.

ORAL READINGS

To have a context in which they can concentrate solely on accuracy, to develop the habit of analyzing their own language and to help them develop better control over the melody and rhythm of English are the reasons for the taped oral reading. Because the texts will be read and recorded four times "once in rhythm groups, once in clausal groups, once as an entire text – without stopping, and again as an entire text the day before the next session" the texts should be fairly short, 200 to 300 words max (Acton 78). The parsing of the learner's work related text into these parameters is to make clear the correlation between speech and gesticulation. The learner's tutor, a more advanced language learner, helps make salient this connection and may even ask the learner--once familiar with certain gestures that commonly accompany certain intonation contours--to repeat a phrase silently.

ORAL DIALOGUE JOURNALS

In addition to the oral readings, learners are expected to keep oral dialogue journals on a separate tape (Duke-Lay 1987; Goodwin 1988). Students provide a blank tape and the teacher initiates a linguistic and cultural dialectic with some opening remarks. At home, learners listen to the teacher's invitation to interact, stop the recorder, give a five to seven minute response and rewind to the beginning of the tape. The tapes are turned in each week with the teacher providing recorded feedback on certain aspects of accuracy and fluency. Oral dialogue journals encourage self-reflection and examination, raise linguistic awareness and

promote higher order thinking skills through the most ancient of all teaching techniques, the dialectic.

CULTURAL INFORMANTS

In addition to a non-native but more advanced speaker of English as a second language to assist in the fulfillment of their contract obligations as part of Acton's idea of Supervised Contract Language Learning, students will be required to recruit a cultural informant from their work environment. Their role is to help the learners compile their oral reading texts, develop their professional word lists, gather speech samples for analysis and become a sort of at work sponsor so that their work environment comes to accept the new person emerging from the old. When cultural questions arise, as they invariably do when learning a second language, the informants are there to help the learner make sense of their new world, the emerging self and guide them towards full cultural participation.

SYNTHESIS

In the beginning of the class, the teacher will play a central supervisory role to make sure the concepts and principles are understood enough to be applied and passed along from learner to learner. As the class builds momentum, the instructor will slowly withdraw until the class is virtually self-sustaining. At this point, the teacher would only occasionally be called upon for expert advice. The bulk of the work will be carried out between learners in the zone of proximal development.

The purpose of this article was to show how spiritual principles can help an ESL learner create a new linguistic/cultural identity. By exploring SLA research and theory I have drawn some parallels between spirituality and the acquisition of a second language and culture that deserve further exploration. I have shown how these spiritual principles are supported in SLA pedagogy and can be put to use immediately in any language classroom. I look forward to deepening our understanding of the transformation process by using a quantitative research design to

empirically test the validity of spiritual principles in second language acquisition. As we say in the Fellowship, more will be revealed.

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APPENDIX I

A Sample Guided Imagery Text

"Sit back in your chair, close your eyes, and relax. Take a deep breath and hold it for a count of 3 (1,2,3), then slowly exhale. Your body is in a comfortable position and your eyes are closed. Take another deep breath, even deeper than before, and hold the air for a count of 5 (1, 2, 3, 4, 5). Again, slowly let your breath out. Notice how relaxed and loose your body feels. Now, inhale again, from the center of your body, and hold your breath for the count of 8 (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8). Picture yourself at home. It's Saturday morning and you have just slept in until you felt ready to rise and face the day. You have no particular responsibilities to attend to, and you are enjoying the feeling of peace and quiet that surrounds you. You wander into the kitchen and make yourself a nice strong cup of coffee. Looking out the window, you notice that it's a summer winter's day. There's a slight breeze and you can see the branches of the trees swaying in the wind. You open the front door and stoop down to pick up the newspaper. The cold outside contrasts with the cozy warmth of your home. You decide to put on some music, and select one of your favorite recordings that you haven't listened to for a long time. You light a fire in the fireplace, and settle into your easy chair. The front page headlines catch your interest and you start to read. From time to time, you sip your coffee. The sound of the cracking fire is pleasant and adds to the sense of peace that surrounds you. You are in a stage of pleasant relaxation, and at this

particular moment in time you don't have a care in the world" (Celce-Murcia, Brinton, Goodwin 2004: 306).

APPENDIX II

Oral Dialogue Journal Procedures (Duke-Lay 1987)

1. Students provide the teacher with a blank cassette tape
2. The teacher initiates the dialogue exchange by taping an introductory message to the student (either individualized or a general introductory remark to all students). If the latter method is chosen, the message can be dibbed at high speed onto the tape.
3. The tapes are returned to the individual students with the following written instructions from the teacher:

    a. *Listen to my message and then stop the recorder. Do not rewind or erase my message.*
    b. *Record your answer AFTER mine (5-7 minutes maximum).*
    c. *After you finish, rewind your tape to the beginning of your message (I will do the same after my entries for your convenience.)*

4. As outlined, students tape their comments, either on their personal tape recorders or in the language lab.
5. The tapes are collected on a regular basis, commented on in terms of content and pronunciation (also occasionally on grammar and vocabulary), and then returned to the students. They listen to the teachers' or tutor's response and tape a new entry.
6. The cycle continues throughout the course, with students being asked to introspect on the progress for their last entry. Ideally, teachers should assign a portion of the final grade to the completion of the oral dialogue journal, as students then take the task more seriously.

APPENDIX III

Oral Recorded Reading Instructions

1. With your cultural informant, identify a work related text between 200-300 words. This could be an email, an Instant Message (IM) exchange, a memo, or a common conversational work routine. Bring the text to class.

2. With your tutor/sponsor you will mark the text in class according to the American English intonation pattern known as the "Jump-up and Step-down pattern." This means that you will identify which words get the pitch jump.
3. After you have marked the text according to the jump-up and step-down intonation pattern read the text aloud with your tutor/sponsor to practice the pattern. Your tutor/sponsor will read it first to model the intonation pattern for you. Afterwards, it's your turn to read it aloud using the pattern.
4. With your tutor, you will now identify the gestures and body language that would accompany such a text.
5. Read the text again, this time incorporating the gestures and body language with the jump-up and step-down intonation pattern that you practiced in step three.
6. With this intonation pattern, gestures and body language in mind read and record the text onto a cassette tape. The day before you turn in this recorded text, you will record it one more time keeping the above in mind as you record it.

BAXTER JACKSON
LANGUAGE SPECIALIST,
MICROSOFT CORPORATION GTCS.
E-MAIL: <V-BAXJAC@MICROSOFT.COM>