

Homage to W.R. Lee



Homage to W.R. Lee

Essays in English as a
Foreign or Second Language

Edited by

Arthur van Essen
Edward I. Burkart

FORIS PUBLICATIONS
Berlin • New York 1992

Foris Publications Berlin • New York (formerly Foris Publications, Dordrecht) is a Division of Walter de Gruyter & Co., Berlin.

© Printed on acid-free paper which falls within the guidelines of the ANSI to ensure permanence and durability.

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data

Homage to W.R. Lee. : essays in English as a foreign or second language / edited by Arthur van Essen, Edward I. Burkart.

p. cm.

'William R. Lee: curriculum vitae and select list of publications' - p. v.

ISBN 3-11-013393-8 (alk. paper) :

1. English language - Study and teaching - Foreign speakers.

I. Essen, A.J. van. II. Burkart, Edward I. III. Lee, William Rowland.

PE1128.A2H584 1992

428'.007-dc20

91-45236

CIP

Die Deutsche Bibliothek Cataloging in Publication Data

Homage to W.R. Lee : essays in English as a foreign or second language / ed. by Arthur van Essen ; Edward I. Burkart. - Berlin ; New York: Foris Publ., 1992

ISBN 3-11-013393-8

NE: Essen, Arthur van [Hrsg.]; Lee, William, R.: Festschrift

© Copyright 1992 by Walter de Gruyter & Co., D-1000 Berlin 30

All rights reserved, including those of translation into foreign languages. No part of this book may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopy, recording, or any information storage and retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publisher.

Printing: ICG Printing, Dordrecht.

Printed in The Netherlands.

Preface

This *Festschrift* was conceived in a pub in Brighton (England) just after Bill Lee had revealed his age, up till then one of the best kept secrets of the International Association of Teachers of English as a Foreign Language, of which he had been the founder.

Once the idea was born the editors made a division of labour, and the thirty-odd papers here assembled are the result of much negotiation between the editors and the authors as to subject, length of the article, and deadlines.

As was to be expected, authors made use of different style sheets, reference and quotation systems. They have been standardized by us. Wherever a bibliographical reference was lacking or incomplete, it has been traced and supplied by us so far as it was possible for us to do so.

Most of the papers show a concern for the teaching and learning of English as a foreign or second language. This book should therefore be of interest to applied linguists as well as to teachers of English and students taking courses in the English language, education, sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics, or pragmatics.

The editors owe a special debt of gratitude to Ruurd van der Weij, Department of Linguistics, University of Groningen, who did the whole of the electronic typesetting of this book on his own. He also designed its front cover. It is no exaggeration to say that but for him this book would not have come into existence. Special thanks are also due to our secretaries, Aukje van der Zee and Belinda Orsel, who typed and re-typed so many typescripts that they must know at least some of them by heart!

Groningen/Minneola (Florida)
April 1991

The Editors

Table of Contents

Editors' Introduction	1
Tributes	
For William R. Lee: A Giant in His Field / A Man for All Seasons Mary Finocchiaro	7
A Leeward Look Vaughan James	9
IATEFL and FATEFL, the Trunk and the Branch Ray Janssens	11
Teaching and teacher training	
The Proper Study of ELT Gerry Abbott	21
Providing Opportunities for Learning: Teacher Training Experience Antonietta A. Celani	29
The Importance of Understanding Reginald A. Close	39
Curriculum Design for Teacher Training David Cross	45
In-service Teacher Training and Teaching Through Activities. A Progress Report from Germany Christoph Edelhoff	53
The Theologian and the Tightrope Walker Alan Maley	67
On Teaching, Training and Learning: Some Reflections and Suggestions Judy Winn-Bell Olsen	79
Research and the Language Teacher: What's the Use? Alun L.W. Rees	85
Second Language Teaching and One-only Solutions Makhan L. Tickoo	93
Language Study and Language Learning Henry G. Widdowson	103
Learning and the learner	
Learning a Foreign Language: the 'Cognitive' Approach Olga Akhmanova and Tamara Nazarova	113
Learning to Spell in an Anglophone Setting Virginia F. Allen	117

viii *Table of Contents*

Parental Support for Young Learners of English – An Underestimated Contributor to Success Opal Dunn	123
Let Them Read! – Later. Problems of Introducing Reading and Writing to Young Learners of English as a Foreign Language Leonora Fröhlich-Ward	131
Observations on the Learning Styles of Adult Students Manfred Gerbert	139
Teaching Foreign Languages in French Primary Schools: A New Challenge Denis Girard	145
Embarrassment in the Classroom Ron Mackay	153
The Notion of Habit and the Contemporary Language Learning/Teaching Paradigm Waldemar Marton	165
Testing or Owls, Pebbles and Fans Mario Rinvolucri	175
Cognitive Style and Individualization in the EFL Class Arthur van Essen, Peter van der Tuin, and Mik van Es	185
Language and linguistics	
Practical Problems, Practical Solutions Louis G. Alexander	197
Teaching in Key: A Tonal Proposition Winifred Crombie and Martin Parker	203
Attitudes of Southern African Linguists René Dirven	213
Translation and Functional Sentence Perspective (A Case Study of John 1.1 – 2) Jan Firbas	221
A Note on the Voicing of Initial /f-/ in English in the 15th Century: Onomastic Evidence Jacek Fisiak	233
The Problem of the *Unable Lexicographer Leslie A. Hill	239
The Re-anglicisation of English William F. Mackey	243
Concepts, Contexts and Meaning: Learning to Learn Vocabulary Wilga M. Rivers	247
A Study of the Intelligibility of Nigerian English Brian Tiffen	255
Where Have All the Phoneticians Gone? John L.M. Trim	261
Why do French-speakers have difficulty with <i>coming</i> and <i>going</i> ? Sidney F. Whitaker	273

<i>Homage to W.R. Lee</i>	ix
Language education and culture	
Peace Education in the Foreign-Language Classroom: Chances - Challenges - Problems Reinhold Freudenstein	285
Cultural Contexts Bruce Pattison	293
William. R. Lee: Curriculum Vitae and Select List of Publications	297
List of Contributors	306

Editors' Introduction

This commemorative volume has been compiled to mark the occasion of W.R. Lee's eightieth birthday and is a tribute both to the man himself and to his work as one of the leading experts in the field of English as a foreign or second language.

The aim of the volume is twofold. First, by assembling a number of greetings and tributes by friends and colleagues, it records the breadth of Dr. Lee's vision, the depth of his work, the unconventionality of his personality, his internationalism, and his tremendous capacity for work. Second, by bringing together a set of original articles by distinguished authors it makes an important contribution to four of the fields where Lee's own work has been most influential.

In soliciting the articles and in compiling the *Festschrift* from the various contributions that make it up, we have sought to make it reflect the areas of Dr. Lee's professional activities: teaching and teacher training, learning and the learner, language and linguistics (including phonetics), and the cultural side of language education. All the authors knew the purpose of the volume, and indeed were specially invited to contribute, either because they knew Bill Lee personally or because the principal author of a paper expressed a wish to work with a particular co-author.

The book thus falls into five sections. The first contains the *Tributes*, beginning with a description of Bill Lee's personality by Mary Finocchiaro. Recording Lee's numerous activities, as the progenitor of an international professional association, as a tireless traveller, lecturer, writer of textbooks, organiser of conferences, as a teacher with a keen sense of humour and considerable histrionic talents, she puts him among the greats, close to H.E. Palmer, A.S. Hornby, and C.C. Fries. This is followed by Vaughan James's short tribute to Bill Lee not so much as an influence but as a presence, somebody in the profession who has always been there, a prophet whose parish is the world and whose followers are legion. This section concludes with an appraisal of Bill Lee by Ray Janssens: "to me Bill Lee is first and foremost the man who made his fellow English language teachers aware of the importance of getting associated".

The articles on professional subjects are grouped according to what we took to be their main topic, audience, or aim. Some articles, however, taking as they do a broad approach to their subject, might with equal reason have been included in a different section. This is true of the articles by Akhmanova, Alexander, Olsen, Rees, Widdowson, and others.

In the section on *Teaching and teacher training*, Gerry Abbott draws attention to what he calls 'anglocentrism' as a 'noticeable and perhaps pernicious aspect of ELT today', and in so doing points to the need for the flow of ELT information to be reversed: from the periphery to the centre.

2 *Homage to W.R. Lee*

This is followed by Antonietta A. Celani's report on experiences of autonomous learning in teacher training courses in Brazil. Reginald A. Close's article focuses on the function of a foreign language as a medium of international understanding, while the next article, by David Cross, describes a curriculum design for teacher education in the form of a graded framework.

Christoph Edelhoff in his article discusses in-service teacher training in Germany. In the paper that follows, Alan Maley looks at the profession in terms of a series of binary distinctions, such as 'process' and 'product', 'learning' and 'teaching', etc.. Judy Winn-Bell Olsen in her article explores a number of similarities between the language learner and the language teacher as each grows in proficiency and insight. Alun Rees addresses himself to the question of the relevance of educational research to classroom practice, while Makhan L. Tickoo in his contribution analyses the tendency in current English Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics towards 'one-only solutions'. Henry G. Widdowson, whose paper concludes this section, questions the validity of what, for a long time now, has been received wisdom, namely that teaching *about* the language is to be strongly rejected. Instead, he suggests the very opposite, at the same time bringing contrastive analysis out of exile.

The section on *Learning and the learner* opens with a theoretical paper by Olga Akhmanova and Tamara Nazarova which describes foreign-language learning in terms of 'practical' or 'cognitive semiotics'. Virginia F. Allen makes some observations on the subject of English spelling, noting especially how (some) native speakers acquired their mastery of English orthography. The following two papers are concerned with young learners of English as a foreign language. The first, by Opal Dunn, points to parental support as an underestimated contributor to success in foreign/second language learning. The second, by Leonora Fröhlich-Ward, deals with some of the problems inherent in the introduction of the written language (reading and writing). Manfred Gerbert contributes an article in which he offers a number of observations on the learning styles of adult students of English for specific purposes. The following article, by Denis Girard, describes problems surrounding the introduction of foreign languages into French primary schools, while Ron Mackay's paper examines the role of certain patterns of classroom interaction in the academic failure of ESL students. Waldemar Marton, in a thoroughgoing article, subjects the notions of habit and habit-formation and their place in the contemporary language learning/teaching paradigm to a critical scrutiny. Mario Rinvolutri reviews the problems and practices of testing, while in concluding this section, Arthur van Essen and his colleagues report the results of their research into learner characteristics and achievement in English as a foreign language.

The fourth section, on *Language and linguistics*, opens with a contribution by Louis G. Alexander who addresses himself to the issue of grammar in ELT, and in so doing ranges widely across the question of what is to be taught, for what reasons

and by what means. This is followed by a paper by Crombie and Parker on intonation in English. The authors make a number of suggestions about the primary function of tone and 'key' (i.e. relative pitch height) in Southern British English. René Dirven's paper describes the attitudes of Southern African linguists towards languages and language policies in South Africa. Jan Firbas offers an analysis of part of the gospel according to John on the basis of the Prague theory of functional sentence perspective. Jacek Fisiak's article describes the voicing of initial /f-/ in English in the 15th century on the basis of onomastic evidence. Leslie A. Hill, in his paper on the problem of the *unable lexicographer, calls for the compilation of a special kind of collocational dictionary to deal with cases where false analogy can easily produce unacceptable English. In the following papers, William F. Mackey describes recent developments in English word-formation and looks at what they may entail for the typology of English, while Wilga M. Rivers looks at the ways in which the vocabulary of a foreign language can be acquired. Brian Tiffen's paper is a study of the intelligibility of Nigerian English. John L.M. Trim discusses the changes in the status of RP, both in Britain and internationally, which demand a fundamental re-assessment of the aims and methods of pronunciation teaching. Finally, Sidney F. Whitaker in his article tries to trace the causes of the difficulties French speakers have with English *coming* and *going*.

The two papers in the last section are concerned with *Language education and culture*. Other papers, for example that by H.G. Widdowson, might have been included here too. The paper by Reinhold Freudenstein reports on the results of a seminar for student teachers on peace education in the foreignlanguage classroom. In the final contribution to this volume, Bruce Pattison argues that in learning a new language cultural knowledge emerges from experience of the foreign language in action. Professor Pattison describes a number of contexts in which such experience may be gained. The book fittingly concludes with W.R. Lee's curriculum vitae and a select list of his published writings.

The preparation of this volume involved the participation of many people: their names are given in the list of contributors at the end of the book.

The production of this volume was beset with a great many difficulties, which had better not be recounted here. In view of Dr. Lee's international stature it is, however, entirely appropriate that the book is published outside the U.K..

The editors would like to express the hope that W.R. Lee, along with many other workers in the field of English Language Teaching, will enjoy the contents of this book and that it will promote further the ideals of internationalism, professionalism and scholarship that he himself cherishes so dearly.

Arthur van Essen
Department of Linguistics
University of Groningen
The Netherlands

Edward Burkart
Minneola
Florida
U.S.A.

Tributes

For William R. Lee: A Giant in His Field / A Man for All Seasons

Mary Finocchiaro

How can I start this very brief paper with so much to say about professor William R. Lee? At eighty, he has spanned a lifetime of travels, lectures, bookwriting and conferences. He has attended and given several hundred major lectures. As president of IATEFL for over twenty years, he worked tirelessly to bring prestige to the *Fédération internationale des professeurs de langues vivantes* (FIPLV), an organization which flourishes even today.

My ill health for this past year and a half has made it difficult for me to write what I feel about this brilliant, indefatigable, incredible man. In my thoughts, I always put him among the greats – close to Palmer, Hornby and Louis Alexander in Great Britain and Fries in the United States.

His lifetime of commitment in IATEFL, the FIPLV and TESOL International is known to many. As head of IATEFL, he prepared annual conferences to which he invited other conference speakers. He spent nights and weeks travelling and he never gave a trite speech. He revised remarks and gaffes that he knew should be changed. His spoken language was incredibly cultured, a joy to his listeners at all times.

I have known Bill Lee for over twenty years. I saw him leading classes in Greece, Great Britain and in Italy. He was a wonder to watch and to listen to. He was tireless at all times jumping from London to Czechoslovakia. I remember when he walked into a large classroom in Athens with noisy youngsters who hung on his every word, who sang with him or recited with him. He jumped over seats at the age of sixty with never a pause.

I remember when twenty years ago he invited a speaker to London from Jamaica, who with class, dignity and aplomb, helped the large audience understand the cultural differences between whites and blacks. What a bombshell Bill launched when he finished his story (of a soccer game) by jumping in the air, literally, with the gestures he used to dramatize the differences between soccer in London and a version played in Jamaica. He said as he finished: “and you’re expecting those people to understand English culture?” (I remember that he had talked of the umpire as a “voodoo” figure.)

I remember when he came to Italy to give lectures and when he spoke in the USA. He and I shared one memory which we would not soon forget. I had started my introductory lecture while people were entering the auditorium. I mentioned

8 *Mary Finocchiaro*

briefly that one of the young lecturers had spoken of my talk. One of them said: "I don't understand a word you say." I answered by saying: "Oh, what's the problem?" "Wella," she said, "we speaka de British, you speaka the American!" The audience broke into laughter. I decided not to make an issue of it. But Bill Lee, sitting in the audience, introduced his lecture by saying "I must apologize, I speaka de British."

I wish for Dr. William R. Lee many years of health and glory. He deserves every one of the tributes found in this book.

A Leeward Look

Vaughan James

Reminiscing the other day with a central European English teacher of some stature, I asked when she had first encountered the work – or the person – of Bill Lee. She thought for a while and then said that she could not recall any particular, dramatic moment. “The point about Bill Lee,” she said, “is that he has always been there.” This, indeed, provides the clue to any definition of the role of Bill Lee in EFL (or do I mean the other way round?): he is not just an influence, but a presence.

Not, I hasten to add, that he has been or is without influence. On the contrary, whole generations of EFL teachers have been brought up – whether they realise it or not – on bases laid down, in whole or in part, by Bill Lee. In addition to his unrivalled *enabling* role as founding father of IATEFL, he has invested both the teaching and the examining of English with a sort of pragmatic balance which not all of his contemporaries or successors have been able to match. Pragmatism does not necessarily imply lack of principle, but it certainly does imply the absence of aggressive dogmatism or of the assumption of extreme positions. In IATEFL – though he might not like this phrase – Bill Lee institutionalised common sense, with all the consequences, both good and less good, that such a process seems inevitably to involve.

A prophet, we are told, does not always receive his due share of honour in his own country. If such a thought ever seriously crossed Bill Lee’s mind (which I doubt), it cannot have lasted more than a fleeting instant. For the world is his parish, and his followers are legion. At a time of incipient insularity, he is a genuinely international figure.

For the past two decades or so we have lived through an age of pedagogical pyrotechnics, when soaring pundits have scudded across the firmament, trailing odd sparks of wisdom before disappearing beyond the clouds, sometimes with a bang, sometimes with a startling silence, and occasionally – alas! – with a legacy of damage in their wake. It has never been Bill Lee’s chosen role to shoot them down. Rather has he preferred to stand with both feet planted firmly on the ground, head turning to watch as he counted them in and counted them back out again, before returning once more to the nitty-gritty of the real task in hand, practical teaching.

With never even a hint of pomposity, Bill Lee is a genuine scholar of the Daniel Jones-Gimson school of phoneticians. His standards in his own field of expertise are clear and immutable even to the point of the pernicky, though this last is quickly countered by a waggish and sometimes slightly naughty sense of humour. (He has been heard to claim a close kinship with approximately one million Chinese who share his surname. I like to think of them busily learning English to commune with their illustrious ancestor!)

After his many years in the field, Bill Lee might easily be forgiven for sitting back now and relaxing, but such is not his nature. In fact, in much of his current thinking he is still ahead of the field. Perhaps because of his background in phonetics, reinforced by years of observing teachers and learners of English all over the world, he has developed an awareness of the vital importance of *intonation* in communication between users of English, and of the dangers that stem from ignorance of the *social loading* of much of the random language that learners acquire in the normless, anything-goes atmosphere of some contemporary teaching. His pioneering attempts to evolve solutions in communicable form have not yet met with the success they deserve, but as others develop them further, the ubiquitous *presence* of Bill Lee will continue to be sensed.

And now, indeed, another major venture as Editor of the English Speaking Union journal *English – a World Language* – the first issue of which certainly augurs well.

Is there no end to Bill Lee's energy and endeavours? Let us hope not!

IATEFL and FATEFL, the Trunk and the Branch

Ray Janssens

To me Bill Lee is first and foremost the man who made his fellow English language teachers aware of the importance of getting associated. In this article I want to focus on the relationship between our respective TEFL associations, 'his', the strong trunk, the International Association of Teachers of English as a Foreign Language, and 'mine', the Flemish shoot that was grafted onto it and developed into a healthy Branch.

My first meeting with Bill dates back to IATEFL's second annual conference, held from 27 to 30 December 1968 at the London Overseas Centre of the British Council and attended by about 230 teachers of English as a foreign language - TEFLers in the jargon – from all over the world. The conference theme then was 'The Relationship between Ends and Means in the Teaching of English as a Foreign Language'.

As far as I can remember I joined IATEFL (named ATEFL at that time) in the course of 1968. My first Newsletter (no 3!) is the February 1968 one, so I knew that Bill and his committee had founded the Association of Teachers of English as a Foreign Language in the spring of the previous year (1967) and that a first conference had already been held, also in London like the second one but at a different location, on 28 and 29 December 1967 under the theme 'Desire to Learn'.

I was in my late twenties at that time and had gained a little more than five years of practical experience as a teacher of English as a foreign language (alongside with Dutch and German) in various Flemish secondary schools. I liked the job and the language but increasingly felt the need of breaking through the barriers of both classroom and language confinement. The news of Bill's newly founded professional club came to me like a godsend. Curious and desirous to learn, I decided to join it, go to its next London conference (it could not be too expensive, I thought, as I lived near Antwerp) and find out for myself how far it would help me broaden and deepen my views.

Once inside the British Council Centre in Portland Place I soon sighted a man apparently in his late forties or early fifties, greyish hair, bushy eyebrows,

dark horn-rimmed glasses and fast moving eyes, who was constantly surrounded by a cosmopolitan crowd of professionally-looking people, most of them speaking English but also other languages which sounded quite foreign to my ears. An attribute he constantly carried under his arm and pressed against his side was a bundle of papers, which, to me anyhow, made him even more conspicuous and easily recognisable as the organiser and central pivot around whom everybody and everything revolved. He was almost incessantly talking to or being talked to and in the rare moments he was not, he always seemed to be on the lookout for someone. Without much help from other participants I made out for myself that he must be Bill, or rather Dr W. R. Lee. He was.

I did not speak to him on that occasion. I hardly found an opportunity to do so, and besides I simply did not dare, greenhorn that I was. But I enjoyed my first conference to the full despite the frugal accommodation, the institutional cuisine and the wintry conditions. I discovered that apart from a colleague from Ghent I was the only Flemish Belgian among the participants. This was an extra incentive to overcome my shyness, seek contact with other colleagues and hear about their work in conditions sometimes unbelievably different from my own. I also made a point of attending as many lectures as possible and let myself be instructed or entertained or even annoyed by the speakers. I did not have the nerve to take part in the post-lecture discussion ritual but admired the courage and the eloquence of those who did. I went home with a feeling of being enriched and encouraged. Above all, I realised that these feelings resulted from having spent two days in the company of colleagues of different backgrounds and levels of experience and expertise who had come together in a fascinating city at the call of an elder expert in our common field.

Back home from my first international teacher conference I tackled the new scholastic year with recharged teaching batteries. Shortly afterwards I joined the newly-founded Flemish Association of Teachers (*Vereniging Vlaamse Leerkrachten*; VVL), a pluralistic and professional body open to teachers of all disciplines but predominantly popular with teachers of humanistic sciences and modern languages. Before long two EFL colleagues and myself received a kind request from the chairman (Lode Ureel) to seriously consider the possibility of setting up some sort of grouping of teachers of English in Flanders. With my early ATEFL experiences still lively on my mind and supported by two Anglo-ophile colleagues, the three of us got together and made up our minds to try and risk it, i.e. found the first professional association open to all teachers of English in Flanders, the Dutch-speaking part of Belgium, without excluding those from elsewhere who showed an interest in joining and sharing.

To pay tribute to our umbrella association and to leave no doubt about its parentage we called the newcomer *Vereniging Vlaamse Leerkrachten Engels* (VVLE) and provided it with an English name as well: *Flemish Association of*

Teachers of English as a Foreign Language (FATEFL). It was 'officially' launched on Wednesday 26 May 1971 on the occasion of a meeting held at the 'Atheneum' (state secondary school) of Mortsel near Antwerp in the presence of no fewer than 35 witnessing colleagues, most of them from the Greater Antwerp area. When I consider the English version of the name of our association and also reread the main objectives discussed and laid down on 26 May 1971, I can see clearly that IATEFL served as an inspiring and motivating force. The VVLE/FATEFL pioneers, too, wanted to promote the teaching and learning of English as a foreign language and to focus attention on the language-learning process as a many-sided educational problem. Furthermore, they wanted to stimulate the exchange of teaching information, promote post-graduate training, encourage international contacts and be watchful of the professional interests of the EFL teacher.

Right from the early beginning there was a pronounced demand for what came later to be known as teacher development, i.e. improving the skills, knowledge and attitudes of the teacher who thinks s/he can still improve professionally. So, we, the founding triumvirate, complied with our colleagues' wishes and embarked on organising a number of afternoon events to meet them. At first we tried to find and encourage colleagues from our own ranks to lead workshops or seminars alongside with the three of us. An inquiry made it quite clear that audiences could only be expected to turn up for practical advice, well-trying recipe-like pieces of methodology presented in a participatory format rather than one-way communication about theoretical linguistics.

It worked. Colleagues of the first hour returned and brought other colleagues along. Within two years after our foundation we invited our first British Council guest speaker. The late Kenneth Whitty gave a talk on British education with special reference to the comprehensive school (in our own country we were going through a period of major educational reform in those days).

At another IATEFL Conference in London, probably that of 1974, a colleague and I 'discovered' the English Teaching Theatre, a fresh educational drama group developed within International House London. Both of us were so enthused by their funny language sketches that we decided to invite them over for their first tour of Flanders. A rather overconfident decision, we realised once it came to funding the whole enterprise. But we pulled it off. I shall not easily forget the ETT's first evening 'concert' (as they then called a performance) in Antwerp on 16 October 1974. It drew such an unexpectedly large audience that Ken Wilson, the ETT leader, kindly proposed to put on a second show to make everybody happy. It was the first of a series of ten successful ETT schooltours organised by FATEFL and also the beginning of our tradition of educational drama performed by groups like Word & Action, The Leeds Laughing Stock Theatre Company, Passe-Partout as well as by solo artists like the late Roger Trafford, Anna Barry, Sandra Butterworth (all British), to name only these few.

Quality educational drama has become one of our favourite activities for various reasons. Groups or solo performers can be booked throughout our (small) country and are therefore an excellent means to spread our activities. An enjoyable performance of a high professional and artistic standard is a welcome break from daily classroom routine and helps to expose learners to a maximum of live English. To the creative teacher or class it can boost all sorts of follow-up work. Of late we have therefore increased our offer in this line by co-sponsoring professional drama for schools at local cultural centres or theatres.

Teacher education and development rather than in-service training are fields in which a professional organisation can be of service to its members and realise its potential. As to speakers and workshop leaders, we of FATEFL have always tried to recruit a balanced mix of experts from both inside and outside the association, English-speaking or not. In line with our basic objectives we have constantly tried to put special emphasis on contact with live English.

In the mid-seventies FATEFL gradually established friendly links with both The British Council and The American Library (later renamed The American Cultural Center) in Brussels.

In August 1973 our association became the Flemish Branch of IATEFL with around 35 members. From then on it became much easier to widen and increase our international contacts. Our own activity, our links with established professional bodies and our Branch status within IATEFL helped to build up our reputation so that we became accepted as partners by teacher training departments of universities and colleges of education and other institutions active in the field of education, including publishing houses.

From the earliest days we had run a modest Newsletter mainly to inform our members of our activities and of other events taking place in our field. Publishers, first Flemish later increasingly foreign, began to send us their ELT publications for inspection or review. This developed into two Newsletter features: a list of Publications Received and Book Reviews. The initial trickle of books grew constantly and bulged out into a continuous stream reaching a peak flow during my review editorship of the IATEFL Newsletter (October 1987 to December 1988). It is true that apart from the Newsletters of English language teaching associations there remain sufficient other outlets for reviews but ours still carries a Reviews section and it is pleasant and encouraging to see how a small but active team of reviewers take charge of it. Thanks to our links with other European ELT Associations it has become possible to negotiate the reproduction of interesting articles from their Newsletters. As a result we were able to revamp content and style of our own quarterly and to offer our readers greater variety and more value for their money.

In the autumn of 1988 our collection of books and materials had outgrown the premises kindly provided by our umbrella association, the Flemish Associ-

ation of Teachers. We were happy to find the Teacher Training Department of Antwerp University (UIA) willing to take the collection over on a long-term loan basis. All our precious possessions are now stored in a fully automated university library to whose kilometre-long shelves FATEFL members have access for a small annual fee.

Like IATEFL, FATEFL caters principally for teachers at all levels. But unlike IATEFL, FATEFL operates at grassroots level and can, therefore, more directly cater for students/pupils as well. Up till now we have co-sponsored (with our umbrella teacher association) a number of broadsheet pamphlets specially written for students. The first was a *TIMES* article on Belgium and Belgians adapted for classroom use by two colleagues. The most successful (over 15,000 copies sold thus far) was a specially commissioned brochure on the USA. This diptych-like classtext consists basically of two longer essays, one in Dutch by a journalist and an authority on the USA, and one in American English by my first exchange student. Comprehension and discussion questions, additional feature texts and topics for talks are also included. Our most recent venture in this line, 'Cities of Flanders', was offered as a complimentary copy to all participants of the Westende conference of IATEFL/FATEFL in 1987.

It is gratifying to see that many of our seminars/workshops are attended by sizeable groups of trainee teachers and their trainers. A party of fifteen trainees attended IATEFL's Warwick conference (1989) and took part in the enjoyable National Evening, an initiative of the late Ray Tongue, at that time still Treasurer of IATEFL. A FATEFL service specially aimed at school classes is the provision of British or American-born guest speakers.

Some time before 1987 FATEFL's proposal to join forces with IATEFL for the organisation of the annual conference was accepted by chair and committee. The 21st International Conference was held from 12 to 14 April at the Zon en Zee Holiday Centre in Middelkerke-Westende on the Belgian coast. It was our biggest large-scale event till now. 820 participants from over 30 countries took part in about 235 sessions, in every respect a record number for a conference held outside the UK. Many will remember it as the 'beads conference' as the traditional meal tickets were replaced here by colourful beads. A FATEFL organising team of ten assisted by many volunteers along with Brenda Thomas and Monique Fisher of the IATEFL central office prepared and ran the conference. It was not favoured by nice weather and outside the otherwise attractive centre looked more like a building site. But despite unavoidable organisational imperfections, the conference itself was a success and our share of its profit put us on Easy Street. For the first time in our brief history a Minister of Education turned up to give an opening address and thus got a chance to convince himself of the size and truly international dimension of the whole event. New in the history of IATEFL conferences was the publication of a collection of 36 con-

ference papers by the Linguistic Agency of Duisburg University (Germany) in 1988, an initiative of Professor R. Dirven, one of our members.

Of all our objectives formulated at the founding meeting of IATEFL the one about “being watchful of the professional interests of the EFL teacher (in Belgium)” has proved the most ambitious and also the most frustrating. We could have known this in advance! The intention behind the words was to try and have a say in the political debates about our profession in general and the teaching of English in particular. Although we have never wanted to interfere with existing teacher unions we considered it our duty to voice any criticisms or fears we had so that education authorities and politicians could hear us. So, when in the early seventies and within the framework of a major educational renewal, the choice between English and French as the second school language was introduced, we campaigned vigorously but with limited means in favour of English. With very little success, I am sorry to say.

September 1989 was the start of another statewide introduction of a new, more uniformed type of curriculum into all secondary schools. But as the new curriculum allowed them to fill in a small proportion of the first year timetable with their own needs or preferences, the state schools decided to include EFL as a compulsory subject in the first year curriculum. The Catholic schools, however, did not, and made it compulsory only from the second year! You may think this must be an example of Belgian educational logic, and you are right! Again FATEFL reacted collectively against this pointless difference and pleaded strongly for the inclusion of English (the world’s *lingua franca*, according to the experts) in the first year curriculum of both school types, and preferably for three periods a week. Alas, with no result. The fact that we are a small (350 members) organisation open to all and therefore not linked up with any of the established educational authorities is a serious handicap in political (and other) matters.

I admit that organising a wide variety of events for the benefit of fellow teachers and their pupils/students has proved much more gratifying than trying to influence political decision makers. Among our most successful achievements I reckon our one-week teacher training courses in conjunction with leading British EFL language schools. And yet, interest began to wane after the sixth course. Again our independent and pluralistic status proved to be counter-productive. Most colleagues who joined such a course had to pay it out of their own pockets simply because most principals did not acknowledge FATEFL as an established organisational body.

As a result of this waning of interest in the mid-eighties we decided to give the short teacher-training course a rest and to change over to study tours of Britain on a (cheap) bed and breakfast basis. With this formula (basically a combination of cross-cultural understanding and language input) we aimed

principally at interested colleagues and their families. It proved a good gamble and as we do not limit registrations to practising teachers we were able to build up a core party of reliable and interested travellers. Participants appreciate their stay with well-chosen families (selected by a travel agent specialised in this field), receive an extensive travel brochure compiled by ourselves and are exposed during each trip to as much live English as possible. Next year we hope to take our sixth party across on a jubilee trip!

In 1988 the Danish Centre for European Education approached our umbrella organisation, the Flemish Teachers' Association (VVL) with an invitation to cooperate in a Danish-Flemish jobswop project. Five teachers, two of whom were also members of FATEFL, spent a fortnight in various places in Denmark teaching the classes of Danish counterparts who were simultaneously taking over from them in Flanders. Danes and Flemings alike reported that they found this a very enriching experience. Both national groups have remained in friendly contact ever since and I would very much like to see this jobswop project develop further with European LINGUA support.

Although both voluntary organisations, structurally and managerially IATEFL is a giant and FATEFL a dwarf. Surprising though it may be, FATEFL has so far had never more than two non-elected officers, i.e. a chairman and a secretary. Unlike IATEFL, FATEFL has no permanent secretariat, no Rules, no AGM, no elected steering committee, no Special Interest Groups, no Branches or Affiliates. Of course, we do have a (non-elected) steering committee of ten who among themselves share the responsibility for the objectives and take charge of the different tasks to be carried out: running the association on a day-to-day basis, membership administration, funding, editing the quarterly Newsletter, educational drama, resource centre, public relations, study tours, etc.. It has proved possible to run it for nearly twenty years with about fifteen colleagues actively involved in the management. Yet, as time passes by, succession and rejuvenation will become unavoidable. In the present climate of poor job prospects for young teachers, general apathy and inertia, it will not be an easy job, I am afraid.

In the early nineteen eighties IATEFL changed their approach to electing officers and committee members to increase member participation and to encourage internationalisation. Organising elections means yet another serious investment in voluntary time and endeavour but they are worth the effort if a teacher association wants to remain active, progressive and outward-looking. My six years as an elected member on the IATEFL committee has strengthened this conviction. And if we want FATEFL, our own association, to continue as an active, service-oriented professional organisation, I think we shall have to follow this example.

Most EFL teachers of the world do not belong to an international association like IATEFL or a national one like FATEFL. Leaving apart all those who simply

have no choice, I suppose that apathy and individualism are two major reasons for not joining. This, our time is the time of collective egoism. It is sometimes frustrating to see how small the turnout is for an EFL event which, from the organiser's point of view, was to be interesting and useful. Yet, unity is strength and together we know and can do more than by ourselves alone. Actually, I can only speak as one who from an early stage in his career felt the need of contact, exchange, cooperation and team work and who has devoted innumerable hours to running a teachers association. The sum total of what I have learned and experienced during all those years in two English language teaching associations (ELTAs) I cannot calculate or measure. It is simply enormous and it has helped me considerably to develop from an insecure into a more confident and experienced teacher.

Whether a teacher association is highly structured or not, it just cannot exist without a driving force: someone who is prepared to devote a great deal of time and energy to it and who can convince others to join in and share. Bill Lee is such a hard, inspiring worker and it is as such that I shall always remember him.

As to the TEFL future, it looks hopeful. European TEFL contacts will probably become easier and more frequent now that both the Iron Curtain and the Wall have come down. NELLE (Networking English Language Learning in Europe) was launched in Osnabrück in 1989 and at the time of writing is preparing its second conference. It will attract, I hope, many East European colleagues who have so far been unable to meet colleagues from the West at conferences.

As to Bill Lee, I feel sure he is happy with this evolution towards increased professional contacts and mutual understanding and respect. By setting up an ELTA or joining it, colleagues pay tribute, many of them unaware, to the man who set the shining example and who therefore deserves their and our gratitude.

Teaching and teacher training

The Proper Study of ELT

Gerry Abbott

Thanks to the rapidly-growing power and range of the electronic media, many people in Europe and the United States have become knowledgeable and concerned about distant problems and global issues - about famines in Ethiopia, popular uprisings that failed in Burma and China but succeeded in the Eastern Bloc, and environmental phenomena lethal to thousands of blameless species and potentially catastrophic to *Homo sapiens*. This paper is a plea, not that ELT syllabuses and materials should include such topics (this has already been done here and there) but that academic and executive authorities in ELT should cultivate a similarly global awareness within their professional sphere. It has been the experience of spending well over half of the past decade in distant places (Borneo, Pakistan, Cameroon and Burma) that has prompted the writing of this paper. Becoming increasingly disturbed by the inappropriateness of many of the current ELT orthodoxies in these settings, I began to consider possible causes of the mismatch.

One general feature of ELT movements in the last two decades has been a reluctance to come to terms with the realities of schooling. Admittedly, the complex responsibilities of education to (and for) such social evils as unemployment, underdevelopment and elitism have constituted a massive problem. Coombs (1968) long ago identified a 'world educational crisis', and the 'education dilemma' (Simmons ed. 1980) is still with us. It seems to me that instead of facing the problems of schooling squarely in an attempt to contribute towards a solution, ELT has been focusing on the far less problematic concerns of post-school instruction. The seminal work of Wilkins (1973), for instance, was the outcome of a commission to establish 'a model for the definition of *adult* language needs' (my emphasis) – the needs of people working across national borders. The resultant 'Threshold Level' specification (Van Ek 1975) was merely copied when a specification for schools was needed (Van Ek 1976), the covert assumption being that schoolchildren's needs were the same as workers' needs. Indeed the ESP boom itself, with its craze for detailing these so-called 'needs' may well have been a corporate expression of relief: here was an opportunity to set aside the awkward fact that most schoolchildren have no clearly predictable needs at all and may even regard their EFL lessons as TENOR, the Teaching of English for No Obvious Reason (Abbott 1981). Basic problems concerning