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## Goals and Objectives

**Kenneth O. Anderson**

At the meeting of the Gogaku Kyoiku Kenkyukai in December 1993, I was given the task of defining the words "goals" and "objectives" so that we would be able to agree on certain goals and objectives for our language programs and begin implementing them. According to *Building Better English Language Programs: Perspectives on Evaluation in ESL*, edited by Martha C. Pennington (Washington, D. C.: NAFSA, Assoc. of International Educators, 1991), the handbook distributed to us by Mr. Kroehler, *goals* are "general formulations of what must be accomplished in order to satisfy the needs that have been identified. Based on the goals that have been formulated from the needs analysis, *objectives* can be written in the form of precise statements about the content, experiences, or skills that can be expected to result in attainment of a given goal" (p. 62).

The authors then go on to say that there seem to be two main kinds of objectives: *experiential*, "which are stated in broad terms describing general experiences that students should have during the course of instruction," and *behavioral*, "which are stated in specific terms describing observable behaviors that students should exhibit at a certain stage or at the end of a course" (p. 62). The authors do not advocate either one of those two objectives, but do say that "statements of goals and objectives are central to the functioning of a language program," citing Jarvis and Adams (1979) that

Goals cannot be considered an optional component of a second language program. They are essential... for education is purposeful... Statements of objectives serve pur-

poses beyond clarifying the intent of their formulator: they function as a communication device among all groups involved in the educational process, including teachers, administrators, parents, and other interested parties.

Moreover, the authors state that “Attention to the form that objectives take is not as important in our view as the benefits accrued from the effort of working together as a program to formulate goals and objectives from the needs analysis... Individual teachers and students should be consulted during the process, whether or not they are enlisted in the actual writing of goals and objectives. Their participation at any stage will have the same beneficial unifying effects already discussed... The curriculum will gradually begin to emerge, based on the experience and values of the individual members of the groups as they evaluate all the information available on all the components of the program” (p. 63).

The authors say, on the very next pages (pp. 64-5), one more thing which I think is important for the mental health of teachers:

The teacher has traditionally been viewed as a “jack-of-all-trades” who was responsible for everything related to the course of instruction. Thus it was up to the teacher to determine the needs and proficiency levels of the students; the goals and objectives for each course; and the tests that should be used for placement, achievement, and promotion. Moreover, the selection or creation of appropriate materials was a central and often time-consuming part of the teaching job. Under these conditions, it is a wonder that language teachers ever had enough time and energy left over for teaching!

It is for the teacher’s sake that the administrator must coordinate the curriculum by either (1) taking responsibility for all of the curricular components based on teacher input,

or (2) working out ways for teachers to share the load in curriculum development and maintenance, each supporting all the others. . . . The coordination by the administrator of the nonteaching aspects of the curriculum leaves teachers time to concentrate on their main job: teaching. Given strong program support, the teacher is left to focus on the most effective means for meeting objectives that reflect the perceived needs of the students and for helping them achieve these objectives.

It is my personal hope that the administration of the Seigakuin schools will help relieve teachers of some of their administrative duties, in particular student registration for classes, administration of tests and some of the more onerous committee work done by the Gakusei, Kyomu and Kokusai-Koryu committees. More office staff, trained in how to carry out such administrative duties, would be a great boon to teachers. Many teachers and staff members at Joshi Seigakuin have too much work to do and could use full-time assistants. (At one university in Japan the department head has three full-time secretaries.) A constant overload of work can lead to stress and frustration and can make one a less effective teacher.

There has already been a statement of goals for the language program by both Mr. Kroehler and Mr. Griffie, and a statement of some objectives by Mr. Griffie. I'd like to recapitulate these.

Last October, Mr. Kroehler distributed a statement of possible goals for our language program. It seems to me that we have to decide if these goals are going to apply to Seigakuin University, Joshi Seigakuin Junior College and the Seigakuin Language Institute—to all of these schools—or to only some of them, or even to only one of them. There is not much point in making common goals for all three schools if only some of the schools are going to implement them. At times it seems as if the three institutions are reluctant to work together harmoniously, which

is regrettable: "If a house be divided against itself, it cannot stand" (Mark 3: 25). As student enrollment decreases, the three institutions will have to support each other and to cooperate if they are going to survive.

Mr. Kroehler favored as a first goal the establishment of "an integrated, multi-track common campus-wide core program for English language education for freshman students with the possibility of each department setting up additional courses beyond the core program... Multi-track implies ability grouping, and frequent evaluation to determine which students are ready to go on to the next stage of the program."

The second goal was "to decide what level of proficiency will be required for completion of the foreign language requirement in each department in addition to the required number of credits, to take effect beginning in April of 1995." The ACTFL proficiency goals were recommended for use in deciding what the proficiency levels at our schools should be.

The third goal was to institute a campus-wide proficiency testing program beginning in April 1994. The SLEP Test, which is already being used at the junior college, was suggested. The multi-track integrated language program would be based on the results of the SLEP Test. It was also suggested that students should be required to take the test as a graduation requirement.

The fourth goal was to develop a common curriculum for a one-year core program. If this goal is adopted, the deadline for curriculum development will have to be discussed.

The fifth goal was to see if 90-minute classes could be changed to shorter classes, say, 70-minute classes. It was felt that shorter classes held more often are more effective than longer classes held often: both teacher and student can stay more alert. At present, however, it seems that the 90-minute class is such an integral part of the Japanese educational system that it unfortu-

nately cannot be changed.

The sixth goal was "to develop various programs for remedial work and for self-study so that students who have acquired the needed credits without achieving the necessary proficiency could continue to study on their own until they reach the required proficiency level." CD Roms were suggested as a means of letting such students study on their own.

The seventh goal was to offer courses in English primarily and initially for foreign students coming to study at Seigakuin, but with the possibility of our own students with sufficient language ability to enroll as well.

The eighth goal was "to develop a variety of overseas study programs so that students would be motivated to reach a level of proficiency that would permit them to participate in such programs." I personally would like to see an overseas program in Canada, England, Australia or New Zealand for our English language students. A friend of mine is teaching Japanese exchange students at Gyosei University in Reading, England, and I know of an exchange program that Dokkyo University has with Essex University. I would like to see Joshi Seigakuin follow suit. England is arguably less dangerous than the United State; the transportation systems are better; there is a great range of museums, historical and cultural landmarks in England that is far easier to have access to than in America; and students would be very near the Continent and therefore might have a chance to experience a bit of other countries' cultures as well.

As for Mr. Griffee's goals: the first goals he discussed were for jido kyoiku (children's education): 1) to introduce practice teaching; 2) to increase students' listening ability; and 3) to expand the student's repertoire of teaching methods and techniques. His objectives for accomplishing these goals were: 1) to have two practice teaching sessions; 2) to use a text and listening exercises to provide listening practice; and 3) to introduce and

practice three or four teaching methods.

Mr. Griffee then had some recommendations. The first was that "goals should be stated (if they are not already stated to our satisfaction) and from those goals objectives should be derived for tracks." Mr. Griffee's second recommendation was that we be concerned with learner training, and he emphasized that we could be one of the first schools to get involved with this. Also, courses directly related to student needs should be added. For example, recently at the junior college a new translating course and a new interpreting course were added, since many students have to do translating and interpreting work for the companies which hire them after they graduate. We have to find out what students want to study and plan accordingly. This does not mean that students should study only what they want to study—for example, it is essential that students learn how to read well and come to enjoy reading, but very few students seem to be interested in reading when asked about reading in their entrance interviews. Also, students hoping to study overseas must learn how to become skilled in taking such tests as the TOEFL Test—not very interesting, maybe, but important.

It has been pointed out that one of the most important reasons for Seigakuin University and Joshi Seigakuin cooperating in establishing a mutual curriculum and language institute is that, unless they do, there may not be enough students in the future to be able to create a multi-track program. But if students are culled from both Seigakuin University and Joshi Seigakuin for courses they can take in common, then an academic track goal, for one, is possible.

Mr. Griffee also had some useful recommendations for academic track goals. First, academic track students need to be able to 1) listen to lectures, 2) take lecture notes, 3) participate in class discussions, 4) prepare papers and reports and 5) read assignments. As for goals, first-year academic track students

need to be able to comprehend short, easy lectures; take notes; and participate in class discussions on the ideas presented in the lecture. Such participation could even be on the level of being able to formulate a question. Second-year academic track students need to be able to comprehend intermediate-level lectures, use comprehension questions to ascertain meaning, take notes and participate in class discussions on the ideas presented in the lectures.

Objectives include the following: first-year learners could work in project groups, find an academic English speaker and make a 15-20 minute video of the English speaker speaking on a subject agreeable to the speaker and the students; the whole class could listen to the videos, take notes, and explain key ideas; learners could participate in class discussions by creating questions. Second-year academic track students could engage in a three-step module: 1) pre-lecture activities, such as reading, dealing with questions about the reading, and discussion; 2) a live 20-30 minute lecture by the teacher; 3) post-lecture activities, e. g. group debriefing, question and answer of the teacher/lecturer.

As for evaluation, first-year students could, both as a pre-test and as a post-test, listen to a video lecture, take notes, and then take a listening comprehension test. The teacher could also give grades on classroom participation (although it can be very difficult to grade classroom participation objectively). Second-year students could also have, as both a pre-test and a post-test, a video of the teacher giving a lecture to listen to, after which they would have to write a summary of the lecture and then write questions for the lecturer.

Joshi Seigakuin has made a step in the right direction this year by establishing a new course, Sogo Eigo B, an honors course for first-year students with admission limited to 20 students. Admission to this honors course will be partly based on the



scores entering students make on the SLEP Test, which can be correlated with the TOEFL Test. Being able to express opinions on a variety of topics and being able to write a term paper will be emphasized in this course. Being able to write well is an ability which has been sorely neglected, despite the fact that some basic writing skills are taught in the freshmen composition classes and in the second-year elective, Composition II. When our students transfer to our sister school, Lynchburg College, or take courses at Oglethorpe University, they are often initially overwhelmed by the enormity of the task confronting them: to improve their English to the point that they can fully participate in regular college classes with American students. There need to be good counselors at our sister schools who are experienced in dealing with Asian students to help such transferring students when they undergo stress and anxiety due to the difficulty of the task of adapting to American classes. As yet we lack proper preparation and orientation for our students going overseas; we need to make them aware of the challenges that face them and we need to be able to reassure them that they will receive help and guidance when they need it. This is why the establishment of the International Center, with Mr. Kroehler at its helm, is so much to be desired. More needs to be done for those students who find that studying at the Seigakuin schools is just the beginning of their academic life.

Can we really accomplish our goals or not? When Randy Thrasher gave his presentation, there was some discussion about having two sets of full-time teachers, a la ICU: one set of teachers handling so-called "content" courses and one set of teachers in charge of language teaching, with coordination between the two sets. Is this feasible? Whether or not two sets of full-time teachers are employed depends on many factors, including whether we will have enough students in the future. If student enrollment goes down drastically, there may be neither

the need nor the wherewithal for having two sets of full-time teachers.

And cooperation and harmony between all the people involved in accomplishing our goals is vital. Japanese education is in a state of upheaval, and in changing and improving education at our schools we need to be flexible, we need to be willing to compromise, we need to be willing to listen to new ideas. One is reminded of Bob Dylan's ever-timely song, "The Times They Are A-Changin'": "Keep your eyes wide/ The chance won't come again... Please heed the call/Don't stand in the doorway/Don't block up the hall/For he that gets hurt/Will be he who has stalled... Your old road is/ Rapidly agin'. Please get out of the new one/If you can't lend your hand/For the times they are a-changin'."