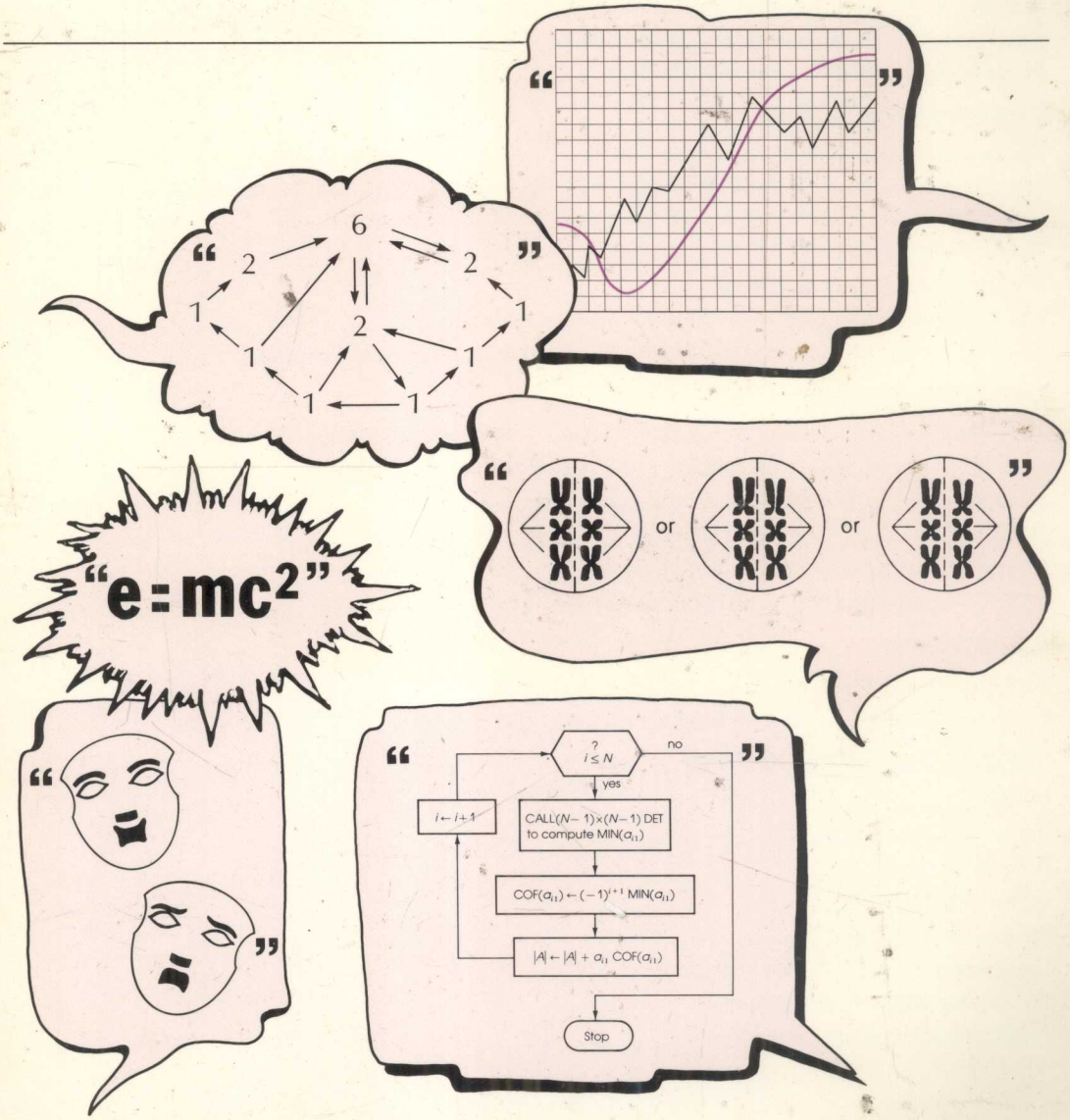
The Wadsworth English for Academic Purposes Series

Academically Speaking

Janet L. Kayfetz and Randy L. Stice



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Wadsworth Publishing Company
Belmont, California
A Division of Wadsworth, Inc.

English/ESL Editor: John Strohmeier
Editorial Assistants: Holly Allen, Sharon McNally
Production Editor: Deborah O. McDaniel
Designer: Andrew H. Ogus
Print Buyer: Barbara Britton
Copy Editor: Bob Seitz
Cover: Andrew H. Ogus
Cover Illustration: Jeanne Schreiber

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Printed in the United States of America 49

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10—91 90 89 88 87

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Kayfetz, Janet L.
Academically speaking.

(Wadsworth English for academic purposes series)
1. English language—Text-books for foreign speakers. 2. English language—Spoken English. 3. English language—Technical English. 4. Public speaking. I. Stice, Randy L. II. Title. III. Series.
PE1128.K384 1987 428.3'4 86-30765
ISBN 0-534-08004-9

WADSWORTH ENGLISH FOR ACADEMIC PURPOSES SERIES

Charles H. Blatchford and Jerry L. Messec, Series Editors

Available in 1987

Academically Speaking Janet L. Kayfetz and Randy L. Stice

Academic Writing Workshop Sarah Benesch, Mia Rakijas, and Betsy Rorschach

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About the Wadsworth EAP Series

The Wadsworth English for Academic Purposes (EAP) series was conceived to provide appropriate teaching materials for college courses that focus on the academic uses of English. The eighteen texts of the EAP series are designed to help ESL students achieve communicative competence in all aspects of academic life in the United States. These materials teach the skills of reading, writing, listening, and speaking and can be used for either intensive or nonintensive formats, in classrooms or for individual study, and for courses of varying lengths.

The Wadsworth EAP series is based on three principles:

1. *Comprehensive skills development:* Because the EAP program is based on the philosophy that language is an integrated unity, each book not only stands on its own but also prepares for and builds on other texts in the series. Individual skills are explored in depth at three distinct levels of proficiency; topics across all skill levels retain a consistent yet nonrepetitive approach.
2. *Academic community context:* The Wadsworth EAP series prepares students for the varied language uses they will encounter daily in their academic careers. All teaching and learning activities are set in the context of college or university classes; however, some texts go even further to depict the extended academic community. This context-specific approach assumes that students possess the learning skills and educational background typically found at academic English centers.

3. *Student-centered, process-oriented materials:* Each text in the Wadsworth EAP series places student learning activities at the heart of each lesson, requiring students to take an active responsibility for their role in the learning process.

The components of the Wadsworth EAP program will include:

Three grammar practice books that encourage students to practice language appropriate to specific academic contexts.

Six listening comprehension texts and tapes that develop (a) listening skills to the level needed for achievement in an academic program and (b) appreciation of the social situations students will experience in the extended academic community.

Three oral language books whose progressive communicative activities develop the spoken language skills necessary for students in U.S. campus communities.

Three reading skill development books that help students acquire skills for reading authentic English texts within the academic community context.

Three progressive process-oriented writing texts that develop writing skills from practice with the Latin alphabet (for those unfamiliar with the system) to communicative writing to writing based on individual research. Writing assignments are based on both visual and written situations. Higher-level texts provide instruction and practice in summarizing articles and research as well as in preparing longer papers. All three books combine practice in composing and editing to the degree necessary to express ideas logically and clearly.

The authors of the Wadsworth EAP series have developed their materials based on teaching experience, but the series is not teacher-proof; it will not work for someone who expects all the answers and a strict step-by-step approach. Each text is designed to allow instructors the flexibility to use their own teaching schemes, styles, and techniques. Not providing all "correct" answers reflects current trends in ESL teaching, which focus on the student as a developing being, struggling to construct, to decipher, and to negotiate meaning. Some texts do provide answer keys, however, as a help to students who may be using the text on their own.

Although no textbook is ideal for all students (or all teachers), this program will work for everyone who is willing to participate fully in classes and assignments. The texts are intended to broaden the students' vision and empower them with the expanding possibilities of language. Control and support are found not only in the materials themselves but also in the teachers who guide the students through them. Just as students can learn to make language their servant, so can instructors learn to make the materials support their individual pedagogical goals.

In sum, the Wadsworth EAP series does more than simply prepare students for a grammar-based examination; the program can help international students master communication in academic English through meaningful practice in the American academic context. The student-centered materials shift the responsibility for learning from the teacher to the student, who, in the process, is provided the opportunity to fulfill his or her potential. And isn't that what each of us would like to achieve?

Charles H. Blatchford and Jerry L. Messec,
Series Editors

Preface

This book is designed to give students an introduction to and practice in using *academic English*. We have identified and described specific settings in which students use the academic register, and we have designed activities to familiarize them with the rules and the quality of performance expected in these settings. Although we have chosen activities that are applicable to specific academic situations, the activities will prepare students for language use in the extended academic community as well. The philosophical and pedagogical implications of these goals are twofold:

1. The text is activity centered rather than information centered.
2. The text is student centered rather than teacher centered.

An Activity-Centered Text

The fact that this book is activity centered has four ramifications.

1. The primary concern is what the students can do rather than what they know. For this reason, the majority of the text is devoted to activities rather than to information about the activities.

2. Because nearly all authentic academic speech situations involve readings and integrate the four language skills (listening, speaking, reading, writing), several chapters are based on readings, and many activities integrate all four skills.
3. Because the different speech situations suggest a different format for each assignment, you will find some variation in the structure of the activities from chapter to chapter. Even so, most activities have a threefold structure: *preparation, practice,* and *presentation.*
4. The book is process centered at every level—from the steps within a given activity, to the sequence of activities within a given chapter, to the sequence of chapters within a unit, and finally to the ordering of the units within the book.

A Student-Centered Text

The student-centered focus of the book is reflected in the fact that most of the class time involves students working in pairs or in small groups with little direct involvement from the teacher. Consequently, the students have significant responsibility for the success or failure of a given activity and of the class in general. This raises the immediate concern of student motivation and the larger issue of the roles of the teacher and the student in an activity-centered and student-centered course.

The Role of the Teacher

Of these concerns, the most important is the role of the teacher. For this text, the teacher's role is primarily that of facilitator. We understand facilitating to consist of the following:

1. *Setting up the activity,* whether this means simply organizing students into pairs or small groups or setting up a debate or panel discussion. The amount of out-of-class preparation that this requires will vary considerably from chapter to chapter and even from assignment to assignment. Dividing students into groups to discuss an article or to analyze an analogy will require considerably less preparation than will delivering a lecture or setting up an impromptu speech.
2. *Setting time limits* for each activity or portion of an activity.

3. *Circulating around the room,* particularly during pair and small-group assignments, to stimulate discussion and answer questions.
4. *Monitoring the progress of an activity:*
   a. Are the students staying on the topic?
   b. Are they working toward the goal of the activity?
   c. Are they staying within the allotted time?
5. *Providing feedback,* both formal and informal, oral and written, which can include any of the following:
   a. commenting on ideas and participation
   b. ensuring that, in a small group discussion, the leader of the group is following the guidelines provided
   c. ensuring that all members of a discussion group are following the guidelines for appropriate participation
   d. providing written feedback on the culminating activity of a given chapter, whether it be a speech, debate, or seminar

As suggested by the preceding guidelines, the teacher's role will change from chapter to chapter and from activity to activity. Some activities will require careful monitoring, but others will not; some will require significant preparation outside of class, but others will not; some will suggest verbal feedback, and others will suggest written feedback. It is important for teachers to be sensitive to these differences and to be aware of the flexibility inherent in our approach.

Adapting the Textbook to Yourself and Your Class

Every textbook will be adapted to the teacher's personality and abilities as well as to the personality and needs of the class. We have sought to design a text that recognizes and allows for this. The sequence of chapters and the sequence of activities within a chapter have been carefully planned. However, we strongly encourage freedom in (1) determining time limits and pace of the course, (2) adjusting topics and activities to fit different levels, (3) using the book for one semester or two, and (4) deciding whether to do certain preparatory activities at home or in class, orally or in writing.

Pair and small-group work are strongly emphasized throughout the book, and much of the success of this work hinges on the composition of the pairs or small groups. We have found that groups work most effectively when they are composed in advance for specific assignments, consider-

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ing such factors as nationality, age, major, and familiarity. This is a crucial part of setting up any activity and should receive a commensurate amount of attention.

Presentations, both individual and group, followed by a question-and-answer period, are another activity frequently used in this text. When an activity involves a presentation before the entire class by either an individual student or a pair, it is not necessary for every student or pair to present. Teachers should feel free to limit the presentations to four or five. Be sure, though, that the same students do not make presentations each time. When there is a question-and-answer period, we have found that the period is more successful when specific students are told *before* the presentation that they must ask a question at its conclusion or when every student is told to prepare a question. After the presentation, the teacher usually calls on only two or three students to ask their questions.

The Role of the Student

The student's role in this course is also vitally important and centers on the following question: Where does student motivation come from in a student-centered course? It is our experience that student motivation for any course comes from three sources:

1. *The enthusiasm of the teacher.* A teacher who consistently shows confidence in and enthusiasm for a course is very likely to engender the same attitides in his or her students.
2. *The perceived usefulness of the assignment.* If students believe that a given activity will, either by itself or in sequence with other activities, help them develop necessary and desirable skills, their motivation for that activity will be enhanced. However, the primary responsibility for communicating the usefulness of a given activity lies with the teacher, and this may have to be done frequently.
3. *Interest in the topic.* If the topic for an activity interests students, is familiar to them, and is relevant to their experience, it will supply much of the motivation for the activity.

The ideal for every activity is that the students become so engrossed in it that they forget they are doing an ESL exercise and become concerned only with the efficacy of their communication. And that, after all, is our common goal.

Acknowledgments

We would like to extend our thanks to several people whose assistance made this book possible. Thanks go first to Nancy Marwin, Kim McNeill, and Richard Nettell, our colleagues in the English as a Second Language Program at the University of California, Santa Barbara, who used and critiqued numerous versions of the manuscript. We would also like to express our appreciation to Charlie Blatchford for his personal encouragement as well as his detailed and insightful comments on the manuscript and to Jerry Messec, who helped us formulate our original concept of this book. Next, we want to thank the staff at Wadsworth, particularly John Strohmeier, Debbie McDaniel, and Andrew Ogus, who worked closely with us to bring the book to its final form. Special thanks go to Becky Hanna, who tirelessly typed numerous versions of the manuscript and who always accommodated our deadlines. Finally, we wish to publicly acknowledge the shared growth and delight that illuminated this project and carried it to its completion.

January 1987

Janet L. Kayfetz
Randy L. Stice

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