

ITA Transcripts

Title: Chemistry Lab 1
Focus: Vocabulary
Contributed by: Cynthia Myers, Iowa State University
Publisher: TESOL

The following short segments from transcripts from several TAs in chemistry labs illustrate situations in which TAs are having difficulty using appropriate vocabulary.

Chemistry Lab

Find places where the TA is having difficulty with vocabulary. Can you supply alternative wordings?

Segment 1:

S Where do we take 'em if they're aren't clean.
TA Pardon?
S These aren't clean.
TA Find another one. [to whole class] Extra crucibles here.
S No
TA Then exchange your ones at room 152.
[Writes on board: "Exchange at room 152."
[student returns from 152]
S They won't give us clean ones.
TA Why?
S I don't know. They won't give 'em to us. They said we can clean our own.
TA Oh
S We just burn 'em? Heat 'em up really hot?
TA Uh. No That's not sufficient
S Rinse 'em out?
[to all students]
TA To clean crucible ... Let's think about it. First of all we can clean those dirty dust.
After that, After that burn, burn.

Segment 2

S1 Do you want us to clean these. Clean 'em out or what?
TA If you can't clean any more, then clean using mechanical method. Then go on to the next step.
[To whole class] When you are on the, ... use Meeker burner first.
S1 Use Meeker
TA Yeah. Meeker burner first. The other procedures are the same still. Only the one I mentioned are are modified. So the procedure is just you use Meeker burner. . . .
S2 I was just , do you want to use Meeker burner when we weigh the crucible to start out with as well?
TA What?
S2 When we start out we're supposed to weight the crucible twice, once while it's cool and then once again when when it's hot. Are we supposed to use Meeker burner to get it hot?
TA No I don't think so.
S2 No. Just the regular burner? Or it doesn't matter.
TA Obtain the vacant weight of crucible.

Segment 3

TA Uh the grip gripping the crucible is a rather bad idea. Your sweat is ... can be ...

S Oh no.. Oh all right.

TA Handle crucible as a sample. The weight is very important. So think about any extra effect which can affect the weight of sample.

Segment 4

S There's no more smoke but there's still a lot of paper in there.

TA If there is no more smoke it means there is no papers in the crucible.

S So I can convert it now?

TA You can confirm in visual manner that, could you see any paper traits in your crucible? paper traits?

S I can see the paper from here. I don't underst- What do you mean?

TA I mean just all the materials which can be from paper. Maybe some black black materials or, because [unintelligible] paper. I think this enough.

Examine the way the TA negotiates for meaning when he does not understand the student. What strategy is he using effectively? Can you suggest alternatives to the responses he gives? Why is it difficult for him to answer the student's question?

Segment 5

TA Your report?

S Did we have to do the report or just the data 'cause I had the data tables but when I talked to everybody else and they didn't do their report 'cause they said we weren't graded for it. And so I did the data tables and everything...

TA Data tape?

S Data tables that you had us that you had us do for uh,... lets see it was... SR 100? I did these data tables and everything like that but I was told by everyone else in the other classes didn't have to write up a report. And so I really didn't understand what they meant by these questions. So I just didn't answer these questions. Did you want these questions answered? 'Cause no one I talked to uh answered...

TA Do your best.

S OK. I'll turn it in then like, like uh, next week. Can I turn it in next week since I didn't understand these questions?

TA Next week?

S Or do you have like uh office hours I can bring it over to ya?

TA Uh let me see.. mmm Everyone get a chance for delaying one day.

S OK Then when can I, what time and what room do I go to to give you the questions.

TA Uh to ask me about the questions?

S No to go to give you the questions.

TA Oh my office is Spedding 325?

S 325? And when will you be there?

TA Uh. If there will, uh if I'm not, I'm not there just put your report to my desk. My desk is just right of..

S What's the building again?

TA Spedding. The next building of Gilman to the north.

S Uh OK. I don't know how to spell it.

TA Right spell. Uh my desk is right when you enter the door.

S OK I have the data if you want it. It's all in tables and everything. But I just didn't answer those questions.