

# An Analysis of “VOA Business Report” English

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## I. Introduction

### A. The Purpose of This Study

This paper will discuss <sup>(1)</sup> the characteristics of the English used in the “VOA Business Report” program and <sup>(2)</sup> a method of using this program to facilitate the teaching of spoken, rather than written, English. The ultimate goal will be to produce materials that will help non-native speakers of English to express their ideas simply and effectively with the limited target language resources at their disposal.

### B. Definitions Relevant to This Paper

A few definitions would be appropriate before the main body of this paper.

#### 1. Business

In this report, the term *business* is used as it is defined in the *BBC English Dictionary*: <sup>(2)</sup> “Business is work relating to the production, buying, and selling of goods or services.” (*BBC English Dictionary*: 153)

2. Business Report (a sample definition relating specifically to Canadian business interests)

“*The Business Report* is a roundup of business news, including the previous day’s close on the Toronto and New York stock markets, today’s close from Tokyo, today’s U.S. dollar close against the yen, and the opening gold figure from London.” (*Broadcast News Style Guide*: 103)

### C. Method of Data Collection

The author recorded 90 “VOA Business Report” programs from January

29 through July 24, 1996 onto tapes. Four of these programs were transcribed in their entirety, and 25 "Background Report" segments were also transcribed. The author also received some transcripts of the "Background Report" segments (see below, II. B. 3), which are part of the "VOA Business Report," directly from the USIA, or the United States Information Agency, Washington, D.C. This made spelling verification possible.

## II. "VOA Business Report"

### A. "VOA Business Report"

"VOA Business Report" is a shortwave radio program broadcast by VOA (the Voice of America), Washington, D.C., from 9:10 through 9:30 a.m. JST, Monday through Friday. Its purpose is to disseminate current business news to multitudinous English-speaking listeners around the world.

### B. Sources

The information on the "VOA Business Report" program comes from VOA correspondents, the "VOA Business Report" director and Bloomberg Business News.<sup>(3)</sup>

### C. Extended Concept

The "VOA Business Report" program extends the basic concept of a business report to include not only the standard business news (as in the Canadian definition above) but also three other areas of interest. The four areas, then, are (1) Standard Business News Items, (2) Special Business News Items, (3) Background Reports and (4) a Summary of Important World News Items.

Specifically, these four areas might include the following kinds of information reports:

1. Standard Business News Items

stocks, currency, bonds, the gold market, etc.

2. Special Business News Items

the airline industry, the Japan-U.S. semi-conductor issue, oil prices, etc.

3. Background Reports

Exact Titles:

business on the Web

corporate design

corporate downsizing

corporate layoffs

corporate partnerships and joint ventures

corporate focus

creativity in business

Dow Jones average anniversary

international executive recruitment

investment clubs

mutual funds/the stock market

New York, capital of business

people-centered management

psychology and management

retirement planning

sales techniques

small retailers vs. chain stores

stockholder meetings

technology/development

turnaround/case studies  
U.S. corporations/global shift  
U.S./Polish business school venture  
women’s business communication  
workers as partners  
Some General Subject Areas:  
managerial talent  
global business strategies  
employee morale  
training of employees and managers  
social trends  
exploiting technology

#### 4. Summary of Important World News Items

Israeli Prime Minister travels to the U.S.  
Cuban official calls for the repatriation of a Cuban hijacker  
U.S. National Security Advisor meets with Chinese officials

### III. Characteristics of “VOA Business Report” English

#### A. Variety of Voices

The listener can hear the voices of five to seven different people—including announcers, reporters and interviewees, which reduces monotony.

#### B. Speed of Delivery

The speed of delivery varies between 142 wpm and 188 wpm. This is in marked contrast to some studio recorded teaching material, which is often characterized by a narrower, more monotonous speed range. The variety in

the “VOA Business Report” speed of delivery is also greater than that in its regular news programs:

VOA news in Standard English: 150-155 wpm

VOA news in Special English: 100 wpm

## C. Vocabulary

### 1. Length of Report

The average 20-minute “VOA Business Report” has about 2900 words. (See Appendix 5 for a complete transcript.)

### 2. Sample Business Vocabulary<sup>(4)</sup>

Below is a sample of typical business vocabulary found in the “VOA Business Report” program.

*balance sheet, basis point, benchmark, consumer price index, deficit, distribution, downsizing, Fed (or Federal Reserve Board), inflation, layoff, merger, NASDAQ (or National Association of Securities Dealers Automated Quotations), NIKKEI 225, packaging, shareholder, stock exchange, stagflation, surplus, Treasury bond, yield, etc.*

The above could be considered a specialized vocabulary list for courses in ESP, or English for Specific Purposes.

## D. Readability

Various language analysis tools exist for determining how difficult a reading passage is. Two of these tools were used to test the three program levels of the “VOA Business Report.” (For an explanation of the three program levels, see Section III. E. Program Structure Level and Language Usage Level below.) The tools were developed by Rudolf Flesch<sup>(5)</sup>. The computer program Grammatik (produced by Reference Software International) accepts textual data and outputs a Flesch Reading Ease Score and a

Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level. (See Appendix 1 for details concerning the method of calculating reading ease scores.)

The samples given in Table 1 show the scores for the three Program Levels of the "VOA Business Report." The Flesch Reading Ease Score uses a scale of 0 to 100, with 0 indicating the hardest level. The Flesch-Kincaid Grade Levels show the level of education that a reader would need in order to read a given passage. For example, "9" means that a reader would have to have a U.S. 9th grade education.

Table 1

1. Flesch Reading Ease Score

"VOA Business Report," Program Level 1: 58

"VOA Business Report," Program Level 2: 40

"VOA Business Report," Program Level 3: 59

2. Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level

"VOA Business Report," Program Level 1: 9

"VOA Business Report," Program Level 2: 13

"VOA Business Report," Program Level 3: 10

In order to calculate the above scores, the author used the Grammatik program to obtain the interim data offered in Table 2, which is also pertinent to this study.

Table 2

## 1. Average Words per Sentence

“VOA Business Report,” Program Level 1: 13.2

“VOA Business Report,” Program Level 2: 22.1

“VOA Business Report,” Program Level 3: 19

## 2. Average Letters per Word

“VOA Business Report,” Program Level 1: 5.05

“VOA Business Report,” Program Level 2: 5.12

“VOA Business Report,” Program Level 3: 4.57

## 3. Average Syllables per Word

“VOA Business Report,” Program Level 1: 1.60

“VOA Business Report,” Program Level 2: 1.71

“VOA Business Report,” Program Level 3: 1.52

Note that the Flesch Reading Ease Score for Program Level 1 in Table 1 is 58, while the score of the more advanced Program Level 3 is 59 (which should mean that Level 3 is easier). Also, Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level is 13 for the easier Program Level 2 and only 10 for the harder Level 3. The explanation for these apparent anomalies is that the Flesch Reading Ease Score formula uses the average sentence length and the average number of syllables per word without considering the difficulty of the words, the degree of hesitation, the amount of backtracking, changes in the direction of thinking, colloquialisms, etc.

On the other hand, some of these factors are taken into account by the computer program RightWriter, which uses not only the Flesch formulas,

but also other measures of reading difficulty, such as sentence structure analysis, a jargon index, a strength index and a descriptive index. (For an explanation of RightWriter and a discussion of this program's potential in developing language teaching materials, see the author's report "A Practical Framework for Research into the Teaching of Broadcast English.") The author also used RightWriter in determining the difficulty level of various portions of the "VOA Business Report" programs. (It should be pointed out that, in spite of the deficiencies of the Flesch formulas, they are valuable in determining reading difficulty levels. However, the results obtained with them should be interpreted carefully. Also, any computer program should be considered to be an aid only, and not the final arbiter of questions involving language difficulty and usage.)

Table 3 illustrates the readability index—produced by RightWriter—for the three levels of the "VOA Business Report."

Table 3

Program Level 1: 7.57 (Readers need an 8th grade level of education to understand this level.)

Program Level 2: 9.27 (Readers need a 9th grade level of education to understand this level.)

Program Level 3: 8.33 (Readers need an 8th grade level of education to understand this level.)

## E. Program Structure Level and Language Usage Level

### 1. Three Program Levels and their Characteristics

The structure of "VOA Business Report" English programs can be understood if we think of them as being organized into three levels.

In general, Program Level 1 is clear, simple and predictable, not unlike a "fill in the blanks" exercise. It is easy to determine what the announcer will say next. This level includes regular, specific items such as stock market reports.

Program Level 2 is less predictable. However, it can at least be expected that a reporter (such as Breck Ardery; see Appendix 2) will introduce a topic and say, "Here is Mr. \_\_\_\_\_," who will then continue his discussion of the topic. After the interview segment, the reporter will say a little more and then perhaps introduce another interview. The range of Level 2 topics is wider and less certain than in Level 1, and this tends to make the form relatively unpredictable, too. However, the language is still clear, because the scripts of reporters are written in a way that will be clear for the shortwave listener. The writers know who their audience is. VOA has complete control over what is being said.

Program Level 3, which is the least structured of the three levels, includes interviewees' actual words. This is also the least predictable level because VOA has only minimal control over the people being interviewed: tapes can be edited, of course, but the interviewees cannot be told what to say or how to say it. There is a concomitant reduction in clarity because interviewees may be careless or may play jokes with the language. Sometimes they use metaphors which are comprehensible to an American audience

but perhaps not to an international one.

To summarize, we could list the three program levels this way:

- (1) greatest degree of structure (stock market reports)
- (2) less structure (reporters' words)
- (3) least structure (interviewees' words)

## 2. Three Language Levels and Their Characteristics

Within the three program levels, there are three levels of language usage:

- (a) formal (difficult words and expressions)
- (b) less formal (including common colloquial expressions)
- (c) sloppy (mistakes)

## 3. Program Level and Language Level Construct

Language types (a), (b) and (c) could occur in the three programming levels in a way that could be represented by the diagram below. Capital letters indicate more common forms.

- (1) greatest degree of structure <—formal, LESS FORMAL (stock market reports)
- (2) less structure <—FORMAL, less formal (reporters' words)
- (3) least structure <—formal, LESS FORMAL, SLOPPY (interviewees' words)

Type (a), or formal, constructions might actually be less likely to occur in Level 1 than in Levels 2 or 3 because they could be difficult for some

listeners' minds to process. In Level 1 stock market reports, for example, VOA wants to be as clear and predictable as possible, especially since shortwave reception is not always good.

#### 4. Examples of Category Types

*1a: Investors will be hoping to stem yesterday's slide... Concern that a possible hike in interest rates could bring down corporate profits put pressure on U.S. share prices...the momentum of Friday's selling slowed considerably.*

In the above example, notice advanced vocabulary items such as *stem*, *corporate profits* and *slowed considerably*. Also, notice the long segment beginning with *that*, which separates the subject (*Concern*) from the verb (*put*).

*1b: Stocks in Tokyo this morning are slightly lower. The Nikkei 225 index is down about 5 points...the NASDAQ composite index fell 8 points to 1150.*

In this example, the sentences are short and simple, and, with the possible exception of *composite*, vocabulary items are not as advanced as in example *1a* above.

*2a: John Kao, a professor at the Harvard University Business School*

....

*2a: Mr. Kao has written a book on business creativity....*

2a: *Professor Kao* says that creating a creative atmosphere. . . .

The three 2a samples above come from the program segment "Creativity in Business." (See Appendix 2.) In less formal, conversational English, a person's name would not be repeated this often. Also, there would not be so much care given to referring to the same person in a variety of different ways.

2a: He believes *that, as with the industrial revolution and the information revolution*, companies can ignore the creative revolution at their peril.

In the example above, note how the *that*-phrase is broken up.

2a: And every day, millions of Americans, *and indeed many people around the world*, will want to know where the Dow Jones industrial average closed that day.

This example comes from the program segment "Dow Jones Average Anniversary <sup>(6)</sup> ." (A more colloquial way of expressing this would be: "and many people around the world, in fact . . .")

2a: The Dow Jones average of 30 stocks remains the *benchmark*. . . .  
(A formal, business word.)

2b: At the age of 100, the Dow Jones industrial average *seems to be in excellent health*. . . . (A playful metaphor.)

3a: What is more at issue and what managers have relearned *after some difficulties in the 1960's and '70's that led to a reevaluation of business practices*, is how to accomplish collaboration in a more effective manner.

The above segment 3a is another portion of the interview with John Kao, who, as can be seen from previous segments, is a professor at the Harvard University Business School. Although Professor Kao speaks in the least structured part of the Business Report, quite frequently his language is very formal. Probably he speaks this way because he is used to talking to an audience of intelligent Harvard students. He does not use sloppy English at all, although he does use colloquialisms. His speech is well-organized: he doesn't backtrack or stop in the middle of sentences, and it is rare for him to use non-standard expressions and to make grammatical errors.

Notice the long construction (italicized) that separates the subject from the verb in the sample above. In addition, the subject itself is a compound one, and the structure of the intervening construction is complicated.

3b: It is a process which can occur *in between the ears* of a creative person, within a team or within an organization itself.

In the segment above, Professor Kao uses the colloquial expression *in between the ears*, which means "in the mind of." We could categorize this segment as type 3b because it is in the least structured portion of the program (3), and it contains a less formal type of language (b).

*3b: Culture of creativity*

*Culture of creativity* is another example from John Kao's portion of the "Creativity in Business" report with a *3b* categorization. The phrase *Culture of creativity* means, in this case, that the Coca-Cola Company creates an atmosphere that encourages creativity. (See Appendix 2 for the complete transcript).

*3b: ...is to tell you whether the market is going up, down or sideways. (The market does not go sideways. This is just a joke.)*

*3b: More indexes than you can shake a stick at. (= Many indexes. A colloquial expression.)*

*3b: If the Dow had not delivered the goods... (= done what it was supposed to do. A colloquial expression.)*

*3c: The original purpose, and continues to be its purpose today...*

The above *3c* is a segment from John Prestbo, a *Wall Street Journal* editor. The quotation would more properly read as follows: "The original purpose—and this continues to be its purpose today..."

More segments and their categorizations appear in Appendix 3.

#### IV. Advantages of “VOA Business Report” English

##### A. “VOA Business Report” English is graduated.

Because Level 1 is easy, it is a good way for students to start learning Business English. Once they become familiar with the phrases that are used in this kind of report, they can go on to Level 2, which is less structured. As they continue to advance, students can begin to study Level 3 segments, which are the least structured and most realistic of the levels.

##### B. “VOA Business Report” focuses *off the subject*.

The subject matter of the “VOA Business Report” programs is interesting, so students tend to absorb the language automatically, the way a child does. The center of concentration is not linguistic. A child focuses *off* the subject, too. He or she doesn't sit down and take grammar lessons from his or her mother, but he or she still learns the language.

##### C. “VOA Business Report” English is natural.

It is language in action. In his book *Listening to Spoken English*, Linguistics professor Gillian Brown says: “Just what material is used for ‘listening’ exercises will of course vary with the age and sophistication of the students. The main thing is to avoid anything that was originally produced specifically for foreign use. It is extremely difficult for speakers who know that they are producing material for foreign listeners not to speak more clearly than they normally would.” (Brown: 157-158)

Although “VOA Business Report” programs are intended for shortwave

listeners who might be having reception difficulties, the reports are not made with the English learner in mind. Therefore, they are good practice because they are more natural than artificially produced language lessons.

## V. Some Teaching Suggestions

### A. Preliminary Comments

As already stated, it is a good idea to start instruction with Level 1. After students have learned certain words, they will be able to understand almost all the stock market reports because these reports are almost the same. This builds confidence and makes the students more eager to advance to Level 2, which is closer to real English. And finally, when they have mastered that level, the students can go on to level 3. That is the hardest level of all, but it is the most realistic because people are sometimes quite sloppy in ordinary conversation.

### B. Preparation and Implementation

For intermediate and advanced learners, a Level 3 handout could be prepared upon which the interviewee's words are transcribed exactly, including all hesitations, repetitions, partial words or sentences, and so on. And then under it, next to it or, line by line above it (see Appendix 4), a "cleaner," more theoretically exact (or "correct") paragraph could be included. In this way, students could see the difference between the way people really speak and the way they are supposed to speak. This discrepancy between theory and practice is a stumbling block for many language learners. Hearing the way native speakers actually talk while at the same time seeing what they are really saying—as well as what they should be saying—can be a particu-

larly valuable exercise for students who need listening practice. This type of exercise could be done in a language laboratory where the students could play a tape over and over, absorbing the language at their own pace.

Eventually, after practicing with this type of “double” transcription, the students could advance to transcriptions with no alterations of sloppy or colloquial language. Then, while reading such transcriptions and listening to the corresponding tapes, the students could write what they think the interviewee really should be saying.

## VI. Conclusion

In traditional Japanese Business English teaching, there is only very limited use of the English language. Formal aspects of English are emphasized, even though informal language is more common in normal conversation. “VOA Business Report” programs give students experience with the less formal and therefore, in some ways, more difficult aspects of English—English as it is really used.

In categorizing the various aspects of the “VOA Business Report” into three program structure levels and three language usage levels, the author has attempted to give teachers a tool for analyzing the English language in general and Business English in particular. This should be beneficial to both teachers and students. If students can handle the English language better in business situations, then they will make the whole country more productive and more competitive. Therefore the author feels that this kind of study and research is very important.

Notes

- (1) This paper is a continuation of the author's ongoing study of the English used in various types of VOA programs. An earlier report on this subject was given at the 21st annual meeting of JAPE, or the Japan Association of Practical English, on September 22, 1996, at Bunkyo University, Kanagawa Prefecture, Japan.
- (2) The *BBC English Dictionary* was prepared by the *COBUILD* team at the University of Birmingham, under the editorship of Professor John Sinclair. The content of the dictionary is based on the analysis of over seventy million words of broadcasting output from 1988 to the present day. This consists of news, current affairs and sports broadcasts from the BBC World Service in London and National Public Radio in Washington.
- (3) A global financial information service.
- (4) Suggestions concerning the list of *JACET 4000 Basic Words*  
Words whose frequency was high in the "VOA Business Report" corpus, as determined by the RightWriter program (see Section III. D. Readability), include *corporate*, *executive(s)* and *retailer(s)*. The author believes that such words should be incorporated into the list of *JACET 4000 Basic Words* in the future. Additional meanings for existing words in this list should also be considered. For example, *yield*, as a business term, is included in the N (General and Abstract Terms) category. However, this word should be included in the J (Numbers, Measurement, Money and Commerce) category in the future. (The categories come from the *Longman Lexicon of Contemporary English*.)
- (5) Rudolf Flesch was a literacy and writing authority and author and an advocate of the phonetic approach to teaching reading to children—namely, teaching reading by phonics, or the sounds of letters, rather than by the meanings of words.
- (6) Recorded on May 27, 1996.

**Appendix 1: Background Information on Reading Level Formulas  
and Additional Statistics**

1. Flesch Reading Ease Formula

$1.015 \times (\text{average sentence length}) + 0.846 \times (\text{number of syllables per 100 words})$ .

Take the result of this calculation and subtract it from 206.835:

$206.835 - \text{result} = \text{Flesch Reading Ease Score}$ .

This score is on a scale of 0-100. The lower the score, the more difficult the text is to read.

Score	Reading Difficulty	Grade Level
90-100	very easy	4th grade
80-90	easy	5th grade
70-80	fairly easy	6th
60-70	standard	7th-8th
50-60	fairly difficult	some high school
30-50	difficult	high school-college
0-30	very difficult	college Level and up

2. Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level Formula

$0.39 \times (\text{average number of words per sentence}) + 11.8 \times (\text{average number of syllables per word})$ . Take the result of this calculation and subtract 15.59 from it:

$\text{Result} - 15.59 = \text{Grade Level}$ .

A readability score of between 6th-10th grade is considered most effective for a general audience. A higher grade level score may seem erudite, but it probably means that most readers would not find the writing easy to understand. If you are writing for a specialized audience (for example, a scientific or scholarly one), a higher readability score may be appropriate.

(This information comes from *Grammatik IV User's Guide, Chapter 6: Using Grammatik's Readability Statistics*, pp. 71-72.)

**Additional Samples of Reading Level Scores**

1. Flesch Reading Ease Score

VOA News in Standard English: 47

VOA News in Special English: 57

*Bloomberg Top Business and Financial Stories*: 40

*USA TODAY*: 46

2. Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level

VOA News in Standard English: 12

VOA News in Special English: 8

*Bloomberg Top Business and Financial Stories*: 14

*USA TODAY*: 12

3. Average Words per Sentence

VOA News in Standard English: 21.8

VOA News in Special English: 11.2

*Bloomberg Top Business and Financial Stories*: 26

*USA TODAY*: 21.4

4. Average Letters per Word

VOA News in Standard English: 5.0

VOA News in Special English: 5.1

*Bloomberg Top Business and Financial Stories*: 5.13

*USA TODAY*: 5.07

5. Average Syllables per Word

VOA News in Standard English: 1.63

VOA News in Special English: 1.64

*Bloomberg Top Business and Financial Stories*: 1.66

*USA TODAY*: 1.64

## Appendix 2: "Creativity in Business" Segment

*The following "Creativity in Business" segment was originally recorded by the author of this paper on February 29, 1996. (The segment was rebroadcast by VOA on June 28, 1996.)*

[Russ Carpenter:] "Creativity" is a word that is often more associated with art than business. However, VOA correspondent Breck Ardery reports from New York an American business professor is strongly promoting the idea that creativity belongs in all businesses.

[Breck Ardery:] John Kao, a professor at the Harvard University Business School, believes that the world economy is now entering what he calls the "creative age," in which businesses that survive will be those that are the most creative. He says that means companies must create structures in which all employees feel free to be creative.

[John Kao:] Too often, I think, people have an idea that creativity is something like the weather or the light bulb that goes on over the head of some 'talented' person who is probably different than you or me. I look at creativity differently. I believe it is a process where ideas are developed in order to realize value. It is a process which can occur in between the ears of a creative person, within a team or within an organization itself. Instead of being something that just happens, it is something that is pursued intentionally.

[Breck Ardery:] Mr. Kao has written a book on business creativity titled *Jamming*. He says businesses are increasingly competing on the basis of creativity, whether it involves fundamental changes in a product or service or changes in packaging and distribution systems.

[John Kao:] Organizations need to be much more open to all ideas. Organizations need to find ways to create a safe atmosphere for people to step forward with new ideas.

[Breck Ardery:] Professor Kao says that creating a creative atmosphere in an organization does not mean that management surrenders its authority or that everyone is free to do whatever they want. A structured creativity, he argues, is one in which management sets the goals but allows workers the freedom to reach the goals in new, and creative, ways. He says business in general can take a lesson from the film and recorded music industries where creativity is encouraged and facilitated.

[Breck Ardery:] John Kao, who teaches a course on business creativity at Harvard, says there is a misconception that only high technology companies need to be creative. He says the Coca-Cola company is a leader in creativity and innovation.

[John Kao:] Coca-Cola has been talking about creativity and managing for creativity for 100 years. It is not something that is just a fashion. Even though their product does not change very often, the creativity that is needed to produce six or seven hundred million purchase decisions per day in favor of their product is almost beyond imagining. To do that, they have a culture of creativity and they want creativity to be the issue in every human interaction, in every meeting.

[Breck Ardery:] Mr. Kao says that, in general, American culture welcomes creativity but that American companies must do better in managing it.

[John Kao:] I think there is the notion of creativity as being something very sympathetic to the core of American values. What is more at issue and what managers have re-learned after some difficulties in the 1960's and '70's that led to a re-evaluation of business practices, is how to accomplish collaboration in a more effective manner. You should be able to include a variety of voices within an organization for creative results.

[Breck Ardery:] Mr. Kao says his message on the importance of creativity is spreading, with a number of American business schools now offering courses in the subject. He believes that, as with the industrial revolution and the information revolution, companies can ignore the creative revolution at their peril. This is Breck Ardery, VOA, New York.

### Appendix 3: Additional Examples of Language Usage Levels within Program Levels

*Program segment name: "Business on the Web" (This segment was recorded by the author of this paper on June 24, 1996.)*

- 3b: The appliance that is *on the end of* the Internet... (Interviewee) ("The device that users require in order to gain access to the Internet...")
- 3b: But in the near future, you will be able to *connect up*... (Interviewee) ("Up" is a redundant, unnecessary word. It would be unlikely that in formal English, someone would say *connect up*. Instead, a more probable word would be simply "connect.")
- 3b: And they go into a back room and *Lord knows what* they do with it. (Interviewee) (A colloquial expression meaning "It is impossible to know, but it might be something terrible.")
- 3b: So I think the concern is *overblown*. (Interviewee) (Colloquial.. *Overblown* means "exaggerated.")
- 3b: So it is a very rich resource if you want to *shop around* the United States... (Interviewee) (A more formal expression would be "investigate or search for items to purchase.")
- 3b: Then the search *happens*... (Interviewee) (More formal: "Then the search begins.")
- 3b: So you select that and it *brings* all Italian restaurants in Pittsburgh... (Interviewee) ("Retrieves" would be more formal here.)
- 3b: And then you can narrow that down by *neighborhood, say downtown*. (Interviewee) (*Say* is informal. A more formal expression would be "for example.")
- 3c: It [The book] *ranges* from Nigeria and Zimbabwe to China and Japan... (Interviewee) (A slightly sloppy use of the word *ranges*, when referring to a book. It might be better to say "It covers everything from Nigeria and Zimbabwe to...")

Appendix 4: Transcription for Teaching

[Richard Ross:] Management is still looking for ~~uh~~ ways to improve <sup>its</sup> ~~their~~ profitability. And, <sup>it's</sup> ~~uh~~ ~~they're~~ looking for those ways in <sup>its</sup> ~~their~~ balance sheet instead of in <sup>its</sup> ~~their~~ people. And ~~and~~ ultimately there's only so much you can cut both from ~~eh eh uh on~~ <sup>your work force,</sup> ~~the people side, um,~~ and then eventually <sup>you've really got to</sup> ~~you gotta really~~ start thinking about creating, and <sup>you've got to</sup> ~~you gotta~~ think about renewal, ~~and uh thinking about growth um,~~ and strategies which win customers ~~um,~~ and expand the market.

**Look**  
<sup>Uh,</sup> ~~look~~ at ways of ~~um~~ really communicating effectively internally so that anxiety levels can be lowered, stress levels can be lowered and people can begin the process of making plans for their future. Where <sup>this</sup> ~~it~~ doesn't happen, <sup>lot of</sup> ~~where it doesn't happen,~~ we see in a ~~lot of~~ <sup>lot of</sup> ~~then~~ the organization really becomes dysfunctional because everybody's focus, <sup>going to</sup> whether they're <sup>going to</sup> ~~gonna~~ be cut or not, is to get their résumé updated, to get it on the ~~on the~~ street and to spend their time looking for a new job on their old employer's time ~~clock~~.

[Greg Martin:] We're going to concentrate in the very very beginning on making sure that customers are satisfied instead of <sup>trying to pressure them</sup> ~~the hard push for~~ ~~into making a purchase.~~ ~~sales.~~

<sup>little requirements. For example,</sup>  
 And additionally there are <sup>little requirements. For example,</sup> ~~such little requirements like~~ each vehicle needs to be equipped with either a flare or flashlight.

**Appendix 5: An entire “VOA Business Report” Program**

*To put the entire contents of this paper into perspective, the author is including the whole transcript of one “VOA Business Report” program in this appendix.*

*Author’s notes: Ellipses in this transcript indicate where very brief portions of the original “VOA Business Report” program have been omitted. The author has made every attempt to verify the spelling of the proper nouns in the following “VOA Business Report” program, but completely accurate spelling cannot be guaranteed.*

It’s ten minutes past the hour, and this is the “VOA Business Report.”

The decline in U.S. stocks continues. Tokyo stocks open little changed. Japanese consumers get a chance at another American car. Indonesia’s national car is introduced. U.S. light truck sales soar, and South Africa’s Nelson Mandela to begin a business trip to Britain. I’m Russ Carpenter. We’ll have details on these stories and more coming up.

Stocks in Tokyo this morning are slightly lower. The Nikkei 225 index is down about 5 points. Investors will be hoping to stem yesterday’s slide, when the Nikkei lost more than 300 points. Concern that a possible hike in interest rates could bring down corporate profits put pressure on U.S. share prices. The NASDAQ composite index fell 8 points to 1150. But as VOA’s Breck Ardery reports from New York, the momentum of Friday’s selling slowed considerably.

The Dow Jones industrial average closed at 5550, down 37 points. The broader and more representative Standard and Poor’s 500 index closed at 652, down 5 points. Despite the continued downward move in stock prices, analysts say there were no signs of the selling frenzy which characterized Friday’s session. On Friday, a stronger than expected employment report prompted many Wall Street observers to warn that the Federal Reserve Board, the U.S. central bank, will soon raise short-term interest rates. They say rates must go up to head off inflationary pressures in the U.S. economy. Lyle Gramley, a former governor of the U.S. central bank, says economic growth rates, and the beginnings of labor shortages are ominous.

This sort of thing is a recipe for greater inflation down the road unless the Fed tightens up. So I think overall the signals are quite clear.

However, appearing on the CNBC Business Network, Mr. Gramley said he does not think the central bank will raise interest rates until its next scheduled meeting on August 20th. Other analysts believe a rate increase could come sooner, despite the

fact that just 5 days ago the central bank's governors decided to leave interest rates where they are. Although there is concern on Wall Street about recent employment growth in the United States, a new study shows that American companies continue to lay off workers. Layoffs in the first 6 months of this year were up 28 percent from the same period in 1995. Breck Ardery, VOA News, New York.

The yield on the 30-year U.S. Treasury bond was unchanged at 7.19 percent. The price of gold, down 30 cents in New York to \$381.20 an ounce. The U.S. dollar is little changed. Despite predictions it would turn bullish, it is quoted at about 110.9 yen and at around 1.5265 Deutsch marks.

Technical difficulties have delayed the launch date of a trading link between two major futures exchanges. The Chicago Board of Trade and the London International Financial Futures and Options Exchange agreed last December to trade bond contracts on each other's trading floor. But they say they've found it more difficult than expected to adapt their trading systems to the new arrangement. The exchanges say they now expect to open the link on the 9th of May, 1997.

Japan and the European Union have reached an understanding on how to proceed regarding international trade policy on semiconductors. The two sides agreed to oppose the U.S. desire for a bilateral agreement with Japan and the use of numerical quotas as a means of judging openness of semiconductor markets. The European Commission fears that meetings between the United States and Japan this week, aimed at renewing a 1991 semiconductor accord, could effectively exclude the EU from the Japanese chip market. Peter Carrow, the European representative at the meeting, said Europe would be willing to eliminate its tariffs on chips imported to Europe, if it is not excluded from an agreement signed between the United States and Japan.

Huge American retailer, Wal-Mart Stores, has agreed to sell its 6 photo finishing plants and an accompanying distribution network to the U.S. subsidiary of Fuji Film, Fuji Photo Film U.S.A. The deal will give Fuji a total of 21 photo finishing plants and a long-term service contract with the 2700 stores Wal-Mart operates in the United States. It would also give Fuji a domestic outlet for its new paper plant in South Carolina. The Wal-Mart-Fuji deal requires regulatory approval.

Meanwhile, talks over the Kodak Film complaint against Fuji's unfair barriers to the Japan market will resume in Geneva Wednesday. It is the first step in the dispute settlement procedure of the World Trade Organization.

Japanese consumers will have yet another American car line to choose from next

year. As VOA's Michael Leeland reports, 6 Japanese companies have agreed to begin selling Saturn automobiles in the early part of the year.

Saturn is a division of auto giant General Motors and has been selling cars since 1991. They are among the most popular small cars in the United States, and GM hopes they'll be just as popular with the Japanese. But Saturn spokesman Greg Martin in Detroit says the company is not setting any sales goals.

We're going to concentrate in the very very beginning on making sure that customers are satisfied instead of the hard push for sales. And it's the same approach that we've taken over here.

Saturn dealers in the United States have a reputation for friendly, helpful service. The company recently tied for first place in a customer satisfaction survey of U.S. auto dealerships. It shared the top spot with Lexus—the luxury car line made by Toyota. Since traffic in Japan moves on the left side of the road, the steering wheel of the Saturns bound for Japan will be on the right hand side. Mr. Martin says that's not the only change the company's making in its export models.

The pedals have been moved closer to the driver. The vehicle also has power, folding side mirrors. The antenna which normally is mounted on the hood of the car, is now featured in the glass on the Japanese export vehicle. And there are some different trim features that appeal to the Japanese consumer. And additionally there are such little requirements like each vehicle needs to be equipped with either a flare or flashlights.

The Saturn faces an uphill battle in trying to capture very much of Japan's automobile market. Last year American made cars comprised only about 2 percent of Japanese auto sales. General Motors vehicles made up just .6 percent of the Japanese auto market. GM put its Chevrolet Cavalier on sale in Japan earlier this year but sold fewer than 500 of the cars in May. GM says it is too soon to judge U.S. cars as failures in the Japanese market based on just a few months of sales. Saturns will be sold through about a dozen dealerships in Tokyo and Osaka beginning early next year. There are plans for 20 Saturn dealerships in Japan by the end of next year. Michael Leeland, VOA News, Chicago.

Consumers in Indonesia are also getting a new car—a homegrown product, and it appears to be getting a nice reception. Joe Lay reports from Jakarta the low price is bound to please consumers. But other automakers are far from happy.

... was after President Suharto's son, ..., launched his new national car in Jakarta Monday, Indonesians were still queuing to place orders. Known as the Timor, the

car is the only brand so far to qualify for Indonesia's national car program. Announced in January, the scheme entitles Mr. Hutomo's company, PT-Timor Putra National, a joint venture with Kia Motor Corporation of South Korea, to lucrative tax breaks. Initially it had to conform to stringent local content requirements, but these were recently waived to allow the car to be imported from South Korea until Timor's local production facilities are ready. The tax exemptions mean the 4-door 1500-cc Timor will sell for 35 million rupiahs, about U.S. 15,000 dollars—half the cost of most other vehicles here. This scheme has angered Japan, which controls 90 percent of the market, as well as the European Commission and the United States, all of which say it violates World Trade Organization guidelines. But there was little talk of the WTO Monday, as Mr. Hutomo cut a ribbon at a central Jakarta shopping center to reveal 2 gleaming new Timor sedans. Also present was Indonesian Minister for Trade and Industry, Tunky Ariwibowo. Mr. Hutomo has already imported 60 Korean-made cars for display in shopping centers until customers begin receiving their orders in October. Monday, hours after the media and senior company officials had left, people were still queuing for brochures on the car. Many were also lodging orders. Mr. Hutomo dismisses reports the company's unique trading privileges have angered other nations. He says the government has already explained the measures to the U.S., and Japan is unlikely to take action through the WTO. But competition may eventually come from closer quarters: Indonesia's Bimantara Group, owned by Mr. Hutomo's brother, Bambang Trihadmodjo, is also keen to join the program. Although it has yet to be given access, Bimantara has announced it will launch its product in July in cooperation with Hyundai Motor, also of South Korea. This is Joe Lay for VOA News in Jakarta.

I'm Russ Carpenter in Washington with the "VOA Business Report." Some of the information for the program is provided by Bloomberg Business News.

Before we leave the auto industry behind, let's look in on trucks. In 1995 for the first time in the 93-year history of America's Ford Motor Company, trucks outsold cars in the United States. And consumer demand shows no signs of declining. VOA's John Berchard reports America's number 2 automaker is riding the light truck wave.

The best-selling motor vehicle in the U.S. is a pickup truck—the Ford F-150. Jacques Nasser, group vice president of product development for Ford's automotive operations says that model is making sales history.

It's outsold the T-Model Ford as the top selling Ford vehicle in our history, and

it's about to outsell the Beetle as the top selling vehicle in the world.

Mr. Nasser says he believes the day is fast approaching when cars and trucks will share equally in sales in this country. In the auto industry, the light truck category includes pickup trucks, mini vans and sport utility vehicles, or sport utes. The sport ute segment is growing at a rapid pace. In 1985, about five hundred thousand units were sold in the U.S. Ten years later that figure had soared to 1.5 million. He predicts sales of 2 million per year by the end of the decade. Mr. Nasser says he attributes the sport ute sales surge to a number of factors. He says the vehicles themselves are becoming more appealing to a broader range of customers, and those customers are themselves changing.

They tend to be heading in the direction of more versatile life-styles and therefore wanting products that are adaptable. Products that feel comfortable in all weather situations. Products that feel comfortable in a car park or a mountain track.

He says improvements in ride and handling have helped sales along with the sense of safety people feel with the average sport ute's high driving position. The Ford executive says the huge popularity of sport utility vehicles is at the moment primarily an American phenomenon.

If you were to look at other markets around the world, we haven't seen that large a segment. Although it's starting to happen somewhat in Japan, in Australia, in some countries in Latin America. In Europe, very slow growth.

Mr. Nasser acknowledges that high fuel consumption remains a barrier to sport ute sales outside the U.S. Fuel prices are often sharply higher elsewhere, limiting demand for vehicles that are not fuel efficient. He believes the answer for countries with high fuel prices is the employment of diesel engines to bring down operating cost. But until that happens, sales records for sport utility vehicles will be a peculiarly American story. I'm John Berchard, VOA News, Washington.

An American story it may be, but Japanese and German auto makers are taking note, introducing new models and boosting production and export of both light trucks and sport utes.

South African President Nelson Mandela begins a 4-day state visit to Britain today.

He is to meet political leaders, talk to businessmen and address both Houses of Parliament. VOA London correspondent Andre Deneshnera reports, however, the main purpose is to boost South Africa's economic standing.

Experts here believe the main purpose of President Mandela's trip is to encourage British business investment. Britain is the biggest single foreign investor in South Africa, but officials in Pretoria have indicated disappointment with the overall flow of long-term investments. Dennis Goldberg has been an activist with the African National Congress over the past 40 years, fighting alongside Nelson Mandela against apartheid in South Africa. He has spent 22 of those 40 years in prison for his beliefs and actions. Now living in London, Mr. Goldberg says there is a great potential for foreign investments in South Africa. He says that is what President Mandela must stress during his talks with the British business leaders.

"I believe—and he will say this, I'm quite sure—that your investment is guaranteed; there will not be simple seizure of property (and, in fact, this is written into the constitution now); that your profits are guaranteed—your right to expatriate, to transfer your profits abroad, are guaranteed; and your right to sell your investment and take it back abroad are guaranteed. This is what businessmen need to know."

President Mandela has been in power for two years, following South Africa's first democratic elections. Many analysts criticize Mr. Mandela for not bringing about rapid economic reforms. But Mr. Goldberg says, given South Africa's problems, what has already been achieved is quite remarkable.

We have had, in South Africa, a legacy of 50 or 60 percent unemployment. I mean, that's a reality. You can't just wipe it out overnight. We've had a history of corruption in business and in civil service second to none. You don't wipe it out overnight. We've had a massive lack of education for the vast majority of people. Half of the kids never went to school. Half of the adult population is illiterate. More children can go to school now. We don't have enough teachers. But they're in school. The possibilities for economic development are enormous.

Mr. Goldberg says all of this is due to Mr. Mandela, who still enjoys a huge popularity in South Africa. Mr. Mandela has said he will not be a candidate in the 1999 elections, but Mr. Goldberg says whoever becomes the next South African president, that person will definitely continue the Mandela legacy. Andre Deneshnera, VOA News, London.

According to reports, Hollywood studio Metro Goldwin Meyer has six bidders, including Rupert Murdoch's News Corp. and the Netherlands Polygram. The studio, which owns a 1500-title film library that includes West Side Story and 17 James Bond movies, is valued at 1.5 billion to 2 billion dollars by analysts.

The U.S. investment and insurance company Smith Barney says it will form a brokerage and underwriting company with the Korea Exchange Bank. The Korea Exchange Bank will own 51 percent of the 62-million dollar company and be called KEB SB Securities and will be based in Seoul.

You are listening to the "Business Report" on the Voice of America.

Before we end our report, here is a summary of some of the top news stories this hour. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is traveling to the United States. He'll hold talks with President Clinton on the stalled Mid-East peace process. Before leaving Israel late Monday, Mr. Netanyahu said Israel will not accept any weakening of its security. During Tuesday's talks with Mr. Clinton, Mr. Netanyahu said he will not raise the issue of an Israeli troop pullout from the West Bank town of Hebron, something Israel promised to do in the peace accords. But Israeli reports say Mr. Netanyahu is bringing information linking Syria to terrorist groups. Israeli Prime Minister, Mr. Netanyahu is traveling to the U.S. A senior Cuban official is calling for the repatriation of the Cuban military officer who hijacked a domestic airliner to the U.S. naval base at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. The president of the Cuban national assembly says if the hijacking agreement between the two countries is honored, the hijacker will be returned to Cuba. Colonel Jose Fernandez Pupo, who hijacked the plane Sunday, has asked for asylum in the United States. In Washington, the State Department condemned the hijacking, but a spokesman says there are many options to be considered before making a decision on the asylum request. U.S. National Security Advisor, Anthony Lake, continues his talks in Beijing today, meeting with Premier Li Peng and other senior officials. Mr. Lake is the highest ranking U.S. official to visit China since 1994.

That wraps up our "VOA Business Report." I'm Russ Carpenter in Washington. We'd like to wish you a very prosperous day. (Recorded on July 12, 1996)

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