行动研究：一个正在兴起的汉语二语课堂教学研究趋向
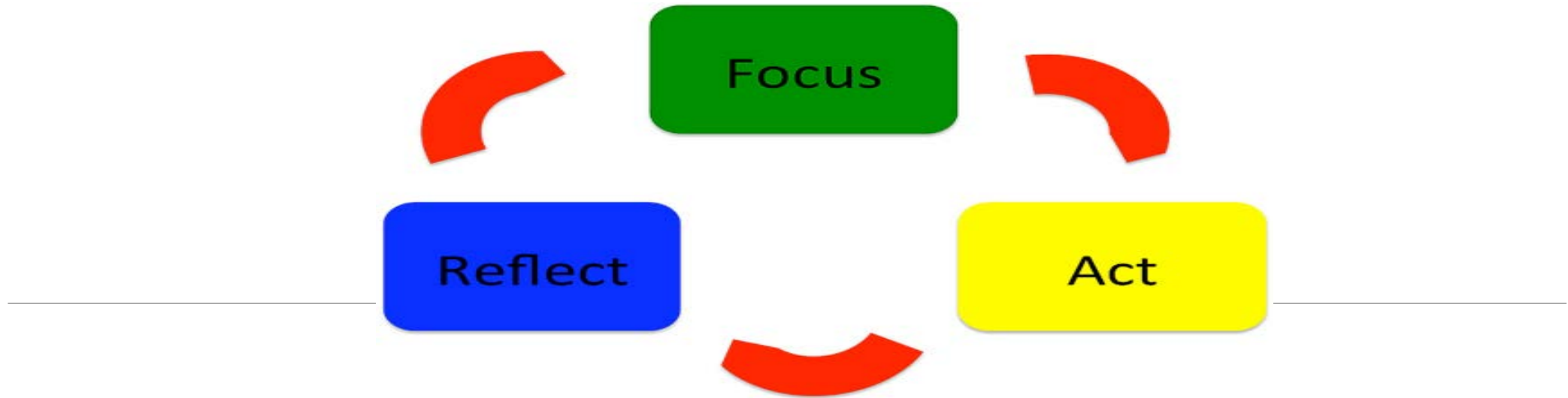## Action Research: An Emerging Trend in Chinese L2 Classrooms

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Highlights

- What is action research in Chinese L2 ?什么是行动研究？
- What is the theoretical foundation for adopting action research?

 采纳行动研究的理论基础是什么？

- Why do we need action research?为什么需要行动研究？
- What are the characteristics of action research? 特征是什么？
- How do we conduct action research in Chinese L2? 怎么做行动研究?
- How do we promote action research in the field?

 如何促进汉语二语行动研究？

What is Action Research in Chinese L2?

A systematic inquiry in the teaching/learning environment to gather information about how the school operates, how we teach, and how well our students learn for the purpose of gaining insights, developing reflective practice, effecting positive changes in the school and classroom environment in order to improve student outcomes and the way of their learning. (With reference to Geoffery E. Mills, 2011)

在教学环境中系统地探索、观察教师的教学及学生的学习情况并收集信息。在此基础上对这些信息进行反思，发现问题，采取行动，对行动的过程和结果进行分析，根据反馈调节行动，从而改善学习环境，改变学生的学习的方式方法以取得更好的学习效果。

对教学行为进行反思，对存在的问题采取系统的研究与改进， 实现教学过程最优化。

What is the Theoretical Foundation for Adopting Action Research?

Complexity Theory 复杂性理论

A system is complex when it is composed of a group of related units (subsystems), for which the degree and nature of the relationships is imperfectly known.

(Joseph Sussman, 2005 "The New Transportation Faculty").

如果一个系统由多个子系统构成，而我们对子系统之间的关系和系统的本质没有完全的掌握，这个系统就是一个复杂系统。

# The Theoretical Foundation for Adopting Action Research

Complexity Theory

Seeks to understand how order and stability arise from the interactions of many components according to a few simple rules…

Philip Ball *Critical Mass: How One Thing Leads to Another* , New York, Farrar, Straus and Giroux (2004, p. 5) .

Complexity theory challenges educational philosophy to reconsider accepted paradigms of teaching, learning, and educational research.

Complexity Theory and the Philosophy of Education. Edited by Mark Mason, published by Wiley-Blackwell, 2008
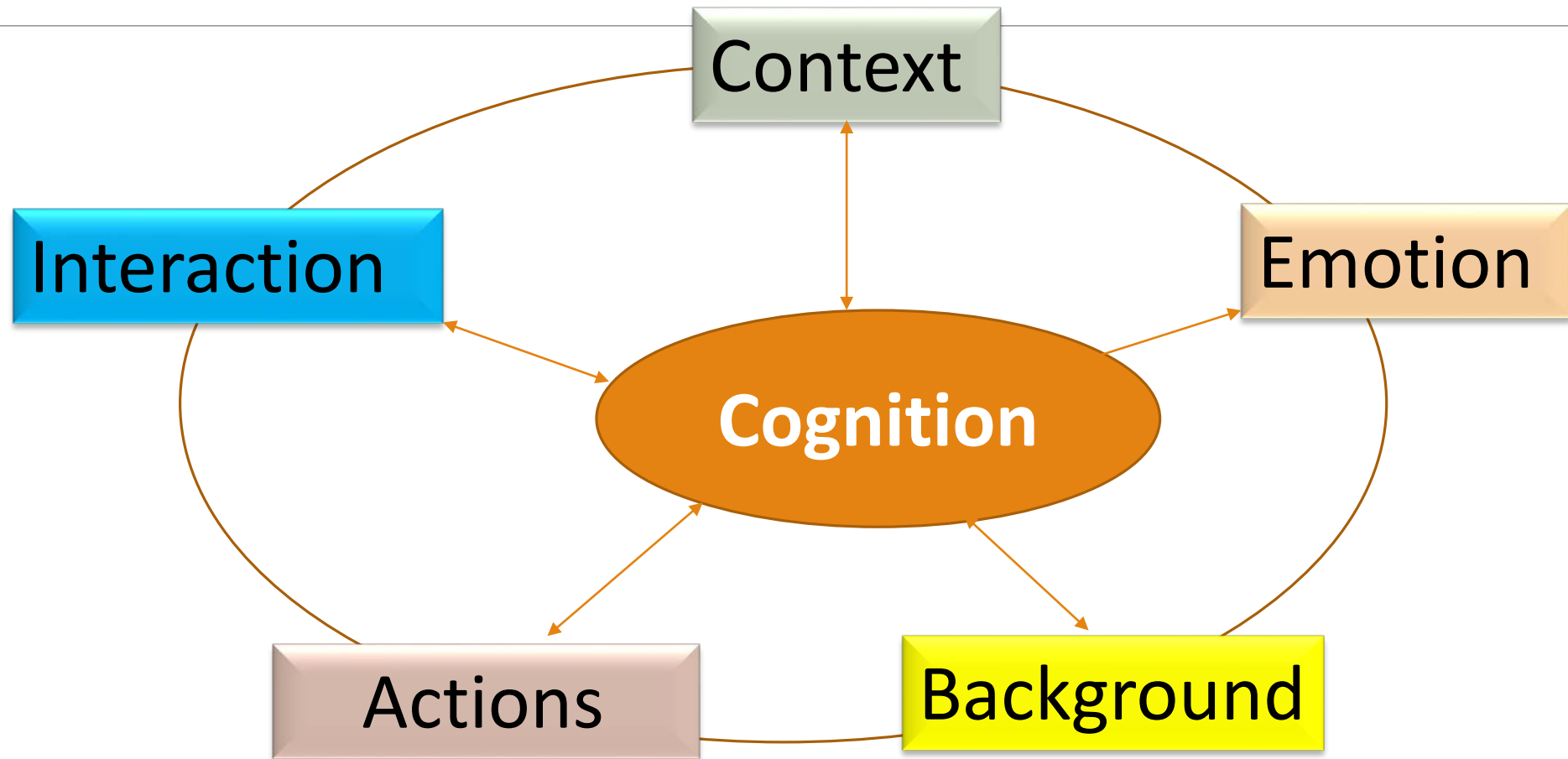
Classroom learning is a complex system

❑It is local (局部的）

❑It is heterogeneous （多元的）

❑It is dynamic （动态的）

❑It is nonlinear （非线性的）

❑It is open (开放的）

❑It is adaptive （自适应的）

with reference to (Davis & Sumanra,2006)

Why Do We Need Action Research?

❑ **Bridging the gap between existing research and a particular practice** 填补实证研究结果普遍性与局部教学问题特殊性之间的沟壑

❑ **Addressing immediate local needs** 解决局部的需要

❑ **Empowering teachers to be reflective practitioners**
培养反思型教师

What Are the Characteristics of Action Research in the Classroom?

❑ The researcher must be involved in the processes of inquiry

❑ The focus is on improving local conditions

❑ Inferential statistics is not a requirement

❑ Cyclical operation is essential

How Do We Conduct Action Research?
Topics for classroom action research

❑ **Classroom teaching behaviors, methods, activities, and strategies**

❑ **Student learning behaviors, methods, and strategies**

❑ **Classroom management and curriculum development**

(see handout)

Brainstorm:

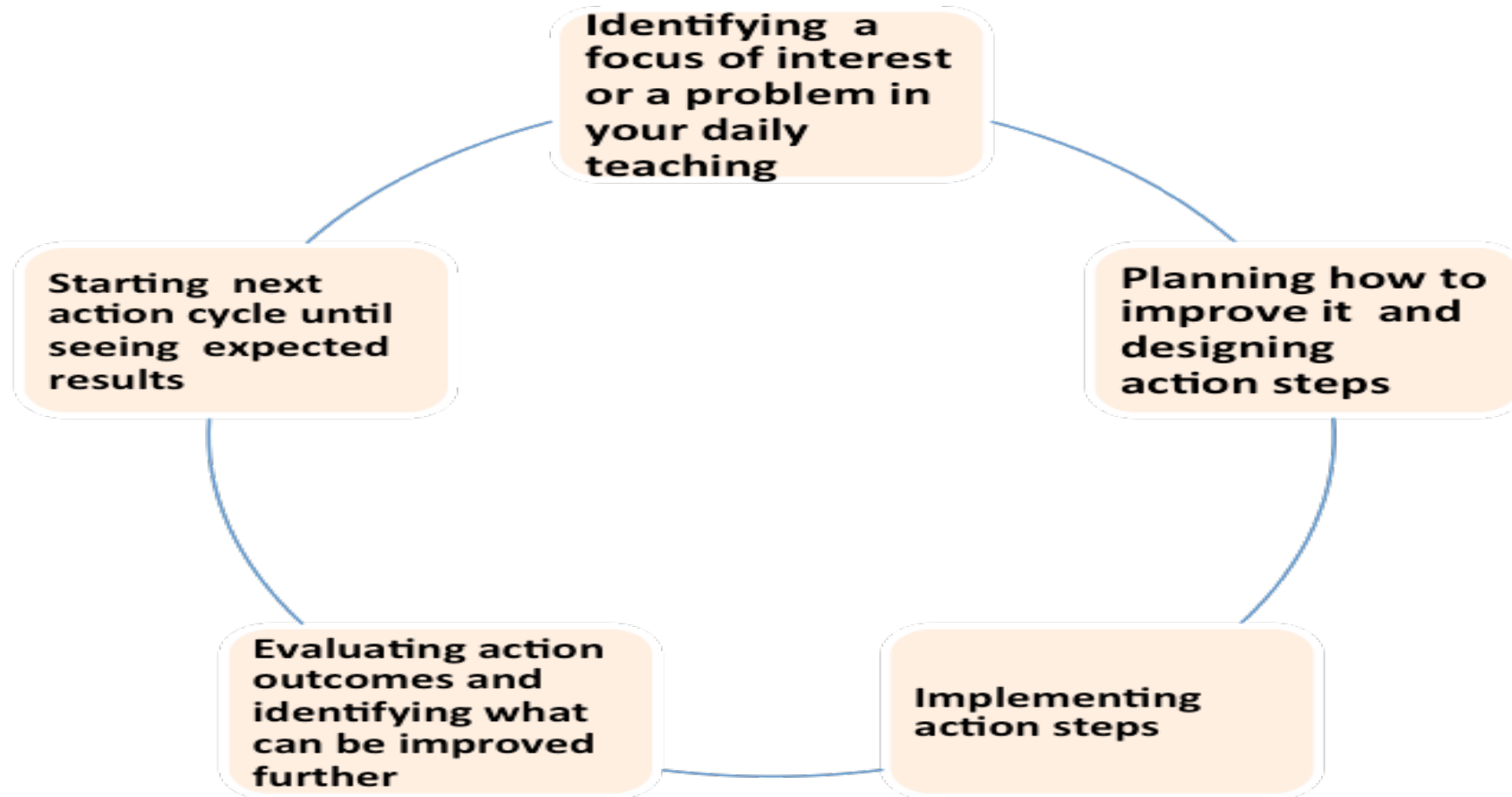What topic you would you like to choose for a study adopting action research approach?

小组讨论：你有什么研究课题适合用行动研究？

How Do We Conduct Action Research?
Procedures for classroom action research

Identifying a focus of interest or a problem in your daily teaching

Planning how to improve it and designing action steps

Implementing action steps

Evaluating action outcomes and identifying what can be improved further

Starting next action cycle until seeing expected results

Seeking Effective Teaching Strategies for Improving Students' Pronunciation (Gao Binnan, Elon University)

The Problems:

A five-minute video of teaching second-year students shows that 1) I only corrected four out of eighteen pronunciation errors; 2) The methods used to correct pronunciation errors are mostly recast (repeat the word with the pronunciation error corrected) and did not address all types of errors effectively.

Purpose:

Seeking effective teaching strategies to correct students' pronunciation errors guided by corrective feedback theory in the beginning level class.

Action Research Questions:

1)Does the teacher increase the number of times she corrects pronunciation errors in her teaching of first-year students during the first-semester?

2) Do her students perceive the teacher's corrections as positive?

3) Does the teacher improve her techniques for correcting students' pronunciation errors in the process?

Plan for Action:

Adopt classification of corrective feedback strategies (by Lyster and Ranta) by using hand movements to visualize pitches of tones, and examine whether the strategies to be employed effectively address students' pronunciation errors of:

1) vowel errors 2) consonant errors 3) tone errors 4)combination of the previous types of errors.

Procedures:

Research Questions	Data Collection Methods	Data Analysis/Evaluation
1. Increase quantity of pronunciation error corrections?	Classroom teaching videos	Calculate the percentage of correction among all pronunciation errors
2. Discourage students?	Students' questionnaires	Assess whether students perceive the correction positively
3. Effective techniques of correcting students' errors?	Classroom teaching videos and after class tests	Two experienced teachers and I review the videos to evaluate the effectiveness of the techniques; determine if the students can pronounce the incorrect sounds accurately after class

Timeline:

Preparation:	**Week 1 & 2:** Brainstorm pronunciation error correction techniques Develop the questionnaire for survey Develop plan 1
Cycle 1:	**Week 3 & 4:** Collect data (i.e. video-taping class, collecting students' questionnaires, testing) **Week 5:** Data Analysis **Week 6:** Come up with action plan 2
Cycle 2:	**Week 7 & 8:** Implement action plan 2 **Week 9:** Data analysis **Week 10:** Come up with action plan 3
Cycle 3:	**Week 11 & 12:** Implement action plan 3

Better Teaching Techniques for Teaching Cohesive Devices to Low-Intermediate Chinese Learners 探索有效的连词教学方法 (Shuyi Yang, The University of Iowa)

The problems:

According to my colleagues' observation and my own self-assessment of class video, there are three major problems in teaching cohesive devices:

- I request students to make sentences using cohesive devices in spoken tasks, but very little in reading and writing where cohesive devices play major roles.

- The tasks I designed were predominantly targeting receptive skills but paid little attention to written production skills. This caused students to use cohesive devices in their writing with errors such as redundant pronouns where no cohesive device should have been used; or omitting cohesive devices where necessary, or making loosely-organized sentence clusters.

- I tended to use the same types of practice to teach different cohesive devices which diminished the effectiveness of my teaching.

Purpose:

Develop new teaching techniques corresponding to different types of cohesive devices and balance receptive and productive skills for better learning.

Research Questions:

- Have students improved their comprehension and production of the target cohesive devices every week after using the new teaching techniques?

- Have students made significant progress in their use of cohesive devices after 20 weeks of instruction by using the new teaching techniques?

- Have students perceived the new teaching techniques as effective methods for learning and retention of cohesive devices?

Preparation:

Weeks 1, 2, & 3: Administered reading and writing pretests, prepared teaching materials (PowerPoint slides, in-class practice handouts, online assignments), and developed interview protocols.

Plan for Action:

The study began in the fourth week and ended at the end of first year. It consisted of five 4-week cycles. In each cycle, the instructor incorporated the following methods and activities with some revisions based on the learning result of the previous cycle.

❑ Presenting the target cohesive devices and explaining the meaning, form, and usage with several example sentences followed by four steps of practice:

▪ analyzing the cohesive device used in passages

▪ comparing passages with and without cohesive devices

▪ identifying the relationships among different meaning units connected by cohesive devices, and grouping sentences into a cohesive text

▪ writing a 5-sentence mini-essay on various topics using the target cohesive devices (a model essay written by the instructor was then presented for students to compare with their own usage of cohesive devices)

❑ Each week students were required to complete online reading and writing assignments designed by the instructor. The writing assignments (100-word texts on various topics) were to be completed using Google Docs and submitted online for feedback from the instructor. Students were required to submit their comments on cohesive device learning to ICON after they finished their assignments.

❑ In the weekly individual sessions, the instructor interviewed students about their perception of the teaching techniques, in-class practices and assignments, as well as their suggestions about possible adjustments.

❑ In the final week of the final cycle, reading and writing posttests were administered.

Timeline:

Cycle 1	Cycle 2	Cycle 3	Cycle 4	Cycle 5
Week 4: Implement Action Plan 1 Week 5: Data treatment and further data collection (e.g. class audio-recording, students' practice handouts, online assignments and comments, interviewing students) Week 6: Analyze and interpret data Week 7: Prepare Action Plan 2	Week 8: Implement Action Plan 2 Week 9: Collect data Week 10: Analyze and interpret data Week 11: Prepare Action Plan 3	Week 1: Implement Action Plan 3 Week 2: Collect data Week 3: Analyze and interpret data Week 4: Prepare Action Plan 4	Week 5: Implement Action Plan 4 Week 6: Collect data Week 7: Analyze and interpret data Week 8: Prepare Action Plan 5	Week 9: Implement Action Plan 5 Week 10: Collect data Week 11: Analyze and interpret data Week 12: Administer reading and writing posttests

Action Research Questions	Data Collection	Data Analysis
Have students improved their comprehension and production of the target cohesive devices every week after using the new teaching techniques?	1 Audio-record the class sessions 2 Reflective journal 3 In-class reading/writing exercises 4 After-class online reading/writing assignments	Reading: correct percentage Writing: accuracy of cohesive device use in class practices and after-class assignments
Have students made significant progress in their use of cohesive devices after 20 weeks of instruction by using the new teaching techniques?	Collect reading and writing pretests and posttests	Reading: correct percentage of comprehension Writing: accuracy, frequency, and variety of cohesive device use
Have students perceived the new teaching techniques as effective methods for learning and	1 Audio-record interviews 2 Collect students' online comments	Qualitative analyses of students' feedback

Validity check: 效度检测

1) Gain insight into the effectiveness of my teaching techniques of cohesive devices by triangulating different sources and types of data -- collecting information from the instructor and the students and making both formative and summative assessments.

2) Keep a detailed reflective journal to record my path throughout the project, which could keep me aware of my thoughts, feelings, and assumptions.

3) Ask my colleagues to review and audit the collected data. The addition of the audit process will give extra assurance that the findings will be reliable and confirmable.

4) Provide as rich a description as possible about my own teaching approach and reflection, as well as students' performance and perceptions, to make an accurate assessment of the study results.

How Do We Promote Chinese L2 Action Research?

Seek support from school/college administrators

How can we do better for action research?

Make action research

a part of formal teacher training

programs

How Can We Do Better for Action Research?

Seek support from academic

organizations for funds, workshops,

 and publications

How Can We Do Better for Action Research?

Seek collaboration with other faculty members within or outside of the unit.

A Good Sample of Action Research

Promoting Learner Autonomy Through Teacher-Student Partnership Assessment in an American High School: A Cycle of Action Research

PROFILE Vol. 14, No. 2, October 2012. ISSN 1657-0790 (printed) 2256-5760 (online). Pages 145-162

Recommended Action Research Reference Book

FOURTH EDITION

ACTION RESEARCH

A Guide for the Teacher Researcher

Geoffrey E. Mills