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Contents/Contenido

From the Editor

This issue of the *Journal* offers you a variety of articles which, we hope, will lead you to reflect on various aspects of language and teaching. We have four articles, a book review, and, for the first time, a letter from a reader expressing her opinion about an article.

Our first article reviews existing techniques used to evaluate teachers. Most all teachers have gone through the evaluation process at some point in their careers and this article by M. Martha Lengeling of the University of Guanajuato offers a clear overview and critique of different techniques that are commonly used to evaluate teacher performance from class observation, peer observation, self-evaluation to student rating systems. The author concludes by exploring the idea of using portfolios (collections of various statistical measurements and documents related to a teacher's performance) to evaluate teachers more fairly.

Our second article critiques the use of portfolio assessment of students for academic classes. The author, Arlene Schrade from The University of Mississippi, describes her experiences using portfolios to evaluate students in her university level classes.

Moya Schultz-Palma, who used to work at the Universidad de las Américas-Puebla and who is now working free lance in the United States, offers us an article about anger and how it is expressed physiologically, linguistically and through body language. This interesting article should lead you to a closer examination of how anger is expressed both by English-speakers and Spanish-speakers.

Our final article offers us an introspective view of what goals language teachers should set for themselves and for their students. Beginning with a classical view of learning and continuing to a review of the theories of Krashen and other communicative theorists, Adalberto Morales García of the Universidad Autónoma de Chapingo discusses the Input hypothesis and how this relates to actual classroom experiences.

We also have a review of two book series based on content area learning and literature. Also, for all of you who have asked, note that we now have an ISSN number! (ISSN 1405-3470) We hope you enjoy this issue and we would like to hear from you. Write us, and let us know your opinions.

The Editor

Editorial Policy

The MEXTESOL Journal is dedicated to the classroom teacher in Mexico. Articles and book reviews related to EFL teaching in Mexico and in other similar situations throughout the world are accepted for publication. Articles can be either practical or theoretical and written in English or Spanish.

Refereed Articles: Articles are refereed by members of the Editorial Board and by other experts in a field related to that of the article. The refereeing process is not blind and, if necessary, a referee will be assigned as a mentor to guide the author through the publication process. Refereed article will have a footnote referring to the fact that the article was refereed. The MEXTESOL Journal retains the right to edit all manuscripts that are accepted for publication.

Unreferred Articles: In order to open the publication process to more authors, unreferred articles will also be accepted. These articles will be read and judged by the Editorial Committee and edited by our Style Editor.

Book Reviews: The Journal welcomes previously unpublished reviews of professional books, classroom texts, video- or audiotaped material, computer software and other instructional resources. Reviews are not refereed.

Submission Guidelines: Three copies of the manuscript, including all appendices, tables, graphs, references, your professional affiliation and an address and telephone/fax number where you can be reached should be faxed or sent to the address below. Submissions are also accepted by e-mail. If you fax your manuscript, be sure also to mail three copies to the Journal since fax service in Mexico is not always reliable. Whenever possible include the article on either 5.25" or 3.5" diskettes, prepared to be read with IBM or Apple compatible program. **Please specify if you want the article to be refereed or not.**

MEXTESOL JOURNAL
San Borja 726-2, Colonia del Valle
03100 Mexico, D. F.
Telephone: 575-5473, Fax: 550-9622
E-mail: mextslj@servidor.unam.mx
and **mextesol@servidor.unam.mx**

Manuscript Guidelines

1) Articles should be typed, double spaced and preferably no more than twenty pages long. References should be cited in parenthesis in the text by author's name, year of publication and page numbers. (For example: "The findings were reported (Jones 1979: 23-24) although they cause no change in policy.")

2) The list of references in an article must appear at the end of the text on a separate page titled "References". Data must be complete and accurate. Authors are responsible for the accuracy of their references. This format should be followed:

For books: Jones, D. J. 1984. How to spell. New York. ABC Press.
For articles: Moore, Jane. 1991. "Why I like to Teach." Teacher's Quarterly. June, 6-8.

Note: A copy of these guidelines in Spanish is available on request from *The Editor.*

Si usted quiere obtener la versión de este texto en español, favor de solicitarla a *The Editor.*

Journal Correspondence: All other correspondence to the MEXTESOL Journal should be sent to Editor at the above address.

Membership: For information on membership in MEXTESOL, contact the *MEXTESOL Membership Service* at the above address.

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From Our Readers

(Have you read any articles that you either disagreed with or strongly agreed with in the MEXTESOL Journal? Have you had any similar or very different experiences as those expressed in the Journal? Are you interested in having your point of view published in this forum? Write us and we will publish your letter and, if it is possible, ask the author of the original article to respond.)

I have a question regarding the article, "Is English Teaching a Profession: Three Mexican Case Studies," by Peter Hubbard (*MEXTESOL Journal,* Vol. 19, No. 2).

This article, six pages long, is comprised of five pages of case studies and a sixth of suggestions to improve the situation, that of English teachers locally not being regarded as professionals.

In the first five pages, the active agents in this situation seem to be managers, directors, administrators and entire administrations. The article states that:[1]

> The **institution** actually prefers teachers without background experience or training that might interfere with the institutional method. (Page 11)
>
> However, **supervisors** are encouraged by **management** to keep their ratings of teacher performance low so as to avoid the additional burden of bonus payments. (Page 12)
>
> ...the **directors** are **managers** at heart and highly conscious of what they are paying for each hour of staff time. (Page 12)
>
> The **management** seems to be unconcerned about the quality or relevance of this, provided that the quantity is right. (Page 13)
>
> It is not surprising that, when **the university** belatedly recognized that English was essential for practically all successful education at Licenciatura level, English teaching approaches were found to be wanting and 30 years out of date. (Page 13)
>
> Despite the expenditure of money and time on this teacher education program, there was **institutional resistance** to the idea that teaching foreign languages merited the status of professionals studies. (Pages 13 and 14)

[1] The words in **bold** print are highlighted by the author of the letter.

> *Conclusions:*...**employers** seem to regard them as relatively low-level workers, who can easily be replaced and are therefore of no consequence. (Page 14)
>
> ...when a complaint is made it is significant that the **school authorities** often side with the students or parents, rather than supporting the teacher's position. (Page 15)
>
> Advancement results from **institutional loyalty or personal connections**, rather than from demonstrable professional certification. (Page 15)

Suddenly, on page 16, where we find suggestions to improve the situation, all of the focus shifts to the **teachers**. **Teachers** need to do this, that or the other, to rectify the situation. Why the sudden placing of the burden of responsibility to improve this state of affairs exclusively unto teachers if the previous five pages had just documented very clearly the problem(s) existing in the minds and actions of others? I am not suggesting teachers are perfect beings and shouldn't work to bring about change, but I was so surprised at the sudden shift that I wondered if my issue was missing page 15 and 1/2.

For example,

> *Suggestion 1:* **Teachers** should make every effort to become more highly trained academically and keep up to date with their profession.
>
> *Suggestion 2:* **We** need a concerted information campaign to convince employers, students and parents that being a native-speaker of a language is not enough: **teachers** need professional training. [*And, it appears to me, the author of this letter, that the campaign must be carried out by the* ***teachers*** *as I can't imagine employers, parents and students waging a campaign against themselves.*]
>
> *Suggestion 3:* Those **teachers** who do not nave a professional degree in teaching English or a subject related to this, should seriously consider enrolling in a degree course.
>
> *Suggestion 4:* As professionals, **we** need a fully accredited Mexican professional association. [*I assume the "we" means teachers (?)*]

Is there something flawed with thinking that if the problem principally rests with employers, managers, directors, school authorities, etc., these entities deserve at least a mention in the list of solutions? How come they are absolutely absolved from any responsibility and involvement whatsoever when it comes time to talk change?

In closing, I would like to express that I found this article by Mr. Hubbard to be one of the best I have ever read in the MEXTESOL Journal and I thank him very much for the three case studies and hard-hitting information they provide. I only ask why all the weight is put on the teachers to bring about improvement when the problem seems to primarily originate from other sources.

Tracy Jordan, PROULEX, Guadalajara, Jalisco
Telephone: PROULEX, 3-615-7602
Fax: PROULEX, 3-615-7608

The author, Peter Hubbard, responds...

I was very pleased that Tracy Jordan wrote a letter to the *MEXTESOL Journal* in reaction to my article. Her concerns are, I think, the same as mine in many respects. That is, she is concerned about fate of teachers in the hands of irresponsible managers.

The point she makes is a good one. If all my implied criticisms are of institutions and their management, why do I end up asking teachers to find the solutions to the problems?

Perhaps I was writing the article from the teachers' point of view and saying that they must fight back against these situations, because I didn't see much hope of a change of mentality among management; and we certainly cannot expect management to **initiate** a change, because they are indifferent or actually hostile towards the professionalization of teachers.

Since writing that article, I have been interviewing dozens of teachers in the Guadalajara area, working in a wide variety of schools. And I have also been interviewing a number of managers. These talks have given me hope that attitudes are changing fast both among teachers and managers (although the enlightened managers are in the minority). Essentially, teachers generally want to become more professional and many managers want their teachers to become more professional. This is extremely encouraging and gives me hope that a new age is dawning in ELT in Mexico.

It is also refreshing to find passionate debate in the pages of the *MEXTESOL Journal*. However, there is a lingering doubt in my mind. I know teachers have read the article and reacted to it. But have the managers? Would a manager please write in response to this letter? We would like to hear their point of view, also.

The Complexities of Evaluating Teachers

M. MARTHA LENGELING, UNIVERSIDAD DE GUANAJUATO[2]

Evaluating teachers is a controversial topic at all levels for teachers and students in the field of education. Teacher evaluation is often criticized as not being the reality of the situation or as being a biased opinion of students. What is clear is the need for teacher evaluation and the need to evaluate teachers fairly and completely. The following article will define evaluation, give reasons why evaluation is conducted and explain a few of the traditional forms of teacher evaluation.

Evaluate is defined as "to determine the worth of, or appraise" in *Webster's New World Dictionary* (1966). The word is synonymous with assess, valuate, account, rate, and size up. Schrier and Hammadou interpret assessment as "the accurate, objective description of performance" (Schrier and Hammadou 1994: 213). These authors continue to explain:

> In the domain of teacher education, this means measurement of the quality of teaching performance. Evaluation means placing value upon what is being measured. The attempt to separate the concept of objective measurement from subjective evaluation has been an ongoing struggle and subject of much debate within the field of educational testing. (Schrier and Hammadou 1994: 312)

The word evaluation is dreaded and feared by teachers and students, but it is a necessary and inevitable process. School administrators need to evaluate teachers as teachers need to evaluate students in order to assess and account for the quality of education. A teacher is evaluated in order to account for the quality of a teacher who desires a tenure position, raise a salary, a higher position, or increased number of hours. Evaluation of teachers is necessary in order for the administration to make decisions concerning the faculty. Often these decisions deal with tenure, salary increase, promotion, reappointment, merit pay, awards, and faculty grants. In order to justify these decisions, evaluation is frequently a means to come to a determination. The administration may need to make a decision whether to fire or keep an individual teacher and evaluation is often the deciding factor or part of the deciding factor. Evaluation used for administrative decisions is sum-

[2] The author can be reached at the Centro de Idiomas, Universidad de Guanajuato, Lascurain de Retana 5, Guanajuato, Guanajuato. Telephone: (473) 2-26-62, Ext. 8000/8001. Fax (473) 2-72-53.

mative evaluation while on the other hand evaluation conducted for professional growth of teachers is a formative evaluation. Seldin comments that in the past, teachers were rewarded for research but today there is a trend to reward teachers for excellence. This change shows how quality teaching has become more important: more than ever institutions and teachers must account for the education an institution is promoting. Improving institutional effectiveness is often another reason for the use of evaluations. If the teaching is not at a high level, are students and parents getting the quality education that they have paid for? Accountability is required of teachers and institutions to meet the demands of the public.

Another reason and the best reason why a teacher is evaluated is to improve the level of teaching. With evaluation, we can also understand the process of teaching and learning better, and use this knowledge to improve in the area of teaching methodology. Evaluation also gives the teachers valuable information about their teaching which can help them in their professional development. A teacher needs to progress continually in areas that are personal to each individual teacher in hopes that the level of teaching becomes more professional. Whether a teacher has years of experience or is newly graduated, the area of professional growth continues to be developed at all times.

Evaluations are conducted at the elementary school level all the way up to the university level in all subject areas. Often these methods of evaluation, such as teacher observation, cause the teacher to be nervous which in turn does not give a true picture of what this teacher is like in a normal class. Sometimes a fellow colleague who has little preparation in the area of teacher evaluation visits another teacher's class; teachers who have many years of experience may be given this responsibility but have little idea what is necessary in evaluating their workmates. Generally these evaluations are done once at the end of the semester with little feedback given to the teacher as to how the teacher performed. Feedback given to the observed teacher consists of information about this single visit providing a little input that will help the teachers in their professional growth. The traditional role of evaluation is to judge the teacher based on one class with little follow-up as to how the teacher planned the class, how the teacher felt about the outcome of the class, or what the teacher is doing throughout the semester. Teacher evaluation also consists of forms that students fill out during the last fifteen minutes of a class. These evaluations shed light on students' points of view of how a teacher manages the class. Valuable information about how a student feels about a teacher can be found in these evaluations which is useful for the teacher in the future if the teacher is given a chance to see this information. It is common that this type of information is collected only once at the end of a course when a teacher can no longer use this information to excel in the quality of teaching for that particular class.

Both types of evaluations are helpful in the professional growth of a teacher only if they are used carefully and appropriately. Student evaluations of teachers can be coupled with a teacher evaluation done by a trained individual to give a broader, more realistic, and more complete idea of how a teacher is performing. Ideas about how a teacher feels need to be explored by both the teacher and observer before and after the visit. Communication among students, observers and teachers must remain open in order for a teacher to progress in his/her personal development in this profession.

Eustis comments on the importance of teacher evaluation with the following statement:

> Faculty evaluation is one of the key factors determining the health and happiness of an academic department. Indeed, it is essential for the smooth administration functioning and collegial interaction of a department that there be clear, consistent, and equitable published guidelines which faculty members can rely on to provide them with the standards and procedures by which they will be evaluated. (Eustis 1993: 59)

Often there is tension between faculty and administration in the area of teacher evaluation because both sides feel insecure with evaluation. Problems may easily arise if the situation is not dealt with carefully and professionally. Instead of promoting teacher development or departmental development, teacher evaluation can alienate the two groups and create a negative situation. Eustis continues to point out, “Evaluation has a direct bearing on faculty members’ livelihood, likelihood of success or failure, self-esteem and attitude toward their colleagues, their department, their institution, and the profession itself” (Eustis 1993: 60). Teacher evaluation is essential in education but must be carried out carefully in order to foster a positive attitude instead of a negative one.

A few traditional methods of teacher evaluation include: classroom observation, peer observation, self-evaluation, and student ratings. Classroom observation, a frequent method used to evaluate teachers, often consists of a school administrator visiting a class unannounced. Teachers dread these visits and feel threatened by this method unless a careful plan of action is taken while observing the teacher. Preconferences and post conferences are important for both the teacher and the observer in order to communicate what will be observed, how the teacher will be observed, and how successfully this was obtained. The teacher's intentions need to be stated in the preconference to help clarify what will be observed. Avoiding judgments about observations and keeping an open mind of what takes place in the classroom is recommended to the observer. The observer should take care while observing so as not to draw attention to him/herself. One visit does not give a complete idea of the teacher and the performance of this teacher. The observer should be highly trained in this area and sensitive to the observed teacher's feelings.

Classroom observation and peer observation are similar in that both of these methods observe a class. While the classroom observation is usually conducted by a school administrator, the peer observation is conducted by a fellow colleague who observes and reports back about the observation. Peer observation, or peer coaching, is less threatening but is not appropriate for summative evaluation. Support is provided to teachers who are new or in need of feedback about their teaching. Trust between the two groups fosters communication which can aid in the development of the teacher and program as a whole. Time is required for this type of evaluation along with support from both sides. If done properly, both can achieve a good rapport.

Self-evaluation is defined by Nunan as, "the encouragement of self-analysis and evaluation by teachers of their own classroom work as a means of professional self-development" (Nunan 1989: 147). Richards and Lockhart add to this definition with, "one in which teachers and student teachers collect data about teaching, examine their attitudes, Beliefs, assumptions, and teaching practices, and use the information obtained as a basis for critical reflection about teaching" (Richards and Lockhart 1994: 1). Self-evaluation promotes reflective thinking and growth in the area of education through the use of self-rating forms such as Medley's (Medley 1980: 136-143), self-reports, peer observation, the use of videotape or audiotape, and self-study materials. Self-evaluation enhances the long term outlook of the teacher, promotes responsibility, modifies teaching practices and encourages high standards in education, but this method is criticized for its lack of reliability when used for administration decisions. Assistance of colleagues or supervisors should be given to teachers who have a need for feedback and guidance.

Lastly, student rating of teachers have been the largest traditional means of evaluation since the early 1920's and have grown in popularity. The reasons for this tremendous increase include: ease in administration and scoring, valuable information gained from these ratings, and popularity among administrations. Students provide helpful information concerning rapport, communication, teacher effectiveness and quality of the instructor. Pennington and Young compare student rating to teacher evaluation with: "student evaluations of teachers are a form of classroom observation, where the observers are students rather than administrators or teachers" (Pennington and Young 1989: 626).

What is also important to remember is that these student ratings can often be abused according to Seldin. Are the questions of the student ratings appropriate and do they ask for information about the teacher that students can answer? Are these ratings the only source of information about the quality of teaching? Careful procedures for the administration of student ratings must be carried out. The teacher who is being rated must be absent at the time of administering student evaluations and the environment must be appropriate. Students need to be informed what these ratings are for. In order that results of these ratings be viable, 75 per cent of the class must complete these ratings. If these ratings are used to promote quality teaching, the teacher should be able to view the outcome and at a time when something can still be done in the classroom to remedy problems. Student ratings need to be taken over a period of time in order to get a better overall idea of what a teacher is like. If these ratings are not shown to the teacher at an opportune time, then these ratings will not benefit the promotion of quality teaching.

Student bias is frequently thought of with the mention of student ratings. Class size, educational level, students' academic field and ability, gender of student and teacher, and amount of work assigned in the class are just a few of the suggested reasons for bias. However, extensive research shows few serious problems with bias. Moss remarks about student bias with the following:

> Research indicates that students are competent to evaluate faculty, that student evaluations are not biased by the sex of the teacher, that a teacher's 'ability to teach' or 'ability to communicate' are positively related to student ratings, and that the results are as reliable (self-consistent) as our better educational and mental tests. (Moss 1971: 17).

Pennington and Young comment on the “evidence of their (student ratings) stability, even in the long-run,” as studies show “a high positive relationship between the judgments made by students who had been away and those made by students who were currently taking the course” (Pennington and Young 1989: 627). Both of these statements confirm that student evaluations are reliable and valid as evaluations measures.

Student evaluations let students voice their opinions about their teachers, expressing whether they feel their teachers have done an adequate job of teaching. Often these ratings are the only way institutions evaluate teachers, however Seldin, Wennerstrom and Heiser all agree that this method is not the only way to evaluate teachers but should be used with other means of evaluation. These three authors feel that student ratings are important and helpful in teacher evaluation but that students are not able to judge all the aspects of a teacher.

Seldin recommends the use of student ratings as part of portfolios which is a current trend in the area of education. Seldin states, “ The best way that I know of to get at both the complexity and individuality of teaching is the teaching portfolio, which also is becoming increasingly popular around the country” (Seldin 1993a: 40).. Seldin states portfolios:

> include not only students’ ratings of the professor but evidence of students’ learning in his or her classes, such as students’ essays and publications, field work or lab reports, or conference presentations on course-related work. Other components can include other teachers observations of the instructor’s teaching, reviews of the instructional materials used in classes, and an essay by the faculty member reflecting on why he or she teaches in a particular way. (Seldin 1993a: 40)

This definition gives precise and current information on how to create a more extensive type of teacher evaluation. The components can be changed or adapted according to how the teacher feels and whenever the teacher desires. Moore adds to Seldin’s definition stating portfolios are “goal based, show reflection, contain samples of work, contain evidence of growth, span a period of instruction, allow for reflection, feedback and improvement, and are flexible and versatile” (Moore 1994: 170-171). Another definition states portfolios as a “factual description of a professor’s strengths and teaching achievements...documents and materials which collectively suggest the scope and quality of a professor’s teaching performance (Seldin, 1991: 3). Other components may include any documentation that describes accomplishments and strengths of a teacher such as documentation including information about professional groups, course syllabi, professional journals, statements from department heads or students. Examples of statements can be included from a variety of sources such as the department head, students commenting on the teacher, and colleagues that have been influenced by the teacher or have observed the teacher. Selection of documents is important and should not include a large number but a selection that is "orderly, efficient, and persuasive" (Seldin 1993b: 3). Selection of components does not include an immense number of documents but a selected number that gives evidence of the abilities of the teacher. Each portfolio differs in content, organization, and approach. The capabilities, opinions, philosophies and teaching skills should be represented with documents. One can notice that a lot of the methods of evaluation have been incorporated in the components of a portfolio. No single method is sufficient to evaluate a teacher but a number have been coupled together to create a more complete idea of what the teacher is.

A need exists for a holistic evaluation of teachers which not only will meet the demands of the administration but also meet the needs of all students and teachers in their search for professional growth. If these requirements are achieved in a complete teacher evaluation program, teachers will be better prepared and more successful while at the same time more comfortable with the idea of teacher evaluation.

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Extended Portfolio Assessment for Academic ESL Classes

ARLENE SCHRADE, THE UNIVERSITY OF MISSISSIPPI [1]

Portfolios are nothing new. For many years photographers, designers, artists, models, and architects have used this method of displaying their work. For their purposes it is a reasonable way to present their best work for evaluation.

Unfortunately, when portfolio assessment was embraced by the educational community (especially for writing), the process of students selecting their best work for portfolio inclusion was incorporated as well. This was, and is, an error in judgement; if we believe that students should be evaluated over a period of time regarding their progress, development, improvement; then it stands to reason that the entirety of their work should be included in a portfolio. I use the term portfolio loosely, to include not only written work in a folder-like container, but all work accomplished by the students. All is a part of the assessment portfolio.

Connecting ESL assessment procedures with U.S. national trends makes sense. The whole language approach, i.e., language learning seen as a connected process; that is all language areas not dealt with independently, but together, is a reasonable adoption. A second national trend which dovetails with whole language learning provides the learning environment that is suitable for the outcomes for which we are looking; that is small group, cooperative, collaborative instruction. In non-intensive, academic ESL classes at the university level, I have found that these small groups provide a much better setting for a mixed group of international students. By mixed, I mean men and women, graduates and undergraduates, students of ages ranging from 19 to 45, students majoring in all fields of study. Add to this mix personality differences and general cultural differences, and you have sincere challenges. In large classes it is difficult to get students to participate as they must in foreign language classes. Time is a factor, numbers are a factor, and cultural differences are a factor. By organizing the students into small groups for most of the class time, there is time for everyone to partic-

[1] The author can be reached at the following address: Department of Curriculum and Instruction, School of Education, Room 152, University, MS 38677, United States. Fax: (601) 232-7249. Tel. (601) 232-7622 or (601) 232-7057.

ipate; quiet, shy personalities are drawn out, and individual attention is maximized. Students are also encouraged to cooperate with one another, help one another, and collaborate on projects. It is a helping, learning environment.

The above national trends fit nicely into the contemporary approach to language learning: communicative competence. CC is defined by Brown (1994: 227) as “that aspect of our competence that enables us to convey and interpret messages and to negotiate meanings interpersonally within specific contexts”. The language emphasis is on speaking/listening, writing for specific purposes, and reading of authentic materials. (Brown: 226)

Logistics is always a problem when one attempts to provide the appropriate setting correlated with the best possible methods to allow students to learn foreign languages, to improve and develop over a term. Like all productive ways to assist students in learning, the best ways are almost always the most difficult. And portfolio assessment being the most obvious and efficient way to evaluate can be another logistical problem

I am fortunate to direct a graduate program in TESOL, with M. A. and Ph.D. students as well as graduate assistants available to join me in allowing this class to function. I have M. A. students doing *practica*, Ph.D. students in internships, and at least two graduate teaching assistants to work with me with the ESL classes. This provides a number of teachers to work with students in small groups, to provide more avenues for assessment, and provide more minds to evaluate the program.

Since we use whole language, communicative competence and small groups as our basic philosophy of language learning; since we concentrate on vocabulary, grammar, and discourse integrated into the four skills, the portfolio system of assessment is a natural. I believe that language learning is a developmental process, that improvement over time is sought after, and leads to the proficiency levels we look for.

At the beginning of the term we diagnose students’ abilities in speaking; a listening quiz; a writing sample and a reading quiz. Then as we progress throughout the term, we continue with the integrated, whole approach to language learning by working grammar, vocabulary, and American culture into the four skills. We also concentrate on grammatical, discourse, sociolinguistic, and strategic competencies. (Brown: 227)

All work accomplished by the students over the entire term is included in their portfolios. This includes required weekly written journals, required weekly oral cassette journals, all written work which includes a small research paper, summaries and reaction papers of all reading and all viewing of videotapes (this also affords good listening and reading comprehension checks), small group discussion evaluation, listening quizzes, a few problematic grammar exercises, a midterm and final oral interview grade; and a final ETS listening comprehension test. ALL of these are collected over the term, are checked and evaluated weekly on a master chart. Students receive constant and continuous feedback on their progress. By talking, reading and writing throughout the entire term, much of the time in the small groups, students' progress is remarkable. Attitudes and attendance are excellent.

In conclusion, portfolio assessment of all student work, not only their selections of their best, provides the best method of evaluation for integrated whole language learning with an emphasis on communicative competence.

I strongly believe in working toward mastery learning, in student progress over time, and that for them to improve to an acceptable proficiency level is the purpose of foreign language classes. I excuse students from further formal language classes if the desired proficiency level is reached.

By including everything students have accomplished over the term, we are able to assess their progress from beginning to end. Students selecting their best work for portfolios tells us nothing, and does not evaluate improvement over time. Cohen (1995) states that portfolio assessment is a logistical problem resulting in too much work for teachers to handle. It is true that organization and logistics can be a nightmare, but anything worth doing well is not easy. And evaluating student progress validly is essential. Searching for ways and means to accomplish this is a study in creativity.

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The Language of Anger

MOYA SCHULTZ-PALMA, FREE LANCE[1]

All human beings have emotions, and each emotion has its own mode of expression. The manner in which emotions are communicated varies with individuals and with cultures. The language of emotions is an acquired skill, as is speech. In order to understand this special language, people must learn to recognize the code or codes that are acceptable in their cultures. Before examining the language of emotion, in this case the language of anger, it is necessary to possess some knowledge about what emotion is and how it can effect us.

Emotions are intense, pervasive, agitated states which can be divided into those which are pleasant (joy, love) and those which are unpleasant (anger, sadness). The psychological vocabulary utilized in the field expresses the intensity of the emotional experience. The range of intensities can be seen in word pairs such as anger/rage, fear/horror, pain/agony, and sadness/grief (Hilgard & Atkinson 1953: 133)

Emotional states, especially profound ones, cause a series of drastic physiological changes throughout the body. These changes are controlled in a very intricate manner by the central nervous system, by both division of the autonomic system and by the endocrine glands. Hilgard and Atkinson (1953: 163-164) list the following characteristics for these physiological changes:

> *Blood distribution*. Alterations in blood pressure and the distribution of blood between the surface and the interior of the body occurs. An example of this phenomenon is the reddened face and neck of an angry individual. This flush is caused when the blood vessels in the skin dilate, and more blood is found near the surface of the skin.
>
> *Heart rate.* The increased speed and force of the heart beat has long been an indicator of emotional excitement.

[1] Formerly with the Universidad de las Américas-Puebla. The author can be reached at 2016 Miller Avenue, Modesto, CA 95354-2925. Telephone: (209) 577-1957.

Respiration. The speed and depth of breathing and the time spent in inhalation as compared to exhalation are considered important characteristics of emotional conflicts.

Pupilary response. The pupils of the eyes may dilate when an individual enters an emotional state.

Salivary secretion. Emotional excitations can cause alterations in the production of saliva. There may be a dryness of the mouth because of the decrease in saliva or a change in its consistency, or there may be an increase in the saliva production which, in an angry person could produce the effect of that person, literally, "foaming at the mouth".

Pilomotor response. Goose bumps appear when the hairs of the skin stand on end.

Gastrointestinal motility. Strong emotions can cause changes in stomach and intestinal activity. The individual can suffer nausea and diarrhea.

Muscle tension and tremor. The person actually shakes during a highly emotional situation.

Blood composition. Endocrine glands are highly active during emotional states and literally pour hormones into the bloodstream. These hormones trigger alterations in the levels of acidity (pH), blood sugar, and adrenaline.

Adrenaline and a substance called noradrenaline play important roles in accounting for the physiological changes observed during emotional conflicts. There may be quantitative correlations between the degrees of emotions and the physiological reactions due to the presence of these chemical substances in the blood (Buss 1961: 100-101).

Buss (1961: 100-101) also cites the effects of the different concentrations of adrenaline/noradrenaline in the blood. The presence of noradrenaline (a substance similar to adrenaline, but lacking one methyl group in its chemical make-up) in the blood causes a significant rise in the blood pressure and the pulse rate, little or no elevation in cardiac output, and a drastic decrease in the blood supply to the skeletal muscles. These types of reactions are associated with moderately intense emotional states.

On the other hand, a high concentration of adrenaline is observed in states of high or low emotional intensity. The presence of adrenaline in the blood causes a moderate increase in the pulse rate, a significant decrease in cardiac output, and a drastic increase in the blood supply to the skeletal muscles (Buss 1961: 101)

These physiological changes are preparations that living beings undergo to be able to confront threats. In such an agitated state, a being is ready for the "sustained, violent activity [necessary] to overcome the sources of danger" (Buss 1961: 91)

One early twentieth century physiologist, W. B. Cannon, called these preparatory alterations "emergency reactions." Cannon observed that "reactions that at first seemed independent and unrelated, form a pattern serving the common purpose of protection" (1929: 166). All these physiological changes that individuals suffer during such highly stimulated states seem, to indicate that emotion is a whole body experience.

Individuals may express any single emotion in a variety of ways. For this reason, it has been almost impossible for psychologists and physiologists to differentiate between human emotions. Particular body responses do not allow definition of a particular emotion because the different emotions share many of the physiological changes caused by the highly-charged state.

In addition to the physiological changes experienced during intense emotion, alterations in human communication can be observed. To better understand some of these changes, one must first look at what is considered a normal communicative act.

Normal communicative events are speech acts, "the things we do with utterances such as promise, bargain, warn, curse, or argue" (Eastman 1990: 130). It is necessary to clarify terminology in order to avoid confusion about what is a speech situation, a speech event, or a speech act. Eastman defines a speech situation as the setting in which a speech event takes place; a speech event is the "activity which rules and norms for speech use operate," and a speech act is "the minimal unit of a speech event which implicates both social norms and linguistic forms." Eastman further states that it is the speech act which "mediates between aspects of grammar and a speech event or situation" (Eastman 1990: 145).

Fishman takes the idea of speech situations one more step. He defines the speech situation as “the co-occurrence of two of more interlocutors related to each other in a particular way, communicating about a particular topic, in a particular setting.” If the conditions of a given situation change, an adjustment in language variety may be required. This alteration in speech variety may also mark a modification in the relationship between the interlocutors or a change in the privacy or location of their interaction (Fishman 1972: 48-49).

In a speech event, “there are conversational maxims that people follow in the interest of effective communication” (Eastman 1990: 190). Grice (cited in Eastman) states these maxims as follows: (1) Quantity--be as informative as is required; (2) Quality--Do not say what you believe to be false nor for which you lack adequate evidence; (3) Relation--be relevant; and (4) Manner--avoid ambiguity, obscurity, length and disorder.

Based on these maxims, Grice suggests that people who engage in communicative acts follow what he terms the “Co-operation Principle”, which is to say that “both participants in the communicative act are assumed to want the conversation to function correctly” (cited in Eastman 1990: 190)

Basically, English conversations are governed by the principle of what is known as “turn-taking”: “ The speaker determines who speaks next by asking a question directly, by nodding towards the person expected to take the floor, or by some other signal; the first to talk after a pause becomes the speaker, and the speaker continues to speak until finished” (Eastman 1990: 37). These “turn-taking” principles are part of Grice’s “Co-operation Principle”.

Hymes proposes the following image of human communication:

> ...the concept of message implies the sharing, real or implied, of (1) a code or codes in terms of which the message is intelligible to (2) participants, minimally an addressor and an addressee (who may be the same person) in (3) an event constituted by its transmission and characterized by (4) a channel or channels; (5) a setting or context; (6) a definite form or shape to the message, and (7) a topic and a comment (Hymes 1972, 26).

Synthesizing Hymes complicated definition, one can see that to have communication, the message must say something about something.

At times, though, for certain social or psychological reasons, concurrence and cooperation are NOT the objectives of communicative interactions, and, as a result, maxims, principles, and conventions are disregarded. Arguments or conflictive communicative situations are examples of such times. Anger, which is a major catalyst for arguments, is only one of a number of highly-charged emotions that the human being experiences.

Because anger is an emotion, it is also a whole body experience. “Anger is a response with facial-skeletal and autonomic components. It may be conceptualized as a drive state” (Buss 1961, 9). This designation as a drive state is due to the fact that emotions have drive properties. It is the drive status of anger that causes us to attack, physically or verbally, the source of our anger. Expression of anger is a part of the human field of expressions as explained by Rummel. He cites a subconscious aspect of verbal expression which includes the combination of words selected and the emphasis and tone used to speak them, and the non-verbal actions and gestures which accompany oral communication (Rummel 1991, 58)

Augsberger designates anger as “the curse of interpersonal relationships”. He views anger as a demand, a demand that one be heard, a demand that one’s worth be recognized, a demand that one is respected, that people stop trying to control one’s life, that one is no longer taken for granted (Augsberger 1993, 154).

Kleinberg observed that “cultures teach conventionalized or stereotyped forms of expression which become a kind of language of emotion, recognized by others of the culture” (cited in Hilgard & Atkinson 1953, 175). It is this cultural influence which dictates the ways in which emotions are expressed within a given culture. In western cultures, anger may lead to arguments which, according to Eastman, “...are considered a social disjunction, not part of normal or usual communicative situations” (Eastman 1990, 192)

In these western cultures, there are linguistic as well as non-linguistic modifications that occur when individuals are angry and/or engaged in an argument. Both modifications will be discussed.

Since it is not feasible nor wise to provoke or interrupt an argument in order to observe that characteristics of this type of conflictive communicative speech event, one may make acceptable observations by viewing movie scenes which depict arguments. Hilgard and Atkinson lend validity to such observation techniques in their reference to the fact that "skilled actors are able to convey to an audience any intended emotion by using facial expressions, tone of voice, and gestures according to the patterns and audience recognizes" (1953, 175). For this paper, two American movies and one Mexican soap opera in which scenes of arguments are portrayed were chosen for analysis of the language, verbal and non-verbal, used during these emotional conflicts. The movies viewed were *The Prince of Tides* with Barbra Streisand and Nick Nolte and *The War of the Roses* with Kathleen Turner and Michael Douglas. The soap opera chosen was *Volver a empezar* with Yuri and Rafael Navarro Sánchez. The following observations were made after analyzing the argument scenes characterized in these films.

Linguistic changes during an argument are diverse and may be extreme or subtle depending on the individuals involved. Alterations may be observed in such aspects as speech velocity, volume, tone and pitch of voice, articulatory gestures, lexical modification due to item selection, and total or partial disregard for the conversational norms usually observed by interlocutors during non-argumentative communication.

The velocity of speech may be radically increased by some individuals during an argument while others may greatly reduce the speed at which they are talking. Some people may raise their voice to where their utterances are very loud, to the point of reverberating, while others may lower their voices almost to the point of whispering. The tone and pitch of an individual's voice may be altered to where the speech attains a quality of screeching or shrieking.

Phonetic fluctuations are also observed. A number of people clench their teeth or lock or clamp their jaws shut when they are angry. These actions can result in a modification of the normal movement of the tongue or lips, or articulatory gestures. As a consequence, the pronunciation of words can be transformed. An example of this is when the "s" is elongated into a sort of hiss. Also, when the teeth are clamped shut, the speech string tends to come out garbled because proper bucal movement is impaired. The alteration in respiration and saliva production may also play an important part in phonetic modification during an argument. Some people actually become "spitting mad" because of the excess of saliva in their mouths and the force with which they exhale and speak during a quarrel.

Lexical selection during a verbal conflict may be contrary to the norm in that use of obscenities in great quantities may occur during a dispute. Words that are not ordinarily part of normal social discourse may be liberally sprinkled into the utterances heard in a verbal row. Also, lexical items that have negative connotations, i. e., words with highly emotive, hurtful meaning may be selected instead of less emotive, less intense ones utilized during “normal” speech events. It should be pointed out that the tone of voice with which a word is spoken may transform a perfectly neutral, non-hurtful word into one that is highly emotional and negative.

Grice’s “Co-operation Principle”, mentioned earlier, with its conversational maxims, loses its strength during an argument. Normal “turn-taking” is forgotten, with the participants in the argument ignoring the procedures of normal communication. In a two-participant argument, it is not uncommon that both people are speaking at the same time, and the usual “it’s your turn” signals are disregarded. The pauses observed during normal discussions may totally disappear or be greatly prolonged with long periods of silence occurring.

Returning to lexical selection, the lexical items chosen for use during a quarrel may produce various violations of Grice’s maxims. Sarcasm, irony, understatement, and overstatement are only a few of the possible violations of these conventions that can be seen during a conflictive interaction.

While various linguistic modifications are apparent during verbal conflict, arguments are also rich in non-linguistic elements...body language.

One gesture observed in the three films mentioned and in remembered personal arguments is that participants in a conflictive speech event tend to lift their chins from the normal position. This may occur to allow freer passage of air in and out of the trachea. It may also be a challenge gesture.

Another commonly seen gesture is “pointing” with the index finger. this “pointing” may reach the point of one interlocutor poking the chest, arm or shoulder of the other. This seems to be an emphatic gesture which angry people use to stress what they are saying. The “pointing or poking” may be done simultaneously with a key word or phrase.

People engaged in arguments may clench their fists in a mild annoyance situation. This action could be considered preparatory to attacking or defending oneself. In a more agitated situation, one may use his fists to pound on the desk, table or wall, but in a rage situation, the interlocutors may reach the point of hitting each other with their fists.

Facial movements abound during an argumentative encounter. The eyebrows can be raised and the eyes opened wider. The opposite can happen. The eyebrows are lowered and the eyes squinted. The nostrils can flare, possibly aiding respiration. The mouth can be set into a snarl or sneer, possibly to intimidate the opponent. If the angry person is one whose saliva production increases during an emotional state, he may actually foam or froth at the mouth during an argument. Some individuals may even develop nervous ticks, muscle tremors, in the eye and mouth areas during such an agitated state. In extreme rage situations, the hair may stand on end.

An angry person may sling her head around in exaggerated negative or positive movements; again, these may be actions to emphasize or reject what is being said or heard. They may also be totally unconscious, involuntary movements. The body of an angry individual may tremble, depending on the level of anger. This quaking may be closely related to the blood supply to the skeletal muscles. The tremors may be more pronounced in the lower and higher levels of the anger state. This muscular reaction may also be considered as preparatory to attack or defend as necessary.

The space that people maintain between each other during normal conversation can vary tremendously during an argumentative situation. The interlocutors may move much closer to one another, possibly giving a challenge signal. Remembering that people tend to elevate their chins during an argument, it is possible to observe people actually chin to chin during an argument. The opposite situation may also occur in which the participants move farther away from each other, maybe to defuse the possibility of a physical attack or to gather forces to continue with the argument.

Anger as well as any other emotional state, is very personal, and individuals can, and do, react in very different ways. Some people might scream, yell and throw things while others may lower their voices and speak very precisely while struggling to control the desire to attack.

In the American and Mexican Cultures, people have learned to recognize the verbal and non-verbal clues that serve as indicators of anger. Arguments are important parts of human behavior which have their own language. Apparently, little, if any, research has been done in the realm of the language of emotion. Further study of this sociolinguistic area could prove enlightening, especially in the cultural area. There are probably many universals of arguments to be found between cultures which would be interesting points to investigate, but what of the cultural differences to be found in the way peoples argue? Do the Japanese argue in the same way the Egyptians or Eskimos do?

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What Every Foreign Language Teacher Should Aim For

ADALBERTO MORALES GARCÍA, UNIVERSIDAD AUTÓNOMA DE CHAPINGO [1]

I have been intrigued since I started teaching a foreign language--English--in how the student arrives at the learning of it. In trying to present a somehow plausible conclusion on what the foreign language teacher should aim for, I have found it necessary to touch on the subject of how people learn a foreign language, or, should we say, anything?

The Greek philosopher Aristotle, and centuries later some medieval thinkers, stated that nothing is learned unless it is through the senses; that is, sight, hearing, smell, touch and taste. How true is such an epistemological position? Volumes have been written pro or con concerning the matter. Suffice it to say that, overall, such a theory bears lots of truth.

In our present times, the Input Hypothesis set by Krashen (1981) states that language acquisition occurs through the understanding of messages. But how are these messages offered to the learner? Through *perceptive behaviors*, answers Krashen. (I highlight the words *perceptive* and *behavior* because they immediately bring to mind the Aristotelian axiom mentioned before, for how could it be otherwise if the mere terms imply something sensorial?)

Those perceptive behaviors, continues Krashen, are given to the learner mainly through listening (hearing), reading and video (sight). (The three other senses: smell, taste, and touch are irrelevant to the point in question.) And the more input knowledge given, the more the learner is liable to acquire the language.

Such an empirical position has already been challenged since Plato with his *Ideas*, Augustine with his theory of *Illumination*, Descartes with his theory of *Innate Ideas* and most recently by the Cognitive Psychologists when they take into account the interaction of all the processes ionvolved in the act of learning.

[1] The author can be reached at the following address: Zootecnia #12, Dr. Gilberto Palacios, 56230 Chapingo, Estado de México.

The Output Hypothesis brought forward by Swain (1985) states that the input only is not sufficient for the acquisition of the language. It is necessary to take into account productive language use, speaking, the oral communication factor, and verbal interchange to test the acquisition of language.

It is quite often the case that intellectually, in one's mind, the belief that such and such a term, expression or sound has already been mastered--acquired--just to find out the minute we externalize it that this is not the case.

To put it in an axiomlike format, the *Output* does not necessarily follow the *Input*, and less when the later is considered to be the correct model.

Why is this so? Simply because the brain's understanding does not imply the mastering of that *understanding* by the speaking organs (vocal chords, tongue, palate, nasal passage, etc.). Thus, our hearing sense perceives certain sounds which the brain clearly identifies, but when the aforementioned organs try to duplicate them, the outcome does not match that held by the brain.

But, continuing with the Input/Output theories, and in order to illustrate that both processes are necessary for the acquisition of a foreign language, I would like to make a comment on something that frequently happens. "My students have finally understood the use to the auxiliary *do/does* in interrogative and negative sentences," we teachers often like to say. In the long and arduous road to the acquisition of a foreign language that is half the journey, the mastering of the *Input*; the more difficult part, the productive one or the *output*, is yet to begin.

The language teacher should aim towards the acquisition process by first presenting, modeling, explaining, etc. the *Input*; but once this has been accomplished, then the student must strive to put that same content into practice.

Undoubtedly, the first phase is important and even becomes indispensable for the second one, but the quality of its nature in being the culmination of the whole process makes the *Output* valuable in a special way. The importance of the *Input* lays on its priority in time; the importance of the *Output* on the finesses of the process.

Not infrequently, we teachers, are fond of showing a preference for the shredding--so to speak--of the language, dwelling too much on grammatical explanations, perhaps either to unconsciously hide our ineptitude for/towards the *Output* element, perhaps too, to show our greater knowledge of the subject; in either case, the outcome is a crippled one, to use a metaphor.

I find it imperative to stop for a minute in our daily teaching activities and ask ourselves if we are giving too much weight to one process in detriment to the other, or just giving all our efforts to only one of the two. Should that be the case, then it is never too late to introduce amendments.

If the promoters of the slogan "aquí hablas o hablas" mean the emphasis is on the *Output* rather than on the *Input* then it is indeed a philosophy and an ambitious one, I should add. Perhaps they might be thinking that the mastering of the *Output* necessarily implies the mastering of the *Input*, which in a sense is a logical conclusion to make; however, I am in favor of a balanced approach rather than leaning heavily towards only one aspect. With too much emphasis on the *Output* we build a giant with weak legs; the other way around, we build a strong being, but a dwarf.

Another issue that is of the concern to all of us foreign language teachers is the feasibility of carrying out the acquisition in practice. Experience has shown me that it is indeed a difficult task to accomplish, although not an impossible one. The learner needs an insurmountable amount of effort, motivation and perseverance in order to succeed. To think that learning English is an easy task, is to deceive ourselves. Nothing is farther from the truth. As a matter of fact, I find the pre-set idea held by students that English is an easy subject to be quite disturbing. And, come to think about it, maybe that is one of the reasons they do not learn it. I wish there were a way of opening their minds and telling them that it is not so. As a matter of fact, I find it to be perhaps an even harder subject than math or any other. And one can easily corroborate that by realizing that at the end of many years of studying math the student has learned a great deal; whereas in English, he spends years and years of study, just to come to the awareness that very little of it was really mastered.

It is, then, imperative that we set about the task of destroying that pernicious myth that the learning of English is an easy endeavor.

It is also very frustrating to realize over and over again how difficult it is to extract the *Output* from our students. No matter the amount of enthusiasm, energy and effort the teacher gives, the results are more than discouraging. I have encountered more than one teacher on the verge of becoming a language juggler in order to make the students put more effort into their learning, but to no avail.

On the other hand, I have also come to the conclusion that we teachers are not completely at fault for their lack of assimilation of the language, and that the learner--the student--is more at fault than we are. Perhaps we should accept what the German axiologist, Max Scheler (1927: 262) used to say about the intellect being "blind" to appreciating values. He said that the intellect was indifferent towards the beauty of a masterpiece painting, sculpture, piece of music, or towards the value of the Holy, the respect towards their own parents, elders, etc. because that area belonged to the sentiment. The sentiment is, he said, "a form of experience whose object is completely inaccessible to the intellect, that is blind as the ear to colors" (*My translation*). And thus, paraphrasing him, we would more than gladly say there are may people "blind" to languages, justifying in a sense, the inability--to use the correct word--of some students to master English.

And if this bears a grain of truth, perhaps then the empiricist theory that "nothing is learned but through our senses" is an incomplete one; that is, not all of what we learn comes through our *Input* and *Output* processes, but that there is something more to that.

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Book Review

Carolyn Kessler and others. Making Connections: An Integrated Approach to Learning English. Three Levels. Heinle & Heinle Publishers. 1994.

Mary Lou McCloskey and Lydia Stack. Voices in Literature. Three Levels Heinle & Heinle Publishers. 1995.

JoAnn Miller, Universidad del Valle de Mexico

Both of these admirable books were written for use in American ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) classrooms. *Making Connections* was designed for middle schools (*secundarias*) and *Voices in Literature* for high schools (*preparatoria*s). Both series use various readings as a take off point to practice the English language with young immigrants in the United States.

Making Connections is based on an integrated approach where readings and activities in various content areas such as science, social studies and literature are used to reach four goals:

integrate language areas through active learning

integrate language with academic content and processes

integrate students with one another, and

integrate the school with the home culture and with the greater community (Book 1: *v-vi*)

Students are presented with basic functions, structures and useful study strategies as they study interesting units such as: "Setting goals", "Making changes" (Book 2) and "Breaking down barriers" and "Crossing bridges" (Book 3). Students are presented with themes that are directed at problems they could find as they adjust to their new culture in the States. For example, in the first book, they practice counting dollars and cents and talking about the weather. In Book 3 they examine racism.

The entire package consists of the hard-covered student's text and a workbook, teacher's edition, activity masters, color transparencies, audio cassettes and an assessment package.

Voices in Literature is similar to *Making Connections*, however it includes more literature and the level of English is higher. There are three levels designated as *Silver* (Book 1), *Gold* (Book 2), and *Bronze* (Book 3). There are Teacher's Manuals and Activity Masters for each level.

This series has also been designed for immigrant students who have recently arrived in the United States from any part of the world. The introduction states:

> This book was written so that you, students from many cultures and language backgrounds, could learn English, talk about literature, and explore themes that are found in many cultures. We have tried to find selections that will help you understand North American culture, selections about moving from one culture to another, and selections that reflect the many cultures that make up North America (p. *v*).

The most wonderful aspect of these texts is the use of literature. Just a short summary of the famous authors from all over the world who have works represented in one or both of the series is impressive. English-language and Hispanic authors such as Pablo Neruda, e. e. cummings, Carl Sandburg, William Shakespeare, Langston Hughes, Maya Angelo and José Martí share the pages with authors from diverse cultures whose work may be unknown to us, such as Ok Kork, Kim Van Kieu, Laurence Yep, Huynh Wuang Nhuong and Mary TallMountain.

Although I would be the first to praise these beautiful series on a theoretical and aesthetic level, I wonder why they are being promoted for use in Mexican schools. I feel that many of the themes used are not culturally relevant for Mexican students. Even in bilingual schools, children usually have never lived in the United States, even if they have traveled there. The themes related to immigration and the culture-shock felt by many recent arrivals in a new culture are not relevant for students who are living and will probably continue to live in their own cultures. Also the often subtle, if necessary, American nationalism presented in the texts could possibly find a negative response on the part of some students, especially at the *preparatoria* level.

These texts, while possibly supplying a teacher with supplementary material for both young people and adults in EFL and ESL classes in Mexico, are not designed to meet the reality our students live daily.