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VOL. II - No. 2 CONVENTION ISSUE - 1977

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MEXTESOL

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Letter from the Editors....

It is with much regret, that we announce the resignation of Mr. Paul Davies as "Chalk Talk" Editor. Mr. Davies has served the Mextesol Journal in this capacity since the first edition and his contribution will be greatly missed. His perspicacious and common sense approach to methodology made him an ideal supervisor of the more practical section of the Journal.

It is our misfortune that his duties as Director of the Instituto Anglo-Mexicano de Cultura in Puebla prevent him from continuing in this capacity.

However, we shall not be wholly deprived of the fruit of his knowledge and experience, as we look forward to regular contributions from Mr. Davies in this and future numbers.

The following persons or organizations contributed either their labor or their critical support in ways without which the journal could not have been printed and distributed.

Dr. Héctor Guglielmo	Director of IMNRC, where the issue was printed.
Mrs. Barbara de los Reyes	Director of Courses IMNRC
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Focusing on the special circumstances of teaching and learning English in Mexico, this quarterly publishes articles on linguistic research (dialectrology, constrastive, and sociological studies), instructional methods and materials; testing and evaluation; curriculum planning; on research related to teaching and learning English as a foreign or second language (psychology, sociology, anthropology), and articles treating the profession in general. Review of textbooks and instructional materials are also solicited. In addition, the MEXTESOL JOURNAL publishes notices of meetings, programs and conferences of interest to teachers of EFL in Mexico.

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Articles should be less than twenty double-spaced typewritten pages. References should be cited in parentheses within the text, giving author, date and page numbers, with complete citation at the end of the article. Footnotes should be placed at the bottom of the page. Articles may be submitted in Spanish.

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COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE: THE NEED FOR A COMPREHENSIVE DEFINITION

Robert J. Di Pietro
Georgetown University

In the first issue of the Mextesol Journal, Christina Bratt Paulston (1) argued for the need of the second-language learner to know about "social rules" appropriate to speakers of the target language. In general, such rules cover the constraints governing when to say what to whom. Without diminishing the significance of such knowledge, I will propose that much more is needed if we are to address communicative competence in its far-reaching significance for the L_2 learner.

Basically, Paulston follows Hymes's approach to communication in which people interact according to the accepted norms of a society. To whom is it appropriate to say "Good Morning"? If two acquaintances, one male one female, both of approximately the same age, encounter each other, who speaks first? At what distance do they initiate verbalization? Do they make eye-contact? Such matters are indeed significant and I have elsewhere outlined some of the typical errors that can occur when the learner has not understood them: (2)

(1) Overstatement.

A very common communicative error is found in those L_2 learners who "overstate" their verbal strategies. Examples abound, as in the case of the international student who profusely apologized to a young lady who refused to dance with him. His "Oh, a thousand pardons" was much more than what was needed for such a minor episode at a social function in the United States. The tendency toward overstatement arises when the learner must choose among several available protocols to apply to a situation. Such can be the case with "bumping" protocols which are used as apologies for violating another person's body space. These bumping protocols are arranged according to the severity of the infraction:

(1) C.B. Paulston, "Developing Communicative Competence: Goals, Procedures and Techniques", Mextesol Journal 1:1 (April, 1976) 5-30.
(2) R. J. Di Pietro, "Contrasting Patterns of Language Use: A Conversational Approach," Canadian Modern Language Review 33:1 (October, 1976) 49-61.

Oops !, Sorry, Oh, SORRY (with loud sentence stress on the word "sorry"), Sorry about that, Pardon me, A thousand pardons, and Oh my God, did I hurt you?, just to mention some of them. This last mentioned is reserved for the most severe infractions, such as knocking someone down. While the learner is not apt to confuse the protocols at either end of the spectrum, problems do arise in choosing among the intermediate ones. How would a learner know which apology to select among those offered by Paulston (3)? Not writing a postcard to a friend could evoke "sorry" or "I'm really sorry" but not, perhaps, some of the others.

(2) Incorrect Presupposition.

How does one request service at a sales counter? Speakers of American English often initiate their requests with "I would like. . . ". In other languages, however, a direct request is the preferred way, such as "Please give me. . . ". Sometimes a question is used as in, "Do you have. . ?". Depending on the language (or the regional variety), expressions of desire or questions about the availability of the object to be purchased carry with them the speaker's intent to make a purchase. The learner must be able to relate the proper verbal message to the underlying presupposition. Transfers from the native language and its culture can often mislead the learner. An Iranian student whom I accompanied on a shopping tour in Washington wanted to buy a dress for his wife. When he told the saleslady that he didn't know the size, she asked him, intending to be helpful, "Is she about my size?". The Iranian replied, "No, she's not quite so fat." When I tried to explain to him later why the saleslady became offended, he told me that such remarks carried non of the same insulting overtones in his native language. Also classifiable under "incorrect presupposition" is Paulston's example of the Thais who openly ask people about their methods of birth control. (4)

(3) Teleologically Invalid Remarks.

What one says to "pass the time of day" such as when waiting for a bus, sitting in a doctor's office, or standing in a long line at some government office is also culturally conditioned. Will the Mexican student automatically know that English-speaking Americans make remarks about the weather in such situations? Not only must L_2 learners know when to speak and to whom to speak, but they must also be given some help as to how to pick the subject content of socially-constrained conversations. To take an example contrary to the American English one, Arabic speakers would never talk about the weather in order to pass the time of day.

(3) Paulston, p. 9-10
(4) Paulston, p. 6.

The three categories of communication errors given above are intended only as a start toward the formal work that needs to be done if we are to bring our treatment of communicative competence beyond that of the anecdote. There are many other matters which have yet to be analyzed and applied to the language classroom. I am referring specially to those verbal strategies which go beyond the culturally constrained protocols of introduction, leave-taking, apologizing, and such similar acts. All speakers, regardless of the language they are using, have a need to manipulate a conversation so that it comes out to a desired goal. Unfortunately, two or more people do not always enter into a speech act with the same intent. A disgruntled buyer may want a refund on a defective article purchased at a store. The employee in the complaint department who answers the buyer's call may be required to uphold a store policy of not refunding the price of defective articles unless it is absolutely unavoidable. The conversation which ensues between the buyer and the seller is far from a cooperative act. The strategies employed by both parties are not covered by the kind of approach to communicative competence which focuses on social constraints rather than on the speakers' potential for linguistic creativity. Even socially-constrained protocols can be manipulated for strategic purposes. For example, if a person elbows his way into a crowded room, without using the appropriate verbal request (such as "excuse me" or "pardon me"), one of the abused occupiers of the room may say aloud, "Well, excuse ME (loud stress on "me")", as if to remind the rude individual of what should have been said. The mother who becomes upset by her small son's improper behavior may up-braid him by addressing him with a formal title (Mr. Smith, behave yourself !). Spanish-speaking mothers achieve a similar effect by using the Usted form of address with their children.

To encourage ESL students to acquire the strategies suited to their own personalities, my suggestion is to construct for them various situations to which they would have to respond. Such situations should be more evocative than a proposed camping trip or a visit to the bank. They should be as close to real-life situations as possible. Only in this way will students come to realize that they themselves may some day have to solve a problem in communication via English.

The following is an illustration of how to make a facsimile of a real-life event. First of all, the teacher describes the situation:

> During your stay in the U.S., you have been invited to the home of a Texan friend. You are especially happy about this invitation because it is the first time that you have been offered the opportunity to get close to the family of your friend. You want to make an especially good

impression. You are asked to join them for dinner.
The meal is served and you discover that the main dish is rattlesnake meat. Just the thought of eating the meat of this reptile is revolting to you. What do you do? What do you say?

Such a situation is not only provoking but also reflects a likely circumstance for the learner. While it may not be snake meat, dietary customs of the target culture may differ widely from those of the learner. How can the learner be prepared for such an eventuality as described above? To start, a number of verbal strategies can be provided by the teacher. Several options come to mind:

Sorry, I've already eaten.
It's against my religion to eat (rattlesnake) meat.
I'm a vegetarian.
My doctor has advised me to stay away from snake meat.
I'm allergic to reptiles.

Of course, each response leads to a particular set of counter-responses by the host or hostess. The first ("Sorry, I've already eaten") might be ruled out immediately if the invitation specified dinner from the start. The next three choices make appeals, respectively, to religious conviction, philosophy of life, and medical authority. The student-invitee must decide which counter-response he or she would be most comfortable in handling. A person who is less than serious about religion in general, might not want to use such a strategy as No. 2 for fear of not being able to follow it up. The vegetarian argument may also rule out an alternative meat dish (if there is one at this particular dinner). The doctor's advice might be countered by some disclaimer that this particular recipe for snake meat does away with all the potentially harmful effects to one's health. The same counter-argument could be raised against the claim of allergy.

Several students may take part in building the conversation that ultimately takes place in the classroom. Each should be made aware of the strategies and counter-strategies at each step. The conversation itself could go in several different directions. The students could later discuss their satisfaction with the particular decisions made by their classmates in bringing the speech event to a close. Was embarassment caused? Who was the "victor"? Did the guest succeed in avoiding the rattlesnake meat without offending the host/hostess? Was the host/hostess sufficiently persuasive to lead the guest to abandoning the attempt to avoid the rattlesnake meat? Of course there is also the possibility that the guest would decide at the outset to try the meat without offering any dodges. In that

case, this event is not stress-provoking but serves as a lesson in self-discovery for the student.

My preferences for this kind of exercise in communicative competence stem from my belief that language learning should be personalized whenever possible. Playing roles in situations which do not involve the student's existential commitments to life will never answer such a need. There is too much of the "game" aspect to playing "Mr. Smythe who is buying a house" or "Miss. X, who is going on a camping trip". My experience has been that ESL students in the United States can manage to get themselves into situations which have a far greater potential for adaptation to the classroom than any imaginary camping trip or shopping excursion. ESL teachers working in other countries can even draw upon their own experiences as the source for real-life situations adaptable to the classroom.

To conclude, I call upon ESL teachers in Mexico and elsewhere to begin compiling situations which commit learners to making personal judgments in order to extricate themselves linguistically in the target culture. A compendium of these situations could form the foundation for a functional approach to developing communicative competence in our students.

THE PASSIVE VOICE IN INFORMATIVE NON-TECHNICAL PROSE

Constance Holcomb
Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México
E. N. E. P. Aragón

INTRODUCTION

In developing materials to be used in teaching reading in English to university students, one of the first steps which must be taken is a linguistic analysis of the texts which the students are likely to read. Such an analysis is necessary in order to identify those structures and lexical items which will be most relevant to the students' needs, and, thus, to be able to incorporate them appropriately into the new materials. While many such analyses have been carried out in technical and scientific English, very little work has been done in the areas of the social sciences and humanities.

This paper reports on an initial study of one of the syntactic patterns often found in the written language of these neglected disciplines, the passive voice. Passive constructions are quite commonly found in scientific exposition (Huddleston 1971), and this is reflected in the materials which have so far been developed for the teaching of technical English. However, there is also a notable consistency in the frequency of the passive voice in informative prose in general (Svartvik 1966).

The following specific topics are treated in this paper: the frequency of active verb strings which could have been made passive; the occurrence and use of the agent with the passive; the occurrence and use of agentless passive constructions; and, some of the major reasons for which the passive voice is used.

The field of political science is the focus here, since it is in this area that foreign language requirements are common at the bachelor's level at universities in Mexico, and in which a great deal of reading about current events is usually emphasized. The corpus which was used for this analysis was taken from an article which appeared in the July 1977 issue of Foreign Affairs (Vol. 55, No. 4), entitled "The Realities of U. S. - Mexican Relations", by Richard R. Fagen. A number of articles appearing in recent issues of five professional journals having

a political science orientation were considered. This article was chosen for study because of the relevance of its content to the Mexican student, and the likelihood that it would be read by Mexican political science majors. The first 2,000 words of the article were used as the corpus.

In an active construction, the subject is usually the agent (or "actor") of the verb, and the objects are either the patient (direct object) or the beneficiary (indirect object) of the action. Here, a construction is considered passive if the patient or beneficiary has assumed the position of the subject; the agent, if given, appears as the complement of a phrase usually marked by the preposition "by". Thus, the passive is viewed as a word order device which shows that the subject is not the actor.

The view of the passive embraces a number of subtypes. Those which are found in the corpus studied and which are considered passive verb strings are the following reduced forms:

A. Post-modifying non-finite clauses which are regarded as reduced relative clauses, where both the relative marker and the be form are dropped, as in the following example where "needed" is considered a passive verb string:

". . . if Mexico were to undertake the kinds of programs needed to make a dent on poverty. . . ." (p. 690)

B. Adverbial non-finite clauses, reduced in such a way that either
1. the subordinator, the passive subject, and the be form are dropped, as in the following example where "resented", "criticized", and "preyed" are considered passive verb strings:

"Resented. . , criticized. . , preyed upon . . , their lot is by no means a happy one." (p. 688); or,

2. the subordinator is present and the passive subject and the form of be are dropped, as in the following example where "evaluated" is considered a passive verb string: "However evaluated, . . . the U.S. presence. . . is enormous." (p. 686)

Since this paper concerns the passive voice as a formal syntactic construction, and because of the underlying practical use information

about this construction might have, it excludes consideration of those structures that may be semantically similar to the passive, but formally dissimilar. That is, such structures as "the door opened," and "the book sold," though they might be thought of as semantically passive, are not considered in this paper.

OBSERVATIONS

Within the 2,000 word corpus, 210 verb strings were identified, 30 of which are syntactically passive. Of these 30 passive strings, 15, or half of them, appear as reduced forms of the types described above, in the following proportion: type A: 5 strings, type B 1: 5 strings, and type B 2: 5 strings. Through the use of reduction, the writer has avoided uninformative phrases such as "who are" and "which is" (type A); he has also eliminated much redundancy and wordiness by dropping the passive subject when it was co-referential with that of the superordinate clause (type B 1 and 2) and by letting the reader supply the understood subordinators in the participial clauses (type B 1). Of the remaining 180 verb strings, 69 active strings were identified as having a potential for becoming passive.

AGENTFUL PASSIVE CONSTRUCTIONS

The number of occurrences of the agent with the passive structures is minimal; of the 30 passive strings, only 8 appeared with agents, 3 of which were inanimate and 5 animate. In 2 of these 8 cases, the agent was not given in a "by" phrase, but rather in phrases beginning with other prepositions. The phrases in these two cases, however, obviously have an agent-like function:

(1) "Some issues can actually be removed from the negotiating agenda through treaties, agreements, and cooperative action." (p. 687)

(2) ". . . it is a very positive phenomenon when viewed from the perspective of Mexican elites." (p. 689)

It is interesting to note that 6 of the 8 agents appeared with reduced passive verb strings. Thus, where certain elements, perhaps redundant or in any case not necessary, were dropped at the beginning of the passive construction, another element, ie., the agent, was added to the end of the construction, suggesting that in some way the deletion of one might have affected the inclusion of the other, or vice versa. The following example illustrates the use of an agent in a "by" phrase following the reduced passive construction, "drawn":

(3) ". . . they flee poverty and unemployment in Mexico, drawn by the promise and possibilities of economic opportunities in the north." (p. 688)

In 7 of the 8 agentful passive constructions, the agent contained new information, as in examples (1), (2), and (3) above. In these 7 cases, the agent appeared as a syntactically complex structure, the most complex being the following:

(4) "So across the border they come, sometimes making it on their own, sometimes smuggled across by coyotes who charge high fees in advance to their human contraband and then often also collect substantial payments from the employers to whom they deliver the low-cost labor." (p. 688)

AGENTLESS PASSIVE CONSTRUCTIONS

In this corpus, 22 of the 30 passive verb strings appeared without agents. This high frequency of occurrence of agentless passive constructions is to be expected, for several reasons. In many cases, the agent is understood and need not be given since it is recoverable from the linguistic or situational context. In other cases, the agent is not given because it is unknown, or irrelevant to the subject at hand. Also, where the writer is specifying a number of actions carried out by the same actor, it would generally be regarded as stylistically undesirable to repeat the agent with each action.

There also may be extra-linguistic reasons for using the agentless passive. The corpus, it will be remembered, is political in nature, the underlying theme being the advantages as well as the problems of being "good-neighborly." Given the politically sensitive nature of this theme, it is easy to imagine that there would be occasions in which a simple statement of fact would appear to place blame on one of the two countries, or on certain persons therein; an urging that action be taken by one or the other country might have the effect of pointing fingers or an unwarranted signaling of responsibility. Any of these interpretations could create ill-will, arouse suspicions of the writer's prejudice, and the effect of the entire article might then be negative. However, on every occasion where the naming of an agent might have resulted in a statement which could have been construed as accusatory or offensive, the writer reverted to a passive agentless construction. Observe the following examples: The author could have, but did not say, "A small minority in Mexico has collected the primary benefits of the impressive growth of the Mexican economy."

Rather, he said,

(5) ". . . despite the impressive growth of the Mexican economy, . . . the primary benefits. . . have been distributed only to a minority of the population. . . ." (p. 690)

The writer did not say, "The conditions leading to illegal immigration are in Mexico, not in the U.S., therefore, Mexico, not the U.S., must take the major remedial actions." What the writer said was,

(6) "The conditions leading to this immigration are in Mexico, not in the U. S., and it is there that the major remedial actions must be taken." (p. 689)

The writer could have said, "The U. S. industry, agriculture, and service sectors locate undocumented Mexicans in the lowest paid and least desirable jobs where these illegals can supply cheap labor," but, instead, he said,

(7) "As workers they are located in the lowest paid and least desirable jobs, supplying cheap labor. . . to industry, agriculture, and the service sector." (p. 688)

These, then, are examples of cases in which the author, by the skillful use of agentless passive constructions, has given his prose a less personal, more objective tone.

THE DETERMINATION OF VOICE AS A RESULT OF SYNTACTIC ORDERING

While it is difficult to answer the question of why the passive is used in informative prose rather than the active, there is one clear and obvious reason; it may be used where no agent is specified, and, as we have seen, there are certain circumstances when this is desirable. In many situations, however, the use of the active or passive is governed by features that are not so easily recognized. Yet, there are certain factors which dictate this decision, since in nearly every case, only one of the two constructions really fits the linguistic context. We can observe that most active sentences which are appropriate in their contexts are just "grotesque curiosities" when they are changed into the passive (Svartvik 1966), and vice versa.

Several writers (Ward 1966); (Swales 1971; et al) have suggested that a fundamental reason for using the passive is to bring the object of

the active sentence into greater prominence by making it the subject of the new sentence. This suggestion, however, is difficult to accept in view of the data obtained from this study. Here, 2 of the 30 passive constructions had subjects filled by "it", and, as we have seen, another 15 had dropped the subject entirely.

Some of the syntactic features which dictate voice, whether active or passive, can be observed by a closer examination of the linguistic context in which these constructions are found. I believe that a writer, in most cases, does not first choose the voice class, and subsequently order his other material accordingly; rather, the reverse is true. The agent, patient, beneficiary, and other items are manipulated by the writer within the structure of a sentence in order to give them different kinds of prominence and to place emphasis on that which is important for understanding his message (Quirk 1973). In order to avoid disruption of the natural development of discourse, the writer fills the subject and object "slots" with that which is necessary to achieve his purposes, or he may decide not to fill them at all. Once this decision is made, he uses the voice class which fits the linguistic context he has created. It, therefore, can be said that the syntactic relations between the elements of a sentence, other than the verb string, usually determine the choice of voice.

There are certain factors which influence the ordering of a sentence. One of these is the tendency to place thematic elements, ie., those which convey new or unknown facts, towards the end of the sentence, and to open a sentence with thematic elements, facts known from the verb or the situational context (Svartvik 1966). Another tendency is to place the more complex parts of a sentence at the end. Quirk (1973) refers to the first as the principle of "end-focus" and the second as the principle of "end-weight." In addition to these tendencies, there is also a strong tendency in English to avoid placing finite clauses in the subject position.

There are many examples of these principles and their effect on voice in the corpus. As we have seen in examples (3) and (4) above, where the writer has desired to give prominence to the new information carried by the agent, he has placed the agent toward the end of the sentence (end-focus), especially if it was also syntactically complex (end-weight). Where the writer wished to give prominence to information about the patient, rather than the patient itself, and where the agent was irrelevant, he has placed the patient at the beginning, dropped the agent, and put his new, important, and structurally complex information at the end, forcing a passive voice construction. This can be observed in the following examples:

(8) "Various scenarios and programs have been

proposed. . , ranging from stricter security measures, to various kinds of identity cards, to fines for employers who knowingly hire undocumented workers." (p. 689)

(9) "Very large scale and carefully designed programs of rural development and job creation are needed to make the north and central plateau of Mexico at least minimally attractive to the tens of thousands of new job seekers who come into the labor market each year." (p. 689)

In the corpus, 69 active verb strings were identified as having a potential for passivization. Here again, in the majority of cases, the voice was dictated by the syntactic arrangement of the sentence elements. If these verb strings had been made passive, and pertinant syntactic changes carried out, the result would have produced a complete change in focus and weight, and therefore, would not have reflected the intent of the writer. Thus, although these strings had the potential for becoming passive (ie., a potential inherent in the verb), very few, if any would have actually been made passive in the contexts in which they appear. This is clearly observed when, in the following three examples, one tries to impose a change of voice:

(10) ". . . the migration annually drains off hundreds of thousands of persons who would otherwise swell the ranks of the unemployed." (p. 689)

(11) ". . . to have Yankee imperialism. . . even mentioned in the White House suggests a modicum of historical candor." (p. 685)

(12) ". . . for if Yankee imperialism has any dominant meaning in Mexico today, it clearly refers to the U. S. economic presence, not the dusty troops and steaming gunboats of times past." (p. 686)

In example (13) below, the subject slot is filled with "one", a syntactic device which is often quite easily converted into a passive construction:

(13) "One can only hope along with both Presidents that there will be more blessing than curse in Mexico's necessarily close relationship with the U. S." (p. 685)

However, in this case, a passive would not fit the context because the writer has chosen to include "along with both Presidents," which will not permit the inanimate filler "it", as in *"It can only be hoped along with both Presidents. . . ."

In cases where the elements in the sentence could have been ordered in more than one way, without regard for end-focus or end-weight, and with no appreciable change in meaning or intent, the writer arranged the elements so as to maintain continuity with the contexts preceding and following the sentence . In the following example,

(14) "The immigration issue thus suggest a basic truth about Mexico, . . ." (p. 690)

the writer places "the immigration issue" initially, because it ties in with the information he has given in previous sentences. He places "a basic truth" in the final-clause position, because he is about to expand on this idea. Since he has chosen this order, the verb string here must be active.

Observe, also, the following example, where the writer has maintained continuity between sentences through syntactic ordering:

(15) ". . . it is little wonder that both U. S. and Mexican policy-makers usually move cautiously when trying to deal with this issue. Yet be dealt with it must, . . ." (p. 689)

Here, the writer is focusing on "to deal with this issue," which he places at the end of the sentence (end-focus). He then picks up the same focal point in the following clause, placing it as close to clause-initial position as possible by dropping the agent, thereby forcing a passive construction. Notice that "must" is placed in clause-final position, so that it not only receives focus, but in no way interrupts the "to deal with" - "be dealt with" sequence.

SUMMARY

In summary, then, the determination of voice, whether active or passive, is, in most cases, not a matter of choice on the part of the writer; rather, it is determined by the syntactic order of the sentence elements other than the verb string, and this order reflects the intent of the writer and focus he wishes to give to his material. There are some cases, however, in which the writer might purposefully choose to use a passive construction, especially where he believes it is inconvenient or undesirable to state the agent in the context.

Although this study has been limited to a very small corpus, the observations made here are relevant to the teaching of English for special purposes, and they should be considered in the development of EFL teaching materials which address themselves to the problem of the passive voice in informative prose.

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LITERATURE AND CROSS-CULTURE COMMUNICATION

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During the past few years, the author has been teaching English to advanced junior high school and high school students at a private school in Mexico City. The majority of these students, Mexican citizens from the upper socioeconomic class, have been studying English since the age of four and when they reach high school, many of the English programs use textbooks used by many school districts in the United States. It has become obvious that a special program must be adapted for these students. In applying the findings of linguists to the teaching of English as a second language, the primary emphasis in the early grades has been oral communication and basic reading skills. At the junior high school level the study of the literature of the language is important to achieve the over-all goal of making students effective in communication in an English-speaking culture. Knowledge of the deep structure of the target language and of the underlying values, assumptions, beliefs, and inter-group attitudes of its culture are now seen to be as important in the real mastery of a language as a facile use of the patterns of everyday speech. The study of the literature of the language is the surest way to attain these more elusive qualities that go to make up a total mastery of the language. Since a course in English as a second language seeks as a primary goal to help the student learn to communicate in a variety of situations, the chief problems in deciding on the literature to incorporate into such a course are: (1) selecting works of literature that will give the student this skill of communication, (2) devising the best sequence for teaching the selected works, and (3) teaching the chosen works effectively.

The purpose of this study is to select literary works for a class of Mexican secondary students who are learning English as a second language. Most of the material selected will deal with American literature and American cultural backgrounds since these students travel frequently to the United States and many intend to later study in the United States. These students are the privileged few from a third-world nation that may have the potential of becoming leaders in their country and it is important that they learn not only to become effective communicators in English but also understand the culture of the United States. Formulating new materials must take into consideration the diversity of reading levels. It is necessary to consider the skills required for reading and the structure of the English writing system. In order for the students to communicate more

effectively they must increase their vocabulary skills and learn the deep structure of the target language.

A language cannot be taught well without coming to grips with its cultural content. There can be no real learning of a language without understanding something of the patterns and values of the culture of which it is a part. Fries states this strongly: "To deal with the culture and life of a people is not just an adjunct of a practical language course, something alien and apart from its main purpose, to be added or not as time and convenience may allow, but an essential feature of every state of language learning. . . " (16) As previously stated, the study of the literature of the language can help the student absorb the full cultural meaning of the target language. Since literature is expressed through language, one cannot understand it unless he understands the meanings of the culture expressed by the words of the language and unless the values and cultural experience against which the literature is written are also understood. One cannot jump from the structure of a language into its literature without passing through the basic cultural content of the language. To experience a literary work it is necessary to understand the language in which it is expressed, the cultural meanings which it contains, and the circumstances surrounding it. If it is a contemporary piece, average proficiency and cultural information are usually sufficient. If it belongs to an earlier period, special preparation and motivation will be necessary.

There are many anthologies prepared specifically for students of English as a second language. The author is not aware of any anthology designed specifically to train students to communicate with native speakers of English. The Literature in English Book Six of the "English for Today" series (New York: Graw-Hill Book Company, 1964), for example contains more writings by non-American than by American authors. The student preparing himself to communicate with Americans should steep himself in literature chosen to improve both his grasp of the language and his understanding of the cultural "meanings" with the literature in English of other cultures. The author, therefore, sought to include paperback books that would increase the students proficiency in English and increase their knowledge of American culture. Two sets of criteria by which the author selected and sequenced the works to be taught were: (1) language criteria, and (2) culture criteria. (31)

In selecting literary works for a particular class of ESL/EFL students, two assumptions are basic: (1) that the structures and lexicon of the learner's language interfere with his mastering of the structures and lexicon of the target language, and (2) that the patterns of the student's culture interfere with his understanding of the cultural patterns of the speakers of the target language. Both of these types of interfer-

ence operate most tellingly at the points where the native and target structures and patterns differ the most. Interference from the structures of the mother tongue is easier to identify, and thus to overcome, than the points of interference from the student's culture, for the latter are subconscious and informal as well as conscious and formal.

Language criteria compose discourse types in literature, sentence patterns, and lexical features that cause varying degrees of difficulty for the student. The discourse type is the primary basis for determining the level of difficulty a reading will have, for it influences the sentence patterns, lexical features, and the level of concreteness in the context of the reading.

1. The easiest discourse type for the student to begin with is narrative prose, especially when it has an average sentence length of about ten words, a small proportion of words in dialogue, a small proportion of different hard words (that is, words not on Edgar Dale's list of 769 easy words) a small proportion of structural variations from the subject-verb-complement sentence pattern, and a small proportion of dialectal expressions.

Examples to consider: William Saroyan, My Name is Aram; Ernest Hemingway, A Clean, Well-Lighted Place; by John Steinbeck, The Red Pony and The Pearl; Fred Gipson, Old Yeller.

2. Essays that appeal to the imagination because of style and that have linguistic features approaching those specified above are on the next rank of linguistic difficulty. They can also serve as models for the student's writing.

Examples to consider: Philip Wylie, The Innocent Ambassadors; John Steinbeck, Russian Jorunal.

3. Short plays with a minimum of dialect or slang provide the learner with idiomatic language useful for oral communication.

Examples to consider: William Saroyan, The Time of Your Life; John Van Druten, I Remember Mama.

4. Certain poems, if their syntax and vocabulary do not depart too widely from that of normal speech, offer through their rhythmic patterns strong reinforcement of the intonation patterns of American English.

Examples to consider: Selected poems of Robert Frost, Emily Dickinson, Walt Whitman, Carl Sandburg, Archibald MacLeish, Langston

Hughes, etc.

5. Rock Poetry, the students can study favorite composers, poets, and spokesmen of America's young. This is all part of the oral literature of the young that all young people are exposed to and interested in regardless of the country where they live.

Examples to consider: Bob Dylan, Phil Ochs, Joan Baez, Tom Paxton, Judy Collins, Leonard Cohen, The Beatles and Mick Jagger, Nick Cohn (whose book Rock from the Beginning is an excellent source book).

CULTURE CRITERIA

Order of difficulty in the sequence of works chosen by cultural criteria is based on the extent to which the student can identify himself with the situations or characters portrayed in the works.

1. Works of American fiction with a universal theme, a non-American setting, and American characters are likely to be more appealing and less confusing to the intermediate student.

Examples to consider: Ernest Hemingway, A Farewell to Arms; A Bell for Adano by John Hershey; Pearl Buck, The Good Earth.

2. Stories portraying non-Americans in interaction with Americans in an American setting enable the student to identify himself in the situations portrated and to acquire patterns and insights for making effective responses to similar situations.

Examples to consider: Willa Cather, My Antonia; Howard Fast, April Morning.

3. Stories and plays portraying Americans interacting with non-Americans in a non-American setting provide insights regarding the assumptions, values, beliefs, and outlook of Americans revealed in their reactions to a different culture-insights essential for effective communication with Americans.

Examples to consider: Flowering Judas and other stories set in Mexico by Katherine Anne Porter, Tales of the South Pacific and Sayonara by James Michener.

4. Nonfiction expressing Americans' reactions to their experiences in a foreign culture reveal Americans' explicit and reasoned response to a different culture as distinguished from their more or less instinctive re-

sponses revealed in fiction.

Examples to consider: Frances Calderón, Life in Mexico; Edith O'Shaughnessy, Diplomatic Days; At Home in India by Cynthia Bowles.

5. Works reflecting values explicit in American culture will give the student valuable insights.

Examples to consider: To Kill a Mocking Bird by Harper Lee, Freedom Road by Howard Fast; The Great Gatsby by F. Scott Fitzgerald; A Separate Peace by John Knowles; Catcher in the Rye by Salinger; Native Son by Richard Wright.

6. Poems by Americans and foreign poems translated by Americans responding to scenes or themes related to a foreign culture reveal the capacity of Americans to integrate unique features of a different culture with their own outlook.

Examples to consider: Walt Whitman, Passage to India; Archibald MacLeish, American Letter.

7. Essays, poems, stories or plays coping with some basic issues of American life provide insights into attitudes Americans might assume on particular topics insights essential for cross culture communication.

Examples to consider: Upton Singlair, The Jungle; David Thoreau, Civil Disobedience; Ken Kesey, One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest.

8. Stories, poems, or plays dealing with universal values.

Examples to consider: William Golding, Lord of the Flies; Erich Maria Remarque, All Quiet on the Western Front; John Steinbeck, The Moon is Down.

Ability in reading English as a foreign language requires improvement in reading speed, vocabulary recognition, and the comprehension of sentences, paragraphs, and complete reading selections. Below the author will include some general techniques and sample exercises to improve reading skills.

LEXICAL RANGE

Which sentence illustrates the same use of the word (or idiomatic or figurative expression) as in the reading selection.

The following sentences were taken from OLD YELLER:

1. Arliss was bound to go with father.
   a) Arliss was bound to his father.
   b) Arliss was determined to go with him.
   c) Arliss was determined to bound through the woods.

2. I loved the big yeller dog.
   a) I loved the big yeller of a dog.
   b) I loved the big yellow dog.
   c) I loved the loud yell.

3. The men needed to get cash.
   a) The men needed ready money.
   b) The men needed coins of small value.
   c) The men collected Chinese cash.

4. Dad tied his bedroll on back on the cantle.
   a) Dad tied his bedroll on the rear part of the saddle.
   b) Dad tied his bedroll on the rear part of his horse.
   c) Dad tied his bedroll on the back of the cantle.

5. The men talked over the drive to Abilene.
   a) The men talked over driving the golf ball from the tee.
   b) The men discussed the problems of the cattle drive.
   c) The men talked about the number of hours to drive to Kansas.

6. Don't let the varmints eat up the roasting ears.
   a) That man is a varmint.
   b) The varmint stole the money out of my purse.
   c) The varmints are wild animals or birds that eat the corn.

7. I told Arliss to skin out fast for the house.
   a) Arliss skinned his leg on the wood chips.
   b) If he didn't obey I would skin him.
   c) He skinned for home so fast he beat everyone there.

PARAGRAPH ORGANIZATION

Reading for the central idea. Examples taken from "To Kill a Mocking Bird".

1. What single word expresses the central idea of the following paragraph? Read the paragraph quickly to determine the central idea.

Then turn the page and choose one statement that best describes the paragraph.

"She was. She had her own views about things, a lot different from mine, maybe. . . son, I told you that if you hadn't lost your head I'd have made you go read to her. I wanted you to see something about her - I wanted you to see what real courage is, instead of getting the idea that courage is a man with a gun in his hand. It's when you know you're licked before you begin but you begin anyway and you see it through no matter what. You rarely win, but sometimes you do. Mrs. Dubose won, all ninety-eight pounds of her. According to her views, she died beholden to nothing and nobody. She was the bravest person I ever knew."

Statements given on page 2 (see below)

Check the correct statement.

_____ 1. Courage is shown by physical strength.
_____ 2. A man with a gun is a good example of courage.
_____ 3. Jem showed courage by being made to read to Mrs. Dubose.
_____ 4. Mrs. Dubose died courageously because she was able to overcome her drug dependency regardless of suffering.

PARAGRAPH DEVELOPMENT.

The following paragraph uses examples. Read the paragraph and find examples of description. Find another paragraph using descriptive examples in Chapter 17. List the page and the paragraph number.

Maycomb's Ewells family lived behind the town garbage dump in what was once a Negro cabin. The cabin's plank walls were supplemented with sheets of corrugated iron, its roof shingled with tin cans hammered flat, so only its general shape suggested its original design: square, with four tiny rooms opening onto a shotgun hall, the cabin rested uneasily upon four irregular lumps of limestone. Its windows were merely open spaces in the walls, which in the summertime were covered with greasy strips of cheesecloth to keep out the varmints that feasted on Maycomb's refuse.

The following paragraph explains a reason for a condition. Answer this question after reading the paragraph in a complete sentence. Why couldn't Tom Robinson have hit Mayella with his left hand?

Tom Robinson's powerful shoulders rippled under his thin shirt.

He rose to his feet and stood with his right hand on the back of his chair. He looked oddly off balance, but it was not from the way he was standing. His left arm was fully twelve inches shorter than his right, and hung dead at his side. It ended in a small shriveled hand, and from as far away as the balcony I could see that it was no use to him.

Find another paragraph in Chapter 18 that explains a reason for a condition.

Create a coherant paragraph by placing the sentences below in logical order and add sentences of your own to write a more complete paragraph.

1. Negroes wouldn't have anything to do with her because she was white.

2. When Atticus asked had she any friends, she seemed not to know what he meant, then she thought he was making fun of her.

3. She was sad, I thought, as what Jem called a mixed child: white people wouldn't have anything to do with her because she lived among pigs.

4. As Tom Robinson gave his testimony, it came to me that Mayella Ewells must have been the loneliest person in the world,

5. Tom Robinson was probably the only person who was ever decent to her.

TYPES OF COMPEHENSION QUESTIONS

Five types of questions for comprehension can be described and graded according to (a) the linguistic form of the required response, and (b) the relation between the information that is needed to answer correctly and the information provided in the reading selection. The following are questions from "To Kill a Mocking Bird".

TYPE I. Information from the reading sufficient for the answer is contained in the question itself.

Mark each statement true or false.

_____ 1. This story takes place in the 1940's.
_____ 2. Miss Stephanie Crawford gives the children large pieces of her cake.

_____ 3. Scout's father is a lawyer.
_____ 4. Scout and Jem's mother had died about four years before the story opens.
_____ 5. Boo Radley was imprisoned by his father because he was insane.

Yes or no.
Answer each question yes or no.

_____ 1. Are Scout and Jem witnesses of the trial of Tom Robinson?
_____ 2. Was Tom Robinson convicted of rape?
_____ 3. Did Dill come to Maycomb the summer his mother remarried?

Multiple Choice.

Directions: Choose the word or phrase that best completes each statement.

_____ 1. After Boo saves the children, Atticus and the sheriff decide to (a) tell everyone so they will know what a hero he has been, (b) say that Ewell fell on his knife, (c) admit that Jem killed Ewell, (d) keep the whole thing secret.
_____ 2. After Scout takes Boo Radley home, she (a) stands on his porch, too frightened to move, (b) runs home, (c) goes in and meets Mrs. Radley, (d) stands on the porch, looking at the street as Boo has seen it all those years.

TYPE II. Answerable with information quoted directly from the reading selection.

1. Who loses his pants on the fence as the children are running out of the Radley yard one night? _____
2. Who was all angles and bones and was always ordering Scout out of the kitchen? _____
3. Where did the story take place? _____
4. What game did Scout, Jem, and Dill play to get Boo out of his house? _____

TYPE III. Answerable with information acquired from the reading selection, but not by direct quotations from a single sentence.

In a few short sentences discuss each question.

1. Why did Boo Radley's brother cement the hole in the tree?
2. How did Jem react when Tom Robinson was convicted?

TYPE IV. Answerable from inference or implication from the reading. Briefly relate the local history of the Radley family. How did Boo Radley

come to be confined to his home? What were some of the rumors the children heard and told each other about him?

TYPE V. The answer requires evaluation or judgment relating the reading selection to additional information or experience of the reader.

1. What do you consider to be Scout's major dilemma in the novel?
2. Would you be willing to accept Atticus as a model, or are there some things about his philosophy of life with which you disagree?
3. There is a great deal of fear and superstition surrounding the Radley house. Yet there is no reason for fear. In your experience, have you found that people reacted in a similar way to something they knew nothing about?
4. If Scout and Jem had been killed by Bob Ewell, would Harper Lee's novel appear more in tune with the somber views that sophisticated modern fiction often presents?

In conclusion, teachers of English as a foreign language and linguists, for the past several years have realized the necessity to change the objectives of foreign language teaching. There is now a much greater need for direct communication across national boundaries. For the student to be able to communicate effectively he must not only be taught the basic language skills but also understand the culture of the people who speak the language. Perhaps the best way for the student to have a better understanding of the culture is through reading selections written by authors of the language.

For the student to master a foreign language so that he can understand the native speakers of that language, he must be aware of specific things of the environment in which the language is spoken. It is difficult, perhaps impossible, for any person ever fully to "get inside" a culture that is not his own. There are, however, certain approaches, points of view, techniques, and procedures by which one can gain insight and a measure of understanding.

Foreign language teachers have learned something about the teaching of reading from the three disciplines of education, psychology, and linguistics. Reading in a foreign language implies that the language is known and the student is learning a graphic representation of it. Reading has as its central purpose effective communication. The task of teaching reading in a foreign language can be divided into many parts. Literature should be the last part. A student can only understand literature in a foreign language when the student is advanced enough to experience it like a native reader.

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WHAT IS APPLIED LINGUISTICS?

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The question-title of this paper is simple enough to deserve a complicated answer. To start with, David Wilkins once in 1975 (and I will quote him from memory) began a course in applied linguistics by questioning whether this title could be given to any one specific activity; the applications of linguistics, he said, are manifold. Pit Corder (1973) nearly apologizes for restricting the term to activities connected with language teaching but claims for this restricting title the legitimacy which Wilkins seems to deny it.[1] I shall follow common practice though and will use this term to refer to those activities connected with language teaching which I will discuss in the rest of the paper.

From the previous paragraph it will be clear that language teaching and applied linguistics are not synonymous; it is not bold at all to declare that, being different activities, applied linguistics is subservient to language teaching. The latter has been defined as 'creating the right conditions for learning to take place'; language teaching, then, is a series of activities involving decisions about language and other areas whose end-product is the act of teaching in the classroom. What, then, is the place of applied linguistics in this series of activities which constitute language teaching?

It may be easier to answer this question from the point of view of the language teacher. A teacher about to start his job may very well have to ask himself among other things "What, how, and for what purpose am I to teach?". In other words, he will have to think of objectives in teaching ('what for?'), content of teaching ('what?'), and method of teaching ('how?'). Notice these questions have been reordered. The answers would have to be looked for in philosophy, linguistics and psychology in which case language teaching would be making use - as in fact it does - of three different disciplines which would thus be applied to purpose different from their own. This would do as a simple answer: applied linguistics is those activities whose purpose is to determine the content of language teaching. Such a simple answer, however, begs the question. Do we

1 The center for applied linguistics in the University of Reading of which he is the Director is called Centre for Applied Language Studies.

not have objectives, syllabuses and even textbooks already?

In the majority of cases, it is true, objectives in language teaching are set up not by the teacher but by some person or body in charge of educational policies in a given country. In Mexico, for example, the Consejo Nacional Técnico de la Educación (CNTE) has taken care of language teaching objectives in secondary schools. Content of teaching has also been taken care of by the CNTE. Furthermore, every textbook must be approved by the Consejo for use in schools. Finally, the CNTE suggests 'activities' which have clear methodological implications. There seems to be a wealth of resources put at the teacher's disposal by and through the CNTE, but there is the danger that this gives the teacher the impression that there is nothing to be done, that he may feel satisfied with what there is. This is a false impression to say the least. Objectives, syllabuses, textbooks and teaching techniques can be improved. There are many people, including the present writer, who, given the present conditions of teaching in secondary schools, would like to see a reappraisal and reformulation of them. The syllabuses approved by the CNTE, like almost every modern syllabus in the world, are based on structural linguistics' conception of language, i. e. they are grammatically structured syllabuses. Syllabuses of this kind are not "the necessary or the most effective way of designing language courses and, in any case, language learning is not complete when the content of a grammatical syllabus has been mastered" (Wilkins, 1976); to put it another way, the learner must acquire not only the ability to express himself in a grammatically correct way but also the ability to use the right kind of language for the situation in which he must perform. Grammatical syllabuses do not give communicative competence as anyone who having studied English as a foreign language finds out when he visits an English-speaking country. I had to learn to say 'please' in such a situation. One might argue for a paradox from the fact that the Objetivo General proposed by the CNTE cannot be accomplished through the syllabuses approved by the CNTE. But this is a question of defining 'comunicarse' as used by the CNTE and this is not the place to do so. What has been said of the syllabuses must apply too to all textbooks based on them.

The question of objectives and syllabuses is inseparable from the question of methodology. If the learner must learn to speak then the method must be one by which he can acquire this ability, and the language taught him must be the kind of language used by native speakers when they speak which is not necessarily, the same they use when they write. Any method of teaching presupposes a theory of language learning; for example, audio-lingual' methods have 'behaviourism' with its techniques of repetition

2 For more on 'communicative competence' see Campbell and Wales (1970) and Brody (1977).

and reinforcement as their basis. One can see a very enlightened audio-lingual approach in the 'activities' suggested by the CNTE, but behaviourism has fallen from favour as an adequate theory of language acquisition and with it audio-lingual methods. The field of methodology is in turmoil. It is difficult to offer an alternative to grammatical syllabuses and audiolingual methods; to do so is, possibly, the golden (and very secret) dream of every applied linguist in the world, specially at the elementary level where the most difficult problems lie. I cannot go into that here, but I hope I have shown why applied linguistics has acquired such importance in the last twenty years: because of its subject matter -specially syllabus design and the production of teaching materials- it is at the heart of virtually every activity in language teaching.

And now we can talk about the ways in which linguistics is applied in language teaching. When we ask "What to teach?" we look for the answer in linguistics, 'the scientific study of language'. Among other things linguistics is a theory of language. It tries to explain the nature of language as a human faculty. In what Pit Corder calls a first order-application, linguistics can be used for the description of particular languages according to one or more models. It is these descriptions which interest the teacher of languages because they embody the language he is to teach. Because no complete description of a language is possible the linguist describes the systems which compose it (phonology and grammar especially). It is these systems which give the native speaker the creativity in his language which characterizes him and all speakers of a language. These descriptions use very specialized language which require specialized knowledge to be understood; for one other thing, to present them to the learner as they are is out of the question. But the material is there and the language teacher (or the applied linguist) can use it in what Pit Corder calls a second-order application: a selection of items which will make up the syllabus. Selection is not simple: a language has many varieties (a neutral term used by the sociolinguist in order not to commit himself to the use of more 'coloured' words); Spanish has dozens of dialects in Latin America and Spain; a Spanish speaking country usually has several accents in different geographical regions; a given accent may have dozens of different forms according to whether its speakers are adults or children, men or women, town or village dwellers, etc. Any of these varieties (which are established by comparison) can be chosen to be taught. In practice it is a common core which is chosen, ie. those items which are common to all or most educated speakers of the language. This comparison between varieties of the same language is one of the techniques of applied linguistics. Pit Corder calls it an intra-lingual comparison. An interlingual comparison is possible (and most desirable) too. It involves a target language (ie. the language to be learnt by the student) and a native one (i.e. the learner's mother tongue). This comparison establishes similarities and differences between the two languages and these two criteria are then used in the selection of items

for the syllabus. This type of comparison is usually known as Contrastive Analysis (it has been called Contrastive Linguistics and even Applied Linguistics too). Another two types of comparison I will merely mention here: Error Analysis and English for Special (or specific) Purposes. The second order of application of linguistics, then, is comparison (of descriptions within a language or between languages) as a means of selecting the content of the syllabus.

A third order of application is structuring the syllabus; before presentation to the learner it must be organized; there must be an order of presentation. This order is determined -or should be determined- by criteria other than purely linguistic; that is, by psycholinguistic criteria having to do with what is known of the psychology of language acquisition and language learning. Especially important in this respect is that other golden dream: to discover the ideal syllabus, that by which infants acquire their first language. A good number of researchers are busy with this problem at the moment. Given an ordered syllabus the next step is to present it to the learner; this is usually done in the form of teaching materials: textbooks, laboratory tapes, grammars designed for the learner, and in general, any materials through which language is presented to the student. (Teaching materials are not to be confused with teaching aids: pictures, pocket charts, etc.). Especially important is the fact that any teaching material presupposes-wittingly or unwittingly- affiliation to one of the theories of learning. If one is a behaviourist then one's teaching materials will establish the conditions for learning by frequent, accurate and reinforced repetition. If one is a 'cognitivist' then one will want to make use of the learner's mental faculties of reasoning, abstract thinking, etc. One may also be eclectic and take advantage of both theories.

With the elaboration of teaching materials the order of applications is finished. Applied linguistics should have emerged as a number of techniques which bridge the gap between a scientific description of a language and the teaching of that language in the classroom. The end-product of the labour of the applied linguist, then, is the production of a syllabus and of the teaching materials necessary to teach it[3]. It is unnecessary to say that the teacher in the classroom has always been, and still is, his own applied linguist. It is obvious too that he must continue

3 Like Chapter VII on which it is based, the section on the order of applications of linguistics seems to imply that applied linguistics has as its goal the production of a grammatical syllabus; such implication, if drawn from this section, would be misleading. There are several ways in which syllabuses have been organized (see Wilkins op. cit.) and there has even been the suggestion that syllabuses are not necessary for the learner who could make his own syllabus if the chance were given to him (see Dakin 1973). Chapter VII does not mention these possibilites so I thought it better to mention them myself even as a footnote.

to be so, or start to be so if he wants to acquire a first-hand experience of these problems. Only in this way will he be able to give expression to his creativity as a teacher. But he must do it with a more conscious knowledge of what the linguistic problems are. It is not superfluous, therefore, to urge him here to invite him to both study theoretical linguistics and learn the techniques of applied linguistics; Contrastive Analysis, Error Analysis, Syllabus design, Pedagogic Grammar (construction of teaching materials) English for Special Purposes, Evaluation, and the rest are all terms of common currency in applied linguistics and part of language teaching. They all fall within the teacher's desirable professional abilities.

A CHART OF ENGLISH PHONETIC SYMBOL EQUIVALENCE: A USEFUL TOOL

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In using dictionaries, or other reference works, for determining the pronunciation of English words, non-native teachers continuously face the problem of finding different symbols for the same sounds. This happens not only between British and American authors, but also among the American. Furthermore, some American authors even coincide with the British, while others do not. This fact naturally results in confusion in the non-native teachers of English. A chart showing the equivalence of phonetic symbologies is suggested as a solution.

INTRODUCTION

Very often foreign language teachers need to look up the pronunciation dictionaries, or lexical dictionaries which also provide the pronunciation of words, and are disappointed at finding the existing diversity of sound representation systems (1), which generally leads to an exasperating waste of time.

It could be argued that just one dictionary would do provided that it were highly reliable. However, quite frequently we realize that the word that interests us is not in our dictionary and therefore we are compelled to use other sources, or, it may also happen that the dictionary we generally use is not available at a given moment.

A teacher of English most frequently meets with this problem when he or she wishes to know or confirm the British pronunciation of a particular word when he normally teaches American English or when the reverse is

(1) In all our references we can observe that certain changes have been introduced into IPA symbols. These changes were found to be justified as necessary for reasons of simplification by the different authors.

the case.

This problem has primarily affected us personally in trying to analyze the pronunciation mistakes made by our students, using different phonetic references for this purpose and too often finding that the transcriptions or symbols used do not coincide with each other in many cases.

Moreover, and what constitutes a serious danger, we have found that sometimes the same symbol is used to represent different sounds by diverse sources.

For this reason, our suggestions are intended to lighten somewhat the English teacher's (or prospective English teacher's) work whose mother tongue is Spanish and who constantly has to identify these sound representation systems.

In this short survey, we will refer to those English phonetic symbols that Spanish-speaking teachers often find difficult to identify in their reference works mainly due to the diversity of symbols met with.

For daily work, the most rapid and simple way to solve this problem, we believe, is by having a large chart posted in one's office with sample words showing the particular sounds clearly marked in a convenient system and providing the different symbols found for each sound.

Our idea is that the teacher be able to determine or confirm, hopefully with a single glimpse of the equivalence chart, the meaming of any doubtful symbol found in his usual references.

Concerning our selection of references, it was obviously based upon those most easily available to us. Likewise, those teachers to whom these ideas may prove useful will have to adopt for their charts the symbols of those reference works which they normally use.

In the following analysis we will refer to each pronunciation reference as follows:

BR = British references: The Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English by A. S. Hornby, E. V. Gatenby and H. Wakefield; English Pronouncing Dictionary by Daniel. Jones; An English Phonetics Course by Paul Christophersen.

C&D = Pronunciation Exercises in English by M. Elizabeth Clarey and Robert J. Dixon.

L&F = English Pronunciation by Robert Lado and Charles C. Fries.

WNCD = Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary.

As teachers of American English (2), whose native language is Spanish (3), we have developed a certain preference for particular symbols most frequently used which prove more helpful. They are, as shown below, a combination of British and American symbologies. This might be considered as a deviation from normal symbol usage; however, the ones we use were chosen because they readily convey the corresponding sounds to us.

Phonetic Symbols for Vowels

Unless he has a key to the phonetic symbols at hand, a Spanish-speaking teacher of English will, no doubt, become confused with the various symbols for the vowel sounds found in words such as peat, for which we have recorded the following symbols in our sources:

	BR	C&D	L&F	WNCD
peat	iː	í	i̇	ē

To further visualize the serious problem caused by the vowel symbols, we refer to the first vowel sound of the word event. Its representations are as follows:

	BR	C&D	L&F	WNCD
event	i̇	I	I	i̇

The symbol used by C&D and L&F for the vowel in peat is found to be very similar to that employed by BR and WNCD for the contrasting

(2) This does not mean that we overlook the main differences in pronunciation and vocabulary between British and American English in our classes.

(3) Specifically Chilean Spanish.

vowel in event, which becomes a source of constant doubt for the Spanish-speaking teacher. We prefer the symbol /i:/ for the vowel in peat because we easily associate the colon of its transcription with a long sound, the length being the most important thing to remember about this vowel (4). Similarly, for the first vowel in event, we simply put /i/. The lack of colon in its transcription suggests to us at once that this is the short vowel.

As to the vowel sound in the word back, the symbol /æ/, used by all our reference works except WNCD, easily conveys to us a sound between Spanish-sounds for letters a and e. WNCD uses /ə/, which is easily mistaken for the symbol used by L&F for the vowel sound in hot /hat/.

Now with regard to the latter vowel sound, we observe that BR represent it as /ɔ/, C&D, as /ɑ/, and WNCD, as /ə/. We are inclined to use the British symbol /ɔ/ because we readily associate the opening of its transcription with the open characteristic of the sound (5).

The vowel sound in all is quite troublesome for us as far as its representation is concerned. We could use the British /ɔ:/ since the colon of its transcription would help us remember that it is a long vowel; however, the opening in the symbol makes us think of an open vowel, which is not so, for in this vowel the jaw is less open than for the vowel in hot (6). On the other hand, the symbol /ȯ/ used by WNCD could have been useful to us had it been provided with two dots instead of one. In this way, it would have indicated to us two things: lengthening of the vowel and the fact that it is pronounced with rounded lips. Unfortunately, the ocurrence of a single dot above the symbol is misleading because it suggests something different from the lengthning indicated by two dots.

To make matters worse, Spanish users of these references can find that vowel lengthening is represented by different marks by WNCD. Thus,

(4) Paul Christophersen, An English Phonetic Course (London: Longmans, Green and Co. Ltd., 1964), p. 41.

(5) Actually, we are dealing with different sounds here. Whereas for the British vowel the lips are rounded and the sound is short, many Americans use a version of it unrounding the vowel and making it rather long. This makes it sound almost like the British vowel in farm. Hence, misunderstandings are likely to occur with the American pronunciation of posture, for instance, which sounds in English ears rather like pasture. (ibid. p. 50).

(6) Christophersen, p. 51.

besided a single dot above the symbol for the vowel in call /ȯ/, this dictionary shows a macron and two dots for lengthening of the vowel sound in words such as see /sē/ and too /tü/ respectively.

Now, we logically infer that the absence of dots above the symbol /u/ found in C&D and L&F would indicate a short sound. Unfortunately, it is exactly the opposite case: /u/ is used by C&D and L&F to represent the long vowel in words such as too /tu/ (7).

Going back to WNCD and observing the symbols for the vowels in the words all /ȯ/ and put /u̇/, we notice that both show a dot on top. But this dot does not mean the same thing in both cases: in all it indicates a lengthening of the vowel, while in put it reflects its short characteristic.

With respect to the vowel sound in the word cup, we see that in WNCD, C&D and L&F it is represented by /ə/, which is also the symbol found for the initial vowel in ago in the same reference works. However, in the British references these vowel sounds are found to be represented by two distinct symbols /ʌ/ and /ə/ in accordance with the fact that in British English these are two different sounds. We have adopted the schwa symbol for both sounds concurring with the American usage, where the only acknowledged difference refers to the occurrence of the sound in stressed or unstressed syllabes, ie. when it is pronounced with tense or with relaxed muscles.

For the combination vowel + r, in which /ə/ is also involved, we feel /ər/ is practical since it efficiently reflects this combination.

Phonetic Symbols for Consonants

Another troublesome representation is that for the initial sound in the word joy. We find that WNCD indicates it as /j̇/ and that L&F use /ʃ/. However, /j̇/ is employed, by BR to represent the semi-vowel in the word yes. Adding to the confusion is the fact that C&D and BR use /dʒ/ for the initial sound in joy and C&D, L&F and WNCD use /y/ for the semi-vowel in yes. We have finally adopted /dʒ/ and /y/ respectively.

We have commonly used /ʒ/ for the middle consonant sound in

(7) We are aware that this problem would not arise if we limited ourselves to the usage of just one reference. Thus, we could adopt WNCD's /u̇/ and /ü/, or L&F's /ʊ/ and /u/, or C&D's /ʊ/ and /u/ or the British /u/ and /u:/ for the representation of the vowel sounds in put and too respectively. But, as indicated earlier, using the same reference all the time is not always possible or convenient.

vision. We presume that teachers born in Spain may have an interference of this symbol with the initial letter representation they employ in handwritten words as *zapato* which they actually pronounce as the initial sound in thought. We, as many people in several Latinamerican countries, pronounce /s/ instead and, therefore, can leave /ʒ/ for the phonetic representation referred to in vision without any problem. L&F and WNCD use /ʒ/ and /zh/ respectively. These symbols are misleading to us.

Since the spelling sh is always pronounced as in shoe or she, and since the elements used by WNCD for the sound representation coincide with those found in the spelling, we could have easily adopted it. However, we have adopted /ʃ/ used by BR and C&D because this symbol is faster to draw and is also involved in the phonetic representation of the initial contrasting sound in child, for which we simply place /t/ before /ʃ/. As to /ʃ/ used by L&F, it is not easy for us to think of it as the initial sound in she.

Now, let us go back to the initial sound in child. We must recognize that even though we have adopted /tʃ/, WNCD's /ch/ would indicate to us the sound just as well because of its coincidence with both the Spanish letter ch and its pronunciation (8). Conversely, we cannot associate this sound with /ʧ/ used by L&F.

For the initial sound in the word thin, we like /θ/ because it readily makes us think of the voiceless sound made with the tip of the tongue against the cutting edge of the upper front teeth (9). Fortunately, only WNCD uses a symbol different from it /th/; we find this usage rather confusing because it leads us to associate /th/ with the sound found in words regularly spelt with th, such as then. In other words, there is an interference problem between phonetic and letter, or spelling, symbols.

We use /ð/ for the consonant sound in they because the transformation of the letter d into /ð/ immediately makes us remember that the latter is not our Spanish /d/ and that therefore it refers to the voiced sound made with the tip of the tongue against the cutting edge of the upper front teeth (10).

(8) It should be remembered that we are referring to Chilean Spanish.
(9) M. Elizabeth Clarey and Robert J. Dixon, Pronunciation Exercises in English (New York: Refents Publishing Co., 1963), p. 43.
(10) Clarey and Dixon, p. 46.

Luckily, the symbologies for the initial consonants in zoo /z / and hat /h /, non-existing sounds in Spanish, and the final sound in sing /ŋ / are found to coincide in all cases. Coincidence also exists in the symbols for the consonant sounds of tea, day, pea, be, cue, go, and the semi-vowel in west represented as /t /, /d /, /p /, /b /, /k /, /g / and /w/ respectively. (11)

Phonetic Symbols for Diphthongs

Apart from problem-symbols related to vowels and consonants, we have also encountered certain difficulties in some of the symbologies representing diphthongs. Fortunately, only a few of these are really troublesome for us.

For the diphthongs in say and old, we concur with BR in using /ei/ and /ou/ respectively because of their coincidence with both the spelling and sound representation of the Spanish diphthongs occurring in words like seis and bou.

In say, the symbol /e / employed by L&F and C&D offers interference with that found in WNCD and BR for the initial sound of the word end /e /, that is to say it is highly misleading for our work.

Likewise in old, /o / used by C&D and L&F is interfered by the Spanish spelling and sound representation of the vowel in por.

As to the diphthong found in eye, the only representation hindering our work is WNCD's /ī /. The others, again, are easily associated with both the spelling and sound representation of the Spanish diphthong found for example in vaina.

Diphthongs in words such as house and boy present us no difficulties since all our references use symbologies quite similar to the letters found in the Spanish spelling of diphthongs au and oi occurring for instance in causa and loica.

Lastly, we must recognize that even though we do not frequently employ WNCD's symbols, the key lines printed at the bottom of every other page are quite helpful because they save us the work of going back

(11) The initial sounds in my, fan, vest, no , lad, red, and so are not discussed here since they showed no symbol equivalence problems among our references.

to the first pages in order to find the meanings of the symbols, as happens with other references such as The Concise Oxford Dictionary (12) which proves extremely time-consuming.

IN SUMMARY, interference problems in phonetic symbols may affect a foreign language teacher in various ways determined mainly by the language he is teaching, his mother tongue, and the reference works he commonly uses in looking up the pronunciation of words. As a solution for this problem, we have suggested the use of a wall chart of phonetic transcription equivalence which has proved useful in our work and which may help other teachers having the same problem.

To further illustrate the degree up to which a teacher of English may become confused by the diversity of phonetic symbols found, we will just add that analyzing particular problems of symbols for this article would have been quite a difficult task had it not been for the fact that our equivalence chart was always at hand.

(12) Edited y H. W. Fowler and F. G. Fowler (based on The Oxford Dictionary).

EQUIVALENCE OF DIPHTHONG SYMBOLS

Sounds represented in sample words	BR	C&D	L&F	WNCD		
peat	i:	i	i	ē		
event	i	I	I	i		
back/pasture	æ/ɑ:	æ/æ	æ/æ	a/a		
hot/posture	ɔ	ɑ	a	ä		
all	ɔ:	ɔ	ɔ	o		
tool	u:	u	u	ü		
put	u	U	ʊ	u		
cup	^/ə	ə	ə	ə		
bird	ə:	ɚ	ər	ər		
end	e	ɛ	ɛ	e		

EQUIVALENCE OF SEMI-VOWEL SYMBOLS

west	w	w	w	w		
yes	j	y	y	y		

EQUIVALENCE OF DIPHTHONG SYMBOLS

say	ei	e	e	ā		
old	ou	o	o	ō		
eye	ai	ɑI	aI	ī		
house	au	ɑU	aʊ	au		
boy	ɔi	ɔI	ɔI	oI		

Note: We are leaving some space in our chart for other systems that could still be found to differ from the above.

EQUIVALENCE OF CONSONANT SYMBOLS

Sounds represented in sample words	BR	C&D	L&F	WNCD		
joy	dʒ	dʒ	ʤ	j		
vision	ʒ	ʒ	ʒ	zh		
shoe	ʃ	ʃ	ʃ	sh		
child	tʃ	tʃ	ʧ	ch		
thin	θ	θ	θ	th		
they	ð	ð	ð	th		
zoo	z	z	z	z		
hat	h	h	h	h		
sing	ŋ	ŋ	ŋ	ŋ		
tea	t	t	t	t		
day	d	d	d	d		
pea	p	p	p	p		
be	b	b	b	b		
cue	k	k	k	k		
go	g	g	g	g		

Note: As to symbols for missing sounds, cf. footnote (11).

HELP ! I CAN'T UNDERSTAND YOU !

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It is extremely depressing for a middle-aged school teacher to suddenly discover she lacks communicative competence in her own language. If this idea appeared to seep in on me before going off on summer vacation, it certainly palled on me during my trip to the Southern and Eastern U. S. A., my "tierra".

Several months before the purchase of my Greyhound Ameripass, I began to find it extremely difficult to read the ever-growing number of erudite articles in the various linguistic publications I subscribe to and therefore feel obliged to read. Elusive phrases like "the selection and comparison of reconstructed core vocabulary", and "the analysis of communicative behavior within a specified event" sent me crawling up a wall in the direction of my dictionary; but to no avail. I could find neither meaning nor sense. My fears of going completely mad were partially allayed by reading Mike Royko's "Educatorese" where he states: "I have been struggling with a language known as educatorese. It is spoken and written by educators to prevent those of us who aren't educators from knowing what they are up to".

A kindred spirit, Mike, but clearly not an educator, so how could I find complete solace in his well-documented article?

The second and even-greater blow to my intellect and speech habits was yet to come, upon contact with "the common man" in Florida. I was greeted by a veritable barrage of "poorly constructed" sentences. Any Course Four student of mine would have failed the course upon producing these grammatical concoctions which sprang so fluently and easily from the lips of my fellow Americans. I heard and fared no better in Georgia, the Carolinas, Virginia, Pennsylvania, New York and New Jersey. Perhaps some respite would have come in New England but my vacation time and funds were limited, so off I went home, to Mexico City.

I have tried to set down some of the changes observed. It all adds up to a veritable revolution of linguistic patterns of Mr. & Mrs. Average, U.S.A. - a cross section of people in different walks of life.

1) The auxiliary Tense Markers seem to be disappearing:
   "Where he off to?"
   "Why he go there all the time?"
   "She never write?"
   "You plan to go?"
   "You coming?"
   "He here?"
2) No real rules can be given for the third person singular of verbs:
   "He just do study and study."
   "He don't ever get here on time."
   "She eat right well."
3) The verb to be seems to be undergoing rather ghastly transformations:
   "Is you all right?"
   "They is all here."
   "They ain't sick."
   "You be back now."
4) The past tense has undergone dire changes too.
   "I come here yesterday."
   "He be gone by the time you leave the message."
   "I done it all last night."
5) The -ly morpheme formerly found in adverbs of manner is going with the wind:
   "She reads real slow."
   "Drive careful!"
   "You better get there quick."
6) Double negatives flourish like spring weeds:
   "He don't need no help from you."
   "Nobody gives you nothing for free."

Those mentioned, together with the tremendous changes in the use of certain vocabulary items like grass, smoke, snow, fix, fuzz, can really "blow your mind" and give you the impression you are listening to an alien tongue. This can in turn, produce feelings of extreme insecurity in a teacher who is evaluating and correcting errors made by her Mexico City students. Does one really deduct for similar "errors" when the average U. S. speakers produce the same sentences with impunity every day? Questions like this have plagued me since my return. It is a problem and perhaps some re-thinking is in order. It would certainly be interesting to hear what the current "language trends" are in other parts of the U. S., in Canada and in England.

Between my growing fear of "Educatorese" where I flounder completely out of my depth and the shock of hearing so much "sub-standard" language in current use, I can only concur with Mike Royko:

"I don't understand these changes but I am very impressed anyway."

BEYOND "BASIC"
PART I

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In certain teaching situations it is fairly clear where a teacher should be leading his students. For example, generation after generation of medical students have the desperate need to read text books and articles in English but are familiar, or half familiar, only with the bare rudiments of the language. They often have very little time for English classes. The teacher should obviously try to improve the efficiency and range of the students' reading comprehension ability in the shortest possible time. Such a clearly specified end suggests the means to it: graded reading passages on medical subjects in which the commonest rhetorical devices and non-cognate vocabulary are exemplified, with expositions of how they function, and related exercises. The teacher need not concern himself much, if at all, with the students' ability in speaking, writing or aural comprehension. The class can even be conducted largely in the students' native language. Many doctors, with the sole aid of medical texts, a grammar book and an English-L1 dictionary have taught themselves up to what can only be described as an advanced level of reading comprehension of medical English (without, so far as I know, any patients who have died of a sudden attack of chronic English). However, these same doctors may be unable to converse in English or to read a novel.

ESP specialists are now catering to the needs of groups such as medical students in some institutions of advanced education. But many English language teachers are working in what we can call "general purpose" teaching situations: the students progress through the "whole of the English language" and come out on the far side of the ultimate advanced course as educated bilinguals ("con un dominio perfecto del idioma inglés"). There are, I think, two main reasons why so many students study in general purpose English courses. The first is that it is usually only in specialized institutions (technological institutes, hospitals, university departments, and so on) that sufficient numbers of students with the same limited and specific needs can be gathered together; elsewhere doctors, lawyers, businessmen, secretaries, and school children who will become doctors, businessmen and secretaries must share the same class. The second is that many students find the prospect of learning

only a limited and specific area of English unattractive: if they are going to learn the waltz they want to learn the polka, the rhumba and the bossa nova too.

One major problem with general purpose courses in finding the answer to the question: "where should the students be going?" (a question fairly easy to answer in the case of the medical students). Another problem is finding the answer to the question: "How far has this or that student got on the road to wherever he should be going?" (again fairly easy to answer in the case of the medical students). What is an "advanced" course and what do the students learn in it? Certainly very, very few students learn "un dominio perfecto del inlgés" in formal study conditions. Where should we put the doctor who reads English in his specialized area with great efficiency but whose speech is incoherent Spanglish, or the adolescent who spent three months at a summer camp in Illinois and whose spoken English sounds "real kinda lika native speaker", but who writes incoherent Spanglish? Should they go into a "basic" course, or into an "intermediate" or "advanced" one?

The quotation marks for "basic", "intermediate" and "advanced" are for two reasons: they are supposed to define levels of competence in English, and they don't . "Intermediate" is the level that comes after "basic", and "basic" is the level that comes. . . oh, well, you know. Does it matter so long as the student is progressing? My answer is that it does. My reason is that it is most probable that all progress in language learning is not of the same kind. If you cover all of a painting of "el hombre águila" except for a minute section of a feather, it appears to be some thin brown lines; if you increase the hole in the cover to include the eye, it appears to be part of the head of a bird; if you uncover the painting completely it is seen to be a man wearing an eagle mask. In the same way the beginning student who learns "It's a Chevrolet" gets only a partial view of IT IS and cannot suspect that "It is a Chevrolet" corresponds to "Que si es un Chevrolet" in Spanish. The value and function of the elements of English a student learns become different as he learns more elements and combinations. Not only does "the English language" appear to change as perceived by the student, but his attitude towards it changes and the strategies he uses to try to master it change (of course one type of student may perceive the English language differently and employ different strategies from another type of student right from the beginning, but there is also bound to be development in perception and strategies in the learning history of every student). Typically a beginner will be cautious and take few risks, sticking closely to the model or the rule given by the teacher (if the student has grasped the structure or the rule); later, students will take more risks (or have risks imposed upon them by the teacher) and usually will make a lot of mistakes (including

many that "even the worst student in Course Two would be incapable of making").

Not all students in "basic" courses will ever reach an "advanced" or even an "intermediate" course; this may be because of a lack of time, money, or language-learning resources. In the previous paragraph I was suggesting that "basic", "intermediate" and "advanced" courses should be different in kind (not just more and more difficult stuff of the same kind). I now suggest that each cycle of courses should reach some kind of practical goal, even though it is most difficult to set such a goal in a series of advanced courses.

A series of basic courses should prepare the students to "get by" in all normal real life situations; that is, they should be able to make themselves understood in speech and writing, when they and the person addressed are familiar with the topic and the person addressed makes allowances for the fact that they are not native speakers of English; and they should be able to understand speech and writing intended for them and taking into account the fact that they are not native speakers of English. This specification of the end (much broader, I am afraid, than that specified for the medical students) leads us to the means. A structural-situational approach to a series of basic courses (as in the official Programa de inglés para secundarias federales) has much in its favour. It aims to teach aural comprehension, speaking, reading comprehension and writing. It works through a programme of selected and graded structures. It presents these structures in situational contexts to exemplify typical meanings and usages of each structure. It has a repertoire of teaching techniques and student activities that maximize student participation and production of meaningful English. It avoids as far as possible grammar explanation and translation. The structures covered by a basic course should stop short of easily avoided ones; for example, "He will not win if he doesn't practise", or "Never before have I seen such a mess", which can be avoided by "I have never seen such a mess", or possibly even reported speech ("Mr. Smith said he had been to India" can be avoided by "He has been to India, Mr. Smith said"). Also to be left out of basic courses are structures which are virtually expressions (in TG terms, rules that generate few sentences); for example "In case of fire, break the glass".

There are a number of criticisms of structural-situational teaching as it is usually practised at the basic level. Two of the more serious criticisms are the following. Everything that is presented to the students is practised for production and there is little systematic attention to the students' most likely communicative needs. In general it is understandable that most of the English in a basic course should be for production as well as recognition, since it will mostly be fundamental (whether structure or vocabulary). However, this general principal is taken to ridiculous ex -

tremes when no new structure or word (even if it is a cognate) is met by the students without being presented and practised (Do Spanish-speaking students need intensive practice of "The man playing the guitar is Jim?") The lack of attention to basic communicative needs can be seen when a student who has just completed the final basic course, at last finds himself in New York. He can still remember the dialogue in which Susan told her mother she was going to marry Tom, but he cannot remember dialogues booking a plane ticket, checking in at the airport, taking a taxi, or (excuse the expression) chatting up a güerita.

If students can finish a series of basic courses with the ability to get by in English, what should the teacher be doing in the intermediate courses? What should the goal be? Perhaps we should first consider the kinds of students the teacher will be working with. Some will indeed be good products of a series of good basic courses. Others will come from outside the institution, and may be strong on "grammar" and writing but weak on speaking, or the opposite, strong on speaking but weak on grammatical precision and writing. (Incidentally, the doctor with good special purpose reading comprehension but poor on speaking, should, I think, go down to the level in the basic courses appropriate to his production abilities). Given a group made up of students with different abilities and problems, as is typical in intermediate courses, the teacher should work at the following areas. He should try to pull students weak in oral-aural ability or conversely in reading-writing skills up to the average level of the group. He should do remedial work on recurrent errors (such as those that "even the worst Course Two student would be incapable of making"). He should extend the range of structures ("unless", reported speech, low frequency structures, etc.) He should work more systematically at communicative functions. He should require students to comprehend and produce longer stretches of discourse than in the basic courses. He should push recognition (vocabulary, structure in speech and writing) beyond production. He should begin to foment an awareness in the students of the differences between colloquial spoken English and formal written English, and even of subtler distinctions of medium - style. The goal should be native-speaker-like comprehension and production in appropriately restricted tasks. For example, students should produce short letters like this:

Río Neva 18
México, D. F.
January 19, 1976

Dear Tammy,

I was very glad to receive your letter. It will be a pleasure to

have you here with us. I'm already making plans with my parents to show you the most interesting places in Mexico.

I think you won't have to bring warm clothes because the weather will be very nice in March. Also we will spend a lot of time in Acapulco and other hot places. Acapulco is a beautiful place and I'm sure you'll enjoy it a lot.

I'm going to take some time away from school. I won't have any trouble with my English teacher because I'll be practising with you, and I've promised him to do my best on the final examination.

Please say "hello" to your family and don't forget to write back as soon as you can. Take good care of yourself.

Love.

and not like this:

México, D. F.
19 of January, 1976

Dear Sandra,

I receive your letter telling me that you're coming to Mexico next month and I am realy very happy for that. Mario and I will be very please if you stayed with us at home, we have an extra room which I can arrange it for you. You should bring light cloths but bring some sweaters because in the morning and the night is quite cold. We can go to Guanajuato a typic city. I'm sure you will enjoy a lot. Give my regards to your family.

Sincerely yours,

I have said "what" about intermediate courses but not "how". I will suggest specific materials and techniques in a following article, as I will also for advanced courses.

This is the first of a two part article, the second of which will appear in a later issue.

THE IDEA FILE

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SITUATION

Much of what we use in a classroom, is filed away in our memories and we expect to use it again at the appropriate time. We know from past experience what techniques or visual-aids to use, where to find them (this is especially important), and with what grammatical structures to use them. From experience we have developed a style full of our own ideas. The audio-visuals, songs, dialogues, skits, posters, flipcards, stick-figure drawings, and wall charts are all a part of our experience.

When a new teacher asks for help in planning a lesson, finding a good visual, or getting an idea, the experienced teacher is more than willing to offer suggestions if time permits. However, the word-of-mouth transference of ideas does not always work. The experienced teacher must be there when the new teacher is looking for an answer and must have time to discuss the new teacher's lesson. If these two variables are not present, then the new teacher is on his/her own. He or she doesn't know where to find materials, but has spent time searching, (usually a lot of time) and as a result loses time that could be used to plan the lesson.

PROPOSAL

An Idea File can eliminate uncertainty. The new teacher can go to it and find the answers he/she is looking for and quickly. What then is an Idea File? It is a place any teacher can go for an idea, a new approach, or just an answer to "Where is it?".

At IMNRC the Idea File is a file card system. We've found it very successful in meeting the needs of our new teachers and our experienced teachers as well and would like to present it to you for consideration.

STEPS IN MAKING THE IDEA FILE

1. Decide upon a manageable size for the file cards. Start with around 100 cards (14 x 20 cm. cards work well because they allow enough space for each entry).

At IMNRC we had file cards printed in our printshop. They could also be hand-printed, using a felt tip pen.

2. Keep the amount of information to a minimum. Make it direct and straightforward.

Our objective was to set down on the card the structure, lesson, and course level in the upper right-hand corner (making the course level our index) and leave the remainder of the card for the stated objective, materials and procedure. The procedure includes only space for five steps; more steps could be included on the back of the card if neccesary. Below is a copy of the file card:

COURSE LEVEL:
STRUCTURE:
UNIT:
LESSON:

MATERIALS: (1) _____
(2) _____

OBJECTIVE: _____

_____

_____

PROCEDURE: 1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

Teacher: _____ (signature)

3. Make the objective stand out by framing it.

Our purpose in framing the objective is so that when a teacher is looking through the Idea File and has noticed in the right-hand corner the course level, structure, unit and lesson in the textbooks being used, his attention is directed to the objective in the center of the card to pin-

point how the structure was approached. Then, if the information on the card is valuable at the time and if it fits his needs for the lesson he is planning, he can examine it more carefully and copy down the list of materials and steps of procedure. On the card beneath the procedure is the teacher's signature. He can talk to the teacher personally for further information.

4. Prepare a file box for the cards.

We found it to our advantage to index by course level first and structure second; namely, because our basic courses are structured around our nine textbook series. For instance, if one visual--a poster--could be used as the material for an objective in Course One (structure-present of custom), and it could just as well be used in Course Eight with if clauses, then it would be found under Course One and Course Eight as well. Our system of indexing allows for this.

The indexing could also be done with a subject heading for each audio-visual material; for example, a section for songs, posters, or available equipment. A wall chart of a scene for instance--a family at home on the weekend; members of the family in each room of the house and outside--would be very flexible and could function very well at any level from the beginning student learning the present progressive tense to the more advanced practicing time clauses.

5. Code the A-V equipment by title or number to correspond to that on the Idea card.

We identified our equipment by title or subject, for example, a wall chart as family at home or stick figure drawings as mass nouns. Another possibility is to arrange the material by a number code or color code to match the equipment with the file card. Filing by title has been best for us, however, because most of the teachers are familiar with the materials we already have and identify them in conversation by title. This is where this filing system is flexible and can be adapted to meet the needs of the institution.

6. Place the Idea File in a readily available place and have nearby a work area.

The work area is invaluable for it gives somewhere to write down information from the card or to write a new card for the file.

7. Encourage everyone to contribute.

Each teacher can contribute a card or a group of three or four

teachers can interview the staff for their ideas. The advantage of using the interviewers is that within a few weeks they can reach each teacher and get at least one idea for the idea file. Although using the latter system is more work at first for a few teachers, after this initial start the additions can be made by the individual teachers and the file constantly up-dated.

8. Optional: Teacher trainees add at least one card based on a classroom observation.

Another method we found successful is using the teacher trainees to add creative ideas because it was felt that students are good observers, critical, and full of good ideas.

ADVANTAGES

The Idea File works for us at IMNRC much as any cataloguing system for books and materials in a library does. The reasons for not having it associated with a library are the advantages of:

1. having it near our A-V materials,
2. having it available at all teaching hours in the teachers' room,
3. having a system to organize what had always been in the teachers' room, but was not being utilized to its full potential by all teachers.

Now, we have a system for retaining over the years, techniques as well as a place for keeping creative ideas and not letting them be used only once, or just by one teacher and then forgotten. The effort of making the file is paying off.

The potential for an Idea File is great for any institution. It can be the foundation for sharing ideas and generating new ones, and a source of material for a newsletter. We have found it has helped acclimatize our new teachers to the A-V materials, to methodology, and to creative ideas at our institution. When a new teacher arrives, he/she can no longer say, "Where are the A-V materials?'', "What can I do today? No one has told me where anything is". The answers are to be found in the Idea File.

THE EXPERIMENT IN INTERNATIONAL LIVING, COMPLEMENT TO THE EFL CLASSROOM

Bárbara B. de Gómez

For 25 years the Experiment in International Living in Mexico has sent students of English to live in homes abroad. Most of these have been English speaking homes in the United States, Canada or England. The result of a homestay lasting three weeks to a month for students who have studied at least a year in an English language institute is that their fluency increases tremendously and the fear of speaking disappears. Also the motivation to continue learning English after such personal experiences is immensely heightened. All of this means that a teacher at an English language institute with students who have had an Experiment experience finds these students extremely easy to teach, and their attendance is very regular.

Because of these positive results and the Experiment's long experience in placing people, young and old, in families, either in group or in individual programs, the project is one that might well be promoted by teachers of English who could consider the Experiment a true complement to academic classes.

The Experiment's program can take place any time of the year. English teachers could send likely candidates to the National Office which is located at Varsovia 44-602, México 6, D. F., Tel. 533-3825. There are partial scholarships available for group programs to the United States and Canada.

Aside from the Mexico City office, the Experiment has 62 Representatives in as many communities in the Republic. Therefore the organization, aside from sending people to live in homes abroad, is in an excellent position to receive people from other countries and give them the opportunity to live with Mexican families. In fact, it hopes to have the opportunity to do this for some of the TESOL delegates who will come to Mexico next Spring for the important TESOL convention.

ENGLISH FOR CAREERS

Various Authors
REGENT'S PUBLISHING CO., INC.

Among the many debates that are currently taking place in the field of teaching English as a foreign language one of the most fiercely waged is that concerning English for specific purposes. The debate has a linguistic component, ie. what are the characteristics of the English used professionally by Physicists, by Doctors, by Accountants, by Economists. Are these characteristics definable and in what respect do these different Englishes have elements in common? The debate has a pedagogic element, ie. if there is a special English, how do we teach it and when can it be introduced; does a student first require a basis of what is commonly called general English before he can begin special English?

The debate also has an element of interest to applied linguists. Is special English a matter of grammar or vocabulary or both or something more? While the debate rages as is common in our field, students are present in classrooms and have to be taught and so while the debate goes on and research goes on so does the teaching and the production of materials.

The present state of the art seems to indicate that English for specific purposes is best introduced after a general foundation has been laid, that ESP is not a pure matter of technical vocabulary nor of structural knowledge alone but that what the ESP student primarily needs is help in understanding the communicative purpose of the speaker or writer.

It is against this background that we have to consider the English for Careers series which consists of some 25 titles covering such fields as Air Travel, Computer Programming, Finance, Tourism, Accounting, Chemical Engineering, Mechanical Engineering, Mining, Agriculture, etc. Each book consists of between 8 and 10 reading passages covering different aspects of the profession under consideration. The units are usually preceded by a vocabulary section introducing new special terms and are followed by a variety of comprehension exercise, discussion topics, vocabulary practice exercises of a fairly traditional type. The aim in all the books seems to be a mixture of informing the student through the reading passages on the subject matter of the discipline and introducing him to some of the specialised vocabulary involved.

All the books are attractively produced with in some cases excellent photographs and what from the classroom teacher's point of view, is in

fact, more important, good diagrams and line drawings on which a variety of supplementary exercises can be based. In this connection the Language of Civil Engineering in English by Eugene Hall is particularly good as in the Language of Accounting in English by Sandra Costinett.

One of the problems of ESP materials writing is to fall into the trap of attempting to teach the discipline rather than the language of the discipline and my impression of the series as a whole is that there is too much concern with content and too little with language.

Another of the problems which is as yet unsolved is whether the language used in ESP texts should be contrived or authentic. The difficulty with contrived language is that it tends to simplify or even distort the special subject and the problem with authentic language is that it is very often too difficult for the student. The authors of the English for Careers series have opted for a type of hybrid between these two poles and the result is a not unacceptable layman's view of the subject matter.

Where I find the books deficient sometimes in the extreme, is in the exercise types offered for the student or teacher to exploit. In the main the exercises are directed towards native speakers of the language rather than to foreign learners. This in my view greatly reduces the value of the series for the busy teacher since he would have to spend a great deal of time producing his own exercise types on the texts. As they stand the series will be valuable as source material for specific English or as extensive reading matter for fairly advanced students. As class texts without supplementary material their use will be extremely limited.

David Harper
The British Council
Mexico

ENGLISH FOR INTERNATIONAL COMMUNICATION

R.C. Yorkey, R. Barrutia,
A. V. Chamot, I. R. de Díaz,
J. B. González, J. W. Ney,
W. L. Woolf
New York: American Book Company
1977. viii. pg. 200

A teacher always has to face a problem of choice concerning the textbook he or she is going to use, and this problem becomes crucial when he has to deal with beginners. There are so many books and so much supplementary material for the intermediate and advanced courses that it seems that first level courses have been neglected.

A group of seven lecturers and teachers experienced in the methodology of teaching English as a second and foreign language recently published Book One, the first of a series of six, that deals with the subject. The next two books of the series (also appropriate for beginners) are due to be published within this year. The last three (two for intermediate and one for advanced students) will be on the market in 1978, as the editor promises in the introduction to Book One. It is difficult to find such a complete and well-designed textbook devoted to beginners in our country. This book is a good start since it focuses on the four essential skills.

This review deals with Book One, since it is the only one we have seen so far.

This textbook intended for approximately 100 hours of instruction, conveys all of its material through simple and straight-forward situational pictures evoking internationally understandable situations and actions. It thus represents, in the best possible way, the idea its title underlines: INTERNATIONAL COMMUNICATION which is indeed what this book aims at. This aim is achieved by the organization of the book and the progressive method used throughout. Each lesson has been divided into smaller sections according to the skills to be practised and the material to be covered, entitled: "presentation", "skill building", "interaction", "pattern summary", "pronunciation", "silent reading", "writing" and "reentry". By dividing these activities into small workable semi-units, the transmission and understanding of most ideas and grammatical patterns are made easier than in most traditional textbooks, where all these skills are mixed. Each subdivision is an entirely different activity to be done in class. This is

achieved through a new organization of materials, (grammar at once integrated into the vocabulary paragraphs), and the whole language structure strengthened in the "skill building" sections, where pupils can freely practice the skill in turn.

Thus, the contemporary educational idea of teaching a foreign language as a comprehensive, integrated system, whose end is communication, instead of as an accumulation of separate identifiable skills and discrete grammar and lexical items, becomes a reality in this book and its method. The process of "slow accumulation" through a "spiraling" approach of the material is a new idea as well, and for the first time made here successful and interesting. Thus, the material to be learned is arranged in such a way that, once it has been introduced, it will be reviewed later combined with the new structures in the following lessons.

Indeed, this book is wholly organized on a succession of "centers" of interest for the students which are useful, interesting, relevant and lively situations with a great variety of activities. Instead of presenting a boring list of grammatical and lexical items, it integrates both of these into wider, more useful and more interesting "communication" situations, organized in units such as "Going to Work", "At the Supermarket", "T.V. Recipe", "Dinner at Home". Moreover, this general "interest-based" organization of the book starts from the very first lessons, and is maintained throughout the whole 200 pages of Book One. Often, the method consists of giving suggestions for activities rather than giving a set of mechanical exercises and thus providing the students with an opportunity to use their creative ability, which is certainly one of the best possible motivations for the study of a language. Indeed, students are encouraged to participate much more in this method than in traditional ones. They have the opportunity to develop their knowledge of the language freely, choosing from the content that which most suits their needs and own interests.

The layout of the book is superb. It has been appealingly illustrated by Claudia Karabaic and designed by Maryanne Gladych. The pages are big and easy to handle, and the material: illustrations and grammar content, is distributed in such a way that there is enough space left for the pupils to rest the eye or to write their own notes on. This is another great advantage in the book, since students do not have to deal with a variegated page. The illustrations and drawings are mostly in full color and the size of the letters is big and uniform. There is a group of personalities whose everyday life adventures are depicted in small readings and stories. These people's adventures are to be followed throughout, adding gradually increased interest to the course. By so

doing, the book avoids the problem which characterizes so many impersonal, lifeless books not offering continuity concerning people.

Another remarkable feature of the book is the grading: the grammatical and lexical content is supplied in a gradual building up of the language from easy to difficult. It is clear that the authors do not leave out any important or essential structure. Since language is an accumulation of practice and progressive mastery, all previous material is continually reviewed in small sections called "reentry", where the newly-taught material is incorporated with the previous material. No more than one or two structures are presented at once. During the presentation, the new grammatical items are never mixed with the previous ones in order to avoid possible distractions. This book has notes and a glossary of grammar items as well as vocabulary appendix. The introduction and the list of grammar items to be taught at the beginning of each chapter can help the teacher clarify different points, or detect, in advance, difficulties to be faced. In general, the way to handle this book seems to be fairly easy. It is divided into four main parts plus four preliminary lessons. Each part has got five or six chapters including a review. At the very beginning of each part we are supplied with the "objectives" of the unit, which are the list of grammar items and vocabulary, and the context and situations in which the language is going to be cast into. There are also many synoptic tables which are clear, easy to follow and to understand. The examples and models of items presented are enough for practise, for homework and for the student reviewing by himself. All the exercises are meaningful and are included in lively contexts. These can also be practised by students in groups or by themselves without the teacher's help.

There is a Teacher's Guide, which will soon be available and which should clarify more points concerning the method to be followed.

This textbook will appeal to students with many interests and backgrounds. It is obviously intended for "young adults", which means our students in Preparatorias and University levels. However, the situations contained in it would not be suitable for secondary school students in some rural areas of Mexico. Some situations would be totally out of their context; especially if we take into account their socio-economic background.

I feel it would be worthwhile for teachers who are interested in solving the problem of texts for beginners to look at and examine this book in order to see if it can satisfy their urgent needs.

Severino Salazar Muro,
Escuela Nacional de Estudios
Profesionales ARAGÓN,
Universidad Nacional Autónoma
de México

FACE TO FACE

Michael H. Long
Evans Brothers
1977

How Natural is Natural?

FACE TO FACE is a book of 40 dialogues, graded from elementary to intermediate, in which various structures are offered, singly or in combination, for the student to practice. The author states his aim as "to provide you and your students with material with which to bridge the gap between what Wilga Rivers describes as "skill-getting" and "skill-using activities". In other words, the student is being prepared for the stage when he can freely and appropriately use the language which has been presented to him. The dialogues are intended "to offer models of everyday English of the sort used in conversation by native speakers". The dialogues are short and thus readily memorized and are furnished with two or three transfer situations. From these, the students should create their own little dialogue using what structures and vocabulary they are able to use.

Each dialogue is illustrated. The illustrations are attractive but they do not give the students any help in producing further dialogues in the transfer situation; they merely give the artist's (Graham Round) impression of the two speakers in the original dialogue.

The introduction provides a "suggested classroom procedure" for the dialogues which gives a very usable and complete picture of the methodological possibilities (including the use of the tape which accompanies the book). There is also a structural index so that teachers working from a structural index can easily find a dialogue or dialogues suitable for the grammatical item they want to practice.

Of course, none of these features is new or unusual. Jerrom and Szkutnik's "Conversational Exercises in Everyday English" (Longman) does at least as much and was published in 1965. What takes this book beyond Jerrom and Szkutnik and others is what Mr. Long calls Paralanguage. This is taken to include verbal items ("Ouch", "Tut-tut", "Uh, uh", etc. - described as the "grunts and groans of the target language") and visual items. The latter are described in detailed notes for each dialogue. Here (for dialogue 21) is an example:

"Joyce Williams jerks her head and shoulders back as she says

"Well I never !" The movement shows surprise and disbelief in English, whether accompanied by a verbal exclamation or not."

Or (dialogue 23):

"Mavis punctuates her next utterance with rhythmic chopping movements".

An assessment of this book depends very much on the teaching situation from which one is working. Differences in objectives, approach and circumstances can make the same language teaching materials useless to one teacher and indispensible to another. It is with this very much in mind that the following comments are offered.

The writer offering materials for use mid-way between presentation and free practice has an invaluable contribution to make; this contribution will be acknowledged by teachers if all or most of the following points are observed:

1) the materials can be incorporated into the syllabus in use;
2) the English is reasonably natural;
3) the materials are usable and reasonably flexible;
4) students find the materials stimulating and interesting;
5) students can feel that they are using language realistically and in situations which are as close to life as classrooms and textbooks ever can be;
6) the teacher is not pushed too far beyond his knowledge of the way the language is used by native speakers (assuming, here, the position of the non-native speaker as teacher, as in Mexico).

With regard to the first point, Mr. Long's experience as a teacher working from a structural syllabus has not let him down. The selection of structures and their combinations is comprehensive and efficient. However, a workpersonlike approach to grammar does not guarantee naturalness.

With regard to individual sentences, Mr. Long is hard to fault. The earlier, simpler dialogues contain one or two infelicities (in dialogue 2, for example: Is that your car?/ Yes, it is. Why?/ My bicycle's under it.) but the language is very simple here and there is no doubt that the use of individual structures is reasonably natural.

Certain combinations, however, stray from native speaker usage. All of a handful of native speakers tested shied away from the following as a natural exchange:

What are you doing tonight?/ If I've got some work, I 'll do that.

What'll you do if you haven't got any work?/ I'll watch television or read a book.
What about if I invite you out?/ I'll think about it. (28)

In general, however, the non-native speaker teacher can be satisfied that this book will help to give students a fair idea of the way English is used.

An experienced teacher, moving to point 3, will find no difficulty in using this book either with a single copy for himself or with the students having their own. The author's suggestions include practical ideas for using the blackboard and the tape recorder. The book is clearly laid out and the transfer situations normally require little explanation.

The author admits to getting away from "boring" textbook characters and to adding an element of humour ("of the situational as opposed to the verbal kind, given that we are dealing with foreign language students") to some of the dialogues. As a result some dialogues are interesting and entertaining. The stated objective is not always met, however; the humour of dialogue 36, for example, depends on the words "herbivore" and "vegetarian"; that of number 26 on "All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy". But this is not serious. What mars this book is that there are too many situations where the author's search for the humorous leads to a bizarre setting which the student will not find relevant to himself and which will thus not encourage successful transfer. After reading through this book, I find myself coming back to arguments that stimulus material should be as general and realistic as possible so that students are given the fullest opportunities to apply the language to themselves or to role-play situations which appeal to them.

Finally, we come back to the paralanguage. Many of the verbal items are clearly useful and valuable. I can see strong arguments for expressions (incidental language, I think we often call them) like "Oh !", "Oh dear !", "Well really !" or "Well I never !". They give the exchanges a natural flavour and give the opportunity to use new intonation patterns. I am less convinced about the grunts and groans. Undeniably, students enjoy producing them. On the other hand, I do not think it is over pessimistic to suggest that unless a native speaker spends a lot of time with a class, the production of these sounds will be extremely un-native speakerlike. Further, with the exception of examples like "Ssshh", these sounds can usually be replaced by a word or expression which will do more to increase the students' communicative competence. Lastly, how much confidence will the non-native speaker teacher need to reproduce the chopping, jerking and hand-clasping described in the notes on visual Paralanguage?

Too much, I feel, for most to attempt it, although it would be very encouraging to find that I was wrong.

In summary, this little book is, at least, a valuable source of suggestions for the way structures may be combined with each other and with little occasional expressions to give a reasonably natural exchange in English. How much further a teacher can go with it will depend on his objectives, his own communicative competence in English (and his confidence in it) and his estimation of his students' willingness to role-play in the kinds of situations provided. Certainly, there are far worse books to have by your elbow when planning further practice activities.

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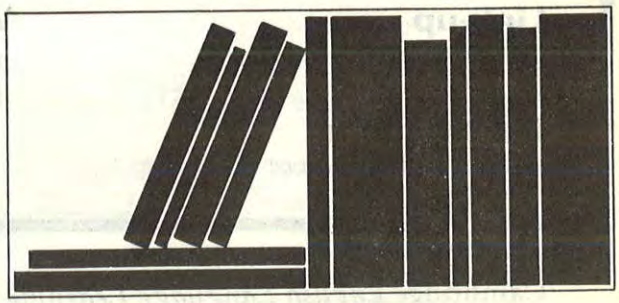

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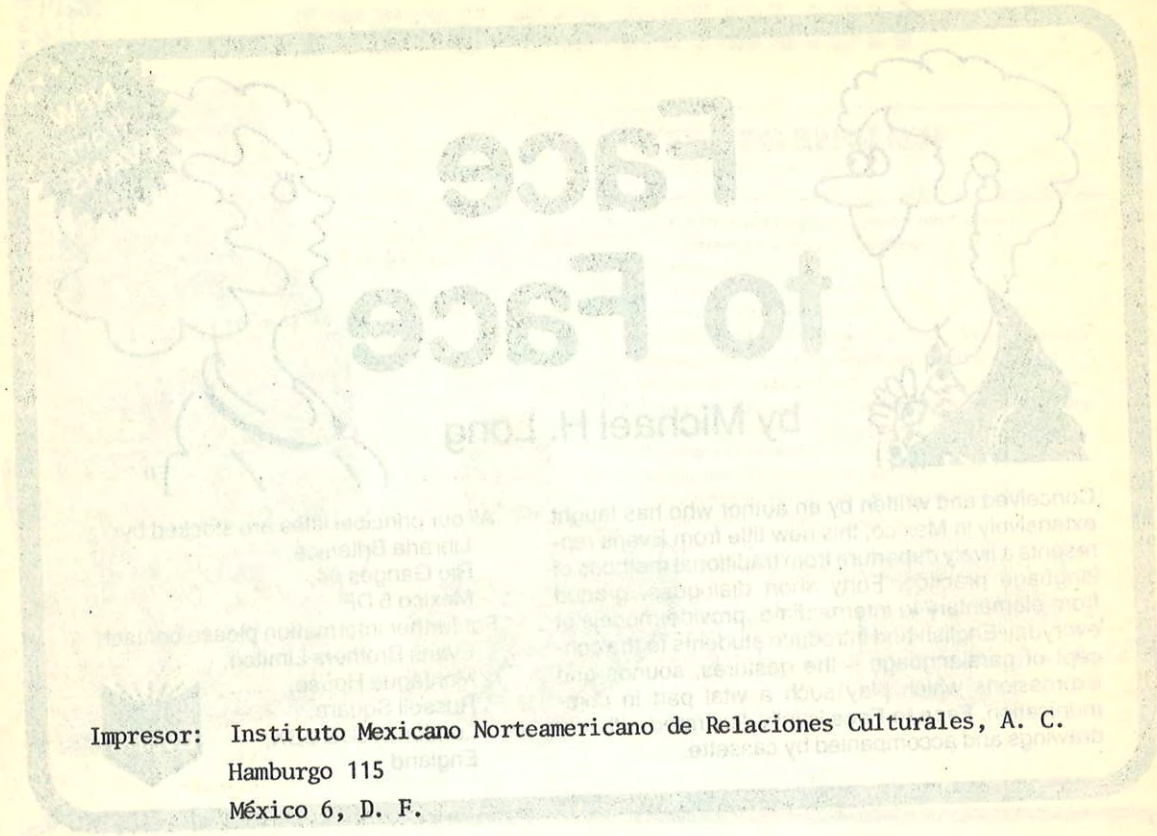

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