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AN ACCELERATIVE
PSYCHOLINGUISTIC APPROACH TO SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION
APPLIED TO ENGLISH LANGUAGE

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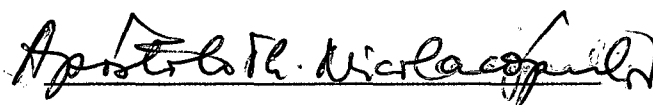
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ABSTRACT

This study is a proposal of a second language acquisition/teaching methodology. Language teaching research and theory have traditionally been relying on linguistic studies. However in the seventies language teaching theorists broke away from linguistics for their only source of information; they broadened the research field, and began to rely on other sciences, such as Psychology, Sociology, and Educational Theories, in order to uncover different aspects of language acquisition processes.

This was a natural development because language teaching theory needed a re-evaluation, since Linguistics alone could not cope with the practical reality of language teaching. As a

consequence methodologies were proposed by theorists and practitioners. The most comprehensive of these proposals was, according to current trends, the communicative approach which claimed that language was fundamentally communication and meaning, rather than form. Language should be taught in real situations and communicative contexts. But contextualization and language practice did not solve all language teaching problems.

This study is concerned with a tentative psycholinguistic solution to one of the problems that have been haunting second language teachers for a long time, i.e. how to help students acquire the second language in a minimal amount of time. The hypothesis proposed is that second language teaching methodologies will be accelerative if based on an interorganism perspective, i.e. if we work on the linguistic material in terms of the way the mind apprehends and stores information.

In this study, I first survey the second language teaching situation in terms of theory and practice, and then I concentrate on the analysis of the problem, i.e. on the inadequacy of acquisition and teaching theories. An accelerative approach to the acquisition of the English verb phrase, based on modern cognitive concepts, is then developed and proposed.

The result is a logic-mathematic-geometrical model which is tested in practice in two different comparative experiments with Brazilian students beginning the study of English language. In the two experiments, a control group was exposed to communicative teaching as proposed by the communicative approach, while an experimental group was taught in the same method but, additionally, received instruction in the psycholinguistic accelerative approach proposed by this thesis.

Tests were developed to measure the accelerative efficiency

of these language teaching methodologies. The results, in terms of the total growth difference, favoured the students following the methodology of the psycholinguistic approach, allowing us to conclude that the iconic model used to teach the English verb phrase generates good input for an accelerative second language teaching/acquisition.

RESUMO

O presente estudo trata da proposição de uma metodologia para ensino/aquisição de línguas estrangeiras. As teorias e pesquisas na área de ensino de línguas têm tradicionalmente se baseado em estudos linguísticos. Todavia por volta dos anos setenta, teóricos do ensino de línguas romperam com orientações puramente linguísticas, alargaram o campo de pesquisa e começaram a basear-se em outras ciências, tais como a Psicologia, Sociologia e Teorias Educacionais, de maneira a desenvolver outros aspectos do processo de aquisição de línguas.

Esta situação foi um passo natural no desenvolvimento do ensino de línguas, uma reavaliação era necessária, pois a linguística sozinha não conseguia abranger a realidade prática do ensino. Como consequência novas metodologias foram propostas por teóricos e professores. A proposta mais abrangente foi, de acordo com as atuais tendências do campo, a abordagem comunicativa, a qual definiu a linguagem como fundamentalmente comunicação e significado, e não apenas forma. A língua deveria, então, ser ensinada em situações reais e contextos comunicativos. Todavia a contextualização e a ênfase no uso da língua, não resolveram todos os problemas do ensino de línguas.

Este estudo trata de uma tentativa psicolinguística para a solução de um dos problemas que tem estado preocupando professores de línguas estrangeiras há muito tempo, i.e. como ajudar os alunos a adquirirem a segunda língua no menor tempo possível. Propomos a hipótese de que as metodologias de ensino de línguas estrangeiras serão acelerativas, se baseadas em uma perspectiva "interorgânica", i.e. se trabalharmos o material

linguístico em termos de como a mente apreende e armazena a informação.

Neste estudo fiz primeiramente um levantamento da situação do ensino de línguas em termos de teoria e prática, e concentrei-me então na análise do problema, i.e. na inadequação das teorias de aquisição e ensino. Então desenvolvo e proponho, baseada em conceitos cognitivos modernos, uma abordagem acelerativa para a aquisição do sistema verbal da língua inglesa.

O resultado é um modelo lógico-matemático-geométrico, o qual foi testado na prática em dois experimentos comparativos, onde trabalhei com estudantes brasileiros que iniciavam o estudo da língua inglesa. Em ambos os experimentos, um grupo de controle desenvolveu uma abordagem sociolinguística comunicativa, enquanto um grupo experimental desenvolveu a mesma abordagem comunicativa, acrescida da abordagem psicolinguística, proposta por esta tese.

Testes foram desenvolvidos, para medir a eficiência acelerativa destes métodos de ensino de segunda língua. Os resultados, em termos de diferença de crescimento total, favoreceram os alunos que seguiram a metodologia psicolinguística. Isto nos permite concluir, que o modelo icônico usado para o ensino do sistema verbal inglês, gera um insumo adequado para a aquisição/ensino acelerativo de línguas estrangeiras.

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INTRODUCTION

During this century language teaching methodologies have been developed based on linguistic description. Language teaching experts have been producing materials relying on language descriptions provided by linguists and grammarians. During the structural period, for example, appeared the audiolingual method which introduced memorization and pattern practice, i.e. structural exercises, as the main teaching activity. In the late 50's, attention was focussed on the Transformational Generative Grammar, in which Chomsky, among other things, advocated the sentence as the main unit of analysis for which he claimed a deep structure that suffered transformations until it reached the surface level realisation. Chomsky implied, through his notion of deep structure, the concentration of grammar in a few generative rules that the competent speaker used to generate sentences, and to develop such a competence language teaching theorists proposed the conscious study of language rules.

In the last two decades, this situation has been changing. Language teaching theorists began to broaden the field. Foundations were sought on other knowledge fields besides Linguistics, e.g. Sociology, Anthropology, Learning Theories, Psychology, etc... The reason for this change was that Chomsky's grammar had a disorienting impact on linguistics, and thus on language teaching theory as well, since applied linguists had been heavily relying on linguistics for their theoretical and

practical input. Language teaching theorists concluded that linguistics alone did not have all the answers to solve the problems of language acquisition/teaching. For a more comprehensive view, it was necessary to explore psycholinguistic aspects, such as the acquisition process or even sociological factors involved in communication.

Sociolinguistics was the first alternative foundation to provide new directions to second language teaching methodologies. After the chomskian period, sociolinguists began to explore language as a communicative process, in which context and meaning had great relevance. Language teaching theorists, then, developed communicative approaches to language teaching that stressed the communicative value of language in the development of linguistic competence.

Communicative methodologies have been working in the classrooms, but one ancient issue of the field has not yet been solved: the length of time students take to develop acceptable communicative competence in a foreign or second language.

The problem with the methodologies so far developed and used in classrooms, is that, linguistic descriptions have determined the teaching. Language teaching theory lacks, as psycholinguistics claims (Slama Cazacu, 1979: 94-95) a description of language that facilitates the acquisition and storage process.

The solution should be sought from an interorganism perspective, i.e. work on language from a mental acquisitional perspective, to facilitate, accelerate, and even guarantee second

language acquisition.

In the present study, I will make a theoretical analysis of the language teaching situation, and of the problem of rate efficiency in second language teaching methodologies. I then propose, based on modern theories of cognition, a model for the study of English verb phrases.

I develop my work in five chapters. The first chapter discusses the language teaching situation, problem, and possible solution.

Chapter II concentrates on the study of the main problematic area of language teaching, i.e. it presents a synthesis of the achievements of other disciplines in the area of cognition. It reviews what other disciplines, that are also concerned with knowledge conveyance, acquisition, and storage, have found out, and defined, concerning cognitive processes.

Chapter III is concerned with the proposition of an accelerative psycholinguistic approach to second language acquisition/teaching, based on modern concepts of knowledge acquisition, and storage.

Chapter IV contains the description of the materials used in the two experiments developed. It describes class materials, and testing materials.

Chapter V contains the description and results of the two comparative experiments developed. These experiments intended to investigate the accelerative efficiency of the methodology proposed.

The paper concludes by summing up the main theoretical

points that answer the central question proposed at the beginning of the work, i.e. the question of how to accelerate second language acquisition/teaching process. I will summarize the results of my investigation, and present suggestions for further studies.

CHAPTER I

LANGUAGE TEACHING SITUATION

1.1. Language teaching theories - a historical perspective

Language teaching theory has a long history that goes back to the classical era. Since these early times the methods proposed to teach languages have been based on diverse fields of knowledge. According to Kelly (Kelly, 1969, cited in Stern, 1983) the period from the classical era up to the nineteenth century, developed techniques of teaching based on rhetoric, grammar, logic, philosophy, education, and even theological studies.

Next, through the development of diachronic linguistics, in the nineteenth century, and later with the development of synchronic linguistics by Saussure, in the beginning of this century, language teaching theory restricted its foundations to the findings of descriptive linguistics. This period is divided, according to Stern (Stern, 1983), into three main periods. In the first one, theorists limited their studies and developed methodologies based on the assumptions of the structural school of language studies. This period ends when Chomsky presents the world his Transformational Grammar in 1957. During the 60's. Chomsky pushed linguistic theory towards mathematical models, and his rational point of view of the human being led him into hypothesizing on mind functioning and mind processes (1). With

his theory he created a disorienting impact, that sterilized language teaching for the next decade.

"The upheaval in linguistics and psycholinguistics created by Chomsky's Transformational Generative Grammar had begun to affect language pedagogy by the mid-sixties. Around 1970 theorists were acutely aware of the loss of direction and confusion of thought that had ensued. "Where do we go from here?" was the title of an address by Rivers" (Ibid.:108)

According to Stern (Ibid.), in the 70's, after complex research and theorizing, linguists, under the strong influence of sociologists, began to gather information concerning the rules of language use, and this broadened the linguistic description, that now included a further section, i.e. language in context. Under this new perspective, theorists developed a new approach to language teaching. According to this new perspective, to develop linguistic competence what mattered in language classes was how to use appropriate pieces of language in appropriate situations and contexts.

Also during the 70's, language teaching specialists suggested that time for re-evaluations had come. It was time to give a new direction to language teaching, time to broaden the method concept, and time to loosen the tight hold that linguistic orientations had exercised on language teaching theory until then. Language teaching stopped to be considered a matter of linguistics alone. Now it was a concern of Educational Pedagogical Linguistics, which draws for information from a range of related disciplines, such as Linguistics, Learning Theories, Psychology, Anthropology, Sociology,

Artificial-Intelligence, etc...

In his book "Fundamental Concepts of Language Teaching", Stern (Ibid.) presents a synthesis, or as he calls it, a conceptual framework, a general model for second language teaching theory, as educational pedagogical linguists view it today. According to Stern, language teaching theoretical studies are divided into three levels. Level 1 consists of a multidisciplinary foundation, i.e. specialized studies on several different areas of knowledge such as language teaching historical perspectives, Linguistics, Sociology, Sociolinguistics, Anthropology, Psychology, Psycholinguistics and Educational Theory. The first level is more abstract, and is the concern of each area specialist. The second level, the concern of language teaching theorists proper, consists of educational linguistics theory and research, and it basically concentrates on the concepts of "learning", "language", and "teaching", all related to the broader concept of "context". Finally the third level, level 3, is a question of practical work on language teaching, and is the concern of practitioners, testers, administrators, and curriculum makers, in schools and classrooms.

1.2. Language teaching practice

The long history of language teaching theories and

research, has produced many language teaching methodologies. In the first period that goes from the classical era up to the nineteenth century, we find, according to Kelly (Kelly, 1969, cited in Stern, 1983) a constant and systematic change between formal and informal language teaching, while alternatively, the grammatical rule studies or the development of oral skills were emphasized. The second period, as described by Stern (Ibid.), has also produced distinct phases in language teaching. The structural period is specially characterized by the Audiolingual, and Audiovisual methods. These methods consist of memorization of dialogues, imitative repetition, and pattern drills, i.e. sentence pattern practice. During the disorienting impact of chomskian theory, we find what linguists called, cognitive theory methods, when language learning was considered a conscious study of rules. And finally, from the 70's on, language teaching practice has been concerned with communicative approaches. Students during classes are supposed to use language in appropriate contexts.

1.3. Language teaching problems

1.3.1. Statement of problem

All these periods of theorizing and practice have produced techniques and methods of language teaching successful to a certain extent. These techniques have helped teachers but have

failed in terms of the amount of time required for acquisition. (2) What worried teachers and students during the 60's was that it took too long to teach language patterns through repetition and drills. And what still worries us today is that it takes students too long to develop fluency, through the understanding of functions and the production of certain sentences in their appropriate contexts. We all realize that the different methods proposed have worked somehow, but not to the extent that we do not need to look for other ways of teaching, other methodologies. They have mainly failed in regard to the amount of time students take in developing an acceptable level of fluency in the target language.

1.3.2. Analysis of problem

1.3.2.1. Theory

In order to find a solution, the next step is to locate the source of the actual problem. Why have all the theories produced slow teaching methodologies? According to Stern (Stern, 1983), up to 1970, with the rise of educational pedagogical linguistics, the situation was completely under the control of linguistics alone, and that caused the failure of language teaching techniques in terms of the amount of time required for acquisition, since other very important aspects of the process, were not considered, such as the learning element. After the

disorienting impact of chomskian theories, however, we find educational linguistics theorists moving away from pure linguistic orientations, broadening theoretical horizons, and concluding that not only linguistic input was important, but the internal acquisitional processes and teaching techniques were important as well.

In 1964, an international association of applied linguistics, AILA, with a strong psycholinguistic orientation, was created. This association re-evaluated the results of linguistic studies, and came to the conclusion that linguistics alone couldn't cope with the problems of practical reality, such as language teaching procedures. Its members asked for new interdisciplinary solutions to these problems, solutions that would be found in research of mind processes (Slama-Cazacu, 1979). A new direction was proposed, and re-evaluations were made, and the seventies was a time for research (Stern, 1983) and for new perspectives.

Several acquisition theories were developed and proposed (Ellis, 1985), such as the acculturation theory by Schumann, 1978; and the nativization theory by Andersen, 1980, which claim that second language acquisition is a process of becoming adapted to a new culture. We also find during this period, the accommodation theory by Gilles, 1980, that explains second language acquisition in terms of a social and psychological accommodation towards ingroups; The discourse theory by Hatch, 1978, treats communication as the matrix of linguistic knowledge, and language development is considered in terms of

how the learner discovers the meaning potential of language by participating in communication; The markedness theory, based on Chomsky, considers second language acquisition, as a uniform phenomenon, i.e. different languages have universal features that require no, or minimal triggery, and marked features that are more difficult to acquire; The neurofunctional theory by Lamendella, 1977, was an attempt to characterize the neurolinguistic information processing system, responsible for the development and use of language; There was also the monitor model theory by Krashen, (1981), where Second language Acquisition is described in terms of an (i+1) input, i.e. input only a little higher than the student's knowledge. This input is first transformed into intake by the student and then integrated into the learner's competence and then displayed as output with higher or lower degree of monitoring.

As we can see through the description of the theories above, the majority have centred on socio-cultural factors, e.g. acculturation, accomodation, nativization, or on linguistic factors, e.g. discourse, and markedness.

The two exceptions are the neurofunctional theory, that was merely an attempt, according to Ellis (Ibid.), and the monitor model by Krashen. Krashen's monitor model is the one that gets closer to real mental process description. His theory is described in five hypothesis, the acquisition-learning distinction, the natural order hypothesis, the monitor hypothesis, the input hypothesis, and the affective filter hypothesis. According to Krashen:

"The true causative variables in second language acquisition derive from the input hypothesis and the affective filter - the amount of comprehensible input the acquirer receives and understands, and the strength of the affective filter, or the degree to which the acquirer is open to the input." (1982:9)

According to Krashen's theory, how does acquisition work ?

"...given the correctness of the natural order hypothesis, how do we move from one stage to another?...the input hypothesis makes the following claim: a necessary (but not sufficient) condition to move from stage i to stage $i+1$ is that the acquirer understands input that contains $i+1$, where 'understand' means the acquirer is focussed on the meaning and not the form of the message." (Ibid.:20-21)

Krashen only signals a communicative process, where meaning is the key to acquisition, but his proposal does not explain, or describe, how an interorganism perspective (mind/linguistic input) would be. He does not describe either how linguistic knowledge is organized, synthesized, and stored in memory after it has been understood.

Today language teaching research asks for a general linguistic theory that goes hand in hand with the principles underlying language acquisitional processes. Psycholinguistics (Slama-Cazacu, 1979), as it is the case with pedagogical linguistics, also defines the need for a structural description of language that will facilitate acquisition.

We can add to educational linguists and psycholinguists' needs definitions, an accurate description of the important aspects involved in the process of second language acquisition:

"A complete account of Second Language Acquisition involves both, showing how the input is shaped to make it learnable

an interorganism perspective), and how the learner works on the input to turn it into intake (an intraorganism perspective)." (Ellis, 1985:164)

1.3.2.2. Practice

This has not been the view that most methodologists have shared in the last decade. Language teaching methodologies have taken language descriptions, and gradually presented these descriptions to students in classes, following a sequential hierarchy of difficulty in course organization.

The main problem with these approaches is concerned with step 1, input, because the grammatically described language has simply been put in front of the student, and the student himself is expected to analyse and synthesize it. Syllabus writers, in their part, while preparing materials, paid no attention to the interactional process between input and mind, the interorganism perspective Ellis mentions (Ibid.).

1.3.3. Conclusion on problem

It seems that there could be a significant economy of time if materials writers simplified the linguistic material before students began working on it. What does this mean? It means that instead of presenting a large mass of linguistic descriptive

material to students, syllabus designers should beforehand organize linguistic input in terms of "mind acquisition", and not only display the traditional grammatical description to the student. This way the student could go directly, with no waste of time, to the second step, intake and language storage.

1.4. Language teaching solution

It seems therefore important, to consider second language acquisition in the terms suggested by psycholinguists (Slama-Cazacu, 1979), and described by Ellis(1985:164), i.e. reviewing input in terms of mind processing.

NOTES

(1) - "Chomsky had not always made direct psychological claims for his own linguistic theory. On the contrary, he often emphasized that a generative grammar and the concept of the native speaker's 'competence' were constructs to account for the linguistic characteristics of a grammar of a language. They were not to be thought of as models of how a native speaker makes up or interprets utterances. But it was obvious that the notion of competence and the concept of linguistic creativity together with Chomsky's attack on behaviourism would lead psychologists, sooner or later, to re-examine the theoretical basis of psycholinguistics." (Stern, 1983:300)

(2) - "As tentativas de renovação no ensino de línguas estrangeiras, qualquer que seja o meio em que o fenómeno se verifica (Unesco, Conselho da Europa, Universidades, mundo dos negócios, etc...) encontram, todas elas, sua origem no notável empreendimento do exército americano que, durante a segunda guerra mundial se empenhou vigorosamente para ensinar uma língua estrangeira a um número máximo de pessoas num mínimo de tempo." (Passel, 1983:1) Attempts to renew foreign languages teaching, whatever the environment, the phenomenon happens (Unesco, European Council, Universities, business world, etc...), find its origin in the remarkable enterprise of the American Army, that, during the second world war, vigorously endeavoured to teach a foreign language to a maximum number of people in a minimum amount of time.

CHAPTER II

LANGUAGE TEACHING PROBLEM

Acquisition theories

2.1. Cognitive theories

As we have seen in the previous chapter, one of the main reasons for second language acquisition rate problem is the fact that language teaching syllabuses basically relied on linguistics to produce materials. But we have also pointed out that research in the field of language teaching has directed theorists' attention to the acquisition process so far neglected. Theorists realized that they should pay attention to the mental processes as well as to the input provided by the teaching materials.

Other science fields have also been concerned with acquisition. They have already successfully described the process and, as the examples below illustrate, developed practical applications. Among these we can name:

a. Schema theory: A vanguard theory within psycholinguistic research, that has been used to explain and propose reading models.

b. Modern cognitive theories: Theories that describe the

cognitive acquisition process as permanent redoing of structures, or mental symbolic models. Also a vanguard theory that can potentially bring improvements to several fields of research, such as educational systems, computer science, etc...

c. Modern theories of scientific methodology: Theories that set mental power limits at the elaboration of simplified models of reality. Models that will never be completely identical to this reality, because reality and apprehension mechanisms are different, and do not agree in terms of their own nature.

These theories claim, in a deep and solid way, within current thought frontiers, that simplifying structures, or schemas, are cognitive conscience levers.

2.1.1. Definition of acquisition mediums

In this sense we can begin our analysis, departing from the types of experiences that propitiate knowledge acquisition. According to Olson & Bruner:

"We have three different types of experience that tend to three forms of representation: active, iconic, and symbolic... The first is related to direct action, the second to model, and the third to symbolic systems."(Olson & Bruner, 1974:122)

2.1.2. Definition of the degree of importance of mediums

In terms of the efficiency and importance of these three channels of experience, that lead to acquisition, Olson & Bruner state that:

"The sequence of functions of the three levels of cognitive experience, leads us to state that the main medium, iconography or modeling of the real is at the same time the final representation, sought, of the inapprehensible real, only absorbed through creation or models. Modeling is the key element of creation and it is the culmination of the cognitive process. Experience is its main vitalizer, and the symbolic systems are the economy of knowledge storage. Which reinforces the idea of a predominantly visual human culture, in its mean term." (Ibid.:53)

This argument reinforces the superior power of the model over the symbolic system, in what concerns acquisition. Also, it makes it possible for us to propose the rational visual model based on geometrical-logic as a superior device to accelerate cognitive understanding in language acquisition in opposition to the symbolic representation. Here we add an argument by Maxwell (Maxwell, cited in Hesse, 1973:88). According to Hesse, Maxwell says, word for word, that we need to translate symbols into the dynamics of language. That is a reinforcing opinion within the scientific methodology field towards the superiority of models over the transmission codes, offered by symbols. So much so that Maxwell goes on recommending:

"Deste modo nossas palavras levantarão a imagem mental não de certas operações do cálculo, mas de certas características dos movimentos dos corpos." (Ibid.:88) (1)

Piaget in several passages of his "Biologia e Conhecimento"

(Piaget, 1973) also states the preference of intelligence for schemas that tend to geometrization:

"Em toda aprendizagem, e sobretudo nos detalhes dos esquemas sensório-motores da inteligência prática, esta lógica dos esquemas é cada vez mais importante; encaixamentos, ordem, correspondências, etc... É acompanhada por uma geometria evidente." (Piaget, 1973) (2)

And about the importance of this structuralism of models, as a basic process of intelligence, Piaget also informs us that:

"Os psicólogos da escola Gestalt tiveram o mérito de pôr em evidência aquilo que chamavam leis da organização da percepção, que consistem essencialmente na geometrização ou constituição de estrutura espaço temporais ou cinemáticas." (Ibid.:378) (3)

In another passage of the same book, Piaget concludes on this subject:

"O problema da inteligência é, antes de tudo, o da construção dos esquemas de assimilação mental." (Ibid.:60) (4)

The organization of these geometrical schemas, that constitute the basic processes of elementary mental work in the process of knowledge conveyance, is considered by Piaget an extension of the biological organization of the human being. Man achieves this when facing actions coordination, through which he goes into the world, opening and understanding his own way, through elaboration of derivative logic-mathematic schemas, through general relationship of his action in the environment. The organization of these processes of cognitive conveyance,

that are based on logical schemas, frequently seek the geometrical expression as one of the most essential to the nature of human perception. As was stated by Olson & Bruner (1974), the iconographic, or model, constitutes the central picture of our organization of the image of the world. Piaget mentions the epistemological source of this suggestion inside philosophy:

"A organização continua e prossegue, por conseguinte, enquanto funcionamento, na qualidade de conteúdo transmitido. O epistemologista que ler estas linhas reconhecerá nelas uma linguagem kantiana." (Ibid.:174) (5)

This essential character of logical and even mathematical schematic organization, and the development of this conveyance technique, is much more essential than the technique of verbal language. Schemas correspond to more fundamental ordinary organizations, within the structural process, than the organizational levels attained by mere language. Piaget affirms that:

"A lógica, por seu lado, não se reduz em nada, conforme se quis fazer crer, a um sistema de notações inerentes ao discurso ou a qualquer tipo de linguagem. Consiste, ela também, em um sistema de operações (classificar, seriar, pôr em correspondência, utilizar uma combinatória ou grupos de transformações, etc...) e a origem destas operações deve ser procurada, muito aquém da linguagem, nas coordenadas gerais da ação." (Ibid.:6) (6)

From the point of view of scientific knowledge it is not different. Acquisition is mainly favoured by the simplifying schemas, that are called models or paradigms, i.e. simplifying

reductions of the complexity that needs to be interpreted, acquired, and used as final knowledge available to the individual. Olson & Bruner inform us that:

"What anyone needs to learn about anything is never the thing itself, but only an organized whole of selected abstract character traits." (Olson & Bruner, 1974: 210)

The "model" is a universal device for materialization and conveyance of scientific knowledge. An irreplaceable, highly meaningful device, in the cognitive field and in knowledge acquisition fields as well. It is responsible for an essential and irreplaceable competence of the mental process, despite its apparent roughness that is due to its necessary simplification, characteristic almost always connected to the geometrization mentioned by Piaget, and the Gestalt theory (Piaget, 1973a: 378). In this sense Bertalanffy warns us that this tool, although rough, is quite essential to the mental process and that:

"O modelo do átomo concebido por Bohr, foi uma das mais arbitrarias simplificações jamais concebidas, mas entretanto tornou-se uma pedra angular da física moderna. As super simplificações corrigidas no progresso subsequente são o meio mais poderoso, e na verdade o único para o domínio conceitual da natureza." (Bertalanffy, 1975: 238)
(7)

In other words, the model is the most essential instrument for both knowledge conveyance and acquisition.

V H. Childe clearly states that:

"Part of the activity of reproducing the external world consists just in the endeavor to improve the correspondance by completing the pattern in imagination." (1956:67)

This means that the expression of a phenomenon requires a model that can be easily apprehended by the mind. In our specific case the human actions and the different forms of the verb phrase, geometrically expressed in terms of the concept of time are transformed into a spacial-geometric concept. We could propose teaching through a symbolic or grammatical model, as teachers have been doing in classrooms, but it is more efficient, according to all arguments so far developed, if we teach through a schematic and geometric model, i.e. an iconic model much more efficient in the process of conveyance and mental storage of knowledge.

2.1.3. Justification for the importance of the icon

The reason for this tendency towards geometrical schemas, as the best elements for knowledge conveyance, are easily understood. The world is complex, it is difficult for the human mind to apprehend all its details. So the human mind needs the simplification that is better achieved by the visual geometric models than by any symbolic complex system, as is the case of the world representing grammatology, which is far more complex. Grammar and functional descriptions are quite good as filing systems, that describe knowledge, but not for a quick mental absorption.

The complexity of the world forces us into a continuous

production of geometric "maps", so that we can understand it. Childe argues that the process is a metaphor of universal use, that cannot be by-passed:

"The external world is enormously complex: to find our way about it we need a simplified map." (Ibid.:60)

This says everything about the indispensable and essential nature of visual schemas that synthesize far better than words.

2.2. Problematic areas

2.2.1. Educational systems

In this sense, it is important to notice that educational systems have been neglecting, to a great extent, the development of the students' ability to work with models. Grammatical/functional lessons have predominated in the classrooms, and we find a general negligence in what concerns the understanding that the model is much more essential for comprehension, and much more powerful in what concerns knowledge conveyance than actions and symbols. According to Olson & Bruner, already mentioned above, the model is not only the main tool for acquisition, but it is also the final goal of all knowledge, that has as its objective to provide to the mind a model of the world. Concerning this negligence we add the authors' words:

"Modeling or providing demonstrations is, therefore, a

skill to which most pedagogic theories are blind. I.A.Richards provides an illustration of the pedagogic implication of such a theory: Modeling as an instructional technique is successful to the extent that it creates an awareness both of the critical alternatives and of how to choose between them." (Olson & Bruner,1974: 138)

2.2.2. Linguistics

Piaget's view (1973a), which we mentioned above, was essential in the history of epistemologic culture. It defined the brain structuring activity in a greater, clearer, more elementary, and more purely logical depth, below the superficial levels of symbolic systems, the language of words, for which Chomsky, mistakenly in our opinion, intended to attribute a systemic place within the human brain. Grammatical laws do not dive so deeply into the essential nature of human understanding, as logical mathematical geometric schemas do, and this is the case of the methodological tool defended in this thesis.

Concerning the fundamental value of this divergency, favouring Piaget against Chomsky, we are for the greater efficiency of the method based on visual rationalization of an iconic geometric logic or model, only partially symbolic, here developed to represent verb phrase tenses and future time.

The essence of acquisition efficiency must be sought in deeper layers of perception, and so we are for Piaget's general argument that favours a less grammatical, and more iconic development for intelligence. We advocate this trend at least,

whenever it is possible, to transform grammatical aspects into iconic models. Intelligence will develop more clearly and efficiently by this method that is closer to the typical activities of the brain. Piaget says in this respect, defining the differences between his, Chomsky's and the empiricist theory, that:

"...uma, fiel às velhas tradições anglo-saxônicas, continua orientada para um associacionismo empirista, o que reduziria todo conhecimento à uma aquisição exógena, a partir da experiência ou das exposições verbais ou audiovisuais dirigidas pelo adulto. A segunda se caracteriza por um retorno inesperado aos fatores do inatismo e maturação interna (isso em grande parte devido à influência linguística de Chomsky, o qual, a despeito dos processos transformacionais, e, por conseguinte, em parte psicogenéticos que reconhece haver nas gramáticas, acredita na existência de um núcleo fixo inato, determinante das estruturas iniciais da linguagem, tal como a relação entre sujeito e predicado); Sendo assim, a educação se resumiria em grande parte no exercício de uma razão já preformada de saída. A terceira direção, que é decididamente a nossa (e que nos leva a atribuir os começos da linguagem às estruturas construídas pela inteligência sensorio-motora pré-existente), é de natureza construtivista, isto é, sem preformação exógena (empirismo), ou endógena (inatismo), por contínuas ultrapassagens das elaborações sucessivas...(Piaget, 1973b:12) (8)

2.3. Conclusion on Cognitive theories

We can conclude, therefore, following Maxwell (Hesse, 1973), that it is less efficient to 'acquire' through symbols, i.e. through the linguistic system, than through the representation of the dynamics and structure of the phenomenon we want to express. We have brought together, through the

analysis of the meaning of the model, icon, and image, the main reasons of epistemology, of scientific methodology, of cognitive theories, and of modern propositions of the mechanophysiology of the brain. All these approaches converge to the suggestion that when we deal with representational models that have a logic-mathematic-geometrical basis, we deal with materials of knowledge understanding and conveyance, far more inherent to the brain process, and in consequence stronger and more consequent, than the conventional remoteness established by symbolic systems of verbal language.

NOTES

(1) - "In that way our words will create a mental image, not of certain calculations, but of certain characteristics of body movements."

(2) - "In every learning process, and above all in the sensorial-motor schema of practical intelligence, this logic of schemas is becoming more important; boxings, order, correspondences, etc.. It is accompanied by an evident geometry"

(3) - "Gestalt psychologists had the merit of making evident that, what they called 'organization laws' of perception, that consist essentially in the geometrization or building of kinematics or time-space structures."

(4) - "The intelligence problem is, above all, that of constructing mental acquisition schemas."

(5) - "Organization, as a functional process, continues and goes on, in the quality of conveyed content. The epistemologist who reads these lines will recognize in them a kantian language."

(6) - "Logic, on its turn, as it was believed, cannot be reduced to a notation system inherent to the discourse, or to any sort of language. It similarly consists of a system of operations (classify, seriate, put into correspondance, use combinatory

or transformation groups, etc...), and the origin of these operations must be sought, far beyond language, in the general coordinations of actions."

(7) - "Bohr's atom model was one of the most arbitrary simplifications ever conceived, nevertheless it became one of the corner stones of modern physics. Oversimplifications corrected in the subsequent steps are the most powerful means, and actually the only one, for nature's conceptual domain."

(8) - "...one, faithful to the old anglo-saxon traditions, is oriented towards an empiricist associationism, which would reduce all knowledge to an exogenous acquisition, departing from experiences, or verbal or audiovisual expositions directed by adults. The second is characterized by an unexpected return to the factors of innate and internal maturation (that because of Chomsky's linguistic influence, which despite transformational processes, which are, therefore, in part, psychogenetic, and present in grammars, believes in the existence of innate fixed nucleus, that determines initial linguistic structures, such as the relationship between subject and predicate); if that was so education would be to a great extent only the exercise of a predetermined reason. The third direction, that is definitely ours (and makes us attribute language beginnings to the structures constructed by the pre-existent sensorial-motor intelligence), is of a constructivist nature, i.e. with no exogenous preformation (empiricist), or endogenous (innatism) by

continous surpassing of successive elaborations..."

CHAPTER III

PROPOSED SOLUTION

Language teaching based on linguistic +mind processes

"The question is," said Alice, "Whether you can make words mean different things."

"The question is," said Humpty Dumpty, "Which is to be master" - "That's all."

Alice was much too puzzled to say anything, so after a minute, Humpty Dumpty began again.

"They have a temper most of them - particularly verbs, they're the proudest - adjectives you can do anything with, but not verbs - however I can manage the whole lot! Impenetrability! That's what I say!" (Lewis Carrol, Alice in Wonderland, cited in Palmer, 1965:7)

3.1. Introduction

In this chapter I will describe an accelerative psycholinguistic approach to second-language acquisition, applied to English language verb phrase (1). As I have emphasized in the previous chapters, language teaching has basically relied on linguistic descriptions to produce materials. These descriptions have historically followed three main lines of evolution, each linguistic school endowing to the next generation a summarized result of its work. So it was that traditional grammar provided the early structuralists with an extensive list of grammatical categories and the

structural school provided the transformational generative school with a large inventory and classification of possible surface linguistic realizations. Similarly, Chomsky provided the next generation with the notion of linguistic competence later extended by Hymes to sociolinguistic communicative competence. In the next section I will briefly describe what linguistic descriptions have to offer us in terms of language teaching.

3.2. Linguistic input and cognitive processes

3.2.1. Linguistic descriptions

In order to have an up-to-date idea of how linguists approach language description today, and how they organize their research, we can summarize and say, according to Hoey (1984), that the field is divided into two main lines of research: semantic/syntactic relationships, and speech act relationships, both applied to monologues, written pieces of text, and to dialogues, i.e. spoken discourse. This means that to know a language, or to describe what a speaker knows about a language, is to develop knowledge first concerning the relationship between grammatical form, and its semantic meaning, i.e. appropriateness, occurrences and feasibility (Hymes, 1971); and secondly (Coulthard, 1977), to develop associations between modes of speaking, topics, message forms, to settings or

activities, i.e. to develop knowledge concerning different styles available when speaking, to develop recognition of different event types, rules of interpretation, and norms of different types of interaction.

According to Hoey (1984), in terms of theoretical studies and their practical applications, the speech act relationships research branch has been far more developed than the semantic/syntactic branch, in what concerns spoken discourse. In terms of theory, dialogue speech act relationships have undergone an intensive description and categorization. In terms of practical application to language teaching, this research line provided the base for communicative approaches now widely used in classrooms.

The other branch of language description, i.e. semantic/syntactic relationship studies, have not been developed so fully in terms of theory. Very few studies have been devoted to it (Ibid.), and its actual description is found in more traditional grammars (Coulthard, 1977) that have organized and classified language mainly in terms of syntax, in opposition to semantics. In terms of language teaching, methodologists and language teachers have made an effort to incorporate the new findings in speech act theory and discourse analysis, but, as a whole, material writers and teachers in general have found it very difficult to free themselves from the boundig grammatical structural framework shaped along centuries. Even materials that claim to be communicative, such as the content of the "Strategies" series, are quite rigidly sequenced

in terms of structural criteria.

3.2.2. Cognitive processes

As we have seen in the previous chapter, it is more efficient, in terms of mental acquisition, to convey and understand knowledge if we work with models that have logic-mathematic-geometrical basis. So if we want to accelerate language acquisition processes, we need to produce input paying attention to the way the mind best apprehends its content, i.e. work on the material from an interorganism perspective, working on linguistic descriptions in terms of cognitive processes, and producing an easier conveyance model. Here, in this chapter then, I first approach one aspect of English grammar, the verb phrase, from a linguistic view and then present a model which is claimed to enhance accelerative competence in the use of tense expression variations by the students. I will deal with the representation of the dynamics and structure of actions, i.e. following the criteria mentioned above, produce models that have a logic-mathematic-geometrical basis.

For feasibility purposes I need to restrict my work, and thus I will only work on the syntactic/semantic relationships of English verb phrases, following Leech (1975). Another reason for this choice is that this is one of the most difficult and

problematic areas of foreign language acquisition. (2)

The remaining linguistic elements, besides finite verb phrases, will be left for further research.

3.3. Input - Leech's description of the English verb phrase

3.3.1. Verb phrase syntax

According to Leech & Svartvik (1975: 303-306) a verb phrase is syntactically defined as consisting of (a) a main verb (to drink, to speak), verbs that carry the meaning of the action and (b) one or more auxiliary verbs (primary auxiliary verbs: to do, to be, to have, and modal auxiliary verbs: will-would, can-could, etc... verbs that help the main verb to make up the verb phrase).

a)- She WRITES several letters every day. (Ibid.:303).

b)- She IS writing a long letter home (Ibid.:304).

Verb phrases are syntactically classified as finite or non-finite verb phrases. According to Leech (Ibid.), finite verb phrases are distinguished by containing a finite verb as their first (or only) word, the finite verb being the element of the verb phrase which has present or past tense (c, d).

(c) - He STUDIES/STUDIED English (Ibid., 304).

(d) - He IS/WAS STUDYING English (Ibid. 304).

Non-finite verb phrases consist of one or more non-finite verb

forms (Ibid.), i.e. (e) the infinitive (to call), (f) the -ing participle (calling), (g) the -ed participle (called).

(e)- TO SMOKE like that must be dangerous (Ibid., 305).

(f)- I found him WORKING hard. (Ibid.305).

(g)- After HAVING LEFT the office, he went home (Ibid.:305).

There are some constructions, according to Leech (Ibid.), in which the verb phrase plays an important part: tense, aspect, voice, imperatives and statements, questions, and negation.

TENSE is the correspondance between the form of the verb and our concept of time, past, present or future (Ibid.:305). The English language has two simple tenses; (h) present tense, and (i) past tense.

(h)- Today Bill is in the office (Ibid. 306).

(i) - Yesterday Bill was at a conference (Ibid., 306).

There is no future tense in English corresponding to the time/tense relation for present and past (Ibid.:306), but there are five chief ways of expressing future time in the English verb phrase (Ibid. 71):

- WILL/SHALL + INFINITIVE: Tomorrow's weather will be cold and cloudy.

- BE GOING TO + INFINITIVE: He is going to be a doctor when he grows up.

- PROGRESSIVE ASPECT: We're having fish for dinner.

- SIMPLE PRESENT TENSE: When he arrives, the band will

play the National Anthem.

- WILL/SHALL + PROGRESSIVE ASPECT: The train will be arriving soon.

ASPECT concerns the manner in which a verbal action is experienced or regarded, as complete or in progress (Ibid.,305), English has two marked aspects, (j) progressive, and (k) perfective.

- j)- Bill IS/WAS just WRITING a letter home (Ibid.:306).
- k)- Bill HAS/HAD WRITTEN five letters (Ibid.,306).

TENSE AND ASPECT are combined to form the following structures (Ibid.,303-306):

Present time

- the simple present: He always writes long letters.
- the present progressive: He is writing now to his wife.

Past time

- the simple past: He also wrote to her yesterday.
- the past progressive: He was writing a letter when somebody came.
- the present perfect: He has written several letters to her.
- the present perfect progressive: He has been writing letters all morning.
- the past perfect: He had written five letters by

lunch-time.

- the past perfect progressive: He had been writing letters all morning and felt tired.

In terms of VOICE, English has (l) the active voice, and (m) the passive voice, formed by combination of a form of "be" followed by a verb in the past participle form.

- l) - He always writes long letters (Ibid., 306).
- m) - Nowadays long letters are rarely written by hand (Ibid., 306).

A simple English sentence may be grammatically a statement, a question, a command, or an exclamation (Ibid., 289).

- STATEMENTS: are sentences in which the subject is present and generally comes before the verb:

- n) - I'll speak to the boss today.

- QUESTIONS: are sentences which are marked in one or more of these ways:

- o) - the operator is placed immediately before the subject: Will you speak to the boss today?

- p) - the sentence begins with an interrogative word: Who will you speak to?

q) - the sentence has rising intonation in <spoken>
English: You'll speak to the boss today?

- COMMANDS: are sentences with the verb in the imperative (i.e. the base form). Although they usually have no expressed subject, they sometimes take "you": (You) speak to the boss today.

- EXCLAMATIONS: are sentences which begin with what or how, without inversion of subject and operator: What a noise they are making!

- NEGATION: To negate a finite clause (Ibid. 246), you place "not" immediately after the operator: He is NOT/ISN'T coming.
When there is no operator present, the auxiliary do has to be introduced. This is called the do-construction: She enjoys reading - She DOES NOT/DOESN'T enjoy reading.
There are other ways of negating a finite clause (Ibid.:246-247) such as with negative pronouns and determiners: There isn't ANY butter left.
Other negative items, such as nowhere, never, etc...or certain words which are negative in meaning and behaviour, although they do not appear negative in form,

hardly, scarcely, seldom, etc...

3.3.2. Verb phrase semantics

Semantically, TENSE relates the happening described by the verb to time in the past, present or future, i.e. it relates the meaning of the verb to a time scale (Ibid., 63).

ASPECT concerns the manner in which a verbal action is experienced or regarded, it may be progressive, referring to an activity in progress and therefore, suggests not only that the activity is temporary, of limited duration, but that it need not be complete (Ibid.: 69). It may also be perfect (see perfect tenses semantic descriptions below).

TENSE AND ASPECT combinations, described in the syntactic section above, express specific meanings (Ibid., 74/75):

PRESENT TENSE: .a state: I like Mary.

.a single event: I resign.

.an habitual action: She gets up early.

PRESENT PROGRESSIVE: .a temporary action: He is drinking scotch.

.a temporary habit: She is getting up early.

PRESENT PERFECT: .a state up to present: I've known her for years.
.an indefinite event: I've seen better plays.
.a habit up to present: He's conducted that orchestra for 15 years.
.an action performed in the past with a present result: You've ruined my dress!

PRESENT PERFECT PROGRESSIVE: .a temporary state up to present time: I've been waiting for an hour.
.a temporary action, with present result: You have been smoking!

SIMPLE PAST: .a definite state: I lived in Africa when I was young.
.a definite event: I saw him yesterday.
.a definite habit: I got up early in those days.

PAST PROGRESSIVE: .definite temporary action: We were watching TV.

PAST PERFECT: .a past before past time: I had visited the island before.
.a state up to past time: I had known him since birth.

PAST PERFECT PROGRESSIVE: .a temporary state up to past time: They had been lying in wait for him.

FUTURE TIME

WILL/SHALL: .future time (neutral): The letter will arrive tomorrow.

BE GOING TO: .future time (arising from present time): Prices are going to rise.

THE PRESENT PROGRESSIVE: .future time (plan or arrangement):

We're moving next week.

THE SIMPLE PRESENT: .future time (as fact): The match starts at
2:00 p.m.

WILL/SHALL+THE PROGRESSIVE: .future time (as matter of course):
I'll be seeing you soon.

.future time (temporary): The astronauts will
be sleeping at 4:00 a.m.

WILL/SHALL+THE PERFECT: .past in the future time: The plane
will have landed by then.

As we have seen in the syntactic section above, there are other constructions in which the verb phrase plays an important part: voice, imperatives, statements, questions and negation. The semantic meaning conveyed by these constructions are:

ACTIVE VOICE: active voice is the opposite of passive (Ibid.: 257), i.e. when the question of who is the agent is important.

PASSIVE VOICE: the passive voice is especially associated with <impersonal> style (e.g. in scientific and official writing), where the question of who the agent is (i.e. who performs the action described by the verb) is unimportant and often irrelevant. (Ibid., 258).

STATEMENTS: are sentences which give information. (Ibid., 110).

NEGATION: negatives are used when a speaker wishes to deny the truth of something (Ibid., 120).

QUESTIONS: sentences by which someone asks his hearer to give information (Ibid., 110).

COMMANDS: with the aim of getting someone to do something, a direct command can be used.

.a negative command has the effect of forbidding an action.

EXCLAMATIONS: an exclamation is a type of sentence which is used to express the speaker's feeling or attitude (Ibid.,230).

3.4:An Interorganism perspective - description of the verb phrase model

The syntactic/semantic information described above will now be transformed into a simplified geometrical model, so that students can manipulate it in an easier way, without brain overloading, following the theory already presented in the previous chapters.

We will have a model (see table 3.1) organized in

terms of the tense/ aspect combinations as described above. The first line of the model is concerned with tense elements, present and past, and with future time. The first column is concerned with aspect elements, progressive, perfect, and perfect progressive, but it also has a line for simple tense configuration. In each of the squares resulting from the tense/aspect crossing, we will have the semantic representation of the specific verb phrases.

Our model will be dealing with a set of geometric symbols:

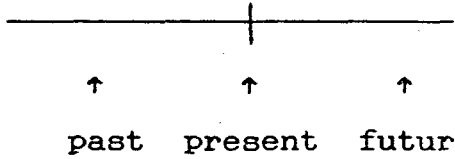




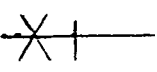
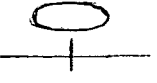
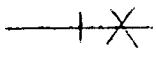
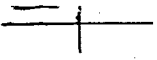
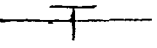

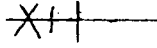
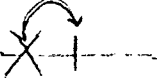
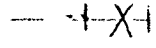
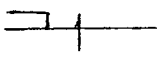
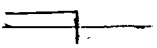
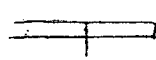
- S1 -  = represents time scale:
- S2 - X = represents a completed action,
- S3 -  = represents an action in progress.
- S4 - | = represents a reference point.
- S5 -  = represents a state.
- S6 - HC = represents an habitual action.
- S7 - X = represents an action arising from present time.
- S8 -  = represents present result.
- S9 -  = represents a connection between a known syntactic structure, and a new time localization.
- S10 - I = represents a command, Imperative.
- S11- A = represents statements.
- S12- A? = represents an affirmative question.
- S13- N = represents negation.
- S14- N? = represents a negative question.

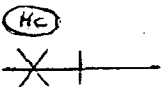
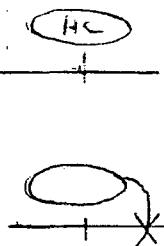

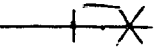
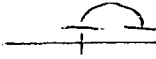
TABLE 3.1 - EVR MODEL* - for English finite verb phrase representation

TENSE \ ASPECT	PAST	PRESENT	FUTURE
SIMPLE			
PROGRESSIVE			
PERFECT			
PERFECT PROGRESSIVE			

* EVR stands for Esquema Visual Racionalizado

Besides the model presented above, it is necessary to introduce additional graphs for some of the semantic meanings of verb phrases that have not been included in Table 3.1. I call this THE VARIABLES MODEL (see table 3.2). Didactically it is simpler to make students acquainted with a balanced model first, and when the first model has been apprehended, introduce the semantic variations of some of the verb phrases.

TABLE 3.2 - THE VARIABLE MODEL - English finite verb phrase semantic variations

TENSE \ ASPECT	PAST	PRESENT	FUTURE
SIMPLE		 	
PROGRESSIVE			

The first model (see table 3.1 above) is formed by twelve graphs. We have the simple past and present graphs, the past and present progressive graphs, the past and present perfect, and the past and present perfect progressive graphs. We also have graphs for the future time realizations, for the "will+the progressive", for the "will+ the perfect", and for the "will+ the perfect progressive" (3).

Each of the graphs above has a correspondent semantic meaning, and also a syntactic realization (4). Table 3.3 expresses these relationships

TABLE 3.3 - English finite verb phrases with their semantic and syntactic specifications

GRAPH SPECIFICATION	SEMANTIC MEANING	SYNTACTIC REALIZATION
SIMPLE PAST	.definite event .definite state	.I lived in Africa when I was young.
SIMPLE PRESENT	.state	.I like Mary
FUTURE TIME	.future time.	.He will arrive.
PAST PROGRESSIVE	.definite temporary action.	.We were watching TV.
PRESENT PROGRESSIVE	.temporary action	.He's drinking scotch.
WILL+THE PROGRESSIVE	.future time, temporary action	.I'll be seeing you soon
PRESENT PERFECT	.indefinite event .past event with present result.	.I've seen better days. .You've ruined my dress
PAST PERFECT	.past before past time.	.I had visited the island before.
WILL+THE PERFECT	.past in future time	.The plane will have landed by then.
PRESENT PERFECT PROGRESSIVE	.temporary state or habit up to the present time	.I've been waiting for an hour. .He's been walking.
PAST PERFECT PROGRESSIVE	.temporary state up to past time.	.They had been lying in wait for him.
FUTURE+PERFECT PROGRESSIVE	.temporary state or habit up to future time	.They will have been waiting for an hour when he comes.

TABLE 3.4 - English finite verb phrases variations: with their semantic and syntactic specifications

GRAPH SPECIFICATION	SEMANTIC MEANING	SYNTACTIC REALISATION
SIMPLE PAST	.definite habit	.I got up early in those days.
PRESENT SIMPLE	.future time as a fact. .habitual action	.The match starts at 2:00 p.m. .She gets up early.
IMPERATIVE (5)	.a command	.Speak, please.
BE GOING TO	.future time arising from present time	.Prices are going to rise.
PRESENT PROGRESSIVE	.future time, plan or arrangement.	.We're moving next week.

In the next chapter I will discuss the application of the model in actual teaching situations.

NOTES

(1) - "Lawles and Selinker propose that for rule internalization one can postulate two distinct types of cognitive structures, acquisition, those mechanisms that guide "automatic" language performance - that is, performance where speed and spontaneity are crucial, and the learner has no time to consciously apply linguistic mechanisms... and learning, those mechanisms that guide puzzle - or problem - solving performance." (Krashen, 1981:1-2)

In the EVR (Esquema Visual Racionalizado) approach we will be dealing with acquisition, since the speed and spontaneity are crucial for our exercises, and the student has no time to consciously apply syntactic rules.

(2) - "Every language has its peculiar problems of meaning for the foreign learner; and most people would agree that in English language the most troublesome problems are concentrated in the area of finite verb phrase, and include, in particular, questions of tense, aspect, and modal auxiliary usage." (Leech, 1971:V)

"...the verbs, or rather the verb phrase... is so central to the structures of the sentence that no syntactic analysis can proceed without a careful consideration of it. Another source of interest is the great complexity of the internal semantic, and syntactic structure of the verb phrase itself.

For almost any language the part that concerns the verb is the most difficult. Learning a language is, to a very large degree, learning how to operate the verbal forms of that language, and, except in the case of those that are related historically, the pattern and structure of the verb in each language seem to differ very considerably from those in every other language. Most of us, as native speakers of a language are as a result reasonably convinced that our own language has a fairly straightforward way of dealing with the verbs and are rather dismayed and discouraged when faced with something entirely different in a new language" (Palmer, 1965:10).

(3) - Here I have added this future construction, that cannot be found in Leech (1975), but is described by Edwards (1951:8). The reason being that it is an English construction that follows the general schema presented so far.

(4) - All the examples used in table 3.3 to exemplify the syntactic realization of the graphs, have been taken from Leech (1975:74-75), and were in the semantic description section.

(5) - The imperative, or command, has been put together with the simple present tense graphs, because it is also formed by the "do" construction (e.g. Speak, please./Don't speak, please.) and this makes it easier for students to understand and keep the

information in their memory.

CHAPTER IV

RESEARCH MATERIALS AND ACTIVITIES

The methodology proposed in the previous chapters has been in use for the last twenty years, not on a large commercial scale, but on a laboratory basis, with private students. The researcher herself learned her English through this methodology. During this period some of the icons have been improved, and the models were applied to English and Portuguese teaching as foreign languages in everyday class routine with good results.

In the present paper two teaching methodologies are discussed and compared in terms of learning efficiency, I will limit the discussion to oral communication, and reading abilities. The methodology proposed in this thesis, an accelerative psycholinguistic approach to second language acquisition, is compared to communicative teaching in an experimental and control group research design. Two small experiments were set up, experiment I and experiment II. In each experiment there was an experimental group (group A) and a control group (group B). The basic difference between the experimental group (A) and the control group (B), was that the experimental group went through intensive training with the iconic model developed for the verb phrase representation, while the control group emphasized communicative-like exercises as proposed in the Strategies materials. In the other aspects the groups received similar treatment. In experiment I there were six students involved: three students in group A, and three

students in group B. In experiment II five students participated: three students in group A, and two students in group B. In this chapter, I describe the teaching materials used in each group, and activities developed in both experiments. I also include a description of classroom testing and instruments used in evaluation. The other research procedures are discussed in the next chapter.

4.1. Teaching materials and activities

Three different types of teaching materials were used in the experiments. First there was the material developed from the verb phrase iconic model, that stood for the accelerative element of the program (only used with groups A); second, Brian Abbs and Ingrid Freebairns' (1982), *Opening Strategies* that stood for the communicative approach (used with different emphasis in both groups, A and B); and a third set of materials, supposed to provide further vocabulary in context, i.e. simplified short stories chosen by the students from American and English literature, also used with both groups.

The materials generated from the verb phrase iconic model were only applied to groups A in both experiments because this was the differentiating element between the experimental and control groups. The other two sets of materials (*Strategies* and stories) were applied to both groups A and B.

The verb phrases iconic model (tables 3.1 - 3.2) has been extensively described in the theoretical section above. The

material consists of a set of cards, a total of twelve graphs that are represented four times, showing that the original statement can also be transformed into an affirmative or negative question, or can be denied, as in a negative sentence.

The icons represented in the graphs are displayed in separate cards, each icon is represented four times, e.g. the present progressive icon has four different realizations: "A" for statements, "A?" for affirmative questions, "N" for negatives, and "N?" for negative questions.

A list of irregular verbs accompanies the set, which provides students with a source of vocabulary (see appendix).

Verb phrase practice begins with a few introductory notes on elementary verb phrase grammatical notions. Students are for example taught to recognise verb forms, such as the (a) infinitive form, (b) the -s form, (c) the past form, (d) the past-participle form, and (e) the -ing form.

(a)-to work (b)-works (c)-worked (d)-worked (e)-working.

The teacher also presents students an English verb classification showing the distinction between (f) regular, and (g) irregular verbs.

(f) - To work - worked - worked.

(g) - To drink - drank - drunk.

Finally, students receive information on verb phrase elements, such as primary auxiliary verbs that will be used: to be, to have, to do, and main verbs. Here the teacher emphasizes the different functions they have in a verb phrase (See verb phrase definition, chapter III). Experience has shown that all

this information can be given to the students in one class.

After having presented these introductory notions, and making sure the students can easily recognise them in use, the teacher begins introducing the model. In the beginning this is done in a step by step progression. First, the progressive icons are presented and practiced, then the perfect progressive icons are introduced, next the simple tenses, and finally the perfects are presented and practiced separately.

The reason for this ordering is that the progressives have the most regular representations, and the student should not be overloaded from the start by simple tense irregularities, or by the perfect and perfect progressive complementation.

After students have been introduced to verb phrase semantics, through the icons, they enter a practice stage. With the help of a list of irregular verbs, they produce sentence structures for all the different actions represented by the icon. From the practice stage students are introduced into a fluency stage, where they can produce any sort of meaningful structure in the second language.

The second set of materials used, Opening Strategies, consists of the "student's book" and "workbook" (1982, a, b). In experiment I students worked through the first seven units since this was a 90 hour course. In experiment II, the class covered only the three first units, because it was a shorter course.

Opening Strategies is a notional/functional syllabus. It presents students a set of functions, pieces of language in context, and a few language notions, grammar and vocabulary that

accompany the functional development.

All the authors' instructions, concerning class procedures, as described in the teacher's book (1983), were followed. A Strategies class follows five steps, presentation dialogues, sets, skills practice material, oral exercises, and analysis.

The presentation of dialogues begins with a revision of the characters of the syllabus, and of what happened in the previous unit. Then, the teacher refers to the photographs that accompany the dialogue, making students describe them and relating them to the general context of the dialogue. Next, the new vocabulary is presented, and the students answer a few comprehension questions related to the dialogue. The students then listen to a taped version of the dialogue, and correct the questionnaire they have answered previously. An oral repetition exercise follows, where students, after listening to the dialogue tape, are expected to repeat it. Then the dialogue is read in a pair-work exercise.

The "set exercises", follows "presentation". They are controlled practice. The language studied is isolated from its original context. The teacher refers to a model utterance, and the students repeat the model chorally or individually.

The "skills practice" is divided into speaking, listening, reading and writing. Speaking and listening rely on the same language studied in the former sections of the unit, but displayed in different contexts. Reading consolidates the structures, the lexical items, and presents extra vocabulary. The writing activities are concerned with practice in elementary written pieces, such as small letters, notes, etc...

The oral exercises are repetition exercises. They work as stimuli for choral or individual responses. These exercises reinforce the structures and vocabulary learned so far, and emphasize pronunciation, stress, and intonation practice.

At the end of the unit there is an analytical activity, "analysis", in which students do pattern practice, i.e., the teacher encourages students to make their own hypothesis to test the structures studied in the unit in new contexts. Here the linguistic system is isolated in tables, so that the learner is encouraged to generate language in other contexts.

The Strategies Workbook contains additional exercises emphasizing what has been introduced in the student's book. All its units follow the student's book units. The exercises developed in the workbook are concerned with the skills practice, speaking, reading, and writing as described above.

The third set of materials used in this research, consisted of simplified short stories by American and English writers used with all the groups of students. It was supposed to provide further vocabulary in context, further listening and pronunciation practice.

In experiment I students worked with "The Forger" (O'Neil, 1974), "Out of the Past" (Schaefer, 1964), "The Christmas Present" (Dixson, 1948), and "Mr. Travers First Hunt" (Ibid.).

In experiment II students had "David Swan" (Ibid.), "The Christmas Present" (Ibid.), and "Rip Van Winkle" (Ibid.).

The difference of the materials used by the students in the two experiments was due to the students' choice of the

materials, but that has not influenced the results because groups A and B in each experiment used the same materials.

The oral exercise was developed through three distinct progressive steps. First the teacher produced a meaningful part of a sentence from the text in English, and translated it into Portuguese. The students then repeated the English and Portuguese sentences after her. The second step, after about 10 hours of exercising, was a translation activity. The teacher produced a sentence in English and each student in his own turn translated a sentence. In a third step, students were asked to translate into English a sentence produced by the teacher in Portuguese.

4.2. Testing materials

This section contains the description of the evaluative tools developed for this research. Here they are discussed in terms of objectives, description and scoring. Samples of the materials described in this section are displayed in the appendix.

There were three different types of evaluations: ALIGU, a survival Level English Proficiency Test, both applied to students of experiment I, and On-going Tests, applied to students in experiment II.

The ALIGU test was used to determine the starting level of Experiment I students. The test was applied at Brasil-Estados Unidos Institute, IBEU, in Florianópolis and consisted of

listening, usage, vocabulary and reading comprehension exercises, and of an oral interview. It is not possible to present the ALIGU tests here because of security reasons, since the Institute applies the test to the community for English Proficiency Evaluation.

The reason for the subjects to take the ALIGU test is that it is a standard proficiency evaluation, developed by a recognized Institution. The researcher wanted an independent evaluation of the subjects who participated in the experiment, in terms of linguistic competence, at the starting stage.

The oral interview part of the test was not taken into account since the Institute does not record this part of the test and consequently no checking of the oral test would be possible. This however has not influenced the research since the sole objective of the test was to divide the students into homogeneous groups. The other parts of the test have provided adequate information for this.

At the end of the experiment, students were submitted to a Survival Level English Proficiency Test to "measure students' achievement in relation to the specific task they would be required to perform" (Heaton, 1975:v). In this specific case it measured whether students would be able to communicate with a reasonable level of proficiency in English.

The test was divided into two sections, communicative subskills level, and communicative skills level. The first was concerned with general linguistic knowledge, and the second with communicative ability knowledge. For this test the syllabus was

not taken into account.

"Proficiency tests rarely take into account any syllabus which the student has followed, since they are concerned with future performance rather than past achievement" (Ibid.).

The communicative subskills level was divided into the four communicative/linguistic levels, i.e., pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, and functions. The subskills are concerned with linguistic knowledge the speaker needs to develop in order to communicate.

Pronunciation exercises were developed based on Gimson's (1962) description of English sounds, and on Hook's contrastive analysis of English/Portuguese sounds, that also describes problematic areas of acquisition for Portuguese speaking students.

This part of the test comprised two activities. A production activity, where students were asked to read and record a list of English problematic sounds; and a receptive activity, where students, after listening to the examiner, were asked to mark the sound they had listened to.

The vocabulary test was a multiple choice test. Students had to complete a statement with the best of four alternatives presented. This content was based on a list of 3.000 most frequent words in English (Madsen, 1965), and on TOEFL test techniques.

The grammar part of the test was of structure recognition exercises. It explored grammatical elements such as nouns,

adjectives, verbs and adverbs, articles, pronouns, prepositions, and conjunctions. It was based on Ona Low's (1966) New Certificate Proficiency English Course.

The functional part of the test explored threshold level functions (Van Ek, 1980), and the exercises were based on Low's (1966) preparatory course for Certificate Proficiency English. Here students were provided with situations, and had to choose, from three alternatives, the best response.

The communicative skills level, the second level tested, consisted of real communication abilities, such as reading, listening, and speaking.

The reading was tested through a multiple choice comprehension test, following the TOEFL test methodology.

The listening was also a multiple choice exercise. After listening to a passage students were asked to answer a few questions on it.

The speaking test was recorded, and consisted of three different exercises. Oral interview, based on Van Ek's (1980) Threshold level functions; Topic discussion, based on Ona Low's exercises (1966), and on a Photograph description exercise.

The scoring was done as shown in table 4.2. below. The subskills level scoring had a value of 40%, and the skills level scoring a value of 60% of the total score.

TABLE 4.1. - SURVIVAL LEVEL ENGLISH PROFICIENCY TEST SCORING

ACTIVITY	TOTAL SCORE	TOTAL NUMBER OF QUESTIONS
pronunciation	10	production 33 reception 67
vocabulary	10	10
grammar	10	20
functions	10	10
reading	10	10
listening	10	10
speaking	10	interview 15 topic 2 photograph 3

The On-going test was an achievement test., to measure class progress, and it took the course syllabus into account (Heaton, 1975). This test was developed for Experiment II, because the students could not develop real proficiency in the language, since this was a very short course.

For the same reason mentioned above, the shortness of the course, the material did not approach communicative skills, such as speaking, understanding or intensive text comprehension. We measured the primary proficiency in communicative subskills levels, such as phonological reception and production, vocabulary production and comprehension, and also grammatical knowledge.

For the phonology exercise the researcher pronounced a sentence in English and the students were asked to repeat it. Students' production was recorded, and then scored for accuracy.

The vocabulary test was divided into productive and receptive exercises. In the first, the students were given a few letters from the alphabet, and were asked to write, in one minute, all the words they remembered that began with that letter. This was a regular exercise to accompany vocabulary growth. The receptive exercise was the translation of a list of words, taken from the syllabus.

Grammatical knowledge was measured in terms of syntagmatic production. The students were given a vocabulary list of verbs, and were asked to generate a few sentences from them.

Contextual comprehension was measured by a translation exercise. Students were asked to translate a text taken from the

syllabus program.

The test scoring is displayed below, see table 4.2.

TABLE 4.2- ON-GOING TEST SCORING

COMMUNICATIVE SUBSKILL	TOTAL SCORE	NUMBER OF QUESTIONS
phonology	10	10
vocabulary production	XX In this section of the test each word remembered scored one.	
vocabulary reception	10	40
grammar production	10	5
translation	10	10 sentences

CHAPTER V

RESEARCH DESCRIPTION AND RESULTS

This chapter describes the research developed for this paper. It contains information concerning group selection, general schedule, and program, i.e. course timetable, class time-table, and content development. It also presents testing procedures, results on students' achievement, graphs, and conclusions.

5.1. Research I

5.1.1. Group selection

As mentioned in the previous chapter, the two groups, group A, the experimental group, and group B, the control group, were selected through the ALIGU English Proficiency Test (see testing materials description). An effort was made to have two homogeneous groups. Group A had one student who achieved a score of 2.5 in the test, one who achieved 3.3 and one student who scored 3.7 on the test. Group B had one student with a score of 2.5, one with a score of 3.1, and one with a score of

3.7.

Group selection started on 1/03/90 and ended on 19/03/90 with the pre-testing stage. Classes developed from 19/03/90 to 25/05/90. Students attended a 90 hour course, distributed into 40 classes of 2:15 hours each. The program finished on 29/05/90 with the application of the Proficiency Test.

5.1.2. Activity distribution

The 90 hour course was basically divided into oral exercise based on the readings mentioned, Strategies, and verb phrase exercises (see materials/activities description section). Group A developed all three of these activities: 30 hours of oral activities, 10 hours of communicative activities through Strategies, and 50 hours of verb phrase practice. Group B did not develop verb phrase activities, but developed 60 hours of communicative activities, and 30 hours of oral exercises.

All these activities were developed in every class. For group A a normal class consisted of 15min. for Strategies, 45min for oral exercises, and 1:15h. for verb phrase practice. The group B class consisted of 45 min. for oral exercises, and 1:30h for Strategies practice.

5.1.3. Content development

The content covered by both groups was basically the same, with the difference of emphasis on verb phrase structures, that was not presented to the control group, group B, because this was the treatment differentiating the two groups.

Group A developed, in English verb phrase exercises, the progressive forms, past, present, and future forms; the simple tenses, the perfect progressive constructions, and the perfect. In terms of oral exercises they had "The Forger" (O'Neil, 1974), "Out of the Past " (Schaeffer, 1964), "The Christmas Present" (Dixson, 1948), and "Mr. Travers First Hunt" (Ibid.). Strategies was studied up to the seventh unit.

Group B, the control group , used the same materials for the oral exercise, and the Strategies exercise. But group B had a complement of communicative exercises, i.e. while group A was developing verb phrase structures, group B was emphasizing communicative exercises, through the Strategies Workbook.

5.1.4. Research results

5.1.4.1. Testing procedures

The testing procedure started with the ALIGU test. The

Table 5.1 - Research I

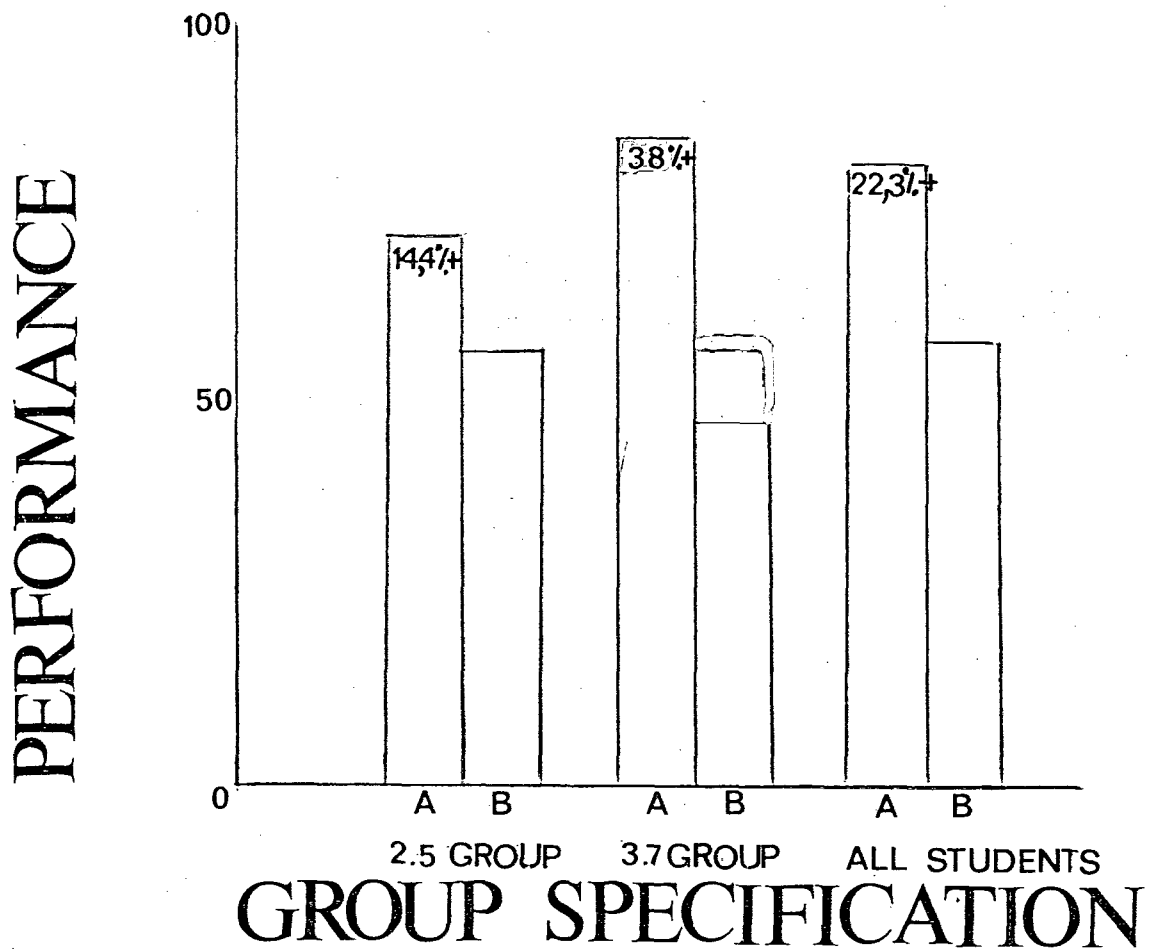
Students performance on the Aligu Pre-Proficiency test, and on the Survival Level English Proficiency Test.

S t u d e n t s	starting level: Aligu scores	Post test scores											
		comm.subskills				comm.skills			t o t a l	%	d i f f e r e n c e %	a l l s t u d e n t s %	d i f f e r e n c e %
		p r o n	v o c a b u l a r y	g r a m m a t i c a l	f u n c t i o n a l	r e a d i n g	l i s t e n i n g	s p e a k i n g					
	total	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	70	100			
A1	2.5	8	7	6.5	9	5	10	5	50.5	72.14	A1- B1 14.4	Group A 80.81	22.3
B1	2.5	7.3	7	5	8	4	6	3.1	40.4	57.71			
A2	3.7	8.5	6	8	10	9	10	8.4	59.9	85.57	A2- B3 38.0	Group B 58.42	
A3	3.3	8.3	7	7.5	10	9	10	7.5	59.3	84.71			
B2	3.1	8.1	5	7	8	5	10	5.9	49.0	69.99			
B3	3.7	6.8	3	4.5	6	2	8	3	33.3	47.57			
Average % A		82	66	73	96	76	100	69					
Average % B		74	50	55	73	36	80	40					
Dif. %		08	16	18	23	40	20	29					

The scores show a strong tendency for students of group A, the experimental group exposed to the verb phrase iconic model, to perform higher than students of group B, who emphasized communicative-like exercises. In terms of real growth, the

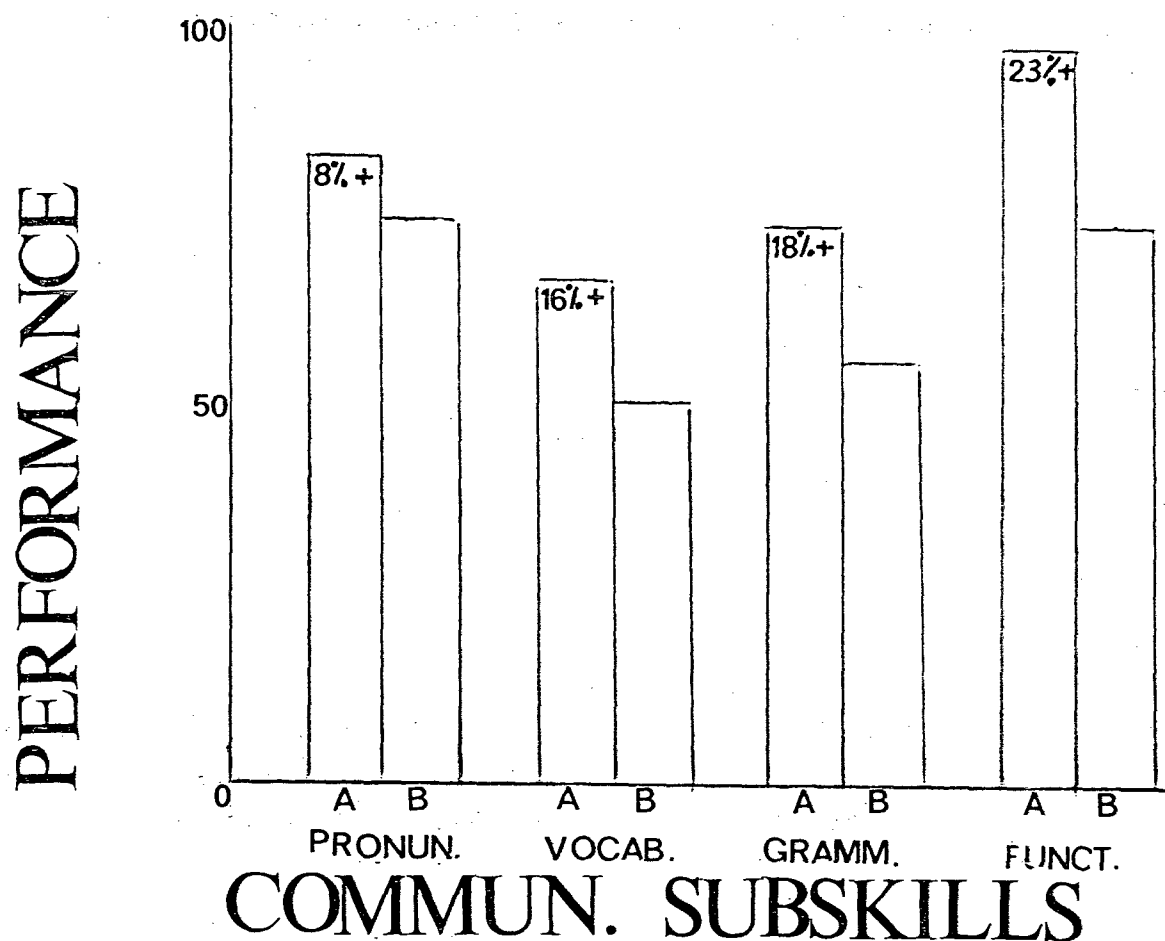
results are better realised through the graphs displayed below.

5.2. RESEARCH I - GRAPH ON THE GENERAL PERFORMANCE OF THE TWO GROUPS



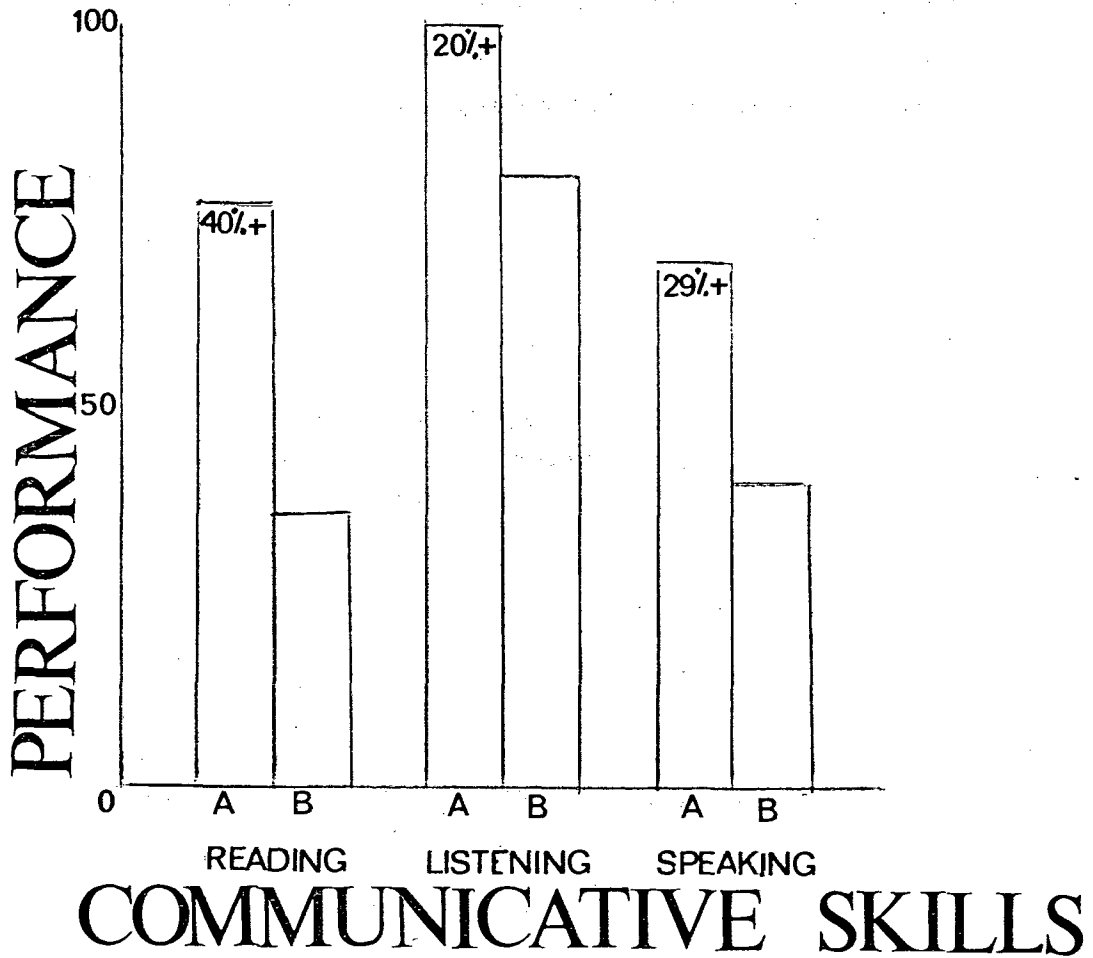
This graph shows groups' general performances at the end of the 90 hour course. Here the results clearly favour the performance of group A.

5.3. RESEARCH I - PERFORMANCE OF THE TWO GROUPS IN THE
SUBSKILLS



Here group A outperformed group B in all subskills. The smallest difference between the two groups is in pronunciation, and the more significant difference is shown in the functional aspect, favouring students in group A.

5.4. RESEARCH I - PERFORMANCE OF THE TWO GROUPS ON SKILLS



Here the comparison of the two groups shows striking differences, the experimental group very significantly outperforms the control group. The biggest difference showing in oral exercises (Reading)

5.1.4.3. General comments on experiment I

The results displayed on table 5.1 and the data on the graphs clearly show better results in all evaluations in the performance of group A the group that was exposed to the accelerative methodology, the iconic model described in this thesis.

It is important to mention here that group A achieved better results, despite a few disadvantages it had. The students from group A worked during the day, and studied in the evening, when they were already tired, and when their production level was lower. Group B studied during the afternoon, was not tired, and had better conditions to participate in classroom activities and be involved in their studies.

Another disadvantage of group A was that at the beginning of April, in the middle of the course, a few students had to leave the experiment, and new students were introduced. Although the new students had separate classes to compensate for the classes missed, the old students must have suffered from the break of continuity that resulted from that. The new students were adequately grouped according to the ALIGU test.

5.2. Research II

5.2.1. Group selection

Research II group selection was different from research I. The groups were not homogeneous as those in research I. But this fact has not influenced the results because the evaluative procedure was different, i.e. each student's starting level was measured and compared to the final level this student achieved.

5.2.2. Activity distribution

The research process started with the pre-testing, 28/05/90 - 8/06/90, for grouping and initial diagnosis of competence level. The course was developed from 11/06/90 to 22/06/90. It consisted of 22 hours, which were divided into 8 classes of 2:50 hours each.

As in the previous research, classroom activities were organized around three kinds of exercises. Group A had eight hours of oral exercise, six hours of communicative exercises, and eight hours of verb phrase exercises. Group B had eight hours of oral exercises, fourteen hours of communicative exercises, and no verb phrase exercise.

A normal class for group A consisted of 1h. of verb phrase exercises, 1h. of oral exercises, and 50min. of communicative exercises. Group B had 1h. of oral exercises, and 1:50h. of communicative exercises.

The oral exercises, and part of the communicative exercise were developed with both groups together. They only studied separately, when they were developing specific activities, i.e. when group A was studying the verb phrases and group B was practicing additional communicative exercises in the Strategies Workbook. The whole group was made up of five students, three for experimental group A, and two for the control group B.

5.2.3. Content

The content developed with both groups was the same for the oral exercises, they read "David Swan" (Dixson, 1948), "The Christmas Present" (Ibid.), and "Rip Van Winkle" (Ibid.). For communicative exercises they developed units 1, 2, and 3 of the Strategies Book I

Group A studied the following aspects of the verb phrase: simple tenses, i.e., present, past and future, progressive, perfect and perfect progressive.

5.2.4. Research results

5.2.4.1. Testing procedures

Both groups underwent achievement tests that were applied in pre-test and post-test conditions. Students were evaluated in productive and receptive vocabulary skills, grammar and translation. Samples of the tests can be found in the appendix.

5.2.4.2. Results

The results of the tests are shown on table 5.5 below. First test grades and second test grades are separated by a slant. The grades achieved in the first test appear on the left, and second test grades are displayed on the right.

TABLE 5.5 RESEARCH II - GENERAL RESULTS ON STUDENTS
ACHIEVEMENT IN EVALUATIONS

students' individual achievement							group achievement			
s t u d e n t	p h o n	vocabulary			gram. p r o d u c	t r a n s l	total	aver.	%	g r o w t h %
		produc.		recept.						
		C *	P *							
total	10	-	-	10	10	10	40/40			
A1	2/7	7/8	4/4	3.7/5.2	4/6	1/5	10.7/23.25	15.3/ 25.6	38/ 64	26
A2	2/4	4/5	2/4	4.5/5.5	8/8	5/7	19.5/24.25			
A3	6/7	7/7	4/5	7.7/9.5	0/6	2/7	15.7/29.5			
B1	7/7	7/5	7/5	6.5/7.5	8/4	8/8	29.5/26.5	16.1/ 16.5	40/ 41	1
B2	2/3	1/4	1/3	0.7/1.5	0/0	0/2	2.75/6.75			
aver.A	3.3/ 6.0	6.0/ 6.7	3.3/ 4.3	5.3/ 6.73	4.0/ 6.66	2.7/ 6.3				
aver.B	4.5/ 5.0	4.0/ 4.5	4.0/ 4.0	3.6/ 4.5	4.0/ 2.0	4.0/ 5.0				
grth.A	2.67	0.66	1.0	1.43	2.66	3.67				
grth.B	0.5	0.5	0.0	0.9	-2.0	1.0				
grth.%A	26.7	6.6	10	14.3	26.6	36.7				
grth.%B	5.0	5.0	0.0	9.0	-20	10				
dif. %	22	1.6	10	05	46	27				

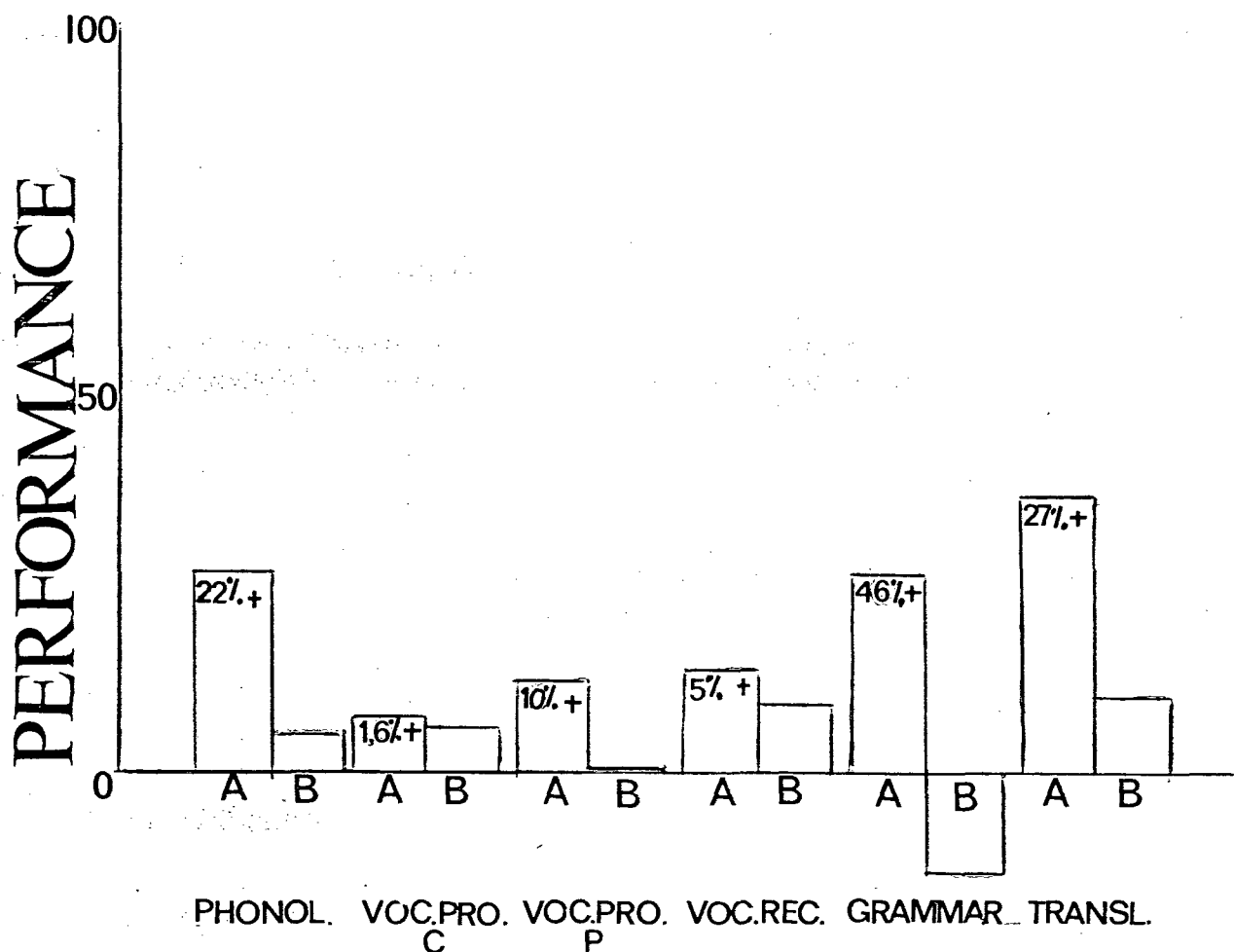
* Not considered for totals or percentage.

The second experiment was a short study, and its objective was to find out if in the very beginning stages of the language acquisition process, input variation, as defined in this study, i.e., the iconic verb phrase model versus the communicative-like exercises, made a difference in the students performance as measured by the evaluative instruments used. The results again,

as in experiment I, seem to indicate that the iconic model excels the symbolic verbal conveyance model.

We measured students growth, in terms of pre and post proficient communicative subskills, through the achievement test. The graphs below display the students (group A and B) growth in terms of communicative subskills.

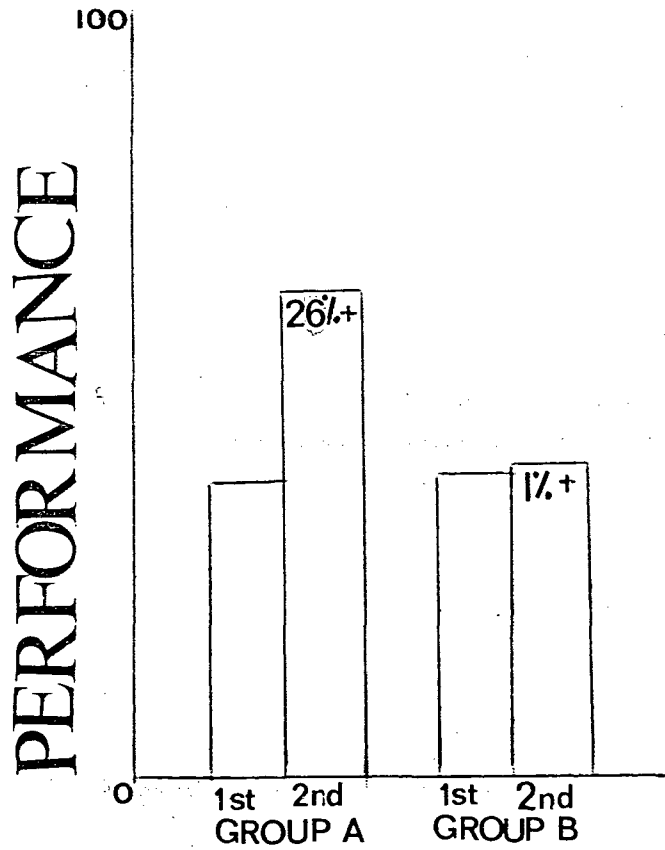
5.6. Research II - Group comparison in communicative subskills growth



COMMUN. SUBSKILLS

In spite of the small sample, which does not allow broad generalization, the results show a clear tendency for the performance of the subjects of the experimental group to be superior in all subskills to the performance of the control group.

5.7. RESEARCH II - Groups' total growth comparison.



GROUP & TEST

The general growth graph, when the results of all the subskills are averaged also shows the significant growth in performance of group A students, when pre and post test results are compared in opposition to the results of the group B students whose performance basically remained unchanged when method pre and post -test results are compared.

5.2.4.3. General comments on the results of experiment II

Here again, as with the first research groups, the results favour EVR methodology. This second research was short, but it shows that from the very start EVR models may accelerate second language acquisition, and make a difference in language teaching methodology.

6. CONCLUSION

I have stated in this thesis that linguistics had exercised a strong influence on language teaching methodological research and practice until the last decade. Then applied linguistics, and language teachers looked for contributions and answers to their questions in other research fields.

Linguistics alone was not coping with the practical problems of everyday classroom reality. One of these problems is concerned with the low rate of language acquisition efficiency provided by current methodologies.

The present study has been concerned with a tentative solution to this problem. It proposes a psycholinguistic approach to second language teaching that concentrates on two aspects of the process: the input drawn from linguistic description, and the students' cognitive process, the psychological aspect.

We propose, based on the study of linguistic descriptions, and on cognitive theories, a simplified logic-mathematic model, to accelerate acquisition of the English language through the teaching of finite verb phrases. This model was applied in practice to groups of Brazilian students, beginning the study of English language, so that we could investigate the real accelerative value of this methodology when compared to the communicative methodology.

The results favoured the psycholinguistic approach in

terms of teaching efficiency. The students exposed to this methodology, outperformed the other students in every aspect of linguistic competence tested.

Based on the results of the two experiments developed, one may conclude that the EVR methodology generates meaningful input adequate to involve the student into mental activities appropriate to the development of communicative linguistic competence. The results also seem to indicate that the meaningful practice provided by the EVR methodology develops in students the necessary automatisms for communicative competence. Furthermore, based on the results one could also conclude that the ideas and the model discussed in this paper deserve further research. Here the methodology was applied only to English finite verb phrases, and the performance of small groups of students was compared, but there are all the other linguistic categories to be researched, and then, if possible, substitute the traditional or even recent methodologies for an accelerative acquisition/teaching model.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX I: TEACHING MATERIALS

APPENDIX II: TESTING MATERIALS

APPENDIX I

TEACHING MATERIALS

APPENDIX 1.1. EVR MODEL - FOR ENGLISH VERB PHRASE REPRESENTATION

	PAST	PRESENT	FUTURE
SIMPLE			
PROGRESSIVE			
PERFECT			
PERFECT PROGRESSIVE			

APPENDIX 1.2. EVR MODEL - ENGLISH VERB PHRASE VARIATIONS

	PAST	PRESENT	FUTURE
SIMPLE			
PROGRESSIVE			

APPENDIX 1.3.

IRREGULAR VERB LIST - *sample*

QUEIMAR - To burn burnt burnt (hand, mão - paper, papel)

RESIDIR - To dwell dwelt dwelt (in a forest, numa floresta)

APRENDER - To learn learnt learnt (French, francês)

CHEIRAR - To smell smelt smelt (milk, leite)

SOLETRAR - To spell spelt spelt (word, palavra - name, nome)

DERRAMAR - To spill spilt spilt (milk, leite - tea, chá)

ESTRAGAR - To spoil spoilt spoilt (fruit, fruta - child, criança)

CURVAR - To bend bent bent (in worship, em adoração)

CONSTRUIR - To build built built (house, casa - life, vida)

RECONSTRUIR - To rebuild rebuilt rebuilt (hopes, esperanças)

EMPRESTAR - To lend lent lent (money, dinheiro - book, livro)

RASGAR - To rend rent rent (dress, vestido - paper, papel)

MANDAR, ENVIAR - To send sent sent (letter, carta)

GASTAR - To spend spent spent (money, dinheiro - time, tempo)

APPENDIX II

TESTING MATERIALS

APPENDIX 2.1.

ALIGU TEST CERTIFICATES



DECLARAÇÃO

Declaramos para os devidos fins que o Sr. RUBEN JOSÉ MARTINS foi submetido ao Teste de Proficiência em Inglês (ALIGU) elaborado pela / American Language Georgetown University, Washington, D. C.; tendo conseguido as seguintes notas:

Listening Test Form LE-E	2,0
Usage Test Form M	2,9
Vocabulary and Reading Form VR-D	2,8
Oral Interview	1,5
Média	2,3

Necessita de 285 horas/aula.

Florianópolis, 16 de abril de 1990.

Gertrudes Starosta
Diretora



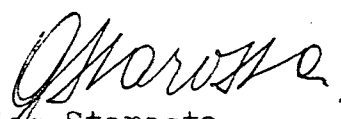
DECLARAÇÃO

Declaramos para devidos fins, que o Sr. ANÍBAL B. GONÇALVES foi submetido ao Teste de Proficiência em Inglês (ALIGU) elaborado pela / American Language Georgetown University, Washington, D. C.; tendo conseguido as seguintes notas:

Listening Test Form LT-E	3,5
Usage Test Form M	4,9
Vocabulary and Reading Form VR-D	2,8
Oral Interview	3,0
Média	35,5

OBS: Necessita de 223 horas/aula.

Folrianópolis, 16 de abril de 1990.


Gertrudes Starosta
Diretora

NOTAS DOS TESTES ALIGU

	Vocabulary and Reading	Usage	Listening	Oral	Média
Jucélia Maria Alves	-	0.7	1.2	3	1.2
Irac Orsi	-	1.1	0.7	3	1.2
Priscilla Schroeder	2.8	5.1	4.7	6	4.6
Marco Antônio Schroeder	4	4.6	4.0	5	4.4
Conceição da Costa Lima	4.7	3.9	2.5	3	3.5
Elizana de Carle	3.2	4.1	2.2	3.5	3.2
Vandré Steinnch	2.7	3.2	1.7	3	2.6
Maria Tereza Kaizer	4.0	4.3	3.7	4	4
Jacinto Antonio Pereira	3.3	3.0	3.7	4	3.5
Eduardo Grúbel	2.7	3.7	2.7	3	3

Florianópolis, 9 de março de 1990

Gertudes Starosta

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APPENDIX 2.2.

SURVIVAL ENGLISH PROFICIENCY TEST

EXAMINER'S BOOKLET

PRONUNCIATION - RECEPTION

INSTRUCTIONS: First listen to the examiner without marking your test. He/she will say the words in the groups below. Listen carefully, and the second time he/she says the words you decide whether they are the same or different words, and then mark your answer sheet.

- 1 - share/chair
- 2 - am/ham
- 3 - thus/toss
- 4 - poll/poll
- 5 - hat/hut
- 6 - low/law
- 7 - lone/lone
- 8 - hear/hair
- 9 - bit/bet
- 10 - thick/tick
- 11 - sheep/sheep
- 12 - old/hold
- 13 - cat/cut
- 14 - dear/dare
- 15 - six/sex
- 16 - right/height
- 17 - author/other
- 18 - thus/sauce
- 19 - then/zen
- 20 - pew/pill
- 21 - ball/bow

- 22 - though/though
- 23 - bit/bit
- 24 - peat/pit
- 25 - bat/bat
- 26 - bad/bed
- 27 - boot/bought
- 28 - do/done
- 29 - boot/but
- 30 - coup/cup
- 31 - food/foot
- 32 - boat/boot
- 33 - bad/badge

PRONUNCIATION - PRODUCTION

INSTRUCTIONS: Read these words silently, and then read the same words aloud, be sure your exercise is being recorded.

1-sin

2-year

3-hill

4-hell

5-group

6-rat

7-girl

8-leak

9-cord

10-back

11-buck

12-though

13-bare

14-better

15-sing

16-ear

17-ill

18-look

19-other

20-calm

21-cot

22-day

23-side

24-boy

25-found
26-sure
27-kill
28-gun
29-five
30-very
31-man
32-yet
33-wet
34-share/chair
35-am/ham
36-do/done
37-boot/but
38-coup/cup
39-food/foot
40-boat/boot
41-bed/bad
42-boot/bought
43-bat/bet
44-peat/pit
45-beat/bit
46-though/dough
47-ball/bow
48-pew/pill
49-then/zen
50-thus/sauce
51-author/other

52-right/height
53-sex/six
54-dear/dare
55-cat/cut
56-old/hold
57-sheep/cheap
58-thick/tick
59-bit/bet
60-hear/hair
61-lone/lawn
62-low/law
63-hat/hut
64-pal/poll
65-thus/toss
66-bad/badge
67-jacket/packet

LISTENING

INSTRUCTIONS; This is the listening part of the test. First read the questions before listening to the information. Then listen a first time without answering the questions. The text will be read a second time when you will answer the questions and mark your answer sheet with the appropriate responses.

1 - O. Henry died in:

- (A) 1970
- (b) 1920
- (c) 1910

2 - O. Henry was:

- (a) an American short story writer
- (b) a poet
- (c) a French writer

3 - O. Henry wrote:

- (a) The Christmas Gift
- (b) The Red Badge of Courage
- (c) Jonahan Livingstone Seagull

4 - O. Henry was born in:

- (a) Greensboro
- (b) Austin
- (c) London

5 - O. Henry:

- (a) never married
- (b) married in Austin
- (c) married in Greensboro

6 - In 1896 the writer:

- (a) went to New York
- (b) went to Central America
- (c) went back to Greensboro

7 - "Cabages and Kings" was based on the author's experience of:

- (a) Central America
- (b) New York
- (c) Texas

8 - The author:

- (a) was arrested when he returned to Texas
- (b) was never sent to prison
- (c) remained in prison for a little more than five years

9 - In New York, in 1902, the author:

- (a) was accused of a crime
- (b) finally achieved success in his career as a writer
- (c) published his first book

10 - O. Henry wrote about the life and times of:

- (a) the first decade of the twentieth century
- (b) the first decade of the thirteenth century
- (c) the second decade of the sixteenth century

LISTENING - TEXT

When O. Henry died in 1910, he was the most widely read and popular short story writer in the United States. Although he wrote nearly three hundred stories during the last eight years of his life, his editors and the public were always demanding more. Even now, more than half a century later, his popularity is still great. Any modern collection of the best and most representative American short stories contains at least one or two from the pen of O. Henry, such as "The Christmas Gift", or "The Last Leaf".

O. Henry was the pen name of William Sydney Porter, who was born in Greensboro, North Carolina, in 1862. Although he left school at fifteen to work in his uncle's drugstore, he continued to read widely. When twenty, because of poor health, he was sent to Texas to live on a sheep ranch. Spending two years there, he became acquainted with many ranchers, cowboys, and cattle thieves; later these westerners were to appear as characters in a collection of stories, *Heart of the West* (1907).

In 1884 O. Henry moved to Austin, Texas, where he married and worked as a clerk in a bank. A good many years later, he was to utilize his banking experience as material for some stories, such as "Jimmy Valentine". Meanwhile, however, he was already beginning to contribute humorous stories and items to magazines and newspapers. But suddenly, in 1896, disaster struck. He lost his job at the bank when his accounts appeared to be short. Although he insisted that he was innocent, he became frightened and fled to Central America. His experiences there were to

become the basis for the stories of his first book, *Cabbages and Kings* (1904). After six months he returned to Texas to be at the bedside of his dying wife. He was arrested and sentenced to the Federal Prison at Columbus, Ohio, where he remained for a little more than three years. During this time he began to write again.

In 1902 he moved to New York, where he devoted all his time to writing. He was an immediate success and within two years had signed a contract with a leading newspaper, the *New York World*, for a weekly story. Because he was able to create plots with such remarkable facility, he sometimes wrote as many as seven stories in a month.

O. Henry's tremendous success exerted considerable influence on the development of the American short story. In fact, he actually standardized the style and form of the modern short story. O. Henry had a very inventive mind and made plots from the most commonplace things - menu cards, a dull rooming house, a doorway - glow with interest. The settings of his stories were drawn from his experiences, and likewise his characters were based on actual people he had known. His sole purpose was to entertain his contemporaries, who indeed found his stories delightful. Today, however, the stories have an added appeal because they provide an amusing historical perspective of the life, manners, and times of the first decade of the twentieth century.

VOCABULARY

INSTRUCTIONS: Each sentence has an underlined word. From the four alternatives (a), (b), (c), and (d), choose the one that best substitutes the missing word.

1 - Passanger ships ----- are often equipped with ship-to-shore or air-to-land radio telephones.

- (a) highways
- (b) railroads
- (c) planes
- (d) sailboats

2 - It is difficult to get young people to plan for their old age, which seems very ----- to them.

- (a) impossible
- (b) faraway
- (c) observable
- (d) fearful

3 - When preparing a -----, a person should be aware that vitamin D acts to increase the amount of calcium absorbed by the body.

- (a) schedule exercise
- (b) nutritional plan
- (c) study of longevity
- (d) medicinal chart

4 - Graffiti painting was among the latest trends in modern art, represented in the exhibition "New York/New wave" ----- in 1981 by Diogo Cortez.

- (a) acclaimed
- (b) arranged
- (c) reviewed
- (d) revealed

5 - It is impossible for people to ----- everything that they have thought, felt or done.

- (a) recall
- (b) appreciate
- (c) repeat
- (d) discuss

6 - Feudal society depended on the existence of -----vassals.

- (a) diligent
- (b) black
- (c) pious
- (d) loyal

7 - -----from solitary to gregarious beaked whales may travel in schools of several hundred during the breeding season.

- (a) varying
- (b) roving
- (c) crazing
- (d) turning

8 - The ----- of cedar wood seems to render it offensive to insects.

- (a) bark
- (b) hardness
- (c) scent
- (d) texture

9 - Sand is found ----- on the seashore and is often blown in land to form hills and dunes.

- (a) at random
- (b) at high tide
- (c) in dry mounds
- (d) in great quantities

10 - Children who are provided with possible feedback for aggressiveness will incorporate this kind of conduct into their standard ----- of behaviour.

- (a) repertory
- (b) understanding
- (c) bond
- (d) lineage

GRAMMAR

INSTRUCTIONS: Choose from each of the grouped alternatives, the one that best suits the following sentences:

1 - The audience -----listening to a Beethoven symphony now.

- (a) is
- (b) are
- (c) were
- (d) was

2 - The class -----taking notes at the moment.

- (a) is
- (b) are
- (c) was
- (d) were

3 - I ----- at the small hotel at ten o'clock last evening.

- (a) arrived
- (b) will have
- (c) will be arriving
- (d) will have arrived

4 - Anywhere in these hills you will find -----orchids.

- (a) got
- (b) get
- (c) wild
- (d) arrange

5 - He will come here again -----.

- (a) after
- (b) next week
- (c) before
- (d) month

6 - How quietly she -----, if she had gone home.

- (a) would have slept
- (b) would sleeping
- (c) have would slept
- (d) sleeps

7 - I want ----- drink.

- (a) many
- (b) a
- (c) two
- (d) so many

8 - They are driving the pig back into -----sty.

- (a) it's
- (b) its
- (c) their
- (d) mine

9 - He travelled from England -----Paris.

- (a) to
- (b) below
- (c) for
- (d) at

10 - You can take one -----that one.

(a) neither

(b) or

(c) added

(d) but

11 - The children are -----in the park

(a) played

(b) playing

(c) plays

(d) will play

12 - -----studying again.

(a) their

(b) they're

(c) there

(d) this

13 - They are -----soon.

(a) go to study

(b) study

(c) going to study

(d) studied

14 - Everybody -----together yesterday.

(a) goes

(b) went

(c) gone

(d) go

15 - My child -----playing in the park.

- (a) likes
- (b) like
- (c) is like
- (d) was like

16 - -----strikes the car and runs.

- (a) I
- (b) We
- (c) The boys
- (d) The boy

17 - -----visited us yesterday.

- (a) you
- (b) she
- (c) he
- (d) John

19 - He was irritable because he -----sleep the previous night.

- (a) shall not
- (b) need not
- (c) will not
- (d) could not

20 - They have not lived in this neighbourhood as long as -----have

- (a) we
- (b) our
- (c) us
- (d) we're

FUNCTIONS

INSTRUCTIONS: In this part of the test you have a description of a number of situations. Choose the appropriate response for each of the situations, paying due attention to the use of socially appropriate forms.

1 - You have just met an old friend in the street, you say to him:

- (a) Hi, How are you?
- (b) Good bye, see you later
- (c) Do you stay here during your summer holidays?

2 - You have been invited to a friend's house for coffee. Two days after the arranged date, you realise you have forgotten all about the arrangement. You telephone your friend. What do you say?

- (a) How was the food?
- (b) What kind of food do you like best?
- (c) I'm sorry about the day before yesterday.

3 - You have been asked for advice about interesting places to see in your locality, what would you say in this situation?

- (a) There are several interesting places to see here, for example you could visit...
- (b) Travelling is the best thing to do in a summer holiday.
- (c) What about a drink?

4 - A boy is going on a summer holiday with a friend without his parents. What advice do his parents give him before he leaves?

- (a) Your brother has just left.
- (b) Take care of yourself.
- (c) First turn left in front of the theatre.

5 - You are late for an appointment. What would you say to your friend in this case?

- (a) I'm sorry, I'm late.
- (b) Would you rather have coffee or tea?
- (c) I'll see you some other day.

6 - A mother is taking her little boy to bed. He does not want to go to sleep. She kisses him, and then she says:

- (a) Good night, dear.
- (b) Your sister has gone to a dance.
- (c) Time to wake up.

7 - A girl is playing in the street, when a man passes by her. The man was not far when the wind blows his hat away. The girl runs after the hat, and gives it back to the man. The man says:

- (a) What do you do for a living?
- (b) Thank you.
- (c) Let's go together.

8 - Carmen and Juan have just met at a party. Juan approaches, greets her, introduces himself. What does he say in such a situation?

- (a) I'm sorry, I'm late.
- (b) Hello. My name is Juan.
- (c) What's your opinion about war?

9 - A woman is at the supermarket. She wants to know the price of the product. What does she say?

- (a) Excuse me. How much is it?
- (b) I love cooking.
- (c) What kind of food do you like best?

10 - A man is looking for a shoe shop. He sees a policeman, he wants to ask him how he could get to the shoe shop. How does he begin talking to the policeman?

- (a) Nice to see you!
- (b) How do you do.
- (c) Excuse me.

READING COMPREHENSION

INSTRUCTIONS: In this part of the test you will read two passages. Each one is followed by a few comprehension questions. You are to choose the one best answer (a), (b), (c), or (d), to each question.

1) The rattles with which the rattlesnake warns of its
2) presence, are formed by loose interlocking hollow rings of
3) hard skin, which make a buzzing sound when its tail is
4) shaken. as a baby, the snake begins to form its rattles from
5) the bottom at the very tip of its tail. Thereafter, each time
6) it sheds its skin, a new ring is formed. Popular belief holds
7) that a snake's age can be told by counting the rings, but
8) this idea is fallacious. In fact, a snake may lose its old
9) skin as often as four times a year. Also, rattles tend to
10) wear or break off with time.

1 - A rattlesnake's rattles are made of:

- (a) skin
- (b) bone
- (c) wood
- (d) muscle

2 - How often does a rattlesnake shed its skin?

- (a) once every year
- (b) one every four months
- (c) up to four times a year
- (d) four times more often than other snakes

3 - The rattlesnake warns of its presence...

- (a) shaking its tail
- (b) losing its skin
- (c) breaking off its rattles
- (d) forming a new rattle

1) The body of nearly all flowering plants can be divided
2) into two systems, the root system which grows below ground,
3) and the shoot system which grows above it. The typical root
4) system anchors the plant firmly in the soil, and absorbs
5) water and dissolved raw materials from it. The typical shoot
6) system consists of a main stem upon which are borne leaves,
7) branch shoots, and sometimes flowers. It should be emphasized
8) that the words stem and shoot are synonymous, the word
9) "shoot" being a collective term for both stem and leaves. The
10) leaves are the chief food-producing organs of a plant, making
11) complex foods in the presence of light by a process called
12) photosynthesis. The stem supports the leaves, displaying them
13) in the light needed for photosynthesis, and also acts as the
14) main channel of communication between the various organs of
15) the plant. Water and dissolved minerals absorbed by the roots
16) are carried in the stem to the leaves and flowers, and foods
17) synthesized in the leaves are conducted away through the stem
18) to other regions of the plant, both above and below ground,
19) here they are either used for growth or else stored for
20) future use. Flowers are organs that are concerned with the
21) reproduction of the species by seeds.

4 - With what topic is the passage primarily concerned?

- (a) how plants produce seeds
- (b) different types of flowers
- (c) the structure of plants
- (d) how leaves grow

5 - According to the passage, what is the main function of the root system?

- (a) to absorb light for growth
- (b) to create minerals for nutrition
- (c) to speed the reproduction process
- (d) to secure the plant in the ground

6 - With which of the following would the author be most likely to agree?

- (a) the shoot is part of the stem
- (b) the stem is part of the shoot
- (c) the stem and the shoot are identical
- (d) the stem is not part of a flowering plant

7 - The major food-producing part of a plant is the:

- (a) leaf
- (b) root
- (c) flower
- (d) shoot

8 - In line 19, the word "they" refers to:

- (a) regions
- (b) foods
- (c) leaves
- (d) flowers

9 - The author implies that plants with flowers:

- (a) are likely to have long roots
- (b) are not reproducing organisms
- (c) can be grown from seeds
- (d) are the most beautiful of all plants

10 - What did the paragraph preceding the passage most probably discuss?

- (a) the anatomy of fruit-bearing trees
- (b) methods of increasing plant production
- (c) the definition of a plant body
- (d) the differences between flowers and leaves

SPEAKING: ORAL INTERVIEW

- 1 - What's your surname?
- 2 - What's your first name?
- 3 - What's your address?
- 4 - Have you got a telephone? What's your phone number?
- 5 - What do you do for a living?
- 6 - How many languages do you speak?
- 7 - Do you stay here during your summer holidays?
- 8 - What kind of food do you like best?
- 9 - What's your opinion about war?
- 10- What's your opinion about old age pension?
- 11- What's your opinion about the new government?
- 12- What are some of the good and bad things about Fpolis?
- 13- What are some of the favourite things you like to do on weekends?
- 14- What season do you prefer?
- 15- What is one of your favourite movies?

SPEAKING - TOPIC DESCRIPTION

INSTRUCTIONS: Read these topics, and choose two of them to be developed during the oral interview. You have ten minutes before the interview to prepare your speech. During the interview you will speak for about five minutes on the topics chosen. You are allowed to make a few notes, but do not write your speech out.

- 1 - The value of spending a year or two in a foreign country.
- 2 - What might be the main problems the world will be facing in the year 2.000?
- 3 - How I would like my children to be educated.
- 4 - Should a woman work after marriage?
- 5 - Some of the ways in which nature is being threatened by man.
- 6 - Some of the problems facing a young couple without much money who wants to get married.
- 7 - Describe a type of person you most admire.
- 8 - What are some of the reasons for the increase of violent crime today?
- 9 - To what extent do you consider it important to be completely honest?
- 10 - What are the main characteristics of a good professional?

PHOTOGRAPH DESCRIPTION

INSTRUCTIONS: The students are shown a picture of São Paulo, and the interviewer asks them to look at the picture, and answer the questions:

- 1 - Give a general description of what you can see in this picture.
- 2 - What city is this?
- 3 - What things do you think attractive or unattractive in a city like São Paulo?

APPENDIX 2.3.
ON-GOING TEST

ON-GOING TEST

1 - PHONOLOGY: RECEPTION/PRODUCTION

Listen to the teacher and repeat the sentences after her.

- 1.1. I'm tired.
- 1.2. My cousin is studying.
- 1.3. The librarian is stacking the book.
- 1.4. Jonny is under pressure.
- 1.5. My brother can read the book.
- 1.6. My sister can study her lessons.
- 1.7. Do you understand the lesson?
- 1.8. Don't you want to buy this book?
- 1.9. I would go to England if it were December.
- 1.10. The sailor would have come back home if the ship had sailed.

2 - VOCABULARY: PRODUCTION

In one minute list the words you know that begin with:

- 2.1. C.....
- 2.2. P.....
- 2.3. S.....
- 2.4. R.....
- 2.5. T.....

3 - VOCABULARY: RECEPTION

In five minutes translate the words below:

- corner
- always
- first
- before

sick
mind
kind
hand
ask for
all day long
word
keep
sad
mistake
together
little
right
empty
easy
late
strong
read
dirty
add
dark
quickly
cry
finish
tomorrow
say
suddenly

give
look
go
perhaps
wake up
happen
trouble
make
board

4 - GRAMMAR: PRODUCTION

From the words listed below, or from any other words, generate five different sentences. You have five minutes to do the exercise.

Beber=to drink drank drunk

Fazer=to make made made

Cantar=to sing sang sung

Escrever=to write wrote written

Falar=to speak spoke spoken

- 4.1.....
- 4.2.....
- 4.3.....
- 4.4.....
- 4.5.....

5 - TRANSLATION

Read the text below and translate it. You have five minutes to do the exercise.

We know very little about the events which influence our course through life. Some of these events if such they can be called - come very close to us but pass us by without apparent result, and often without any indication of their coming or going. If we knew all the possible changes in our fortune, life would be full of hopes and fears, of surprises and disappointments, to permit us a single hour of peace.

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