UNIVERSIDADE FEDERAL DE GOIÁS

Faculdade de Educação

Mestrado em Educação Escolar Brasileira

The use of the Communicative Approach for Teaching Adult Beginners in Goiania

Luciene Godoy Lima

Goiânia — Goiás

1992

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Dissertação apresentada como exigência parcial para a obtenção do título de Mestre em Educação Escolar Brasileira a Comissão Julgadora da Faculdade de Educação da Universidade Federal de Goiás, sob a orientação da Prof* Maria B. Brown e co-orientacao da Prof* Cristina Kratz.

Goiânia - Goiás

1992

Comissão Julgadora.

M. Brown.

Izaggio

M. P. Cavalcante

Agradecimentos

Agradeço imensamente a Profª Maria Brown pela dedicação e assistência continua.

Agradeço tambem a Profª Cristina Kratz pelas observacões oportunas.

Meus agradecimentos a todos os professores do Mestrado que de alguma forma enriqueceram minha vida e a Franciney C. de Franca pela paciente digitação do texto.

Dedicatória

Para Augusto, por seu apoio,
amor   e   carinho   todo este
tempo.

ABSTRACT

Experience and results of interviews with students and teachers of English in Goiania show that the students are not having the desired results. The Communicative Approach is presented here as an alternative way of dealing with the challenge of learning another language.

The Communicative Approach is an ecletical approach and for this reason its assumptions are derived from different methods. It is believed that the solution to the difficulties in the language learning process cannot be found in just one method but rather by taking into account the contributions made by all the previous methods.

Another feature of the Communicative Approach is that it frees the teachers from following the rigid sequence of procedures imposed by a method. On the contrary, it encourages them to take into account the students' needs and personalities and provide specific, meaningful and real-life-based material for them.

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

This work is primarily an attempt to establish a theoretical clarification of the origins of the Communicative Approach as well as a description of present day techniques used in communicative classrooms.

Chapter One points out the need for a new approach in English teaching departing from an anlysis of the performance of methods presently used in Goiania. The results of surveys carried out on performance satisfaction are analysed and conclusions are drawn.

Chapter Two deals with a historical background in which the major methods which preceded the Communicative Approach and which have influenced it in one way or another are assessed. The last part of this chapter is dedicated extensively to what the Communicative Approach is and the alternatives it offers for dealing with language teaching.

Chapter Three presents typical communicative teaching techniques used for developing the four skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing. It attempts to show how the Communicative Approach deals with each of these skills.

Chapter Four contains a description of a

communicative coursebook, "Blueprint One", and attempts to demonstrate how a communicative course is built up. It is also an attempt to illustrate communicative activities so that the reader gets an overview of how a communicative course works.

In the last Chapter, and in the light of previously stated principles, a selection of exercises designed to fit the needs of a particular group is proposed. These exercises are mostly aimed at demonstrating that teachers can build up exercises for their groups based on the students' needs, interests or difficulties. In this case, that group is of adults in Goiania.

It is hoped that this dissertation will prove to be useful for English teachers who are working with adult beginners or false beginners and are looking for better results in their students' performance as well as wanting to know more about what is going on in the field of language teaching. The final aim of this work is to provide teachers with a simple overview of what the Communicative Approach is and how it can be used as an alternative to the methods currently used in Brazil.

Chapter ONE — ON THE NECESSITY
FOR A NEW METHODOLOGY
IN ENGLISH TEACHING.

1.1. A Student and a Teacher's
Experience.

One of the reasons for choosing this topic for my dissertation relates to the time when I was an English student. In my primary and secondary education I studied English through the Grammar Translation Method but at the same time, at a private English course the method used was the Audio-visual Method. This, in the 70's was considered the most up-to-date method, although, in the United States it had already been criticized in its assumptions by the linguist Noam Chomsky and material based on the Cognitive Theory was already being used.

Even though I was considered an excellent student and all my grades from the beginning to the end of the course were "A", I always felt uncomfortable with my English because

when I had to say or write something I was never sure about the right words to use.

Because I was an excellent student I was invited to teach in the same course I had studied at. So my displeasure and insecurity as an English student continued as an English teacher.

I started reading and looking for alternatives to answer my questions and to provide me with what I needed, that is, I wanted to use the language I had studied for so many years with confidence and help my students to do the same because the only thing I felt I was doing was to teach them structures that they did not know how, when or where to use.

I was not satisfied with the Grammar Translation Method because I could see that my classmates had such a poor command of the language even though they had studied for so many years. On the other hand, the Audio-visual Method did not show much better results. I could see students speaking more in class situations but when it came to any situation that was out of class, in real life, the students did not know what to do. I even made an experience in Piracanjuba teaching small groups because I thought the problem was classes of large groups of students, but I was using the same Audio-visual books and the results continued to be insatisfactory.

In the 80's I came across some material that I later found out to be one of the first attempts towards a communicative teaching. After using "Streamline" books for some months the results were much more satisfactory. The students could express themselves with more confidence and more appropriately. In addition, they were much more involved in their own learning process. I then started looking for more

information about the Communicative Approach because I felt I had found answers to questions such as: "What can a teacher do to lead his students to use the language they have studied with confidence and in a natural way?" or "What kind of language should be taught that will reflect what the student really wants to express?" or still "Which processes or techniques should be used to achieve communication in the target language?". I finally had the feeling that I had found what I had been looking for.

Later, when I was doing my Master's Degree in Education my decision to write about the Communicative Approach come from the need for more information about it and at the same time the possibility to investigate further and confirm or refute affirmations on previous teaching techniques. In the light of such investigation, I felt that conclusions could be advanced that would be of use to fellow-colleages also.

A questionnaire (Appendix I) was made to gather information that would confirm my suspicions that the methods being used in Goiania were not giving the desired results. This questionnaire was applied to graduate and post-graduate professionals since the stated objective is to deal with adult learners. Twenty people were interviewed, fourteen graduates and six post-graduates. The following results demonstrate the level of satisfaction that people who have studied English have with their performance.

The average time these people have studied English is two years and seven months. Thirteen out of twenty say their mastery of the language is poor and twelve see their performance as only 20% of the desired level. When asked about which aspect they needed to improve more, speaking was mentioned

sixteen times, listening and reading ten times while writing was mentioned eight times. In assessing methodology through which they learned grammar, listening, translation and reading students rated these last as average but conversation as weak.

Although reading is always mentioned as the most required skill for highly qualified people only two affirmed to having been trained to read authentic texts. Most of them, that is, fourteen, were trained to read small texts and, in the interviewees' assessment, this training varied from weak to average. When asked about the skill they needed to use more, listening was mentioned nine times, reading seven, speaking six, writing five and translation three. Five people never read for professional or academic purposes. The same number read regularly and another five sometimes read, while four always read. All of the people who do not read say they would read in English if they could and fifteen out of the twenty have the opportunity for interchange in their area of work but half of them shrink from this opportunity for the lack of English. Only two said their professional level would not increase if they knew English.

A brief analysis of the data provided by the questionnaire shows that, although the students have studied for a considerable amount of time, about three years each, they feel they perform poorly principally in speaking. Almost none of them were trained to read authentic material even though this is the kind of reading most required for academic or professional purposes and they affirm to read quite a lot. As much as half of the interviewees miss the opportunity to go abroad for exchange or for further education courses because of not having a better knowledge of the English language. This means that after almost

three years studying this language they still feel unable to use it for international communication.

When we talk about the need for a new methodology for teaching English we have in mind statements (appendix II) such as the ones given by a graduate primary and secondary teacher who has been an English teacher for thirteen years. She affirms that the vast majority, in her words more than ninety percent, of the English teachers working in the public sector still uses techniques inspired by the Grammar Translation Method and that this method is so far from the students' interests that most of them do not like to study English. She goes on to say that the outcome of four years of English teaching in primary school plus three in secondary result in an incredibly poor performance, in her opinion.

One of the people interviewed is currently a pedagogic consultant to the Departamento de Ingles da Delegacia Metropolitana de Educacao. She affirmed that fifth and sixth-grade students are clearly performing better and enjoying more learning English because of the work that is being developed with younger groups on the basis of a more practical and interesting English course. She states that the changes being implemented are the result of the reading of up-dated articles on communicative techniques and that a very slow improvement can be seen in the students' appreciation of the English classes and the teachers' satisfaction with the better results. In spite of this, according to the interviewee, the movement is still very small and it will take at least ten years to perceive a widespread result in the city of Goiania.

If we consider the private English schools in Goiania (Appendix III) it can be noted that most of them use

methods that were abolished in the United States and Europe decades ago. In the process of questioning secretaries, coordinators and directors of the ten biggest schools surveyed it was noticed that many of these people directly linked to the school did not know the name of the method they used because most of them gave the names of the coursebooks they used when questioned and some even said they used different methods, one for children, one for teenagers and another for adults, demonstrating clearly that they mix up the name of the method with the name of the coursebooks applied.

Another level at which English is applied is the proficiency tests given in Master's Degrees in Goiania (Appendix IV). First, it should be mentioned that if a master's student does not pass this test he cannot get his degree. A major feature of the proficiency test is that it only tests students' ability to understand written texts. According to a lecturer at the Federal University of Goias who used to be responsible for these tests, the other skills such as speaking, listening and writing are not required because reading is seen as fundamental. The others should be acquired later if the student does not have them. She also states that, in her opinion, if the proficiency test were applied in the other skills too many students would fail. It is interesting to note that in the questionnaire many graduates and post-gratuates said that although they knew how to read they felt the need for speaking, listening and writing because of the need for interaction with foreigners. It is reasonable to assume therefore that they wanted to be able to exchange information and not only to receive it.

1.2. Why There is a Need
for a New Approach

After analysing the questionnaires, the interviews with teachers from the public sector and a lecturer who used to give the proficiency tests for Master Courses in Goiania as well as the study of the methods presently used in private English schools in Goiania it can be concluded that of the many students who have attended courses, only a small percentage perform as well as their expectations in the Target Language. This fact raises the question of why such a small number of students seem to be able to use the basic structures of English efficiently to communicate needs or information.

The problem demands a solution principally in developing countries like Brazil where so many students need to use English as a tool in the study of scientific and technical subjects. It is alarming, as it could be seen in the analysis of the questionnaires, to hear the number of highly-qualified professional people who, despite the need for English for reading, attending congresses and courses of further education abroad, seem unable to learn it to the necessary degree of competence. A great number of them report that they have started English courses over and over again and yet are unable to adequately use the language to express their communicative needs. Similarly, they state, whilst they are able to manipulate structures, they tend not to be able to understand the native-speaker or to extract main ideas from the written text in the L2.

Students following post-graduate courses have
many subjects which require a lot of background reading in
English but the great majority of them feel they cannot read
English satisfactorily, as the results of the interview in
Appendix I demonstrate. In their attempt to solve this
problem, the students report that they resort to a bilingual
dicitionary together with their limited knowledge of the syntax
of the language.This can often be more confusing than helpful.
In extreme cases of need of access to information in the Target
Language, they may even resort to paying for translations.

As far as post-graduate academics in general in
Brazil are concerned, they can read and extract necesssary
information to differing extents, but far fewer of them can
speak or write effectively. This would imply that they are in
a position to receive information but are severely handicapped
in the giving of it. This raises the question of how they will
communicate their ideas with, for example, fellow-colleagues in
their field from other parts of the world.

On the other hand, it is clear that there are all
sorts of professional people like doctors, dentists, veterinary
surgeons, economists, computer-programmers and others who want
to keep up to date with the latest developments in their field,
and English plays an extremely important role in this respect.
It is an undisputed fact that English has become the dominant
language in all modern academic and technological fields.
Our own experience together with the experience of the people
who were interviewed confirm the authors' opinion that there is
a need for a new approach. The Communicative Approach shifts the
focus of attention appropriately. According to recent research
the main difficulty that is likely to prevent students from

understanding and using the language adequately is the lack of communicative ability.

> " Newmark (1966) speaks of the "strucuturaly competent" student - who has developed the ability to produce grammatically correct sentences - yet who is unable to perform a simple communicative task. Our structurally competent student might perform this task in a perfectly grammatical way. Yet none of these ways - however grammatical they may be - would be used by the native speaker." Johnson (1981:1).

The Communicative Approach goes a long way to bridging this gap between 'structural competence' and success in communicating. If one examines the number of students who, despite having studied a great deal of English, cannot communicate effectively at an elementary level, one will begin to question the validity of the methodology currently used in Brazil by English teachers. It should come as no surprise, to find that by the time new teaching techniques reach Brazil they are already becoming out-dated and replaced by new ones as the research on the methods used in the most successful private language schools in Goiânia reveals (Appendix III).

One way to overcome this time-lag is to tap new ideas and developments at the source. This means going to where more modern techniques, such as the Communicative Approach, were created and are already undergoing modification as a result of experience through practice. Johnson and Morrow (1981:Preface) state:

> "Recent years have seen many exciting developments in language teaching. Some have been at the level of syllabys design... Others are concerned with methodology and

we are today seeing the growth of interesting new procedures and techniques, many
of which challenge our traditional views of what should happen in the classroom."

Jeremy Harmer (1983:Preface) sees English teaching as:

" perhaps healthier now as a profession than it has ever been: certainly it is better
informed. There are more good materials than ever before. More articles and books
about teaching and those areas of applied linguistics which concern it are
published every day."

Even more succinctly H. G. Widdowson (1979:Introduction) states:

"The 'Communicative Approach is, of course, very much in vogue at present."

Thus, any work of this kind implied the need to
go to England not only to conduct bibliographical research but
also to get first-hand practical knowledge of the most recent
innovations in the field. This allowed us not only to observe
the techniques being applied but also to collect a variety of
materials such as: realia, cassettes, videotapes, books,
exercises, pictures, research papers and authentic reading
materials.

Other activities that were undertaken were the
observation of classes given by teachers trained in the
Communicative Approach, visits to language laboratories and
computer centers, not to mention the course attended at the
University of Leeds: "Communicative Methodology in English
Language Teaching" which gave invaluable insights for the work
to be undertaken in Goiânia.

Chapter Two — THEORY

2.1. Major Teaching Methods of the 20th Century and their Contribution to the Communicative Approach.

Empirical observation tends to suggest that any method is either a mixture of previous methods or diametrically opposed to one of them. The Direct Method, for instance, was conceived in opposition to the Grammar Translation Method. The latter consisted of teaching English through grammatical rules and translation of literary texts from the Target Language into the Mother Tongue, while in the Direct Method translation was totally avoided and meaning was demonstrated primarily through illustration or action followed by words. Reading and writing were developed later. (Hubbard, et alii, 1989: 33, 34).

The Audiolingual/visual Method, on the other hand, was not created in opposition to the Direct Method. On the contrary, it drew inspiration from it in various respects, such as the exclusive use of the Target Language as a means of

teaching and the shunning of translation. A clear addition, however, was the idea of organizing the language into a list of grammatical items and then grading them on the basis of difficulty. In the classroom, teaching always proceded from the less difficult to the more difficult.

The Situational and the Functional Methods, in their turn, were developed in clear opposition to the Audiolingual/visual Method. They are based on the belief that students should be asked to think, formulate hypotheses and test them, rather than simply repeat.

Following this same line of thought, the Communicative Approach can be seen as both a mixture of the methods which preceded it and a reaction to them. In teaching techniques recommended, it draws on many of the latter-day methods. Yet, unlike its predecessors and possibly in reaction to their dogmá, it is seen as an approach and not a method. In other words, it seeks to establish guidelines on the principles and beliefs underlying teaching. A method, on the other hand, is the sequence of procedures used by a teacher in the classroom which, it is hoped will give the desired results. In this way, it is a radical departure from the previous language-teaching tradition.

It would appear necessary to conduct a deeper survey of these more influential so-called methods as they have occurred historically and during the last hundred years and assess their outstanding features as well as their proposed objectives, theoretical assumptions, and teaching techniques. Such an assessment whilst mindful of both the good and bad aspects of the methods respectively should primarily detect the

contribution of each method to subsequent teaching and current thoughts on communicative teaching and practices.

This study will therefore range from the Grammar Translation Method to the Post-Cognitive era, looking at the more influential methods of the period such as the Direct Method, the Audiolingual/Visual Method and the Structuralist proponents, as well as Cognitive-inspired methods such as Functionalism and Notionalism. Throughout the survey, apart from looking at the influence of one method on another, a major consideration will be to assess the relative contributions of each to the Communicative Aprroach.

2.1.1. The Grammar Translation Method

Grammar Translation is the first major method under consideration. It is also the one to which other successive methods have reacted in the sense that their starting point for a better alternative has been a radical critique of the underlying principles and the practical techniques employed in language teaching. It will become clear that in so doing, too radical a departure was made and some efficient aspects of the method were left lost until the advent of the Communicative Approach. Some aspects, such as the learning of rules, are of crucial importance to students who feel the necessity to understand the rules that govern certain grammar points and will refuse to memorize through repetition without the clear mental understanding of how it happens. Another feature of the Grammar Translation Method that was rescued by the Communicative

Approach is the idea that the First Language is indeed a reference system of great importance for the Second Language learner and that translation is a crosslingual technique that can put the learner into an active problem-solving situation.

The dominant feature of the Grammar Translation Method was the emphasis placed on translation. Students worked with unwieldy extracts of erudite written texts and recoded them from the Target Language into the Mother Tongue. It must, however, be pointed out that these texts were at least authentic, an aspect lost by subsequent methods and only retrieved in the present communicative era. Equal prominence was given to the dissecting of the grammar of the second language and the studying of grammatical paradigms such as, for example:

Simple present indicative active tense of the verb to do

	Singular	Plural
1st Person	I do	We do
2nd Person	You do	You do
3rd Person	He	
	She does	They do
	It	

Students had also to memorize rules such as the use of some and any or the correct use of the articles a or an. A great deal of emphasis was also placed on committing to memory exeptions to the rules. The students were given lists of vocabulary with their translation equivalents in the Mother Tongue to be memorized.

The teaching techniques always followed the same procedures, that is, the presentation of a grammar definition or rule demonstrated through examples illustrating the point. Students were then asked to make up their own sentences illustrating the grammar studied. As far as translation techniques are concerned, the students usually started by translating single words and phrases progressing to sentences with the use of vocabulary lists, and later to translating Second Language texts into their Mother Tongue or vice-versa.

The main objective of the Grammar Translation Method was to enable its students to read in the Target Language. It may have been thought that speaking would come as a natural consequence of learning the way the rules worked and of the memorization of lexical items. This idea is supported by Stern (1983:454) in the following quotation:

> "Grammar translation lays little or no emphasis on the speaking of the second language or listening to second language speech; it is a mainly book-oriented method of working out and learning the grammatical system of the language"

In other words, students subjected to this approach who did well were well-informed on the grammatical backcloth of the Target Language in question and were widely conversant with the thought and works of its great literary masters. They often had an impressive and erudite vocabulary and could read extensively in the L2. Moreover, their ability to read aloud was probably better than average. However, even the successful ones would have been at a loss to engage in everyday conversation or to express run-of-the-mill needs. The less

successful were legion, discouraged by the dryness of the exercise and the greatness of the task.

There is evidence that the Grammar Translation has been used as a language teaching method for centuries to teach languages such as Latin, Greek and French but by the early twentieth century it was being attacked as a cold and lifeless approach. In addition, its excessive emphasis on the written form meant spoken needs were left unattended and so learners could not speak the Target Language they undertook to study. For these reasons, the following decades witnessed the development of opposing language teaching reforms. In spite of that, Grammar Translation, which dominated foreign language teaching in Europe from the 1840s to the 1940s, is still widely used, in a modified form, in many parts of the world today, including in state primary and secondary schools in Brazil and, specifically, in Goiania.

2.1.2. The Direct Method

With the development of better means of transport and other factors such as international trade, the opportunities for communication among Europeans in the early and mid-nineteenth century increased, and so did the demand for a language teaching method which would enable people to communicate orally in a more effective way (Stern, 1983:457). Linguists began to claim that speech was the primary form of the language and so an oral-based methodology should be used. Many

methods derived from this so-called Reform Movement, among them, the Direct Method.

The main feature of the Direct Method was the exclusive use of the second language as the medium of instruction. Translation as a teaching technique was totally avoided. Meaning was conveyed through demonstration, illustration and action without translation (Richards & Rogers, 1986:9). It was an important change since it was to influence the methods which followed it such as the Audiolingual/visual Method or more recently even the Communicative Approach, with some variation such as the possibility of using the Mother Tongue in classroom whenever it represented a source of help in the understanding of a particularly difficult meaning. Another feature of the Direct Method that was assimilated in a modified form by subsequent methods was the idea of the teacher grading his language to the level of the student. In the Direct Method the teacher just submitted the student to a normal flow of language, both easy and difficult aspects were presented together in normal speech. This sometimes made it difficult for students to absorb many aspects of the language properly. Subsequent methods, however, started grading the language from easier to more difficult so that the students had a greater opportunity to grasp the structures properly. The Audiolingual/Visual Method was the first method which came up with this structuralist point of view in language teaching.

In addition, the Direct Method shifted the main focus of English teaching from literary written to spoken language. Thus, spoken everyday language was used as the object of instruction, providing the situation for students to abandon

the first language as a frame of reference. In the words of Stern, (1983:456):

> "The Direct Method is characterized, above all, by the use of the Target Language as a means of instruction and communication in the language classroom and by the avoidance of the use of the first language and of translation as a technique."

The Direct Method led to the development of new non-translational techniques of language instruction. In particular, texts were used now as a basis of language learning. These texts were specially written for the L2 classroom so that they highlighted and repeated the strutucture and vacabulary that was the object of the teaching. In other words, whilst unwittingly, Grammar Translation exponents had fed their students with authentic script, Direct Method teachers now deliberately favoured artificially constructed texts. It will not be until much later that this trend is reversed. Meaning was demonstrated through pictures and objects. Practice techniques were based on question and answer, spoken narratives, dictation, imitation and a host of new types of grammatical exercises many of which still influence the language classroom to this very day. It is probably fair to say that, from time to time, students were a little unsure of what they were saying. Whilst the techniques exposed and practised the language, they did not check for understanding.

This method and the techniques it stimulated have had an inordinate influence on the teaching of language throughout the twentieth century. Indeed, it is fair to say that the Audiolingual and Audiovisual Methods, in the USA and the Situational Language Teaching in Britain and France popularised

in the fifties and sixties, preserved many of the techniques first developed by Direct Method teachers.

2.1.3. The Audiolingual/Visual Method

The Audiolingual/Visual Method, which has been around now for over thirty years, is still heralded as innovatory in many areas of Brazil. In contrast with its forerunners, it originated not in Europe but in the United States, more precisely in response to American wartime language programme needs in the post World War II period.

The method was responsible for some completely new features in language teaching such as the separation of listening, speaking, reading and writing into four independent skills, proving one of the bases for the kind of teaching that is practised nowadays. Another innovation was the use of language laboratories as the major means of practice. Mimicry, memorization, pattern drills and dialogues were used to present language. Long lists of sentences were given for the student to memorise a grammar pattern. But there was no contextual link between them, and having practised in this highly unnatural way there was no moment where the student used the language acquired in a meaningful interactive situation where the focus shifted from accurate production to fluent communication. The students were asked to repeat patterns that were, most of the time, meaningless since they were presented in isolation, without a situation to demonstrate when, where or how they were to be used. This aspect of the method came under attack. The idea of

repetition only returned with the advent of the Communicative Approach but this time a new component was introduced which was the need for all utterances to be meaningful. That is, the sentences given depart from a context and reflect utterances appropriate to that context.

For the first time, language is acknowledged to comprise four skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing. However, the Audiolingual/Visual Method places far greater emphasis on developing listening and speaking although reading and writing are also dealt with to some extent. As with the Direct Method, it seeks to develop the language skills without the use of the Mother Tongue. However, it differs in that it is among the first approaches to strictly base practices and techniques on both linguistic and psychological principles. Practice techniques stemmed directly from Skinnerian notions of conditioning through the stimulus-response-reinforcement model without the intervention of any intellectual analysis. The Audiolingual/Visual Method is the product of a combination of Structuralist Linguistic Theory, Contrastive Analysis of the Mother Tongue and Foreign Language in question and Behaviourist Psychology. Contrastive Analysis is the systematic comparison of two languages which throws up the similarities and differences between the two, and for Lado (1976: preface) is capable of predicting and describing:

> "... the patterns that will cause difficulty in learning, and those that will not cause difficulty, by comparing systematically the language and culture to be learned with the native language and culture of the student." Lado (1976: Preface)

For Audiolinguists, the potential problem areas for students were those where the two languages differed in

grammatical or phonological pattern. They also assumed that the Mother Tongue would interfere in the learning of the second language, but that this interference could be predicted and dealt with through the preparation and use of adequate teaching material (Richards & Rogers, 1986:46). In other words, previous linguistic habits were considered a disadvantage:

" Interference from the Mother Tongue, ... is possibly the greatest single handicap in the acquisition of a Second Language.' Cazabon (1973: Int)

The Aural-Oral Approach emphasizes aural training first, secondly pronunciation practice through repetition of what was heard then reading and finally, and not always, writing. The use of aural-oral material provided repeated and extensive practice of both listening to and reproducing of sounds. The method consists of presenting an oral model to the student, on tape or in the teacher's voice, and carrying out a series of pattern drills based on the model (Hubbard, et alii.,1989:34). The backbone of learning methods in Audiolingualism came from Behaviourist Psycholology, as elaborated by B.F.Skinner. Behaviourism is antimentalist. Learning is seen as the acquisition of new habits. The process occurs where there is a stimulus, a mechanical response and a reinforcement; the stimulus being what is taught, the response the student's reaction and the reinforcement the extrinsic approval of the teacher or peers which serves to imprint the new habit, in other words, the new piece of language. The principle of error-prevention was strictly applied. Since positive reinforcement (reward) was considered necessary for learning to take place but only correct utterances could reasonably inspire

such approval, every possibility for the student to make a mistake had to be guarded against. This concept has been completely rejected in the Communicative Approach which believes that students learn a great deal through their mistakes. In addition, it is felt that accuracy should not always precede communication otherwise the student can feel so pressurized by the need for 100% accuracy that he may well find himself tongue-tied. The aim of such a tightly structured approach is to minimize the possibility for making mistakes. Since students were to be discouraged from taking any initiative which would lead to mistakes, this is primarily a teacher-dominated method and, for that reason, students play a reactive role with little control over what they say or room for their own way of studying the language.

The Audiolingual\Visual Method views language learning as a matter of repetition and imitation. It therefore broke language down into a structural progression from less difficult to more difficult. The student progressed carefully up a structural ladder from the verb "to be" on the first day of classes to the future conditional in his third year of study. In the Audiolingual/Visual Method, language is viewed as a system of structurally related elements that must be learned in blocks which become more and more complex as the student progresses in understanding the rules by which they are combined. Being a structure-based approach to language learning, Audiolingualism presents a linguistic syllabus arranged in an order of presentation containing items of phonology, morphology and syntax (Richards & Rogers, 1986:53).

While the Audiolingual Method was being developed in the USA, the Audiovisual counterpart was being elaborated in

France in the fifties (Stern, 1983:466). This latter only varies in its emphasis on the presentation of a scenario for eliciting utterances in a context. In this way, the visual image and spoken utterance complement each other. At that time, the only such image was a film strip. The technique of illustration as a guide to meaning is still largely used in the Communicative Approach but there is no restriction to film-strip as the only illustrating medium.

As the Audiovisual Method stresses the social nature of language, the visual presentation is intended to simulate the social situation in which communication through language takes place. Its aim is to teach language as meaningful spoken communication. However, a very rigid teaching sequence is imposed, of presentation, explication then exploitation. Although the idea of simulating the social situation in which communication takes place has been kept in the Communicative Approach, the rigid teaching sequence has not. The teacher is free to work with the new item in the way he considers most appropriate. That is why the Communicative Approach cannot be called a method because it does not follow a strict sequence of procedures to teach a new point.

2.1.4. The Cognitive Theory

Although the Audiolingual Method enjoyed considerable success in the 1960s, in the 1970s, its theoretical foundations in language and learning were attacked by the American linguist Noam Chomsky who rejected the structuralist

approach as well as the behavioristic theory of language learning. Chomsky's theory opposed the behavioristic assumption that language was acquired through habit, saying that language was not learned by repetition and imitation but through the use of innate aspects of the mind (Stern, 1983:169). He affirmed that learning implied the conscious understanding of grammar which also involved innovation and formation of new sentences and patterns according to rules found by abstract mental processes.

Chomsky initiated a battle between the Cognitive Code psycholinguists and the Behaviourist psycholinguists that was to have far-reaching effects on the strategies used by language teachers in the classroom. The Theory of Cognitive Code Learning conceived language learning as a conscious acquisition of a meaningful system (Harmer, 1987: 30). In methods that have taken their inspiration from it the students are encouraged to use their innate and creative abilities. Thus, the behaviouristic view of learning in terms of conditioning, shaping, reinforcement, habit formation and over-learning was replaced by an emphasis on rule-divining and learning. Practice had to be meaningful and creative. Drilling for drilling's sake and the repetition of meaningless utterances was scorned. This theory gave birth to several methods, the most well-known of which were Notionalism and Functionalism.

Functional-Notional contrasts with Structural or Grammatical and represents a great trend in the 70's. It has already been mentioned that Structuralism graded the items to be presented according to their greater or lesser difficulty of form, in other words, their grammar. Functional-Notional Methods, on the other hand, arrange the items according to their

social function or the notion. The function of requesting something, for instance, can be expressed in many ways, some more grammatically complex than others, depending on where the speaker is, who he is speaking to and what situation he is in. The sentence Can I have that book, please? would come under the functional label of REQUESTING, but the speaker can also choose the sentence: Would you mind giving me that book? or yet still I'd be grateful if you could give me that book. The student here should be aware of appropriacy, which means that he should know that in certain circumstances, one form will be more appropriate than another. The term notion is used to define concepts of time, space, quantity,etc. For example, can, may, may well, must can be used to convey different degrees of uncertainty/certainty.

One of the reasons why Functional course-books did not last long even though they were designed by linguists and truly reflected how people actually use language was that they were not of what a learner on his way to language competence was capable of. Students had problems because there was no grading of difficulty. As in the examples from the previous paragraph shows, it was possible in a single lesson to juxtapose extremely simple with extremely difficult forms, all of which performed the same function of requesting, all of which the native-speaker has in his active repertoire. However, the lack of progressive grammatical coherence made them inaccessible to the learner except by role-learning. At the end of this process, the learner was still unable to produce novel utterances of his own. The Communicative Approach, revived the concept of Functionalism but within a structural framework. Funcionalism and Notionalism as methods, therefore, were short-

lived and difficult to implement faithfully in the classroom.
However, their ethos has been partially revived in the
Communicative Approach.

2.2. The Communicative Approach:
What it is and what it can offer
in terms of Language Teaching

2.2.1. Definition and Origins

"Communicative Language Teaching means little more than an integration of grammatical
and functional teaching." Littlewood (1981:1).

Before any attempt to present a description of
what the Communicative Approach is, it seems necessary to
clarify the difference between a method and an approach. An
Approach is the philosophy of language teaching. It is the
theory that states the principles of how languages are learned.
A method, on the other hand, is where theory is put into
practice. It is a plan for the orderly presentation of
language. While the approach is axiomatic the method is
procedural. While in methods such as Audiolingualism there is a
clear and definite sequence of procedures for presenting and
practising language, in an approach such as the Communicative,
the strait-jacketing idea of a rigid method is abandoned. This
is, indeed, the first major departure that the Communicative
Approach makes from its predecessors.

The origins of the Communicative Approach date from the changes that occurred in the 60's, when British applied linguists started questioning the theoretical assumptions underlying the Situational Language Teaching, which was the approach used then. This approach was based on the belief that language was learned by teaching structures in meaningful situation-based activities. While British linguists were beginning to reject the Situational Language Teaching Approach in Europe a similar move was taking place in the United States with Audiolingualism.

The British applied linguists who started emphasizing the functional and communicative potential of language, drew their inspiration from British functional linguists such as Firth and Halliday, American sociolinguists Hymes, Labov and Gumperz and philosophers such as John Austin and John Searle. They changed the focus of language teaching from the need for the mastery of structures to an emphasis on communicative proficiency.

Another factor that influenced the appearance of the Communicative Approach was the changing of educational realities in Europe provoked by the the increasing interdependence of European Countries. There was a greater need for communication among those countries which formed the European Common Market and for that reason, the Council of Europe sponsored and promoted international conferences on language teaching in an effort to increase the developement of alternative methods of language teaching, which was considered a high priority. Obviously, the governments' investment in this area allowed a great deal more research to take place and consequently the results came in a shorter time.

The work of linguists such as Candlin, Widdowson, Wilson, Keith Johnson, Christopher Brumfit and others resulted in principles that were called the Notional-Functional Approach, also called Communicative Language Teaching or simply, the Communicative Approach. The emphasis of the new approach was on the learner's needs in order to communicate, that is, what abilities a language learner needs to develop in order to be able to understand and express himself.

2.2.2. Theoretical Assumptions and Objectives

The Communicative Approach is characterized by having an eclectic basis, not only as far as theoretical assumptions taken from other approaches and methods are concerned, but also within its own theoricists, who offered different contributions towards the development of the CA.

According to Richards and Rogers (1986:72), little has been written about the Communicative view of a theory of learning, but conclusions can be drawn from an analysis of some of its basic principles: the communication principle, the task principle and the meaningfulness principle. It can be assumed that the basic Communicative assumption of what promotes learning is engaging the learner in meaningful and authentic language use.

Other recently developed theories that are compatible with the Communicative Approach account for the importance of linguistic, social, cognitive, and individual variables in the process of language acquisition. Krashen's

theory of language learning and language acquisition also gives support to Communicative principles. He defines language acquisition as the unconscious development of the target language system as a result of using the language for real communication while language learning is seen as the conscious representation of grammatical knowledge resulting from instruction (Richards and Rogers, 1986:72). This theory reinforces and provides a theoretical base for the Communicative assumption that we learn language through using it for communicative purposes.

Communicative Language Teaching also receives theoretical support from Johnson and Littlewood in their theory of the skill-learning model (Richards and Rogers, 1986:72). This theory affirms that communicative competence comes from developing language skills in both a cognitive and behaviouristic way. The cognitive aspect being the one which involves the internalization of grammar rules and conventions governing speech, and the behaviouristic aspect the one which deals with the automation of these rules so that fluency can be achieved. From this model then, comes an emphasis on practice as a way of developing Communicative skills, in other words, it is practice leading to performance, which is one of the Communicative principles.

In the field of teaching theory, according to the authors Richards and Rogers (1986:64), the Communicative Approach aims to:

"(a) make communicative competence the goal of language teaching and (b) develop procedures for the teaching of the four language skills that acknowledge the interdependence of language and communication."

The term communicative competence was used by the American sociolinguist, Hymes, who developed the theory of language as communication. Hymes contrasted his view of communicative competence with Chomsky's theory of competence. While Chomsky advocated the idea that speakers possess abstract abilities that allow them to produce correct sentences, Hymes went much further and asserted that language is much more than just the learning of accurate grammar in ideal and homogeneous situations. He demands that language be incorporated into the concept of communication and be practised in real life non-homogenous situations, taking into account cultural factors too (Richards and Rogers, 1986:69-70).

In Hymes' view a person with communicative competence is someone who has both the knowledge and ability to use language appropriately. Appropriacy is a communicative term to describe the ability to know which language is appropriate in a given situation, taking into account who is taking part in the conversation, where this conversation is being held, what the topic of the conversation is and what its purpose is, that is, which function is being performed, be it inviting, apologising, requesting and so on (Richard and Rogers, 1986:70).

Halliday elaborated the theory of the functions of language which complements Hymes' work on communicative competence. He classified basic functions performed by language, as for example: getting things, expressing personal feelings and meanings, using language to communicate information, to learn and to discover (Richard and Rogers, 1986:70-71). Halliday's importance for the Communicative Approach can be seen in one of the definitions given by its proponents which says that from

the Communicative point of view, learning a second language is acquiring the linguistic means to perform different kinds of functions.

One of the assumptions of the Communicative Approach is that the language items dealt with must be presented in illustrative, real-life communicative situations. This is called contextualisation and it is the technique used to give students a clear vision of which language to use in each specific situation. That is, students should learn how to be appropriate. Many of the activities are task-based. Emphasis is placed on the use of authentic materials such as signs, magazines, maps and graphs (Richards & Rogers, 1986:80), which apart from providing information about the English culture and society, allow students to apply the linguistic-communicative competence they are developing to real-life language tasks from the target community. The Communicative Approach, as Littlewood states, "encourages us to go beyond structures and take account of other aspects of communication. It can therefore help us to match the content more closely with the actual communicative uses that the learners will have to make of the foreign language" (Littlewood,1990:77).

The Communicative Approach views the students as active participants instead of receivers of what the teacher decides to impose. They learn the language through using it. They use it to solve problems they are interested in solving. This is why so many of the activities are task-based. This does not mean, however, that the presentation of new language items, their oral repetition through drilling and practice have been abolished. Neither does it mean an end to grammar analysis. On the contrary, these elements form the basis providing the

students with the tools they will need to take part in Communicative activities. At the preparatory stage in the lesson, therefore, the Communicative Approach is similar to the rule-based teaching that preceded it. Adequate time is allocated to accuracy-based intensive oral and written practice. It is only after such practice that the CA diverges from other methods.

Keith Johnson is another theoricist who has offered contribuitions to the Communicative Approach. He emphasizes what the Communicative Approach adds in terms of theory and methodology to English teaching. As he sees it, an:

> "...ability to manipulate the structure of the language correctly is only a part of what is involved in learning a language. There is a 'something else' that needs to be learned, and this 'something else' involves the ability to be appropriate, to know the right thing to say at the right time. 'There are... rules of use without which the rules of grammar would be useless." Johnson (1981:2)

Such an assertion stems from the fact that until the development of the Communicative Approach, no method had taken into account this factor of "appropriateness". As a result, this kept generating structurally and grammatically competent students who were, usually, unable to perform a communicative task fully.

Robert O'neill describes some of these dimensions which must be developed by the learner in order effectively communicate in the Target Language. He also defines the utimate aim of Communicative Language Teaching, which is to:

"...help the learner to do with the language. Can he state something and make it

clear that it is only an opinion open to argument? Can she use the language to make

him expand upon the argument and give reasons? Can they both use the language

effectively to disagree, and to suggest a meal or a drink afterwards? Can they, after

deciding where to go, stop a passer-by, ask for instructions about how to   get

there, and understand the reply? Can they understand the menu when they get there or

ask the waiter to explain what they do not understand? And can they after being

overcharged write an appropriate letter of complaint to the head of office of the

organization of which the restaurant is a part?"   O'neill (1986:25)

If we examine this quotation more closely, we
find that many abilities are involved in the final performance
act. Of course the speakers have to know the structure, grammar,
pronunciation and intonation of the sentences they produce, and
perhaps to a lesser extent, those which they receive, otherwise
communication may break down. But they also need an awareness of
the situation they are in, and the meaning of the language
within that situation.

What can perfectly easily occur and, in fact,
often does, is that despite extensive training in the four
skills the vast majority of students fail to use them in
accordance with a specific situation. This happens simply
because they do not have the understanding of which language to
use in which situation. Such a gap in knowledge can only hinder
the foreign student when attempting to use his English fluently
and with confidence. When he is in a given communicative
situation he has many choices and he has to know which is
appropriate to that specific situation. As with most human
beings faced with doubt about which way to take, the tendency of
that student will be to get stuck or to vacillate. Indeed, it is

our belief that lack of confidence is one of the greatest
barriers to fluency.

It is therefore necessary to deal with the
question of how confidence is acquired. As has already been
stated, to perform communicative tasks a student needs to
practise in communicative situations, but to practise something,
he needs to have been put in a learning situation. One can not
practise what one does not know. For that reason, grammar
analysis and drilling must be the basis for building up
Communicative competence. These basic activities are called pre-
communicative activities . Nicolas Hawkes helps to clarify this
position when he says:

> "A communicative course may provide for formal presentation and practise of
> structural and lexical items before they are incorporated into the dialogue ... There
> should be no dogma about this, and no cry that 'structural patterns are now out'.
> Learning a language is not only a matter of learning to communicate in that
> language." Hawkes (1986:36).

One cannot talk about the Communicative Approach
without touching on the issue of the four skills. This matter
will be dealt with more comprehensively in Chapter III . For the
time being, a brief explanation of how these skills are viewed
by the Communcative Approach will be given.

The Communicative Approach divides the four
skills into two groups, the receptive and the productive. The
receptive skills are listening and reading and they are
classified in this way because, although the listener and reader
have to take an active part in decoding the message, they are
not required to create any language. The productive skills are

speaking and writing. In order to be capable of using these skills the students will have to develop more abilities than just the ones the receptive skills require. Students have to be aware of the grammatical structure of the language and of the meaning of the words but they should also learn in which functions, that is, for what purpose that specific piece of language is used and in which social situations certain expressions are appropriate or not. Perhaps the most important aspect of the CA's treatment of the skills is that it takes into account how, and why, we use the skills in real-life: we listen or read because we are interested in the text, and because we have a purpose for listening or reading. Likewise when producing language, spoken or written, we always have a reason for doing so. It is this factor which is fundamental to the CA's treatment of skills in the classroom.

Another innovation of the Communicative Approach that should be pointed out is the fact that it takes into account different kinds of students. Teachers are asked to make a pre-analysis of who their students are, what their interests and expectations are, what kind of syllabus will suit them best and how the selected language will be taught. It means that even before the course starts the teacher has to be able to detect through questionnaires, conversations and observations, the reasons his students have for studying English, so that he can select materials and techniques which will be motivating and effective for that specific group, of a specific age, with specific interests. In doing so, successful learning, the primary goal, seems much more likely to be achieved.

Based on the needs of the students the teacher will give emphasis to certain areas and not to others. This way

of thinking is another contribution of the Communicative
Approach in terms of language teaching, since the students are
seen as individuals with individual necessities. They are not
expected to have full command of the four skills and language
varieties. In this respect, the teacher's expectations of the
students are realistic. They are expected, however, to be able
to communicate efficiently what they want to. For this purpose,
they have to learn about grammar, situation and context,
pronunciation, accent and skills, up to the point where they can
understand and make themselves understood. It could be said that
when students are given an unrealistic goal, beyond their
capabilities, they tend to feel unintelligent or even guilty or
embarrassed about not being able to do what is expected of them.
So they become de-motivated and either give up or under-achieve.
As Jeremy Harmer (1983:24) says.

"We are not teaching our students to be model Englismen or Americans, etc, but to use
the tool of the English language to communicate".

Littlewood (1990:IX) refers to the learners who
need to acquire a general communicative ability as:

"People who want to prepare themselves, in a general way, to be able to communicate
socially on straight forward everyday matters with people from other countries who
come their way, and to be able to get around and lead a reasonably normal life when
they visit another country.'

Morrow (1981: 60-65) refers to some of the most
important principles of the Communicative Approach. The first
principle is that the student should be aware of the process in

which he is involved. It is not just a matter of repetition or memorization of dialogues or vocabulary. The aim of each lesson should be to enable the student to do something. In order to achieve this, he should perform operations such as understanding and following determined instructions, asking for directions in a given situation and so on. It is crucial that students be aware of what they are learning, why they are learning it and in which situations they will be able to use it.

Closely related to this principle is that which states that the student will learn something by doing it. This means that the Communicative Approach is a student-centered method in that students are encouraged to be much more responsible for their own learning. The teacher will concentrate not only on teaching but also on helping, monitoring and participating in communicative activities.

The third principle would be the principle that process is as important as form. A person cannot build up the ability to communicate effectively in a foreign language if he does not have command of the forms, the structure that he will need to create the sentences he will use to express his ideas. But the ability to handle structures either at a grammatical, lexical or phonetic level in isolation does not imply ability to communicate. What is necessary is the ability to work within the context as a whole. Students learn the form in order to use it, and through using it in real situations. This means that among the many forms the student has at his disposal he has to choose the appropriate ones in a determined situation. Forms have different functions. The speaker's intention when saying something may be to invite, to greet, to complain or to apologise but he may be reacting to what someone else has said

before. This interaction occurs under the great time pressure that the language act involves. The Communicative Approach aims to develop strategies and tactics for language use by promoting activities which will give students practice in using language for real purposes. The student will learn to be communicative by striving to communicate.

In striving to communicate his intentions, the student will probably make mistakes, and here is the fourth principle of the Communicative Approach which is that mistakes are not always a mistake. The teacher has to have a clear view of the situation in which the student is using the language as well as a systematic basis on which to assess mistakes. For example, if a student is trying to express something he is not quite sure of and which has not yet been taught, the teacher will have to be careful about correcting mistakes at that level for this is an important way of learning to use a foreign language. The student is trying to put his ideas across with whatever sources he has at his disposal. If the teacher criticizes or fails to encourage him by demanding total fluency or accuracy, this may destroy the student's confidence in his ability to use the language. It is true that communication involves using accurate forms in appropriate ways otherwise the receiver may not understand the message. What is advocated by the Communicative Approach is that the student can learn these forms in different ways but it is crucial that the practice be meaningful, that conditions be provided for their use in real life situations, and that a student be judged ultimately on how well he uses his own resources to communicate.

2.2.3. Teaching Techniques and Materials

From a Communicative point of view, teaching techniques are procedures used to develop Communicative ability. For Littlewood (1981:2-5), communicative ability is the student's capacity to understand and express functional meanings and to understand and express social meanings. According to the same author, understanding and expressing functional meanings involves the efficient use of skills such as:

"- the ability to understand linguistic structurs and vocabulary;

- knowledge of the potential communicative functions of linguistic forms;

- the ability to relate the linguistic forms to appropriate non-linguistic

knowledge, in order to interpret the specific functional meaning intended by the

'speaker."

The ability to express functional meanings is developed by providing students with activities that expose them to situations where they communicate using appropriate language. These activities range from identifying pictures, discovering sequences, locations or differences, following directions, to reconstructing story-sequences and others.

Understanding and expressing social meanings involves the learner's capacity to interpret the social situation in which communication is taking place. This skill requires the ability to choose socially appropriate language, taking into account, for example, the degree of formality of the situation. Exercises of this kind should ask students to simulate social roles and express themselves appropriately

taking into account the social conventions that govern the different kinds of social relationships. The most useful techniques for developing this ability are situationalised dialogues, role-playing, debates and discussion sessions and the teaching situation itself through the language used for class management as well as facilitating language and language used as the teaching and learning medium.

There are many different kinds of exercises to develop communicative ability and a teacher can design an unlimited number according to his students necessities but all communicative exercises contain one or some of the following aspects: information-sharing, negotiation of meaning, interaction and completion of tasks. Communicative material used in classroom is either text-based, task-based or realia. Text-based materials are written texts around which activities are developed while task-based materials are given in the form of games, role-plays, simulations, pair-work or any other kind of exercise that requires the performance of a task. Authentic or real-life materials such as magazines, newspapers, maps, graphs, instruction letters, recipes, menus and so on, are used whenever possible.

In order to assure that the principles of the CA are effectively carried over into the classroom new techniques and activities had to be designed. A brief description of the most important of these techniques will now be given along with a discussion of which principle they exemplify. Information gap is a technique based on the principle that someone interacts with someone else in order to get information that he does not have. For this reason many different exercises are designed in a way that Student I has information which is witheld from

Student II. In this way, a basis for genuine communication in class is created because the students will be telling or asking each other things they do not already know.

Role-playing is a technique in which the participants pretend they are one of the characters in a situation. Exercises based on this technique provide the students with the opportunity to use language appropriately according to the social role of the person they are the role of. Performing tasks is another of the most used techniques in the Communicative Approach and it is based on the principle that we learn by doing. In this technique the students are told to do something out of what they have been given, so that the activity is over when the students have managed to fulfil the task and do what was asked. Techniques such as problem solving, discussions and debates are more complex because they involve the use of all the students' ability to express themselves, in trying to find solutions to problems and influence other people through suitable arguments.

Chapter THREE — DEVELOPING THE FOUR SKILLS COMMUNICATIVELY

As was mentioned in Chapter II, Audiolingualism contributed to language teaching by creating the concept of the division of language into four skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing. However,because its assumptions are based on the Behaviouristic Theory, that method deals with the development of the skills in an unequally giving preponderance to speaking and listening. The Communicative Approach, on the other hand, regards the four skills as co-related and linked in such a way that one cannot be used without the other. If we take the listening skill, for example, one cannot listen to something if someone else has not said it first. So, listening can be seen as being based on speaking. On the other hand, however, if someone says something it is because he wants to be heard.

The same co-relation is true of writing and reading, not to mention all the occasions involving different relations between the skills, sometimes involving the four at once, as, for example, when a secretary is listening to a

candidate for a vacancy and is at the same time filling in an application form that she will later give to her boss. The boss will then read this, prior to a discussion of the candidate's suitability. This one activity involves listening, reading, writing and speaking. By treating the four skills as co-related the Communicative Approach purports to deal with language within the classroom in a way which is as close as possible to its normal use in every-day life and has developed specific teaching strategies for each.

Given these considerations, a general overview of what each skill involves will be given, as well as the implications for the classroom . It should be remarked, however, that the description of the skills, as well as suggestions on ways of developing them, will be based on a Communicative view of language teaching. Such a view is based on the principle that the four skills should be developed within the classroom with the ultimate aim of enabling students to transfer these skills to situations outside the classroom and cope with real-life communication.

3.1. - Listening

Listening is the first skill to be used by a new student when he starts an English course. It is not difficult to back up this argument if one thinks of a teacher's first entry into a classroom saying: "Good morning, my name is Monica". The teacher would probably go on to ask students to repeat "Good morning" and later the structure "My name's...".

For this reason the listening skill is highly exploited in communicative teaching from the first moment of contact with the new language.

Even though, as mentioned before, it is difficult to isolate one skill from the other they can occur in isolation, as when someone is listening to the radio or watching television. The skills can also be artificially separated for the sake of teaching. Geddes (1991:78) expresses the same idea when she says:

> "It is of course somewhat misleading to suggest that, when discussing spoken communication, we can isolate listening from other language skills. There are times when the only language skill we use is listening... But more often than not, other language skills will be involved in the communication."

One student may find it necessary merely to listen to a speech, another may want to make notes to study the subject later, another may even listen to a certain lecture to tell a group of classmates about it later. The additional skills required will depend on the student's purpose.

What is interesting to note is that in the process of listening we normally select, from the stream of sounds, that which we require to fulfil our purpose. It is a well known fact that, let us say, in a party, we are not listening to anything special, but if someone mentions our name we start paying attention to what is being said in that specific conversation because our interest has been aroused. This fact has to be taken into account when the teacher is preparing activities for the classroom. If the student is not interested in what he is hearing he will just 'switch off' and cease to

listen. Consequently, an effective teacher, having aroused students' general interest, must provide his students with a reason for listening, by pre-setting a task. By setting such tasks the teacher creates a need to listen, and consequently arouses interest in the text.

The teacher must expose students to a wide variety of listening materials, accompanied by realistic and appropriately graded tasks. In this way, students will develop their skill by means of a gradual progression, thereby reducing the likelihood of becoming pessimistic about their own capabilities.

Another feature of listening that makes it difficult to master is that the hearer cannot control the kind of language that is used although he can ask for clarification or repetion. It is therefore important to be able to extract meaning as efficiently as possible. A communicative way of dealing with this problem is to provide students with the most varied range of listening material. They will have to learn how to understand language in situations with a lot of sound interference, for example, a conversation held at a disco, to interpret hesitation and certain patterns of intonation which show different feelings. Students should also be given the opportunity to learn how to understand people with different accents and not necessarily exclusively those from English-speaking countries. Communicative coursebooks normally include listening texts of foreigners speaking English because, as it is a language used for international communication, people from all countries will be using it as a means of communication. Hubbard, (Hubbard, et alii,1989:80) see this kind of difficulty faced by English learner in the same way:

"Often students arriving in England find the listening skill the most difficult,....many teachers seem to assume that it's quite easy... the learner should be exposed, quite early on, to as many different types of listening as possible."

Communicative theoricists affirm that although listening is known as a receptive or passive skill its nature is active because the listener has to be an active participant, he has to "be there" and pay attention to what is being said, otherwise he will not be able to understand the message. In other words, he will not use his listening skill. Methodologically speaking, the students should, for this reason, be encouraged to engage in an active process of listening for meaning. There is no doubt that listening is a skill which demands participation in the sense that the listener has to deal with the message received, anticipating what the speaker is going to say, checking and readjusting his predictions, selecting and rejecting information.

One way a teacher can encourage this is to provide students with a purpose for listening. Because of the task the teacher has given them, they will devote themselves to understanding those parts which sound more important for the fulfilment of the task assigned. The task may range from listening for specific information, where the understanding of details will be required, or listening for the general gist, where only a general idea of stretches of the passage will be sought. In order to develop this ability the teacher can utilize techniques such as performing physical tasks, drawing and

constructing,   sequencing,   identification   and   selection,
transferring or reformulating and evaluating information.

The   skill of   listening can   be divided into what
Jeremy   Harmer speaks of as "specialist skills" and other authors
call   "sub-skills". Whichever way, these sub-skills are, in fact,
a   subdivision of   the main   skill which,   here, is   listening.
Briefly   speaking, when   someone listens to a text he brings into
play   a set   of sub-skills such as that of predicting; extracting
specific   information;   getting   the   general   picture   or   gist;
inferring   opinion and   attitude; deducing   meaning from context,
and, finally, recognising function and discourse markers.

In   previous methods,   it was   generally   believed
that   students only had to understand the grammatical system of a
language   plus be   capable of   sound discrimination   in order   to
understand   the language   in its   spoken form.   The Communicative
Aprroach,   on the other hand, says that, in order to understand a
spoken   message students   need much   more.   Students have   to be
able   to recognise the function of the utterance. An awareness of
the   social meaning   of a   form must   also be   taught since it is
important   that   students   learn   what   kind   of   language   is
appropriate   in   certain situations. There are various techniques
to   achieve this   objective such   as matching   conversations with
situations   given in   pictures or asking students to find out, by
interpreting   the language   used, what   the status of the speaker
was, what mood the speaker was in and what the situation   was.

The   use of authentic listening material is one of
the   major characteristics   of the   Communicative Approach.   Non-
communicative   teachers   argue that listening to authentic
language   is   far   too   a   difficult   task,   especially   for
beginners.   The Communicative Approach deals with this difficulty

however, by grading the task and not the language. In other words, the more difficult the text, the easier the task. For example, the teacher can give a listening passage of some television programme and ask students to identify the type of programme, or to listen to a conversation and discover the names of the participants, or even more simply, decide how many speakers are involved in the conversation. As the task has been graded to the students' ability they will benefit from a feeling of accomplishment, in being able to listen to 'real English' and successfully complete a task. Consequently, their motivation will increase, as there is no better motivating factor than success. The feeling of success is even greater since the students know that the text dealt with was not an adaptation for students but people speaking normally in an every-day situation. The following quotation illustrates perfectly what has been said:

"Authentic materials are also important as a motivation device. Students get real satisfaction from having made some sense out of real-life language at the early stages." (Hubbard, et. alii., 1989:89).

They go on to discuss what teachers can do to increase motivation through the successful accomplishment of tasks at their level of capacity:

* If teachers can show students how easy it is to understand something from authentic material rather than how difficult it is to understand everything then students are more likely to want to understand more.' (Hubbard, et. alii., 1989:90).

3.2. Speaking

It is quite common to hear students say that listening and, principally, speaking are the most difficult of the four skills. This feeling is justifiable because when two people are talking, both of them are involved in an interaction that occurs at high speed. The hearer has to be able to interpret what is said without being able to predict exactly what he is going to hear, either in terms of form or meaning. He has to reply with whatever language he has at his disposal, taking into account what has just been said, and formulate the reply in such a way that it achieves his own purpose. In short, this difficulty stems from the fact that, in spoken communication we have to rapidly process the incoming message and instantaneously formulate our response.

Methods based on the Structural Approach believe that sufficient oral practice of the structures will result in fluency. These methods are mostly concerned with the production of grammatically accurate sentences in isolation from each other. The Communicative Approach acknowledges the importance of learning grammar rules in order to achieve a systematic understanding of the possible combinations in the language. On the other hand, however, it questions the effectiveness of the structural approach in leading students to use the language fluently and communicatively, since it does not provide students with the necessary awareness of function and appropriacy.

This communicative belief has led to change of emphasis within the learning process, and consequently a change

in the role of the teacher in the classroom. Scott (1986:70)
describes it thus:

" The role of the teacher changes, too. Instead of being the person who provides

prompts that trigger utterances of a certain atructure froa the students, the teacher

now sets up the conditions for coaaunication to take place."

The communicative criteria for judging success
are also different from those employed by other approaches. The
communicative student is not required to produce grammatically
accurate sentences from the beginning, but, rather to be able to
express his needs even if he does so with a poor command of
syntax. Consequently more prominence is given to the rules for
use and not to grammatical accuracy. However, a fine balance
between accuracy and fluency must always be maintained.

'The question, now is how the Communicative
Approach develops the students' ability to use language. In
order to promote and increase this communicative ability the
Communicative Approach draws heavily on techniques based on the
real-life communication gap. That is, where one speaker
collaborates with another to produce a composite of the two
speakers' information. Contextualisation, drilling, the reading
of authentic material and some other techniques have been taken
from previous approaches and methods, but they are not used in
the same way as they originally were. Contextualisation, for
example, was taken from the Audiolingual Method and is used in
order to clarify meaning. It varies in that the context is not
given but is built up by a process of eliciting and moulding of
information from the students. In this way, they draw on
previous-known language to talk around and arouse interest in

the target language for that day. In addition, the context will be conceptually clear so that analysis of form and meaning will be facilitated. The teacher will offer a clear auditory model of the new form and isolate those elements which make its pronnunciation more fifficult. In addition, the students will be made aware of what function the language they are learning performs.

In communicative methodology the contextualised presentation of new language is immediately followed by accuracy-based practice activities. The students study the language form, drill the new item, are prompted to give answers or make use of any other technique to learn to manipulate the language. At this stage, the focus will shift from teacher to student to student to student and the teacher will monitor production. As soon as they are considered competent, that is, able to make themselves understood, they then proceed to a less-controlled practice stage which consists of interacting within a communicatively based activity, such as role-plays, games, information gap exercises, questionnaires and so on.

Once again then, when talking about communicative activities, it is clear that they should be preceded by "pre-communicative" activities. The pre-communicative activities will prepare students, by giving them the structural and functional knowledge of the items so that they will be able to use them in communication. During this stage, the student may well be engaging in less realistic but necessary language repetition activities. Littlewood (1990:8), says that pre-communicative activities:

"...aim to equip the learner with some of the skills   required   for
communication   without actually requiring him to perform communicative acts."

He then goes on to discuss the different criterion for success
in pre-communcative activities:

"The criterion for success is therefore not so much whether he has managed to convey
an intended meaning, but rather whether he has produced an acceptable piece of
language."

In   pre-communicative   activities   students   are
concentrating on the production of   acceptable language, that
is, accurate language. They do this by practising drills,
question-and-answer   and   a whole range of other similar
exercises aimed at engaging in producing immediate responses,
thereby   impróving, fluent accuracy. In   an audiolingual
classroom, the lesson would end there, without having put the
student into a situation where communication was necessary.
However, in the communicative classroom, the   structures and
vocabulary   that are dealt with in the pre-communicative
activities will then be used in communicative activities which
will enlarge the scope of the use of the language by adding the
components of functional and social meaning. In addition, the
student will have a personal reason for engaging in the speech
act. It could, therefore be said that   pre-communicative
activities provide an answer to the question of how to bridge
the gap between linguistic and structural competence and
communicative competence.

The Communicative Approach considers the
elements of "information gap", "choice" and "feedback"   an

important part of communication. A successful performance is determined by much more than grammatical accuracy. In an information gap exercise one student will never know what the other is going to say, both students will be determining all the time the outcome of the conversation. One will have to take into account his partner's answer. In his reply and contribution to the feedback, he chooses what to say, how much to say, to continue or to discontinue. The feedback will come in the resulting product or action to be taken as a result of that product. Using techniques which exploit these features will present learners with the opportunity to practise speaking under conditions that are as close as possible to those of normal communication. What the Communicative Approach adds in terms of helping students to acquire the ability to use the language is well defined by Scott (1986:77):

> "... it is only by using the language under the conditions which a communicative approach tries to create and in the way this approach advocates that one can develop, as a learner, one's ability to use language outside the institution where it is beingl earnt."

The final part of this Chapter offers a brief overview of how the speaking skill can be developed, from the presentation of new language to freer practice, within the communicative classroom. First, the teaching of new items follows a progression that starts with contextualised presentation of new language, followed by structural practice, which aims to develop students' ability to manipulate the form through controlled exercises such as drills. The next phase relates the structure to communicative functions in that it

uses the structure in a situational context. This provides students with the opportunity to use the structure in a realistic way in situations that they might encounter in every-day life. The next phase is the relating of language to social context ie, the use of language as a vehicle for social interaction. In this phase the students work independently from the teacher. They interact with each other in an exchange, the exact outcome of which can not be totally predicted. This kind of exercise allows students to develop the ability to participate in meaningful and more independent forms of interaction. This procedure allows students to overcome the difficulty in speaking that was mentioned in the beginning of this section. For this to happen, the teacher must plan the activity carefully outside the classroom. Having stablished that the students know what they are doing and have the language with which to do it, the teacher withdraws from the central position in the room and "takes a back-seat". The students engage in the speech-act during which time the teacher takes notes to monitor what is happening. The feedback at the end of the activity will either take the form of considerations for subsequent actions such as the writing of a letter, or more language input or analysis based on mistakes that have been detected by the teacher during the activity. Either way, the three elements typical of the speech act, that is, information gap, choice and feedbck will have been present.

3.3. - Reading

Let us first consider the question of why people read. Among the many possible answers it could be said that we read to obtain information which is presented in written form. White (1986:87) says that the information we look for is of various different types: "cognitive (or intellectual), referential (or factual), or affective (or emotional). He says that we read referential material to obtain information, for example, on how to operate a piece of equipment. We read material of a more intellectual or literary content in order to manipulate ideas that influence others, make proposals and so on. Finally, according to the same author, we also read for emotional gratification, for pleasure or self-improvement.

From a communicative point of view, our reasons for reading are essentially practical. We read in order to enable ourselves to do something else. Thus, the content of the message is more important than the form, and parts of the message can be dispensed with if they do not provide the information sought. In addition, the style of the passage will be of minor or no importance to the reader. Again, then, we come to the issue of using skills for a purpose. Reading is classified as one of the "receptive skills" because the reader does not produce or create the sentences, instead, he decodes the meaning of messages created by the writer. The reader normally controls the reading speed, which makes reading easier to understand than speaking since in the latter the listener depends on the speaker's speed. According to the reader's purpose he will use different reading strategies and,

if he is a good reader, he will be able to switch between them, according to his purpose at any moment. In either case, the reader will be motivated and oriented by a predetermined purpose in extracting information from the text in hand.

The Communicative Approach divides reading into the following types : "Scanning", used to locate a known item or extract specific information "Skimming", used when the reader wants to gain a general idea of the text, or, as it is very often called nowadays, the gist of the text. The Communicative Approach views reading within the context of the communicative use of the language, as a part of the process of communication and not as reading for its own sake, as it was previously treated by other methods.

Another sub-skill found in the efficient reader and listener is the ability to predict. The main function of contextualisation, a technique also used and mentioned in the previous section speaking, is to arouse the students' interest in what they are going to read and to encourage them to predict the content. When they read, part of the confirmation of understanding will be the process of checking their predictions offf against the information in the text. They can confirm, change or reject their predictions as they receive more information from the text, and even proceed to elaborate modified predictions on that basis. The technique of "reading to confirm expectations" involves the reader in a more active process since after becoming interested in the subject-matter of the text he feels the necessity to confirm his expectations and wants to read on and find the information he requires. The teacher may start talking about the subject-matter and ask questions about it. The following introductory questions are

always useful: "What do you know about this subject?", "Which things aren't you sure of?", "What would you like to know about this subject?" After the students have finished reading the text the teacher can check if the text confirmed what they knew or not.

It is a basic communicative tenet that the student should be given a reason to read, since reading to check predictions or extract information not only imitates real life, but is also an important motivational factor. While reading, the student will use the different sub-skills mentioned above, scanning and skimming, depending on his aim, and rejecting the information that is considered irrelevant. One of the ways of providing students with practice in this is to give them task-based exercises. In exercises of this kind students are asked to read in order to fulfil a task. It is the teacher's responsibility to select appropriate material and design appropriate tasks, which will give students a reason to read, as well as providing them with the opportunity to use one of the sub-skills. For example, the teacher can give students a series of advertisements about places for holidays and ask them to scan the texts to identify those places which are within a suitable price-range. The teacher could provide a situation for practising skimming by asking the students to read through the page and choose the place which attracted them most, based on the impression that they got while reading the ads.

Most of the time the reader is not aware of the implicit dialogue that occurs between the writer and the reader. So, it could be said that reading is a silent dialogue in which the writer tries to show, demonstrate, prove, inform or convince the reader of something. The communicative reader, in turn, is

no longer just a passive receiver of the writer's message, since he is now required to actively participate in the interaction by asking questions which the writer may or may not answer, or by decoding the written symbols into a meaningful message. This dialogue is facilitated by the reader's ability to predict what will come next. The efficient reader knows that some combinations of items are more likely to occur in a certain utterance due to his knowledge of syntax and appropriacy. Another factor that will help the reader understand a text better is a minimal knowledge of the topic being dealt with. The teacher should always ensure that this minimal knowledge exists before embarking on the text. Indeed, the interest-arousal stage can also be used to ensure this and provide the input when necessary. Meaning is therefore extracted through the effecient handling of lexical, syntactic and rethorical aspects of a text.

Effective reading material should require the students to think about what they are reading, to find answers to questions posed by the teacher, thus fulfilling a previously set task. This will encourage them to be active participants in the reading process and more engaged in the writer-reader relationship. White (1986:92) states that there is a:

" ... now widely held view that both reading and listening involve a much greater active contribution by the receiver than was traditionally accepted."

It is for this reason that task-based activities play such an important role in the Communicative Approach. They give students a reason for reading by requiring them to perform a task that goes beyond the simple reading of a text. By using the

information they have read to perform a task, the students are using the language, not just studying it. This is one of the pillars of the communicative view of how language is acquired.

The question of source for materials to practise the skills makes another departure from previous methods, and harps back unawares to the period of Grammar Translation when authentic texts were used though of a different type and certainly for a different purpose. Far from literary and stylistic, per se, communicative authentic materials are drawn from what is said and written in the day-to-day world. Jeremy Harmer (1983:35) distinguishes between "finely" and "roughly-tuned input", the former being language that is precisely at the developmental level the student has reached and thus the target language that is to be presented and practised. "Roughly-tuned input", on the other hand, is a little further beyond the student's productive capacity but yet within his comprehension range. It is believed that by expossing students to input of this type during skills work, not only will their receptive capacity increase but also their productive in some cases. Indeed, experience has shown that there are students who can read and understand English. They are as yet unable to speak. They can process information which is above their productive level. This illustrates the nature of receptive skills themselves, that is, the receiver is involved in trying to understand the message while not being required to produce any language.

In dealing with reading, teachers should bear in mind that another important factor to consider when selecting texts is the difference between authentic and non-authentic material. Authentic texts are those which are not designed for

teaching purposes, and include items such as newspaper articles, instructions on how to operate machinery, a letter of complaint to a company and many others that are used in everyday life. Non-authentic texts are specially designed for language students often with the aim of illustrating or practising a particular language point. This means that language is graded and aimed at providing the student with maximum practice of a specific language item. This practice of specific language will eventually prepare students to deal with authentic texts where no language grading is in evidence, and where students will have to use all their ability to comprehend a demanding text. It is true that non-authentic texts can also achieve this, since, despite the language-grading, such texts, if exploited well, can still be motivating and develop not only the students' language but also their ability to read effectively in English.

As far as classroom procedures themselves are concerned, a communicative way of dealing with reading is similar to the approach adopted in relation to listening. In other words, teachers create expectation and arouse student interest in the subject-matter through a pre-reading scene-setting activity which will also encourage students to start speculating about the content of the text. In order to narrow students' focus and also provide them with a reason for reading, the teacher should set a task. This task could be of various types, since in real life we read for a variety of reasons, such as confirming expectation, extracting specific information, or for general or detailed comprehension. Since, in real life, purpose precedes action, such a task should always be agreed on and set prior to the actual act of reading. Ideally the students should be exposed to as many different text types

and tasks as possible, in order to prepare them for reading
outside the classroom.

3.4. - Writing

One of the theoricists to contribute to the
fundamental concepts of the Communicative Approach, Johnson
(1986:92), says that :

"A central characteristic of Communicative Language Teaching is that it focuses
attention on the ability to understand and convey information content."

Because of this shift of focus, communicative
students will not be asked to comment specifically on points of
grammatical structure, lexis, or style for their own sake. On
the contrary, they will be asked, for example, to extract
information, to recognize functions, perceive meaning and take
subsequent action. Communicative writing follows this same line
of thought. The consequent difference in determining success or
failure in language learning, leads Communicative teachers to
assess a piece of writing on the basis of how well the student
was able to convey his message.

After controlled, guided practice in writing,
an important factor in the developing of the skill is that
students be provided with realistic situations through which to
demonstrate their communicative competence. In achieving this,
the information gap technique reveals itself to be of remarkable
effectiveness. Student one is given instructions to write

something that is unknown to student two and vice-versa. They then exchange letters and check if the message was clearly conveyed, that is, if they were able to understand what was written. Such transfer of information allows students to practise writing in a meaningful way since this technique imitates what people normally do in their every-day life: they receive information in one form and transfer it into another. For example, the teacher may give a listening passage in which the students will hear one person asking questions about a flight in an airport. The students will then complete a chart with the answers given by the check-in clerk. Such information gap and information transfer techniques are attempts to provide students with an opportunity to use their English in as realistic a context as possible within the constraints of the language classroom.

Harmer(1983:132) discusses ways of promoting written communication in the classroom through exercises like the following: relaying instructions, exchanging letters, games, fluency writing, story constructions and writing reports and advertisements. Relaying instructions are exercises in which student 1 has information for the performance of a task, which he must clearly convey to student 2 in order that the task be completed. In exercises of the letter-exchange type the students write each other letters based on simulation and role-play. Writing games can be of various styles, such as the writing of descriptions of people or places to be guessed by another student. Fluency writing exercises, as the name indicates, are exercises used for improving the students' ability to write as much as they can about a given theme within a determined period of time without too much concern for

accuracy. This theme may be provided by a series of pictures depicting a story or a single picture of a situation. The same applies in exercises of the story construction type, the only difference being that in this case the class should be divided into groups, each of which receives some of the pictures to write about. After finishing their sentences the students regroup, so that all previous groups are represented. They then produce a complete story by organizing and possibly re-working the individually-produced sections into a coherent text. Exercises such as writing reports and advertisements can be successfully used in project work. Groups of students can be asked to prepare a tourist brochure, organize an international event, make up questionnaires to get information about different topics or even prepare a radio or television interview. All of these can then be used in class as the basis for further listening and speaking practice.

According to Hubbard (Hubbard, et alii, 1983:62):

"Of the four skills, writing is the skill most frequently neglected. A lot of modern ELT 'methods' under the influence of the audio-lingual method stress the importance of speech, with writing coming a very poor second."

It is a mistake to consider that if students know how to say something they will consequently be able to write it. Writing is a skill that, like any other, necessitates practice. For this reason, it is necessary to prepare graded exercises that will lead students from very simple writing to being able to express themselves fluently. One example of a very simple writing exercise is copying. From a very early stage students can be given a vocabulary list and be asked to copy the words

forming 'word families", that is, words belonging to the same semantic category. Copying can also be done by asking students to read and select from a choice of three or four passages describing a person, place or object. They then copy the one they are most interested in. They write the passage under the appropriate picture. When dealing with copying teachers also have at their disposal a resource called "the substitution table". These are sets of syntagmatic columns of words. Each column contains a paradigm of the same grammatical category. By proceeding from left to right and selecting one word from each paradigm sentences of the same pattern can be generated, thus providing extensive practice of a specific structure. For example:

He		to school	yesterday
She	went to	to the bank	last Sunday
They		to church	last week

Students can write: He went to school yesterday or He went to church last Sunday and so on. It may be more suitable to modify this kind of exercise to make it more challenging, and therefore more motivating. This can be done by the simple expedient of removing one of the columns, or letting students build up their own substitution tables or even by introducing an element of competition.

When moving from simple writing exercises to free expression there is the need for bridging activities. Open-ended dialogues, for example, can help students to write based on what was said previously, thereby providing them with concrete guidelines. Teachers can also give students stories with gaps

to be filled in or even texts to be recoded into dialogues or vice-versa. Maps, tables and diagrams are an invaluable source upon which to base writing practice. Students can, for example, interpret information from a map and transform it into a written text. Dictation can also be used to help students develop the writing skill. Again, as well as what it traditionally understood as being dictation, there are different ways in which it can be exploited. The teacher can dictate one sentence and let students invent the following, or alternatively the teacher can dictate the beginning of a sentence which the students complete.

From this brief expose, it can be seen then that there is a wide range of exercises and activities at the communicative teacher's disposal, all of which attempt to provide students with meaningful practice in writing, and to mirror as accurately as possible real life situations. In selecting the most suitable, however, the teacher should always be aware of his students' needs and bear these in mind in material selection.

3.5. Integrated Skills

In real life, people require language to communicate their ideas, since others are incapable of reading their minds. We use the four skills both to express our thoughts and to understand other people's. One can communicate something by writing on a piece of paper or by speaking to the other person. If someone decides to write, the receiver will have to

read in order to understand the message. If the sender decides to say the message, the receiver will have to listen. This is how things happen in real life, the four skills being intrinsically linked in such a way that one does not exist without the other. Let us take the example of someone who reads an advertisement for a job and decides to telephone the company for further details. He may then decide to write a letter applying for the job. Someone in the company will read the letter, discuss it with someone else and write a reply, which will be read by the candidate who will probably discuss it with a friend before he finally decides to go to the company and talk to someone from the Personnel Department. The story of the use of the skills in our every-day life is endless. It is a chain and at each link the person draws on a particular skill depending on aim and situation.

·The communicative teacher will encourage effective communication and learning by introducing material which leads the students to practise the four skills in as natural a way as possible. This means that, first of all, a context must be provided wherein the student will find a reason for doing something and will learn the necessary competence in the skill most appropriate to accomplishing that task. If this principle is respected an increase in student motivation can be expected.

By integrating skills work one skill can be seen as providing the basis for practising the others. For example, reading can be used as the basis for discussion and writing or vice versa. At one point the focus of attention will concentrate on a certain skill but later it may shift to one or more of the other skills. It is not a rule that an exercise which integrates

skills should practise all of them. There may be only two or three skills involved.

Byrne (1981:108) says that the term "integrated skills" is used almost as a synomym for reinforcement. This poin t of view is based on the fact that an exercise dealing with one skill is often reinforced or extended through follow up activities which allow students to manipulate the same structure or function while practising other skills. For example, a teacher may give a listening passage of a weather forecast and ask students to complete a map showing the weather conditions he has heard. The student can then be asked to draw a map of his own and dictate it to another student who will try to reproduce it, based on his classmate's description. While listening, the students will often be required to speak, to ask for clarification or simply to make comments. By following this procedure, the students will be practising weather language through the media of the whole range of active and passive skills. Such extensive practice should greatly improve students' ability to manipulate the language, as well as providing invaluable opportunity for skills development.

To promote practice of integrated skills, teachers can use exercises such as the following. The students play the role of a young person who has just finished college and wants to work with tourism. First of all, he/she has to look at newspaper advertisements. After reading and choosing which company to call, the students, in pairs, role-play a dialogue with the secretary. Prior to this stage the teacher may provide a listening exercise of a similar conversation to help students with ideas for their own dialogue. As a result of the telephone call, the students apply for the job in writing and the teacher

may then give them a reply inviting them to come for an interview. The students finally perform the interview with the help of a questionnaire provided by the teacher and expanded by each student depending on what he feels is most relevant to the situation. In this series of exercises, then, the students practise all four skills in the same order as they happen in real life. As a result, it can be expected that students will develop the ability to interact and perform these tasks in a real-life English speaking context.

Chapter FOUR — AN ANALYSIS OF "BLUEPRINT ONE", A COMMUNICATIVE COURSEBOOK

It was a deliberate decision to select a communicative coursebook for analysis since the main reason for writing a dissertation on this topic was the belief that the Communicative Approach, together with some extra material adapted to the students' specific reality, is more likely to improve their chances of succeeding in mastering the Target Language.

The authors of "Blueprint One" define it as being communicative when they say that from an early stage "...language activities in the classroom are at all times meaningful and aimed at real-life communication" and "...the language they are going to learn will enable them to communicate their needs, ideas and opinions." (Abbs and Freebairn, 1990:1)

In order to give the reader an overview of the material, a general description of "Blueprint One" will be given. This description will include the contents and the organization of the book, the presentation of a cross-section of

exercises used within a typical unit, as well as a description of the Workbook, the Teacher's Guide, the Class and Students Cassettes.

4.1. Textbook

4.1.1. A General View

The basic course consists of forty units divided into eight parts. These parts are preceded by "Preview" which is a dialogue presenting the main points that will be dealt with in the following five units. There is a unit called "Fluency" after every five units and it gives to students a communicative situation in which they can use what they have learnt. A section called "Check" closes each part of five units and it is, as can be presumed, a test to give students an opportunity to assess how much of what has been studied has actually been learned, as well as providing them with a source of general revision. At the beginning of the book there is a "Contents" section and at the end students are provided with a "Vocabulary and Expressions" list, a "Language Review", a list of verbs and and an answer key.

4.1.2. Preview

This kind of organization, as experience tends to prove, has an extremely positive influence on students. The Preview stimulates their interest in what they are going to study in the next five units and provides motivation and psychologycal preparation as students start hypothesizing about the new content, preparing themselves for the new experience. Another benefit of the Preview is that it provides a previous summary of what is going to be taught, just like someone looking at a map before setting out on a journey. It gives students more confidence because they can foresee what is coming.

The Previews are presented in the form of photo-story dialogues which tell the story of Laura, an American literature student attending a course in the city of York; Adam, a young man who works as a travel agent and their friends. The story is presented in sequence in order to capture and hold student interest.

People are normally interested in what goes on in other countries, how other people live and their culture, and the Previews make use of this natural curiosity to introduce people living in contemporary Britain. The setting gives authenticity to the language but it can also generate other kinds of activities like vocabulary-building based on the photos, or discussions of cultural differences. Whichever it is, the activity allows a great deal of fluency practice.

At the end of each Preview section students find a blue box with a list of the learning objectives for the next five units. They are presented in functional terms like " how to

introduce yourself, greet people, describe objects..." . These lists provide the students with the necessary framework to structure their progress.

4.1.3. The Units

After being exposed to the main features of the language to be dealt with, the students proceed to the individual units. The aim of each lesson is to enable students to learn and use a new piece of language as confidently and naturally as possible. It follows the traditionally given stages of a language item presentation, that is, teacher's presentation, highly controlled practice, less controlled practice and free practice. In the following pages, a more detailed description of the exercises presented in each unit will be given in the hope that they can illustrate how communicative coursebooks deal with the the development of the skills.

4.1.3.1. Presentation

The presentation stage is dealt with in different ways, depending on the unit. For example, in Unit 3, Exercise 1, names of the countries are presented through matching them with letters on a map. Although pronunciation is also practised, these vocabulary items are undoubtely presented in a

communicative way, that is, students do something while learning them and at the same time learn through doing something.

Nationalities

1 Find the letters for these countries on the map.

Italy   Argentina France Greece Spain
Britain The USA   Brazil Turkey China
Japan   The USSR   Portugal West Germany

Extensive reading is the technique used in the Presentation of Unit 40. The communicative feature here is that before reading the text students are asked some questions about what the text might be about. Some lexis is also given as an aid to the hypothesizing. From the moment their curiosity in the subject has been aroused they have a reason for reading.

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1 READING

Before you read

Look at these words and phrases. What do you think the article is going to be about?

poor Italian family   spaghetti sauce
the USA   factory   make money

Read the article and see if you were right.

Grammar analysis is also used in a communicative presentation, as we can see in Unit 15, Exercise 1. Apart from presenting a chart with the grammar forms, the exercise also provides a clear context, through the pictures, and an opportunity for controlled practice, in the prompts. In this way students analyse grammar forms at the same time as they use them to communicate ideas.

1 have/a shower

2 play/the piano

15

Present activities

1 In pairs, talk about what the people are doing. Use the Focus box below to help you.

A: What's the girl/man in picture ... doing?
B: She/He's ...

GRAMMAR FOCUS: Present continuous

What	am	I	doing?	You're	writing a letter.
	are	you		·I'm	
	is	he		He's	
	is	she		She's	
	are	we		We're	
		they	·	They're	

4.1.3.2. Grammar and Communication Focus

"Grammar and Communication Focus" are labelled boxes containing the main points of grammar or communication of each unit. It is up to the teacher to judge the relative merits of dealing with them at the beginning, during or at the end of the lesson. Often, it will depend on what is being taught. These "Focus" boxes have special inductive questions and tasks to facilitate the students' discovery of the rules for themselves. An example of this is the focus in Unit 15, which presents the affirmative and interrogative form of the present continuous tense in a chart, followed by questions that will lead the students to discover spelling rules involving the use of this verb tense.

```
GRAMMAR FOCUS: Present continuous
```

| What | am
are
is
is
are | I
you
he
she
we
they | doing? | You're
I'm
He's
She's
We're
They're | writing a letter. |

Spelling rules

start-starting   write-writing   run-running   lie-lying
learn-learning   make-making   get-getting   die-dying

What happens to verbs which end in *e?*
What happens to verbs which end in *ie?*
What happens to one-syllable verbs ending in one
consonant, like *run* and *get?*

The "Focus" of Unit 16 deals with the functions "Asking for things" and "Asking the price". The communicative feature of this substitution table is that students practise the appropriate language for shopping.

COMMUNICATION FOCUS:

Asking for things

| Can I have
Could I have | a T-shirt,
a big one,
this/that pen,
these/those chocolates, | please? |

Asking the price

| How much is | it?
the T-shirt?
this one/that one? | It's £7.99. |
| How much are | they?
the/these/those/chocolates?
the large ones? | They're £3.50. |

4.1.3.3. Pair-work

Pair-work is a technique where students have to work with a partner, asking and answering questions, planning something together and so on. These exercises are widely used throughout the lessons. They are usually presented in the form of questions and answers which contain blanks for students to insert their own information and they are used from the very

beginning of the course. For example, in Exercise 1 of Unit 1 the students go around asking and noting down the name of ten students in the classroom. This activity has a dual function: it is a drill of new language, but also an opportunity for students to use the language in a meaningful and realistic context, since, at this early stage of the course, they probably do not know each other's names.

---

1 Ask the names
of ten students in
your class and write
them down.

A: What's your name?
B: My name's ... / I'm ...

A pair-work activity given at a very early stage is the one in Unit 5, Exercise 6. It is also an example of the information gap technique which means that student A has information that student B does not have and vice-versa. They are therefore required to ask each other questions to obtain the missing information. In this exercise they both have to ask questions about telephone numbers and complete their lists. The only way they can fulfil their task is by interacting.

4.1.3.4. Group-work

Group work is less used but it also has its place within the lessons, as in Unit 23 Exercise 7 where students have to plan a cultural event to take place in their school. This is a task-based activity because at the end of the discussion each group must produce a list of suggestions for the party, and it is communicative in the sense that students are using language in context, and in order to achieve an aim.

---

7 Plan an International Evening for some visitors to your school. Make suggestions for the evening, using the Focus box and the ideas below to start your discussion.

show slides	give a talk
sing folk songs	put up some posters
show some handicrafts	give a concert

Now tell the other groups what you are going to do. Which ideas were best?

4.1.3.5. Roleplay

Roleplay is another communicative activity that is used in Blueprint One. Cases of it range from more to less controlled. An example of the more controlled type is the cued dialogue in Unit 10, Exercise 8. Student A is provided with the questions and only student B is required to be creative.

---

8 ROLEPLAY

STUDENT A

You meet Student B on a train in your country. Use these questions to have a conversation.

Where do you come from?
Where is that exactly?
What's it like?
Do you like living there?

STUDENT B

You come from York and are travelling in Student A's country. Answer Student A's questions. Then return the questions.

Note
What's it like? = What sort of place is it?
To be like is used to ask for descriptions of people, places and things, e.g. *What is he/she/it like?*

A less controlled practice exercise is the
Roleplay in Unit 34, Exercise 5. Although students are given
the situation as well as some opening sentences, they still
have a certain amount of freedom to choose what they say and
how they say it.

---

5 ROLEPLAY

In pairs, write a dialogue for the following
situation.

A telephones B to invite her/him to play ·
squash/tennis/football. Unfortunately B
doesn't feel well (température/sore throat) or
has had an accident and has hurt something
(arm/leg).

Now roleplay your conversation for the
rest of the group. Try not to look at your
written dialogue.

Start like this:

A: Hello. Is that . . .?
B: Yes, it is.
A: It's . . . here. Would you like to play . . .?
B: I'm afraid I can't.
A: Oh, what . . .?

Here the students roleplay situations in shops.
An example of a free practice exercise is Exercise 9 in Unit 36,
where only the situation is specified, the students being left
free to choose appropriate language.

---

9 ROLEPLAY

Collect some outdoor
clothes, e.g. jackets and
coats, and put them on a
desk at the front of the class.
Roleplay shopping situations
in front of the class.

4.1.3.6. Listening

In comparison to many other courses, listening,
in Blueprint One, is dealt with more carefully and thoroughly.
It is incorporated and presented in a variety of ways ranging

from understanding gist to getting specific or detailed information. This variety is achieved through a series of listening exercises with different tasks and features. A selection of them will now be presented with the aim of illustrating the above stated differences.

An example of listening for general gist is in Unit 2 Exercise 1 where students are required to do nothing more than match what they hear with what is written in the dialogues. In this case, reading offers a support to the students' first attempt to listen to natural English, and as a result, students feel more motivated, since, from the beginning of their English course they feel capable of understanding and locating a piece of language in their books just by listening.

Greetings and goodbyes

Hello, Jan. How are you?

Fine, thanks. And you?

Good morning, everyone.

Good morning, Mrs Jackson.

Good evening, ladies and gentlemen.

Good afternoon, sir. Can I help you?

1 ▣ Listen to the conversations and match them with the pictures.

In the same unit three other kinds of listening are presented. Exercise 4 practises accurate pronunciation of the days of the week through listening and repetition.

```
┌─────────────────────────────────────┐
│ ▌        ─── ─── ───                 │
│ ▌          JUNE                      │
│ ▌   M  T  W  T .F  S  S              │
│ ▌               1  2  3              │
│ ▌   4  5  6  7  8  9 10              │
│ ▌                                    │
│     ▉Now listen and repeat the days. │
└─────────────────────────────────────┘
```

Exercise 7 deals with stress and intonation while in Exercise 8 the dialogue provides not only the opportunity for listening to a contextualised conversation but it also gives an opportunity for revision, consolidation and writing of the new vocabulary items presented in the unit.

---

7 ▉ SPEECHWORK

Listen and underline the stressed syllables or words.

<u>How</u> do you <u>do</u>   Hello   How are you
<u>Good</u> morning   Good afternoon
Morning   Good evening   Good night
Goodbye   See you on Monday

COMMUNICATION FOCUS:
Greetings and goodbyes

Formal	Informal
How do you do?	Hello./Hi!
Good morning.	Morning!
Good afternoon..	Afternoon!
Good evening.	Evening!
Goodnight.	Night!
Goodbye.	Bye!

What are some formal and informal greetings in your language?

8 ▉ LISTENING

Listen and complete the conversation.

CHRIS: Hello, Adam. . . . you?
ADAM: . . . fine, . . . And . . .?
CHRIS: I'm O.K. Adam, . . . Karen, a friend from Leeds.
ADAM: . . . , Karen.
KAREN: Hi!
ADAM: Sorry, Chris but I must go.
CHRIS: That's O.K.
ADAM: See you . . .
CHRIS: O.K. . . .
ADAM: Thanks. And the . . . .!

Another example of listening for general understanding is Exercise 3 in Fluency 16-20. In this exercise the students, after having discussed how they have spent their day in London, listen to a woman saying how she spent hers. They are required to have a general idea of what she did and at the same time they "confirm expectations" by trying to discover if she did any of the things they predicted she would from their

own movements. This method of dealing with a listening passage is one of the most emphasized features of the Communicative Approach.

---

3 LISTENING

Listen to an Italian woman talking about how she spent some days in London. Did she do any of the things you did?

Listening to extract specific information is found in Unit 5 Exercise 10. Here, the students have to listen to a dialogue between a secretary and a girl who wants to join a health club. While listening, the students have to complete a form which specifies the information they should listen for.

APPLICATION FORM
(please use BLOCK CAPITALS)

Surname ....

First names ....

Title (please tick)   Mr ☐   Mrs ☐   Miss ☐   Ms ☐

State if (please tick)   Married ☐   Single ☐   Divorced ☐

Address ....

.... Postcode ....

Telephone number .... Age ....

A noteworthy example of listening to natural English is in Unit 6 Exercise 7 where students at the very beginning of the course are exposed to a completely natural

conversation from which they have to extract specific information and complete a chart about a person. It is an example of a roughly-tuned input exercise which, at first glance, might seem too difficult a task, with over-difficult language. On closer inspection, however, the only thing required from the students is that they understand the positive and negative forms of can and match them with the sentences in the chart. While they are listening to "cans" and "cant's" they are also being exposed to authentic English.

---

7 READING AND ▦ LISTENING

Read the results of a survey about the ability of British people to speak French.

How do you score in English?

Now listen to a British person living in Paris. Look at the survey above and note down what the person can and can't do.

How well can the Brits speak French?

The British are not a nation of linguists, as the results of this survey show.

	AGE		
	15-34	35-54	55+
Can read a menu	38%	31%	22%
Can ask directions	40%	28%	21%
Can read a French newspaper	9%	10%	7%
Can have a simple conversation	32%	22%	15%
Can understand a TV or radio programme	8%	7%	6%
Can speak French fluently	3%	3%	2%
Can do none of these	50%	63%	78%

4.1.3.7. Writing

Writing exercises are presented in the form of small guided compositions as in Unit 3 Exercise 11 where students already have a model and must only change some words to write about themselves. This is an example of how the Communicative Approach grades its exercises, starting from

exercises with simple tasks and progressing to more difficult ones.

---

11 READING AND WRITING

Read about Youcef and then write about yourself.

'My name's Youcef. I'm Algerian and I'm from Algiers. Languages are my hobby. I speak Arabic, French, English, Hungarian and Russian – and I also speak a little German! My English is quite good but my Russian is very bad.'

My name's . . . I'm . . . and . . . from . . . I speak . . . and . . .

In freer writing exercises students are given varying degrees of help and guidance, as is apparent from the two examples given: Exercise 10 in Unit 7 and Exercise 5 in Fluency 16-20 where students just have the beginning of the composition and go on using their own resources.

---

5 WRITING

Write a postcard to an English-speaking friend telling him/her about your day in London (or another city). Start like this:

Dear . . .,
I'm writing this from London. I had a wonderful day yesterday. In the morning I went to see . . .

10 WRITING

Write a paragraph about your family. Say if you come from a big family or not. Mention any interesting ancestors you have got. Start like this:

I come from a big/small family. I've got . . .

The writing in Unit 30 Exercise 5 uses the technique called "transferring information". The student extracts information from an advertisement and recodes it in a letter. This transfer requires fundamental abilities of the language learner, since people are always getting information

and passing it to different people, in different places and for different purposes.

---

5 WRITING

OXFORD STREET HOTEL CHAMBERMAIDS
Male or female
wanted in central London hotel. Age 18 +. To serve breakfasts and clean hotel bedrooms. Live in hotel. Must speak some English. Free time (afternoon) for English language classes. Earn £70 per week! Tel 491 9987.

The girl in the photograph is a friend of yours. She gets the job in the advertisement above. Write about her in a letter. Say what she is doing in London (give details), where she is living, how much she is earning and what she is doing in her spare time.

By the way, I forgot to tell you about Carmen. Did you know she's in London? She's working as a ...

Now write about someone you know who is living, working or studying away from home.

4.1.3.8. Reading

Reading is another skill treated appropriatly from the communicative point of view. The authors, as good communicative teachers, never give a passage to be read without first trying to create in the students curiosity and need to read. This is applied from the beginning, as in Unit 1 Exercise 7 and Unit 11 Exercise 8. The exercises begin with three questions that the students are not able to answer. In order to do so they have to read the sentences or text presented. They have a real interest in reading since they want to find out the answer to the questions.

7 READING

Read and answer.

1 What's Jorge's name in English?
2 What's Christine called for short?
3 Is Chris a boy's name or a girl's name?

> My name's Jorge.

His name's Jorge. He's called George in English.

> My name's Chris.

Her name's Christine but she's called Chris for short. Chris is a boy's name and a girl's name in English

8 READING

Read the information below and answer the questions.

1 What time do banks open and close in Britain?
2 Do they open on Sunday?
3 What time do shops close?

ABOUT OPENING AND CLOSING TIMES IN BRITAIN

Post offices open at 09.00 and close at 17.30 from Monday to Friday. They close on Saturday at 12.30.

Banks open at 09.30 and close at 15.30 from Monday to Friday. A few banks open on Saturday morning. In big cities, *Bureau de change* offices open every day until quite late in the evening.

Shops usually open at 09.00 or 10.00 and close at 17.30 or 18.00. They do not usually close for lunch except in small towns. Most shops are closed on Sunday and national holidays.

Some readings are clearly authentic like Exercise 10 in Unit 34 which is information found on the label of a medicine bottle. This kind of reading exposes students to texts they may be required to read in an English-speaking environment, which is one of the aims of the Communicative Approach.

DAYTIME COLD REMEDY

The complete daytime remedy for colds and flu

| CONTAINS PARACETAMOL |

Each 20 ml dose contains: Paracetamol B.P 500 mg. Phenylpropanolamine Hydrochloride B.P. 25 mg, Dextromethorphan Hydrobromide B.P 15 mg, Alcohol B P 3.08 ml.

Dosage Instructions: Shake the bottle before removing cap. Replace cap securely after use

Adults and children over 12: Fill measure cup to 20 ml mark (four 5 ml spoonfuls) and repeat every 4 hours as required up to a maximum of four doses in any 24 hours

Children 6-12. Fill measure cup to 10 ml mark (two 5 ml spoonfuls) and give every 4 hours as required up to a maximum of four doses in any 24 hours

Children under 6: Only as directed by a doctor

day 0
nurse

10 READING

Read the instructions for a cold remedy and note the correct answers.

1 As an adult, how much medicine should you take each time?
   a) Four 5 ml spoonfuls.
   b) Two 5 ml spoonfuls.
   c) One spoonful.

2 How many times can you take the medicine in 24 hours?
   a) Once.
   b) Six times.
   c) Four times.

4.1.4. Fluency

The Fluency section draws together language from the previous five units within a common theme, in such a way that students are involved in a freer use of the language. Emphasis is placed on producing fluent rather than accurate speech. This is a way of not only improving fluency but also of consolidating what has previously been taught.

The Fluency sections, as a rule, consist of a reading passage, a listening, a roleplay and a writing exercise, all of which are related to the same subject. Fluency 11-15 serves as a suitable example since it presents all the features normally found in this kind of section. In exercise 1 the means for contextualization is given. Exercise 2 is the reading passage; Exercise 3 is the roleplay followed by an oral activity, which is Exercise 4, where the students are required to give their opinion about the text and finally Exercise 5 which is a listening and writing activity. The exercises in this section exploit all the relevant points that have been studied in the previous five units, giving the students a situation in which they can use the language they have been learning communicatively.

---

2 READING

Read the text and say which paragraph is about:

- Nina's morning routine (paragraph 2)
- who Nina is and where she lives
- Nina's routine on performance days
- the rewards of being a ballerina
- what Nina does after a performance

3 ROLEPLAY

Use the cues below to write some of the interviewer's questions. Then roleplay an interview with Nina in pairs.

Where/live/Moscow?
What/flat/like?
What/do/in the morning?
What/do/on performance days?
What/do/after the performance?

Start your roleplay like this:

YOU: Nina, you're a prima ballerina at the Bolshoi Ballet.
NINA: Yes, that's right.
YOU: Where do you live in Moscow?

4 Tell the class three facts in the text which you think are interesting.

5 LISTENING

Listen and complete the list of furniture there is in Nina and Guya's flat in Moscow.

Sitting room	Kitchen
a sofa	a table
a table	two chairs
an . . .	a . . .
a big . . .	a . . .
a video recorder	
a . . .	
a . . .	

4.1.5. Check

After the "Fluency" follows the "Check" section which closes each of the eight distinct parts of the book. It is a way of revising and testing the grammatical and functional items studied. The "Check" consists of a variety of exercise types, for example, multiple choice tests, sentences and paragraphs for rearranging , and questions and answers. Some examples of these tests were taken from Check Units 6-10 Exercises 1,2 and 7.

1 Choose the correct answer.

Example
1 A: . . . you ski?
  B: Yes, a little.
    (a) Can   b) Have   c) Are

1 A: . . . you ski?
  B: Yes, a little.
    a) Can   b) Have   c) Are

2 He . . . in the centre of Madrid.
    a) live   b) does live   c) lives

3 . . . she live in Milan?
    a) Is   b) Does   c) Do

4 A: I like this music.
  B: Really. I . . . like it.
    a) don't   b) not   c) no

5 She . . . with her parents.
    a) don't live   b) doesn't live   c) live not

6 . . . like living in America?
    a) You do   b) Do you   c) Does you

2 Rearrange the words to make sensible sentences.

Example
1 you cycling like do?
1 *Do you like cycling?*

1 you cycling like do?
2 much like very she him doesn't.
3 live they do where?
4 his he parents with does live?
5 this I like music don't.

7 Complete the sentences with the correct form of *there is/are*.

there's (x2)   is there (x2)
there are (x2)   are there (x2)
there is   there isn't

Example
1 ... a beautiful park near our house.
1 *There's a beautiful park near our house.*

1 ... a beautiful park near our house.
2 ... three people from Kuwait in our class.
3 ... any good restaurants in this town?
4 A: ... a coffee machine in this building?
   B: No, ...
5 ... some more chairs in the dining room.
6 A: ... a shower in your hotel room?
   B: Yes, ...
7 ... a telephone in the front hall.
8 ... any interesting people in your class?

As these tests are printed in the book like any other section, they are a self-check. There can be various means of correction such as the teacher dictating the answers or giving out the answer key and allotted marks for individual or group correction. The latter type is expected to make students more independent and responsible for their own learning.

At the end of each check section there is a box with the title "Learning to Learn", aimed at helping students develop better learning strategies. "Learning to Learn" in "Check" 11-15 gives suggestions on recording vocabulary.

LEARNING TO LEARN 2: Talking about grammar

Here are some important 'grammar' words:

Grammar word	Example	Names of verb tenses	
noun	chair, girl	*present simple*	I live
article	a, the	*present continuous*	I am living
verb	be, have, write	*past simple*	I lived
adjective	good, bad	*going to future*	I am going to live
adverb	well, badly	*simple future*	I will live
preposition	on, in	*present perfect*	I have lived

What are these words?
1 boy   2 go   3 beautiful
4 an   5 slowly   6 open
7 brown   8 for   9 speak

What are these tenses?
1 he is working   2 they like
3 I have worked   4 she wanted
5 I am going to have

4.1.6. Contents, Vocabulary and Language
Review

As in most coursebooks, Blueprint One has a Table of Contents with the topics, functions, grammar and vocabulary that will be dealt with within each unit. There is also a Vocabulary and Expression section with a list of vocabulary contained in each unit in alphabetical order and a Language Review which is a short reference grammar that covers the main grammatical input dealt with in the book. These sections were designed to provide students with one more source of material for organizing their revizing and consolidating.

4.2. Workbook

4.2.1. Grammar Exercises

The workbook comprises forty units, that is, corresponding to the forty of the textbook. In the units there are exercises to practise grammar points, communication, writing, reading, vocabulary, listening and speechwork. The grammar exercises may be in the form of picture cued questions and answers as in Unit 1 Exercise 1. The students practise using the possessive adjectives his or her. The use of pictures make the exercise more meaningful since students can actually see who is a man or a woman to make the choice of the apropriate pronoun.

GRAMMAR: possessive adjectives/
genitive s

1 Adam   2 Laura

5 Sarah

1 Ask and answer the questions.

1 *What's his name?*
His name's Adam.

2 ....

....

3 ....

There are also grammar exercises combined with reading where students read a text and complete a task which also practises a grammar point as in Unit 23 Exercise 1. In this case, students are practising the going to future.

Unit **23**

GRAMMAR: *going to future*

1 Look at the advertisement and write questions to complete the conversation.

ELBA!

Island in the sun
Special Summer Offer!
Two weeks for the price of one!
First 2 weeks of July only.

Half pension in the Hotel Napoleon in Marina di Campo – only 2 minutes from the sea.

Fly from Manchester to Pisa, then by coach and boat.

SUMMER SAVERS Ltd, *Red Lion Square, Manchester MA4 BD6   tel: 061 345-8923*

YOU: When/have/holiday? [1] *When are you going to have your holiday?*

MIKE: In the first two weeks of July.

YOU: Where/go? [2] ....
....

MIKE: To Elba.

YOU: Elba! How lovely! How/get there?
[3] ....

MIKE: First by plane to Pisa and then by coach and boat.

YOU: That's quite a long journey. Where/stay?
[4] ....

MIKE: In a hotel in Marina di Campo.

YOU: That sounds nice. How long/stay?
[5] ....

MIKE: Two weeks.

YOU: Who/go with? [6] ....
....

MIKE: A group of three friends from the office.

YOU: Well, have a nice time!

4.2.2. Communication Exercises

Another feature of the workbook is the Communication Exercises. From the first lessons, they practise communication through dialogue completion and gap-filling techniques as in Unit 2 Exercise 2. Apart from practising key vocabulary in contextualized situations, these exercises can also be used for intonation practice.

COMMUNICATION

2 Ben meets Juliet on Wednesday morning. Complete the conversation using the words and expressions in the box.

| this is   Thanks   Hello   on Monday |
| I'm fine   How do you do   Goodbye |

JULIET: [1] *Hello*...., Ben. How are you?

BEN: [2] ...., thanks.

JULIET: Ben, this is my father.   Dad,

[3] .... my friend, Ben.

MR JACKSON: How do you do, Ben.

BEN: [4] ....,
Mr Jackson.

JULIET: It's Ben's birthday today.

MR JACKSON: Oh, have a nice day, Ben!

BEN: [5] ...., Mr Jackson.
I must go now, Juliet.

JULIET: O.K. [6] ...., Ben.

BEN: Bye! See you [7] ....!

Another communicative activity is the cued dialogue, which often has the additional advantage of providing valuable practice in recoding and transferring information, as in the Unit 9 Exercise 2:

2 Write another party conversation.

1 Greet/Give name/Ask name	A: *Hello. I'm Gina. What's your name?* ....
2 Give name/Ask where A is from	B: ....
3 Answer/Ask where B lives	A: ....
4 Answer/Ask what A does	B: ....
5 Answer/Ask if B likes the music	A: ....
6 Answer/Say what music you like	B: ....
7 Ask if B likes dancing	A: ....
8 Say you can't dance	B: ....
9 Say you must go. Say goodbye	A: ....
10 Say goodbye	B: ....

4.2.3. Writing Exercises

The Writing Exercises are of many different forms and practise different aspects of the writing skill, such as spelling, punctuation and syntax. In Unit 10 Exercise 5 students practise sentence structure through transforming information from a chart into sentences. This exercise provides the students with ideas for the sentences, which they write following the given model.

WRITING

5 Look at the chart and write sentences about the towns and cities.

1 *Florence is a beautiful old city in the centre of Italy. It is famous for its museums and art galleries.*

2 ....
....

3 ....
....

4 ....
....

5 ....
....

Place	Description	Location	Famous for
Florence	beautiful old city	centre/ Italy	museums/ art galleries
Munich	big industrial city	south/ Germany	football team
Rio de Janeiro	big tourist port	east coast/ Brazil	beaches/ Sugarloaf Mountain
Cambridge	beautiful old city	east/ England	university
San Francisco	beautiful and interesting city	west coast/ USA	bridge/ cable cars

There are also composition exercises, as in Unit 15 Exercise 3, where a contextualized situation is provided. This represents a great advance on traditional exercises that merely ask students to write a composition about a certain topic or situation. Some students cannot rely on their imagination so a picture can offer an alternative to creativity.

This is a photo of my family camping in France. My father is making dinner.
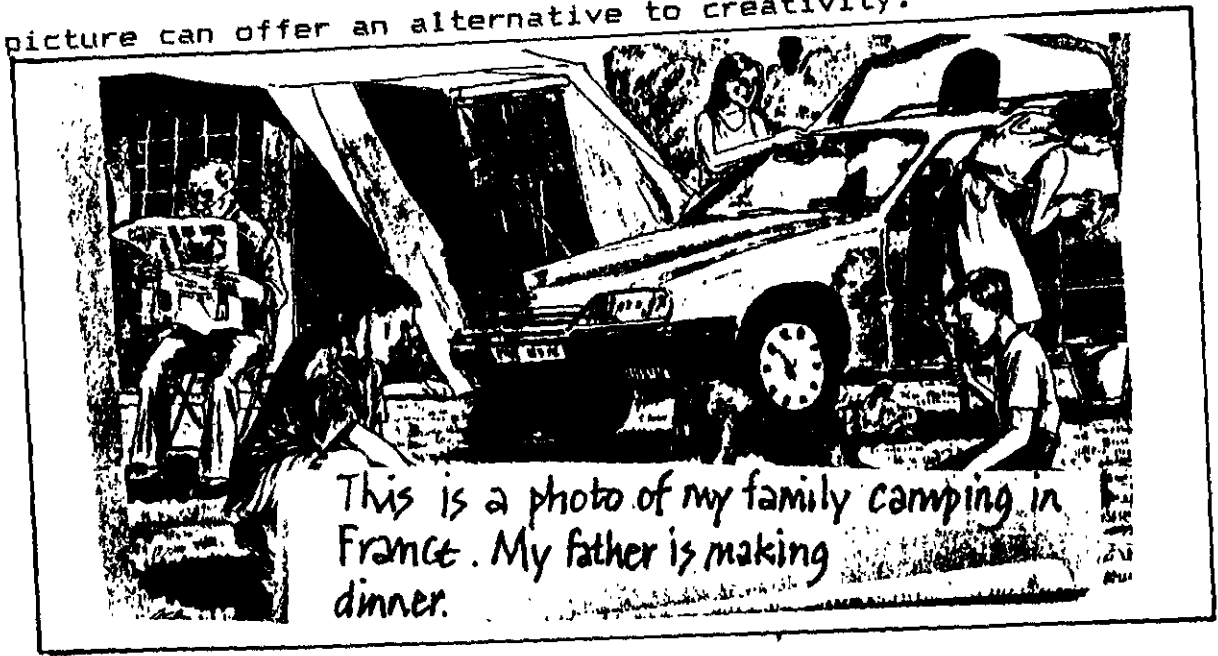
The writing of correspondence is practised in exercises such as Exercise 2 in Unit 26, giving students ideas and a purpose for writing.

YORK UNIVERSITY DRAMA SOCIETY
Whole day trip to Stratford
to see Shakespeare's
RICHARD III
ON SATURDAY 2ND JULY

Coach leaves from Derwent College at 8.30 a.m. and returns to college at approx. 9.30 p.m.

(includes theatre ticket, coach fare, and a picnic lunch)

COST ONLY £15

FRIENDS WELCOME

PLEASE BOOK YOUR PLACE BEFORE JUNE 28th

2 Read the notice and invite a friend to join you on the trip to Stratford. In your notebook, write a letter about your arrangements.

– say what the trip is about and what date it is
– invite your friend to join you
– say how much it costs
– say what time the coach leaves in the morning and returns in the evening.

4.2.4. Reading Exercises

In the workbook, Reading Exercises are always linked to some kind of writing. In Unit 5 Exercise 2 the students read a form and then reorganize the information into a paragraph. This is an example of scanning, where students read for specific information.

READING AND WRITING

2 Read this paragraph. Then use the form on the right to write a similar paragraph about Hannelore in your notebook.

Silvia Mondi is an Italian student from Treviso. She is twenty-one years old. She isn't married. Her address in Britain is: c/o Turner, 12A, Minster Gardens, York, YO1 2AS.

FIRST NAME SURNAME
NATIONALITY
PLACE OF BIRTH Copenhagen
AGE 36 OCCUPATION
SINGLE ☐ MARRIED ☐
ADDRESS IN BRITAIN
Richmond TW1 2ER England
TELEPHONE NUMBER

The workbook also contains reading passages with comprehension questions as in Unit 8 Exercise 4, to develop reading as well as grammatical accuracy. The writing exercise then leads students to build up a similar text, making use of the structures from the reading.

READING

4 Read the text and answer the questions.

ALEX SABELLA

ALEX SABELLA is a footballer. He is Argentinian but he plays football for Sheffield United in England. He is married and lives in Sheffield with his wife, Concepción, and baby daughter. His wife teaches Spanish at an English school in Sheffield. His family live near Buenos Aires. His father is a farmer.

1 What does Alex do?
He's a footballer.

2 What nationality is he?
....

3 What team does he play for?
....

4 What does his wife do?
....

5 Where do his family live?
....

6 What does his father do?
....

WRITING

5 In your notebook, write a similar paragraph about Dolena using the notes.

Name:	Dolena Suarez
Job:	nurse
Nationality:	Portuguese
Place of work:	hospital in Birmingham
Husband's name:	Jose - Luis
Husband's job:	waiter in a hotel
Family:	near Oporto
Jobs:	father sells newspapers and magazines
	mother a housewife

4.2.5. Vocabulary

There is a range of vocabulary exercises in the Workbook. Some help students develop the idea of words belonging to a certain category as in Unit 2 Exercise 4 and in Unit 4 Exercise 4.

VOCABULARY

4 Complete the groups of words.

Monday	*morning*	
		today
		tomorrow
	night	
Sunday		

An attractive way of practising vocabulary is through crossword puzzles as in Unit 17 Exercise 3. They are normally effective, since they are challenging and enjoyable.

VOCABULARY: food and drink

3 Complete the crossword with words from Unit 17.

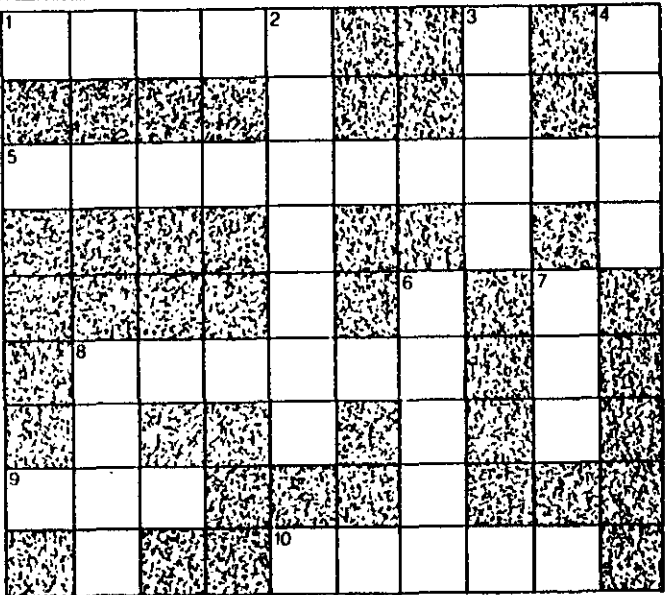**CLUES**

Across
1 Unit 17 is about food and ... (5)
5 Potatoes and onions are ... (10)
8 ... and biscuits. (6)
9 ... and vinegar. (3)
10 ... and butter. (5)

Down
2 You cook food in a ... (7)
3 ... and sugar. (4)
4 ... and chips. (4)
6 Salt and ... (6)
7 ... or coffee? (3)

4.2.6. Listening Exercises

Among the innovations that Blueprint one offers, the workbook listening material is one of the most attractive, providing revision and consolidation of listening aspects of the language as well as improving pronunciation. What is more remarkable, however, is that it encourages student independence and autonomy.

The listening in the workbook is developed in the listening and speechwork sections. These sections are presented after every five units of the textbook. As the students have already studied the grammatical aspects of the units and practised through oral and written exercises they are more prepared to receive reinforcement of certain aspects of listening and pronunciation. The sections normally start with a conversation which uses the language studied in an authentic, communicative situation, as in Units 1-5 Exercise 1 and 2 where students practise listening to personal information and the alphabet in a doctor's surgery. This is a meaningful and useful exercise because when people go to opticians they really do have to answer personal questions and during the routine sight test they really do have to read the letters of the alphabet.
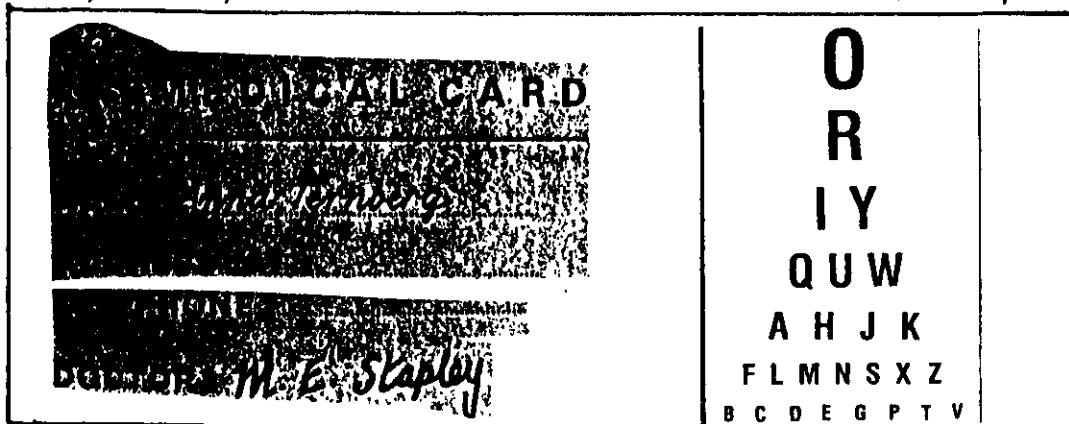
There are repetition exercises to practise accuracy and fluency, as in Units 1-5 Exercise 5 where students reproduce and immediately check their utterances by listening again to the model. There are exercises which deal with stress as in Units 1-5 Exercise 8 where students are asked to underline the stressed syllable. This is done in order to raise the student's awareness of where the main syllable is and how to stress it properly.

STRESS

8 Listen to the word, ask the speaker to repeat it and underline the stressed syllable.

T: yesterday
S: *Can you say that again, please?*
T: yesterday

1 yesterday
2 tomorrow
3 morning
4 afternoon
5 Italy
6 Italian
7 Japan
8 Japanese

From the beginning of the course students start studying aspects of phonetics and phonology through exercises like the ones in listening and speechwork 1-5 Exercises 9,10 and 11 where students listen and practise consonant and vowel sounds, as well as becoming acquainted with the phonemic symbols.

PRONUNCIATION

Vowel sounds

/ ɪ / | It's | English.

/ iː / | He's | Japanese.

9 Listen and tick the sound you hear.

	/ ɪ /	/ iː /
1	....	.........✓.........
2	....	....
3	....	....
4	....	....
5	....	....
6	....	....

10 Listen and repeat the words and phrases.

It's English.   This is Chris.
Chris is his name.   Chris is English.
This is Mrs Gibson   What's this in English?

he   we   she
He's Japanese.   She's fourteen.
We speak Chinese.   She's Teresa Green.

Consonant sound

/ dʒ / | Japan | German

11 Listen and repeat the words and phrases.

George   John   Jan
German   Germany
Japan   Japanese
Algiers   Algerian

`4.2.7.   Oral Exercises`

Oral exercises always accompany listening exercises and in Units 11-15 Exercises 3 and 5 they both involve the practice of grammar points. In Exercise 3 they practise the present simple and in Exercise 5 the present continous tense.

ORAL EXERCISES

3 Ask how often people drive to work.

(you/always)
s: Do you always drive to work?

1 you/always	4 they/sometimes
2 he/usually	5 you/never
3 she/often	

5 Ask questions about what people are doing now.

T: John plays football every day.
s: Is he playing football now?

1 play football	4 write letters
2 play tennis	5 watch TV
3 clean the car	6 telephone her boyfriend

Some exercises train students to listen to detailed information such as in Exercise 2 of Units 16-20, thereby practising a subskill that is so often required in everyday life.

```
2  Now listen again. Tick what Sarah and
   Derek order and fill in the prices.


   ——— MENU ———

   Tea                        50p
   Coffee          large  ........
                   small   40p
   Orange juice               50p
   Mineral water              60p
   Sandwiches             ........
     Cheese and tomato
     Ham
     Egg
     Roast beef
   Hamburger              £1.50
```

4.3. Cassettes

Blueprint course material also consists of two cassettes - a student's and a class cassette. There is the recording of 8 Units of the workbook with all the activities developed in each one of them. These activities have been described above in the description of the Listening and Speechwork sections.

The student cassette contains simple listening comprehension material designed to increase student confidence

by showing the student that he is able to understand natural English. It also gives the student the opportunity to concentrate on his own specific aural/oral problems and to try to solve them primarily through the speechwork, which deals with word stress, sentence stress and intonation, but also through drills to practise structural and vocabulary items.

The class cassette exposes students to a wide range of native and non-native speakers in authentic situations as well as in scripted listening passages, in addition to the Preview dialogues, Speechwork exercises and listening comprehension passages. It is felt that a further description of the listening activities provided by the cassette is unnecessary since this same description has already been given in the description of the listening exercises.

4.4. Teacher's Book

The last item of the course material to be described is the Teacher's Book. It contains an introduction to the course, starting with some considerations about the student's needs and then giving a description of the course with a few words about the Student's Book, the Workbook, the Class and the Student Cassettes and finally the Teacher's Book. It also contains an explanation of some special features of the Student's Book: the Preview, the Grammar and Communication Focus, the Speechwork, the Fluency, The Check, the Learning to Learn and the Language Preview.

In the introduction there is also a short description of the methodological approach adopted in Blueprint One and some general suggestions on how to handle the material in areas such as speaking, listening, grammar, vocabulary, reading, writing and speechwork as well as some considerations on techniques like roleplays, repetition, and pair and group work.

After the introduction, the book gives a detailed description of the teaching procedures and unit-by-unit notes which include advice on how to handle the material, such as preparation of lessons, presentation, tapescripts of recorded material, answer keys and suggestions for extra activities.

Chapter FIVE: A SELECTION OF EXTRA MATERIAL FOR "BLUEPRINT ONE" IN THE LIGHT OF THE NEEDS IN GOIANIA.

5.1. Towards Empirical Evidence of the Success of the Communicative Approach.

It was felt that some empirical basis was necessary in order to verify and attest to the greater effeciency of the Communicative Approach. To this end, there appeared to be three independent but corroborative means. It would be necessary to find statistical ratings of student learning failure or underachievement as a result of other methods. Secondly, increased student satisfaction and apparent greater learning would need to be found to be present in the case of those students undergoing communication instruction. However, the students perceived to be is not always what is. A third criterion, therefore, would have to be independent

assessment of the rate of success as judged by recognisably capable adjudicators. All three of these procedures were attempted.

Although an exaustive attempt was made to find bibliographical substantiation of students' satisfaction or dissatisfaction with their learning of languages but consultation of libraries of Goiania and Brasilia (Biblioteca Central da Universidade Catolica de Goias, Biblioteca Central da Universidade Federal de Goias, Biblioteca do INEP, Biblioteca do Congresso, Biblioteca Central da Universidade Federal de Brasilia and Biblioteca da Casa Thomas Jefferson in Brasilia) yielded nothing on the subject. It is felt, however, that this does not invalidate the findings of the questionnaires which were applied to people who studied had English for some time in language schools in Goiania.

'First, a questionnaire (Appendix I) was applied to students who had studied English for an average of three years through different methods. The answers given in this questionnaire, as has already been mentioned in Chapter One, showed the students' dissatisfaction, in general, with their performance. This dissatisfaction is demonstrated by the fact that they rated their performance as being 20% of the desired level. On the other hand, the results of 40 questionnaires (Appendix V) applied to students who have already studied English through other methods and are at present studying through the Communicative Approach show that the level of satisfaction with the present method is much higher.

Indeed, a sixteen-year-old student (Appendix V) reported that she is learning "a lot of English" and that she thinks that the Communicative Approach makes the students want

"to speak like the people on the cassette". A 38-year-old psychoanalist (Appendix V), on the other hand, affirms that the course is very dynamic and creative but she thinks that there is not enough listening. In a later interview it transpired that her difficulty in listening was due to the fact that she had never practised it in her previous years of study through way another method.

A 28-year-old speech therapist reported liking the activities given for oral practice and the way grammar is dealt with. As she said "the learning of grammar is done in a natural way without the obligation to memorize endless rules" (Appendix V). In general, the students thought that the method was more active and that they learnt better because they participated more and had more freedom to express their opinions and show their personality. They mentioned that there is a lot of conversation variety from one class to another. Some interviewees mentioned the quality of the material that is used in class and teachers' friendliness. Others said that the approach lead students to want to know more and more.

Reference was made to the way the Communicative Approach deals with error correction. It was said that student felt freer to speak because he was put into an experimental situation in which he could try and learn even from his mistakes. Testing was also mentioned as being very good because it made students more responsible for their own learning. In the words of two interviewees: "this method is more interesting, different and criative.", "I like this method very much. I perceived that my knowledge has increased a lot."(Appendix V). It should be mentioned however, that although most of the students using the Communicative Approach demonstrated a greater

degree of satisfaction with the approach, some students mentioned that, in their opinion, there should be even more listening and extra written exercises than the ones provided in the course they are following. This demonstrates that there is still a lot to be developed in order to produce the expected results.

In an attempt to establish some form of external evaluation of cause and effect three experienced English professors, two from the Federal University of Goias and the other from the Catholic University of Goias (Appendix VI) were invited to attend some communicative classes in a language course that uses the Communicative Approach and assess the general performance of the students. The aim of this assessment was to seek an independent opinion of the quality of learning of the students involved in this approach.

After observing two or three classes and applying a test to the groups the professors wrote reports detailing students' performance and mentioning aspects they considered relevant. The first professor, M S F, attended classes with a group that had been studying English for two months and reported that although the students were just beginning their course they "demonstrated the ability to use the language naturaly without feeling threatened" (Appendix VI). She also mentioned that they demonstrated communicative competence through using appropriate language in specific social situations. A supplementary point mentioned by this observer was the extent to which she felt that the dynamics used by the teacher aroused students' interest and attention.

The second observer, professor M G C S, attended classes with a group that had been studying for two semesters.

She rated the students' performance as excellent because they demonstrated linguistic competence and were able to develop contextualized conversation. She went on to say that the students demonstrated confidence and could cope with the situations presented. Another aspect that she noted was the opportunity that students were given to express their opinions and ideas. She also referred to error correction as being seen as a natural occurence in the course of the learning process.

The third, and final observer was professor L B M, who observed a group that was coming to the end of their basic course after three semesters. The observer said that after attending two classes with the same group she interviewed each one of the students and verified that their level of communication in English was very good considering the time they had been studying. She concluded that the methodology applied in that specific school produced excellent results but she ended her report questioning the possibility that state schools could use the same method with the same results because of the lack of similar, good working conditions that she noted were present in the school where the observation was carried out.

There follows a presentation of a selection of materials that were designed to help students learn more effectively. These materials were developed in Goiania with adult learners in mind.

Despite being a communicative book, "Blueprint One" was felt to be steeply graded for Brazilian students using it in Goiania. To ascertain the validity or not of this assumption, the book was piloted with a group of eight students and at the end of a three-month period an assessment of the students' performance was made through oral and written tests.

The results of the tests demonstrated that they experienced some difficulty in retaining the language studied. According to these students it seemed that the rate of different language taught was too fast and that there was not enough controlled practice material leading up to the freer speaking activities. For that reason, it seemed that preparatory, consolidating and extending exercises would prove a useful addition in some cases with the aim of providing students with more specific practice mainly in speaking which was considered the most difficult skill. Such supplementary work would also provide further practice of specific structures and functions which was also felt to be lacking. No need was felt for extra reading, listening and writing exercises since students performed well in these areas and for that reason it was felt that the material provided by the book was adequate for their needs.

'Practical experience has also shown that students often want to diverge from their set book, and extra materials, based on the book, provide this opportunity. The materials made include flashcards, picture cards, charts, graphs, questionnaires, cued dialogues and information gap exercises. It should be mentioned, however, that every time a piece of supplementary material was designed, the underlying assumption was that a more realistic way of dealing with the subject-matter as well as further practice of the most difficult items would be provided. It did not mean that the original was not good, but that it did not provide enough or specific practice.

5.2. Pictures and Drawings

An example of how supplementary picture cards can be useful, is the material made for further practice of the structure, What nationality is he/she?, studied in Exercise 6 Unit 3. It consists of pictures of people from different parts of the world which are distributed among the students. Each of them asks: "What nationality is he/she?" and the other student answers: "I think he's/she's Italian.". ST1 who has the answer on the back of his picture will say: "No, she isn't. She's Spanish". This kind of material allows more practice of the structure but also provides a more realistic situation since students are shown a picture, asked about that person's nationality, and, because they are not sure of it they will use "I think...." to express opinion.

In Unit 1 picture cards seem to be one of the best ways to present and practise he, she, his name's _____, her name's _____, as well as the question Who's that? and What's his/her name? This exercise had to be home-made because it was felt that pictures of well known people would be more effective. Student's are asked the question Who's That? and have to answer according to the person's sex, he's_____ or she's_____. Later, they practise the structure his name's_____ or her name's_____ to answer the question posed by their partner: What's his/her name?

Additional material in the form of picture cards and drawings are also suitable for teaching vocabulary items such as the ones in Unit 4: a letter, letters, an orange, oranges and so on. If the teacher shows colourful attractive pictures of objects, the students will be more likely to remember the impression caused by them and relate it to the name of the object. Picture cards also give the students the opportunity to practise the demonstrative pronouns that, those and this, these according to the number and position of the objects.
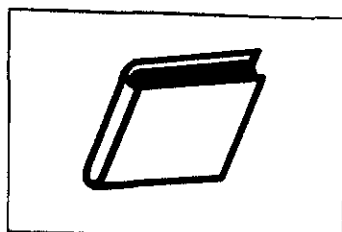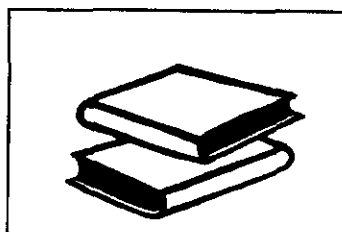
This is a book   These are books
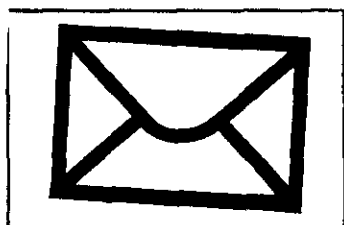
That's an envelope
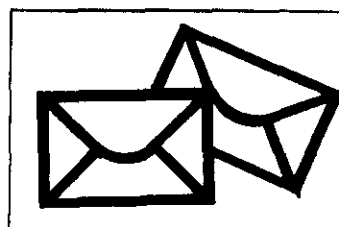
Those are envelopes
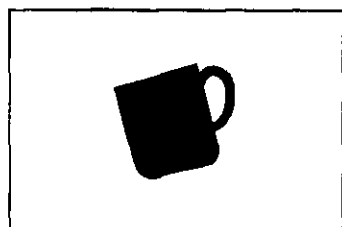
It's a mug
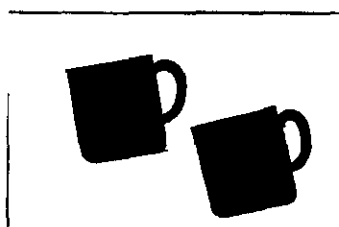
They're mugs

Another suitable occasion to use picture cards is in Unit 5 Exercise 8. As the students have to guess people's age, the use of pictures of people of the most different ages prove to be effective. The question to be practised is: How old is he/she /the boy/ the girl/ the woman/ the baby/ the man?. Students look at the picture and answer accordingly. For example:

Student A   Student B
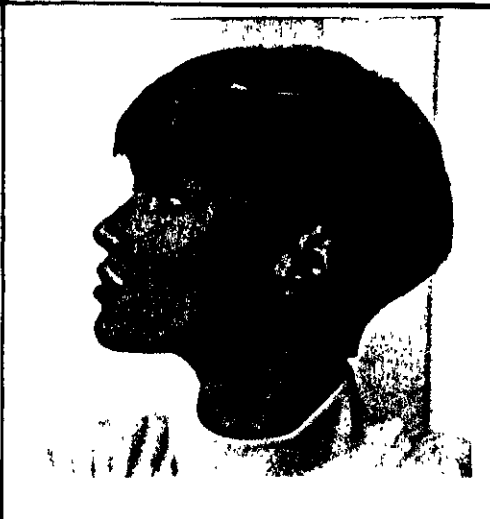
                                         I   think   she's

                                         thirty

How old is the woman?

          Pictures   of   a   family   together   are   also   very
useful   to practise   vocabulary and   structure related   to family
relationships.   Students look   at the   picture and   say sentences
like: I think he's the father (point) and she's the mother.

          Pictures   are   used   with   written   cues   for
practising   simple present   sentences about   lifestyle in Unit 8.
This   extra material   provides   more   practice   of   the   subject
studied, thus helping students to develop greater fluency.

| New York (origin) |
| single (marital status) |
| family (lives with...) |
| doctor (occupation) |
| St Paul's Hospital (place of work) |
| 29 (age) |
| 42, Penny Lane, London (address) |

S1 - She comes from New York. She's single and she lives with her family. She's a doctor and works at St Paul's Hospital. She's 29 and lives at 42, Penny Lane, London.

Another way of using pictures or drawings is for practising the interrogative, affirmative or negative form of like with the linking words and, but and or. ST1 has a card with a drawing on each side. He shows one side of the card to ST2 who asks him a question according to what is in the picture, as for example: Do you like apples? ST1 answers: No, I don't, but I like oranges, showing the back of the card.

Student A   Student B

                    Do you like apples?

No I don't, but I like oranges.

or

Student A   Student B

Do you like pears?

Yes, I do. I like pears and grapes.

or

Student A   Student B

Do you like hot-dogs or hamburgers?
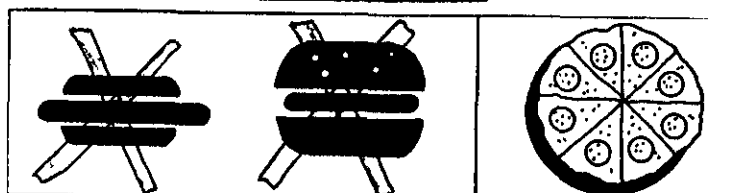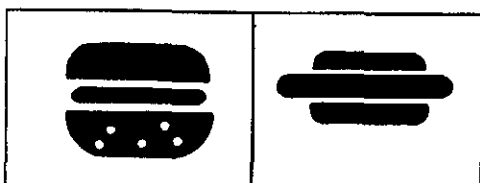
I don't like hot-dogs or hamburgers

but I like pizza.

Pictures seem to be particularly useful for describing places, the function studied in Unit 10. The teacher presents pictures of different places and students have to discribe them using adjectives such as: big, modern, old, busy... and nouns such as: It has a church, a cinema, a lot of cars....
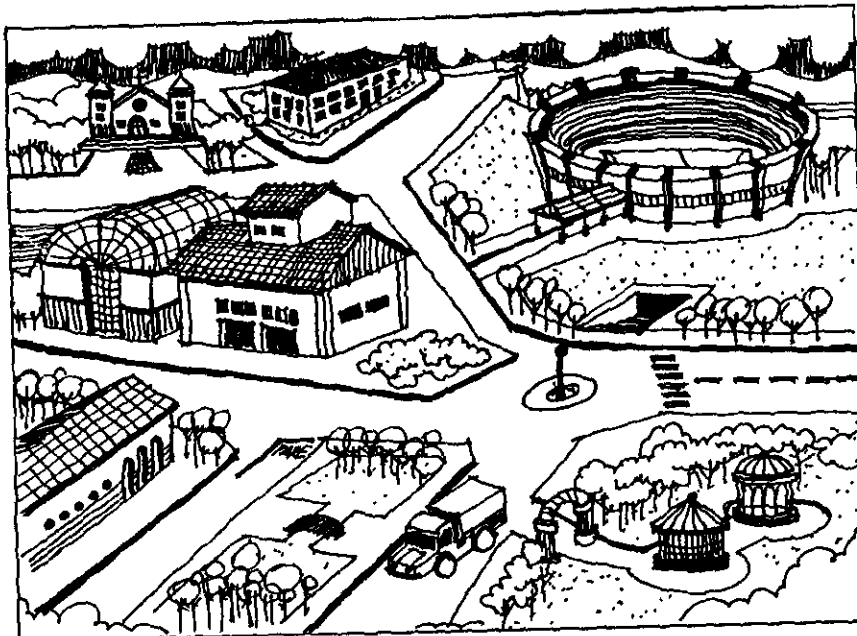
The presentation and practice of comparative adjectives, can also be done successfully with pictures and drawings
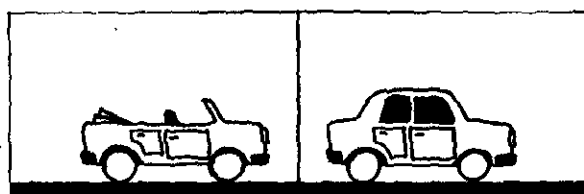
The yellow car is newer than the blue one, or the blue car is older than the yellow one. Or,

Nancy is more beautiful than Barbara

As it is not always easy to find pictures of the situations one needs it is possible to make stickman drawings to illustrate and provide practice for present perfect used to describe recent events, in Unit 32, as for example.
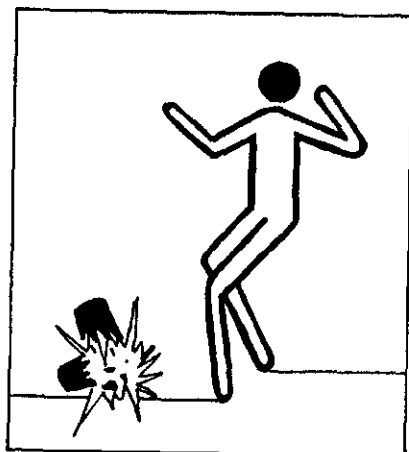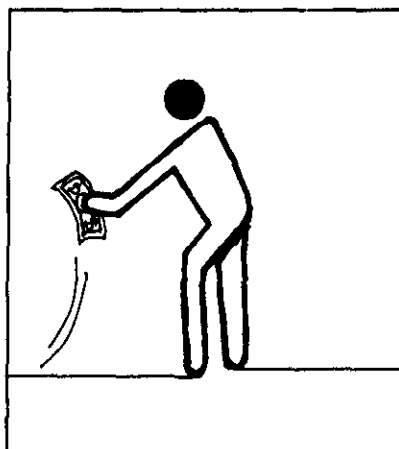
I've broken a glass   I've found some money

Among the many possibilities of using stickman pictures the practice of verb tenses seems to be one of the most successful. For example, one can get a picture of a stickman walking and practise the verb can

or, by adding the word "now", the present continous tense can be practised

I can walk

I'm walking now

Or, by demonstrating routine, students can practise the simple present.
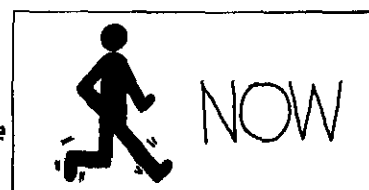
The simple past tense can be practised by adding a time expression in the past.

He walks at 7:30 every morning   He walked yesterday afternoon

Drawings and pictures are always a good way for practising names of food, restaurant situations and questions such as "what would you like?" in Unit 31.
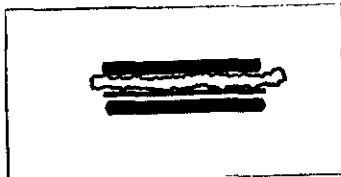
a coke   a sandwich   some soup

ST1 - I'd like a coke.

ST2 - I'd like a sandwich.

ST3 - I'd like some soup.

Drawings and pictures can also be used for the practice of simple structures like the genitive 's:

THE
GIRL

It's the girl's bike

They can also be used for practising more than one structure at a time:

HARRY | 20 Km | 30'

Larry goes to school by car. It's
20 km far and it takes him 30 min

Pictures of people are an excellent source of descriptions. In Unit 24, students learn to describe personal appearance. So, they can practise describing people in pictures

like this one.

She's a beautiful woman with long, fair
wavy hair. Her eyes are green, too. She's
slim. She's wearing...

5.3. Written Cards

Written cards are mostly useful for practising
structure and vocabulary, as in Unit 1 Exercise 3. The teacher
displays the pieces of the sentence: What's your mother's name
? so that the students have a clear idea of the structure What's
your...name?. They practise pronunciation, intonation and word
order. The visual effect of the construction of the sentence,
plus the drilling by substituting the cards with new
information such as father's, brother's, sister's, dentist's,
provide students with the necessary extra practice to master
this difficult structure.

| What's | your | mother's | name? |

| father's | sister's | brother's | dentist's |
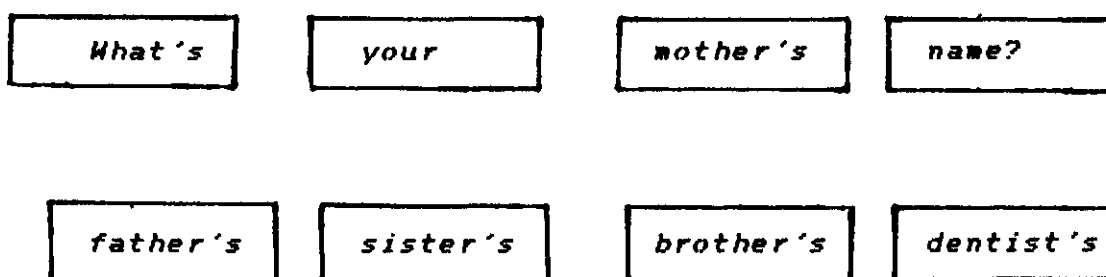
Written cards are very effective when teaching vocabulary such as names of countries and nationalities and at the same time practising subject pronouns.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

| I
France | she
Holland | I
Spanish | They
Japanese |
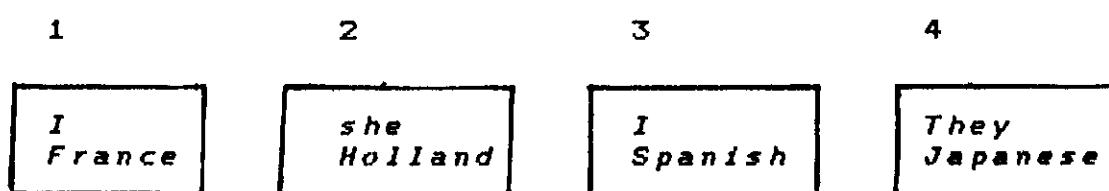
1 - I'm from France   3 - I'm Spanish

2 - She's from Holland   4 - They're Japanese

The same cards can also be used for helping students discriminate and develop fluency in expressing accurate sentences to talk about country of origin and nationality. Students ask each other: Where are you from? or What nationality are you? and answer according to the cards they have:

Student A   Student B

(Shows the card)

                                   What nationality are you?

```
┌─────────────────┐
│    French       │
└─────────────────┘
```

I'm French

                    or

Student A   Student B

(Shows the card)

                                   Where are you from?

```
┌─────────────────┐
│    Spain        │
└─────────────────┘
```

I'm from Spain.

Vocabulary related to family relationship together with verbal structures such as have got in Unit 7 are also effectively practised through written cards. The letter "x" on the chart stand elicits a negative sentence while the question mark demands a question and no sigh means that the affirmative form should be used.

1   2   3

```
┌───────────┐      ┌───────────┐      ┌───────────┐
│   niece   │      │  uncle    │      │   aunt    │
│           │      │    X      │      │    ?      │
└───────────┘      └───────────┘      └───────────┘
```

I've got a niece.

I haven't got an uncle.

Have you got an aunt?

Verbs such as can are among the ones that can be sucessfully practised with written cards with some pre-stablished signs such as +(plus) meaning yes and -(minus) meaning no.

| +swim + run | + cook - drive | - Ski - Skate |

BT1 - I can swim and run.

ST2 - I can cook but I can't drive.

ST3 - I can't ski or skate.

Questions can be elicited through written cards. For example, in Unit 10 where students have to learn the structure What's _____like?. The teacher shows the answer and the students ask each other the questions imagining a suitable person or place.

| fat | modern |

ST1 - What's JO Soares like?   ST2 - He's fat

ST3 - What's Brasilia like?   ST4 - It's modern

More complicated structures such as "Florence is famous for its museums and art galleries" found in Unit 10 Exercise 4 can be better mastered if students practise through cards like these:

1	2

Rio		beaches and sea

London		museums and pubs

ST1 — Rio is famous for its beaches and sea

ST2 — London is famous for its museums and pubs

Written cards seem also to be ideal for practising interrogative, negative and affirmative forms of verbs such as like:

side 1	side 2	side 1	side 2

going to parties	going to restaurants	washing up	shopping
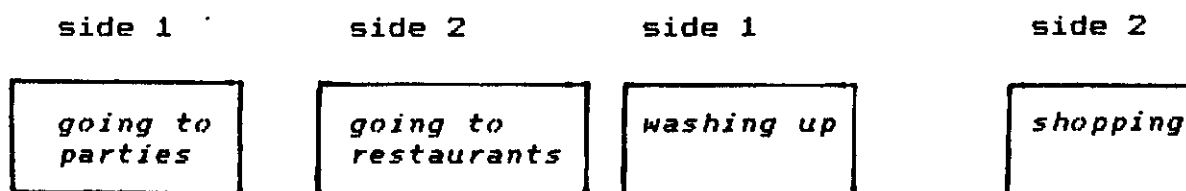
ST1 — Do you like going to parties?

ST2 — No I don't, but I like going to restaurants

ST3 — Do you like washing up?

ST4 — No, I don't, but I like shopping.

Cue-cards are useful for teaching structures such as the ones in Unit 8:

1	2	3

What/do	Where/come from	Who/live with
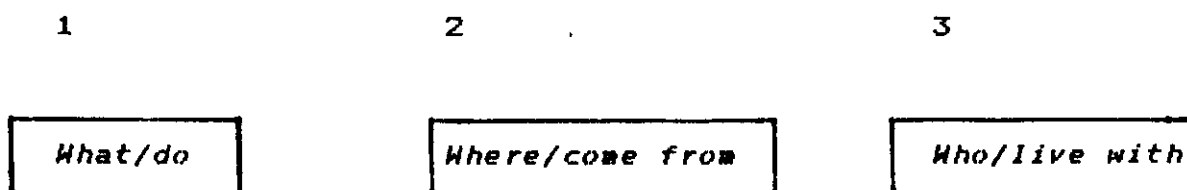
ST1 — What do you do?

ST2 — Where do you com from?

ST3 — Who do you live with?

Numbers and the alphabet, Units 4 and 5, are traditionally known to be successfully taught through cards:

| 1 One | 5 Five | 14 Fourteen | A | G | X |

| 18 | 3 | 7 | M | O | F |
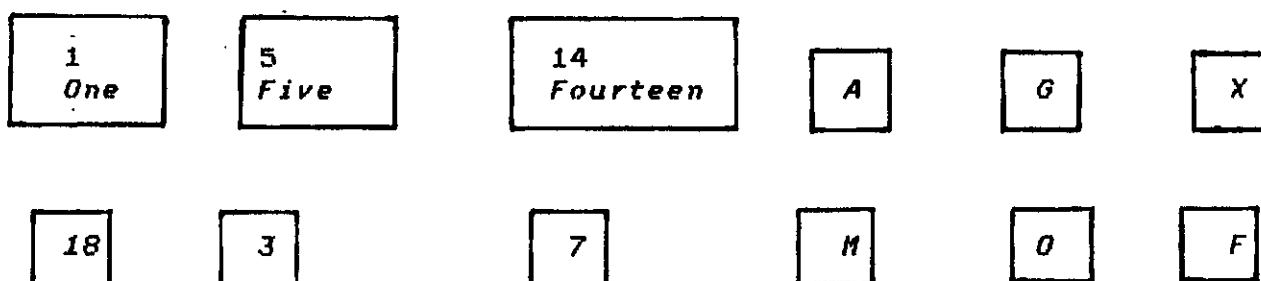
Numbers can be taught first with the written form with the number but then the teacher can elicit the answer by showing just the number. The alphabet is taught by just associating the letter with the sound. An innovation would be the practice of number through telephone numbers. For example:

| 1 | 2 | 3 |

| Kate 64 31 49 | James 09 04 89 06 | British Ariways 01 88 71 85 |

1 — What's Kate's telephone number? It's 6-4-3-1-4-9

2 — What's James' telephone number? It's oh-9-oh-4-8-9-oh-6

3 — What's the telephone number of British Airways?

It's Oh-1-double-8-7-1-8-5

The alphabet can be put into practice by spelling exercises such as:

| 1 | 2 | 3 |

| apples | wallet | chair |

ST1 - How do you spell apples?   ST2 - A.P.P.L.E.S

ST3 - How do you spell wallet?   ST4 - W.A.L.L.E.T

ST5 - How do you spell chair?   ST6 - C.H.A.I.R.

Another way of practising numbers is with time:

| 10:30 | | 1:15 | | 8:45 |

ST1   - What time is it?

ST2   - It's ten-thirty.

ST3   - What time is it?

ST4   - It's one-fifteen.

ST5   - What time is it?

ST6   - It's eight - forty-five.

Written cards can also be used for verb tense memorization like present and past forms of the verbs:

1	2	3
go/went	can/could	wake up/woke up

First students just repeat the present and past form of the verbs. After that the teacher masks the past form and students say it. The students can finally make sentences like:

1 - I go to the cinema every week. I went there yesterday.

2 - I can cycle. I could cycle when I was six

3 - I normally wake up at seven but yesterday I woke up at nine.

5.4. Charts, Tables and Diagrams.

Charts for interviews are very useful for practising varied structures as in this one:

Surname:
Hobbies:
Something you would like to do:
Two things you like very much:
The name of your favourite song:

Students have to ask questions with different verbs and different structures as for example:

1 - What's your first name?

2 - What hobbies have you got?

3 - What would you like to do?

4 - Can you tell me two things you like very much?

5 - What's the name of your favourite song?

More complicated structures can be reviewed through an extra practice with charts as in this exercise:

Student A

Journey to school	You	Jane	Henry	Laura	
Method:		bike	bus		
Distance:			10 km		
Time:			40 min	15 min	

Student B:

Journey to school	You	Jane	Henry	Laura	
Method:	car			taxi	
Distance:		8 km		2 km	
Time:		15 min			

ST1 - How do you get to school?

- How far is it?

- How long does it take?

Situations with a lot of information to be exchanged are satisfactorily dealt with through charts like the following one, where all the students have the same chart but one asks the questions departing from the cues, place, length of stay, the weather, the people, the food and the shops and the other answers using the information provided for each question:

Student A

HOW WAS YOUR HOLIDAY			
Name	·		
Place			
Length of Stay			
The weather			
The people			
The food			
The shops			

Student B

HOW WAS YOUR HOLIDAY?			
Place	Rio	New York	London
length of stay	1 week	10 days	15 days
The weather	sunny & dry	cold & windy	wet & cool
The people	friendly	nice	kind
The food	excellent	quite good	not very good
The shops	expensive	interesting	excellent

St1 — Where did you go for your last holiday?

St2 — I went to Rio.

St1 — How long did you stay?

St2 — I stayed there for a week.

St1 — What was the weather like?

St2 — It was sunny and dry.

Charts can also be linked with reading passages from which the students extract information to answer their partners while using their own chart to solicit their partner's character:

Student A

Veronica

She's twenty, single and lives in a flat with her mother in London. She works at Regent Hotel as a receptionist. She studies at an evening school. She hasn't got any children. She likes dancing and listening to music. She doesn't like shopping or eating in restaurants. She can swim very well but she can't ski at all. She's got a small family.

Robin

Marital Status: _____

Place he lives: _____

Person he lives with: _____

What/do: _____

Where/work: _____

Where/study: _____

Number of children: _____

Likes: _____

Dislikes: _____

```
┌─────────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│  Can do:_____    │
│                                                       │
│  Can't do:_____    │
│                                                       │
│  Family size:_____    │
└─────────────────────────────────────────────────────┘
```

St A — Is Robin married?   St B — Yes, he is.

St A — Where does he live?   St B — He lives in Oxford.

. . . .

Student B

```
┌──────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│                        Robin                              │
│                                                            │
│       He's thirty-five, married and lives in a house with his │
│  wife and two children in Oxford. He works at Oxford University │
│  as a professor. He studies at a post graduate course. He likes │
│  cooking and reading. He doesn't like playing tennis or driving. │
│  He can speak French very well but he cant't write it at all. │
│  He's got a big family.                                   │
│                                                            │
│                                                            │
│                      Veronica                              │
│                                                            │
│  Marital Status:_____  │
│                                                            │
│  Place she lives:_____  │
│                                                            │
│  Person she lives with:_____  │
│                                                            │
│  What/do: _____  │
│                                                            │
│  Where/work: _____  │
│                                                            │
│  Where/study:_____  │
│                                                            │
│  Number of children:_____  │
│                                                            │
│  Likes:_____  │
│                                                            │
│  Dislikes:_____  │
│                                                            │
│  Can do:_____  │
│                                                            │
│  Can't do:_____  │
│                                                            │
│  Family size:_____  │
│                                                            │
│                    . . . . . . . . .                      │
└──────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┘
```

ST A —Who does Veronica live with?   ST B — She lives with her

mother.

ST A —What does she do?   ST B — She's a receptionist.

Information gap exercises are designed to promote
practice in the usage of newly acquired structures, functions
or vocabulary. They also suitable for developing fluency because
students repeat the same language several times in order to fill
in the chart and it is also communicative since this kind of
exercise consists of the exchanging of information known just by
one of the students involved. The technique consists of giving
information to student A and retaining the same piece of
information from student B so that he has to ask about it. For
example:

ST A

Name	Activity
Mark	Washing his father's car
Anne	
Harold	Doing his English homework
Debbie	
Liza	Studying for her biology test
Nancy	

ST B

Name	Activity
Mark	
Anne	cleaning the kitchen for her mother
Harold	
Debbie	wahing up at the restaurant
Liza	
Nancy	making coffee for the visitors

This exercise provide practice in the present continous tense.

ST A — What's Ann doing?

ST B — She's cleaning the kitchen. What's Mark doing?

ST A — He's washing his father's car. What's Debbie doing?

....

The following information gap exercises allow students to practise asking and answering questions with the verb can and have got:

Student A

Activity	Ability	People	Belongings
Jim/sing	yes, very well	Jane/bus	NO
Eric/cook		Ernest/house	
You/run	yes, a little	Juliet/ashtray	YES
Lydia		Clint/diary	
Carol/speak Greek	No, not at all	Craig/notebook	NO

Student B

Activity	Ability	People	Belongings
Jim/sing		Jane/bus	
Eric/cook	yes, quite well	Ernest/house	NO
You/run		Juliet/ashtray	
Lydia	Yes, very well	Clint/diary	YES
Carol/speak Greek		Craig/notebook	

ST A — Can Eric cook?

ST B — yes, he can quite well

    Can Jim sing?

ST A — yes, very well

ST A — Has Ernest got a house?

ST B — No, he hasn't.

Has Jane got a bus?

ST A —. . . . .

A good exercise for helping students to memorize vocabulary and talk about family relationships is the following:

Student A

The Greens

```
                              Patrick————————————————Daisy
                   Arnold———————————————Sally
                               |
         ┌——————————————————————┼————————————————————┐
George—┬—Mary              Cynthia              Robert—┬—Paula
   Justin                                      David———┴—Jill
```

———
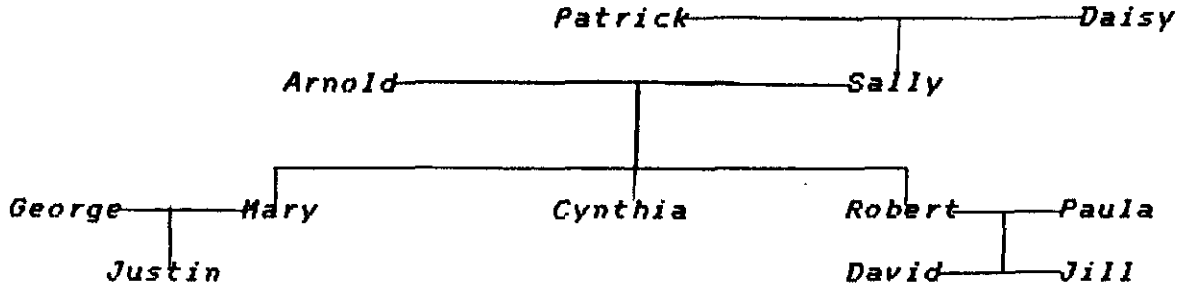
The Jonhsons

Ask your classmate and draw another family tree

```
         ————————┬————————
            Ted_____
                             |
         ┌———————————————————┼——————————————————┐
      ——┬——                                    ——┼——
```

Student B

The Johnsons

```
         Rex————————————Linda
              Ted————————————————Marian
                         |
Ronald—————┬—Melanie         Judy              Stanley—┬—Martha
      Peter                                  Simon    Sylvia
```

———
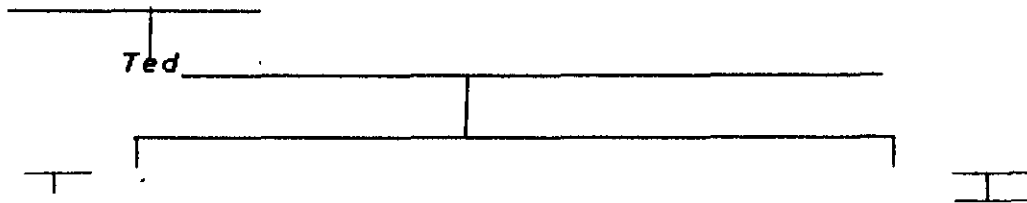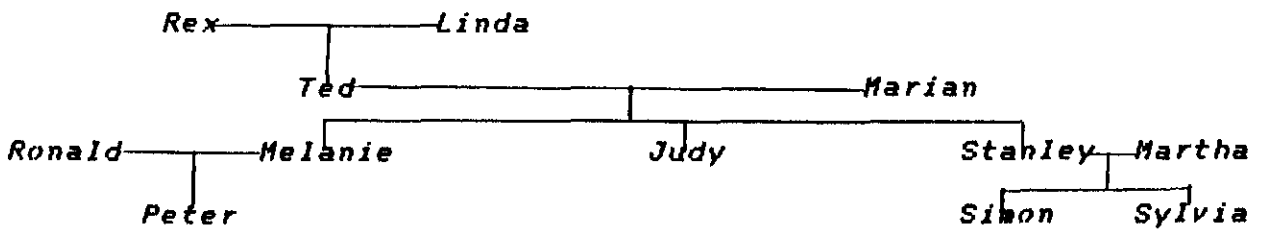
The Greens

Ask your classmate and draw another family tree

```
                              ————————┬————————
                                   Sally
         ————————————————————————————┼————————
         ┌——————————————————┼——————————————————┐
      ——                                      ——┼——
```
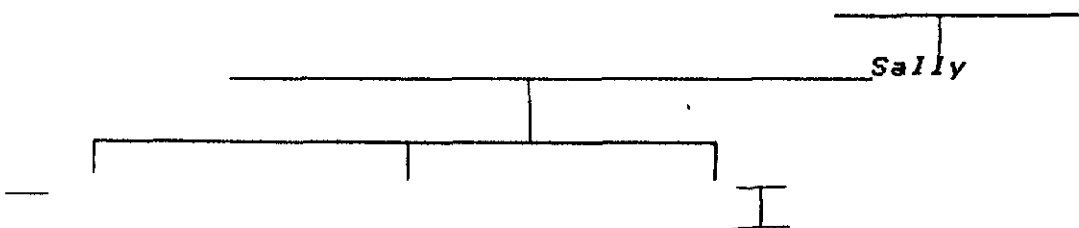
ST A - Who are Ted's parents?

ST B - They're Rex and Linda. Who's Sally's husband?

ST A - His name's Arnold

5.5. Questionnaires

Questionnaires are mainly suitable for practising questions and promoting interaction among students. They can be very simple questionnaires dealing with only one structure like the following one that practises questions in the simple present and answers with adverbs of frequency:

Student A

How often...?
- have chicken for lunch?
- have a bath?
- go to the swimming pool?
- drink whiskey?
- go to the cinema
- eat pizza?

Student B

How often.....?
- go to the theatre?
- travel on business?
- study your lesson?
- go dancing?
- eat caviar?
- drink beer?

ST A - How often do you have chicken for lunch?

ST B - I sometimes have chicken for lunch. How often do you go
       to the theatre?

ST A - I rarely go to the theatre.

This questionnaire provide practice on the verb have got:

	You	Your father	Your friend
a house			
a flat			
a car			
a Rolls Royce			
a job			

ST A — Have you got a house?

ST B — No, I haven't.

ST A — Has your father got a house?

ST B — Yes, he has. And so on.

Levels of ability with the verb can are practised with students interviewing each other using the following questionnaire:

HOW WELL CAN YOUR CLASSMATE DO THESE?					
	not at all	a little	yes/but not very well	quite well	very well
dance					
swim					
ski					
cook					
drive					

ST A — Can you dance?

ST B — Yes, I can, but not very well. Can you swim?

ST A — Yes. I can swim very well. Can you ski?

Some questionnaires are just blash up versions of the ones in the coursebook. This is done in order to facilitate its manipulation by the students.

APPLICATION FORM
(please use BLOCK CAPITALS)
Surname _____
First names _____
Title (please tick)   *Mr*   *Mrs*   *Miss*   *Ms*
State if (please tick)   *Married*   *Single*   *Divorced*
Address _____
_____ *Postcode* _____
Telephoned number _____ *Age* _____

The following three questionnaire are more complete. The first one deals with personal questions, likes and dislikes. The students can practise the verb to be and the simple present form of the verb to like. This questionnaire is complemented by a composition that has to be written with the answers, so that the students have extra practice of the "s" in the third person singular of the simple present tense.

Date_____

Student's name_____

Interview_____

Personal Information

Surname: _____

First Name (s):_____

Age: _____

Occupation: _____

Likes

Colours: _____

Food: _____

Drink: _____

Recreation: _____

Music: _____

Dislikes

_____

_____

_____

_____

Now Make a Composition about your classmate using the information from the interview:

_____

_____

_____

_____

The second one is aimed at practising the adverbs of frequency in the simple present tense.

M R — Market Research Ltd

Date: _____
*Interviewee*_____
*Interviewer*_____

QUESTIONNAIRE

1 — What time do you usually arrive home from work?

> *before six o'clock*
> *at six o'clock*
> *after six o'clock*

2 — What do you usually do after dinner?

> *watch television*
> *read*
> *go out*
> *visit friends*

3 — How often do you (a) go out, (b) watch television, (c) visit friends?

	(a)	*(b)*	*(c)*
rarely			
once or twice a week			
three or four times a week			
every night			

4 — Do you ever go to the....

	never	*rarely*	*occasionally*	*sometimes*	*often*
the cinema?					
the restaurant?					
the theatre?					
the opera?					

Now make a report about what your classmate does in his free time.

The third questionnaire provides extra practice of personal questions with the verb to be and questions in the present perfect tenses in a job interview situation.

APPLICATION FORM

Job: _____

Name: _____

Age: _____

Nationality: _____

Marital Status: Married ___   Single _____

Education: Secondary School   ___

               Technical College   ___

               University   ___

Languages   French ___   Spanish __

                   Russian __   Arabic __

                   Others _____

                          _____

                          _____

Countries Visited: _____
_____
_____

Previous Experience: _____
_____
_____
_____

Salary Desired: _____

Addrress: _____

CONCLUSION

Departing from our own experience as an English student and teacher together with the experience of the people who answered the questionnaires and other professionals of the field, it was attempted to demonstrate the need for a new approach in language teaching in Brazil, more specifically in Goiania.

It was mentioned throughout the interviews and questionnaires that students and teachers are displeased with the methods currently used and that the level of achievement is not satisfactory because the students' needs, such as a better verbal command and the ability to read authentic material, are not attended to.

The Communicative Approach is proving to be efficient because it deals with language by taking into account these aspects, that is, it warns the teachers to take into account students' needs and interests and build up a course with that in mind. Another feature of the Communicative Approach that fills the blanks mentioned by the interviewees about the need for a better mastery of speaking is the communicative

assumption that communication is the aim and the means for learning a language and oral communication is normally the starting point of all communicative activities. Because of this emphasis on communication, that is, understanding and being understood, a great deal of authentic material is used in communicative courses for providing the opportunity for students to interact with the language in the way it is used in real life. In a few words, the methods mostly used in Brazil that preceded the Communicative Approach were concerned with the memorization of vocabulary and grammar analysis or with the learning of structures through repetion and automation but the Communicative Approach goes beyong all these methods because it presents language in context, practises it in a meaningful way and finally puts students in simulated real-life situations so that they learn to cope with what is required from a person when he is engaged in a speech act.

For this reason, it is hoped that this dissertation will serve as an introduction to the Communicative Approach for those teachers who are interested in learning more about alternative methods of language teaching, with a view to applying them in their own classrooms.

It is also hoped that teachers will have not only a theoretical knowledge of how and why the Communicative Approach developed but also a practical knowledge of techniques and how to apply them. An attempt has been made to show teachers that they can and should make extra communicative materials for their classes based on their students' specific needs and interests to supplement good available coursebooks with them.

A question that remains untouched because it is
out of the scope of this dissertation is how to train teachers
to use this approach, since, it is different in many ways from
its predecessors. It is clear, though, that communicative
teachers do not have a method to follow, that is, they are not
given a series of procedures to follow in a specific order. This
means that communicative teachers have to be prepared to cope
with unpredictable situations in class as well as to find
solutions for specific needs. For that reason, a much higher
degree of preparation and involvement is required from them and
this obviously generates ot-her kinds of problems concerning
teacher training that will be left for a future study in
future work.

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Entrevista com Profissionais de Qualificação de 3o.Grau
não inscritos no momento em curso de inglês.

Nome:_____

Endereço:_____tel.:_____

Curso(s) de graduação:_____

(cursando ☐ ou   completo ☐)

Curso(s) de pós-graduação:_____

(cursando ☐ ou   completo ☐)

1- Já estudou inglês (além do 1o. e 2o. Graus)? Sim Não
                                                 ☐   ☐

2- Por quanto tempo?

3- Como você definiria o seu domínio da língua inglêsa ?
Fraco ☐ Regular ☐   Bom ☐   M.Bom ☐   Excelente ☐

4- Que grau de satisfação você tem com seu desempenho

20% ☐   40% ☐   60% ☐   80% ☐   100% ☐

5- Sente necessidade de melhorar? Sim ☐   Não ☐

Em que ? leitura ☐   fala ☐ audição ☐   escrita ☐

6- Qual avaliação faz de como lhe foi ensinado:

	Não houve	Sofrível	Regular	Bom	Excelente
Gramática					
Leitura					
Conversação					
Audição					
Tradução					

7- Em que tipo de leitura foi treinado ?

Leitura em voz alta ☐   leitura de textos curtos ☐

leitura de material autêntico ☐

8- Qual avaliação faz de sua capacidade de ler:

	Nenhuma	Sofrível	Regular	Bom	Excelente
Leitura em voz alta					
Leitura de textos curtos					
Leitura de material autêntico					

9- Do que mais sente necessidade ?

leitura ☐   escrita ☐   tradução ☐   audição ☐   expressão verbal ☐

10- Você lê em inglês para fins acadêmicos ou profissionais?

nunca ☐ de vez em quando ☐   regularmente ☐   sempre ☐

11- Você consultaria material em inglês caso tivesse a capacidade?

Sim ☐   Não ☐

12- No seu campo de trabalho existe a necessidade ☐   ou   oportunidade ☐

de intercâmbio internacional através de congressos, correspondências etc ?

Sim ☐   Não ☐

13- Você deixa de participar desses intercâmbios por carência de um melhor dom

de língua inglêsa ? Sim ☐   Não ☐

14- Você acha que o seu nível profissional melhoraria se dominasse a língua ing

? Sim ☐   Não ☐

De que forma_____

_____

_____

- Appendix II -

Entrevista com E M C assessora pedagógica da área de inglês do Departamento Pedagógico da Delegacia Metropolitana de Educação

P - Qual o método usado pela região metropolitana de Goiânia?

R - Não tem um método específico, técnicas são sugeridas.

P - Qual o tipo de trabalho desenvolvido pela maioria dos professores?

R - A grande maioria ainda usa métodos antiquados baseados em tradução e fixacão gramatical através de exercícios escritos.

P - Qual a posicão da Delegacia em relação a este tipo de trabalho desenvolvido pela maioria dos professores e quais são estas técnicas sugeridas?

R - Alguns membros da coordenação da Delegacia que sentem a performance dos alunos é fraca e pode ser consideravelmente melhorada se novas técnicas e uma nova postura diante do que é ensinar linguas existir. Quanto as novas técnicas que atualmente sugerimos são baseadas numa nova forma de se trabalhar o conteúdo tomando como base a realidade do aluno e sua necessidade de comunicação. De acordo com leituras atualizadas que fazemos estamos enfatizando o lado funcional e prático da língua e não só o estudo das estruturas. Procuramos colocar os alunos em situações mais práticas e tirar o apego excessivo ao livro didático.

P - Qual avaliação a senhora faz dos resultados das novas técnicas que estão sendo implementadas?

R - Apesar da resistência de muitos professores que estão apegados a forma mais tradicional de se ensinar línguas, o que

sentimos e que os alunos da quinta e sexta séries que desde o princípio de sua aprendizagem foram ensinados com estas técnicas mais comunicativas demonstram um aproveitamento muito melhor e uma apreciação maior pelo inglês.

P - Estes resultados animadores são gerais ou localizados?

R - Infelizmente são localizados pois poucos professores até agora mudaram sua maneira de dar aula. Eu pessoalmente creio que demorara pelo menos dez anos até que as modificações se generalizem.

Entrevista realizada com a professora D R S, formada em Letras pela Universidade Federal de Goiás e exercendo o magistério ha 13 anos.

P - Qual a método usado pela senhora?

R - Não tenho um nome para o meu método mas uso o quadro negro, mímica e desenhos. Também tenho que usar o português para ensinar inglês porque os alunos são muito fracos e não permitem um ensino de maior nível.

P - Qual a razão que leva os alunos a serem fracos?

R - É interessante notar que os alunos mais fracos são os do segundo grau, os da quinta e sexta serie sao sensivelmente melhores e isto se deve ao fato de estarmos começando o trabalho com eles de forma diferente com mais conversacão dada através de diálogos baseados no que os alunos sentem necessidade de expressar. Os alunos mais adiantados aprenderam através de métodos mais tradicionais baseados em traducão e grammática e por isso apresentam uma performance bem inferior aos que estão aprendendo com estas novas técnicas.

P - Quais são estas novas técnicas a que se refere?

R - São técnicas ensinadas através dos cursos da Delegacia Metropolitana de Educação que levam em conta a realidade do aluno e procura usar os recursos possíveis e não ideais para se levar o aluno a usar a língua inglêsa de uma forma mais significativa para eles. O resultado tem sido animador pois tem diminuido a tradicional aversão ao inglês que existia no passado e muitos alunos frequentemente me dizem que sentem saudades das aulas. Parece que estamos conseguindo fazer com que o inglês faça mais parte da vida deles.

P - É este o mesmo método usado pelos outros professores de inglês?

R - Não exatamente. Eu sinto que mais de noventa por cento dos professores usam os métodos tradicionais com muita ênfase em tradução e estudo de gramática. Estes professores, na minha opinião tem grande dificuldade em aceitar o novo porque foram treinados de forma diferente e não conseguem dar uma aula fora dos padrões já assimilados.

P - Qual a avaliação que a senhora faz do desempenho geral do aluno da rede pública depois de estudar inglês no primeiro e segundo graus?

R - Depois de sete anos estudando inglés,na verdade, os alunos saem com muito pouca base. Não estão preparados nem para o vestibular.

- Appendix III -

Entrevistas realizadas em 10 das maiores escolas de inglês de Goiânia.

Escola Número 1

. . . .

P - Qual é o método de ensino de línguas que sua escola utiliza?

R - Não temos nome, mas usamos o método mais tradicional mais voltado para o audio.

. . . .

Escola Número 2

. . . .

P - Qual é o método de ensino de línguas que sua escola utiliza?

R - Usamos o Functional Approach mas mesmo o livro não sendo comunicativo nós usamos o Communicative Approach.

. . . .

Escola Número 3

. . . .

P - Qual é o método de ensino de línguas que sua escola utiliza?

R - Nós usamos o Audio-Visual Method.

. . . .

Escola Número 4

. . . .

P - Qual é o método de ensino de línguas que sua escola utiliza?

R — Posso dizer que ulilizamos o Notional-Functional.

. . . .

Escola Número 5

. . . .

P — Qual é o método de ensino de línguas que sua escola utiliza?

R — Nós usamos o livro . . . .

P — Este é o nome do livro utilizado, mas qual e o nome do método utilizado?

R — Eu acho que poderia chamar de Audio visual porque utilizamos muito a fita cassete.

. . . .

Escola Número 6

. . . .

P — Qual é o método de ensino de línguas que sua escola utiliza?

R — Usamos o Audio-visual.

. . . .

Escola Número 7

. . . .

P — Qual é o método de ensino de línguas que sua escola utiliza?

R — Utilizamos o Communicative Approach que é um método eclético.

. . . .

Escola Número 8

. . . .

P — Qual é o método de ensino de línguas que sua escola utiliza?

R — Usamos o Aural-Oral.

. . . .

Escola Número 9

. . . .

P – Qual é o método de ensino de línguas que sua escola utiliza?

R – Usamos o Audio visual.

. . . .

Escola Número 10

. . . .

P – Qual é o método de ensino de línguas que sua escola utiliza?

R – Nós usamos o Audio visual.

. . . .

— Appendix IV —

        Entrevista feita com M F professora aposentada do curso de
letras   da Universidade Federal de Goiás e ex-responsável pela
prova de proficiência aplicada aos alunos do curso de mestrado
em educação da mesma universidade.

P - Quais são os aspectos testados pelo teste de proficiência.?

R - A exigência que se faz é que o candidato leia e compreenda o
texto. Nao se exige tanto a tradução mas a apreensão da idéia
geral.

P - O aspecto oral não é testado?

R - Eu pessoalmente desconheço testes orais aplicados em testes
de proficiencia para mestrandos.

P - Por que nao se testa a parte de comunicação oral?

R - Eu suponho que por se julgar a parte de compreensão de
textos escritos como requisito fundamental, pois, durante o
curso de mestrado o aluno será requerido basicamente a ler
textos escritos e por isso deve demonstrar a capacidade de
absorver   informacões   fornecidas desta   forma.   Agora,   eu
pessoalmente acho que se se incluisse o teste oral como parte do
teste de proficiencia muito poucos candidatos passariam.

- Appendix V -

Entrevista com alunos utilizando o CA.

Nome: _____

Experiência anterior no estudo de ingles (tempo e metodo
utilizado.) _____

_____

_____

Idade: _____

Nível de instrução _____

O que você acha do método que você esta usando atualmente (o
Communicative Approach)? Quais os pontos positivos e
negativos e quais as diferenças mais marcantes entre este e
os outros metodos pelos quais voce ja estudou?

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Avaliação realizada pela professora L B M

COMMUNICATIVE APPROACH - AVALIAÇÃO

CRITÉRIOS

1. Grupo

2. Idade dos alunos

3. Escolaridade

4. Nível social

5. Número de alunos por turma

6. Local - ambiente

7. Material didático

8. Professor

9. Escola

Para avaliação da metodologia aplicada - Communicative Approach foi observado o desempenho do uso da língua inglêsa por um grupo de 10 alunos em idade entre 15 a 35 anos que haviam frequentado a mesma escola por um período de 4 semestres com a frequência de 3 aulas por semana. A escolaridade dos alunos varia entre I Grau, II Grau e curso superior. O nível social do grupo é de classe média. O local ambiente da aula e uma sala grande, bem confortável com cadeiras em volta de uma mesa, tendo ao fundo um quadro de pincel afixado na parede, acompanhado de um gravador e um video-cassete. A escola, que se destina ao ensino de língua inglêsa, é bem organizada, oferecendo ótimas condições de trabalho ao professor com seu rico material didático e humano.

A metodologia - The Communicative Approach - aplicada ao ensino de inglês nesta escola apresentou ótimos resultados

através do bom desempenho dos alunos. Como seria, porém, o resultado da aplicação desta mesma metodologia ao ensino de línguas estrangeiras nas escolas de I e II grau com apenas 1 hora de aula por semana? Será que funcionaria? Os objetivos são os mesmos? Para respondemos a estas perguntas com precisão teríamos que fazer um estudo (sobre) no ensino de línguas estrangeiras em nossas escolas, suas estruturas pedagógicas, etc. O que sabemos e que o ensino atual de línguas em nossas escolas deixa muito a desejar, mas não acreditamos que seja uma questão de Metodologia, apenas. O problema é muito mais sério e sobre o qual não nos cabe discutir no momento.

Achamos, porém, que qualquer escola que ofereça condições básicas de um bom funcionamento, deve apresentar um mellhor desempenho na aprendizagem de línguas estrangeiras através da aplicação da metodologia em questão.

Em Goiânia 24/06/92

Em Goiânia, 24/06/92
Lélia Borges Moreira

Avaliação realizada pela professora M G C S

O nosso objetivo e analisar o método de ensino de
língua estrangeira - Communicative Approach - a partir de três
aulas de Língua Inglêsa, ministradas pela Oxford School em
Goiânia, no primeiro semestre de 1992, em turmas que já tinham
estudado a língua por mais de 2 semestres nessa metodologia.

A avaliação deve integrar a execução de dissertacao de
mestrado da professora Luciene Godoy Lima sobre a aplicação do
método na escola. A escola utilizou todos os recursos que o
método solicita, quais sejam, situações pré-determinadas, jogos,
resolução de problemas, flash-cards, charts, etc.

O teste que realizamos com os alunos efetuou-se no
último dia de aula e foi deito informalmente, sem que eles
percebessem que estavam sendo testados. Estabelecemos situações
cotidianas que vieram preencher expectativas de contexto sociais
específicos de comunicação.

As "performances" dos alunos foram excelentes,
demonstrando competência linguística para desenvolver a
comunicacão contextualizada. Revelaram segurança e habilidade na
execução das situações apresentadas e total entrosamento com a
proposta metodológica.

É sabido que o Communicative Approach tem, como o
próprio nome indica, dentro das correntes linguísticas gerativo-
transformacionais, o objetivo principal de fazer com que o aluno
se torne comunicativamente competente. O papel do professor é o
de facilitar o aprendizado do aluno, promovendo a comunicação em
sala de aula e monitorando as "performances". Os alunos são
vistos como gerentes responsáveis por seu próprio aprendizado.

Usam a língua através de atividades comunicativas, como role-plays, resolucões de tarefas, já em situações de discurso.

E interessante observar que, algumas vezes, o professor é somente um co-comunicador, e, na maioria das vezes, apenas estabelece situação de pronta comunicação entre dois ou mais alunos. O fato de já serem apresentados conteúdos relativamente prontos e direcionados faz com que o método amplie a preocupacão do aluno com a estruturação linguística dos significados e melhoria do vocabulário.

Outro ponto importante e que os alunos têm a oportunidade de emitir suas opinioés, idéias e vivência. Nisso, promove a integração aluno/aluno e aluno/professor e sentem que aprendem, de forma útil, alguns campos de significação. De certa forma exercitam uma leitura globalizante dos contextos apresentados porque tentam esgotar os conteúdos.

Os érros são tolerados e vistos como naturais ao desenvolvimento da habilidade de comunicação e estruturação do significado. Tanto quanto possível, os alunos tem que se comunicar e basta o professor promover a comunicação.

Tudo isso pode ser conferido pelo teste que realizamos com a turma. Assim, percebe-se que o Communciative Approach avança en relacão a outros métodos de ensino de linguas, como o "Direct Method" o "Audio-lingual Method" colocando o aluno seguro dentro de uma situação de discurso, desinibindo-o para a comunicação. A nossa avaliação do método é, pois, positiva.

Goiânia, 25/06/92

AVALIAÇÃO QUALITATIVA DO "COMMUNICATIVE APPROACH".

A Dissertação de Mestrado da Profa. Luciene Godoy Lima apresenta o estudo do "Communicative Approach" e a presente avaliação visa testar a sua eficiência em turmas de alunos adultos do curso básico com dois meses de iniciação no estudo de inglês, independente de experiência anterior.

A presente observação não tem por fim o estudo contrastivo entre vários métodos de ensino de inglês, mas, tão somente, a verificação do desempenho qualitativo deste enfoque.

O objetivo da testagem é o de verificar a compreensão dos alunos quanto aos conteúdos apresentados pela professora e a capacidade de uso dos novos conhecimentos de forma inteligente, sem o aspecto do automatismo mecânico.

A metodologia empregada foi a observação da aula e o estabelecimento de um diálogo dinâmico com os alunos visando a aferição dos conceitos ensinados, na ausência da professora. Como a ênfase da aula foi centrada na habilidade "speaking/understanding" a testagem foi orientada neste sentido, procurando induzir os alunos a utilizar os conteúdos desenvolvidos na aula em diferentes situações de comunicação.

A testagem foi realizada na Escola Oxford, em Goiânia, com alunos do Curso Básico nos dias 5 e 12 de maio de 1992 no horário de 8:00 às 9:30 horas. As aulas observadas tiveram a duração de uma hora e os trinta minutos seguintes foram utilizados para a avaliação.

Como observação adicional notou-se que a professora apresentou as estruturas gramaticais integradas aos conteúdos trabalhados, sem o destaque com que estas são apresentadas nos métodos tradicionais. Este fato representou mais um aspecto positivo para o bom desempenho do "Communicative Approach".

Resultados:

1. O material usado em sala de aula permitiu a condução dos temas para situações reais que é um dos objetivos do "Communicative Approach".

2. A dinâmica utilizada pela professora despertou o interesse e a atenção dos alunos. Esta estratégia pedagógica direciona os alunos para atividades que propiciem comunicação através de um processo centrado nos alunos e não mais no professor.

3. Os alunos, apesar de iniciantes (dois meses de curso), mostraram-se à vontade e sem constrangimento na expressão de suas idéias. Esta atitude demonstra um dos objetivos fundamentais do uso do Communicative Approach que é o estudante tornar-se comunicativamente competente, i. é, ter competência comunicativa usando a linguagem apropriada a um determinado contexto social.

4. Nas situações observadas pode-se comprovar a eficácia do "Communicative Approach" para o grupo avaliado, bem como a capacidade didática de sua utilização pela professora na situação em análise.

Goiânia, 14 de junho de 1992

Profa. MARLENE STEIN FISCHER

2