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CLL: An Approach to Teaching Advanced Conversation (Student Teaching Report)

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STUDENT TEACHING REPORT:

CLL: An Approach to Teaching Advanced Conversation

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INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Given an advanced conversation course and the freedom to conduct it
as one chooses, what approach does one elect to take? This paper is a
discussion of a Community Language Learning (CLL)-based procedure that I
developed over a two-month period and the results of this experience.

The setting for this teaching experience was the English Teaching
Program of the Hispanic-North American Cultural Association (ACHNA) in
Madrid, Spain, where I taught English during July and August of 1977 in partial
satisfaction of the requirements for the MAT degree at the School for Inter-
national Training. During this two-month period I was responsible for two
grammar courses and two courses in advanced conversation. Having two similar
courses in succession provided me with the opportunity to develop and test
out certain ideas with my July conversation class and then to apply a more
refined "model" in August.

Summer courses at ACHNA are labeled "intensive" because class atten=
dance of one and a half hours is required daily, five days a week. Each
course comprises a total of thirty hours' class time, which during the
regular term would cover a ten-week period.

The composition of evening classes at ACHNA ranges generally from
university students to a large number of professionals in a variety of fields
to an occasional soldier serving out his military requirement. Several have
traveled or lived in the United States and others are making preparations to
go. The balance are studying English to help them in their jobs, as a
supplement to their university studies, or simply out of personal interest.

In terms of their English ability, the students in my advanced conver-
sation classes had completed the equivalent of the highest levels of grammar
available at ACHNA or other institutions. In that some had much greater

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command of spoken English than others, the groups could not be considered entirely homogeneous. However, these students demonstrated that their intellec-lectual knowledge and understanding of English grammar was about the same, which fact served as an equalizing force among them.

Since the structure of the August course was basically the outgrowth of work done with the July class, I have chosen to concentrate more closely on this "ultimate" structure and how it was applied in August. The July group in many ways provided a testing ground for my ideas and required constant creative and critical thought. As a result, I gained insights and developed a strategy that proved quite effective when applied in its totality in August.

THE RATIONALE BEHIND THE APPROACH

In setting my goals for the conversation course, there were several
points to consider. First, I knew that conversation classes in general
can often provide an appropriate and comfortable setting for the use of a
foreign language, but that if attention is not directed toward the problems
people have in speaking, little progress is seen at the end of the course.
I felt that it was important to devise a system that would focus attention
on the grammatical problems of the students in an effort to improve their
English-speaking accuracy. The basis for this decision was two-fold: first,
personal experience as a language learner had shown me that free conversa-
tion was an enjoyable activity and that close relationships can be fostered
among students in an atmosphere of acceptance and personal interest. However,
I was also aware that without emphasis on error correction, students' linguistic
ability remains more or less the same or at best shows only minimal improve-
ment. Second, I had just reread Earl Stevick's article, "An Experience with
Community Language Learning" in which he made similar observations and des-
cribed his remedial work with a group of students whose sense of community
was strong but whose linguistic competence had not shown improvement over a
period of several weeks.[1] I therefore resolved that close attention to
grammatical errors produced during the students' conversations would be of
foremost importance.

In addition to wanting to effect a noticeable improvement in the
student's spoken English, I had certain ideas about how I hoped to see this
accomplished, and about how the respective roles of students and teacher could

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[1]Earl W. Stevick, "An Experience with Community Language Learning"
(unpublished article, Foreign Service Institute, December, 1976).

help bring this about. Since everyone in the conversation classes had already studied a significant amount of English, I felt that collectively they possessed the resources necessary to recognize and correct their own mistakes without heavy reliance on me as the teacher. The idea of encouraging self-correction, then, was a logical outgrowth of this realization. Second, I had observed a variety of instances in which students who were expected to assume the major portion of responsibility for their own learning actually accomplished more and were generally more satisfied with the end results than were students in the more traditional teacher-directed setting. I therefore hoped that the students would carry their own weight in the course, making their own decisions about such things as discussion topics and working together on grammar. This would limit my control of the content and also reduce any potential threat my input might have had. Third, I felt that a sense of community and cooperation among the students would be the most suitable atmosphere in which to accomplish our collective goals.

As for my own role in the group(s), I saw myself as an additional resource whose primary function was to help with grammatical problems as they arose and to aid in the understanding of the intricacies of English grammar. Through my work with the July class I reaffirmed for myself that I could not limit myself to these functions alone. Not only was it necessary to take a personal interest in the students, but I found it important to share myself with them. One of the most viable goals or expectations I therefore came to consciously establish for myself was to interact on a truly personal level with the students.

THE BASIC COURSE STRUCTURE

With the above goals in mind, I set to work developing a suitable
structure for "teaching" advanced conversation. Rather than trace the
development of this course structure step by step through the July course,
I will emphasize here the more solid plan as it stood with the August group,
contrasting and comparing with experiences in July where appropriate.

The first step was to "poll" the class on their expectations for the
course in order to find out what emphasis they wanted the course to have
and what specifically each of them expected to get out of it. This proved
to be a worthwhile activity: learning their expectations gave me a base
from which to work and indicated to me that what I had in mind for the class
would be compatible with their needs. In addition I would surmise that my
asking the question caused each student to examine his own goals more closely
and therefore to be more aware of them.

Most of the group said they had registered for the course because
they needed practice in speaking, but they hoped their grammar would improve
as well. Some suggested they might like to do some reading also, so it was
proposed that we select a book of readings on which to focus our conversation.
It actually took parts of three days to reach a final decision as to which
book we would read and exactly what procedure we would follow. Despite the
amount of time consumed by these discussions, the final decision, once reached,
was a group decision and as such was respected by all. The rest of the class
time these three days was devoted to free discussion.[2]

During the process of examining books and discussing alternatives, I
remained open to whatever decision the group chose to make. (One student

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[2]For a list of discussion topics covered, see Appendix 1.

even remarked, "This is a true democracy.") I recognized that whatever the group selected as a basis for conversation could be worked with equally well. From the comments that had been made by the July group, I had already come to anticipate that I would have to participate much more actively in the class discussions, including leading them if this were called for. However, I found that the needs of the August group were quite different, and though they welcomed my participation, they did not request my leadership as such.

Once the goals were established for the class and a basic procedure agreed upon for conversation, I shifted my own attention to the question of grammar. My approach was to tape-record about thirty minutes of conversation daily, switching on the cassette recorder and setting it on the floor in the center of the circle. The next day, in preparation for class, I analyzed the tape for grammatical errors, not bothering to transcribe the entire tape, which would have been much too time-consuming, but only extracting those sentences which contained problems. From this pool of material I then chose five or six sentences to be worked on in the group.[3]

In general I followed two basic criteria in selecting sentences. First, in terms of the overall sequencing of material, I wanted to progress from simple problems to those that were more complex. The logic behind this was obvious: if the students had trouble with some of the more simple structures of English, these difficulties should be weeded out before dealing with anything more complicated. I also felt that the members of the group would be able to handle the easier material with more competence and would thus be building confidence both in their understanding of English grammar and in themselves. Second, I wanted each group of sentences to represent as

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[3]For a complete list of the sentences used in the August course, see Appendix 2.

cohesive a unit, grammatically speaking, as possible. Granted, this was
not always possible, nor was it always desirable. It was certainly not
possible to assure that five or six sentences containing related problems
would crop up within a thirty-minute conversation. Besides, there would
often be a sentence or two that required attention as they came up, either
because the error, though important, was rare enough not to have much
probability of arising again, or because correction of the error depended
on contextual understanding. Therefore, as an example, the sentence, "You
can do things by your own," was included among a group of sentences that
dealt primarily with comparatives because it contained a fairly significant
error even though the expression "on your own" or "by yourself" was not
one that would be expected to occur frequently in our conversations. Like-
wise, vocabulary items and idiomatic expressions were best considered as they
appeared; hence,the sentence, "Other countries have also a high level of
criminality," was included among others that contained problems with
verb complements not so much for its grammatical error (adverb placement) but
because contextually the situation was ideal for learning the expression
"crime rate."

The way I chose to work with errors involved writing on the board
the five or six sentences I had selected for the day. The students were
asked to work together as a group to "improve the sentences" or to "find
more suitable ways of saying the same thing." I tried to avoid the use of
words such as "correction," "error," "mistake" and the like because I wanted
the students to develop a positive sense of their competence despite the
amount of attention that was being focused on grammatical errors. I felt
that more euphemistic terms coming from me might help alleviate any inner
tensions that could have built up as a result of this concentration on errors.

When the students had reached a consensus about the "best version"
of the sentences, they made the appropriate changes on the board. Through-
out this exercise I remained outside the circle. As soon as this work was
completed, I went over each sentence with them, first reading it if it was
correct or stopping if I noted an error. Occasionally the majority had
overruled the one or two people whose suggestions had been correct, in which
case it was simply a matter of recognizing the minority opinion. In such
cases, these people were asked to explain the grammar point involved for the
benefit of the rest of the group. Questions were generally thrown back into
the group, and if no one could answer adequately, I would provide a very
brief explanation of the grammar point involved, making every effort to
limit my comments to five seconds (though not always succeeding). Often I
found that some member of the group was able to provide a satisfactory
explanation that was easily understood and accepted by the rest of the
students.

When disagreement arose as to the best way to say something, I would
gently intervene by saying, "I would say...," or "It's more common to say...."
If a student still expressed doubts by asking, "Is it also correct to say...?"
I would add a clarifying statement such as, "Yes, but it's very rare," or
sometimes, "No, it wouldn't be said like that," or, "Yes, but it's better to
say...." In instances of overcorrection, I would observe that both versions
were equally acceptable.

As soon as we had gone over all the sentences on the board, I then
went back over the corrected sentences, reading them aloud one by one with
proper intonations. I allowed several seconds to elapse between sentences
to permit personal reflection. When two or three correct versions had
been produced, I would read the most commonly accepted sentence first, followed

by "...or..." and the next in order of preference, in accordance with standards of native English. During this period of reflection I noticed that the students became very quiet, and most of them focused their attention on the board. They usually remained silent somewhat longer at the end, and then I erased the board. Any questions that arose at this point were answered as above before going on to the next step.

Toward the middle of the course, I recognized that much the same sort of approach could be taken with pronunciation and vocabulary work. I began to extract five or six words daily for work on pronunciation problems, in addition to useful vocabulary words and expressions that had come out of the previous day's discussion. After completing our work with the sentences, I wrote the list of words for pronunciation on the board. After a few seconds I read the list over slowly, leaving several seconds between words. Then the students were encouraged to pronounce the words, which they did so individually and voluntarily. If I noted a problem, I pointed to it on the board and asked for another try. Generally I avoided looking at the students while they went over these lists so as to prevent too much attention from being focused on the individual. After any questions were answered about these words, I erased this list and wrote up the vocabulary items. Students were asked whether they had any questions; when they did, these were first referred to the group. If the students themselves were unable to give an adequate definition or explanation of a word or phrase, I did so very briefly, explaining contextual usage when necessary.

As a final step in working toward improved expression in English, I devised a system of signaling when I heard errors during the conversations. It had become apparent that written work and learners' discussions about English grammar had low transference into the spoken language. Therefore,

I announced that I would raise a finger when I heard errors related to those grammar points we had worked on in class. This simple system of signaling resulted in almost invariable recognition of the problem on the part of the speaker and proved a very effective approach to self-correction. In instances where the speaker was unsure of his error, others in the group were often able to point out the problem to him. When none of the students could offer a correction, I simply restated the sentence or phrase in correct English and the conversation continued.

Correction of errors often took other forms as well. The July group had been especially desirous of on-the-spot correction, and I recognized that at times this sort of correction was more appropriate. For instance, when students found themselves searching for a particular word, when they used the wrong form, or when an error was very simple or perhaps had not been covered in the exercises, it was much easier just to supply the correct term. I did not always feel the necessity to make corrections, for instance when I was aware that the error was one of performance rather than competence. I also hesitated to intervene when the speaker was strongly invested in communicating an idea. I felt that on certain occasions content should take precedence over structure and tried to remain aware of the operant psychological conditions involved in self-expression.

However, the corrections I made were not always direct. I often assumed a counseling manner in talking with the members of the groups. This meant that when they produced a jumbled sentence, I would invert it or make whatever change was necessary and then reflect it back to the speaker in question form. For example, if a student said, "I think she must put in jail the judge," my response might be, "You think she should put the judge in jail?" Such a response served not only to reformulate a statement in

English but also generally elicited further explanation of the remark from the speaker. This sort of counseling response therefore served a conversational purpose as well as correcting English and providing a non-threatening means of interacting on the Knower-Learner dimension.

One final important element I sought to incorporate into the class structure was the use of feedback sessions. Though periodic, these were not scheduled at any particular intervals but were conducted according to need. In August, because people appeared to be much more satisfied with the direction the course was taking, feedback sessions occurred with much less frequency than they had in July. Whereas with the July group my approach was somewhat more exploratory, the structure of the August class was much more solid. This is perhaps one of the reasons the manifested need for feedback (both on my own part and that of the students) appeared to be higher in July. At any rate, I did feel it necessary to monitor the changing sentiments of the groups and as a result sought to make changes that would help meet the needs and requests of the students.

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS ABOUT THE PROCEDURE

In an attempt to judge the effectiveness of my work with the conversa-
tion classes, it is necessary to rely heavily on personal observation and
student feedback. Here I shall cast a critical eye at those elements of the
course that seemed most effective as well as at some of the less satisfactory
aspects.

If I were really to begin at the beginning, perhaps I would re-examine
the goals I set for myself and for the course before venturing further.
However, since these reflect my basic assumptions about language learning and
teaching, I shall not call them into question here, with one exception. This
exception relates to my previous statement about interacting personally
with the students.

Although relating personally to the students had always been an implicit
aim for me, it became much more explicit as a result of my experience with
the July group. With this particular class, I began to sense that I was
withholding too much of myself from the students, even though I did take an
active interest in each of them. Much of this had been a conscious decision
on my part: I wanted the content of the course to be theirs and sought to
limit any input on my part that might have put the power in my hands or
otherwise threatened them as learners. However, when the students requested
not only that I participate more in the discussions but also that I lead
them, I did not explain the already existing complexity of my functions as
I saw them. Nor did I defend my ideological position. The most I ever
indicated to them about my role as I perceived it was that I was a resource
person whose primary function was to help them with their English. This does
not mean that I refused to interact with them. What it does indicate, though,
is that I was not operating fully on a "real-person" level since, in the

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group, I was suppressing rather than expressing my own feelings.

To a certain extent, my stance appears to have been valid. Stevick, in speaking of feedback sessions, urges that "the teacher not become defensive, or try to answer the students' criticisms or objections at this point."[4] However, in retrospect I feel that this particular situation was one of the "few exceptions"[5] to which Stevick makes reference, and one of the ways to deal with it would have been to enumerate the functions I was performing in the class: (1) listening for grammatical errors, (2) listening for content in order to participate in the conversation, (3) intervening as "counselor" when people's emotions flared up during some of the more heated discussions, and (4) in response to the student's requests, attempting to ask appropriate questions to help guide the discussions, keep people on the subject, and suggest opposing viewpoints. An alternative response might have been to make a greater effort to shift the responsibility for leading discussions back to the students.

There are two reasons for making my feelings known to the students. In doing so, I allow them to have a better understanding of who I am and how I think. Jourard supports this view when he emphasizes the importance of a psychologist's relating to one's clients as a "real" person, sharing feelings and beliefs rather than setting oneself up as a model to be emulated without question.[6] This attitude appears to transcend disciplines and would seem to have relevance to an approach like Community Language Learning, which is firmly based in psychological theory.

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[4]Stevick, p. 13.

[5]Stevick, p. 13.

[6]Sidney M. Jourard and Dan C. Overlade, <u>Disclosing Man to Himself</u> (Cincinnati: Van Nostrand Rheinhold, 1968).

My second reason for supporting teacher openness with students is that in August a similar question was posed: would I participate more actively in the discussions? The request was a valid one; we were all members of the same group and could reasonably expect this of each other. In agreeing to try I did point out multiple functions I was performing, whereupon the students were more able to accept my occasional silences.

I have spoken throughout this paper of "community" and "group," but how does one establish a relationship with a group of people in the first place? I have long felt that though first impressions may not necessarily be correct, they are often lasting. Expanding on this idea and on Zunin's theory that the first four minutes of a personal encounter are significant in establishing the parameters of that relationship,[7] I wanted to attend specifically to the initial activities of the class in hopes that my doing so would set the tone for the rest of the course. Although the July and August classes began very differently, some of the effects of the first days of each were felt throughout.

In July, after introductions and discussions of people's reasons for continuing their study of English, I chose to use the Islamabad Procedure, a CLL technique, as an introductory activity. The use of the rods to describe Hamburg, Germany (home of one of the students) quickly captured everyone's interest and was very effective in helping establish an immediate sense of community. However, the next two days saw several changes in class composition which resulted in a net gain of five students, yielding a total of twelve. Although the original group sense was not exactly lost, it was definitely altered by the change in group dynamics.

In August, as mentioned earlier, the first scheduled activity after

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[7]Leonard Zunin and Natalie Zunin, Contact: The First Four Minutes (New York: Ballantine Books, 1972).

introductions was to discuss the specific expectations of each of the students.
Doing this served a very useful purpose in that once these expectations were
specified, we all had something against which to measure the progress of the
course.

Except for the withdrawal of one person, the composition of the August
class did not change. Class size was seven, which proved to be a much more
satisfactory number for this type of course. It is possible that these two
factors may have helped maintain the August group as a more cohesive unit.
Attendance was much more regular and interest levels appeared higher in
all respects.

The first-day activities in August, that is, making a group decision
and having free discussions, provided an effective means for us all to
get to know each other. Perhaps the fact that the first two or three
days were somewhat more loosely structured contributed to the ease with
which people continued to interact. After experiencing the effects of
class changes in July, I wanted to be sure about the final enrollment before
initiating more formal activities.

With regard to the specifics of the course structure, I made a variety
of brief observations:

First, my sitting outside the circle gave me a good opportunity to
observe the interactions of the students. I confirmed my belief that they
did possess the resources to correct their own English and to explain the
grammar adequately to each other. Often during these sessions they spoke
in Spanish, which perhaps enabled them to work together more quickly as well
as freeing them from any inhibitions they might have felt speaking English.
I noted especially that even the quieter members of the August group were
more vocal when working on the sentences; also, their contributions were
generally as correct as those of the rest of the group. The level of

investment of all the students indicated to me that their interest level was high. Judging from the active participation of all concerned, I would conclude that my having removed myself from the circle also served to reduce any threat my presence might have produced. It also forced a reliance of the students on each other.

Second, my decision to work with only five or six sentences daily differed from my original approach in July, which had been to request students to work through a transcript of their first ten-minute conversation (one and a half handwritten pages). This required them to discriminate between correct and incorrect grammar but proved to be much too laborious for their purposes. We therefore dropped this procedure after one attempt.

Third, being aware that too much grammar work in a conversation class could be tedious, I felt it was necessary to ask the August group how they felt about the addition of pronunciation and vocabulary items to the work they were already doing. Was it too much? Their response was, "No, we need it." So these elements were instituted as part of the regular procedure.

Fourth, my experience with the July group also served me well with respect to my heightened awareness of the types of errors native Spanish speakers make in English. Although I was cognizant of a variety of problems that could be expected to come up, my daily analysis of the tapes forced me to look much more closely at the students' errors. Many of these naturally derived from direct translation from Spanish, resulting in somewhat complicated sentence structures that were not easily corrected on the spot. At any rate, by the end of July my increased understanding of the students' grammatical problems enabled me to plan more carefully the type of sequence I wanted to follow in selecting sentences for each day's work.

Fifth, the idea of signaling errors seemed to meet with approval from both groups. Although the students were aware that they made mistakes when speaking, many of their errors appeared to be habitual. Almost everyone articulated his willingness to have these things pointed out.

Sixth, though much has already been said about the use of feedback sessions as an integral part of the class structure, I must reiterate that I found them to be an extremely valuable tool. While encouraging critical evaluations of the course, they also allowed for the expression of feelings and provided cogent data on which to base revisions in course procedures.

PERCEIVED RESULTS AND CONCLUSION

Although it is not always easy to judge the results of one's own
work, I did observe (1) an increased awareness on the part of the students
of the types of errors they made, (2) greater ease in speaking over a
month's time, (3) the conscious efforts of the students to catch and
correct their own errors, and (4) much lower levels of improvement on
the part of the students who did not attend class regularly.

With regard to the learning enviornment, the atmosphere in both groups
was generally relaxed and secure enough for people to express their opinions,
not just in conversation but also in feedback sessions. People did not
appear afraid to make critical remarks or to express their frustrations
with me or the procedure when they felt the need to do so. I view this
as a positive indication because even when certain aspects of the course
failed to satisfy, another intrinsic element, the feedback session, continued
to serve its purpose.

My final criteria for evaluating the procedure in its ultimate form
rest with the students. In August I found that I had difficulty eliciting
negative comments from the class. However, from every indication, the
classroom environment was conducive to their expressing their opinions:
we were able to talk openly together and people responded well to my
probing questions during feedback. As a result I accepted the fact that
the August group was satisfied with the progress of the course. I made
occasional alterations (such as adding pronunciation and vocabulary) where my
own critical judgment showed there might be a need, leaving the basic
structure untouched.

Throughout August, the general feeling seemed to be, "The method is

good." But my final realization of how good it must have been came by surprise one day in the third week during a particularly productive feedback session. Without any input from me, the students made the following observations: (1) that although I was available for guidance, I did not direct or control the class, and that they, the students, were expected to assume the responsibility for their own work; they could not simply sit back and wait for me to perform; (2) that in realizing they were able to correct their own mistakes they were gaining confidence in themselves; (3) that in looking at their mistakes the next day, they could think about them and work on them, rather than just being corrected in passing; (4) that they also had the opportunity to talk and were not spending most of their time writing and correcting meaningless exercises as they had done in other classes; (5) that the pronunciation work was helpful; (6) that free conversation was more natural and therefore preferred; (7) that they were not learning just grammar but also were learning about the United States and sharing ideas on a variety of subjects; and (8) as mentioned above, that the method was good.

This feedback session more than any other single factor serves to point out the effectiveness of the conversation course. Almost every remark in some way or other reflects the rationale behind the basic structure as it was originally conceived. What the students experienced and observed was exactly as had been intended. Their comments on the last night of class reiterated the above: the course had been well-organized, they felt they had learned from it, and they were pleased with the results. Judging from their remarks, I must conclude that for the students' independent observations to have so closely mirrored my unstated goals, the course must have been successful.

The following list of topics was discussed by the August class:

  Ghosts/the supernatural/life in space
  Stereotypes
  Women's liberation
  Life-style of Spain as compared with that of the U.S.
  Mercenaries
  Son of Sam/crime
  Tax systems in Spain and the U.S.
  Eating habits/customs in the U.S.
  Movies
  Languages/accents
  Gypsies/racism
  The Mafia
  Effects of alcohol/drugs
  Retirement/old age
  Music
  The news
  From The USA/A Commentary by Hugh Rank:
        "The Real United States"
        "The City" (urban movement)
        "The Immigrant"

Following are the sentences that were selected for grammar work in the
August group. Each block of sentences represents one unit.

I Maybe if you read a lot about ghost stories, they are very near from you.
   He was not thinking in anything of this kind.
   We are talking and looking the book.
   After being there for a lot of time, he arrived England.
   The government interests to the Communist countries.
   It is difficult to find mercenaries into the Communist countries.
   Have you read some article from García-Márquez?

II Perhaps after next month when I have been for a month in the States, I will
      have another idea of the States.
    People is everwhere.
    I can bring tomorrow a book for you.
    We are going now to this place where the riñones are really good.
    In Spain people doesn't know to live.

III I have not a copy.
     They have been not destroying this country.
     Why those people didn't kill the Indians of Asia?
     I don't know how are you going to do it.
     They have not a future.
     Alexander did not that because he was Greek.

IV You have been only for a month in Spain.
    In the States, the very rich people has a leader?
    Some months after, he was killed in the prison.
    Why Jackson was in jail for one year?
    After it he was politicized and he write a lot of letters.
    But now the Black Panthers are disappeared,¿no?

V Woman has the same rights like a man.
   I get less money that a man in the same job.
   They wanted to be the same thing that other people wanted to be.
   Maybe the system is not attacking you so much that you believe.
   You can do things by your own.
   But why to call it liberation?
   I try don't be.

VI Yesterday he has been captured by the police.
    He didn't want to be that the woman had seen him.
    He was thinking it can happen to his own daughter.
    It depends of the area.
    The court said that when a person make hitchhiking, it's prepared for anything.
    I think she must put in jail the judge.

VII   But in English don't exist the subjunctive.
      It's a futural movie.
      You are living now in a big city.
      Only 20 years ago people went outside the city for living.
      You must know in which direction you must take.
      In Tokyo I heard that the subway it's impressive.

VIII What do you think that it's real?
      I'm saying that what a nation is it doesn't exist.
      The idea that you have of this country maybe it's not real.
      It's very difficult what you say.
      Really exists a real country.
      Was a joke.

IX   You only pay to the central government.
      This person sent to the computer a check with $0.00.
      In the restaurant have a machine for washing.
      When the level of the life is higher, people don't eat much bread.
      Other countries have also a high level of criminality.

X   It's in the native language?
      Is very usual in the States to employ slang?
      To speak very well French is very difficult.
      You think that in the States it's used more a contraction that in England?
      I don't know if other languages have changed so much that Spanish.

XI   One year the potatoedoesn't grew in all Europe.
      But why the United States are not influenced by Germany?
      I thought that Great Britain and Ireland was the two first countries
         that went to the U.S.
      It doesn't say for me anything.
      Before this date probably everybody were from Great Britain.

XII   I was thinking in that.
      I need be free.
      I really would rather prefer be at the Retiro reading a book.
      These people prefer don't have any money.
      Everybody here do that.
      It depend of the people.

XIII Only was talking about Puerto Ricans.
      You have said that now exists the same problem.
      I don't see the relationship between to be an Italian and to be a waiter.
      He was in California visiting a friend of him.
      He was buying meat for to do dogfood.
      He spend every week $2000.00.
      It is not the same that here.

XIV I know a person who can drink very big of wine.
     I took 3 or 4 glasses of brandy before to do it.
     Why you did that?
     Afterward he call me and we begin to talk.
     He was asking me three questions.
     I think he was thinking that I was being satisfied with a "C".
     It's not the same that in the States.

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