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INCREASING CULTURAL AWARENESS THROUGH
EFFECTIVE CLASSROOM DYNAMICS

Maria Cristina Enriquez y Arcaraz.

"Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the Master of Arts in Teaching degree at the
School for International Training, Brattleboro, Vermont."

September, 1982.

This report by Ma. Cristina Enriquez y Arcaraz
is accepted in its present form.

Date 10/30/82 Principal Advisor *Olivia E. G. Martin*

Acknowledgements:

I want to sincerely thank to my parents and all my friends who encouraged and helped me with their guidance, counseling and support during my studies. Especially thanking the ones who forced me to accomplish the most difficult task of my career: finding the time to write this report. Special thanks to Sandy.

PREFACE

My second student teaching experience at the University of the Americas was perhaps atypical of most student-teacher programs because of the fact that I was hired as the Spanish Division Coordinator. I had many diverse administrative responsibilities that were very important to my division and the Language Department in general. They also became very important to me personally. Because of the large amounts of time and energy I spent on purely administrative work, I feel that it is important^{to} include my experiences as an administrator in this paper.

Before arriving in Mexico to begin my second student teaching I had chosen as my objective the development of strategies to increase cultural awareness by first creating good classroom dynamics. In a sense it is a dual objective: creating the proper atmosphere within the group and then leading my students into meaningful discussions of culture in order to heighten their awareness of this topic.

In order to appreciate my situation at the University of the Americas I feel it is necessary to understand the geographical, cultural, and social setting in which I was working. This paper therefore is organized in the following manner:

- Introduction
- Description of Puebla and Cholula, Mexico.
- Description of the University of the Americas
- Responsibilities of the Spanish Division Coordinator
- Personality Profile of the UDLA student
- Classroom Strategies
- Success and Failure
- English Training Center

INTRODUCTION

In the fall of 1979 I found myself in Cholula, Mexico, about to begin my second student-teaching practicum. I have to admit that I was surprised to be at the University of the Americas again since it was one year before, in the fall of 1978, that I was hired as a Technical English teacher by the Language Department chairman at the UDLA. However, after working in that capacity for one week I was informed that I couldn't be contracted because of budget cuts.

So, the next day I made contact with the coordinator of the Foreign Language Office at S.I.T. Within one week I was back in Vermont teaching Spanish in my old capacity. Three months later I began to receive calls from the UDLA, all apologizing for my rather abrupt dismissal and asking me to return to begin teaching Technical English the next semester, (Spring 1979). I declined all of the many offers.

Then, while I was in Mexico attending the Experiment's Summer Language Camp, (1979), the chairman of the UDLA Language Department contacted me again. This time he offered me a teaching position in General English and the position of Spanish Division Coordinator. He also offered me a substantial raise in salary and a University house to live in. This time I accepted. However, I accepted without any idea of what the position of 'Spanish Division Coordinator' really entailed at the University of the Americas.

But first a brief description of Puebla is in order because of the fact that the UDLA is a representation, a 'microcosm', of Puebla society and this had a great effect upon my experiences there.

PUEBLA DE LOS ANGELES

Puebla, Puebla, is linked to the capital, Mexico City, by a good 4-lane highway. It takes less than two hours by car, but in mentality these two cities are light-years apart. Puebla is in the provincia as is everything in Mexico, outside of the capital. Provincial is a good word to begin describing Puebla and its nearly 1,000,000 Poblanos. Puebla is a tight, closed, rather 'cold' city. Religion is very important to its inhabitants. These are not the open, gay, hospitable Mexicans of the coastal regions. No, Puebla is more than a mile high in the mountains of Central Mexico; perhaps this causes its people to be cold, insular and isolated.

Puebla society is controlled by its extremely wealthy members, many of them coming from 'old money.' Although there are quite a few members in this group, the city does not reflect this large concentration of money in either its entertainment or cultural offerings. The high society of Puebla is much more interested in its new cars, houses, clothes, jewelry, and trips to Europe and the States.

Puebla also has a rather large foreign population made up, primarily, of Germans (Puebla has a large Volkswagen factory) and Americans, (many U.S. companies have factories or outlets here: NCR, XEROX, Coca-Cola, etc.). These groups have remained isolated. They have little effect on Puebla society and vice-versa; although their presence here has added to the 'snob-appeal' of all things American or European.

CHOLULA

Cholula is a smaller community (pop. 35,000) linked to Puebla by the Recta, a beautiful 10-kilometer highway. However, Cholula has as little in common with Puebla, as Puebla does with Mexico City. Cholula was once the great religious center of the Aztecs and many tourists come to see its famous pyramid, the largest in the world. The Cholultecas have grown accustomed to the tourists and perhaps have prospered a bit because of them. But they remain a close group, highly religious, superstitious, poor and with a large indigenous population.

The University of the Americas, located on the Recta leading into Cholula, with more than 3,000 students, has had little impact upon Cholula, and vice-versa. This University, although located in Cholula, is purely Poblano in character, Poblano of the 'high society'.

THE UNIVERSITY OF THE AMERICAS

The University of the Americas was founded in 1940 as Mexico City College, with 80% of its students and staff made up of Americans. In 1959 accreditation was granted by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. The UDLA is the only liberal arts institution in Latin America fully accredited in the United States.

The UDLA is a co-educational, bilingual, private university. The University houses three different schools: The School of Engineering, the School of Business and Economics and the School of Social Sciences and Humanities. And there are some spectacular facilities, especially for a Latin American university.

The UDLA received as a gift from the United States government the Learning Resources Center that houses the University library, the Audi-Visual Dept., an art gallery, the colonial history archives and the language laboratory. The UDLA also has an auditorium, a student center, a cafeteria, a huge dining room, a complete gym, swimming pool, several tennis courts, and soccer and baseball fields. The grounds and the view of the volcanoes are impressive, and there is an artificial lake, beautiful gardens and fountains. Actually, it looks rather like a country club.

The University is ruled by the General Director who is designated by the Associate's Committee, three Vice-Directors, a Dean for each of the Schools, Department Chairmen, Coordinators within the departments and full and part-time teachers.

THE STUDENT BODY

The student body in 1979 was predominantly Poblano: 63%, Mexicans from other states: 25%, foreigners (Americans and students from other Latin American countries): 12%. The radical shift in the percentage of foreign students to Mexican students was the direct result of a teachers' strike in 1976, after which nearly all the American teachers were fired and many American students either were expelled or left in disgust at the situation. After the strike the UDLA became more rigid, repressive, less open to new ideas and foreign influence, but still retained its bilingual nature and its requirement that all graduating students must pass a foreign language proficiency exam, (either Spanish or English).

THE LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT

The Language Department functions as a Service Department for the entire University. That does not mean, however, that it has priority over other departments. It serves 90% of the student population with English or some other foreign languages. There are three different divisions: The General English Division, the Technical English Division, and the Spanish Division. Each division has a coordinator, under the direction of a Department Chairman.

There were approximately 30 language teachers in the department in 1979, of which only 12% were full-time.

LANGUAGE PROGRAMS

The scholastic year at the University is divided into two semesters of four months and one special Summer Session of 8 weeks. Language classes met three times a week, with 50 minute sessions, and a 50 minute lab session weekly. However, the Spanish classes were considered 'intensive' and met everyday for an hour and fifteen minutes, including lab work.

The Language Department was supposed to make students "functionally bilingual" in three semesters. Besides expecting this impossible feat, prerequisites for taking language classes were confusing and often incoherent. Students didn't have to take language classes consecutively and they had as many chances as they needed in order to pass the proficiency exam. 'Exceptions' were not uncommon, and they added to the difficulty in administering the programs.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SPANISH DIVISION COORDINATOR

And so I became a part of the University of the Americas, as its new Spanish Division Coordinator. In the weeks to come I learned just how much work and responsibility fell under the umbrella of my new job. I must admit, it was nothing short of astonishing.

A week before classes started -on registration day- I was given a brief and informal orientation of my responsibilities and limitations within my division. It was at that time that I learned that all foreign languages, except English, were included in the Spanish division. At that time it meant the addition to my responsibilities of the Portuguese and French departments. On the same day I was informed that I would be teaching two English courses, (Intermediate level) but wouldn't be teaching any classes in my own division! Even though I was more interested in teaching and actualizing my objective of creating effective communication of culture in the classroom, my priority as Spanish Division coordinator, I was told, was to, "straighten up the division." That meant:

- 1) Gather and correlate statistics about all language courses offered (schedules, number of students per class, number of teachers, courses offered, etc.).
- 2) Define objectives for each course.
- 3) Prepare course descriptions.
- 4) Prepare curriculum for each level.
- 5) Coordinate all of the Spanish Division courses, (schedules, requirements, procedures, etc.).
- 6) Hire new teachers.
- 7) Up-date files, (records, statistics, etc.) in order to create

- a practical and usable departmental filing system.
- 8) Develop, select, purchase, and organize teaching material.
 - 9) Select and purchase books to create an interdepartmental library of teachers' reference books and up-dated realia.
 - 10) Supervise, correct, and evaluate textbooks which were being written by Spanish teachers. (One of the worst tasks assigned to me because of the strong differences of opinion between me and the 'text book' writers.)
 - 11) Design and plan special summer courses of Spanish, (After I had done all the work, a special director came to 'run' the Summer Session.)
 - 12) Prepare and write proposals for various universities, (Texas A & M, the Tecnologico de Monterrey, St. Mary's College, and others.) Also, a special proposal designed for the government of Japan. (All of these proposals represented an enormous investment of time and energy with no gratifying results.)
 - 13) Design adequate and relevant placement, final and proficiency exams. (Another large investment of time and energy, but with happier results. The tests which I wrote were a large improvement over the existing tests.)
 - 14) Lead the In-Service Teacher Training Program.

The first major task included in my supervisory work was to try to create a closer community among the teachers and staff of my division and the Language Department in general. We needed to open up communication. The department was full of tension caused by constant rumors and gossip generated, in part, by the constant administrative and personnel changes.

In order to improve communication I started informal staff meetings twice a month so teachers could share their classroom experiences with each other. I began observing classes, with the teacher's approval. We held meetings for discussion prior to and after observation. And we held evaluation sessions with teachers and students as well.

Going hand-in-hand with my work to open up communication I was leading the In-Service Teacher Training program. We met once a week, during which time I would offer supplemental material and ideas for the points that the teachers were covering at that time. I also gave presentations about different methods and techniques and supplied readings to the teachers. I took advantage of the visit of some MAT's to Puebla and we presented workshops on Community Language Learning and The Silent Way. The reaction to these new methods was overwhelmingly negative. Although the workshops given were extremely well prepared and well presented, many teachers and especially the other coordinators, were highly critical, hostile even, to the new methods and came to quick defense of their traditional ways. Ever since that time my classes were carefully watched to see whether I was actually implementing any radical new methodologies.

I also found myself being linked very closely to the Education Department Master program in TESOL. At the last moment I was called upon to teach the Methodology course which actually complemented my work in the In-Service Teacher Training program. Of course this additional class really increased my workload and I was very happy to pass the class in mid-semester to an MAT colleague who was visiting at that time. I did, however, remain in touch with the group through my supervision of and frequent visits with the students.

So, although my primary objective was to enter the classroom and, "work on techniques for creating good classroom communication for oral discussion of culture," I found myself burdened with the responsibilities of three departments at this University. The irony is that I was actually teaching two English classes, half of the TESOL methodology class, and nothing within my own division.

However, despite the heavy workload, there was a positive side to all my various jobs. I was able to expand myself in a large number of administrative capacities in a number of areas. I did learn and grow. And much of what I learned fulfilling these numerous administrative activities gave me a number of insights and strategies to use to develop my original second student-teaching objective when finally I was in the classroom.

PERSONALITY PROFILE OF THE "UDLA" STUDENT

As I mentioned before, the 'character' of the average UDLA student is actually a reflection of the 'character' of the upper classes of Puebla society. These students come from a rich to very rich background and are in general, very traditional. My role as a teacher, for them, made me the 'authority figure' a role in which I felt uncomfortable. However, realizing that all teachers to them have always been figures of authority, I understood the origins of their feelings: teachers are people to be respected and perhaps USED in order to gain the ends that they the students are seeking. In this case, the prime motivator was the NEED to pass the foreign language proficiency examination.

I saw my first task as the 'opening-up of the students', and to attempt to make them more relaxed and comfortable. Talking with

my students informally, because they are as a whole out-going and friendly people. I was actually shocked by the shallowness of their concerns. Talk usually turned to discussions of the previous' nights' activities which generally included: going to the discoteque, the movies, or the latest party. Daytime activities never seemed to vary from visiting friends and shopping. (These people are incredible consumers of 'status' items and their conversations reflect this). Vacation activities were no different, only the locale changed.

They showed no interest in culture, politics, current events or world problems. The University itself was ridden with gossip, being perhaps, the only attempt that these students made in talking about other people. The Poblano student remained isolated from the foreigners and from students from other Mexican cities on campus. The Poblanos formed their own tightly-knit, closed group.

In short, the traditional educational systems from which these students arrived simply do not deal with the students as a 'person'. These students, although they loved to talk, would freeze-up when asked to talk about themselves. If they had given thought to their personal value-systems, or their fears, fantasies, desires, or goals I am sure that they had never given voice to these topics in the classroom. I saw this as a major obstacle to the open discussion of culture and cultural differences between Mexico and the United States.

CLASSROOM STRATEGIES

Coming from their extremely traditional educational backgrounds, my students were rather rigid in the roles that they assigned to themselves as students and to me as a teacher. I needed to break-down

the expected classroom structures. I tried to present myself as a facilitator, counselor, friend in order to eradicate the authoritarian role they had already assigned to me. I like to laugh and have fun in the classroom. I found that very quickly the natural sense of humor of my students was coming out of hiding. They were learning that the classroom did not have to be the humorless, tension-ridden cells of their former classes.

I also had to break-down the image of a class as 'a group of non-entities'; I wanted to provide each student with individual attention and acceptance from the entire group, and increase individual contribution in the discussions. On the other hand, I had to present the importance of working as a 'Unified group', in which we needed to develop cooperation among group members, and emphasize each group member's value to the group.

Students started to get accostumed to dealing with their feelings, sensitivities and emotions through the use of non-compromising activities which provided simple interactions with one another, and at the same time offered good opportunities for sincere interpersonal communication.

I started by changing the setting of the chairs into a circle so everybody would have the chance to see each other, and give the students the chance to place me on their level.

I started using some activities from the book Developing Effective Classroom Groups (1) which were very effective. I learned how each member of my classes behaved towards the rest of the group.

(1) Gene Stanford, Developing Effective Classroom Groups, A Practical Guide for Teachers. Hart Publishing Company, Inc. New York.
Copyright 1977.

By pure coincidence or good luck, one of the students raised the question: Why the re-arrangement of chairs? -obviously up set- and I applied the technique mentioned in the Stage Two of 'Responding to Others' of re-directing questions.⁽²⁾ From that moment it was easier for them to ask questions, and for me to show what I was expecting from them.

I stressed the importance of active listening through an Active Listening demonstration. I had one student acting as speaker and myself as a listener. When we finished the class was divided into groups of three and I asked the students to do the same kind of exercise for a very short time, after which we shared the experience all together. To conclude this exercise, I asked the students to make a list of what they considered necessary for achieving good listening skills. This was a variation of the 'Rogerian Listening' exercise described in Values Clarification.⁽³⁾

The following class I decided to work on 'cooperation' using the exercise called 'Broken Squares' from Developing Effective Classroom Groups ⁽⁴⁾ for which they had to work in groups of five. I formed two groups and had the rest of the students as observers. This exercise is done without speaking and the participants must observe a set of strict rules. I chose this exercise because through it I was able to determine who were the natural leaders and who were the followers within the group.

(2) Stanford, op. cit., p. 119.

(3) Sidney B. Simon, Leland W. Howe and Howard Kirschenbaum, Values Clarification, A Handbook of Practical Strategies for Teachers and Students. (Hart Publishing Company, Inc. New York. Copyright 1972) p. 295.

In order to learn more about their personal interests we conducted a "Whole Body Voting." I placed large sheets of paper around the room, each sheet with a different topic of conversation: politics, family, fun and recreation, work, love and romance, and I added the topic "religion and society." The students were asked to stand by the topics that they most liked to discuss and then the topics that they least liked to discuss. They were also offered the opportunity to write any comments they may have had about the topic on the papers. During this exercise I learned that as I expected, these university students are quite traditional and especially in respect to religion and its functions in society.

Throughout these first days I used Spanish exclusively in the classroom, I wanted to 'make contact' with my students and help to build their confidence in me, and each other, as members of the group. English had always been somewhat threatening to them (the ever present threat of the proficiency exam) and so I relied upon our native language to help break down the barriers to openness. And, finally, I wanted to eliminate much of their unease so that they could enter the classroom relaxed and comfortable. These preliminary exercises, done in Spanish, had the effect that I had hoped for. Within the first week we had created a sense of trust within the group and a readiness, I felt, for deeper communication.

I chose next, an exercise from Values Clarification, the "Alligator River Story" in which the group is asked to rank the characters in the story from the worst to the best, although no character is very good or totally bad.⁽⁵⁾ The focus in this exercise is the

(4) Stanford, op. cit., p. 152.

(5) Simon, Howe and Kirschenbaum, op. cit., p. 290.

roles of men and women in a sexual context. Their choices and subsequent discussion revealed to me the strength of their traditionalism, in evaluating the 'good' and 'bad' of men and women. (i.e. a sexually active and aggressive man is O.K. but under no circumstances outside of marriage, could a woman be considered 'good' and sexually active, at the same time.) This exercise and all subsequent classroom activities were carried out in English, with a minimum of Spanish, where necessary in order to understand directions.

My personal interaction with my students was carried out in both languages. For the fun of practicing and talking we often spoke English outside of the classroom. However, when my students needed to speak more seriously they would revert to Spanish and I, of course, would too. Being a native speaker, it would have created a totally unnatural situation to speak in English under such circumstances. So, although learning English was our basic thrust in working together, I had gained enough of their confidence in order to be viewed by them as more than "an English teacher," by relating to them as people, as well as English students.

Having created a good working dynamic within my groups, and having already learned much about the members' interests, strengths, and values, I planned activities that I hoped would open-up the road for in-depth considerations of cultural differences. Cultural awareness was still something quite new to my students. In order to heighten this awareness, one of the exercises that I chose is called "The Owl", description by Theodore Gochenour, from the book Beyond Experience.⁽⁶⁾ This exercise presents a task which can only be com-

(6) Donald Batchelder and Elizabeth G Warner, Beyond Experience, The Experiential Approach to Cross-Cultural Education. (The Experiment Press. Vermont, U.S.A. 1977). p. 125.

pleted by careful observation and sensitivity towards people from a very strange, very different type of culture.

I was satisfied with the results of this exercise. Through student feedback I was able to see that a topic that they had never really given much thought to was beginning to take hold of their minds. Awareness is the key word here. And, of course, their new-found awareness of the diversity and validity of different cultures provoked a lot of questioning. It was a time of excitement and learning.

At about the same time I began to receive criticism from the Department Chairman about the techniques I was using in my classes. It was made abundantly clear that I was expected to follow the course syllabus already prepared. (A copy of this syllabus is enclosed.) Within the restrictions placed on me by the syllabus, I was still able to implement much of my own material and techniques.

I made a lot of use of photographs and pictures in working with specific grammar points. (i.e. affirmative, negative and interrogative statements, subject and object pronouns, comparative and superlative of adjectives, count and non-count nouns, etc.). I found the added visual dimension very effective. It also created more natural opportunities for asking questions and oral practice of grammatical patterns. I used a lot of the exercises suggested in Caring and Sharing in the Foreign Language Class (7). I also used role-play effectively within my groups in order to supply 'functionalism' to what they were supposed to be learning according to the syllabus.

(7) Gertrude Moskowitz, Caring and Sharing in the Foreign Language Class, A Sourcebook on Humanistic Techniques. (Newbury House Publishers, Inc. Rowley, Massachusetts. April 1978).

LABORATORY

It's worth mentioning that during that semester the Language Lab was literally 'falling apart' and it certainly did not suit the needs of the Language Department. Although the language lab represented a very large investment of money for equipment and occupied a large part of the third floor of the University library, it was decided that we should use small taperecorders available to the entire Language Department, which meant that three recorders had to be shared by 30 teachers. This created terrible problems for the teachers for programing use of the recorders, and returning them within the 50 minutes of class. To make matters worse the tapes were poorly recorded and very boring.

After my first frustrating attempts using the taperecorders in my classes, and realizing that I was not alone (my colleagues were complaining also), I decided to ask the General English coordinator to allow me to use the lab session for another type of activity. I suggested a Community Language Learning session once a week, at a different time from the one scheduled. After explaining to him the technique, the objectives, the procedure, and the results of CLL, he had no objections.

By the time I started the first CLL lab session, I had created a good classroom dynamics in both of my groups so that the sessions were well received (my lab sessions became very popular among other English students causing me more trouble with colleagues and coordinators) and worked successfully. Although my lab sessions were highly criticized by the more 'traditional' teachers who didn't know anything about CLL; my students and I were very satisfied with the CLL experience.

Throughout the semester, despite the many criticisms, I continued to put emphasis on culture in my classes. I relied heavily on Culture Capsules USA-Mexico,⁸ Living Language. USA Culture Capsules for ESL Students⁹ and Beyond Experience.¹⁰ We used the readings and exercises as springboards for conversation and discussion. By this time I was quite content with the progress made in attaining my objectives. The discussions were often very lively and fun, but at times quite serious. And I could see the students trying to cope with the new perspectives on culture and values.

I wanted to maintain their enthusiasm and interest and, very happily for me, friends from MAT arrived to visit. These Americans were very willing to participate in my classes and talk with the students. Their visit added a whole new dimension to the classes. The students could talk with and ask questions to representatives of another culture. (A culture they had already learned something about.) Being more sensitive to cultural differences helped them in asking insightful and interesting questions. You could feel a lot of learning going on in those sessions. A friend of mine from India, a TESOL student at the time, also visited my classes and talked about her country and culture. The students were very open and accepting. I really noted how far we had come together.

(8) Drs. J Dale Miller and Russell H. Bishop, Culture Capsules. USA-Mexico. (Newbury House Publishers, Inc. Rowley, Massachusetts. 1974).

(9) Jerrilou Johnson, Living Language. (Newbury House Publishers, Inc. Rowley, Massachusetts. February 1979.)

(10) Donald Batchelder and Elizabeth G. Warner, Beyond Experience. The Experiential Approach to Cross-Cultural Education. (The Experiment Press. Brattleboro, Vermont, U.S.A. 1977.)

Nearing the end of the semester I planned a large party at my apartment and invited all my students and English students from fellow teachers' classes. I also invited some American students who were studying Spanish and many of my personal friends, which created a rather international group. The party was planned carefully with many different activities to practice English and to get to know different people in a natural situation. There was a lot of interaction between the Mexican students and foreign guests, and there was a lot of English being spoken. As a demonstration of cultural awareness, I as a teacher, could not have asked for much more. It was also fulfilling to see that my efforts to teach my students English were being put to a positive use. By using their knowledge of English to communicate with and enjoy the company of English speakers at that party, I believe that they realized there can be more reasons to learn English than just to pass their proficiency exam.

SUCCESS AND FAILURE

Ultimately, I must consider the two years I spent at the University of the Americas as a mixture of success and failure. Personally, I felt satisfaction in having achieved my objective of creating the proper classroom dynamics for relevant discussion of culture and cultural differences. Through the various techniques I employed, I was able to change the students' view of me as an authority figure, in the process of language learning. Following that I was successful in creating accepting and open groups. Basically, by achieving the aforementioned changes in attitudes we were able then to discuss culture and cultural differences in a meaningful way. Despite a

workload that often took me far from the classroom into the realm of administration, I feel I had successfully reached my second-student teaching objective.

Within the department I feel I had contributed to some good changes. By working closely with the General English coordinator I was able to convince him that many of the techniques I had used in the classroom were effective in "opening students up" in order to facilitate oral communication. As a result, the coordinator decided to integrate humanism and functionalism into the program.

Although, many of my ideas were considered too "new"; too "radical", through my work as the In-Service Teacher Trainer I was able to affect a few of the teachers who did indeed try different exercises that I suggested in order to create better group dynamics. They reported their experiences to me and I especially responded to their enthusiasm as they, too, reported success.

I feel that to a large measure I was responsible in bringing order out of the chaos that was the Spanish Language Division when I arrived. By starting with the most basic task of defining course objectives through to curriculum development and material selection, I was able to see the programs take on a sense of cohesiveness that they had lacked before.

I was successful in quadrupling the number of foreign language courses offered and in training three new foreign language teachers in new approaches in teaching languages.

I feel successful and pleased that I was able to create friendships within the Department. The gossip never really ceased but it diminished quite a bit and the teachers became more unified. We began to work as a team.

My failures are more difficult to describe. From my present vantage point I no longer blame myself for what I thought of as my personal failures. The administration of the University of the Americas has in each semester restricted the budget of the Language Department. With this the number of students per class increased each semester as did the workload of each teacher. There were signs of decreasing importance of the Language Department to the University Administration. Although I was able to affect some teachers and the General English coordinator, we were very few in the midst of many thoroughly traditionally-oriented teachers, who were hostile to change. In the end I was forced to resign because I realized that, although I touched my students and a few colleagues, my efforts to promote a more humanistic program would always be thwarted by the teachers, Department Head and the University Administration.

However, my resignation was not as much a sign of defeat as an acknowledgement of the reality of the situation at the University of the Americas. My frustration led to creation.

ENGLISH TRAINING CENTER

In April of 1981, English Training Center opened its doors. With four fellow teachers and friends, we had created a humanistic language learning center in Puebla. The center offers programs in English and Spanish for adults and children based on a humanistic philosophy, using the functional approach. Groups are limited to a maximum of twelve students in order to assure individualized attention to each student. The atmosphere of our school is relaxed and informal. We work on first name basis with all our students. Their reactions

to our methodologies and techniques (all teachers work with an eclectic approach, so there is a lot of variety) has been unanimously positive. The school has quintupled it's enrollment in one and a half years and most new students come to us on the recommendation of our students. I find myself now with the freedom to implement my own ideas without the criticism and problems they caused for me at the UDLA. And, yes, the students are learning language and culture and, I believe, a lot about themselves.

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University of the Americas

Syllabus DL- 102-02
DL- 102-04

Instructor: Profa. Ma. Cristina Enriquez A.

Office: Room 123 Bld. 5

Office hours: 12:00 - 13:00 Mon. Wed. Fri.
3:00 - 4:00 Tues. Thurs.

Class hours: 8:00 - 8:50 Mon. Wed. Fri. (102-02)
9:00 - 9:50 " " " (103-04)

Lab. hours: 8:00 - 9:00 Tues. (102-02)
9:00 - 10:00 Thurs. (102-04)

Lab. room number: - - - - -

Texts: 1) American Kernel Lessons - Intermediate
2) Bridges to Fear. (Reading)

IMPORTANT:

- Class attendance is mandatory
- You will be required to sign a sheet of student responsibilities prior to starting the course.
- This sheet is your contract with your professor for the duration of the course.
- I will expect that you read the assigned reading part of each unit and also the readings from "Bridges to Fear" in the assigned dates. You are also expected to complete all written homework assigned in class.
- Attendance to Lab is also mandatory.
- Every fifth class session there will be a comprehensive review in the form of a quiz.

Composition of Final Grade:

Mid-term Exam25%
Final Exam25%
Quizzes15%
Homework15%
Participation10%
Laboratory10%

The final exam will consist of both an oral and written evaluation.

Objectives of the course:

- 1.- To expand the students' speaking and listening-comprehension skills of basic English structures and vocabulary.
- 2.- To reinforce those basic structures and vocabulary items exposed in DL-101.
- 3.- To improve student's pronunciation in English.
- 4.- To improve and expand student's basic reading and writing skills.

Material that should be understood and applied upon completion of this course:

- 1.- Tenses:
 - a) Simple present
 - b) Present progressive
 - c) Regular past
 - d) Regular future (will)
 - e) Idiomatic future (going to)
- 2.- The verbs "be" and "do" - Present and past tenses.
 - a. affirmative statement form
 - b. negative statement form
 - c. interrogative form
 - d. contracted forms
- 3.- Subject and object pronouns.
- 4.- Possessive adjectives.
- 5.- Demonstrative adjectives.
- 6.- Telling time.
- 7.- Question words.
- 8.- Comparative and Superlative of adjectives.
- 9.- Frequency words. (Never, always, sometimes, often)
- 10.- Position of adjectives. (
- 11.- The Determiners. (a, an)
- 12.- Plural formation of count nouns.

Material that students should have a good understanding of upon the completion of this course.

- 1.- Tenses:
 - a. Present Perfect.
 - b. Past continuous.
 - c. Past Perfect.
 - d. Irregular verbs in the past tense.

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- 2.- Conditional sentences.
- 3.- Some, any, a few, a little.
- 4.- Count nouns vs. non-count nouns.
- 5.- Comparative and Superlative nouns.
- 6.- Adverbs and their positioning.
- 7.- Frequent gerund constructions.
- 8.- Reported speech.
- 9.- "Will" in requests and offers.
- 10.- The construction "have to".
- 11.- Request, commands, and offers.
- 12.- Expressions used with the present perfect tense.
- 13.- Much, many, a lot of.
- 14.- Prepositions that appear in American Kernel Lessons - Intern.