

International Business Transactions and Foreign Languages

The use of the name "Foreign Languages," must be discontinued for different pedagogical, psychological and social considerations, and most of all because the United States of America is in fact, and by law, a multi-lingual nation. By law, for the reason of the signature of the Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo of 1848, and in fact, because millions of American citizens are French, Italian, German, and Spanish-speaking people; for example, there are 16-million Spanish speaking people living in our fifty states, and in the Associated State of Puerto Rico. Moreover, the publication 579(10-71) of the United States Department of the Treasury was written in Spanish, not in English. Since this is true, is Spanish a foreign language?

Among the many baseball fans in the United States, there are those who have listened to bilingual (French-English) broadcastings from Montreal, when our major league baseball teams visit that Canadian city for a game.

Why don't German teachers organize study tours with educants to the Amana Colonies in Iowa, or to areas in Pittsburgh, where students may learn as much of the German culture as if they went to Berlin? Similar things can be done with Spanish students: not by taking them on study tours to Mexico or to Spain, but to Florida, Puerto Rico, California and New York (the fourth largest city in the world in number of Spanish-speaking people, being surpassed only by Mexico City, Buenos Aires and Madrid.)

Consequently, foreign languages in the U.S.A. are only as foreign as English, because the latter has been imported from Britain, which no one will question as being a foreign country.

The renaming of "foreign languages" does not have much relevance. It has not been irrelevant to change the name of a country, which was

*J.D., Univ. of Havana, Cuba; S.C., Law School, Miami Univ., Florida; Chairman, Foreign Language Dept., Briar Cliff College, Iowa; Member, American, Inter-American, Iowa State, Woodbury County, and Cuban (in Exile) Bar Associations.

recently done when we "rebaptized" Red China as the "Democratic Republic of the People of China."

In renaming the foreign-language field of instruction, it may be beautified by picking up one from the following list:

1. Social Communication (using the pattern of Social Studies)
2. World Appreciation (using the pattern of Music Appreciation)
3. World Forms of Expression (using the pattern of World History)
4. Comparative Languages (using the pattern of Comparative Literature)
5. Human Communication Power (because language is the most important difference between animals and Humans).

A growing pattern of trade, intellectual and cultural relationships at the end of this century, has been noticed when instant communication was established; jumbo jets are flying, dial-direct telephone communication has achieved national and international standards, and TV from Asia and even from the Moon is almost as practical as local telecasting. Consequently today, and more than ever, there is not a greater tool for progress in the hands of our citizens than the possession of a good education.

However, unemployment and inflation are present today in the American life. Experts are studying the reasons for these two undesirable characteristics of the present economy. Our Federal Government is working hard to arrive at a solution: devaluation of the dollar in the international market, trips of President Nixon to eighteen different nations, etc., are the steps adopted to remedy the situation.

Is our unemployment and our inflation caused by internal or international causes? Obviously our international transactions are the ones which are suffering the competitive impact of other countries with greater HUMAN COMMUNICATION POWER, and this is indeed the major cause of our economical disadjustment.

Let us take the example of Hong Kong. When they export to us, they use the English language by saying, "MADE IN HONG KONG," instead of using the language they use in Hong Kong, which in this case, would be expressed 香港製的.

The Hong Kong manufacturers talk to Americans in English, for the reasons of "Mutual Respect and Equality." They will communicate in French when they export to France or to French-speaking countries, which is a way to spread democratic processes abroad.

What do Americans do when they export to Hong Kong? They will only impose our English by telling them, "Made in U.S.A.," when they should reciprocate by using their language in the phrase 美國製的.

With Japan, our greatest rival in industrialization and export power, it

will be the same way. They will communicate with us in English, but we will never communicate with them in Japanese. That is the main reason why Japanese people will react negatively before our exporters, as well as most of the rest of the people in the world; they assume we are using the English language for "cultural imperialism purposes." We are ignoring the courtesy of proper human communication power, when using only English, and not the Japanese language, in conducting transactions in Japan, for example.

There will be a similar effect on foreign transactions when dealing with France, Germany or Spain, or with any other country, if American manufacturers do not use these three respective languages when selling to those millions of non-English speakers.

Our lawyers, businessmen, corporation people, sellers, public relation departments and any worker on international transactions, must be equipped with the proper Human Communication Power. This means the ability to use the language spoken in the country where they are going to invest or negotiate. If this is not done, and other competitive countries develop this ability, our unemployment and total economical disadjustment will increase in the near future.

One more point will give an idea of the importance that our International Business Transactions have on today's economy. An example is the decision of the United States Government to make taxes 50 percent cheaper if you are going to export your merchandise. This is what they call the DISC (Domestic International Sales Corporation). This new 1971 corporation consists of a firm dedicated only to international business sales. If a business decides to take advantage of this new corporation, they will pay to the IRS only 50 percent of the taxes that the same profit or sales will pay if the corporation is involved in domestic sales.

What does the Federal Government want? It wants to sell to foreign countries. In order to obtain this result, which will promote the solution of American internal unemployment and inflation, any possible remedy must be adopted. It will not be surprising if, in the near future our government says, "For those who export, no taxes at all."

Everyone should realize that the most important aspect of selling to our neighbors and the rest of the world, is not imposing our language on them, but to use the proper Human Communication Power; in other words, the buyer's language. We need to know how to communicate with the rest of the world if we want to put America on the proper level of competition at the Twentieth Century International Transaction Situation.

The NDEA of 1956 identified second language education as one of the three critical areas of shortage in the United States, along with science and

mathematics. The future of American students in the International Communication Power situation regarding what United States is facing today, proves this. Consequently in 1972, second language education is still relevant.

American students are working today in the national interest of the country when studying "Human Communication Power," because they are persuaded that:

1. If you really want to understand a person who speaks another language, you should be able to communicate with him in that language.
2. If you want a person from another country to feel that you are concerned about him and his way of life, you should speak his language.
3. If you want to know how a person from another land really feels, what he really thinks, what his real needs are, you should speak his language.
4. If you want his political cooperation, you should speak his language.
5. If you want to establish successful trade relations with him, you should speak his language.
6. If you want to travel in his country, you should speak his language.
7. If you want to understand his culture, his arts, his history, his way of life, you should understand his language.