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ABSTRACT

The present paper reports on a study conducted in 1973, designed to measure the English competence and performance of bilingual fourth graders in selected schools in southern Arizona and the extent to which the first language (Spanish) interfered with the second (English). The study also attempted to determine which patterns might yet be unlearned by both native English speakers and nonnative English speakers. A test of basic English sentence types for bilingual children was constructed and adminstered to 90 native Spanish-speaking fourth graders who had participated for three or more years in any of three bilingual programs or any of two nonbilingual programs.The groups were further classified as urban and border. In addition, part 1 of the test was given to 20 native English speakers at the fourth grade level. It was concluded that: (1) the native English speakers had less difficulty in identifying the correct sentence types than the bilingual groups had; (2) the native Spanish-speaking groups showed no significant differences in their production performances; (3) the nonbilingual program groups seem to have an advantage in their ability to identify correct English sequences. Appended to the report are the personal data sheet completed by the students, test designs, and parts 1 and 2 of the test. (Author/PMP)

SMALL GROUP SESSION A-1
ESL In Bilingual Education

GRAND BALLROOM
Thurs 10:30

FRANK P. PIALORSI, The University of Arizona

The Production And Recognition of Grammatical And Ungrammatical English Word Sequences By Bilingual Children

The proposed paper will report on a study made in 1973 which attempted to measure the English competence and performance of bilingual fourth graders in selected schools in Southern Arizona, the extent the first language (Spanish) interfered with the second (English), and to determine which patterns might yet by unlearned by both native English speakers and non-native English speakers. Comparisons between the performances of Title VII Program and non-Title VII program groups were made to determine whether or not there could be significant differences in their abilities to recognize and produce correct English grammatical sequences.

Since no reliable test of this type existed for bilingual children, the study first involved the constructing of a test of basic English sentence types for bilingual children. Initial pilot testing of the test items took place in a Tucson, Arizona, elementary school with thirty subjects in groups of ten. These groups were not included in the final testing program.

Test items were adapted from various diagnostic tests for students of English as a second language. The final subjects were ninety native Spanish-speaking fourth grade pupils who had participated three or more years in any of three bilingual programs or any of two non-bilingual programs in Soutnern Arizona schools. The groups were further classified as urban (Tucson, Arizona) and border (Nogales, Arizona). In addition, Part I of the test was given to twenty native English speakers at the fourth grade level and of a socio-economic background similar to that of the five native Spanish-speaking groups. This was done to determine whether or not the native English speakers are significantly different from the non-native English speakers in their ability to recognize correct English grammatical sequences.

Part I of the test was made up of thirty-four multiple choice items based on a contrastive analysis of English and Spanish grammar (Recognition). Part II consisted of the correct items of Part I in their Spanish equivalents and required the subjects to write the correct English equivalents (Production). There was at least a one-week interval between the administration of Part I and Part II of the test.

(more)

presented at the 8th Annual TESOL Conference, Denver, March 1974

The results of the study showed that:

1. The native English English-speaking groups differed from the five Spanish-speaking groups in their Recognition performances.

2. There were no significant differences among the five Spanish-speaking groups in their Production performances.

3. There were no significant differences among the five Spanish-speaking groups in their total test performances.

4. There were significant differences between the three bilingual program groups and the two non-bilingual groups in their Recognition performances. It appears that the non-bilingual program subjects performed higher on the Recognition scale.

5. There were no significant differences between the urban and border groups.

6. There were no significant differences between sexes.

7. There was a positive correlation between the subjects' recognition and production performances.

On the basis of this study, the following conclusions were made:

1. Problems with basic grammatical English sequences among bilingual children can be identified.

2. Native English-speaking children had less difficulty in identifying the correct basic sentence types presented than the bilingual groups. This comparison was made primarily to test the reliability of Part I of the test.

3. The five native Spanish-speaking groups, whether in structured bilingual programs or not, showed no significant differences in their Production performances.

4. At this point in their English language development, the non-bilingual program groups in the study seem to have an advantage over the bilingual groups in their ability to identify correct English grammatical sequences.

THE PRODUCTION AND RECOGNITION OF GRAMMATICAL AND UNGRAMMATICAL ENGLISH WORD SEQUENCES BY BILINGUAL CHILDREN

by

Frank Paul Pialorsi

This project was undertaken to provide an effective instrument to measure the Production and Recognition of grammatical and ungrammatical English word sequences by bilingual Spanish-English children. The initial task was to construct a reliable test of basic syntactic structures with which mature native speakers of English have little, if any, trouble, and which would determine the variance among Spanish-speaking fourth graders in bilingual schools between the production and recognition of these basic sentence types at this stage of their language development. Results indicated that native English speakers perform better in their recognition of correct sequences. Differences between groups of children in bilingual programs and non-bilingual programs whose native and home language is Spanish were minimal. Patterns such as the tag question house number and street address,

subject + p-group + verb proved difficult for native speakers, as well as bilinguals. These may be classified as unlearned patterns, and, in the case of subject/verb agreement (one of the boys is rather than one of the boys are), as a matter of usage rather than syntax. This is an error with which instructors of college freshmen are still confronted.

Part II of the test, Production, required the ninety subjects to translate the thirty-four test items from Spanish to English. This was the first time in their school experience they were given a task of this type. After receiving instructions from the researcher and the classroom teacher, they proceeded with a minimum of questions which concerned unfamiliar vocabulary items. (For example, there were questions from every group about the meaning of helado [ice cream] and nos divertimos [we enjoy ourselves].)

Two basic criteria were used to evaluate the translations: correct word order and tense and plural markers. Many of the responses were comparatively free in their translations:

Cue: En el verano hace calor en Arizona, ¿ verdad?
Response: Arizona's hot in the summer, don't you think?

Cue: Yo no quiero mas leche; ya tengo.
Response: I don't want any more milk; I've had enough.

Cue: ¿Como le gustó el cuento?
Response: What did you think of the story?

Cue: Nos divertimos en la fiesta.
Response: We had a lot of fun at the party.

Frequent error-types are demonstrated by the following:

Cue: Esta resfriada ella?
Response: Does she has a cold?

Cue: Favor de leer esta carta.
Response: Please to read this letter.

Cue: No puede el correr rapido?
Response: Does he can't run fast?

Comparisons of all groups between Recognition and Production performances revealed a positive correlation of .7567 and that some error would be made in prediction.

Statistically verified results showed:

1. The native English-speaking groups differed from the five Spanish-speaking groups in their Recognition performances.
2. There were no significant differences among the five Spanish-speaking groups in their Production performances.
3. There were no significant differences among the five Spanish-speaking groups in their total test performances.
4. There were significant differences between the three bilingual program groups and the two non-bilingual groups in their Recognition performances at .05 level of confidence.
5. There were no significant differences between the urban groups and the border groups in their Production performances.

6. There were no significant differences between the urban groups and the border groups in their Recognition performances.
7. There were no significant differences between sexes.
8. There was a positive correlation between the subjects' Recognition and Production performances.

Conclusions

The major conclusions from this study are the following:

1. The instrument developed to measure the English Production and Recognition performances had acceptable reliability and validity; however, revisions should be made.
2. Native English-speaking children had less difficulty in identifying the correct basic sentence types presented then the bilingual groups who showed some evidence of first language interference.
3. The five native Spanish-speaking groups, whether in structured bilingual programs or not, showed no significant differences in their Production performances.
4. The scores of the non-bilingual program groups indicated an advantage over the bilingual groups in the ability to identify correct English grammatical sequences.
5. In considering the causes for the above, the extensive use of Spanish initially and the relatively late formal

introduction to the English language in the bilingual programs are important factors.

Recommendations

In view of the limitations of this study, which was primarily concerned with English proficiency among bilingual children and not with the equal development of two languages, the following are recommended:

1. The instrument developed in this study should be used with other bilingual groups to test and possibly increase its reliability and validity.
2. Since problems with basic grammatical English sequences among bilingual children can be identified, similar tests should be developed, expanded, and administered periodically to determine competence in basic English sentence types. This data will be useful in the continuing effort to improve the methodology in the teaching of English as a Second Language.
3. If balanced bilingualism is the goal of bilingual programs, educators in bilingual schools should consistently compare the language development of their pupils with that of native speakers. In so doing, they can develop a realistic scale of measuring native-like proficiency.

Fluency in two or more languages is a major factor in enabling a person to live and function in more than one culture.

It can help to free him from limitations imposed upon him by belonging to a single cultural and linguistic group. Making two languages part of the educational process of children involves many complexities; therefore, further recommendations stated here must go beyond the limited scope of this study.

Linguistic habits take time to develop. One of the strong arguments for bilingual education in elementary schools is that a series of progressive skills can be organized according to the best available methodology which should lead to competence in the two languages (Stern 1967, p. 9). However, three important factors must be considered to determine in which direction individual bilingual programs can and should go:

1. Since conditions, aims, and needs vary greatly in different communities, it is impossible to derive from any one bilingual program all of the procedures which would be universally or nationally applicable.
2. All teachers in bilingual schools should have the opportunity to participate in preservice and in-service programs which provide training to meet the following requirements (Saville and Troike 1970, p. 26):
   a. a willingness to participate in an innovative program.
   b. a knowledge of the structures of both languages of instruction.

c. a general understanding of the nature of language, including the acceptability and inevitability of dialect variations.

d. a specific understanding of one's own dialect and the dialect of the area in which he teaches.

e. a knowledge of methods for teaching a second language.

f. an understanding and acceptance of all cultures represented in the community.

g. a knowledge of the growth and development patterns of children from different cultures.

h. the competence to provide a good linguistic model, preferably in both languages.

3. Current methods of evaluation such as that attempted in this study should be supported by follow-up studies or by more evidence from a sufficient amount of adequately controlled research. The need for further investigations of all kinds is recognized (Stern 1967, p. 79).

The above supports the view that in research on the differences between languages there is a need to develop indices for all aspects of bilingual education to determine the absolute and relative difficulties of the native and second languages. Further measurements of Production and Recognition in both languages should be made for all children at different ages and different degrees of language aptitude. Concerning the area of language testing, Saville and Troike (1970, p. 64) stated:

> A great deal of work still remains to be done in the construction and validation of tests of bilingual education programs. As such tests are being developed and made available, necessary checks on the progress of children and programs are going to come from the combined observation of experienced and knowledgeable teachers, coordinators, administrators, and linguists.

Such studies would involve a great deal of effort; nevertheless, it is only through these studies that satisfactory knowledge can be gained concerning bilingual education and the amount and type of investment it requires. More research needs to be made in innate language acquisition and its relationship to nonstandard language patterns. Robinson (in Shane, Walden, and Green 1971, p. 12) explained further that:

> . . . clearer distinctions need to be drawn between language competence and performance. In the sequence of language development . . . we need to ascertain the significance of the variability with which usage skills are acquired and also to explore more fully the influence of the child's membership in a given subculture in relation to his language development.

The schools' future posture with respect to bilingual programs needs to be determined and altered as greater agreement is reached on the virtue of developing two languages. In addition, careful consideration should be given to the changes in procedures and teaching and testing techniques such a bilingual policy would require.

APPENDIX A

PERSONAL DATA SHEET

Name of Student _____ ID.# _____

Name of School _____

I have been a pupil at this school for _____ years.

Sex _____

Date of Birth _____ Place of Birth _____

Father's Place of Birth _____

Mother's Place of Birth _____

Home Language: Check the statements which are true.

_____ 1. I speak mostly Spanish away from school.

_____ 2. I speak mostly Spanish with my father.

_____ 3. I speak mostly Spanish with my mother.

_____ 4. I speak mostly Spanish with my brothers and sisters.

_____ 5. I speak mostly Spanish with my neighbors.

_____ 6. Both of my parents speak to me both in Spanish and English.

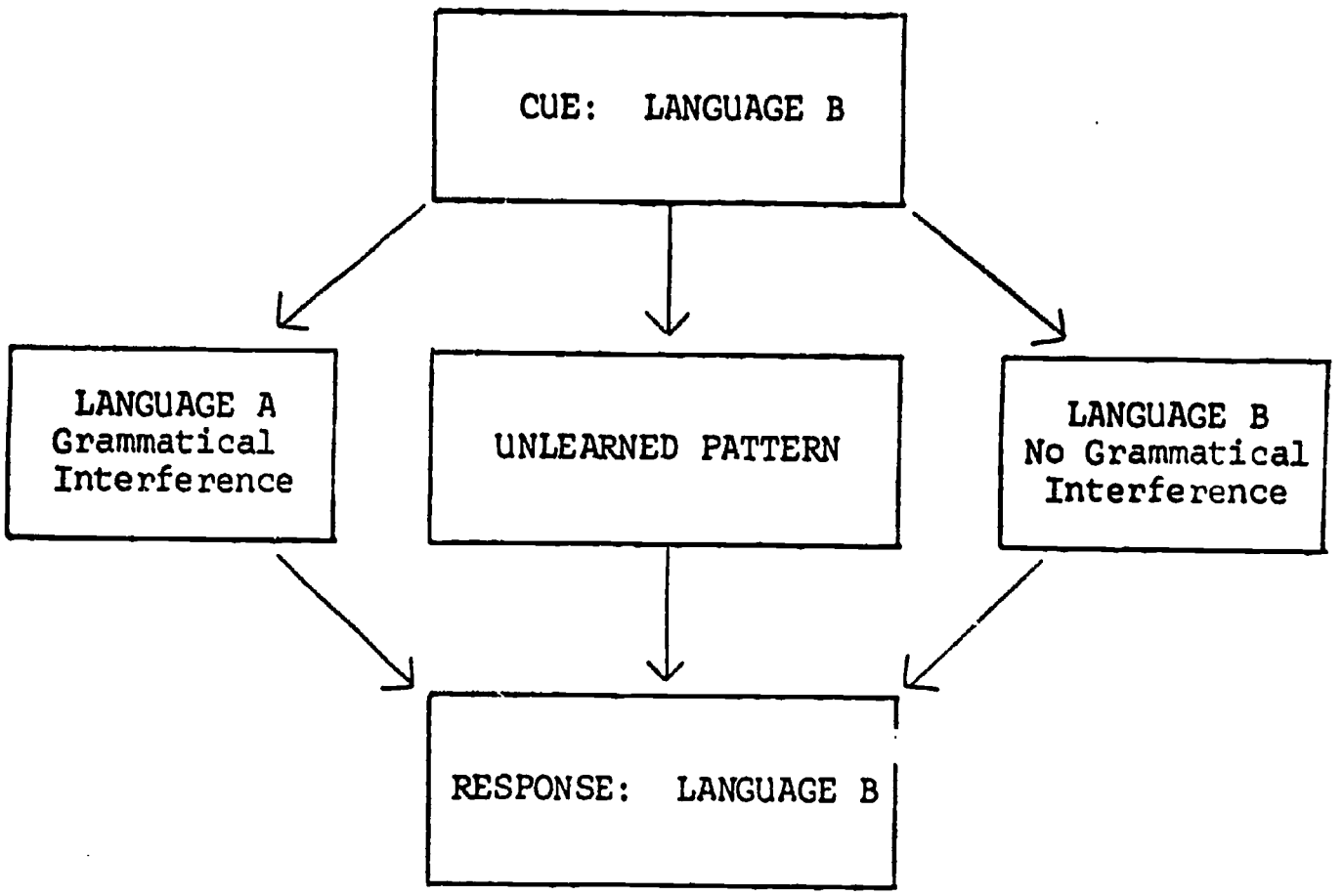
_____ 7. One parent speaks to me in Spanish and the other speaks to me in English.

_____ 8. I speak mostly English away from school.

APPENDIX cB

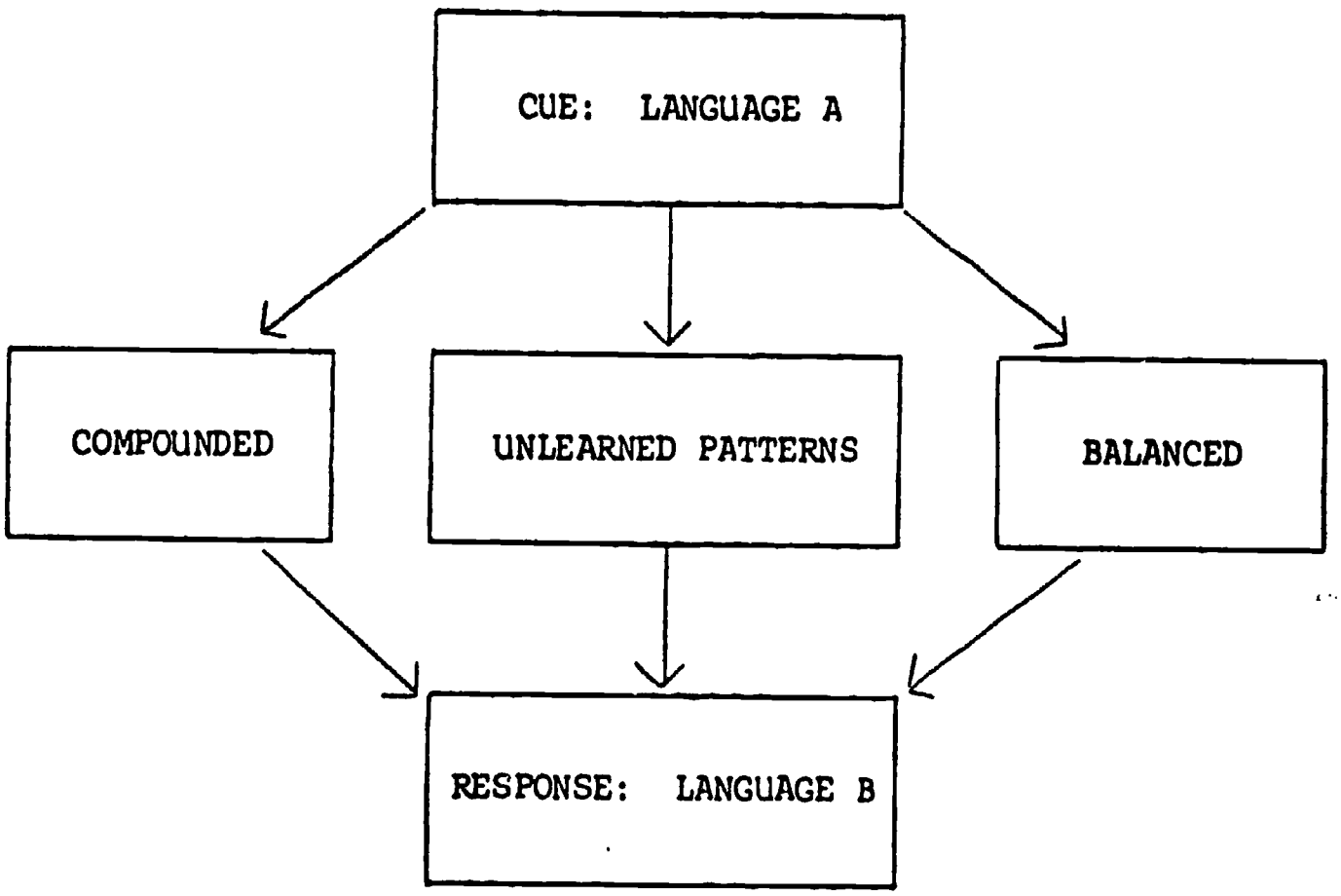
TEST DESIGNS

Part I



LANGUAGE A: Spanish
LANGUAGE B: English

Part II


CUE: LANGUAGE A
COMPOUNDED
UNLEARNED PATTERNS
BALANCED
RESPONSE: LANGUAGE B

APPENDIX .C

TEST OF THE PRODUCTION AND RECOGNITION OF ENGLISH GRAMMATICAL SEQUENCES
PART I: RECOGNITION

English Practice

Directions: Place a checkmark next to the sentence that you think is correct.

Example 1:
<u>✓</u> He is my father.
___ She is my father.
___ It is my father.

Example 2:
___ She like her teacher.
<u>✓</u> She likes her teacher.
___ She liking her teacher.

1.
___ Tom has a bicycle but wants other.
___ Tom has a bicycle but wants one.
___ Tom has a bicycle but wants another.

2.
___ Maria bought this book yesterday; it is his.
___ Maria bought this book yesterday: it is hers.
___ Maria bought this book yesterday; it is its.

3.
___ This pencil is my sister's.
___ This pencil is of my sister.
___ This pencil is to my sister.

4.
___ Mr. Sanchez comes to school in a bus.
___ Mr. Sanchez comes to school by a bus.
___ Mr. Sanchez come to school on bus.

5.
___ Is near the school the church?
___ Is the school near the church?
___ Is the school the church near?

6.
___ After to study I play with my friends.
___ After studying I play with my friends.
___ After the study I play with my friends.

7. ___ Can you going with us tomorrow?
___ Can you go with us tomorrow?
___ Can you to go with us tomorrow?

8. ___ The dog wants something to eat.
___ The dog wants something for to eat.
___ The dog wants something for eat.

9. ___ The girl I saw was happy.
___ The girl what I saw was happy.
___ The girl which I saw was happy.

10. ___ We had a good time at the party.
___ We made a good time at the party.
___ We did a good time at the party.

11. ___ Mary eats much of ice cream.
___ Mary eats a lot of ice cream.
___ Mary eats many ice cream.

12. ___ She wishes she were pretty.
___ She wishes she is pretty.
___ She wishes being pretty.

13. ___ Please to read this letter.
___ Please read this letter.
___ Please reading this letter.

14. ___ How liked he the story?
___ How he liked the story?
___ How did he like the story?

15. ___ Does he can't run fast?
___ Can't he run fast?
___ Does he can run fast?

16. ___ How are you feeling today?
___ How are feeling today you?
___ How today are you feeling?

17. ___ I very well speak English.
___ I speak English very well.
___ I speak very well English.

18. ___ We arrived there late yesterday.
___ We arrived late yesterday there.
___ We arrived yesterday there late.

19. ___ One of the boys am not at school today.
___ One of the boys are not at school today.
___ One of the boys is not at school today.

20. ___ Columbus has discovered America in 1492.
___ Columbus discovered America in 1492.
___ Columbus has been discovering America in 1492.

21. ___ Does she have a cold?
___ Is she have a cold?
___ Has she have a cold?

22. ___ Robert is a gooder swimmer than James.
___ Robert is a more good swimmer than James.
___ Robert is a better swimmer than James.

23. ___ Arizona is hot in the summer, not true?
___ Arizona is hot in the summer, is it?
___ Arizona is hot in the summer, isn't it?

24. ___ We live in 1824 South Fifth Street.
___ We live at '824 South Fifth Street.
___ We live on 824 South Fifth Street.

25. ___ Doesn't he have nothing for you?
___ Doesn't have he something for you?
___ Doesn't he have anything for you?

26. ___ The school nurse comes tomorrow, won't she?
___ The school nurse comes tomorrow, doesn't she?
___ The school nurse comes tomorrow, isn't she?

27. ___ I don't want more milk; I have some.
___ I don't want more milk; I have any.
___ I don't want more milk; I have other.

28. ___ Mr. Gonzalez isn't at school today, does he?
___ Mr. Gonzalez isn't at school today, is he?
___ Mr. Gonzalez isn't at school today, isn't he?

29. ___ There is not much news in the paper today.
___ There is not many news in the paper today.
___ There is not much of news in the paper today.

30. ___ She hasn't been sick, did she?
___ She hasn't been sick, was she?
___ She hasn't been sick, has she?

31. ___ He talked to each other.
___ They talked to each other.
___ He talked to other.

32. ___ Dolores likes school and Juanita likes too.
___ Dolores likes school and Juanita does too.
___ Dolores likes school and Juanita is too.

33. ___ We went to school during a year.
___ We went to school for a year.
___ We went to school while a year.

34. ___ I wish that I had a new bicycle.
___ I want that I had a new bicycle.
___ I like that I had a new bicycle.

APPENDIX D

TEST OF THE PRODUCTION AND RECOGNITION OF ENGLISH GRAMMATICAL SEQUENCES
PART II: PRODUCTION

Say It In English

Directions: You are helping someone who doesn't understand Spanish. How would you say the following sentences in English?

Example 1: Me llamo Pancho.
My name is Pancho.

Example 2: Les hablo en inglés.
I speak to them in English.

Example 3: Juan y él son mexicanos, verdad?
(DO NOT USE TRUE)
Juan and he are Mexicans, aren't they?

---

1. Tomás tiene una bicicleta pero él quiere otra.

2. Maria compró este libro ayer; es suyo.

3. Este lápiz es de mi hermana.

4. El señor Sánchez viene a la escuela en el bus.

5. ¿Está la escuela cerca de la iglésia?

6. Después de estudiar, juego con mis amigos.

7. ¿Puedes ir con nosotros mañana?

8. El perro quiere algo para comer.

9. La muchacha que yo vi estaba contenta.

10. Nos divertimos en la fiesta.

11. Maria come mucho helado (ice cream).

12. Ella quisiera ser bonita.

13. Favor de leer esta carta.

14. ¿Cómo le gusto el cuento (story)?

15. ¿No puede el correr rapido?

16. ¿Como te sientes hoy?

17. Yo hablo muy bien el ingles.

18. Ayer nosotros llegamos allí tarde.

19. Uno de los muchachos no está en la escuela hoy.

20. Colón descubrió América en 1492.

21. ¿Está resfriada ella?

22. Roberto es mejor nadador (swimmer) que Jaime.

23. En el verano hace calor en Arizona, ¿verdad?

24. Vivimos en la calle Douglas sur, número 1824.

25. ¿No tiene él nada para ti?

26. La enfermera de la escuela viene mañana, ¿verdad?

27. Yo no quiero más leche: ya tengo.

28. El señor Gonzalez no está en la escuela hoy, ¿verdad?

29. No hay muchas noticias en el periódico hoy.

30. Ella no ha estado enferma, ¿verdad?

31. Ellos se hablaron.

32. A Dolores le gusta la escuela y a Juanita también.

33. Nosotros fuimos a la escuela por un año.

34. Ojalá que yo tuviera una bicicleta nueva.