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Intercultural Grammars: A Languetics Up-Date and a Geolinguistic Challenge

V. Lynn Tyler

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ABSTRACT: Intercultural Grammars presuppose that all people everywhere can synergystically communicate with each other to an acceptable degree and at desirable levels of closure, all things being equal. The essential components of such communication, relational rules from which real patterns of success can be projected, and situational qualifiers which must be given both expressive and perceptive focus -- these together form one of the significant dimensions of the discipline currently denominated LANGUETICS. Simply: What specifically communicates "best"? What is confusing? What is offensive or intolerable? What is so distinct as to be ineffable? What do we now know? What can we learn? What must we attain for world-wide communication and effective interaction?

CULTURE GRAMMARS are composed of written and unwritten "rules" which may be assumed or real. These constitute that which is generic to a given people: Japanese, American, Slavic, and so on. As these are broadly identified, contrasted with other communication systems, and given both rational and replicable points at which communicability, tolerance, offense, confusion, etc., take place, there evolve apparent critical patterning which is essential to the use of "language" -- in all of its forms and functions (the ETICS) useful to successful communication and "closure." Closure in this sense is the satisfactory result of what is intended by the communication or interaction: education, motivation, etc.

LANGUETIC categories interrelatedly demonstrate the CONTENT of real or assumed messages on the basis of CULTURE (unique thought, feeling, and action patterns of a people), CONTEXT (time and place of events, interactions, symbols, etc.) and COMMUNICATION modes and codes (verbal -- such as spoken or written words in well-formed syntactic systems, non-verbal, para-verbal, and para-normal -- such as inspiration, "vibes," and other channels of understanding).

Over 1200 elements have been identified as potentially critical to the acceptability of communication, with developmental rules interweaving culture, content and communication modes and codes in what can be called "INTERCULTURAL GRAMMARS." Over 100 countries/cultures have been sampled to illustrate potential miscommunications. World-wide research and development is essential to adequately portray all essential interrelations. More than 125 disciplines have been found to have bearing on intercultural interactions (such as public relations, deontology, ethics, anthropology, linguistics, journalism, conflict analysis, etc.).

Geolinguist implications come from 300+ political and "people" nations, millions of "kindreds," tongues or languages exceeding 10,000, and "peoples" estimated to range to about 25,000 "affinity groups." An INTERCULTURAL READY REFERENCE has been prepared, citing examples, models, and key statements from experts having world-wide focus on communication.

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Orientation to Intercultural Grammars: People do interact -- usually in patterns or by "formulas." They acceptably and regularly communicate. They learn to use mutually meaningful symbols and signs to transfer their understanding, their feelings, their desires, and their motivations one to another.

Somewhat reliable systems of classification can be understood as they work together: words, gestures, colors, time and place, bodily position and movement. These and many more elements of "language" combine into what we call "culture." Culture characterizes the unique or different ways given peoples think, feel, and act -- and why. Results of culture such as art or activity either converge or diverge in recognizable patterns and environments to help us discern and label the distinctions of a people.

Language in its many forms combines with other signal systems to help people interact and "make sense." For example, WHO speaks can be more telling than WHAT is said -- or not, and what is DONE. And what is done might be more significant that what is verbalized. (Actions can speak more loudly than words.) What is seen often alters what is otherwise perceived. ( A picture paints more than a thousand words. Or, "I can't believe my eyes.")

People usually interact in ways that seem universal or all-pervasive to them. Combinations and transformations of thought, feeling, and action (speech, stance, smell, symbols) when used widely and often seem to become "right and proper" or "wrong and inappropriate" for specific groups of people. In combination, these are called "CULTURE GRAMMARS."

A paradox of identification of almost stereotypic patterns which characterize how people act and interact is that the theory of probability can predict with almost uncanny precision the overall result of a large number of individual events (what to say, when to say it, etc.) which are each in and of themselves unpredictable. A large number of uncertainties can somehow produce an almost certainty which we call "language and culture."

Though infinite variations make up a "people," we still can and do categorize them by groups: TruKESE, FinnISH, TongAN. We feel we can read a sort of "people-map" and readily understand differences which make a difference to our motivations, entertainment, information, etc.

However, what may seem clear and appropriate to one person can be not only confusing but offensive to another. What a person says or does in his or her own society can be intolerable in a new setting. (E.g. the American "O.K." sign is obscene in Brazil. In France it often means "zero, zilch." The INTERCULTURAL READY REFERENCE recently produced at the B.Y.U. Language and Intercultural Research Center cites over 1200 samples of such distinct "messages" in literally hundreds of categories.)

Add together words or terms ("democracy," "leader," "pig," ) and all other potential communication "events" -- such as time, place, circumstance, and language patterns, and you have the currently denominated field of LANGUETICS, or, language in its broadest context. Languetics forms the basis for the study and use of INTERCULTURAL GRAMMARS.
Peoples are recognized and valued by their CULTURE GRAMMARS, in identifiable rules, guidelines, codes, basic principles, and their manifestations. ("Oh, yes, they are Americans. You can tell by how they..."

Though never fully transcribed, there are foundations for etiquette, mores, and laws. Learning such patterns can aid understanding and even communication.

INTERcultural grammars become necessary as people try to understand and communicate with OTHER people. For instance, does an American bow in certain circumstances in Japan, as the Japanese do? With what acceptable verbal expressions or silences? What is not appropriate? When does a hand-shake convey comprehensively the equivalent meaning?

Or, in diplomacy, do we do it THEIR way, or they OURS? To resolve our problems with them, how do we deal with their problems with us? When can we find yet another way which can (by synergy) be more acceptable to both of us -- as in negotiation, decision making, or humor?

INTERCULTURAL GRAMMARS are developed by synergy or common acceptance. (E.g. sign languages used between native tribes, courtesies shown visitors though not normally practiced otherwise, etc.)

There may be few invariable rules or exact formulas for such people-to-people "grammar" systems. There always seem to be more individual exceptions than "musts." However, descriptive generalizations can become valuable "maps" for mutual understanding, responses, and outcomes, more particularly so when they conform to repetitive reality. (Of course, we would first recognize that the map represents only part of a territory; any form of language interrelating with all other forms only provides limited-faceted views of what actually happens.)

Maps of people interactions can be valuable in a similar way to periodic charts of elements (in chemistry). They point out special relationships and values. Generalizations can aid in many situations if not attempted for all. When some structure is required and present, we have what can be called GRAMMAR. Bridges between GRAMMARS are INTERCULTURAL GRAMMARS.

Grammars have recognizable logic to the people who use it -- or "hear" its misuse. (Figures of speech, false logic, humor -- these are types of culture-logic.) Grammars are both a product of and part of the people who devise and use them. Intelligible life processes can represent reality, be real, and be affected by other realities -- such as thought patterns, role relationships, aesthetic choice, etc.

The command "DO IT!" likely represents the authority of someone to motivate. Reactions are culturally determined. (THEY might do it, but should WE? How? Under what conditions? With what expected results?)

Thus, when words and other codes or symbols are "strung together," in any acceptable form and identifiable function, they "make sense." If they confuse or offend unintentionally, then an INTERCULTURAL GRAMMAR system may be required to bring about desired interactions or results.

The model on the next page suggests essential elements for manifesting or modifying what can be understandable in certain CONTENT, CONTEXT, CULTURE, and COMMUNICATION modes and codes. Starting at any point, as fits given examples, one can "map" formulas for successful interactions.
**INTERCULTURAL GRAMMAR--PROTOTYPE CHART**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>USER TYPE</th>
<th>GUIDELINES</th>
<th>CODES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Little aid, weak, or impossible in exact form</td>
<td>AVOID INSTRUCTIONS</td>
<td>SIGNS, SYMBOLS, ...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Needs, ideas, and rules, limited in use and reality</td>
<td>USE UNCONSCIOUS</td>
<td>FORMULATING FACTORS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Needs, but limited in use and reality</td>
<td>CAUTION PERCEPTION</td>
<td>A = ALL THINGS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Needs, but aid not available</td>
<td>DMIT EXPRESSION</td>
<td>BEING EQUAL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Needs, but aids are inappropriate</td>
<td>NOO FEEDBACK</td>
<td>A = ALL ALWAYS</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**RULES**

- **SITUATIONAL (OR CONCEPTUAL, CODES)**
  - CODIFIES
  - DE DICTO
  - AFFECT
  - PERCEIVED
  - INTENT
  - MANIFESTATIONS
  - ALEXIS
  - RELEVANCE
  - PERCEPTION
  - VALUES
  - CLUES
  - CODES
  - RULES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EXAMPLES</th>
<th>RULES</th>
<th>CODES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>INDIFFERENT</td>
<td>PREVAIL</td>
<td>LDL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INTERRELATIONAL</td>
<td>PREVAIL</td>
<td>LDL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMPLICATIONS</td>
<td>PREVAIL</td>
<td>LDL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EXPECTATIONS</td>
<td>PREVAIL</td>
<td>LDL</td>
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<tr>
<td>PREDICTIONS</td>
<td>PERCEPTIVE</td>
<td>LDL</td>
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<tr>
<td>BEHAVIOR</td>
<td>PERCEPTIVE</td>
<td>LDL</td>
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<tr>
<td>ROLES</td>
<td>PRECEPTIVE</td>
<td>LDL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RULES</td>
<td>PERCEPTIVE</td>
<td>LDL</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**PRINCIPLES & LAWS**

- **VALUES**
  - DIMENSIONS
  - NEGATIVE
  - IRRATIONAL
  - INHERENT
  - ABSENT

- **MESSAGES**
  - DIMENSIONS
  - NEGATIVE
  - IRRATIONAL
  - INHERENT
  - ABSENT

* May be used, as a map, beginning at any point, according to need and applications. Other factors may also be devised.*
Examples follow of how INTERCULTURAL GRAMMAR codes and rules and the guidelines which govern them for specific situations can be generated. (Principles involved and laws which must be followed can be outlined, as sampled at the base of the prototype chart.)

In the middle of the right column one could find codes for F = Female, yA = Young Adult, Pt = Participant, Gp = Group, Tm = Time, and Plc = Place. A young woman who is participating in a group at a certain time and certain place might [see under CUES] evoke empathy, for instance, in one culture but disrespect in another. That is, she might be in a crowd scene that is "affinity -- alike." Someone with a different value system might think it a mob or "rabble." An INTERCULTURAL GRAMMAR would be used to show the difference and give understanding. In speech, a comparative example might be "Now I understand why she is with them, and likes it." (As a map, the chart allows for myriad uses, dimensions.)

From the PROTOTYPE CHART can be generated almost any kind of interactive relationship. Though it is the initial chart comprehending INTERCULTURAL relationships, rules, codes, etc., it is obviously in need of expansion and comprehensive examples. Only completed in the past several weeks, it is already being used in a variety of ways to demonstrate factors and interrelationships of message transfer across cultural and other boundaries. It is a generative "map" and has as many possible uses are there are intercultural situations to work through. It is NOT final but only operationally suggestive of what can be done to create scenarios, examples, rules, guidelines, and indicate what "can be."

In our times, patterns by which people can or cannot be understood and accepted become quite critical. Prototype ready references recently completed at BYU's Language and Intercultural Research Center cite from the literature and intensive interviews such critical patterns. Such examples obviously have to be tested and retested by personal experience and broad applications.

Forms and functions of INTERCULTURAL GRAMMAR rules, guidelines, codes, and principles are only now beginning to be applied (other than intuitively) to critical interactions between the distinct peoples of our world. Reasons for this delayed but urgent task are indicated in questions and quotes appearing with the INTERCULTURAL READY REFERENCE. For reader's interest, some of them appear on the next page. Specific quotations in context are available from BYU/LIRC.

Much is yet to be done. While this is but a beginning, is IS a beginning. As Edward T. Hall (Beyond Culture. Anchor Books, 1977.) indicated,

An almost overwhelming task lies ahead of us to classify situation-al frames and the way in which they build up into larger wholes. Man has had very little experience with this sort of analysis, and I for one have no notion where it will lead us. Research...smooths out contradiction, and makes things simple, logical, and coherent.

To perform that task is a challenge open to you and many of us willing to pay the price of world-wide, people-to-people, urgent and meaningful understanding. A base is being built, through LANGUETICS and many other scientific studies. Accomplishment requires us all working as one.
Questions and Quotes

WHY IS AN INTERCULTURAL READY REFERENCE NEEDED?

The principal function of the International Communication Agency should be to reduce the degree to which misunderstanding and misinterpretation contribute reasons between the United States and other nations.

Prospect: Jenny Cagle 1975

It is frequently the most obvious and least for granted and therefore the least studied aspects of culture that influence behavior in the greatest and subtlest ways.

Until recently, man did not need (as much) to be aware of the structure of his own behavioral systems (or others') because facing at home, the behavior of most people was highly predictable. Today, however, man is constantly interacting with strangers, both because his environments (travel, radio, TV, press, correspondence, etc.) have widened his range and caused its world to shrink. It is therefore necessary for man to transcend his own culture and the single become only by making the rules by which it operates.

A discovery must be, by definition, in variance with existing knowledge. What research does it smooths out contradiction, makes things amiss logical, and coherent.

Dr. Edward T. Hall 1977

The communicator cannot help but know that the people he is working with have different customs, goals, and thought-patterns from his own. He must be able to deal with an infinite variety of messages and understandings: feelings. He must be able to work with them and within them, neither losing his own values in the confrontation nor permitting them behind a wall of intellectual arrangement.

Dr. Francis E. H. Hall 1975

There are different perspectives from which to view things, and something can look radically different to persons who view it in different perspectives.

Dr. Daniel L. Osher 1974

IF we would communicate across cultural barriers, we must learn what to say and how to say it in the expectations and presuppositions of those we want to listen

Dr. Robert T. Oliver 1956

WHAT IS THE CHALLENGE FOR DEVISING AN INTERCULTURAL READY REFERENCE?

To abstract such a system from the living data whose existence before it is a formidable task, an intellectual achievement that can equal the great accomplishments in chemistry, physics, and astronomy.

Dr. Edward T. Hall 1977

The dividing line between language and nonlinguistic knowledge is not as clear as some have supposed. There are many other difficulties in discovering the elements of a culture grammar and grammar, empirically learned grammars, and structures of grammars in our mind.

Dr. Bernard M. Colby 1975

Men does not possess and cannot ever have, perfect knowledge and will never possess with any completeness the outcome of any division made. The objective investigator is to reduce the uncertainty and to determine the level of risk that is acceptable in terms of the expected benefits from the proposed action.

Dawn Nicks, et al. 1975

WHAT IS THE URGENCY? HASN'T THIS ALL BEEN DONE BEFORE?

The speed and acceleration of events is such as to make obsolete and render almost anything that has been published.

What is increasingly becoming required is an anticipatory research and anticipatory management. The ideas, from not facing the problems squarely, are now just too late.

Dr. Wilbur T. Britton 1975

Our linguistic and cultural myopia is a looming business, and result in the world.

J. William Rubright 1979

Our great need, desire, and obsession is to bring to the world the cans of understanding.

Southwest K. Komita 1978

WHAT IS AN INTERCULTURAL GRAMMAR, AND WHY IS IT NEEDED?

An intercultural grammar would consist of rules for the arrangement of cultural elements that should account for all communications, regardless of the user.

Dr. B. N. Colby 1975

The base is not merely to compute a taxonomy of the various syntactic functions which arise merely in a discourse block, but how to determine the possible reasons why such functions may be used and when it may not.

Given the taxonomy, the rules, and the definition (with occasional quotations), it should then be possible to detect and predict with reasonable accuracy the points in which statements of other languages and therefore the words, encounter communication breakdowns.

Dr. Robert D. Huglas 1975

If all cultures were precisely the same in all their characteristics, we would not need to consider the important study and practice of intercultural communication.

Dr. Michael A. Proser 1974

To enhance the sensitivity, the insight, and the understanding that Americans bring to their relations with other people.

Ambassador John E. Reinhardt 1978

HOW CAN YOU GENERALIZE AND STEREOTYPE TO FIT CRITICAL SITUATIONS?

A stereotype is a useful concept, without necessary emotional overtones or connotations of prejudice, which is used in generalizing the results, and which is not at variance with other cultures.

The communication between users of other languages and therefore users of other cultures...the effect is that the stereotype will be more accurate about members of the other culture.

Dr. Bernard E. Blass 1971

The answer to complexity is not to give up the whole thing, but to keep generalizing and simplifying assumptions that put their fingers on the essential factors behind the complexity.

An essential component of it includes everything that should be in that degree of completeness, and concisely, that it includes nothing that is superficial.

Dr. Joseph E. Eberle 1975

WHY GO BEYOND "LEARNING THE LANGUAGE?"

Language is always accompanied by other signs, but the other signs are not always accompanied by language. In fact, most communication is non-linguistic. We need to be more conscious of the non-linguistic signs we use among ourselves and of the fact that not all people use the same signs to indicate the same message. Because our education system is a language-oriented, many people believe that language is the primary signal system. But in fact, it is not.

Dr. James检察官 1975

No matter how skilled the translator is, he cannot possibly mirror the entire speech community that uses it. Translating into English is not a simple two-way street.

Dr. Betty S. Smith 1975

On the other hand, it is not a simple two-way street.

Dr. Betty S. Smith 1975

The emphasis of culture is that language is the system most frequently used to describe culture, by nature tied directly to the difficulties. Language is not a communication system for transmitting thoughts or meaning from one brain to another, but a system for preserving information and in maintaining thoughts and reasoning them in others. Businesses, educators, government officials, and foreign service personnel, and to gain the most in-depth understanding of cultural processes in living contexts.

Dr. Edward T. Hall 1977

Our "language" of communication is broader than our "spoken" language. Language includes the use of non-verbal symbols and codes of our culture. When something is said, it is more than just a confusion of speech, its "spoken" language or cultural mechanism was conveyed.

Dr. Daniel L. Osher 1974

Your Experience and Challenges:
Languetics: An Up-Date. Intercultural Grammars (using elements which number over 1200 essential to specific uses) spring from the study and use of "appropriate language" in any and all of its critical and essential forms and functions.

Languetics, as an intercultural bridge, involves the study and use of practical and real interrelationships of the:

Verbal (i.e. print, spoken, other symbolic codes); Para-verbal (rate, pitch, lay-out, et al.); Non-verbal (anything which is used to, or by which itself does, communicate: events [such as elections being a "voice of the people"], gestures -- or their unexpected absence, colors, touch, media ["the medium is the message"], etc. The current BYU/LIRC Taxonomy of Elements consists of over 1200 separate potentially essential factors, categorized under content, context, culture, and communication modes and codes. Not to be left out is the Para-normal (ESP, intuition, inspiration, the "vibes," psycho-kinesis, and other psi-types of "fourth and fifth dimension communication!").

As a scientific discipline, Languetics draws upon and correlates principles and practices from over 130 related disciplines, such as semiotics, cybernetics, linguistics, content analysis, stylistics, translation, etc. (A complete list is available from BYU/LIRC. Models for interrelated research are illustrated in the new Intercultural Ready Reference.)

One of the major principles involved in Languetics is that of imbrication. This term deals literally with what is "missing." For example, a tile broken on a roof may allow rain to come in. Closing up the hole is imbrication. So, in intercultural interactions, finding the "holes" and closing them -- to prevent confusion or offense -- is a Languetics principle called imbrication. The positive application of the principle is to determine where critical points of successful communication can be dealt with consistently, to "build bridges of understanding." (E.g. to know when to wink, with whom, together with what verbal expressions, can be important to youth relationships. What clothing to wear, and colors to use, can also be vitally important to total message acceptance in some situations. What gestures to avoid or use can be good to know -- particularly when these can enhance a message transfer.)

The main point of Languetics is to investigate what "works best" in predictable intercultural situations, or to detect what offends or confuses or otherwise inhibits the desirable results expected in human interactions. As "bridges" are built and appropriately crossed, there can be continually improving understanding, friendship, motivation and all else which the use of language as communication implies.

A few brief analogies may help readers to understand the purposes, uses, and challenges of Languetics.

Medical I: A doctor can indicate on a graph an area of concern regarding a patient's health. Some sections on the chart demonstrate a quite satisfactory range or tolerance, or "health." Another may indicate where special treatment may be required. The doctor uses the chart in a diagnosis of what might need to be done to assure improved or continuing good health. (An oculist uses a similar chart to prescribe lens preparation so that eyesight can be improved.) [Sample chart: next page.]
DIAGNOSTIC MODEL--LANGUETICS

LANGUETICS MODEL for CRITICAL CONCERNS: INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATIVE IMBALANCES

[Key]

A CONTENT (real or assumed) INHIBITORS
B CONTENT (real or assumed) ENHANCERS
C CULTURE (physical, intellectual, social, emotional, aesthetic, ethical)
D PERSONALITY (physical, cognitive, creative, motivational, emotive, moral)
E CONTEXT -- TIME and SEQUENCE
F CONTEXT -- PLACE and SPACE
G CONTEXT -- PARANORMAL
H COMMUNICATION MODE -- PERSONAL & GROUP
I COMMUNICATION MODE -- MASS & ORGANIZATIONAL
J COMMUNICATION MODE -- DELIVERY (SYSTEMS)
K COMMUNICATION MODE -- VERBAL (COMPOSITED)
L COMMUNICATION MODE -- NONVERBAL (COMPOSITED)
M SENDER FACTORS (Feedback Composited)
N RECEIVER FACTORS (Feedback Composited)
O UNKNOWN FACTORS (Within or beyond range of acceptability or perception)

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The preceding chart could help in analyzing and diagnosing and prescrib­
ing for people seeking improved understanding with other people across
international or intercultural barriers. Such a chart can also graph
what is "healthy" or "successful" in people-with-people interactions.
(For those having interest in the use of such models, the BYU/LIRC
INTERCULTURAL READY REFERENCE, in the appendix, provides an introduction
to the creation and adequate use of such research and training devices.)

Critical concerns can be graphed, prescribing necessary "treatment,"
such as apology, restatement, etc. The chart may also indicate a given
range of meanings which can be appropriately expressed in certain cul‐
tural environments, or others which may cause offense or confusion. (E.g.
"Yes, I know what you SAID...but what did you mean? I saw your look and
realize you are not being honest.")

The analysis and diagnosis of "best" communication, or of MIS-communica-
tion -- between peoples who are socially or linguistically or otherwise
"different" -- could make possible the building of bridges of understand-
ning not now available except for intuition or chance.

Medical II: Vaccinations are often successful in helping a body to be-
come immune to certain diseases. (E.g. Salk over polio; inoculations
vs. killer pneumonia; exercize for healthy heart; etc.) In the medical
chart there is the possibility of preservation or cure. With inocula-
tions we speak of prevention.

To make available certain vital information which can aid people seeking
to avoid confusion or offense (or, to positively find a "best way") can
be a helpful "vaccination" -- given the need and accuracy of data.

Obviously, there is the determination of risk and effectiveness to be
carefully considered. Options must be taken into account. Vaccinations
are only about 85% effective in some cases. Risks are possibly greatest
when true causes of illness are not known for sure. Yet, real lives and
feelings, and understanding -- in many cases, can be helped by injecting
minuscule doses of "avoid this" or "use that," or "we can know...."

Recipes: There are basic foods containing needed protein, carbohydrates,
fats, etc., which are used in family and institutional menus to "balance"
diets. Food served to people who are different may not be attractive.
(Do you enjoy fried baby bumble bees? Does milk-drinking come across to
you as equivalent to drinking blood? What is "sweet"? What is a "lie"?)

Recipes can be useful provided ingredients are accurately measured and
required preparations are made. What else is necessary? The awareness
of what is palatable to those who may be given the food to eat!

So with intercultural interactions. Preparations and recipes may be
useful IF and WHEN they match "appetites" or predilections and predis-
positions. Otherwise there may be unexpected or undesirable results.

Homilies, Literary Notes, etc.: Consider the intercultural implications
of "A Soft Answer Turneth Away Wrath." (To fighting tribes?) "School thy
feelings, oh, my brother." (To an employer?) "A stitch in time saves
nine." (What if not available, or is weak?) "Actions speak louder than
words." These and other models give a focus for Languetics research/use.
Geolinguistic implications: When we begin to see the interrelations of the many forms of language, we recognize that there is much yet to study, learn, and become acquainted with from "all good books, and languages, tongues, and peoples." (D & C 90:15.)

Verbal languages in our world today number well over 5,000, where one person cannot understand his or her neighbor. Non-spoken languages: of the deaf, of drums, flowers, colors, etc., extend this number tremendously. When we learn all necessary interrelationships of all of the world's "languages," we will begin to have the complete model of Languetics. Until then, we are only guessing and bluffing our way along the paths of desired understanding, albeit somewhat acceptably.

In diplomacy, we currently have about 152 nations in the United Nations trying to speak together. Another 150 "people" or "political" but not territorial states, necessarily, are awaiting improved communication. (E.g. the Kurds of the Mid-East, the Apache of Arizona, the Karens of Burma, the Teso of Uganda, the Koreans of China, et al.)

Some interaction is directly people-oriented. (E.g. truck-drivers have their own lingo but also their unique behavior patterns -- which also "say" a great deal.) People -- or "cultures" number well over 25,000 today. Each is unique; each with a pattern of patterns of acceptable interaction and understanding.

Still there are people who will be known only by their "families" or "kindreds" or "tribes." We know little about communication patterns in such instances, as oriented as we are to families being the most basic and likely the most lasting of relationships.

The challenge of geolinguistics (that is, where what people use what languages) is to determine what is significant, what is offensive, what is confusing, etc. Then, as intercultural interactions take place on the basis of realistic INTERCULTURAL GRAMMARS, new dimensions of human understanding and interrelationships will develop.

This may seem too broad, too complex, too altruistic. What are the options for our times? You may have noticed the quote from Dr. Wilbur T. Blume (retiring program officer with International Communication Agency of the U.S. government):

The speed and acceleration of events is such as to make obsolete and irrelevant almost anything that has been published.

What is increasingly becoming required is anticipatory research and anticipatory management.

The risks from not facing the problems squarely are too great to take.

Or as President Spencer W. Kimball has said, "Our great need, desire, and obsession is to bring to this world the candle of understanding."

These we see as some of the challenges, uses, and opportunities of INTERCULTURAL GRAMMARS which build bridges of understanding in the world.