

Training indigenous editors

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[Topics: editing, editor training, writer training]

1. Introduction

There are now many indigenous writers in Colombia, some of them very creative and a few who have written fairly large books. Many short courses have helped them perfect their skills, but in the end it has usually been the linguists who do final corrections of their spelling, punctuation, diacritics, word division, and so forth. Who will do this after the linguists have left? Certainly not Spanish-speaking publishers who do not know the indigenous languages. Is it not SIL's responsibility to help provide for the continuing production of books in the communities where we work?

As this need began to be articulated by different people, including Guahibo writer, Marcelino Sosa, one attempt was begun to train editors in an apprenticeship-type situation. Three Guahibo young people came to the SIL center for training. However, this kind of training is not feasible for all indigenous language groups. Gradually, plans evolved for a series of three editing courses, open to all language groups. General content of the three courses was planned:

Course One: Community planning and motivation; punctuation and overall acceptability of manuscript; and correction of punctuation and paragraphing of manuscript.

Course Two: Organizing community committees and motivation of community; steps for editing and book design; and content editing.

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Course Three: Community committees and their responsibilities; final proofreading and layout of book; funding and distribution; relating to the publisher and the continued production of literature in the community—training others.

2. The first editors' course

2.1. Preparation and content

It was decided to emphasize punctuation and correction of details in the first course, and the editing of content, layout, and so forth in later courses. In order to be able to teach correction of manuscripts (like proofreading, but not yet at the proofs stage) to students from different languages, several things had to be prepared ahead of time:

1. Capitalization and punctuation rules for Spanish (with examples) were included in a writers' manual which the literacy department had been working on for use in writer-training courses ("Manual para escritores indígenas," 30–31). Also included were proofreaders' marks and examples of their use. Photocopies of this manual were made available to all the students.
2. Sample exercises in Spanish were collected for use in teaching punctuation from the chalkboard.
3. Linguists were asked to produce two exercises for use during the punctuation class: portions of text in the indigenous languages, with errors. A copy corrected with red pencil was requested, if they would not be available to help participants to correct the exercises (**Note:** Some linguists were also participating in a comparative workshop.) A chart was provided that indicated the type and number of errors for each day in the exercise. (See [Excerpt I.](#)) For example, the text for the first exercise (for Day 1) should include three times a small letter which should be a capital; two times a capital letter which should be a small letter; two times a period is omitted; three times words or letters are transposed; two times a word or letter is omitted; two times a wrong letter occurs; and two times diacritics are left out. Paragraphs should be taken from previously written indigenous-authored material. The corrected paragraphs should be corrected in red, using proofreading marks.

The following subjects were included in the first course:

1. The punctuation class was cotaught by an SIL linguist and a Colombian journalism student.
2. The class on "What kind of books do we want and how do we set up a planning committee?" took the form of a discussion on the subject. It was led by a Guahibo leader and was limited to participation by indigenous people.
3. The class on Principles of Indigenous Education, was mainly discussion, cotaught by a Colombian educator and an SIL linguist.
4. First Principles of Library Science ([Excerpt III](#)) was taught by an SIL member
5. Psychology and Pedagogy of Indigenous Education (elective), was cotaught by two Colombian graduates in education

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6. Composition (elective) was taught by an SIL linguist. Translation and ambiguity were covered briefly ([Excerpt IV](#)).

The three Colombian educators and Guahibo, Marcelino Sosa, represent the foundation FRESCI (Foundation for the Respect for and Solidarity with the Indigenous People of Colombia), which also took the initiative in obtaining credits for the course from the state educational authorities.

2.2. The course

Forty students representing 13 languages attended the three-week course held in January 1987. Most, not all, were at least fifth-grade graduates and 13 were bilingual school teachers. Only three groups already had educational committees. Some were still struggling with the meaning of the word “committee.”

In their *discussion class* the students talked about their ideas for bilingual-bicultural education, how to achieve their ideals through preparing school materials themselves (in their mother tongue), how to organize a committee, to coordinate such activities, and so forth. They shared their problems and hopes, and encouraged one another.

In the *indigenous education class* the students tried to list some of their cultural values (surface or material, and deep culture) and discussed which are important to preserve. They attempted to plan a curriculum for Grades 1–5 that would help preserve these values. The guidance and time allowed for this was not sufficient for significant innovation, but it started the participants thinking. They saw the film *Between two worlds* several times and discussed certain parts of it in class.

During the *editing class*, the teacher introduced what was to be taught (see chart, [Excerpt I](#)), discussed the rules in Spanish, and corrected a Spanish text written on the chalkboard. After this practice, each student corrected exercises (prepared by the linguist) in his own language and checked his results with the corrected copy. Some had a second exercise for homework, to hand in the next day. They worked with linguists if they had difficulty with the exercise.

In the *library science class*, each language group made a small library of the books available in their language, and it was noted that one group, as soon as they mimeographed a book in their *composition class*, promptly put it into their library. Book care was stressed, and three local libraries were visited. The idea of creating private, school, and village libraries was, of course, to create a place where the books they produce will be preserved and used, hopefully for a long time. A few school teachers reported that they had already started school libraries.

There were so many new concepts presented in the classes that some complained that their heads could not hold it all. They asked that they receive notes from the course, and this had already been anticipated. A Colombian took notes in four classes on a small computer, and a printout was photocopied to hand out at the end of the course.

2.3. The follow-up: Home exercises

It had been planned to hold three courses about six months apart. However, it turned out that the schoolteachers would be free only once a year. Since a lot of interest had been created, and in order not to let it die, it was decided, along with the students, to carry out a type of correspondence course. The students would be sent exercises to correct and a short writing assignment to return, after which they would receive more exercises. No strict time schedule was set, since many live in isolated areas where communication is difficult and slow. In addition, they were assigned the task of producing a school book in rough draft to bring to the next course for editing. It was not required that they write it themselves, though many planned to. Suggestions for this assignment were: a supplementary science book, a history of their people, a collection of myths, or a book of stories for second-grade reading. The writers' manual they received has ideas for these, such as questions to ask the older people about history, examples of stories for children, lists of possible topics, and so forth.

Individuals from these or other language groups who had not participated in the first course were to be permitted to come to the second course only after participating in the correspondence courses and the writing assignment. There were a number of candidates.

2.4. Evaluation of the course

There were definitely things that could have been done better. Much was learned from this first attempt.

The *editing class* would have been better if there had been more linguist participation. It was not ideal to have students correct their own exercises from a corrected copy. Individual progress and the repeated missing of a certain type of error could not be monitored. It was felt that the students learned the rules but needed much more practice in catching mistakes, not overlooking them.

There was less editing and more on bilingual education (pedagogy, and so forth) than originally planned. This happened when we invited the participation of the foundation FRESCI, since bilingual education is their area of competence. However, it turned out to be good background and stimulation for the editors, especially the two discussion classes where there was an exchange of ideas among the different groups. The more advanced groups (in the area of participation in the planning of their own education and literature) were an encouragement to those who had not tried anything along those lines before.

Because of a misunderstanding, the *composition class* members printed their stories instead of spending more time editing them. It was nice to have books for participants to take home, but it showed up some flaws in the preliminary planning sessions.

The *library science class* was probably too short (only nine hours of class). It was requested that the next course have more about libraries; libraries were discussed in this course as time allowed, though not in great detail.

There was some confusion caused by the way the *electives* were offered. Most of the students did not understand electives and wanted to take all of the classes.

Of course the positive results far outweigh the faults. In some groups, there was a tremendous enthusiasm generated for producing their own schoolbooks—a bright awakening to this new possibility. The students of one language group requested a writers' workshop midyear to produce schoolbooks.

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A few students confided, “I’m not sure I’d make a good editor. May I select someone else from my area who might be better to come to the next course?” This showed their concern that their group have good editors, because for them it would be a sacrifice to give up coming themselves. They all wanted to see one another again.

Several groups planned to try to interest their communities in starting an education committee. The idea is something quite foreign to the face-to-face indigenous cultures and will be accepted only gradually as it is understood. One student wrote to Marcelino Sosa in April, “After arriving from there I tried to get the people together, in my way, to explain what we talked about and orient them and cause them to recognize the value of our culture and what in the future could be the road by way of education for the indigenous children. We are writing and will select the best. Trying to explain things to the people I sometimes end up in the air, because I’m just getting started in this job. The people are very enthused, in the way of the people here.”

The experiences obtained by the FRESCI members in interacting with the students in the editing course have helped give a good foundation for planning their own courses. The members of FRESCI are all Colombians, both indigenous and nonindigenous.

3. The second editors’ course

The second course was held a year later, in January 1988. Most (not all) of the students brought a manuscript they had written or someone else had helped write. The idea of having a correspondence course between courses was a failure, probably because communication in isolated areas is so difficult. But many students returned. There were 42 participants from 14 languages; most of these were returning for the second time.

In the second course there was an emphasis on the steps of *editing and designing a book* ([Excerpt II](#)). The information was mimeographed and handed out as pages to be glued into the participants’ notebooks. It included the following topics: responsibilities of an editor, evaluation of the general content of a book, evaluation of the message, organization of the book, correction of details, format, final corrections, layout, information for the print shop, and distribution.

As the steps were explained, the students were expected to apply them to the manuscripts they were editing in their languages each afternoon, under the supervision of the respective linguists. It was not possible for those with long manuscripts to get through all the processes during the course, however.

To help with the editing of content, a class in *literary criticism* ([Excerpt V](#)) was taught, also with material to paste into their notebooks. It included suggestions for judging a product from the following points of view:

- Correct, clear, and interesting
- Action and dialogue
- Details

- The use of the familiar
- Suspense
- Plot
- Setting
- Characters
- Emotional words
- Onomatopoeic words

(In the third course, two more were added: verisimilitude and point of view of the narrator of the story.) These were short classes, each stressing just one topic. They so captured the imagination of a Camsá student that he was asked to teach the material in the third course. He did very well and the class was popular.

The class on *punctuation* and editing of details was taught again; it was felt that the students could never get too much practice with this. At the end of the series of courses, all the students felt that this had been a very important class. During this second course there was some teaching of grammar rules for the use of comma in the national language, Spanish, as well as phonological rules for comma, semicolon, and period, such as length of pause and lowering the voice. As anticipated, this was not an easy subject for the students. The linguists were expected to follow up on this, showing how it applied in each individual language.

The *discussion class* in which only indigenous people participated was again the first class of the day. The students again talked about how to organize their community for the production, publication, and distribution of books.

Evaluation: The greater participation of the linguists in this course was a tremendous advantage. They worked with the students on their punctuation exercises during the morning class and then all afternoon with them on the books they were editing. Two Colombians (nonindigenous) taught classes, along with SIL linguists.

The assignment for the third course was to check their first manuscript (or provisional edition) in their community and write (or get others to write) a new manuscript to edit during the third course.

4. The third editors' course

4.1. Preparation

The third editors' course was held in January 1989. In preparation for this course, an editors' manual was produced, which contained 107 pages of material from previous courses and material to be taught in the

third course. A provisional edition was photocopied for the students. (This was in addition to their writers' manual, *Manual de escritores indígenas*, which they were also expected to bring.)

Some thinking was done about how the editors would use their new skills, especially in the groups which still have no organization for publishing books (the majority). It was decided that they might teach writers' courses in their villages and print small editions of their books on the silk-screen mimeograph, possibly for school libraries, where these exist. For that reason, we included classes on how to teach writing courses ([Excerpt VI](#)) and how to use the silk-screen press; some students had not learned these skills in the first course. The students who have access to a regular mimeograph machine in their location also practiced with one of these.

4.2. The course

There were 35 participants from 12 languages. As we had planned from the beginning, in order to teach how to get a manuscript to press, we invited to this course guest speakers from Bogotá, Colombia's capital, who had experience in editing and publishing. Just before their arrival, a class was taught regarding the costs involved in publishing (and how to raise funds). The guest speakers were able to add more concrete figures and answer questions in this area, besides giving other helpful suggestions. Their contribution was very valuable. As a bonus, we also had an adviser from the Ministry of Education, author of a primer based on Scripture, who explained the newest educational legislation and also how she developed her primer.

Another difference about the third course was that we were short on SIL teaching personnel. We, therefore, called on a number of students to participate in the teaching, besides the Camsá who taught literary criticism and two classes in translation (a bare introduction). Students from different groups shared their experiences regarding distribution, teaching writers' courses, and writing activities for school textbooks.

The *punctuation class* ([Excerpt II](#)) was taught again, with more time than in previous courses for the students to work on their own languages with the linguists.

The *discussion class* among the students was led by a different participant each week, each with a different emphasis: literature distribution, community organization, and training writers. These discussion classes in the three courses were like planning sessions. Each year the questions were more specific. The experiences of those from peasant-type societies, which had already had several generations of experience with organizations, were a help to those from tribal societies who found the ideas very new and not easy to apply when they returned home.

Some time during the last week was spent sharing plans. All of the participants explained the work they had in progress and where they expected to go from there. The students paid close attention to these discussions, receiving ideas for types of books to work on. A number were working (either together or separately) on school textbooks (readers, science books, geography, history, and so forth). At least one was working on a preprimer and one on a basic primer. Several were working on books of stories and/or myths. An editorial committee has been set up by at least one group that did not have one before, and this committee has conducted at least one writers' workshop. Many reported a growing interest in vernacular

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literature in their communities, but most felt that the people do not have a reading habit. To sell them on reading their books (except in school), they will need to produce better and better books (as to content and appearance). Some have made good contacts with educational entities in their areas. Others are still very dependent on their contact with SIL to help them with publishing. All talked about how the community might be able to help in the financing of publication, but few have put their suggestions into practice.

4.3. Evaluation

During the course, there was some review of book layout and design, but probably not enough. We should not have assumed that the students remembered everything from the previous course or that they would refer to their editors' manual. There was not adequate information given on how to teach a writers' course. However, the information is available in the writers' manual. Participants have been encouraged to hold a writers course in their community, and can seek help in organizing, if necessary.

The silk-screen printing of books produced took more time than planned. Two things contributed to this: 1) The Colombian organizing the printing did not have adequate training and experience, and 2) the books printed were too lengthy (some 50 pages). We needed to have someone (SIL) step in and help out during the printing of the books.

All of the students learned the principles of editing. What they now need is a great deal of practice. Some are receiving practice as they help with translation checking, others as they edit schoolbooks for their committees or along with the linguists. Three of the Guahibo editing students, in addition to the series of courses, participated in a 15-month editing apprenticeship at the SIL Center. During their apprenticeship, they edit school textbooks and library books produced by their bilingual education committee.

The Páez and Camsá participants have set up editing committees and are editing books to be used in schools in their areas. The Camsá committee is now publishing the material it produces.

The students learned technical and creative skills, but perhaps even more importantly, they grew in vision as they exchanged ideas among themselves and confronted the issues of planning for literature development in their respective languages. One bilingual teacher confessed that one of the insights that came to him was that his students are not just for "destroying and changing into something new," but rather, valuable human beings to be stimulated and encouraged to fulfill their potential.

5. Results

The long-range results are not yet known, but an interest (in some cases, a hope) has been awakened; the possibilities have been demonstrated; some groups are beginning to develop infrastructures, and some individuals have learned skills that will ensure a supply of editors, as well as writers, when SIL has departed.

The Páez committee has gotten together on their reservation, several times, to edit first and second grade textbooks to be funded through SIL, and, in some cases, to be mimeographed on their own machines with funds obtained through local government connections. A Guahibo young lady was hired for three months by a government educational entity to help a Guahibo staff member edit some materials in Guahibo for (1990). *Notes on Literacy*, 61.

the first grade course. After she finished a 15-month editing apprenticeship, working on books in her language with two other Guahibos and an SIL linguist, she obtained a scholarship to continue her secondary education. She continues to write in her spare time.

Two Guahibo editors in villages isolated from each other are each taking home a typewriter and flat silk screen mimeograph. They plan to teach writers' courses and then edit and mimeograph limited editions of storybooks produced, for school libraries in their general area. They produced books in the same way for the editors' courses.

An outstanding Bora school teacher is from a very small minority group of Bora in Colombia. He teaches in a boarding school where at least four indigenous languages are spoken and the teaching has been in Spanish. After writing about education for leaders of his community, he brought to the third course a primer he had written for teaching Bora children to read their own language.

Each course more students participated in the teaching. In response to popular demand, another series of courses is planned for many who have not yet participated. Those with experience will gradually take over the teaching, using the "editors' manual" developed during the first course. Through these courses, the groundwork is being laid for an ongoing indigenous literacy program.

6. Future courses

It has been decided to hold future courses at two-year intervals. Following is a tentative schedule:

Editors' Course I (January 10–31, 1990)

- Discussion class on organization for writing, editing, printing, distributing, and evaluation literature—14 hours
- Literary criticism—7 hours
- Basis for practical orthography—7 hours
- Punctuation and correction of manuscripts—14 hours
- Editing of content and details—9 hours
- How to teach a writers' course—5 hours
- Preparation of stencils and how to mimeograph—9 hours
- Funding of publication—5 hours
- Typing (if there are enough typewriters)—14 hours
- Writing practice with punctuation—7 hours
- Mimeographing—6 hours
- Distribution and libraries (including a field trip or two)—8 hours

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- Art—4 hours

Editors' Course II (January 1991)—(Must bring a manuscript of a small book, written and edited.)

- Discussion class (organization)—14 hours
- Literary criticism—7 hours
- Formation of practical orthographies (phonological aspects)—7 hours
- Punctuation and correction of manuscripts—14 hours
- Layout and design—5 hours
- Distribution and evaluation—4 hours
- Preparing textbooks with activities—5 hours
- Publishing (not mimeo)—4 hours
- Culture—10 hours
- Editing and layout practice—35 hours
- Extras on Saturdays, not yet planned

Excerpts from the 'Manual for indigenous editors'

(translated from Spanish)

Excerpt I. Chart 1

This chart was used by the linguists, in preparing exercises for each day of the editing class.

day 14	day 13	day 12	day 11	day 10	day 9	day 8	day 7	day 6	day 5	day 4	day 3	day 2	day 1	
1			1				1				1	1	3	<u>a</u> small letter which should be a capital (proper name beginning of sentence)
		1				1					1	1	2	<u>M</u> capital which should be a small letter (i.e. in titles)
1				1				1				1	2	^ period omitted
			1				1				1	1	3	<u>ne</u> need to transpose words or letters
			1				1				1	1	2	<u>en</u> a word or letter left out
	1				1					1	1	1	2	<u>ex</u> a wrong letter
			1			1					1	1	2	<u>i</u> diacritic left out
	1			1				1			1	2		<u>en</u> a letter or word to delete
		1			1					1	1	2		<u>en</u> space which should not be there
1			1				1				1	2		<u>en</u> 2 words run together need a space
	1			1				1			1	1		^ comma left out after vocative
	1			1				1			1	1		^ hyphen needed (i.e. at end of line)
		1			1		1			1	1			¶ L paragraph indentation needed (1st line of text or in dialogue for each speaker)
		1				1				1	1			≡ wrong indentation or uneven left margin
	1			1		1				1	1			¿? left out
X	X			X		X	X	X						: — dialogue without punctuation and paragraph indentation (or partly)
		1				1		1						!! left out where need is obvious: ¡Look out!
1			1			1		1						: colon and commas left out of series of items
	X	X			X	X								“ ” a quote that needs quotation marks (He thought:, or a cited reference)
			X	X										— “ ” a quote that needs quotation marks within a dialogue (she said he said)

Excerpt II. The editor and his responsibilities

[Topics: editor training, evaluation: of materials]

2.1. Characteristics of a good editor (who also revises and corrects)

The good editor is organized, mindful of details, and a perfectionist.

The good editor is organized in his work. He always has the pages he is editing in order, the pictures numbered and kept in order, and his archives in order. He knows where all his papers are all the time, in order to be able to find them easily. Also, he knows at what stage each project is and what is lacking for finishing it; if it is necessary to do so, he has a place in which to enter the progress on each book that he is editing. A good editor does not scatter his papers, for he is organized.

The good editor pays attention to details. To him the smallest details are important, such as when to condense a paragraph, when to use double space, or subtitles, or explanations under the illustrations, which kind of type to use, and so forth. It is relatively easy to write a book, but to publish a book requires many processes and many decisions regarding small details. These facts do not bother the good editor, for he is one who concentrates on details.

The good editor is such a perfectionist that it bothers him to ignore a single error; he is an indefatigable hunter of errors in order to eliminate them all. He knows that a single error in an edition of a thousand books is produced a thousand times (a thousand errors). Also, he knows that the readers are going to complain if they find a single error in a book. The good editor is also a perfectionist in other things, for he wants his book to be interesting on the inside and beautiful on the outside. Therefore, the color of the dust jacket, the quality of the illustrations, and the appearance of the pages are all important to him. He does not want the book to appear difficult to read or boring, but to be irresistible. Thus, the good editor is a perfectionist.

Remember: the good editor is organized, mindful of details, and a perfectionist. He has great patience in correcting the work of imperfect human writers, but he does not have patience with his own errors. They are his enemies.

2.2. Revising and editing a manuscript

Responsibilities of the editor

The editor acts as the evaluator of the literature. He is responsible to four persons and entities; the responsibilities being different in each case.

1. Responsibility to the author: he must be sure that that which is written expresses clearly what the author has in mind and wishes to express, but without destroying the style of the author and without offending him.
2. Responsibility to the organization responsible for the publication: he must be sure that the book fulfills the technical requirements and the purposes of the organization responsible for the publication.
3. Responsibility to the printing shop: he must be sure that the book is written in legible form as to format, spelling of the words, punctuation, arrangement of the illustrations, and so forth.

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4. Responsibility to the reader: he must be sure that the message of the book is clear and appropriate and interesting to the reader. (Think of the age, the sex, and the environment of the readers for whom the book is written.)

2.3. First stage of the check

General evaluation of the contents of the book

If there is not yet an editorial committee in your community, the book ought to be evaluated by at least two people. As editor, you must:

1. Read all the manuscript in order to understand the message and content.
2. Ask yourself: Does the manuscript fulfill the purpose of the author and of the organization which is going to publish it?
3. Think about the readers who are going to read this book (their age, their sex, and their environment). Think of some specific person among the group. If you were that person, would you understand the message of the book?
4. If you were this reader, would you be interested in the book?
5. If to some of these questions you must answer negatively, explain to the author why you answer so and give him suggestions as to how he could improve his writing in order to rectify the problems. (Do this, taking his culture into consideration.)

2.4. Second stage of the check

Evaluation of the message (the ideas) of the manuscript, and its presentation

1. Is it understandable?
Ask yourself: Is what the author says clear, or does it need more explanation, more information?
Make your suggestions to the author.
2. Is it expressed with known words?
Are the words clear and easy to understand? Make suggestions to the author.
3. Is it not ambiguous?
Is there ambiguity in the words (that is, words which could have more than one meaning) and one cannot know the meaning of what is written? Make suggestions to rectify this.
4. Is it clear?
Must you read part of it two times because you did not understand it the first time? How could it be made clearer (by changing a word, changing the order of the words, and so forth)?

5. Is it not confused?
Is the thread of the story clear or is it confused with unnecessary details? Is the order of the presentation of the information confusing or easy to follow? Make suggestions to the author.
6. Do you have correct information?
Is what the author says correct and true? Does the information contain errors and doubtful information?
7. Is it interesting?
Is the theme of the story interesting?
8. Is it easy to read?
Is the writing smooth-flowing, that is, is it pleasant and easy to read? Make suggestions to the author. (When the reading “flows” well, the reader does not think of the author nor the book; he is completely absorbed with what he is reading.)
9. Does it have adequate details?
Does it have sufficient details (or dialogue) in order to be interesting?

Note: It may be necessary that the author rewrite his book in order that the ideas be clear or so that it will be more interesting and more appropriate for children (or adults).

After the editor makes his suggestions to the author, the latter should make corrections and write a clean copy of his material.

2.5. Organization of the book

[Topics: books: designing]

- A. Plan first and finish each part on time, using the list on the following pages.
 1. Decide on the number of pages and/or lessons, if there are any, and their objectives.
 2. Choose the order of the stories, chapters, and units (begin with something interesting).
 3. Give interesting titles to the stories, chapters, or units.
 4. Plan the questions and activities for the lessons, if there are any, thinking of the time that it will take to finish each lesson or unit.
 5. Choose a title for the book and make the title page.
 6. Begin the acknowledgment page (to be finished later).
 7. Plan the introductions (personal introduction, preface, and so forth).
 8. Plan the content page (at the first of the book) or index (at the end) with all the titles that the content will have (without yet putting the numbers of the pages).

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9. Plan the general layout of the title page (title, illustration), or you could do that later.
10. Decide if it will need a translation to Spanish. In what place in the book?
11. Plan the final pages, and their order. Do you want to include appendixes, glossary, bibliography, notes, index, or a bibliographical note about the author?
12. Decide if subtitles are needed.
13. Make sure that you have all the names of the authors. Where: at the first of the writing, at the end, or on the acknowledgment page?
14. Number all the pages and put them in order for the typist.
15. Decide if some illustrations, maps, or diagrams will need title, legend, or explanation under them.

B. This list will help you to verify if everything necessary for the organization of the book has been

Name of the book _____

	planned	begun	finished
1. units and objectives			
2. order of stories, etc.			
3. questions, activities			
4. title page			
5. acknowledgement page			
6. introductions			
7. index or contents			
8. title page			
9. translation into Spanish			
10. appendixes			
11. glossary			
12. bibliography			
13. notes			
14. bibliographical note			
15. titles and subtitles			
16. names of authors			
17. numbers on the pages			
18. illustrations, maps			
19. titles of the illustrations			
20. spaces for the illustrations			

included:

2.6. Third stage of the check

Correction of details

- A. This is done line by line. It is a process that is repeated several times after you have a clean copy, hopefully by several people. You can use the list for Correction of Details on the next page in order to indicate each time that you finish reading the manuscript, with attention to certain details enumerated in the list.

(1990). *Notes on Literacy*, 61.

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1. Alphabet: Decide what letters you are going to use in the alphabet and make sure that you always write the same, without changing the letter that you use for each sound.
2. Misspelling and mechanical errors: If diacritics are important in your language and are easily forgotten, include them in the list of Correction of Details.
3. Spaces between words, but not between the parts of words, including prefixes and suffixes joined to the stem.
4. Capital letters at the first of independent sentences.
5. “Final” punctuation (. ? ; !).
6. Punctuation of subordinate (dependent) clauses (,).
7. Punctuation of dialogue (with colon and dash).
8. Punctuation of citations (with commas).
9. Paragraphs (indent).
10. Capital letters at the first of names of persons and places (proper nouns).
11. Correct use of hyphens in the division of words.
12. Punctuation with comma for other short pauses (vocatives, appositions, and so forth).
13. Other punctuation (of a series, suspense, and so forth).
14. Title(s) and subtitles of equal importance should conserve the same form (capital letter, boldface, underlined, or centered).
15. Number of units and the place of them on the page.

Note Also it is necessary to correct the Spanish (title page, acknowledgment page, introductions, and translations).

C. This list will help you to verify if you have corrected all the errors in the details.

Name of the book _____

	1	2	3	4	finished
1. orthography					
2. spelling					
3. diacritics					
4. spaces between words					
5. capital letters					
6. final punctuation (. / ; !)					
7. subordinate clauses					
8. punctuation of dialogue					
9. punctuation of citations (“ ”)					
10. paragraphs (indentation)					
11. division of words (hyphens)					
12. short pauses (,) vocatives, apposition					
13. persons, places--capital letters					
14. titles, equal treatment					
15. numbers of units (in order)					
16. corrected translation					
17. other Spanish corrected					
18. interlinear writing correct					
19. margins correct					

2.7. The format

When the book has almost no errors, plan and format:

1. Decide the size of the book (width and length).
2. Decide the size of the letters and calculate the length of the lines (in centimeters or inches or letters and spaces, leaving sufficient margins (according to the kind of binding)).
3. Decide what the interlinear space should be and where the text should have extra spaces between lines (considering the typewriters at your disposal).
4. Decide if the right margin should be justified.
5. If it is important that certain text and illustrations appear complete on the page, make sure that they will fit on the page. If the page is not big enough, decide how to make the necessary adjustments. (This is chiefly for the first literacy primer.)
6. Put numbers on the pictures (and maps, diagrams, and so forth) and indicate their places in the text (or wait until the layout of the book is in process).
7. Write a clean copy with the interlinear spacing and the line length indicated.

2.8. Fourth stage of the check

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Revisions and final corrections

1. For the division of words at the end of the line (with hyphen), make sure that the words are divided correctly.
2. Check the title page:
 - a. The title of the book in the native language
 - b. Translation of the title into Spanish (if there is any)
 - c. Name of the language
 - d. Date of the publication (or on the acknowledgment page)
 - e. Name of the publisher and place of publication
3. Check the acknowledgment page, in cooperation with the organization responsible for the publication:
 - a. Names of
author(s)
editors(s)
translator(s) into Spanish
typists
illustrator(s), and
consultant(s), and so forth.
 - b. Recognition of funding
 - c. Ownership rights or ISBN number
 - d. Number of the edition
 - e. Number of copies
 - f. Name and address of the print shop.
4. Check the general layout of the cover (title, illustration, and author).
5. Check the prologue, indices, appendixes, activities, and so forth, one by one.
6. Put the numbers of the pages in the page of contents (or index) and make sure that the numbers of the pages in the index or content still correspond with the numbers of the pages in the text. If you still do not know the pages of the text, wait until you finish the layout in order to make the comparison.

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7. Make sure that the titles in the contents (or index) still correspond with the titles of the text.
8. See that sufficient space is left for each picture (and its title, if there is any).
9. See that the spacing between lines and the margins is correct.
10. Obtain a clean copy, if it is necessary. Each time that there are corrections in the book (made by the typist or the computer operator) read the proofs again, paying attention to the format and the details. A part of the process is the comparison of the new version with the previous one, to make sure that the corrections are made well.

One way for making the final spelling check is to read the book backwards, word by word. (Of course, with this system one can overlook a wrong correction which forms a well-spelled word which is not the correct word, but such errors will have been detected in the earlier readings of the text.)

2.9. Evaluation of the manuscript (before the layout)

[Topics: evaluation: of materials]

Name of the book: _____ Date: _____

Committee or person responsible: _____

1. What is the purpose of this book?
2. For whom is the book prepared (adults, children, semiliterates, or literates)?
3. Has the book been tested with some of these persons? With whom? Who tested it?
4. Were all the pictures accepted by some representative of the community?
5. Has the text of the book been corrected (as to grammar, vocabulary, dialect, spelling, punctuation, and so forth)?
6. Has all the Spanish been corrected? By whom?
7. Have the designs of the cover, the title page, the acknowledgment page, the introduction, and the contents or index all been checked?
8. Is a translation into Spanish, or a vocabulary or a glossary included?
9. Is there an explanation of the book in Spanish (or the translation of the title)?
10. Has the title page included the title of the book, the author, the language, the publisher, the place, and the date (year)?
11. Does the acknowledgment page include the authors (if there are several); the editor, reviser or consultant; the translator; the corrector of the Spanish; the name of the organization which helped

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with finances; rights reserved; the number of ISBN; the number of the edition (first, second, and so forth); the number of copies of this edition; and the name and address of the print shop?

12. In the first pages, are there all the explanations needed by the author and/or the publisher (introduction, preface, prologue, instructions for the bilingual teacher, and so forth)?
13. Is all the information necessary included in the last pages (appendixes, notes, bibliography, glossary, alphabetic index, biography of the author, and so forth)?
14. Is the cover showy? (Do the title, the design, and the color “invite” readers to read the book?)

This evaluation is not to oblige you to include certain things, but rather to remind you not to forget the things that you wish to include.

2.10. The layout of the book

[Topics: layout]

Sometimes the process is done in the print shop or with a computer.

1. Make sure that the texts with their respective pictures are in the order in which they will appear in the book.
2. Calculate the space which the illustrations will need (with their titles, legends, or explanations, if there are such).
3. Decide which pages will be blank (or which pages should be at the right).
4. Then make a “dummy.” Arrange all the pages of the text with the illustrations on clean pages. Be sure that the text and pictures do not go over the margin.
5. When all is well organized, write in the numbers of the pages. Do not forget a number for the pages of the text which are blank. Be sure that the pages correspond with those of the index or table of contents.
6. Count the total number of pages there are in the book, not forgetting the title page, the acknowledgments, the appendixes (if any), the pages which come before the text, the page(s) of the index or table of contents, and all the pages that remain blank because of the design of the book.
7. Make a plan for the printing of the book (order of pages). The plan will depend on the form chosen for binding the book. (Sometimes this is done at the print shop. In the printing, the pages with odd numbers (1, 3, 5, 7, 9) always appear on the right and the equal numbers (2, 4, 6, 8, 10) on the left.

2.11. Information for the print shop

[Topics: books: making, print shops]

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1. Make a final plan of the cover and the back, with the title of the book and illustration (Name of the author? Translation of the title into Spanish?), choice of color of the cover, and the size and style of the letters for the title.
2. Basic information:
 - a. Number of copies desired
 - b. Size desired (width and length of the book)
 - c. Kind of paper desired
 - d. Kind of cover page desired (color and kind of paper)
 - e. Binding desired: stapled, sewn, glued, and so forth (It is important to keep the climate in mind. In very humid areas, staples rust.)
3. Send to the print shop
 - a. the order sheet
 - b. the text: the layout and the dummy
 - c. the illustrations, and
 - d. the cover plan.

2.12. Distribution of the book

[Topics: distribution of literature]

1. Calculate the cost of the book. (Are you going to try to regain the cost in the price of the book?)
2. Calculate the cost of transportation. (How will it be paid?)
3. Decide who is going to distribute the book. Where? When? How?
4. Decide where you are going to store the copies meanwhile.
5. Organize the accounts and inventories.

Excerpt III. Libraries

[Topics: libraries]

There are different methods for setting up and taking care of libraries. The libraries might be personal, of the community, of the church, or of the school. The most important is that someone be responsible for taking care of the books, in order that they not be damaged or lost.

(1990). *Notes on Literacy*, 61.

When there is a library, more persons can read the same book. If the books are cared for well, they will serve also for the next generation (for the very small children, when they are bigger). Libraries serve to stimulate writers, for they know that their books will not be thrown away.

Two ways of organizing and taking care of a library are presented here. Perhaps you can choose ideas from both.

3.1. The library and its organization

3.1.A. The community library

There are various objectives in setting up a community library:

1. To promote interest for the reader and the habit of reading
2. To encourage individual betterment
3. To encourage betterment of the community

Needed are: funds for buying books, a place, a little furniture (shelves, chair, table, and so forth), and someone to take care of the library.

You can indicate the owner of the books by stamping on them, for example, the name of the school or of the town council, or you might have a stamp made for the library, with adhesive on it or with an embossing stamp which leaves a print without tearing. You can mark the book on the first page, or on some page within the book; it is easier to lose the first page than to lose a page within the book.

3.1.B. What are the enemies of books?

1. All kinds of insects. You can prepare for their attacks by fumigating and putting the books in plastic bags. You can make poison for the cockroaches and keep it on a shelf behind the books (a teaspoon of boric acid from the pharmacy, mixed with a teaspoon of sugar and a little water, put in the tops of pop bottles).
2. Small children soil books, eat them, tear them, draw lines on them, and so forth. The books that are not appropriate for small children should be kept out of their reach. Also, children can be taught, or can be punished at the first offense. It is possible to have other books that are suitable for small children, of plastic or of thick cardboard, with pictures fastened to them.
3. Water, humidity, and the rain all destroy books. When you travel, wrap books well; in the house, take care of them well.
4. Dust and all kinds of dirt destroy books. Do not handle them with dirty hands; teach the people to always wash their hands before using the books. You should dust the books constantly, and not leave them on the floor or on the ground.

- 5. Animals (rats, cows, and so forth) are enemies of books.
- 6. The fire is an enemy of books.

3.1.C. Classification of the books in a library:

	A. Anthropology	N. Associations
	B. Biography	O. Occupation
	C. Science	P. Political Science
marriage	D. Family and	Q. Essays
	E. Education	R. Religion
	F. Fiction (novels)	S. Health
	G. Geography	T. Technology
	H. History	U. Literature
	I. Language	V. Visuals
	J. Youth	W. Animals
	K. Readings	X. Agriculture

L. Laws (rights)

Y. References

M. Music

Z. Prerecorded tapes

Examples: If I have a book about rural technology, I classify it under T1 (the 1 signifies that it is the first book on this material). If I have another book of technology, it will be T2, for it is the second book on this theme.

This classification is written on a paper pocket which is fastened to the back cover of the book. You ought to keep an up-to-date list of all the books that there are in the library.

3.1.D. How to organize the small library

1. It is important to display all the books. If the books are not in sight, nobody will be interested in reading them.
2. It is necessary to lend the books, so that others can benefit from them.
3. It is necessary to have a special place to keep the books: a box of cardboard or wood, a table, or a special room.
4. You can impose a fine on persons who damage the books; also on persons who return them late.
5. You should prepare the books for lending again (put the cards within the books, correct any damages that have occurred, and so forth).
6. In order to obtain more books, you can write other books that are needed, or buy what you want to in another language and what seems important.
7. When you have new books, you can classify them according to the list.
8. You can prepare a card for each book, writing on it the classification of the book, the title of the book, and the name of the author. Each book should have its card in a paper pocket which is glued to the inside of the back cover.

In the libraries which have many books, an alphabetical classification is made by title, author, and theme and the information is kept in a file.

For the circulation of the books, the person borrowing the book chooses the book, fills in the card with his complete name and the date, and gives it to the librarian who signifies the date on which the book should be returned. If the person has not finished reading the book in the time stipulated, he can renew the loan.

How can one encourage the people to read and to establish libraries? By having the books belong to the community and available to everyone.

3.2. The school library

There are libraries where the books are not loaned but read only in the library. Many school libraries are like that. A local committee sends the following letter to the bilingual teachers of the area:

Bilingual teacher:

If you wish, the Bilingual Education Committee will send you, from time to time, books in our language for the school library. In this way, the children will have books to read. It is important that they take care of these books, for it costs a great deal to print them. Also, when the copies are exhausted, we do not know if there will be more.

If there is no library, you can make one very quickly. Prepare a wooden box with a door. We know that books have enemies; some of them are: pigs, cows, termites, cockroaches, certain wasps, rain, very small children, persons with dirty hands, and so forth.

In order that the books be not quickly damaged, put plastic covers on them. If you use plastic covers, the front of the book will be visible, so that the children can easily find the book they are looking for. Also, the books will be more attractive to the children if they can see the colors.

When a book begins to be damaged, it is better to repair it right away. If a page becomes loose, sew it with thread or glue it in place. Do not be careless with it, for if it falls it will be lost.

We ought to appreciate books written in our languages, because they are not available everywhere as books in Spanish are.

Teach the children these rules:

1. You should wash your hands before touching a book, for it is not possible to wash the book if it becomes dirty.
2. You should not tear the pages. Therefore, if several children want to read the same book, only one ought to turn the pages and ought to do it carefully.
3. When you return a book to the library, you ought to place it in the same place where it was and leave it in the same position, that is, with the back facing outwards.

4. You should not fold the pages, for where it is folded is where it will begin to tear. You should not push the pages with your finger, for that is the way they are wrinkled. You ought to take the corner of the page carefully in order to turn it.
5. When you finish reading a book, you should return it as soon as possible to the library, for perhaps someone else would like to use it.
6. You should not take books out of the school, so as not to lose them. You should read them in school.
7. You should not let very little children touch the books, for they do not yet understand and may damage them.
8. You ought to take good care of the books, for the books of a library serve for many people, if they are well taken care of.

If the adults want to read the books in the school, whether in the afternoons or in the evenings, teach them the same rules.

It is good to write the name of the school in each book of the library. It is preferable to write it on the title page, and not on the cover, so that the cover will remain clean.

If you are transferred to another school in order to teach there, you should not take the library, for it belongs to the community and not to the teacher.

Excerpt IV. Translation

[Topics: translation]

The best books and school texts are written in the local language and are based on the local culture. A textbook translated from another language is almost never of the same value or popularity, especially if the culture is quite different. But at times it is desirable or necessary to translate a book or some material from another language, for example Spanish. The Bible is one book that has been translated into more languages than any other book.

Perhaps someone will ask you to translate some material from Spanish into your language, or ask you to correct a translation made by another person. The process of translating materials is quite different from writing an original composition. Here we present only an introduction to the theme. The part that covers ambiguity can be applied to any writing, not just to translation writings.

4.1. Correct, clear, and natural

A good translation is correct (accurate), clear, and natural. If you are asked to translate material from Spanish into your language, do it in the style most natural to your language. Do not translate word for word, but rather express the meaning of the complete phrase or sentence; it is not important to have the same number of words in the translated sentence as there are in the original sentence.

(1990). *Notes on Literacy*, 61.

Do not, however, completely change the meaning of the original; the meaning should be the same, and it should be correct.

Do not think that the order of the words in Spanish is more nearly correct. Use the most natural order of words in your language, because if you do not, your translation will not be clear, and will not be easy to understand.

The following steps will help in the translation process (for example, from Spanish):

1. Read all of the original in Spanish, looking up in a dictionary the words that you do not understand.
2. Make a tentative translation, using the original Spanish.
3. Put aside the original and without consulting it, try to improve the way the translation is expressed until it is clear and natural in your language.
4. Return to the original to make certain that the meaning is the same (correct).

Practice

1. Read the four Spanish translations of the following English sentence and find the correct, natural, and clear translation in each case.

A. I am hungry.

1. Yo soy hambre. (I am hunger.)
2. Yo soy hombre. (I am man.)
3. Yo tengo sed. (I have thirst, or I am thirsty.)
4. Yo tengo hambre. (I have hunger, or I am hungry.)

B. Write it on the blackboard.

5. Escriba aquello en la negra tabla. (Write that on the black board.)
6. Escríbalo en la tabla negra. (Write it on the black board.)
7. Escríbalo en la tablero. (Write it on the _____.)
8. Escríbalo en el tablero. (Write it on the blackboard.)

2. Is it satisfactory to translate word for word, as in Numbers 1 and 5? Why not?
3. The translations that are clear and natural, but not correct are numbers _____.
4. The translation ought to be exact _____ and _____.
5. The four steps for translating material are:

6. Using the four steps, translate from Spanish into your language one of the following (have samples of these available):
 - a. Something about first aid
 - b. A short story, or report
 - c. A part of *El valor de la persona en la economía Guahiba* by Marcelino Sosa, for example, “El arco de Brazil,” page 41
 - d. Something interesting from a book of science or history
7. Check whether your translation is: 1) exact, 2) clear, and 3) natural.
8. Read it to another speaker of your language, or have him read it, to check for translation accuracy and whether or not it is clear and natural in your language.

4.2. Ambiguity

In order to be clear, the writing should not have ambiguous sentences (which have more than one meaning).

1. Many words or sentences can have more than one meaning, and at times the context does not indicate clearly which meaning is meant. Examples: ¿Cuál era? (Which was it? or What was it?); No los creo. (I don't believe them, or I don't make them.).
2. Many times the writer is not aware that the ambiguity exists, because he knows what he wants to say, and always reads the sentence with that meaning. Therefore, it is helpful if others read the material. They do not know what it ought to say, and can more easily fall into the trap caused by the ambiguity (not understanding well).
3. If there is not another person who can read what he has written, the writer should put aside the manuscript for several days (or weeks), until he has forgotten what he wrote, before attempting to see if he wrote with clarity, and without ambiguity. (He may also find that he has forgotten to say certain things that he thought he had said).
4. If you find something ambiguous, do not think that the reader will figure it out; change the sentence so that it does not have two meanings.

Excerpt V. Literary criticism

[Topics: literary criticism]

Literary criticism is the art of judging literary works like poems, stories, dramas, essays, reports, and so forth, that is to say, examining their worth. To judge a production is not something negative, but is rather to examine the good aspects, beautiful and well written, as much as the weaknesses and inferior aspects.

(1990). *Notes on Literacy*, 61.

To know how to criticize (evaluate) a writing helps the editor in his evaluation of the presentation of the material (second stage of the check).

In each one of the following 12 themes, a different aspect of literature is examined, in order to know how it is used to improve the writing. It would be possible to add more themes, but these are the principal ones.

Theme 1. Correct, clear, and interesting

The writing must be correct and clear. Also it must be interesting to the reader, whether boy, girl, youth, man, or woman.

1. Boys like to read about boys and boys' things.
2. We must not forget the girls; they like to read about girls and girls' things. (If it is possible, some of the authors should be women.)
3. One way to know that the writing interests adults and youth (and children) is to ask them about their interests and their problems. (Make an inquiry.)
4. For children and adults, it is more interesting to learn by means of stories and anecdotes (instead of direct arguments, although it is good to include a little of everything).
5. When you are editing, think if perhaps it will be necessary to include anecdotes. Ask yourself: Is the content of the writing (the theme and the vocabulary) appropriate for the age of the readers?

Theme 2. Action and dialogue

Action and dialogue make the writing interesting.

1. Children like action.
2. Dialogue between persons contributes to making the story more interesting and not too short. It is interesting to know how the people are reacting and what they are saying and thinking.
3. The dialogue ought to be typical; in that way it makes the story more real.
4. Does the writing that you are editing need more action or a little dialogue?

Theme 3. Details

Details can make the story more interesting.

1. One can choose very precise words. (For example, one can choose words or phrases that are more precise than the words to do, man, house, to be).
2. To add details is to tell a little more about the same happenings or the same people.

(1990). *Notes on Literacy*, 61.

3. If you do not know what to add, answer these questions: When?, Where?, Who?, What? How?, and Why?
4. Readers like details very typical of the culture and/or region.

Theme 4. Well-known things

Well-known and common things are more interesting than unknown (new) things, although people like to learn some new things.

1. Writers who make people laugh or cry talk of very common, familiar things which all understand. The readers will say: "Yes, that's the way it is. That's the way we are. He is an author who knows."
2. They like the things that they are always thinking, but never before had they heard them expressed in such a good way.
3. To express what everybody knows in a new and interesting way is to make things (like the house, the road, and the hat) talk. This is to personify an object. (Two poems in the manual for indigenous writers are examples.)
4. If the writing does not have savor, would it be better to add something that is familiar, or to make a comparison between the new thing and a very familiar thing?

Theme 5. Suspense

In certain stories, it is interesting to have suspense, that is to say, not to tell to the reader what is going to happen beforehand. Thus, he will be waiting with expectation to know the result, and he will not put the story aside before finishing it (in order to know the ending). The word "suspense" is of the same family as the word "to suspend." The reader remains suspended in the air until he knows what happened at the end of the story.

1. Progressive riddles have suspense, for they tell general clues first and wait till the end to give the specific clues. Thus the reader keeps on reading to know the end of the story.
2. A story has suspense if the reader does not know until the end how things are going to turn out. It has suspense if the steps are lengthened (or if there are more steps) before knowing what happened. Some authors like to make the readers suffer, having them wait and wait until arriving at the climax of the acts and then knowing how it turned out. The readers also like this.
3. Sometimes the author gives clues so that the reader may guess how it will turn out.
4. Sometimes the author tells the reader how it is going to turn out, but the main person of the story does not know how it is going to turn out, and there is suspense until that person knows.
5. Does the story that you are editing involve suspense? Are there certain details that should not be included until later in the story?

Theme 6. The plot

Certain stories have a plot or tangle which makes them more interesting.

1. Five steps of a good plot (according to Betsy Edwards) are:
 - a. The introduction (or opening of the situation)
 - b. The unfolding (the beginning of the action)
 - c. The suspense (or the plot or tangle)
 - d. The climax (the culminating moment, the solution, or what happened)
 - e. The conclusion (what they thought after, the moral, and so forth).
2. For a fiction story (which is not the truth), the author can look for a problem which his readers have and consider that the chief person in the story has this problem, the tangle it causes him, and how the problem is at last resolved. (The Guahibo wrote stories of this kind for their Christian publications, after thinking and asking about the problems of men, women, youth, and children. They used real experiences as a base, in order not to consider things which were not real problems in their lives.)
3. Does the story which you are editing have the steps of a good plot, in correct order?

Theme 7. The setting

A short description of the setting (place or surroundings) of the events helps to make a story more interesting.

1. If the author tells something about where the events happened, the reader can better visualize all the story.
2. It is not necessary to describe all at the beginning; you can include the information little by little, with the introduction of the persons and the first events.
3. The author will include the most important details of the setting, thinking of one or more of these:
 1. What do you see?
 2. What do you smell?
 3. What do you feel (wind, heat)?
 4. What do you taste?
 5. What do you hear?

Example: (including sight, smell, and sound) When I went to the farm I was delighted. What a pleasant smell! I noticed the pleasing odor of hot syrup. I saw piles of firewood in the corner, and the flaming

(1990). *Notes on Literacy*, 61.

fire where they were cooking the syrup. I seemed to hear them playing guitar music and singing songs in the distance.

5. Will to tell something about the setting make the story that you are editing more interesting?

Theme 8. The characters

The story will be more interesting if the characters have their own personalities, instead of all appearing the same.

1. It is more interesting when the reader discovers the personality of each person rather than the author telling him directly. Through the dialogues and the way that each person does things, the author indicates what that person is like.
2. It is very interesting when the characters have their own names. If it is not appropriate to reveal the names of the persons of a real story, you can change the names.
3. Think whether some names in your language are more interesting than others.
4. Think whether the story that you are editing needs more details which show the personality of the characters.

Theme 9. Emotive words

Each language has special words which make the reading more interesting. Many of them are interjections (that is, exclamations and words which give courage or spirit).

1. What words of your language express surprise, jubilation (great joy), anger, or remorse for a mistake (such as stepping on the foot of another person unintentionally, and so forth)? These are words which are expressed spontaneously (rapidly); the persons in a story might use them.
2. In your language, how are emotions or attitudes of disgust, compassion, thoughtfulness, emphasis, remorse (for some condition or act), and so forth expressed? These expressions are those which touch the emotions of the readers and make the story more interesting.
3. At times the older people use very typical expressions when they talk. Are there expressions which only the women use?
4. Consider whether you can use some of these special words in the writing that you are editing, in order to improve it.

Theme 10. Onomatopoetic words

Onomatopoetic words (which imitate sounds and movements) make the writings more interesting.

1. Comic strips contain many such words. They are very expressive.

(1990). *Notes on Literacy*, 61.

2. You can expand a word by using a special intonation. For example: “Mamaa, come! Help me!” (In Guahibo, when a word is lengthened, it can indicate greater distance.)
3. Onomatopoeic words imitate sounds of animals, persons, and things (like the water, the wind, motors, and so forth).
4. From time to time, the author invents an onomatopoeic word, using it only one time.
5. See if you can include in the writing some onomatopoeic word, to make the writing sound more interesting.

Theme 11. Verisimilitude

A story has verisimilitude when it seems true and can be believed to be true. Even fiction stories (invented) ought to be realistic; they should be believable.

For example, when a person has never committed a mistake and is perfect in everything, he is not a credible person, because nobody is perfect. In the same way, nobody is completely bad. The characters ought to be like real people, and credible, especially when they give us an example for our lives.

The following things help to make our stories realistic:

1. The use of details. When the author uses many details, he gives the impression that he witnessed the happenings.
2. The use of dialogue. When the reader knows what the main character says and thinks, he seems more real. The reader does not have to believe only the opinion of the author but can form his own opinion of the character.
3. The use of complications in the plot. It is not normal that problems are resolved too easily or that a person with a bad habit change this habit from one moment to another and never have any more problem. Real solutions come more slowly and with more effort. Not all efforts result positively.

Theme 12. Teller of the story (point of view)

The story can be told by different persons. Here are some possibilities:

1. First person narrator
 - a. Told in first person (“I”), but he is not the author. For example: Arthur Cova in the story of the maelstrom. Though Arthur Cova disappeared at the end of the story, he left his story written in his diary.
 - b. The author writes in the first person, but he is not the main person.
 - c. The author writes in the first person, and he is the main person. Autobiography.

2. Third person narrator
 - a. The narrator cannot see anything except what the main person sees.
 - b. He knows only what the main person is thinking.
 - c. The other characters must show by their acts and words what they think and what kind of people they are.
 - d. It is very real, for none of us knows what the other thinks if he does not show us what he is thinking, nor can we see happenings if we are not there.
3. Semi-omniscient narrator
 - a. The narrator knows what two (or three) persons in different places are doing.
 - b. He knows what two (or three) persons are thinking.
 - c. The fewer persons “accompanied” by the narrator, the more credible the story.
4. Omniscient narrator
 - a. He can be in any area, like a supernatural being.
 - b. He knows what everyone is thinking, like a supernatural being.
 - c. It is difficult to handle this narrator (or viewpoint) in a credible way.

Excerpt VI. How to teach a writers’ course

[Topics: writer training]

6.1. The indigenous editor

The work of the indigenous editor will depend on who are writing books in the mother tongue. If the government or other entity is contracting editors or translators, they will also need an editor (also called reviser or proofreader, according to the work) who knows the language well. At times they desire to have a committee of revisers composed of speakers of different dialects and of different ages.

But if no one is interested in the need for books in his mother tongue, perhaps it will fall to you to arouse the interest of the community. A community awakened and with goodwill can produce its own literature.

Much can be accomplished through the leaders of the community, with the participation of all the people. You can begin by asking them if it is important to preserve aspects of their culture by means of its written form, and if the children who do not yet understand Spanish ought to have books in their own language in order to learn more quickly, with understanding and enthusiasm.

6.2. The history of the community

A community project that has been popular in some communities is the compilation of the history of the community. The young people, profiting by the questions in the Manual for Indigenous Writers (46–47), interviewed the older people and wrote what they told them. (It did not matter if more than one older person answered the same question, because each one told different details.) Then the editors organized the data in more or less chronological order with subtitles, and corrected the mistakes. Other persons made the illustrations, guided by the older people so that the details would be correct. Perhaps a project like this would serve to awaken the community.

If the community do not have funds for paying for the publication, it would be possible to print the books in the same community with a simple duplicating machine. The members of the community could sell food and artifacts to pay for the cost of the stencils, the ink, and the paper. For small editions of small books this method is economical.

6.3. Books for the library

If your community has one or more schools, the school children will be delighted to have books in their own language in the school library. To produce them you could give a course for writers, sponsored by the community. (The community would choose the participants.) Before giving the course, you should know how to write stories (having practiced what you are going to teach), how to type stencils, and how to print them on the duplicator, if that is going to be the method of publishing the books. You can use the Manual for Indigenous Writers as the textbook. You will need the machines and materials (see the list given previously).

The writers ought to remember for whom they are writing, and that children like to read about children. You can provide many ideas, so that they do not write only a story that they have heard in Spanish. In the appendix of the manual are simple instructions for the writing of different kinds of material, with examples and a list of ideas. Choose the kinds of writings easiest and most appropriate for the community. Add other ideas to the lists, ideas that originate from the culture. If you do not provide ideas, your students will waste much time thinking of what they are going to write about.. But the students should not be limited to the ideas of the manual if they can think of others.

When the writers have written something, you can give suggestions for improving their writing; for example: more details, dialogue, change of order if it is not very good, and so forth. (For advanced writers, teach literary criticism.) But first, you can warn them that the best writers revise their story many times. **Important:** Tell the writers the part of the story that pleases you before giving them suggestions about how to make it “even better.” In this way, you will not discourage your students.

When you have checked and made suggestions the best you can, you can help the writers to correct the details, with your experience as editor. When a book is ready to print (perhaps not at the end of the course but some weeks or months after), your students can help you with the printing and binding of the books. Sewing the books with thread or nylon lasts longer than stapling them with staples which rust. Then the copies will be ready to distribute to the schools which have libraries.

6.4. School songs

In the schools of your community, do they sing educational songs in the mother tongue or only in Spanish? The writers of the community can write songs in the mother tongue. If it is your responsibility to edit them, remember these points:

1. They must have good sense. Do not use poor grammar just to fit the music. Change the words until you have a good balance between the sense and the music.
2. So that they will be easy to sing, the number of syllables in each line should correspond with the number of notes in the music.
3. The music could be of an educational song in Spanish, a popular song or a song in the mother tongue. Or you can invent new music. In the latter case, it would be good to tape the music so as not to forget it.
4. Some ideas for words of the songs are the following:
 - The vowels (in your language)
 - The numbers
 - The alphabet
 - Sounds that animals make (or other sounds)
 - Names of different stars
 - The colors
 - “Mother” and “daddy”
 - The names of the rivers
 - The grasshopper (or other insect or animal)
 - The canoe (or other well-known thing)
 - The correct form for greeting different relatives or visitors
 - Characteristics of a good little girl
 - Characteristics of a good little boy
 - The work of men and of women, and so forth