Chapter 6 For its users, instances of language are never abstracted, they always happen in specific situations.Decisions have to be made about whether to gloss emotive words such as 'martyrdom?, which has quite different connotations from the Arabic "shahada, or simply to give up in difficult cases and import the original word, as in the case of jihad' and 'sharia', thus assuming in the reader a relevant background knowledge which they may not have. The importance of such decisions, playing as they do a role in each community's view of the other, cannot be underestimated. 'Traduttore traditor–The translator is a traitor'. This Italian adage provides its illustration, for translated into English it loses the almost exact echo of the two words. It illustrates, too, why despite many attempts across the centuries, there can never be foolproof rules for doing a translation or precise ways of measuring its success. In every translation, something must be lost. One cannot keep the sound and the word order and the exact nature of the phrase. One cannot always make, in Hymes' terms, the translation at once accurate, feasible, and appropriate. Yet translation is––in the (loosely translated!) words of Goethe––'impossible but necessary', essential both in world affairs and in individual lives. It is work at the boundaries of possibility, and when subjected to scrutiny it inevitably attracts criticism, like applied linguistics itself. There are always judgments and compromises to be made, reflecting the translator's evaluations both of the original text and of the translation's audience. This, incidentally, is why machine translation by computer, though it may provide a rough guide to what has been said, does not challenge the need for human judgment. Own language: rights and understanding The inevitable losses of translation lie behind the popular view that, if we are truly to understand someone and the culture from which they come, then we must understand their language. This accounts for the widespread notion in literary and religious study that something essential is lost if texts cannot be read in the original. To a degree this view is motivated by some vague belief in 'the spirit of the language'; more precisely it derives from a belief that important ideas and traditions are specific to a particular language. The corollary of this view is that if someone is to express themselves fully, they may need to do so in their language. To preserve their cultural, preserve their culture, they must also have the right to educate their children in that language. These needs, which have been referred to as language rights, have clear implications for language planning. They are implicit in a good deal of national and international legislation, ensuring the possibility of own language use both in formal transactions and schools. On the other hand, there are many contexts where language rights are denied and oppressive legislation Within easy meningitis, sucecoron contribute to languages dying out completely. In extensively multilingual and multicultural societies pressure groups are seeking to preserve linguistic diversity and others seeking to restrict it. The 'English Only' movement in the USA is an example of the latter. Though the moral case for diversity seems self–evident, there are obvious practical problems in institutionalizing the use of every language, however small, in a community, and a valid practical need for at least one lingua franca. There is also the danger that language preservation, pursued in certain ways, can lead to segregation and sectarianism. The task of the language planner is to reconcile all of these interests and factors. Like that of the translator, it is inevitably thankless and controversial. Teaching culture Although relevant to every area of applied linguistics, the study of cross–cultural communication has often been related to ELT. At first glance it seems sensible, when learning a language, also to study the culture of the people who speak it. While

 learning Icelandic–to return to the example used in Chapter 3–one would expect to study the lifestyle of the Icelanders. Thus, teaching materials could reasonably include an element of 'Icelandic studies' with descriptions of the treeless landscape, the historic links with Denmark, the importance of the fishing industry, and so on. For students such materials would be both necessary and motivating as they are unlikely to be studying the Icelandic language if they are not also interested in Icelandic culture. With English however, and to a degree with other widely distributed languages such as Spanish and French, the situation is rather more complicated. Firstly, English is the language of many different cultures and the conventions governing its use vary accordingly. Our earlier example of 'How are you?"In linguistics, the linguistic relativity hypothesis, which holds that language determines a unique way of seeing the world, has fallen from favor under the influence of Chomsky's emphasis on language as a biological rather than a social phenomenon.Such variations, and the role of English as a global lingua franca, raise doubts about the association in many EFL materials of the English language with specific cultural practices, usually those of the dominant mainstream culture in either Britain or the USA.To demonstrate this, applied linguistics has drawn upon, and also developed, discourse analysis––the study of how stretches of language in context are perceived as meaningful and unified by their users.At a time when new technologies mix writing and visual effects in ways that may be altering fundamentally the nature and process of communication, there is a pressing need to integrate findings from these disparate areas.New technologies make the paralanguage of writing increasingly more significant, for whereas, in the past, resources were limited to handwriting, typing, or printing, the computer has brought powerful .new tools for document design within many people's reach