At the Higher Institute of Electronics in Libya we have been developing a course for first year B. Sc. students of electrical engineering. Our students all have a fairly thorough grounding in sentence structure as a result of their high school education but when they arrive at the Institute they are very uncertain about how to use their knowledge of English to communicate in lecture and seminar situations. Consequently our materials have a listening comprehension focus, usually a taped dialogue with related exercises, around which we provide opportunities for practice in all the skills areas. The material presented here forms Unit 6 of this course. Aware of the particular need of these students, faced for the first time with an English medium learning environment, to develop the skills necessary to participation in their classes we decided one priority area was the provision of practice in a number of simple exchange structures. We felt it important that the dialogues used to exemplify these structures should be as authentic as possible with regard to discourse features the students were likely to meet in lectures and seminars, e.g. hesitations, incomplete sentences, therefore we taped and listened to actual classroom sessions before writing each dialogue with the appropriate subject teacher. In the process of writing the dialogues we found certain discourse features suggested themselves as necessary for in-
elusion in the text. However although we wanted our material to be as appropriate as possible we rejected the idea of using authentic recordings of lessons; at the first year stage we felt it important to control the introduction of lexis, structures and exchange features while emphasising a graded series of functions. We think the use of unedited authentic texts is likely to be of more use at a later stage.

This unit introduces two language functions, expressing certainty and uncertainty, and agreeing and disagreeing which we felt would complement the exchange structure we wanted to practice. Using

1. Sinclair and Coulthard's terminology the two exchanges are:
   1. Inform (or statement) → possible reply → possible comment.
   2. Elicit (or question) → possible reply → possible comment.

These are illustrated in the transcript and practiced in accompanying exercises. The exchange might be: -It is connected externally → I don't agree with that → Oh well I'm not so sure then. Or it could be: -Is it connected internally → I'm not so sure → Maybe I'm wrong then. As can be seen when combined with possible agreement, disagreement, certainty and uncertainty there is the possibility of a great variety of practice exchanges. Here are some of the materials we have used when teaching this unit.

WORKSHEET 6.

The work on this sheet will help you with your next language lab. lesson.

1. Complete these replies with a phrase of agreement or disagreement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I agree with that</th>
<th>That's not right</th>
<th>That's correct</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I don't agree with that</td>
<td>You're right</td>
<td>You're wrong</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

   Eid: ___________________________?  Ali: ___________________________.

3. Ali: Ramadan begins in April this year. 4. Ali: There should only be one man in program.
   Eid: ___________________________.  Eid: ___________________________.

5. Ali: I agree with Ragab, if the switch is open the current won't flow.
   Eid: ___________________________.

2. Answer these questions with a phrase of certainty or uncertainty.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>maybe...</th>
<th>perhaps...</th>
<th>I'm not so sure...</th>
<th>I'm sure...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I'm certain...</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Will Liverpool win the European Cup? 2. Is a triangle a shape?

3. Does Dr. Jawahiri teach Physics? 4. Will Fathalla pass English?

5. Will it rain tomorrow? 6. Can a cathode ray tube be used as an oscilloscope?
3. Choose one of these words to complete the sentences below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>deflected</th>
<th>disagree</th>
<th>internal</th>
<th>externally</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>horizontally</td>
<td>amplitude</td>
<td>excuse me</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Something that is fitted ________ is on the outside.
2. ________, could you answer this question please?
3. I ________, ________ doesn't mean colour, it means size.
4. An electron beam is ________ by the X and Y plates.

LISTENING COMPREHENSION. 6. USING THE OSCILLOSCOPE. TRANSCRIPT.

Salih. Yunis, do you know how to get a sine wave on the oscilloscope screen, I'm not sure how to do it?
Yunis. Yes, I know. I'm sure this is what happens, in fact I'm certain.
Salih. Go on then.
Yunis. Well you know there are two channels; the Y plates are connected to a ramp generator....
Salih. You mean externally?
Yunis. Uh huh.... and as the electron beam passes between the Y plates it is deflected up and down according to the polarity of the sine wave voltage, and as it passes between the X plates it is deflected horizontally; the amount of deflection is proportional to the amplitude of the ramp signal.
Salih. But that's not right. I don't agree with that!
Yunis. With what?
Salih. The ramp signal isn't connected externally to the oscilloscope.
Yunis. Oh well, I'm not so sure then... maybe I'm wrong, perhaps it isn't. Excuse me Dr. Halit, is the ramp signal connected to the oscilloscope externally?
Dr. Halit. If the cathode ray tube is being used as an oscilloscope then it isn't, the ramp signal is applied internally.
Yunis. Ah yes, that's correct. I agree with that. You're right, Dr. Halit.
Salih. I agree as well.
Dr. Halit. Good, any more disagreements, just ask me.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>agree</th>
<th>disagree</th>
<th>I'm sure</th>
<th>certain</th>
<th>correct</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I'm not so sure</td>
<td>maybe</td>
<td>I'm wrong</td>
<td>perhaps</td>
<td>internally</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>externally</td>
<td>amplitude</td>
<td>cathode ray tube</td>
<td>ramp generator</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>horizontally</td>
<td>excuse me</td>
<td>deflected</td>
<td>sine wave</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LISTENING COMPREHENSION ii. USING THE OSCILLOSCOPE. SHEET 2.

1. You will now hear some short sentences. Listen to each sentence then circle e.g. the correct reply.

1. 1. A. Where with? 2. A. I agree as well.
   B. What with?
   C. With what?
   D. Who?

2. A. I agree as well.
   B. I disagree as well.
   C. Ah yes
   D. With what?

3. A. Ah
   B. Oh well.
   C. Uh huh.
   D. Yes I know.


You will now hear some more short sentences. Say whether you think the speaker is certain or uncertain.

e.g. I'm sure it'll rain today. ______ certain _______.

1. ________ 4. ________
2. ________ 5. ________
3. ________ 6. ________

Now listen to these sentences and mark on the tone unit boundaries.

e.g. I'm sure //that's the book.

1. Perhaps it is; I don't know
2. Maybe I'm wrong; perhaps it isn't.
3. I don't agree; that's not right.
4. Are you sure this is what happens?
5. The ramp signal is applied internally.

At the bottom of the transcript we have listed the lexis, structures and functions to be pretaught. The first lesson would therefore involve a pre-teaching of these "key items" and notes would be completed on a worksheet. With worksheet 6, the functions are introduced and practiced orally along with other important lexical items. The second lesson involves completion of a diagram after listening to the tape. The tape can be played two or three times. The students have then to complete the appropriate replies in voice bubbles on an illustration of characters from the tape. The students then hear several short sentences and they have to circle the correct, or most appropriate reply. The sentences are:

1. I agree with that. (C. With what?)
2. I agree with Dr. Halit. (A. I agree as well.)
3. Is the ramp signal connected internally? (C. Uh huh.)
4. Are you sure this is the answer? (C. I'm certain.)

They then have to say whether a number of sentences are spoken by a person who is certain or uncertain e.g. Perhaps Yusif knows the answer.

I'm sure I locked the door.
I agree, Dr. Halit is correct.
I thought you had the key, maybe its in your back pocket.

We avoided examples which relied on the intonation pattern alone e.g.

I think I passed the exam.

...although this could be introduced and practiced as well.
Finally model sentences are heard by the students who then have to mark on the tone unit boundaries.

The third lesson involves reading the transcript itself and answering various comprehension questions, or taking parts and reading out the dialogue. The fourth lesson is an extension of this involving written exercises. The students are given a sheet with two short dialogues on; they have to complete several replies which have been left blank but which they can guess from context. They could then be asked to write their own dialogue about a disagreement, a discussion about exam results, etc.

We hope that through controlled exposure to what we consider appropriate subject specific material and exercises based on the material which give practice in responding to and participating in target areas we will increase our students' ability to handle the language requirements of their particular subjects. Simple routines or exchange structures like those illustrated here are, we think, an important part of that requirement.

REFERENCES:

2. This phrase is Julian Dakin's, "Language Laboratory Materials' ECAI vol. 3."