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In Chapter One, the writer, Dr. Alfredo Urzúa, explains that: At a personal level, as an applied linguist, second language teacher educator, and program coordinator, my work in the U.S.-Mexico borderlands has been closely connected to my educational and professional experiences. Chapter Two covers border crossings. Chapter Three discusses the local context in El Paso, Texas. Chapter Four focuses on the situation at the University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP), which is a public university located less than one mile from the US-Mexico border. Although this book is about teaching and learning English on the border between the USA and Mexico, lessons can be learned that can be apply to English language teaching and learning in other border situations and contexts.

Dr. Urzúa highlights some of the reasons for creating this book: A substantial body of research highlights the important role played by contextual factors in second and foreign language learning, including aspects such as contact with the target language and culture, learners' experiences and interactions in the language, and the specific characteristics of the learning setting. He concludes that: It is these factors that may, in the end, explain the effects of our teaching and the way learners approach the learning task.