

# **NECTFL *REVIEW***

**A Journal for K-16+ Foreign Language Educators**



**Northeast Conference  
on the Teaching of Foreign Languages**

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## *From the Executive Director*

Dear Colleagues,

This 59th issue of our journal is notable for several reasons. First, we are pleased to publish here an article that brings an investigative approach to the challenge of foreign language teacher recruitment. The first author, Peter Swanson, was a high school teacher who acquired the research and theoretical tools needed to study the problem and to experiment with a concrete approach to solving it. Working with the second author, Alan D. Moore, an educational research and assessment specialist, Swanson analyzed the data collected to create an article of undeniable interest. As always, Articles Editor Robert M. Terry and the Editorial Board have worked to ensure that all members of our reader constituency will find this piece readable and useful.

Second, a new feature of this issue of our journal is the appearance in the Table of Contents of a list of all reviews. Tom Conner has greatly expanded both the number and the diversity of the reviews we publish, and we have realized that they will reach more colleagues if a quick glance at the Table of Contents makes the aforementioned diversity clearer. Reviews are ordered alphabetically by title. Please enjoy perusing these constructive critiques of materials in languages from German to Latin to French to Chinese to Spanish to Hebrew and more. Note that professional and research volumes, materials for learners at all levels of instruction, and a variety of media are included in our reviews section. It is a wonderful service to the profession, and we thank the many reviewers willing to provide it. If you are interested in writing reviews, guidelines are available in that section of the journal.

Finally, the essays on the topic of articulation in this issue are expanded and elaborated versions of comments made by the authors at a special panel held during the 2006 Northeast Conference last March 30 - April 1 in New York City. Although we were disappointed not to be able to publish the remarks of all panelists, the four writers who submitted articles give us a wide and representative range of perspectives on the issues associated with this topic. At the special panel, organized by 2006 Conference Chair Nancy Gadbois and moderated by 2008 Conference Chair Sharon Wilkinson, the several hundred audience members (fueled with “energy snacks” provided by a College Board sponsorship!) were invited to comment on and ask questions about the panelists’ statements. Likewise, we invite readers of this journal to send us feedback in response to any or all of the articulation pieces — or, consider submitting an article of your own!

In the larger professional context, please note the new ACTFL media campaign that urges our fellow citizens to “**Discover Languages**.” We, too, as language educators, should heed that imperative: **discover** something new about the language you’ve always taught; **rediscover** the language of your ancestors or family; **uncover** the fun in learning a new language (maybe ASL or an indigenous American language?). One way to accomplish the latter is to come to the 2007 Northeast Conference where a series of “Try a New Language” sessions complement the high-quality array of presentations attendees have come to associate with our annual meeting. Native speakers will introduce you to Kurdish, Wolof, Yiddish, Korean, Polish, Basque, and other languages and cultures with which you may hope to become more familiar! All conference information has been available since September and is updated regularly ([www.nectfl.org](http://www.nectfl.org)). The exhibit areas and the session schedule are both packed once again for 2007! We are working to exceed your expectations and hope to see you in New York next April 12–14!

Cordially,



Rebecca R. Kline

# Guidelines for Preparation of Manuscripts

All articles submitted will be evaluated by at least two, normally three, members of the **Editorial Review Board**. Elements to be considered in the evaluation process are the article's appropriateness for the journal's readership, its contribution to foreign language education and the originality of that contribution, the soundness of the research or theoretical base, its implications for the classroom, and finally, organization, focus, and clarity of expression.

As you prepare your manuscript for submission to the NECTFL Review, please keep the following guidelines in mind:

1. We use the most recent **APA** [American Psychological Association] **Guidelines**, and not those of the Modern Language Association (MLA) or the *Chicago Manual of Style*. Please use the latest edition (5th ed., 2001) of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* as your guide. For models of articles and references, examine *The NECTFL Review*, the *Modern Language Journal*, or a recent issue of *Foreign Language Annals*. These journals follow the APA style with minor deviations (and those being primarily changes in level headings within articles). Citations within articles, bibliographical entries, punctuation, and style follow the APA format very closely. You can visit the following web sites, which give you abbreviated versions of the APA guidelines:
  - a. APA Style Resources: <http://www.psychwww.com/resource/apacrib.htm> — this excellent site offers links to several other sites that offer guidelines for using the 5th edition of the APA guidelines.
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2. Do not submit a diskette with article you are submitting. Instead, submit your article electronically to [rterry@richmond.edu](mailto:rterry@richmond.edu). Please follow these guidelines carefully to expedite the review and publishing process:
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  - b. Do **not** use the rich text format.
  - c. Use a font size of **12 points** and use **only one font throughout** — we require **Times New Roman**.
  - d. Use italics and boldface type when necessary, but **do not use underlining**.
3. Please think carefully about the title of your article. Although "catchy" titles are permissible, even desirable in some cases for conference presentations, the title of your article should be more academic in nature, allowing the reader to determine at once what subject the author(s) will be addressing. It should be brief, preferably without subtitles, and no longer than **12 words**.
4. **Effective July 2006, we now require an abstract of your article.**
5. Articles will not be accepted if they appear to endorse or sell software, hardware, books, or any other products.
6. **Do not include the names of the author(s) of the article on the first page of the actual text.**
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    - ii. Names and titles of the author(s)
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- b. The first page of the manuscript itself should have the title only, followed by the abstract, then the text.
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7. Include a short biographical paragraph (this will appear at the bottom of the first page of the article). Please include this paragraph on a separate page at the **end** of your article. This paragraph should include the following information (**no longer than 4-5 lines**):
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  8. Please note that the length of manuscripts averages approximately 20-25 double-spaced pages, including notes, charts, and references. This does not mean that a slightly longer article is out of the question.
  9. Authors will receive galley proofs of their article prior to publication. At this stage, **no major changes can be made in the manuscript**. Authors are to read the galley proofs, verifying the accuracy of the citations (including the spelling of names, page numbers, and publication dates); the accuracy of the format of the references; punctuation, according to the APA Guidelines; spelling throughout the article. Upon receipt of the galley proofs, authors are expected to inform the Articles Editor of any corrections that need to be made within **two weeks**. **Under no circumstances can major textual changes be made at this stage.**
  10. Please consult the **Checklist for Manuscript Publication**. Promising articles have been rejected because authors did not spend enough time proofreading the manuscript. Proofreading includes not only



## Guidelines for Preparation of Manuscripts (Continued)

reading for accuracy but for readability, flow, clarity. Using the Checklist will help ensure accuracy. Authors are encouraged to have several colleagues read the article before it is submitted.

These guidelines and the accompanying checklist are based on similar documents prepared by Maurice Cherry, Editor, *Dimension*, a SCOLT publication.

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## A Checklist for Manuscript Preparation — NECTFL Review

Here are a few reminders, most of which are taken directly from the APA Guidelines:

1. Please remember to use the “spell check” and “grammar check” on your computer before you submit your manuscript. **Whether you are a native speaker of English or not, please ask a colleague whose native language is English to proofread your article to be sure that the text sounds idiomatic and that punctuation and spelling are standard.**
2. Remember that with the APA guidelines, notes (footnotes or endnotes) are discouraged — such information is considered to be either important enough to be included in the article itself or not significant enough to be placed anywhere. If notes are necessary, however, they should be **endnotes**.
  - a. **Do not use automatic footnoting or end noting programs** available with your computer. Simply use raised superscripts in the text and superscripts in the notes at the end. Automatic endnote/footnote programs present major problems as we prepare an article for publication.
  - b. **Do not use automatic page numbering**, since such programs often prove to be impossible to remove from a manuscript.
3. Please **double-space everything** in your manuscript.
4. The **required font** throughout is **Times New Roman 12**.
5. There should be **only one space after each period**, according to APA format.
6. **Periods and commas** appear within quotation marks. **Semi-colons and colons** should appear outside of quotation marks. **Quotation marks and exclamation points** appear inside the quotation marks only when they are part of the actual quoted material. Otherwise, they should appear outside of the quoted material (as, for instance, when the author of the article is asking a question or reacting strongly to something).
7. **All numbers above “nine” must appear as Arabic numerals** [“nine school districts” vs. “10 textbooks”].
8. Please remember that **page number references in parentheses** are not part of the actual quotation and must be placed outside of the quotation marks following quoted material.
9. Use **standard postal abbreviations** for states in all reference items [NC, IL, NY, MS, etc.], but not in the text itself.
10. Please **do not set up tabs at the beginning of the article** (i.e., automatically); rather you should use the tab key on your computer each time you begin a new paragraph, which is to be indented only 1/4 inch.
11. Please note the differences between the use and appearance of hyphens and dashes. Note that **dashes**

(which should be used sparingly) should appear as the correct typographic symbol (—) or as two hyphens (–). If your computer automatically converts two hyphens to a dash, that is fine. APA guidelines, as well as those for other style manuals, suggest that commas, parentheses, and other marks of punctuation are generally more effective than dashes.

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16. Please make certain that the components you submit are in the following order:
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  - b. **First page of the manuscript** — should have the title of the article and the abstract.
  - c. The text of the article
  - d. **Notes: References, Appendices** — in this order
  - e. The **short, bibliographical paragraph** (no more than 4-5 lines).



# Call for Papers

The *NECTFL Review* encourages articles of interest to instructors, researchers, and administrators at all educational levels on theory, research, and classroom practice in language teaching. Articles dealing with pedagogical strategies, materials and curriculum development, language teaching technology, the teaching of literature, assessment, community awareness projects, and international studies would be equally welcome; the foregoing list illustrates the range of concerns that might be addressed in submissions. We welcome manuscripts from teachers at all levels, pre-K through university, and from teacher educators.

## The NECTFL Editorial Review Board

Our sincere gratitude to the following individuals who have agreed to serve as reviewers of manuscripts submitted for publication in the *NECTFL Review*. We cannot fulfill our mission without you!

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# Changing Student Misperceptions about Foreign Language Teaching: A Research-Based Approach to Improving Recruitment Practices

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*Peter Swanson, Georgia State University*  
*Alan D. Moore, University of Wyoming*

## Abstract

The U.S. is currently experiencing a shortage of educators, especially in the area of foreign language. Reasons for the shortage range from retirements to increased enrollments to new teacher attrition. The teacher shortage is a complicated issue, and a review of the literature reveals a dearth of research on certain potentially important factors such as student perceptions of the teaching profession. The purpose of the present study was to investigate and understand students' perceptions about a career in foreign language education and to determine whether those perceptions could be influenced by instruction and by the provision of pertinent information. Specifically, the research question posed was: Will students be more likely to consider becoming a FL teacher if they are educated about the benefits of becoming a teacher? The investigation used a quasi-experimental research design and involved secondary students (n=106) studying Spanish in five rural schools. Pre- and posttest results from the survey indicated statistically significant differences between the control and experimental groups in conceptual change for four of 12 constructs explored. This research may have implications not only for the profession of foreign language education, but also for broader understanding of the importance of career counseling for adolescents.

## The U.S. Teacher Shortage

Currently, teacher shortages are found in many different areas such as special education, science, and mathematics (Bradley, 1999). Both Bradley (1999) and the American Association for Employment in Education (2003) classified bilingual educa-

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**Peter Swanson** (PhD, University of Wyoming) is an assistant professor of Foreign Language Methods at Georgia State University. For 15 years, he taught Spanish K-16 and has studied internationally in a variety of Spanish-speaking countries. His areas of research interest include recruitment and retention of foreign language teachers, foreign language teacher identity, and teachers' sense of efficacy in the classroom.

**Alan D. Moore** (PhD, University of Northern Colorado) is an associate professor of educational research and educational leadership at the University of Wyoming. His research interests include education of gifted and talented students, assessment alignment, effects of assessment systems on instruction, and formative assessment.

tion and Spanish as a foreign language (FL) as disciplines faced with significant problems. Region 3 (Montana, Wyoming, Colorado, and New Mexico) was characterized as experiencing considerable shortages in both these fields. A recent report in Wyoming reviewed all content areas taught in the state and found that 10.95% of all Wyoming FL teachers were non-certified or teaching outside of their areas (Stowers, 2004).

We posit that the shortage of FL teachers involves the following five factors: retirement, attrition, increased enrollments, legislation, and perceptions of teaching.

Hussar and Gerald (1996) found that 24% of the total K-12 teaching population in the US would retire or be able to retire by 2005 because 29.4% of public school teachers would be 50 years old or more (National Center for Education Statistics, 2002). Specific to French education, Spencer (2003) found The American Association of Teachers of French expected that “in coming years, the rate of retirement among French teachers will escalate even more rapidly than it has been doing so far” (p. 47).

Teacher attrition, a second factor, contributes to the problem and, in turn, increases the need for more teachers. A report published by the National Commission on Teaching and America’s Future (2002) found that “almost a third of America’s teachers leave the field sometime during their first three years of teaching, and almost half leave after five years” (p. 4). For those who enter the teaching profession through some alternative pathway, such as emergency certification, the attrition rate can be as high as 60% (Darling-Hammond, Berry, & Thoreson, 2001) within the first two years of teaching (Lauer, 2001; Raymond, Fletcher, & Luque, 2001). These findings include both general and FL educators. Disappointingly, “little has been published specifically on attrition of foreign language teachers” (Wilkinson, 2000, p. 1), although Konanc (1996) studied teachers in North Carolina and discovered that the attrition rate of FL educators (22%) was slightly higher than the rate for their colleagues in other areas (15-18%).

A third factor that is instrumental in explaining the shortage of FL educators is increased enrollments. Draper and Hicks (2002) found that secondary modern FL enrollments (Spanish, French, German) had increased nationally from 16.3% of the total enrolled in FL in 1890 to 42.5% in 2000. Specifically, Spanish enrollments had been steadily climbing since 1964. Unfortunately, the number of FL teachers has not increased to meet this demand. In Montana, one of the states cited by the American Association for Employment in Education as having a shortage of Spanish educators, Nielson (2001) found that the mitigating causes for the shortage were increased enrollments combined with FL teacher attrition and a high number of teacher retirements.

Clearly, the shortage of FL educators is a complicated issue. Nevertheless, recent legislation, a fourth factor to consider, has made matters worse. In 2001, the Bush administration proposed sweeping educational reform when No Child Left Behind (NCLB) was unveiled and enacted into law with overwhelming bipartisan support. As the states began to work with this new massive piece of legislation, students and teachers were asked to be accountable for their learning via standards-based education. The law

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***“...the shortage  
of FL educators is  
a complicated  
issue.”***

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*“...teaching has been described by some as a dead-end job...”*

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requires all teachers in federal core academic areas, of which FL is one, to meet “highly qualified” criteria established by the U.S. Department of Education. This requirement is problematic because FL teachers who are licensed to teach in their respective states may find they are not considered highly qualified in the eyes of the federal government. In addition, NCLB

has prioritized instruction and allocation of resources to the core areas of reading, mathematics, and science (Rosenbusch, 2005; Rosenbusch & Jensen, 2004), which has resulted in an undervaluing of subjects like FL.

Additionally, state legislatures and policy makers have sometimes exacerbated the shortage of certified teachers. In 1999, the Wyoming Legislature passed the Wyoming School Improvement law that states: “Not later than the 2002-3 school year, all school districts shall provide instruction in foreign language to all students in kindergarten through grade two in accordance with standards promulgated by the state board of education” [sic] (School Improvement Act, 1999, p. g). Several years later, Wyoming House Bill 0170 was proposed and passed to extend the 1999 legislation to include grades 3-6. This new legislation requires elementary educators to prepare and teach additional subject matter for which many are not certified inasmuch as elementary FL certification does not exist in Wyoming.

### **FL Recruitment Initiatives**

Research focused on countering the recruitment and retention problems created by the above four factors is scant. Draper (1991) expressed concern about the lack of effort to address the crisis, warning that few states were in a position to know whether to expect a teacher shortage. There are still very few active initiatives investigating the best method to attract and keep FL instructors.

One endeavor, sponsored by the Alabama Association for Foreign Language Teachers, was reported by Spencer (2003). The organization encouraged French teachers to invite their best students to attend AAFLT annual meetings. High school students had the opportunity to meet with other students and teachers from around the state to find out more about the teaching field.

Citing a less proactive approach, Scheetz (1995) reported that active strategies to recruit FL teachers include only putting on career fairs, posting job vacancies on the Internet, and identifying qualities of the “best, brightest, and most talented new staff” (p. 10). Thus, Long (2000) suggests that post-secondary faculty must be proactive in K-12 recruitment, especially given that FL teaching positions are the most difficult to fill, well above special education, math, and science (Murphy, DeArmand, & Guin, 2003).

### **Perceptual Factors**

The fifth and final factor viewed as contributing to the shortage, perceptions of teaching, may be difficult to quantify since what people do may not reflect how they feel. But, vocational perception may nevertheless represent a formidable factor to consider when investigating the shortage of FL educators. After all, teaching has been described by some as a dead-end job with a perceived low-status, poor working con-

ditions, lack of control over how schools are run, ineffective administrative support, low salaries, classroom discipline issues, a lack of induction and mentoring, and frustration with colleagues (Boles, 2000; Boser, 2000; Brunetti, 2001; Stanford, 2000; Weld, 1998). Other barriers such as inadequate classroom management skills, large classes, work schedules, feelings of isolation in the classroom, and insufficient preparation for dealing with cultural diversity in schools all contribute to producing high levels of stress for first-year teachers (Fideler & Haselkorn, 1999).

Because these educators are leaving the profession for a myriad of reasons and current legislation is not attempting to retain or recruit more language teachers, an innovative FL teacher recruitment project for rural U.S. secondary students in Spanish classes was created and its impact will be reported in the remainder of this article.

First, the research methodology will be presented through a description of the approach used to change student misconceptions about teaching within the context of FL education. Results from the present study are followed by a discussion of the broader implications of such a FL teacher recruitment approach, not only for Spanish, but also for other FLs, as well as other professions.

## **Methodology**

### **Theoretical Framework**

Two distinct theories helped guide this research. The first posits that individuals begin to crystallize a vocational preference between the ages of 14 and 18 (Super, 1990). During this period, adolescents begin to formulate ideas about appropriate work and begin to develop occupational self-conceptions that will guide educational decisions. Thus, we selected secondary students attending daily Spanish classes in grades 9-12 for this study.

The Conceptual Change Model (CCM), which is based on Piaget's ideas of assimilation, accommodation, and disequilibrium (Posner, Strike, Hewson, & Gertzog, 1982; Strike & Posner, 1992), is the second theory framing this research project. CCM is a method of presenting science concepts to students in classrooms that seeks to restructure meaning by replacing existing conceptions with new ones, emphasizing the importance of a student's conceptual ecology in controlling the process of change. For conceptual change to take place, students must reevaluate their existing knowledge and restructure existing concepts.

CCM proposes that if students are to change their ideas, four conditions must be met. First, they must become dissatisfied with their existing knowledge. Second, the new concepts must offer a more understandable explanation. Then, the new concept itself must meet three criteria: it must propose solutions to problems, be compatible with knowledge in other related areas, and be plausible. Finally, the new concept must lead to new insights and have potential for new discoveries.

CCM places students in a setting that encourages them to confront their own preconceptions and those of their peers, then work toward resolution and conceptual change through a six-stage process (Stepans, 1996).

1. Students become aware of their own preconceptions about a concept by thinking about it before any activity begins.

2. Students expose their beliefs by sharing them, initially in small groups and then with the entire class.
3. Students confront their beliefs by testing and discussing them in small groups.
4. Students work toward resolving conflicts (if any) between their ideas (based on the revealed misconceptions and class discussion) and their observations, thereby accommodating the new concept.
5. Students extend the concept by trying to make connections between the concepts learned in the classroom and other situations, including their daily lives.
6. Students are encouraged to go even further, pursuing additional questions and problems of their choice related to the concept.

## Researchers

My (first author) interest in FL teacher identity and socialization practices is influenced by my 15 years teaching Spanish in high schools and community colleges in two western states. Working in rural public schools as an educator gave me the opportunity to interact directly with students in academic and vocational contexts. During my doctoral program at the University of Wyoming, I met and studied with Alan Moore (second author) who specializes in educational research methods, statistics, and measurement. Together, we utilized our respective strengths to conduct this study.

## Method

Since the university research involved secondary students, we submitted and received institutional review board approval to conduct this research in rural secondary schools in order to answer the research question: Will students be more likely to consider becoming FL teachers if they are educated about the benefits of becoming a teacher? Next, we contacted FL educators and administrators in five schools and gained their permission to conduct our study in their buildings. Being teachers ourselves, we were concerned about the loss of instructional time. The FL educators in charge of these students assured us that student learning would not be adversely affected because they planned to modify their lessons each week as needed.

To begin the research process, we reviewed the literature regarding reasons for people's decisions about the career of teaching. Following this research, discussions with high school students studying FL from the first of five selected schools took place, and these informal dialogues focused on the same topic.

From the review of the literature and the student discussions, a survey questionnaire (see Appendix A) using a 5-point Likert scale (1 — Strongly Disagree to 5 — Strongly Agree) with a participant demographic sheet was developed for implementation as a pretest and as a posttest. The instrument

was designed to test possible changes in students' perceptions of 12 dependent variables: (1) adequacy of teacher salary, (2) teacher stress levels, (3) desire to become a teacher, (4) length of teaching contracts, (5) respect and low status of teachers, (6) societal importance of teaching, (7) requirements for becoming a teacher, (8) misconceptions about NCLB, (9) school safety issues, (10) insecurity about finding a

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***“Being teachers ourselves, we were concerned about the loss of instructional time.”***

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job as a FL teachers, (11) insecurity about own FL ability, and (12) questions related to the need for life-long learning of FL. A paper version of the instrument was field-tested on two classes of secondary FL students from the second school and was subsequently modified to ensure content validity and reliability.

The data gathered from the first two schools were used to verify the constructs and to test the instrument; these data were not included in the study for two reasons. First, we felt that the student responses from the first school could lead to a biased view. Second, the survey was modified after the pilot test, making some of the survey statements slightly different. Therefore, the data would not have been deemed comparable. Later, we developed lesson plans to teach about the 12 constructs being investigated.

Once ready to begin the experiment, we made schedules to visit each of the three remaining schools five times, once per week on the same day and time, to gather initial data from the pretest. During the three weeks of presentations (treatments), we delivered lectures, engaged students in discussions about the information presented from the lectures, and encouraged the students to seek supplementary information regarding the topics being discussed. The topics for week one were low salary, the parameters of a typical year-long teaching job, and student insecurity about finding a job teaching FL. The second week we focused on teacher stress levels, students' interest in becoming FL educators, their misconceptions about the requirements for becoming a teacher, and their insecurity about their own language skills. The final week of the treatment dealt with respect and low status, the societal importance of FL education, and students' misconceptions regarding school safety. The final two constructs of interest, misconceptions about NCLB and life-long learning of FL, were threaded discussions throughout the three treatments.

The first and last week were used to assess students' perceptions of FL teaching and education using the survey. During the three weeks after collecting the preliminary data, we conducted lectures and discussions to present to the students factual information about FL teaching and the profession.

## **Population**

As noted above, the students in the three secondary schools who participated in this study were those who had neither helped identify the constructs of interest nor seen the survey prior to the pretest. The school districts were composed of students sharing similar ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds. The research focused on first-year Spanish classes because these classes typically can contain a variety of students from freshmen to seniors within the same class, and Spanish classes traditionally tend to have higher enrollment than other FL classes. Similarly, these introductory classes tend to be much larger in student-to-teacher ratios than second- or third-year Spanish courses. Demographic data showed that the majority of the participants in this study were Caucasian (81%) ranging in age from 14 to 18 years, females (56%) slightly outnumbered males, and most were freshmen and sophomores (78%).

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***“Students learned about salary schedules, benefits packages, tax benefits and deductions...”***

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## Treatments

Within each of the three schools, two Spanish classes were used for the study: one experimental classroom that received the treatment (lectures and discussions) and one control group that did not receive the treatment, only the pretest and posttest. Both classes took the same pretest and posttest. The experimental classrooms were assigned randomly by a flip of a coin. To reiterate, the treatment for the experimental classrooms occurred once a week for three weeks.

Each of the treatment classrooms participated in educational lessons about the profession of education and becoming a teacher. Students learned about salary schedules, benefits packages, tax benefits and deductions offered via laws enforced by the Internal Revenue Service; the social impact of becoming a teacher; the shortage of foreign language teachers; assessing their own knowledge of Spanish and lifelong learning; and the future job market. We also made students aware of the actual (as opposed to perceived) drawbacks to becoming a teacher, such as low status, low wages, concerns with discipline in the classroom and safety, the lack of administrative support, and other issues cited in the review of the literature and the initial student inquiry. We simply taught students about the profession and their potential to become FL educators.

After the final treatment was administered, we told the students that we would return the following week to gather their perceptions about FL education. The last week of the study, we returned to the schools on the usual day and administered the posttest. Once the posttests were collected, we asked the students to share their feelings about investigating a career as a foreign language teacher.

## Data analysis

The data were analyzed using SPSS 13.0. Means and standard deviations were calculated for treatment and experimental groups at pretest and posttest. Tests of the effectiveness of the treatment were conducted using a 2 x 2 repeated measures factorial design. The between-subjects factor was membership in either the treatment or control group, and the within-subjects factor was pretest or posttest. The test of the interaction between these factors tests the hypothesis that the changes in the two groups are different. A significant effect typically means that the experimental group changed more between pretest and posttest than the control group.

## Results

Pretest and posttest data were entered into SPSS for data analysis immediately after collection. Since possible differences among schools were not the focus of this research, only the differences in students' perceptions on the 12 dependent variables are discussed in this article. Changes in student perceptions were marked by a statistically significant difference between the control and experimental groups in student response changes from the pretest to the posttest. Mean changes discussed here represent positive and significant perceptual change indicating that the treatment — our discussions and instructional presentations — helped correct prior beliefs.

Table 5 shows the means and standard deviations for the pretest and posttest results of all 12 variables (Appendix B), and the interaction plots showing perceptual

change are displayed in Appendix C. The interaction plots graphically illustrate the changes in mean between the two groups (control and experimental) for the time of testing (pretest/posttest). These visual representations are included because they help show the change of student perception over time for each group. The week each construct was addressed is denoted in parentheses after each construct title followed by the Cronbach's Alpha reliability coefficients.

According to the literature, teacher salary appears to be one of the main reasons people decide not to become a teacher or decide to leave teaching for a different profession. The researchers' discussions with students in the treatment groups included information on the adequacy of a teacher's salary (through presentation of actual teacher salary and benefit schedules), on special tax benefits afforded to teachers that help reduce taxable income, and on special discounts offered to educators by various known computer companies, cellular phone services, and bookstores. To measure this construct, students were asked to respond to the following three survey items:

- Becoming a teacher would cost me too much money.
- Teachers receive less special benefits than other jobs.
- A teacher's salary is too low to be able to pay off college loans.

The change in perception for the construct of adequacy of teacher salary of the experimental group was significantly greater than the change for the control group ( $F=32.09, p < .001$ ). Table I shows the results of the repeated measures ANOVA conducted for the construct Adequacy of Teacher Salary.

**Table I** ANOVA summary table for adequacy of teacher salary

| Source           | df  | SS     | MS     | F     | P     |
|------------------|-----|--------|--------|-------|-------|
| Between subjects | 95  |        |        |       |       |
| Group            | 1   | 121.92 | 121.92 | 22.61 | <.001 |
| Error (between)  | 94  | 506.75 | 5.39   |       |       |
| Within subjects  | 96  |        |        |       |       |
| Time of testing  | 1   | 129.51 | 129.51 | 55.55 | <.001 |
| Time X Group     | 1   | 74.83  | 74.83  | 32.09 | <.001 |
| Error (within)   | 94  | 219.15 | 2.33   |       |       |
| Total            | 191 |        |        |       |       |

The data indicated that the perceptions of students in the experimental group changed in a positive manner after exposure to accurate information on teachers' salaries and benefit packages. A graphical representation of this change in perception, found in Figure 1 (Appendix C), shows a significant change in mean scores for the

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***“According to the literature, teacher salary appears to be one of the main reasons people decide not to become a teacher or decide to leave teaching for a different profession.”***

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experimental group and little change for the control group from pretest to posttest. The control group ( $M = 9.21$ ) and the experimental group ( $M = 8.86$ ) began the study with similar means reflecting student perceptions of teacher compensation. However, following the three treatments, the control group ( $M = 8.81$ ) perceptions had not changed significantly, whereas the experimental group ( $M = 5.95$ ) showed dramatic conceptual change regarding teacher salaries and benefit. The change in mean score is reflected as a decrease for this construct only, because the Likert items measuring the construct were worded negatively. The other constructs reported show positive change in means. Interestingly, this construct had the most dramatic student perceptual change of all those tested.

Next, we examined student misconceptions about the advantages of becoming a FL educator, such as the length of a teacher's annual contract, because many students believed that teachers worked year-around even though school was not in session. During the treatment sessions, students in the experimental groups were informed that presently there are no year-around schools in Wyoming; all schools, even charter schools, usually begin in August and terminate for the academic year in May.

In a related vein, many students thought that their teachers continued to work on school-related tasks throughout the summer months and were paid for their effort. We showed the experimental groups copies of various policy manuals from Wyoming schools indicating the number of contract days for which educators work and receive pay (approximately 182 days per year). Furthermore, we explained that teachers usually work approximately nine months and have three months for other activities or another job. Moreover, we discussed some special tax benefits for which teachers are eligible and the societal impact teaching has on society because teachers can be role models and mentors for children.

As the lectures continued, many students were surprised that their teachers enrolled in classes, during the school year as well as during the summer months, to learn more about their content areas and to earn additional college credits in order to maintain their state licensure. Additionally, the experimental group learned that many teachers had summer jobs to offset living expenses. A third revelation was that many teachers choose to be paid over 10 months instead of 12 in order to bank money during the school year to pay their summer expenses.

Another topic addressed was the benefits of travel for FL educators during the summer months. The students were amazed that their Spanish teachers traveled to Spanish-speaking nations for several reasons, one being the opportunity to refine their second language (L2) abilities and to find new materials for the upcoming academic year to be used in class. Data analysis of the following survey items,

- I feel that teachers get paid during the summer when they are not working.
- I think many people do NOT understand the advantages to becoming a teacher.

showed perceptual change. As shown in Table 2, students' perceptions in the experimental groups changed significantly whereas those in the control groups did not ( $F = 20.11, p < .001$ ).

**Table 2** ANOVA summary table for FL teacher job advantages

| Source           | df  | SS     | MS    | F     | P     |
|------------------|-----|--------|-------|-------|-------|
| Between subjects | 95  |        |       |       |       |
| Group            | 1   | 17.37  | 17.37 | 7.56  | <.001 |
| Error (between)  | 94  | 215.96 | 2.30  |       |       |
| Within subjects  | 96  |        |       |       |       |
| Time of testing  | 1   | 14.87  | 14.87 | 13.91 | <.001 |
| Time X Group     | 1   | 21.49  | 21.49 | 20.11 | <.001 |
| Error (within)   | 94  | 100.50 | 1.07  |       |       |
| Total            | 191 |        |       |       |       |

Figure 2 (Appendix C) shows a graphical representation of the change in participant response from pretest to posttest. The interaction plot shows that both the control group ( $M = 6.21$ ) and the experimental group ( $M = 6.14$ ) started with similar perceptions about the advantages of being a FL educator. However, after the treatments, the mean for the control group ( $M = 6.09$ ) remained close to the initial pretest finding, whereas the mean for the experimental group ( $M = 7.37$ ) changed significantly, again indicating positive signs of conceptual change.

The third dependent variable found to have changed significantly from pretest to posttest for the two groups was the value of taking FL. Unlike the first two discussed above, this construct was not isolated to only one treatment discussion; it was threaded throughout the three treatment sessions. During the treatments, students were informed about the reasons their teachers continue to take college classes: (1) to maintain their teacher certificates, (2) to ascend the salary schedules, and (3) to enhance their content knowledge.

Additionally, students were made aware of the many benefits they could enjoy once they become fluent in Spanish: (1) enhanced job opportunities, (2) traveling throughout the Spanish-speaking world without the need of a translator to see the sites and experience the culture they have been learning about in their Spanish classes, (3) communication with approximately 7% of the world's population. To measure this construct, we asked students to rate their feelings on the two following items from the survey:

- I'm taking Spanish because my parents are forcing me.
- I want to make Spanish a part of my life for many years to come.

Information gathered during the project-development phase discussions with the students in the first school indicated that FL students failed to recognize the benefits of fluency in a second language. Many believed that being a monolingual English-speaker

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***“Both of us provided examples of former students who visited us long after being in our classrooms...”***

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was easier and being bilingual did not have many advantages. After the discussions about the advantages bilingual people have in the job market and in life, student perceptions showed evidence of positive change. Data analysis, shown in Table 3, illustrates an actual statistical difference for both time and group effects ( $F=4.63, p<.05$ ). Mean differences in student perception are represented graphically in Figure 3 (Appendix B).

**Table 3** ANOVA summary table for value of taking FL

| Source           | df  | SS      | MS      | F       | P     |
|------------------|-----|---------|---------|---------|-------|
| Between subjects | 95  |         |         |         |       |
| Group            | 1   | 5333.48 | 5333.48 | 2338.92 | <.05  |
| Error (between)  | 94  | 214.35  | 2.28    |         |       |
| Within subjects  | 96  |         |         |         |       |
| Time of testing  | 1   | 6.37    | 6.37    | 13.41   | <.001 |
| Time X Group     | 1   | 2.20    | 2.20    | 4.63    | <.05  |
| Error (within)   | 94  | 44.63   | .47     |         |       |
| Total            | 191 |         |         |         |       |

Of the 12 under investigation here, the fourth construct that changed significantly from pretest to posttest between the experimental and control group was operationalized as the Societal Importance of FL Education. We talked to the students in the experimental classrooms about the importance of FL education in today’s society by showing U.S. census data. Students learned about the increasing number of non-English-speaking monolingual people from Spanish-speaking nations residing in the U.S. Likewise, students were encouraged to discuss American teachers’ roles from a societal perspective. The roles educators play in our global society and the impact of U.S. leadership in many areas were noted.

Additionally, students were shown how much time their teachers spend with them on a weekly basis, both in the classroom and in extracurricular activities. We showed students that teachers spend much of their time and effort to prepare students to become capable, productive citizens in today’s society. Both of us provided examples of former students who visited us long after being in our classrooms to talk about how we, and other teachers, had impacted their lives. Students were asked to remember the past December holiday vacation and how many of the previous year’s graduates returned to their respective high schools to visit their teachers. To measure student perception about the role of FL educators for the construct of societal importance, students were asked to respond to the following three statements:

- I feel that teaching is very important to building a better America.
- Making a big impact on society is very important to me.
- I feel that teachers make little impact on their students.

Table 4 shows the statistical difference for both time and group effects ( $F=7.75, p<.01$ ).

**Table 4** ANOVA summary table for societal importance

| Source           | df  | SS       | MS       | F       | P    |
|------------------|-----|----------|----------|---------|------|
| Between subjects | 95  |          |          |         |      |
| Group            | 1   | 17088.56 | 17088.56 | 6338.07 | <.01 |
| Error (between)  | 94  | 253.44   | 2.69     |         |      |
| Within subjects  | 96  |          |          |         |      |
| Time of testing  | 1   | .13      | .13      | .09     | .77  |
| Time X Group     | 1   | 11.61    | 11.61    | 7.75    | <.01 |
| Error (within)   |     | 94       | 140.87   | 1.49    |      |
| Total            | 191 |          |          |         |      |

Again, the experimental ( $M = 9.63$ ) and control ( $M = 9.39$ ) groups at pretest show about the same numeric rating to the survey statements. However, at posttest, the control group decreases ( $M = 8.85$ ) and the experimental group increases ( $M = 10.07$ ), indicating once again a positive change in perception from the treatment. Figure 4 (Appendix C) shows an interaction plot that graphically displays the change in student perception.

Data analysis of the remaining eight constructs tested during this research, (1) desire to become a FL educator, (2) misconceptions about the requirements for becoming a FL teacher, (3) student feelings of L2 insecurity, (4) teacher respect and status, (5) school safety, (6) misconceptions about NCLB, (7) student qualms about finding a job as a FL teacher, and (8) the stress level associated with being a FL educator, did not indicate statistically significant changes for the interaction of time of testing (pretest/posttest) and group affiliation (control/experimental). However, the final two dependent variables listed above (#7 and #8) showed statistically significant change for time of testing (pretest/posttest) but not for group affiliation (control/experimental).

## Discussion

The purpose of this study was to investigate and understand secondary students' perceptions about becoming a FL educator. This inquiry sought to answer the research question: Will students be more likely to consider becoming a FL teacher if they are educated about the benefits of becoming a teacher? Positive results from this research study have been reported in the previous section and are discussed here.

For many of the students in the treatment classrooms, we could clearly track student ability to evolve through Posner et al.'s (1982, 1992) Conceptual Change Model. An environment for discussion and learning was established to create dialogue and understanding between the students and us. This environment helped students think aloud by listening to others discuss their conceptions of FL education. The goal was not to get students to arrive at consensus, but rather to create an opportunity to verbalize and listen to other points of view.

For example, during the first week of treatments in which teachers' salaries and benefits packages were discussed, it was apparent that students became aware of their own preconceptions. We helped students expose their beliefs by engaging them in small group and class discussions. As the students were exposed to legitimate information, they confronted their beliefs by talking with other students and even with their Spanish teachers. As the discussions proceeded, the new knowledge was integrated into their belief systems. Near the end of the first treatment, students were encouraged to search for teachers' salary schedules on the Internet to verify the information that we had given them during the treatment. Rather promptly, students holding incorrect conceptions began to abandon these beliefs.

In all three of the treatment classrooms, after the students were shown the salary schedules, they began to broaden their knowledge base by asking about the differences found in each of the 48 Wyoming school districts. Students knew that some counties were more economically advantaged than others. They began asking us questions about which districts sat on the two poles of the salary/benefits continuum. Consistent with Piaget's notion of accommodation and assimilation of information, students began to restructure their knowledge regarding teacher income. This was not only true of the first week's treatment session; it was consistent throughout the study.

Furthermore, we found that some students continued to investigate independently whether the information presented in class was factual or not over the course of the three treatment sessions. Several students remarked during the study that they had met to talk to their parents and other teachers about the topics and information discussed during the treatments. Once the students realized that they were receiving factual information, a level of trust was established between the participants and us.

This faith in receiving valid and reliable information solicited more in-depth questions from students about FL education and teaching as the treatments progressed. While we made every attempt to keep professional distance from the participants in order to avoid biased results, many of the students asked us personal questions about our teaching careers in terms of salaries, job advantages, preservice teacher requirements, and professional frustrations once we became educators. We answered all questions honestly and attempted to give students a first-hand view of education. The information presented from a variety of sources became valuable to the students and helped them co-construct knowledge about FL teaching in an investigative environment.

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***“...some students continued to investigate independently whether the information presented in class was factual or not...”***

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After being presented with new concepts and data to support those ideas, students showed definite signs of new learning. They appeared to understand better the teaching vocation and began to apply this new knowledge beyond the classroom discussions. For example, when discussing the safety of being a teacher, students applied the given information to different contexts such as rural versus urban educational settings. Students began to theorize about differences between schools and the diversity of factors that help



to create a safe or dangerous learning environment for students in America's schools. The process that students work through, as conceptualized by the CCM, was found to be recursive and not linear: as students confronted new ideas, they shared their ideas with peers, re-shaped their conceptions, and began to accommodate this new information before extending it to other situations. Students would revert to prior stages proposed by the model to verify their understandings. Thus, from a theoretical standpoint, the present research tended to support the Conceptual Change Model.

This research did not merely help show that some student misconceptions can be corrected by presenting factual information; it also has vocational counseling implications. Our research worked with 12 constructs that students and the literature identified as problematic for teachers and those thinking of becoming teachers. During the study, we discovered that students felt they did not receive enough career counseling at their schools. Many stated that misconceptions and lack of factual, first-hand information about careers sometimes discourage students from considering many occupations in which they might have talent or even interest. The students claimed that this was particularly true when this information came from people not currently in those career fields. Students and teachers alike expressed appreciation for learning more about one specific occupation from a career teacher.

In addition to learning that students and teachers felt strongly about the need for more vocational counseling in schools, we saw promise for this type of research and its practical application during our final meeting with the students. Students were reminded of the purpose for this study and were shown the statistical results from the pretest and posttest data. Equally as important, we explained what the statistics were telling us, that a significant change in mean from the pretest to the posttest indicated positive change in students' beliefs, and that with the provision of factual information, students corrected misconceptions and had a better basis on which to make career choices. Following presentation of our rationale for this study, we asked both groups in all three schools two questions:

1. How many of you thought you might investigate a career as a FL teacher before we met you a month ago?
2. How many of you think you might investigate a career as a FL teacher now?

Three students in the entire sample, one from the experimental groups and two from the control groups, expressed interest in becoming a FL educator at the beginning of the study.

Student response to the second question offered hope for using this approach for FL educator recruitment purposes. From the control groups, the same two students raised their hands. However, from the experimental group, fifteen students raised their hands. Therefore, before leaving the schools for the final time, we provided all six classrooms with our contact information, copies of the FL teacher preparation program of study at the University of Wyoming, and the website address where university admission application forms could be obtained. Later, four of the FL teachers who permitted this research to be conducted in their classrooms contacted us and requested more information about the FL teacher preparation program for their students and their students' parents.

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***“Offering students more vocational information during this time in their lives may thus be an effective approach.”***

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Clearly, from our perspective, this investigation yielded positive results. First, initial discussions with students at the onset of this study revealed that not only were the students misinformed about FL education and teaching, they had numerous reasons for their opposition to teaching as a career that confirmed and contributed to the literature base. This finding has implications for other professions currently experiencing shortages of personnel. It appears that the provision of accurate information by professionals can create a more positive view of

careers that student misconceptions may have prevented them from considering.

Secondly, this study helped support Super's (1990) theory about career crystallization between the ages of 14 and 18. An informal poll of raised hands during the posttest data collection showed that almost half (46%) of the students (mean age 15.47 years) still were not sure about their career plans. Students indicated that they were casually thinking about possible careers and were unsure of where they could obtain more information. Offering students more vocational information during this time in their lives may thus be an effective approach.

Lastly, this study demonstrates that misconceptions can be corrected by working directly with students in schools. Even though the present investigation was limited to secondary students studying Spanish, we stress the impact that our findings may suggest for other professions. Perhaps people's misconceptions hinder growth and thus contribute to shortages in other professions. Armed with factual information, people who first were unlikely to enter certain careers might consider them. We call for more research with students to test the validity of this method and we also advocate programs to help offer solid, factual career information to students so they can become better informed about many different professions as they begin to crystallize their career choices.

## **Acknowledgement**

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## Appendix A Survey of the Perceptions of FL Students

How well do these statements describe your feelings regarding teaching at this moment? Please circle the letter that best expresses your opinion for each statement using the scale below from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree.

|   | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Undecided | Agree | Strongly Agree |
|---|-------------------|----------|-----------|-------|----------------|
| 1. I feel that getting a degree in Spanish and Education in college is a good combination to find employment after college. | SD                | D        | U         | A     | SA             |
| 2. Teachers receive fewer special benefits than other jobs.   | SD                | D        | U         | A     | SA             |
| 3. Education has too many problems to make me want to become a teacher.   | SD                | D        | U         | A     | SA             |
| 4. If I were to teach, I would want to teach at the high school level.  | SD                | D        | U         | A     | SA             |
| 5. If I were to teach, I would want to teach at the elementary school level.  | SD                | D        | U         | A     | SA             |
| 6. When I was younger, I wanted to become a teacher.  | SD                | D        | U         | A     | SA             |
| 7. I feel that teachers make little impact on their students.   | SD                | D        | U         | A     | SA             |
| 8. Becoming a teacher would cost me too much money.   | SD                | D        | U         | A     | SA             |
| 9. I feel that there are few teaching jobs available right now.   | SD                | D        | U         | A     | SA             |

**Appendix A** (Continued)

|  | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Undecided | Agree | Strongly Agree |
|--|-------------------|----------|-----------|-------|----------------|
| 10. Poorly behaved students discourage me from wanting to become a teacher.  | SD                | D        | U         | A     | SA             |
| 11. A teacher's salary is too low to be able to pay off college loans.   | SD                | D        | U         | A     | SA             |
| 12. Making a big impact on society is very important to me.  | SD                | D        | U         | A     | SA             |
| 13. The problems facing education discourage me from becoming a teacher.   | SD                | D        | U         | A     | SA             |
| 14. I feel that teaching is very important to building a better America.   | SD                | D        | U         | A     | SA             |
| 15. I feel that teachers get paid during the summer when they are not working.                                     | SD                | D        | U         | A     | SA             |
| 16. I feel schools are too dangerous for me to work in.  | SD                | D        | U         | A     | SA             |
| 17. Teachers do not receive enough respect from the public.  | SD                | D        | U         | A     | SA             |
| 18. I'm taking Spanish because my parents are forcing me.  | SD                | D        | U         | A     | SA             |
| 19. I am thinking about becoming a teacher.  | SD                | D        | U         | A     | SA             |
| 20. I think many people do NOT understand the advantages to becoming a teacher.                                    | SD                | D        | U         | A     | SA             |
| 21. The new teaching standards make me NOT want to become a teacher.   | SD                | D        | U         | A     | SA             |
| 22. I feel that I would like to know more about becoming a teacher.  | SD                | D        | U         | A     | SA             |
| 23. I feel that students appreciate their teachers.  | SD                | D        | U         | A     | SA             |
| 24. I want to make Spanish a part of my life for many years to come.   | SD                | D        | U         | A     | SA             |
| 25. Becoming a teacher is too complicated of a process.  | SD                | D        | U         | A     | SA             |
| 26. I feel inadequate about my language skills in Spanish and probably would not become a teacher because of that. | SD                | D        | U         | A     | SA             |
| 27. President Bush is correct, we need more qualified teachers.  | SD                | D        | U         | A     | SA             |
| 28. I think that schools are safe places to work.  | SD                | D        | U         | A     | SA             |

**Appendix A** (Continued)

Please complete the following information.

Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Gender: \_\_\_\_\_ male \_\_\_\_\_ female

Ethnicity: \_\_\_\_\_ Caucasian/white \_\_\_\_\_ Latino/a \_\_\_\_\_ African American  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Asian \_\_\_\_\_ Native American \_\_\_\_\_ Other

Year in school: \_\_\_\_\_ freshman \_\_\_\_\_ sophomore \_\_\_\_\_ junior \_\_\_\_\_ senior

Thank you for taking the time to participate in my survey!

**Appendix B****Table 5** Means and standard deviations for constructs by group and time

|   | Control<br>(n=53) |      | Experimental<br>(n=43) |      |
|---|-------------------|------|------------------------|------|
|   | M                 | SD   | M                      | SD   |
| <b>Constructs that changed significantly</b>  |                   |      |                        |      |
| Adequacy of teacher salary (1, $\alpha=.53$ ) |                   |      |                        |      |
| Pretest                                       | 9.21              | 1.98 | 8.86                   | 1.77 |
| Posttest                                      | 8.81              | 1.93 | 5.95                   | 2.16 |
| FL teacher job advantages (1, $\alpha=.87$ )  |                   |      |                        |      |
| Pretest                                       | 6.21              | 1.17 | 6.14                   | 1.08 |
| Posttest                                      | 6.09              | 1.36 | 7.37                   | 1.54 |
| Value of taking FL (1-3, $\alpha=.79$ )       |                   |      |                        |      |
| Pretest                                       | 5.00              | 1.39 | 5.23                   | 0.92 |
| Posttest                                      | 5.15              | 1.26 | 5.81                   | 0.98 |
| Societal importance (3, $\alpha=.45$ )        |                   |      |                        |      |
| Pretest                                       | 9.39              | 1.52 | 9.63                   | 1.41 |
| Posttest                                      | 8.85              | 1.42 | 10.07                  | 1.42 |

**Table 5** (Continued)

|   | Control<br>(n=53) |      | Experimental<br>(n=43) |      |
|---|-------------------|------|------------------------|------|
|   | M                 | SD   | M                      | SD   |
| <b>Constructs that did not change significantly</b> |                   |      |                        |      |
| Finding FL job (1, $\alpha=.33$ )                   |                   |      |                        |      |
| Pretest   | 6.41              | 1.04 | 6.74                   | 1.07 |
| Posttest  | 6.13              | 1.39 | 5.95                   | 0.84 |
| L2 Insecurity (2, $\alpha=.70$ )                    |                   |      |                        |      |
| Pretest   | 2.72              | 1.06 | 2.86                   | 1.06 |
| Posttest  | 2.68              | 1.16 | 2.86                   | 1.05 |
| Desire to teach (2, $\alpha=.87$ )                  |                   |      |                        |      |
| Pretest   | 8.38              | 3.04 | 8.74                   | 3.09 |
| Posttest  | 8.28              | 3.05 | 9.09                   | 3.08 |
| Job Stress (2, $\alpha=.78$ )                       |                   |      |                        |      |
| Pretest   | 8.85              | 2.58 | 8.55                   | 2.58 |
| Posttest  | 8.57              | 2.69 | 7.63                   | 2.60 |
| Requirements (2, $\alpha=.55$ )                     |                   |      |                        |      |
| Pretest   | 8.60              | 1.50 | 8.44                   | 1.16 |
| Posttest  | 8.89              | 1.45 | 8.30                   | 1.23 |
| NCLB (1-3, $\alpha=.72$ )                           |                   |      |                        |      |
| Pretest   | 6.49              | 1.46 | 6.58                   | 1.58 |
| Posttest  | 6.55              | 1.62 | 6.77                   | 1.09 |
| Safety (3, $\alpha=.35$ )                           |                   |      |                        |      |
| Pretest   | 5.74              | 0.71 | 5.58                   | 0.69 |
| Posttest  | 5.75              | 0.70 | 5.76                   | 0.57 |
| Low respect (3, $\alpha=.48$ )                      |                   |      |                        |      |
| Pretest   | 6.24              | 1.22 | 6.32                   | 1.08 |
| Posttest  | 6.08              | 1.49 | 6.65                   | 1.23 |

Treatment week in parentheses with Cronbach's Alpha coefficient



# Appendix C

## Interaction plots for statistically significant changes per construct of interest.

Figure 1. Adequacy of teacher salary

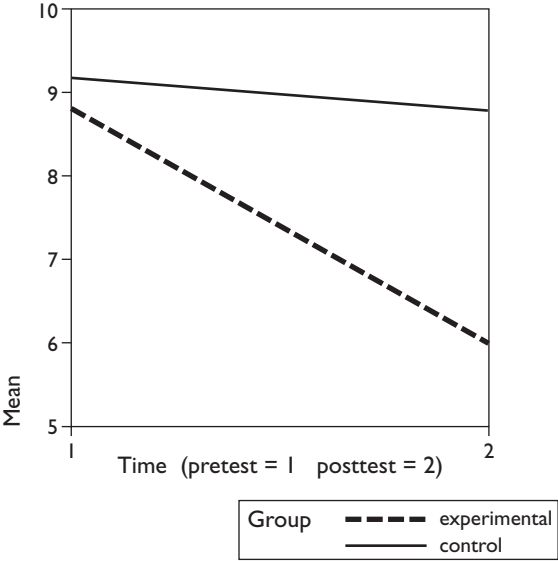
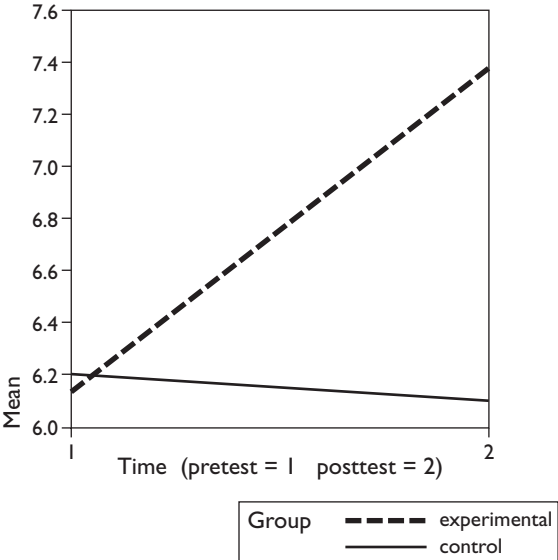
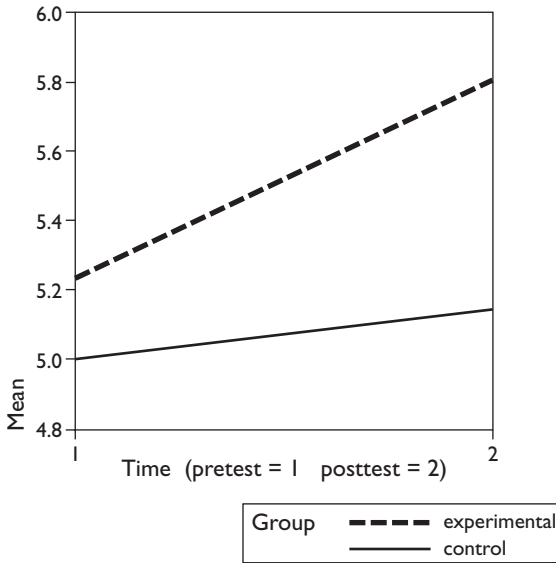


Figure 2. Job advantages

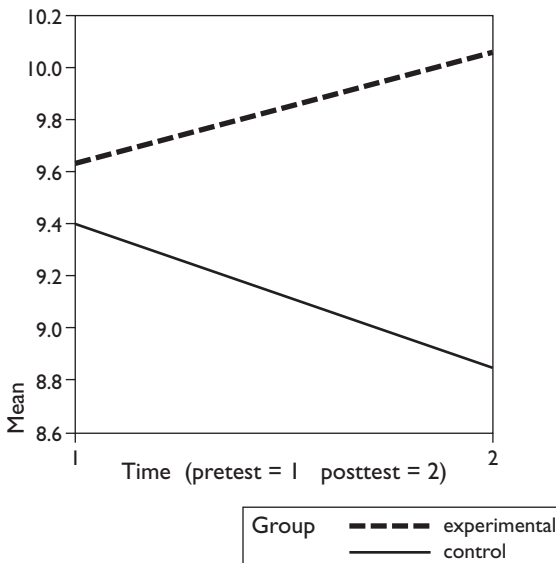


**Appendix C** (Continued)

**Figure 3.** Value of studying Spanish



**Figure 4.** Societal importance



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# Meaningful Tests Promote Articulation

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**Bill Heller**, Perry High School (NY)

In the wake of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act there has been much consternation among teachers about the deleterious effects of “high stakes” testing. In some states, it has been shown that the obsession with scores on reading and mathematics tests has had a detrimental impact on world language programs (Ashford, 2005; NASBE, 2005). While language teachers in some states may be relieved that they do not have to deal with the pressure and accountability that come with standardized testing, the existence of a well-defined, reliable, and valid proficiency test in New York State (NYS) has helped strengthen and validate language programs, to improve instruction (Rissell, 2005) and provide a framework for K-16 articulation.

## Testing and Articulation in New York State, K-16

The New York State curriculum in Languages Other than English (LOTE) is outlined in *Modern Languages for Communication* (1986). It defines 15 topics and four language functions at three levels of proficiency called “checkpoints.” The first benchmark, Checkpoint A, is assessed with a secure, on-demand test called the Second Language Proficiency (SLP).<sup>1</sup> This test is administered in five languages on the same date in June across the state to students having had two years of language instruction prior to the end of grade 8. The on-demand portion tests listening comprehension, reading comprehension, and writing. A speaking portion with well-defined protocols is administered prior to the written portion and represents 30% of the test score. What makes the SLP different from much of the NCLB testing is that a passing score gives one high school credit and meets the NYS graduation requirement for all students. In other words, there is a real incentive for the students to perform to the best of their abilities.

After two more years of LOTE instruction, students can take the New York State Regents Exam for Level III, Checkpoint B. The Regents is a parallel assessment to the SLP. There is a speaking portion worth 24% and an on-demand paper-and-pencil test, which includes tests of listening comprehension, reading comprehension, and writing. In addition to giving credits for earning a passing grade, there is an additional incentive. Students earning a grade of at least 85% meet the State University of New York (SUNY) system-wide LOTE minimum graduation requirement for all degree programs. In other words, you can get into a SUNY school without a LOTE, but you cannot get a degree without at least the equivalent of two semesters of LOTE study. Several of the campuses are also requiring an additional year beyond that benchmark in order to completely waive a student’s college foreign language requirement.

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These real incentives for achievement have encouraged more students to persevere in their LOTE study and to work harder to earn more than minimum passing grades. It has been interesting to observe that weaker language students, who may have dropped out of LOTE classes in previous years, and who wish to keep their college options open, are now staying and meeting the SUNY waiver requirement. When students are motivated to stay in a class that may seem difficult, they give themselves enough time to be able to “get it,” and ultimately can experience success. In addition, enrollments in level four classes have also been increasing. Once experiencing success on the Regents exam, more are choosing to continue language study in high school. Some graduates even report continuing their language study in college. However, the greatest boon of the testing program has been to facilitate articulation at all levels of LOTE instruction.

At times, attempts at even the most basic articulation among teachers of different levels can quickly focus more on differences in approach rather than on any sense of shared purpose. Clearly defined content with meaningful assessments help set aside the finger-pointing in order to focus on the achievement of the students. Middle school teachers who give the SLP are accountable to teach the curriculum because their students will be tested individually on their language skills. They cannot spend two weeks on craft projects or cooking! On the other hand, high school teachers cannot just teach a cavalcade of verb tenses or noun declensions because, at the end, students must speak, read authentic texts, listen, and write. The very clearly defined topics and functions in the state syllabus provide a compass and a roadmap for teachers to follow. The parallel nature of the two assessment instruments facilitates a more natural transition from one level to the next.

Having well-articulated benchmarks still allows and encourages individual departments and instructors to retain significant control over language teaching methodology and the sequence of instruction. State standards, which spiral across these levels and broadly define the content of instruction, promote a common language for making curricular decisions. The testing program helps teachers focus on increasing student language proficiency. The tests provide data on which to base modifications to the instructional program and to inform future staff development needs.

Another real strength of the New York State SLP and Regents Exams is that teachers of the tested levels are contracted to write all of the test items, which are then field-tested and assembled into an exam by the Bureau of Testing in a form that is reliable and valid. Panels of teachers scrutinize the final version of the tests before they are administered. This gives the test credibility with practitioners in the field and offers an additional check on their alignment with the published syllabus.

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***“What makes the SLP different from much of the NCLB testing is that a passing score gives one high school credit...”***

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***“...enrollments in level four classes have also been increasing.”***

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The increasing popularity of Advanced Placement (AP) programs offers another example in which a meaningful, reliable, and valid testing program can promote articulation. The College Board has recognized the importance of enriching the pre-AP levels of instruction in order to help more students be successful on the AP exams, and is helping to facilitate that dialogue through its workshops. The College Board is also becoming an important agent of articulation between high school teachers at all levels and university instructors, with the issue of how to improve student achievement through secure, predictable, and reliable AP testing instruments as a common focus.

## Testing and Articulation in Post-secondary Education

Content area testing for teacher candidates is also beginning to provide an impetus for the types of conversations that open the door to articulation. The calls from taxpayers and politicians for accountability, which initiated the current testing “mania” at the K-12 level, have begun to extend to the post-secondary level as well. For those

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*“The common goal of improved student achievement becomes the focus for the types of conversations that lead to curricular alignment and increased language proficiency for all students.”*

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institutions having teacher preparation programs, foreign language departments are being drawn into the dialogue through the accreditation process. In New York, foreign language teacher candidates are required to pass a Content Specialty Test (CST). In addition, more colleges are requiring them to submit to some manner of Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) testing as a requirement for the language major. These test results will provide solid data upon which departments can begin to examine both the content and methodology for continuing a more performance-based focus than may have been prevalent in the past. The beginning of this internal scrutiny among college foreign language faculty may provide encouragement for them to consider greater participation in local, state, regional, and national professional organizations for language teachers, which are, perhaps, the best vehicles we have for fostering sound K-16 articulation.

## Conclusion

“Teaching to the test” can be very positive if the tests are good. Teachers of languages other than English in New York have taken advantage of standardized testing mandates, whose results are tied to granting credit and meeting advanced requirements, as a way of retaining students and defending programs in times of cutbacks and diminishing resources. The results from these tests, along with those from teacher certification tests and the findings of accreditation panels, can give an objective basis upon which to initiate meaningful articulation projects. The common goal of improved student achievement becomes the focus for the types of conversations that lead to curricular alignment and increased language proficiency for all students.

## Note

1. Copies of the Second Language Proficiency Exams, Comprehensive Regents Examinations including administration instructions, scoring rubrics, graded anchor papers, and syllabus documents are downloadable from the New York State Education Department website. The only material which is not available are the secured booklets of the actual speaking tasks. You can find all these materials at <http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/ciai/lotte/home.html>.

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# ***Increasing Foreign Language Proficiency through Well-Articulated Study***

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*Linda M. Wallinger, Virginia Department of Education*

## **Abstract**

With a renewed interest in promoting foreign language proficiency among Americans, the federal government has recently enacted programs such as the National Security Language Initiative and the American Competitiveness Initiative. These programs contain elements aimed at establishing early learning programs in foreign languages, well-articulated programs throughout the American educational system, and incentives for students to continue their foreign language study to an advanced level. To that end, this article offers some options to assist students in extending their foreign language study on a seamless continuum rather than be forced to repeat information and skill development. Such articulation would lead to the development of higher proficiency levels of foreign language students. Considerations for articulation, particularly from the high school to college level, include offering advanced programs in high school, more transparent placement testing at the college level, better communication between high school and college faculty, the use of portfolios as evidence of language proficiency, and articulation and guaranteed admission agreements between community colleges and four-year institutions.

## **Introduction**

Recent political, commercial, and social developments have magnified the need for multilingual individuals in the United States. In 2005, Malone, Rifkin, Christian, and Johnson summarized an acute need in the United States for individuals who can speak and understand languages other than English, from business and social services to national security and diplomacy. Of the relatively small number of individuals in the United States who learn languages other than English, an even smaller number achieve a high level of proficiency in the language(s) they study. The authors proposed a number of possible approaches that could be taken to help language learners develop a higher level of proficiency. Among their strategies was to start language learning early to build a strong basis for learning a second, third, and even fourth language. The authors maintain that “we must expand the number of Americans studying foreign languages, especially the less commonly taught languages (i.e., languages other than French, German, Italian, and Spanish), and offer the types of classroom and out-of-classroom experiences that will help individual learners develop high levels of proficiency.” Inherent in this strategy is the understanding that language learning is a spiraling process that takes students from where they are and builds upon existing skills to develop higher skills. Rather than repeating information learned, each level of language study advances skills and knowledge. Without tightly articulated programs, students are destined to repeat information and activities as they move from one

level to the next or from one teacher to another. Such duplicated effort results in boredom on the part of students as well as stagnation in learning — they could produce so much more if their skills built on one another rather than repeating the same information from year to year.

Generally, there are not clear-cut expectations for students to progress from one level of foreign language study to the next, either in elementary, middle and high schools or from the K-12 programs to those at the postsecondary level. Under the best of circumstances, there are state foreign language standards that provide guidance for K-12 foreign language teachers. However, unless there is an accountability system in place at the K-12 level, the teachers have a certain amount of latitude in determining how closely to adhere to the standards. Furthermore, it is likely that the K-12 standards have been developed with only limited (if any) input from the postsecondary institutions within the state. Conversely, college-level placement tests and their cut-scores again have likely been developed in isolation from the K-12 world. Thus, students who have completed several years of foreign language study in middle and high school may be placed in a beginning-level language class as they begin their postsecondary studies. Yes, it is an easy A — but it is a waste of time and it stifles the progress a student might make in developing greater proficiency in his or her foreign language skills. The circumstances are even more challenging in states that do not have a centralized university system, i.e., each individual public and private institution sets its own proficiency entrance and placement requirements. So students who apply to several colleges or universities really do not know until they enroll at an institution exactly if or how their foreign language course work will count toward college degree requirements.

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***“Without tightly articulated programs, students are destined to repeat information and activities...”***

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## **Foreign Language Articulation in Other Countries**

The foreign language skills of students in the United States are often compared negatively to those of students in other countries. Generally, the United States is viewed as a country of monolinguals, with little interest in learning other languages. Furthermore, students who do study other languages generally do not obtain a high degree of proficiency in those languages.

Noting that students in other countries often have much better foreign language proficiency than young (or older, for that matter) Americans, in 2001, Pufahl, Rhodes, and Christian collected information from 22 educators in 19 countries about foreign language instruction in their elementary and secondary schools. Participants in the study responded to the key question: “What do you think are three of the most successful aspects of foreign language education in your country?” From this study, the authors identified eight characteristics of foreign language study in the other countries surveyed:

- Early language study
- A well-articulated framework



- Rigorous teacher education
- Comprehensive use of technology
- Effective teaching strategies
- Strong policies that promote foreign language study
- Assessment of foreign language learning
- Maintenance of heritage, regional, and indigenous languages.

For the purposes of this article, we will focus on the concept of articulation, where several respondents noted the importance of a well-articulated curriculum framework that motivates and guides the development of an effective system of foreign language education.

Many European countries have adapted their foreign language teaching at the national level to the frameworks and standards articulated by the Council of Europe's language policy and activities. *Modern Languages: A Common European Framework of Reference. Learning, Teaching, Assessment* (Council of Europe, 1996) was developed through a process of scientific research and wide consultation and provides a practical tool for setting clear standards to be attained at successive stages of learning and for evaluating outcomes in an internationally comparable manner.

An outgrowth of the common framework is the European Language Portfolio.<sup>1</sup> The European Language Portfolio (ELP) is a document in which those who are learning or have learned a language — whether at school or outside school — can record and reflect on their language learning and cultural experiences.

## Portfolios as Evidence of Language Proficiency

The National Council for State Supervisors for Languages (NCSSFL) has developed a modified version of the ELP for use in the United States. *LinguaFolio*,<sup>2</sup> is a student portfolio comprising three components: (1) a language biography, which includes information about a student's language background and intercultural activities; (2) a language passport, where formal assessments and a student's self assessments are recorded; and (3) a language dossier, providing samples of a student's work over time. It is a tool that can accompany language learning throughout life and is suitable for documenting language abilities for various uses. Among its intended goals is the facilitation of articulation among language programs (e.g., high school to university, transfer of students within school districts) based on a clear and commonly accepted

description of language proficiency. *LinguaFolio* is currently being piloted in Virginia, Kentucky, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia. In collaboration with the Virginia Department of Education, Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) has developed a summer language immersion program for teachers of French, German, and Spanish with instruction in the target languages both inside and outside the classroom. VCU offers up to 6 graduate credits, combining teacher and student classroom use of *LinguaFolio* with courses in technology and

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***“LinguaFolio is currently being piloted in Virginia, Kentucky, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia.”***

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current civilization. Perhaps as teachers introduce the use of *LinguaFolio* more and more with their students, it will become another means of certifying the language proficiency that students have gained in any number of venues, including high school and college classrooms, study and travel abroad, and native language proficiency.

## **Placements Tests**

For students whose only exposure to a foreign language is the middle or high school classroom, there is often a tendency to blame their school programs for failing to prepare them adequately for readiness to enter a foreign language classroom at the college level. Clearly, foreign language standards are a start — and are even stronger if they are accompanied by performance-based assessments. Externally validated assessments such as those provided by the SAT II, Advanced Placement (AP), and International Baccalaureate (IB) programs offer a universal metric that is more readily acceptable at multiple institutions than local assessments or even dual enrollment courses. Furthermore, assessments used with the K-12 domain and at the college and university level are valuable in gauging the language progress of students.

But high school teachers find it difficult, if not impossible, to know the proficiency expectations of all of the postsecondary institutions their students will attend. An Internet search of several of Virginia's four-year colleges and universities indicated a wide range of foreign language entrance requirements, and beyond mention of SAT II or Advanced Placement scores, did not specify which internal placement tests were used and/or which scores warranted placement at which levels. Furthermore, the requirements that were mentioned for each had a heavy focus on reading and writing proficiency, with little or no reference made to oral language proficiency.

The Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL) maintains extensive foreign language testing databases. The K-12 searchable database contains information on language assessments that are currently being used in K-12 language programs around the country as well as annotated bibliographies of published and Internet resources on assessment. A second foreign language assessment database contains information on tests in over 70 languages. Each test record includes information on test level, skill area, format, scoring method, materials, cost, and availability, as well as test author and contact information. A start in working toward transparency, rather than secrecy, in foreign language articulation and placement would be for colleges and universities to list their placement tests with the CAL database, and then reference that listing on their Web sites and in information provided to students who are entering their programs.

## **Trading Places**

In addition to reliance on assessments, there is a need for faculty at the K-12, community college, and four-year college/university levels to have a better understanding of the students, curriculum, and expectations found at all levels. Lee (1999) describes a successful collaborative program that paired college faculty with area middle and high school teachers to team teach introductory French and Spanish courses at the State University of New York at Plattsburgh. In this case, high school teachers helped team teach the university's introductory foreign language courses. The program had three major goals: (1) to facilitate pedagogical cooperation between college foreign

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*“...high school teachers helped team teach the university’s introductory foreign language courses.”*

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language and literature faculty and local middle school and high school teachers; (2) to improve articulation between secondary and postsecondary foreign language curricula; and (3) to develop the communicative skills of students, particularly speaking and listening, despite increased class sizes. Perhaps not surprisingly, the areas of greatest discrepancy were related to instructional approach, course pace, correction, grading, and classroom management. The secondary school teachers became

more aware of the material that needed to be covered in high school, which skills students needed to acquire, and what pace had to be maintained for students to continue successfully in the college program. Lee’s study offered only this observation about benefits to the college faculty: “Senior college faculty who had not taught first year classes for a while enjoyed the program and received high marks on student evaluations.” While it is typical of the “receiving” faculty, be they middle school, high school, or higher education faculty, to pass judgment on the quality of student they receive, it is also beneficial for them to walk in the shoes of the “sending” faculty to understand the variety of students, schedules, parental involvement, and other challenges they face on a daily basis. An interesting follow-up study would be asking the senior college faculty to team teach with the middle and high school teachers for a semester!

## **Transfer, Articulation, and Guaranteed Admission Agreements**

In addition to third-party validators such as AP, IB, SAT II, and individual college placement assessments, consideration might also be given to foreign language articulation agreements between high school programs and postsecondary programs. Such agreements already exist within the world of career and technical education, and are readily applicable to performance-based content areas. I will cite a model within my home state of Virginia as an example that might be considered for replication in the world of foreign language instruction.

Working in close collaboration, the Department of Education (K-12) and the Virginia Community College System have created a statewide articulation agreement template to be used by local K-12 school divisions and community colleges in developing a closely articulated program of performance-based career and technical studies in specific areas.<sup>3</sup> Using this template, the first program-specific agreement to be created enables students who complete specified business and information technology courses at the high school level and who earn industry certifications in this area to earn from three to twelve college degree credits (rather than general education credits) toward an associate’s degree in science or applied science without having to complete the comparable courses at the community college.<sup>4</sup> The purpose of this statewide articulation agreement is to provide a consistent procedure for high school graduates who were Business and Information Technology career and technical education (CTE) students to move easily into community college degree programs in Information Technology without duplication of instruction or testing.

This means that students *build* upon their high school course work rather than repeat information and courses at the community college, thus accelerating their studies to become more proficient in information technology at a faster pace. Since Virginia's 23 community colleges are part of a centralized community college system, the articulation agreement for this information technology program is universally available to students within all of Virginia's high school programs.

The high school students validate their learning both by taking courses and demonstrating proficiency with an industry certification. To transfer this concept to the area of foreign languages, consideration must be given to a proficiency-based external validator of a student's foreign language skills. Possible external validators include the Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI), Modified Oral Proficiency Interview (MOPI), Simulated Oral Proficiency Interview (SOPI), Visual Oral Communication Instrument (VOCI), or Computerized Oral Proficiency Interview (COPI). Crucial elements of an articulation agreement for foreign language programs would be the establishment of test examiner training and credentials, scoring methodology, and cut-scores required to award college degree credit.<sup>5</sup>

A separate challenge exists for high school students who wish to enter a four-year college in Virginia. Virginia's four-year college programs are not administered by a central system office. All four-year institutions, both public and private, operate independently, so creating any kind of universal agreement is very challenging. However, the State Council for Higher Education in Virginia (SCHEV) was instrumental in creating the Commonwealth College Course Collaborative (CCCC), a common set of subjects that give Virginia students the chance to earn a semester's worth of college *degree* credit while in high school rather than counting them as general education credits. The CCCC is comprised of 13 credit hours that are accepted at all of the participating institutions for degree credit. At some institutions, students also may have the option to earn as many as 20 additional degree credit hours. In some cases, a high school student could earn more than 30 credits through CCCC. That means less time needed to earn a college degree — and more savings for students and their families.

These courses can be taken through dual enrollment, Advanced Placement (including virtual and online AP courses), and/or International Baccalaureate programs. Every public college in Virginia (except Virginia Military Institute) participates, as do the 24 undergraduate private institutions that make up the Council of Independent Colleges in Virginia. Some colleges evaluate and accept dual enrollment courses on a limited, case-by-case basis. Currently, courses that meet these criteria are offered in the areas of biology, United State history, psychology, English, economics, music appreciation,

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***“The fact that Virginia’s four-year colleges operate outside of a central university system also presents challenges related to how college-level coursework completed in high school is counted toward completion of college degree requirements.”***

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general physics, mathematics, and art history. A review of additional courses is ongoing, with a significant amount of discussion and agreement required to enable more than 50 separate institutions to agree to accept these credits toward satisfying degree requirements rather than as general education and/or elective requirements.<sup>6</sup>

The fact that Virginia's four-year colleges operate outside of a central university system also presents challenges related to how college-level coursework completed in high school is counted toward completion of college degree requirements. As is often true in other states, even externally validated course offerings such as AP and IB courses do not receive the same recognition at all institutions. To help high school and transfer students make informed decisions about how their coursework will transfer, SCHEV has also created a Transfer Tool that allows high school students and transfer students to evaluate more clearly how their college-level coursework will be accepted at colleges in which they are interested.<sup>7</sup>

The 2005 Virginia General Assembly passed the Higher Education Restructuring Act.<sup>8</sup> Provisions within the Act laid the foundation for smoother and more consistent articulation between community colleges and four-year institutions. In the Act, all of Virginia's colleges promised to

1. Provide access to higher education for all Virginians, including under-represented and under-served populations in accordance with anticipated demand.
2. Keep higher education affordable with tuition/fee levels and financial aid funding so that qualified Virginians are not prevented from attending college.
3. Offer a broad curriculum with high academic standards.
4. Target critically needed professions with academic program offerings.
5. Ensure students progress at an appropriate pace and graduate on time.
6. Accept associate degree graduates from community colleges with full academic credit.
7. Participate in regional economic development efforts.
8. Help improve K-12 schools in their areas.
9. Ensure maximum operational efficiency.

Condition 6 (Accept associate degree graduates from community colleges with full academic credit) is a major consideration in facilitating the seamless process of education for students. Section 23-38.88 of the *Code of Virginia* states:

B. The Board of Visitors of a public institution of higher education shall commit to the Governor and the General Assembly by August 1, 2005, through formal resolution adopted according to its own bylaws, to meeting the state goals specified below, and shall be responsible for ensuring that such goals are met, in addition to such other responsibilities as may be prescribed by law. Each such institution shall commit to the Governor and the General Assembly to:

[...]

6. Consistent with its institutional mission, develop articulation agreements that have uniform application to all Virginia community colleges and meet appropriate general education and program requirements at the four-year institution, provide additional opportunities for associate degree graduates to be admitted and enrolled, and offer dual enrollment programs in cooperation with high schools;

In addition to accepting students who have earned associate degrees from Virginia's community colleges at the junior level, many public and private four-year institutions of higher education have established guaranteed admission programs for community college students. In many cases, these guaranteed admission agreements are between the four-year institution and the community college system office, meaning they apply to students who receive an associate degree from any of the 23 Virginia community colleges. A list of the current articulation and guaranteed admission agreements is located at: <http://www.vccs.edu/vccsasr/agreements.htm> (September 16, 2006).

Community colleges and four-year colleges and universities are now working to finalize their agreements and publicize the details to their stakeholders, including prospective and current students, community members, guidance counselors, and parents. An example of the range of opportunities available to students at one community college, Blue Ridge Community College, near James Madison University in Harrisonburg, Virginia, includes guaranteed admission agreements with 16 public and private colleges and universities operating in Virginia.<sup>9</sup>

Because of the independence of the four-year institutions, and even further autonomy afforded the different departments within each institution, the establishment of mutually acceptable conditions for transfer, articulation, and guaranteed admission is largely dependent on a genuine commitment of the faculty to offer such flexibility and opportunity to student transfers and the ability and understanding of the community college faculty to ensure that their students have the skills and experiences necessary to continue their studies at the next level, if they so desire. One thing that becomes increasingly clear is the need for strong communication across all levels of education.

## **National Initiatives to Promote Foreign Language Proficiency**

As we think more about articulation of foreign language programs, it is important to acknowledge the gathering momentum toward increasing accessibility and affordability of educational options for all students. Several influential organizations and entities such as the U.S. Department of Education, the Council of Chief State School Officers, the Education Commission of the States, the National Governors Association, and the Southern Regional Education Board have promoted major high school reform initiatives in recent years.<sup>10</sup> A key component of these initiatives is the opportunity for high school students to accelerate their learning so that a certain amount of college-level work may be completed at the high school level, thus enabling students to study at a higher level or complete their postsecondary studies earlier. Currently, the major focus is on accelerating learning in English, mathematics, and science, but the national momentum offers a prime time for the foreign language community to jump on the bandwagon and benefit from the increased focus on rigorous, performance-based learning.

For the first time in quite a while, the federal government has again taken an interest in promoting language learning for American students. In January 2006, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings co-hosted

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***“The summit focused on how to attract foreign students and scholars to study in the United States, as well as how to encourage more American students to receive part of their education abroad.”***

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the U.S. University Presidents Summit on International Education in Washington, DC.<sup>11</sup> The Secretaries engaged leaders of U.S. higher education in a renewed partnership to strengthen international education, emphasizing its importance to the national interest. The summit focused on how to attract foreign students and scholars to study in the United States, as well as how to encourage more American students to receive part of their education abroad. It also drew attention to the key investments required to strengthen international higher education for Americans, including increasing access to study abroad, encouraging non-traditional study abroad locations, and strengthening non-traditional language acquisition. During the Presidents Summit, the National Security Language Initiative (NSLI) was announced.<sup>12</sup> At the direction of the President of the

United States, the Secretaries of Education, State, and Defense, and the Director of National Intelligence (DNI) have developed a comprehensive national plan to expand U.S. foreign language education beginning in early childhood (kindergarten) and continuing throughout formal schooling and into the workforce with new programs and resources. Additionally, on February 8, 2006, President Bush signed into law two new student grant programs: the Academic Competitiveness (AC) Grants and National Science and Mathematics Access to Retain Talent (SMART) Grants, which were created by the Higher Education Reconciliation Act of 2005.<sup>13</sup> The grants encourage students to take more challenging courses in high school and to pursue college majors in high demand in the global economy, such as science, mathematics, technology, engineering and critical foreign languages.

While many in the current generation of language teachers benefited as students from the training our teachers received as part of the foreign language institutes offered under the auspices of the National Defense Education Act in the 1960s, most of us never had the chance to participate ourselves in foreign language training offered by the federal government. However, the old adage says “Everything old is new again.” And so it is that the American government has once again acknowledged the need for further language proficiency within our population. We, as foreign language professionals, have the opportunity to rise to the challenge, and one clear way to meet the challenge is to improve the articulation of foreign language study within the American educational system.

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## Notes

1. More information about the European Language Portfolio (ELP) is available on-line at [http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/linguistic/Portfolio\\_EN.asp](http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/linguistic/Portfolio_EN.asp), September 17, 2006.
2. More information about LinguaFolio is available on-line at <http://www.ncssfl.org/links/index.php?linguafolio>, September 17, 2006.
3. A PDF version of the template is available for review on the Internet at: <http://leg2.state.va.us/dls/h&sdocs.nsf/4d54200d7e28716385256ec1004f3130/68b4c0c89b88ae6d85256ec500553c1e?OpenDocument>, December 29, 2005.
4. Available on-line: [http://www.vccs.edu/aboutvccs/news\\_releases/careeritweb.html](http://www.vccs.edu/aboutvccs/news_releases/careeritweb.html) and [http://vccs.edu/vccsdr/VCCS\\_VDOE\\_IT.pdf](http://vccs.edu/vccsdr/VCCS_VDOE_IT.pdf), December 29, 2005.
5. More information about the assessments listed above may be found at <http://www.nclrc.org/readings/hottopics/interviewopas.html>, <http://www.cal.org/topics/ta/flsacess.html> and <http://www.cal.org/resources/digest/0014simulated.html>, October 7, 2006.
6. More information about the Commonwealth College Course Collaborative is available at: <http://www.virginiamentor.org/planning/cccc.asp>, December 29, 2005.
7. Available online: [http://www.virginiamentor.org/ap\\_ib/ap.asp](http://www.virginiamentor.org/ap_ib/ap.asp), December 29, 2005.
8. Available on-line: <http://leg1.state.va.us/cgi-bin/legp504.exe?051+ful+CHAP0933>, September 16, 2006.
9. Available on-line: [http://www.brcc.edu/services/advising/transfer/agreement\\_types.htm](http://www.brcc.edu/services/advising/transfer/agreement_types.htm) and <http://www.brcc.edu/services/advising/transfer/GAAPolicies.pdf>, September 16, 2006.
10. More information about major high school reform initiatives may be found at the Web sites of the following groups:
  - Council of Chief State School Officers — [http://www.ccsso.org/projects/State\\_Strategies\\_to\\_Redesign\\_High\\_Schools/](http://www.ccsso.org/projects/State_Strategies_to_Redesign_High_Schools/)
  - Education Commission of the States — <http://www.ecs.org/ecsmain.asp?page=/html/issuesK12.asp>
  - National Governors Association — <http://www.nga.org>
  - Southern Regional Education Board — <http://www.sreb.org/main/highschools/highschoolsindex.asp>
  - U.S. Department of Education — <http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ovae/pi/hs/index.html>
11. More information about the U.S. University Presidents Summit on International Education is available on-line at <http://exchanges.state.gov/universitysummit/>, September 24, 2006.
12. More information about the National Security Language Initiative may be found at <http://www.ed.gov/about/inits/ed/competitiveness/nsli/index.html>, September 24, 2006.
13. More information about the SMART grants may be found at <http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ope/ac-smart.html>, September 24, 2006.



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# **The Community College Perspective: New Visions, Responsibilities, and the Challenge of Teaching Students with Language-Based Learning Difficulties**

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**Margarita Esparza Hodge**, Northern Virginia Community College

## **Introduction**

In the wake of ACTFL's Year of Languages 2005, our profession continues to move forward in 2006 with the challenging mission of guiding our nation in valuing the importance of language learning and cultural understanding. A working knowledge of a language and the ability to behave appropriately in the culture that it represents has placed us at the forefront in helping combat terrorism and in promoting freedom and democracy. In January 2006, President George Bush announced plans to promote foreign language learning, in particular the critical languages necessary for national security. Graham (2006) reports in the *Washington Post* that the plans "aim to involve children in foreign-language courses as early as kindergarten while increasing opportunities for college and graduate school instruction." In this K-16 continuum, we expect to empower our learners with proficiency in a second language and the ability to interact in multicultural settings. We view this as a critical need for today's world citizens, who regardless of career paths will be required to interact globally in situations involving economic, social, and environmental issues.

## **The Community College Role**

The role of the community college is vital. As institutions of higher education, our community colleges articulate clearly a critical need in serving very diverse student populations. According to the American Association of Community College's Fact Sheet (Phillippe, 2000), we enroll 46% of all U.S. undergraduates, 45% of first-time freshmen, 58% women, 42% men, 62% part-time, and 38% full-time students. Our student profiles include 47% of African-American undergraduate students, 56% of Hispanic, 48% of Asian/Pacific Islanders, and 57% of Native Americans. The average student age is 29 years.

At local levels, we serve our surrounding communities, responding to their particular needs. For example, demographic trends and world events indicate a greater need

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for teaching the less commonly taught languages, many now considered critical, e.g., Arabic, Chinese, Farsi, Hindi, Korean, Russian, and Vietnamese. The promotion of heritage language classes to strengthen near-native language skills has resulted from the increasing Hispanic population growth throughout our communities. Arabic, Korean, and Chinese are also on the rise. The specialty courses targeted for social sciences, business, tourism, and the hotel industry reflect a curriculum tailor-made for the workplace, e.g., Spanish for the Medical Professions, Spanish for Policemen and Firefighters, Spanish for Teachers, French for Tourism, and German for Business. Due to the need and popularity of American Sign Language (ASL), first- and second-year programs have been developed with full-time positions being filled wherever ASL is offered.

Our students are those who receive associate degrees, those who earn certificates, and those who take non-credit and workforce training classes. Most often, our students take language courses to fulfill a humanities requirement, to transfer credits to another institution, or for personal enrichment. Therefore, the role of world languages programs affects the service area directly in understanding and respecting other cultures through the study of foreign languages, and by providing lifelong learning skills for career paths, enjoyment, and globalization efforts in enriching the community.

## **The Community College Vision**

Our vision is clear. Our roles are defined. Our primary challenge is to embrace the best practices in second language learning in light of the continually changing phase of new and diverse student profiles, hybrid and online courses, heritage language programs, dual enrollment, and languages for the workplace. However, we have many new, persistent, and unresolved issues. Our institutions give us the most advanced technological equipment and training to integrate technology into our classrooms. We are given smart rooms and opportunities to offer online and hybrid classes. Yet, we still have a long way to go in the full implementation of technology. We can still do more in promoting communicative-oriented language instruction, and validating a student's level of proficiency using both formative and summative methods of measuring language skills. This assessment is crucial in placement and exit exams if we expect to create a smooth transition for students transferring into community college programs and later transferring on to colleges and universities. Due to budgetary issues, we are generally understaffed and rely heavily on our adjunct faculty colleagues, who make up 50% of our teaching faculty. Many are seasoned secondary educators coming to teach

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during our evening programs. Our teaching faculty has grown older; some are now complacent, having lost the passion of their younger years. Others are retiring and leaving leadership voids that will be hard to fill. If we prioritize our greatest need for change, however, there is one pervasive and critical issue. We have not yet fully addressed the needs of providing a truly inclusive and productive classroom environment for our students with language-based learning difficulties.

## **The Challenge of Teaching Students with Language-Based Learning Difficulties**

Spinelli (2004) notes that the K-12 and post-secondary population is showing greater academic diversity due in part to the mainstreaming of physically, emotionally, and learning-disabled students and to the increasing paths of access to higher education for all students. She states that faculty must learn to deal with these students. Whether we are offering dual language programs, languages for the workplace, or heritage language classes, we will find a cross-section of learning disabled (LD) learners or other exceptional learners having emotional and behavior disorders, physical disabilities, or visual and deaf impairments in all of our courses.

We cannot espouse the vision and the role of world languages and cultures in today's society as a necessary requirement for all learners if we fail to make it available to all. We need to take a position that we can successfully provide second language and cultural enrichment for all learners, rather than limit the opportunity to only a selected number of students. The focus is on us to create change. Therefore, we need to revisit our past approaches and make critical changes to produce truly inclusive classrooms. We need to articulate with educators at all levels to provide best practices for teaching LD learners, and coordinate a smooth transition from one level to the next whenever possible in the K-16 continuum.

Why has it been so difficult to provide intervention strategies for our exceptional students who learn differently? Do we not boast about the quality and impact of our world languages programs? Do we not provide very practical and innovative learning and teaching approaches in student-centered and safe learning environments?

The answer is simple but the solution is complex. Research studies estimate that

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***“One can speculate that greater numbers of LD students may exist in community college Spanish programs due to heavier enrollments in this discipline.”***

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14 percent of community college learners have learning difficulties. One can speculate that greater numbers of LD students may exist in community college Spanish programs due to heavier enrollments in this discipline. Spanish represents 63 percent of language enrollments in two-year institutions (Welles, 2002, p. 8). In any case, whether enrollments reflect a greater or lesser number of individuals taking a particular language, language learners may be at risk if they have language-based learning difficulties without receiving appropriate intervention strategies.

In postsecondary settings, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires public

institutions to accommodate LD learners who provide a diagnosed documentation of a disability. A special education counselor, working closely with an LD student, provides a list of accommodations to guide an instructor in assuring that the student is protected from discrimination in the learning process. IDEA entitles students to

“a free and appropriate public education” through the provision of accommodations such as extended time on tests or books on tape; educational services such as tutoring or assistance with study skills; educationally related services such as speech or occupational therapy; and modifications to curriculum such as shorter testing, more frequent testing, or the waiver of certain requirements depending on the student’s disability-related needs. (National Council on Learning Disabilities, 2006)

At times, students having a previous documentation obtained during their secondary studies fail to request accommodation because they are ignorant of their rights, have not self-reported their needs to counselors or instructors, or may see their learning difficulties as a stigma. Unfortunately, most of these learners do not have objective evidence (documentation) that verifies a learning disability. Identifying who these learners are in the foreign language classroom is critical since such at-risk learners require very specialized language instruction. In most cases, when there is no intervention with accommodation, remediation, and compensatory strategies, these learners are doomed to fail. They generally make up the C- through F grade profiles of language learners. Almost certainly, these students are part of a silent majority that increases the attrition numbers. This scenario is also mirrored at four-year institutions.

## **Foreign Languages Studies and Learning Disabilities**

It is important first to provide some background and connections between current foreign language (FL) study and learning disabilities — disabilities primarily seen as language-based disorders by experts. The ERIC Clearinghouse on Disabilities and Gifted Education (ERIC EC) notes that the federal government defines learning disabilities in Public Law 94-142, as amended by Public Law 101-76 (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act [IDEA]):

Specific learning disability means a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using language, spoken or written, which may manifest itself in an imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell, or to do mathematical calculations. The term includes such conditions as perceptual handicaps, brain injury, minimal brain dysfunction, dyslexia, and developmental aphasia. The term does not include children who have problems that are primarily the result of visual, hearing, or motor disabilities, or mental retardation, emotional disturbance, or of environmental, cultural, or economic disadvantage. (1999)

According to The National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke (NINDS, 2006b), “Learning disabilities are disorders that affect the ability to understand or use spoken or written language, do mathematical calculations, coordinate movements, or direct attention. Although learning disabilities occur in very young children, the disorders are usually not recognized until the child reaches school age.” NINDS (2006a) defines Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) as

a neurobehavioral disorder that affects three to five percent of all American children. It interferes with a person's ability to stay on a task and to exercise age-appropriate inhibition (cognitive alone or both cognitive and behavioral). Some of the warning signs of ADHD include failure to listen to instructions, inability to organize oneself and school work, fidgeting with hands and feet, talking too much, leaving projects, chores and homework unfinished, and having trouble paying attention to and responding to details. There are several types of ADHD: a predominantly inattentive subtype, a predominantly hyperactive-impulsive subtype, and a combined subtype. ADHD is usually diagnosed in childhood, although the condition can continue into the adult years.

According to the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-IV-TR), Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder may be defined as "a persistent pattern of inattention and/or hyperactivity-impulsivity that is displayed and more severe than is typically observed in individuals at comparable levels of development" (2006).

The review of literature reveals that LD learners generally meet with failure in learning a second language (L2) since LD difficulties are language-based disorders (Sparks & Ganschow, 1993). Sparks (2005) contends that "research findings show that students who exhibit oral or written native language deficits will have problems with FL learning" (pp.43-55). The ability to understand or use spoken or written language due to visual and/or auditory processing disorders undermines the acquisition of the four skills. These difficulties affect the areas of phonology (the sound units that comprise language), morphology (word structure), syntax (the structure and rules of language), and semantics (the meaning of words) of the language. Auditory processing deficits create difficulties in developing listening, the core skill in acquiring L2 speaking, reading and writing proficiency. In citing various studies, Kirk et al. (2006a) report that an auditory processing deficit affects the storage of information in short-term memory — information that may not transfer to long-term memory. This affects the semantic memory, causing problems in encoding, cataloging and recalling information (p. 124).

In addition to these difficulties, students may have additional language problems due to possible attentional, or memory disorders. Attentional problems and poor memory retention undermine listening and reading comprehension skills or the building of essential vocabulary. Besides these language difficulties, executive function abilities affect the learning process as well. Kirk et al. (2006b) report that this executive function "regulates thinking processes, behaviors, and performance ... a type of traffic manager that monitors and controls" (p. 42). For example, some individuals have difficulty organizing and integrating thoughts and ideas when speaking and writing.

Therefore, as mentioned above, it is evident that the language-based difficulties, which LD learners demonstrate in their first language (L1), will surface as identical difficulties in learning a second language (L2). Dyslexic and ADHD/ADD learners will struggle in developing receptive and expressive language skills, and such efforts can condemn attempts to acquire proficiency in a second language. Nonetheless, a student classified with either dyslexia or ADHD/ADD can still succeed despite these odds. Proficiency in a foreign language is indeed possible depending on the level of severity of the learning disability, the provision of a supportive environment, adaptation of the

curriculum and teaching strategies, and the incorporation of technology.

## **Lack of Teacher Preparation in Intervention Methods**

Classic approaches in LD literature include intervention methods such as accommodation, compensatory strategies, and remediation. In general, educational adaptations include modifying the learning environment, the curriculum, and teaching strategies, as well as using assistive and instructional technology. Unfortunately, very few language instructors are trained in sophisticated intervention measures. One of the most contentious issues in the field of special education is the status of current instructional practices employed to remediate students' academic deficiencies. The Chief of the Child Development and Behavior Branch within the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) at the National Institutes of Health (NIH), Dr. Reid Lyon, faults colleges and universities for not providing appropriate teacher training. Lyon agrees with numerous professionals and policy-makers that many students who eventually become identified as learning disabled are, in fact, "teaching disabled" (Patriarca & Travnika, 2003, pp. 1-3)

Teachers need guidelines and professional development for differentiating instruction. Citing Lerner (2000), Kirk et al. (2006c), advocate that the best help for teachers is to provide them with tools for identifying the academic and social problems that LD individuals have, and to provide a curriculum with strategies and materials that will help learners use their strengths to overcome their weaknesses (p. 136). When language practitioners become empowered with the knowledge that students can improve their proficiency, given appropriate instruction and assessment, then a change in attitude will take place in our profession. It will help shape a philosophy that students with language-based difficulties can and should be given the opportunity to study a foreign language. More importantly, the development of best practices will benefit LD students, as well as, *all* students.

## **Identifying a Learner's Learning Style and Providing Accommodation**

LD learners (including dyslexic and ADHD/ADD) need to be identified very early on in beginning language classes. Their learning modality preference can quickly be identified. By using learning styles assessment instruments, instructors and learners can easily identify and capitulate on learning strengths, and accommodate weaker learning modalities. Typical accommodation includes using a variety of means to record lectures, preferred seating in the classroom environment, taking exams in a quiet environment, and receiving extra time to complete tests. As mentioned earlier, these measures for providing for accommodation are mandated by the federal laws, IDEA and *Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act*, in settings receiving federal funding. In general, educators are not required to accommodate LD learners, especially when students do

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***"...a student classified with either dyslexia or ADHD/ADD can still succeed despite these odds."***

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not identify themselves as such. Nonetheless, it is imperative that early in a semester, classroom instructors emphasize to *all* of their students that they will accommodate and honor *all* learning styles, and in particular, accommodate LD learners.

## Compensatory Strategies

LD learners can benefit greatly when accommodation is provided for them. Of equal benefit is providing for direct instruction in language learning strategies and study skills. These strategies can be seen as compensatory strategies that help to build receptive and expressive skills in the L2 process. For instance, useful language strategies may include employing mnemonic devices to facilitate the learning of vocabulary. In addition, foreign language educators need to focus attention on instruction in study skills because LD learners require overt training in both these areas. Sedita (1996) observes that most college students have learning processes intact to create the necessary organizational and study strategies to be successful in their college classes. These are skills in organizing, processing, and comprehending what is read or heard, planning homework and long-term assignments, studying for tests, and determining good test-taking strategies. However, at-risk learners do not automatically and instinctively develop these strategies in their first language unless they take study skills classes. Sedita proposes that

Other students, however — particularly those with learning disabilities — need direct, systematic instruction to develop these skills. Learning disabilities related to reading, spelling, and writing skills; concrete or abstract organization skills; short- or long-term memory; or attention controls affect certain students' ability to self-design and independently apply study strategies. These students can learn study skills, but they need specific instruction and sufficient practice to do so. (2006)

Two decades earlier, McKeachie (1988) had already noted that there was a body of research demonstrating that learning disabled individuals could be trained in more effective study strategies (p.6). Consequently, it is not uncommon now, twenty years later, to browse through the Internet sites of various college and university student learning centers to discover that these institutions provide a variety of study skill components beneficial to all students. These include organizational skills, study/reading systems, test preparation and test taking, goal setting, attitude, time management, vocabulary building, listening skills, basic reading skills, memory and concentration techniques, note taking, critical thinking/problem solving, library skills, research writing, and speed reading. It is evident that instructors can easily provide direction in study skill training via the Internet as another means of intervention.

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***“...foreign  
language  
educators need  
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## Remediation

Hodge (1998) notes that “in the larger picture of intervention strategies for at-risk learners, remediation should be the first and most important of the



three building blocks when providing accommodation, compensatory strategies, and remediation in a foreign language setting. Yet, it is the most difficult one to implement because it requires specialized training and a one-to-one tutorial approach” (p.73). LD Resources (2005) defines remediation as a “process in which an individual is provided instruction and practice in skills which are weak or nonexistent in an effort to develop/ strengthen these skills.” Remediation training for dyslexic students involves phonemic and phonological awareness. Phonemic awareness is recognition of individual sounds in spoken words. This is an awareness that words and syllables are made up of speech sounds that are represented by alphabetic symbols or letters. Phonological awareness is an ability to rhyme, isolate the beginning or ending sound of a word, delete and substitute parts of a word into a syllable. Ideal training in remediation programs provided by Orton-Gillingham practitioners involve a structured, sequential and cumulative approach.

Students begin by reading and writing sounds in isolation. Then they blend the sounds into syllables and words. Students learn the elements of language, e.g., consonants, vowels, digraphs, blends, and diphthongs, in an orderly fashion. They then proceed to advanced structural elements such as syllable types, roots, and affixes. As students learn new material, they continue to review old material to the level of automaticity. The teacher addresses vocabulary, sentence structure, composition, and reading comprehension in a similar structured, sequential, and cumulative manner. (Academy of Orton-Gillingham Practitioners and Educators, 2005)

## Technology

Technology becomes a powerful tool in accommodating and providing compensatory strategies. LD learners learn best when instructional and/or assistive technology become needed tools for successful learning. In instructional technology, the use of computer software tutorials and the Internet enhance tactile/kinesthetic strengths, and help strengthen the weaker learning modalities by building the auditory and visual modalities. As Singhal (1997) observes, the Internet provides supplemental language activities that provide students with additional practice in specific areas. These include reading tests and comprehension questions, grammar exercises, pronunciation exercises possible through the available multimedia capabilities, cloze tests, and vocabulary exercises to mention a few.

An excellent source of online materials can be found in MERLOT’s World Languages Portal (2006). MERLOT is the acronym for Multimedia Educational Resources for Learning and Online Teaching. MERLOT’s World Languages Portal (2006), one of fifteen discipline communities, is an educational resource for teaching and learning languages. A wide variety of materials exists with over 1500 submissions for use online and for incorporating mutisensory

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*“...a learner can be directed to an ever-growing collection of tutorials, simulations, animations, web quests, drills, realia, and reference tools.”*

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***“Are intervention strategies similar at primary, secondary, and higher education levels?”***

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instruction in the classroom. Here, a learner can be directed to an ever-growing collection of tutorials, simulations, animations, web quests, drills, realia, and reference tools.

Assistive technology benefits not only those learners who have visual or auditory impairments, but all types of learners. According to the DO-IT Center of the University of Washington (2002), “assistive and adaptive technology do not ‘cure’ a specific learning disability. These tools compensate rather than remedy,

allowing a person with an LD to demonstrate his intelligence and knowledge.” Effective computing tools can include (1) word processors for spelling checking or grammar usage, (2) reading systems, e.g., JAWS, that allow text on a screen to be read aloud, (3) concept mapping software that facilitates organizing ideas for writing and speaking, and (4) speech recognition software that employs a microphone to convert speech into a machine-readable format. The availability of such technology enhances the learning process directly, and complements dramatically all types of intervention efforts.

## **Establishing Best Practices**

As mentioned earlier, educational change must include adapting the learning environment, the curriculum, teaching strategies, and the use of technology. Practitioners can begin to create ideal settings with best practices that (a) emphasize specific training in phonological, morphological, syntactical and semantic aspects of the language, (b) include a multisensory approach to teaching the foreign language through the use of visual, auditory, and tactile/kinesthetic learning pathways, (c) reduce the course content with a slower and controlled pacing of the presentation of material with time for frequent review of oral and written materials, and (d) provide for much individual attention and tutorial assistance with mastery learning strategies to help break instruction into learnable units according to an individual’s level of understanding. In essence, we must help these learners learn how to learn. If our profession is sincere about resolving these critical and pervasive issues surrounding the education of LD and ADHD/ADD learners, we should heed the recommendations implied in current research. Sparks (2005), one of the most recognized seminal researchers in this field, proposes three courses of action. He advises that students’ disability classifications not be used to predict their future performance in FL courses or as a marker to recommend course substitutions for the FL requirement. He recommends that students classified as LD and ADHD/ADD be encouraged to enroll in FL courses and be provided with instructional accommodations by their instructors. He also encourages FL department chairs to take the lead in helping their faculty members develop, learn, and use teaching techniques that benefit at-risk FL learners (43-50).

## **Articulation**

How then, do we articulate with each other to provide for successful inclusion in our classrooms? Are intervention strategies similar at primary, secondary, and higher

education levels? How can we adapt our curricula and incorporate effective teaching strategies?

A promising and hopeful endeavor has been the recent efforts of the Italian Cultural Society and Casa Italiana in Washington, DC, to provide Italian teachers a graduate 500-level course in effective teaching strategies for second language learners with special needs. Twenty Italian teachers, representative of the K-16 continuum from surrounding school jurisdictions, colleges, and universities are now applying the best practices in their classrooms. In the area of technology, I have created an online site for Spanish LD language-learners with the intention of incorporating intervention strategies on the web. The site, *Aprendiendo se aprende*, ([www.nvcc.edu/home/nvhodgm/aprendiendo](http://www.nvcc.edu/home/nvhodgm/aprendiendo)), includes multisensory tutorials in Spanish to (a) develop phonemic and phonological awareness, and (b) gain knowledge of grammar, sentence variation and the mechanics of language. The site also includes Internet links to resources for language learning strategies, study skills, and general LD resources. Most importantly, efforts such as these are needed in all of the language disciplines and at all levels of instruction at K-16 levels. We need to advocate as a profession to find funding for professional training, create special interest groups (SIGs) specific for teaching LD learners, and participate in listservs to continue the dialogue of what is working in our classrooms.

It will be through our organizations like the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL), the Northeast Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages, language-specific organizations, and our state foreign language associations where we can share our knowledge and experience, and continue to articulate our hopes, dreams, and concerns for our world languages profession.

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# ***Puddlejumping: The Articulation Problem***

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## **Abstract**

Articulation has been a perennial challenge within the field of foreign language teaching. The present article seeks to clearly frame this challenge by positing three main perspectives, or, metaphorically-speaking, puddles, from which language educators teach, putting the onus on students to jump from one of these puddles to another without being provided the necessary boots. The solution, then, is for language educators to learn how to effectively integrate all three puddles in their teaching.

## **Introduction**

It is the beginning of the year; a high school Spanish teacher complains to her colleague that the students who had just arrived from the middle school had studied Spanish for two years and really do not know anything. In fact, she would rather they had had no previous language instruction because then she could teach them what they needed to know.

This true anecdote captures the essence of the challenges of articulation. In the field of foreign languages, articulation most commonly refers to curricular coherence between levels of instruction. Coherence often exists within contexts. For example, a high school will have a coherent language program. It is when students move from one context to another that articulation becomes problematic, for example from middle to high school. It is then that we ask students to jump from one puddle to another without providing the metaphorical boots that they need. What follows is a brief introduction that outlines the articulation problem by framing it in terms of three puddles from which language educators teach. Then I go into a more in-depth discussion of the nature and challenges of the three puddles, ending with a suggestion that all language educators must learn to teach from all of the puddles in level-appropriate ways.

As early as 1955, in the Northeast Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages' (NECTFL) report on "Foreign Language Instruction in Secondary Schools," Mead (1955) raised the issue of articulation and suggested a bottom-up approach to dealing with it (this sentiment is reiterated in 2004 by Curtain and Dahlberg). It is now fifty years later and we still ask students to, what I call, puddle-jump, as they move from course to course and/or context to context. As far as I can see, there are three principal puddles: the grammar puddle, the communicative pud-

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dle (informed by the proficiency movement), and the content puddle (informed by Foreign Language in the Elementary School (FLES) programs, the national standards (1999), literature programs, and, for me, conceptual teaching). These three puddles have always been in existence. However, we, as a profession, have never explicitly formulated our relationship to them.

The underlying assumption behind the premise that students are asked to puddlejump is that every language classroom functions as a puddle. That is, language educators and/or language programs create a curriculum that primarily integrates the practices and approaches of only one of the puddles. For example, Gilzow (2002) highlights model elementary-age foreign language programs that have all incorporated the five national standards into the curriculum and “use content-based or content-enriched curricula that are closely tied to the general elementary school curriculum” (p. 2). Simultaneously, he points to the potential for “disconnect when students move to the higher grades, where there is more emphasis on grammar, writing, and formal assessment” (Gilzow, 2002, p. 3). Lambert (2001), however, puts forth the standards as the framework for integrating K-16 language instruction, but also warns that “the different degrees of adoption of the ACTFL Standards in secondary schools versus colleges and universities threaten to introduce a new discontinuity between educational levels” (p. 349). James (1998) argues that the college curriculum has to change as a result of the bottom-up impact of the standards on college-level instruction. For all of these thinkers, the standards provide the primary basis for the foreign language curriculum and, as a result, the framework for articulating instruction.

At the same time, other voices emphasize proficiency as the lens for articulating foreign language instruction. Connor-Linton (1996) suggests that programs need to be “more coherent in organization and more communicative and proficiency oriented in approach” (p. 139). The Minnesota Articulation Project aims to develop a proficiency-based cohesive framework for curriculum by using assessment as the means to foster articulation (Chalhoub-Deville, 1997).

Lange (1997) and Sandrock (1996) offer a different perspective on articulation by stating that we need to focus on the learner. Lange defines articulation in curricular terms, but goes further by stating that “it also focuses on the progress of the individual learner within an educational-development framework” (p. 30). Sandrock is more specific when he says, “Our focus needs to be on student learning, the process of becoming more proficient in using another language” (p. 545).

A silent but omnipresent and omniscient voice in this discussion is the grammar voice that is most loudly heard in many textbooks and classroom practices. Given the important role of the textbook, one would think that it is an ideal document that illustrates and models best teaching practices. Yet there has been very little change in textbooks over the past century. They tend to be grammar-based and have not responded to more recent findings regarding effective second language acquisition.

There has been a dramatic change in the appearance of the textbook, but not in the content. Bragger & Rice (2000) comment on the static nature of the textbook, even in the face of recent technological advances:

Today's foreign language programs reveal a surprising absence of fundamental changes or transformations.... Moreover, the same way that the new components of programs are "ancillary" to the textbook, many of the activities and features that make up the "new" content remain "ancillary" to the grammatical core of the content. (p. 110-111)

With the textbook as the primary instructional tool for teachers, the principal focus on grammar is bound to influence classroom practice.

As should be clear, there is no one commonly agreed on framework for designing and assessing foreign language instruction within the field. It is my contention that we, as language educators, teach from a specific perspective, which I will call a puddle; this perspective dominates our classroom practices while other perspectives might or might not be present in our teaching. Therefore, it is students who are required to move from one perspective to another, without the requisite knowledge base and experience to make that move. Herein lies the challenge of articulation. What follows is a description of the three puddles followed by a proposal for addressing the challenge that articulation has posed over the last 50 years.

## The Grammar Puddle

In short, there is now convincing indirect and direct evidence to support the teaching of grammar. (Ellis, 2006, p. 86)

The teaching of grammar has a long history. As Fotos (2005) states, "By the first century BC the grammatical framework was developed that has remained the foundation of grammar pedagogy to the present" (p. 655). The initial framework was generated from literature, not colloquial speech, and therefore emphasized "correct" grammar usage. Grammar translation evolved from that base, dominated foreign language instruction from the mid nineteenth to twentieth centuries, and is still used today (Fotos, 2005).

After World War II, the US's foreign language needs shifted toward people who were able to speak the languages they studied. However, the grammatical basis was not abandoned. Instead, it provided the structure through which people learned to communicate, in what was called the Audio Lingual Method (ALM). Elements of language structures were replaced as learners engaged in repeated practice of these structures. For example, "I went to the store, I went to the library, I went to the bank," etc. ALM dominated foreign language instruction through the

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1970s (I can actually remember some of the dialogues between Paco and Anita that I learned in my language classes during that time).

The role of grammar in the classroom, however, has evolved over time, while vestiges of each of these approaches exist in current practices to varying degrees. In the 1980s, the proficiency movement came to the fore and helped form the proficiency puddle. In the 1990s, the standards helped form the content puddle. These two events put into question what the role of grammar instruction should be in the classroom. Meanwhile, the field of Second Language Acquisition (SLA) blossomed and provided empirical evidence for helping the field understand the nature of language acquisition (it must be said, however, that while we have a broad empirical data base, understandings of best practices based on research findings do not always make it into classroom teaching).

Ellis (2006), an SLA researcher, quells any doubt that grammar should be taught when he claims, “In short, there is now convincing indirect and direct evidence to support the teaching of grammar” (p. 86). In fact, neglecting grammatical instruction was found to be problematic; students must pay attention to form if they are to learn a language (Nassaji & Fotos, 2004). Moreover, “Current research indicates that learners need opportunities to both encounter and produce structures which have been introduced either explicitly, through a grammar lesson, or implicitly through frequent exposure” (Nassaji & Fotos, 2004, p. 130).

The question, then, becomes how and when it should be taught. Ellis (2006) contends that “Instruction needs to ensure that learners are able to connect grammatical forms to the meanings they realise in communication” (p. 101). At the heart of Lee and VanPatten’s (2003) work is this form/meaning connection. They argue that students need comprehensible input that has a message to which learners attend that includes a process of negotiating meaning in order for form-meaning connections to happen. Despite these understandings, many challenges remain when thinking about teaching grammar.

As Byrd (2005) points out, a grammatically based syllabus connects form and meaning, but is lacking in appropriate contexts. That is, students learn definitions, but do not learn to use them effectively. An additional layer of complexity lies within the current tensions that language teachers must navigate as they make instructional decisions. These tensions include the focus on accuracy versus fluency, form (which entails prerequisite engagement in meaning) versus forms (which does not entail prerequisite engagement in meaning), explicit versus implicit grammar learning and teaching (Byrd, 2005). Moreover, many of us have experienced the “apprenticeship of observation” (Lortie, 1975) in grammar-based classrooms and, unless we make con-



certed efforts not to, we will teach in the ways we were taught (in my high-school languages classes I remember spending hours going over the verb forms in the Amsco workbook). Moreover, I wonder if our initial attraction to learning a language was the comfort we felt at being easily able to break down language forms and get accurate answers, because of our tendency to think analytically. This comfort we felt as students may translate into our focusing on those same activities as teachers.

While it should be clear that grammar instruction is an integral part of learning a language, the specific shape of the grammar puzzle is amorphous, due to its inherent complexities. Historical influences, current research findings, inherent tensions, and, perhaps most importantly, our own histories as learners, all contribute to the role this puzzle plays in our teaching. To complicate the situation further, we must understand the two other puzzles — proficiency and content — if we are going to be successful in addressing the articulation problem.

## The Proficiency Puzzle

“Language development...needs to be seen as the mastery of linguistic functions...Learning a language is learning how to mean.” (Halliday, 1973, p. 16)

The underlying premise of proficiency is that language is social in nature. Halliday (1973) posits that there are three main purposes for language: (1) representational (the expression of ideational content, present in all its uses), (2) interpersonal (the expression of social and personal relations), and (3) textual (providing texture to meaning in specific contexts). These purposes provide language teachers with the means for constructing the social situations within which language would be practiced and assessed within the classroom. Two powerful tools that have had a significant impact on the assessment of proficiency, and in turn, in language teaching, are the proficiency guidelines and the Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI).

In the early 1980s, the oral proficiency guidelines were published and, since that time, have had a tremendous impact on language instruction. In fact, “The proficiency guidelines remain at this time the only nationally recognized set of criteria for assessing oral communication skills across languages in the United States” (Rifkin, 2003, p. 582). The proficiency guidelines provide a rubric for assessing global functional speaking ability in real-life situations in 48 languages. It was the first common assessment tool ever produced within the language field.

While the proficiency guidelines have been criticized (see Liskin-Gasparro, 2003 for a synthesis of those critiques), they have had a profound impact on language instruction. As Liskin-Gasparro (2003) suggests, “The so-called proficiency movement and the ACTFL Guidelines and the OPI that served as its emblems, sparked significant change in the foreign language field that resonated even at the local classroom level” (p. 486). The proficiency movement does not promote a specific methodology; rather, it focuses on specific knowledge and skills that speakers should acquire. This is both its strength and its weakness.

By focusing on knowledge and skills, not methodology, the proficiency movement allows teachers to employ their own approaches in the classroom. This freedom may be problematic, however, because of the lack of models for teachers who might want



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***“It would be naïve to think that assessment practices do not impact instruction and methodology: in fact, they have a profound effect.”***

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to adopt a proficiency orientation but do not know how. Lastly, while there is a claim that the proficiency movement does not dictate a specific methodology (Liskin-Gasparro, 2003), the Oral Proficiency Interview with the corresponding guidelines function as a much-used assessment tool. It would be naïve to think that assessment practices do not impact instruction and methodology: in fact, they have a profound effect. A common mantra in teaching is that we “teach for the test.”

As with the grammar puzzle, the proficiency puzzle has its own complexities. First, there is a need for empirical evidence to support anecdotal assertions about its influence on language instruction (Chalhoub-Deville & Fulcher, 2003). Second, Norris and Pfeiffer (2003), while acknowledging the positive changes the ACTFL Guidelines have had on language programs, wonder if the OPI misses other valued learning outcomes. As they say, “it remains to be seen whether this use of proficiency standards and assessments helps foreign language programs achieve the kinds and range of educational goals they actually value” (Norris & Pfeiffer, p. 574).

It should be clear that teaching students to communicate in meaningful ways in social contexts is an important and valuable goal for language educators. Like the grammar puzzle, the waters of the proficiency puzzle are muddied with complexities. These include a lack of models for implementing proficiency-oriented instruction, the need for empirical evidence to shore up our anecdotal understandings of the implementation of the proficiency guidelines, and the need for a close examination of the coherence between the values of language educators and the educational goals achieved when employing the proficiency guidelines as the basis for curriculum development. Here again, these complexities contribute to the role this puzzle plays in our teaching. What remains is to understand the content puzzle before we are able to consider a solution to the articulation problem.

## **The Content Puzzle**

Language teaching as a profession always struggles under the burden of not having a natural content. (Byrd, 2005, p. 553).

Content-based instruction (CBI) is an attempt to address the lack of content in language instruction. It is:

distinguished first of all by the *concurrent learning* of a specific content and related language use skills in a “*content driven*” curriculum ... In content-based language teaching, the claim in a sense is that students get “two for one” — both *content knowledge* and *increased language proficiency*. (Brinton, 2005).

In this conceptualization, language and content are seen as interdependent to the extent that language is embedded in specific content, thereby having students learn language through the content.

Stryker and Leaver (1997) state that while there is no one formula for CBI, it must have three essential features which include a subject matter core, the use of authentic materials and language, and a curriculum that is appropriate to the needs of the specific learners. In fact, it is CBI's focus on content and use of authentic materials that distinguishes it from the communicative approach to teaching languages (Stoller, 2002).

Historically, Krashen's (1985) concept of comprehensible input influenced the development of CBI. In its second phase, Swain's (1993) output hypothesis put the focus on the need for more linguistic accuracy and sophistication. There is no standard within the field, however, for what counts as content. For example, Curtain and Dahlberg (2004) define content as curricular concepts used in schools, Genesee (1994) deems content to be any topic that is important to learners, and Met (1991) considers content to be material that is cognitively engaging. This wide range of conceptualizations has proven problematic when implementing CBI at a programmatic level. As Stoller (2002) states, "CBI is founded on important principles, but really its success depends on the details of its implementation" (p. 3).

Here again, there is a range; there are different program models that have emerged which include theme-based language instruction, sheltered content instruction, adjunct language instruction, content-based FLES, and immersion instruction (for a description of these models please see Brinton, Snow, & Wesche, 1989 and Curtain & Dahlberg, 2004). CBI has also been proposed as a bridge between beginning-level, language-focused classes and advanced-level, literature-focused classes in university programs (Dupuy, 2000). These models provide options for integrating language instruction in a variety of ways. But, as Stoller (2002) warns, the details of implementation are important.

As with the grammar and proficiency puddles, the content puddle is not without complexities of its own. First, because language emerges from specific texts, it places a heavy burden on teachers to create materials that focus on the language structures inherent in the chosen texts. Second, because the curriculum is content-driven, language can be left to be learned implicitly (which, if you remember the above discussion about grammar, has largely proven ineffective). Third, students may lack the background information associated with the content chosen, leaving the teacher to determine how to address that lack (by assuming that students will need it and integrating it into instruction, by providing background reading in the LI, or by providing it in English in the class). Fourth, Stoller (2002) has suggested that there have been times that CBI has been used "as a shell for language teaching" (p. 1) implying that content has not been effectively integrated into instruction. Fifth, there have been "few controlled empirical studies demonstrating the effectiveness of actual CBI programs" (Grabe & Stoller, 1997, p. 14). Lastly, Eskey (1997) has expressed concerns about clearly establishing the relationship between form, function, and content during instruction and students who do not make normal progress.

Particularly in academic contexts, the need for meaningful and compelling content other than topic-

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***"...the need for meaningful and compelling content other than topic-based vocabulary targeting tourist activities should be non-negotiable."***

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***“Until we learn to effectively integrate language and thought, articulation will continue to plague us as a profession.”***

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based vocabulary targeting tourist activities should be non-negotiable. The content puddle, like the grammar and proficiency puddles, has its own complexities, which include a range of program models, a lack of agreement as to the nature of the content, the need for empirical evidence on the nature of the impact of content instruction, and the challenge of effectively implementing CBI in ways that meet the students' educational needs without placing an undue burden on the teachers' time and energy.

As I have described, within the field of language teaching there are three main puddles, all of which are imbued with their own complexities. It is my contention that teachers and/or programs teach primarily from one of the three puddles and it is up to the students to be able to jump from one puddle to the next as they move from class to class or context to context. Within these three different puddles, there is no common framework for teaching languages, hindering any efforts at creating a coherent foreign language learning experience for students.

At the same time, there have always been and, I hope, always will be differing perspectives on what it means to teach a language (Fotos, 2005). These perspectives underlie the three puddles outlined previously. For our students' sakes, however, we can no longer teach from only one puddle. We need to reconceive what it means to teach languages and develop a common framework. The starting point (and perhaps the most important point) of this reconceptualization process is the relationship between thought and language.

Galloway (1999) suggests that one reason teaching culture has been such a challenge is because language and culture have been separated. She states,

Edward Hall's message in *The Silent Language* is one foreign language teachers recite almost as a mantra: Culture is communication, communication is culture)...Yet, foreign language classrooms may be the only place in the world where the two are so unnaturally separated. (p.176)

I would adapt and amend Galloway's statement by replacing the word "culture" with "thought" (which is shaped by culture). Foreign language classes may be the only place where thought and language are unnaturally and unhelpfully separated. The most obvious example is at the university level, where students experience two years of language classes and, if they continue (which is a big if), two years of literature classes, whose focus is content. Until we learn to effectively integrate language and thought, articulation will continue to plague us as a profession.

This is not a new idea. Byrnes (2001) points to something similar when she suggests that thought and language be integrated:

...from a language-form-driven paradigm, which is constitutive of pretty much all of our professional work, to a cognitive-communicative paradigm within which we, quite understandably, have only just begun to rework everything, from curriculum to instruction, materials, assessment, and approaches to teacher education. (p. 167)

However, we need to start thinking about what this reworking might look like. What follows is a description of my learning to integrate the three puddles in my teaching and my current thinking, with the hope that it makes the ideas presented thus far concrete and even doable.

## **A Potential Solution to the Articulation Problem**

At this point in my teaching career, I have taught at almost every level. I started as a high school Spanish teacher, taught in an elementary age program (grades 1-5), had a brief two-year experience in middle school, and currently teach at the college level. In my trajectory as a teacher, I have taught from, and played in, all three of the puddles. On my first day of teaching high school, I taught the grammar sequence right from the textbook because I did not know what else to do. I spent a number of years in the grammar puddle, completely overwhelmed by the thought of teaching culture, never mind anything else that was not in the textbook.

Since then, I have grown as a teacher. My professional experiences have pushed me to learn about the other puddles and, in so doing, I have become increasingly aware of the burden we are placing on students to jump from puddle to puddle without the right kind of boots. For example, the worst day of the year for me is in September, when incoming students take the placement test after having studied languages for three years in high school and place into the college-level first-year class. Clearly, their high school language-learning experiences have not prepared them for college-level language learning. At the same time, I have developed my own beliefs and convictions about what it means to teach and learn a language, and more and more I situate myself in the content/conceptual puddle.

I faced the issue of students needing to jump from one puddle to another head-on when I taught in a middle school and saw the placement test that my students would have to take upon arriving at the high school. Before designing the curriculum for the seventh and eighth graders, I examined the high school placement test, which included verb conjugation charts, vocabulary matching items, and grammatical fill-in-the-blanks. I, on the other hand, had the idea of creating a virtual trip to Spain, where they would design and describe their experiences as they learned about different facets of the country. Two different puddles, for sure! At the same time, I felt a deep responsibility to the students not to set them up for failure. It was this feeling of responsibility that pushed me to think hard about the issue of articulation.

My solution was to design the curriculum based on ideas from the content and communicative puddles (for example, I started the first two months using only the “I” and “you” verb forms and then added another subject as needed for the experiences I had designed) while at the same time making sure that the students would have the tools necessary for passing their placement test (for example, I went through a number of first year books and most of the verbs and vocabulary). Thus, in the terms I am using today, I worked from the content and communicative puddles and, in the last month, I helped them jump into the grammar puddle. We put what they already knew in the form of verb charts and fill in the blank exercises, thereby providing them with the boots they needed to jump from one puddle to another. They all passed the place-

ment test and were able to go into and have considerable success in Spanish II.

This experience has influenced my thinking about articulation in significant ways. Based on the existent literature, the main solutions that have been proposed are more effective communication between and among different levels and languages, and the development of a common framework for teaching languages. As I have argued, these solutions have not been effective. However, inherent within them are seeds of possibility, which raise as many questions as they answer.

I do not believe it is realistic to think that all teachers will teach from the same configuration of puddles. Moreover, I am not sure it would be desirable. I think having differing *informed* perspectives is useful. Discussions such as these create a worthwhile synergy that would be too easy to avoid if we were to use a common framework. Moreover, historical forces are too strong and too well embedded. Still, I do not capitulate to the thinking that we should continue to do what we are doing because that is what we have always done.

We need to focus on the learners, and prepare them to puddlejump. That is, all students should be able to function in each of the three areas. Within the field, we must seek to understand the three puddles along with their inherent complexities and prepare students to be able to function in the grammar, communicative, and content/conceptual puddles. This ability would serve as their metaphorical boots. As teachers, we need to design courses that contain all three elements, foregrounding and backgrounding different puddles based on our informed judgments.

The process of foregrounding and backgrounding could be implemented in different ways; two possibilities from potentially many are presented here. Teachers could prepare students for the placement tests, which is a sequential model of foregrounding and backgrounding, as illustrated above. That is, students spent time exclusively in the content and communicative puddle and then, in the last month, learned about the grammatical puddle. Alternatively, the process could happen dynamically, as classes are taught over time. Either way, it would mean understanding and being able to work within each of the areas as we design the courses we teach. (It would also effectively change the role of the textbook.)

I have suggested that, as a field, our approach to articulation has not been effective. It is time to think creatively of other possibilities to address this daunting issue. In the past we have asked our students to jump from one puddle to the other without having the appropriate boots. In order to provide them with the appropriate boots, we will all have to examine, understand, and (re)consider both our approaches and the implementation of our teaching. This is a tall order. But the fact that we, as teachers, care deeply about our students and about the field, provides us with a powerful foundation from which to work.

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# Reviews



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Edited by Thomas S. Conner, St. Norbert College

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The Northeast Conference makes available in its *Review* evaluations of both products and opportunities of interest to foreign language educators. These evaluations are written by language professionals at all levels, and representing all languages. The opinions presented by reviewers and by respondents (publishers, tour operators, webmasters, association leaders, etc.) are their own and in no way reflect approval or disapproval by the Northeast Conference.

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  - Reference materials
  - Other
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**Walz, Joel C., ed. *Development and Supervision of Teaching Assistants in Foreign Languages: AAUSC Issues in Language Program Direction, A Series of Annual Volumes.***

**Boston: Thomson and Heinle, 1992. ISBN 0-8384-5124-1.**

**Rifkin, Benjamin, ed. *Mentoring Foreign Language Teaching Assistants, Lecturers, and Adjunct Faculty: AAUSC Issues in Language Program Direction, A Series of Annual Volumes.***

**Boston: Heinle and Heinle/Thomson Learning, 2000. ISBN 0-8344-1686-1.**

The American Association of University Supervisors and Coordinators of Language Programs (AAUSC, <http://www.aausc.org>) has existed since 1980. It was created to serve as the professional organization for a diverse clientele: those who are in charge of post-secondary language programs (especially beginning and intermediate language), those who direct and train (foreign) language teaching assistants, and those who teach methodology to those planning to teach on the post-secondary level. This is a disparate group of teaching professionals whose positions vary enormously from institution to institution. The AAUSC holds sessions at ACTFL (the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign



Languages) every year, as well as occasional sessions at other major national language teaching conferences, has a newsletter and a new mentor program and, since 1990, has published an annual volume of useful research articles for the language program director. Two of these volumes are under review here; both deal with the issue of how to develop, supervise, and mentor new and/or temporary teaching staff, whether they are graduate student teaching assistants, adjunct faculty, or more permanent part-time faculty. Although these two volumes might seem of little use to elementary or secondary school faculty, many of the issues raised and discussed in them apply to the training and mentoring of all new faculty, no matter their level; they certainly provide a useful overview of the training done at the post-secondary level.

The first volume under review, edited by Joel C. Walz, is divided into three sections. The first section, on teaching assistant development programs, begins with two possible model programs presented by Katherine Kulick and Julia Herschensohn and finishes with a discussion by Benjamin Rifkin on how less-commonly taught languages involve issues and problems in TA development that may not occur in more commonly taught languages. Kulick's chapter is interesting because she discusses how undergraduates (not graduate students) were used at her institution to buttress regular undergraduate language instructors. She describes many factors concerning their use, as well as recruitment, legal issues, and evaluation. She shows clearly how more advanced undergraduate language students can be used appropriately in the teaching of beginning undergraduate language students. Herschensohn's chapter gives a summary and overview that all post-secondary language program directors should read to ensure that their own training of foreign language teaching assistants is done well. Rifkin does an excellent job of pointing out how LCTLs (Less Commonly Taught Languages) suffer from a lack of appropriate TA development and resources, and he proposes a variety of solutions for the problems he raises, some of which involve professional organizations. He also discusses important theories that should be considered in LCT (his usage) TA training.

The second section of the Walz volume has two chapters dealing with the methods course. Marva Barnett and Francis Cook argue very strongly that all graduate teaching assistants need to take a course in teacher training and professional development. They outline what they have done at their institution, giving a very useful overview and salient details of their course, "Theories and Methods of Scholarship." Keith Mason goes "beyond the methods course" in designing a graduate seminar in foreign language program direction. In a sense he is proposing a course to train future members of AAUSC in a professional manner.

In the third and final section a variety of authors consider specific aspects of TA development and supervision. Charles James presents tools that will help TAs remember to incorporate changes in language pedagogy into their classes. Mary Wilder-Bassett seeks to ease TA anxieties and concerns through the use of logs that encourage reflection, discussion, and interaction between teaching assistants and their supervisors. Nadine O'Connor Di Vito emphasizes the need for teaching assistants to use and promote native speech and oral fluency in their classes. She points out that oral structures are often much less difficult than written ones

and wants TAs to teach them a lot more often to promote communication in the classroom. She also wants TAs to “look behind” communicative textbook activities to understand their communicative purpose. Cynthia Fox proposes a “revised model of TA training” that highlights the importance of linguistic training, especially training that incorporates better linguistic understanding of the language the TAs are teaching. She and Di Vito are well paired in this section. Madeline Cottenet-Hage, John E. Joseph, and Pierre Verdagner cover very different ground by insisting that TAs should be trained in the culture associated with the language they teach. This very interesting chapter highlights culture vs. Culture, native vs. non-native perspectives on the target culture being taught, and the diversity of culture and cultures. Finally, Robert Terry discusses the challenge of “inter-rater reliability.” This challenge is observed when instructors in multi-section courses diverge in their assessment of student performance and have difficulty agreeing on standards of assessment. Terry suggests holistic scoring of work using rubrics and metrics that are quite detailed and deserve to be used much more often than they have been up to now.

*Mentoring Foreign Language Teaching Assistants, Lectures, and Adjunct Faculty*, edited by the same Benjamin Rifkin who contributed to *Development and Supervision*, goes beyond the specific problem of developing and supervising foreign language teaching assistants and considers other types of new and/or temporary faculty while focusing on mentoring, instead of supervision. Rifkin begins the volume with a thorough and interesting introduction that summarizes the chapters and puts them into context. Unlike the first volume considered here, this volume is not organized into thematic sections. Instead, every chapter is independent of the others. Rifkin’s introduction helps the reader see how the volume is a whole as well as a series of parts.

Jay Siskin and James Davis provide the first chapter, which discusses the history of mentoring and then looks at its use in foreign language departments. They provide an excellent framework for the volume as a whole. Elizabeth Guthrie then discusses more specific aspects of mentoring foreign language teaching assistants, again considering recent history. She favors revision and extension of the course work normally required of graduate teaching assistants and advocates helping students see how research and scholarship are part of these courses and course work as well.

Elizabeth Bernhardt addresses a very different topic: mentoring and training experienced teachers who may not be willing to adapt to new ideas and settings. One of her suggestions is to teach these teachers second language acquisition research to help give them a new context for their teaching praxis. Betty Lou Leaver and Rebecca Oxford focus on “style” in their chapter on mentoring language teachers, which for them is a “host of characteristics that comprise a person’s individuality” (57). This excellent chapter provides a fairly exhaustive list of ways a mentor can vary her or his mentoring to become something of a “chameleon.” It addresses cognitive, sensory, and personality factors, all in some detail. Sangeeta Dhawan in the next chapter focuses on reflection. She uses an action research and portfolio log approach that privileges teacher reflection and discovery in the class described in the chapter. Cynthia Chalupa and Anne Lair

next introduce issues and problems associated with “international” teaching assistants, using a survey of international foreign language teaching assistants from their institution. They point out that linguistic deficiencies (at least for foreign language TAs) are not as important as cultural and policy misunderstandings. They then detail the type of workshops and mentoring they believe international TAs need.

In the next chapter John Klapper provides a reflective approach for training graduate teachers and FL teaching assistants in universities in the United Kingdom. This interesting chapter presents the only non-U.S. viewpoint in either of the two volumes reviewed. The DOPLA (Development of Postgraduate and Language Assistant) program he discusses contains a number of rubrics for facilitating the reflective process as well as for contextualizing it. These rubrics are quite useful, and his first appendix, on how to deal with small group teaching problems, deserves to be reprinted and given to all teachers who use this modality. Richard Robin discusses the difficulties of working with lecturers and part-time faculty, using his test case of Russian in Washington, DC. In a survey of DC Russian university students he discovers that, for the most part, part-timers are considered as effective teachers as full-timers. However, he does point out that using part-timers instead of full-timers involves programmatic and administrative problems. While wishing that budgets allowed for tenure-track full-timers, he proposes that part-timers be considered for “regularized” positions that would provide health care and continuity even if at a lower salary level than tenure-track faculty. The final chapter, by Patricia Chaput, addresses a number of disparate questions and problems. She looks at what language teachers need to know in order to be successful; she considers the question of whether native speakers are or are not as effective as well-trained non-native speakers; and she presents an interview model that privileges the type of knowledge her successful teachers (at various levels) need. She has definitely “raised expectations for instructor preparation.”

In summary, these two volumes on supervising, developing, and mentoring teaching assistants, lecturers, and other new post-secondary faculty present a very useful series of chapters that explore a full range of topics. Although some chapters are more general in terms of topics considered and content — making them more useful to a larger number of readers — the diversity of positions held by those directly involved with this type of post-secondary faculty guarantees that every chapter will have its fans. Both of the volumes under review here are highly recommended to anyone involved in training new post-secondary faculty but also deserve to be considered by teachers training elementary and secondary faculty and providing professional development workshops for them.

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## Teichert, Herman and Lovette. *Allerlei zum Lesen*.

**Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2005. 2nd edition. Includes: Text, In-Text Audio CD, Website. ISBN 0-618-50349-8. \$51.96.**

*Allerlei zum Lesen* is a reader designed to engage students at the intermediate level: third- and fourth-semester college students, or third- and fourth-year high school students. The text contains 18 unedited stories by authors from Germany, Austria, and Switzerland. (The table of contents can be found on the publisher's Website.) The themes and styles are diverse and compelling; although there is one fairy tale from the Grimms' collection, most of the pieces are by twentieth-century and contemporary writers. The editors have selected stories with a range of themes, including encounters with the uncanny, racial stereotyping, historical social codes, and contemporary alienation and isolation, as well as different ways to overcome problems in society.

The stories are all relatively short, and each chapter provides additional information and activities to enhance the students' ability to understand, interpret, and respond to the respective work in a meaningful way. The second edition has five new stories and a different Grimms' fairy tale. Each chapter begins with a short biography of the author (in English), usually with some background material that gestures at possible interpretations of the story (autobiographical connections to the characters, for example). An *Aktiver Wortschatz* follows, divided logically into nouns, verbs, and other words and expressions (including the meaning of idiomatic expressions). The pre-reading activities are particularly useful: the vocabulary is reinforced with a variety of exercises, including matched meanings and synonyms, fill-in-the-blanks exercises, crossword puzzles, and related-word activities. Sections entitled *Vor dem Lesen* further prepare students for the story to come by having them observe and discuss a series of images pertinent to the content. These illustrations, by Carlos Castellanos, are strong, clear, and occasionally humorous visuals that appeal aesthetically to the reader of comics or graphic novels. This and other similar activities help students anticipate the content and activate the vocabulary needed for discussion. At the back of the book, students will find a list of the principal parts of strong verbs and a helpful German-English vocabulary.

The text is accompanied by an In-Text Audio CD, which adds a listening-comprehension component to the reading exercises. This feature, with stories read in a well-paced, expressive way, is an especially effective method of enhancing reading ability in intermediate-level students. (I base this observation on my evaluation of the cassette provided with the first edition, not on the current CD version.) Students are encouraged to read through a short series of content-based questions in the new *Zum Hören* section to help focus their listening — to listen actively. The stories are relatively short; students can reread them easily. All the stories have additional glossed words and phrases (dialect variations, for example) in the margins to supplement the active vocabulary. The text does not have a dedicated Website, but the maps and transparencies available online at the publisher's Website are helpful.

Each chapter concludes with a variety of post-reading exercises. These include questions about the reading, discussion topics that can be prepared in pairs or small groups, a writing exercise (often a summary of the story), personal questions that position the students in the appropriate context, possible interpretations, and role play derived from the experiences of the characters. The activities progress from the most basic level of understanding plot elements and details to the ability to interpret the story in both personal and more far-reaching ways; I should add that the stories gradually become more and more complex. The questions regarding interpretation are fairly straightforward, based on speculation about authorial intention, the psychology of the characters, and an evaluation of social and moral codes represented in each work studied. Some stories presuppose a degree of familiarity with German history and cultural history that many American students simply do not have at this level, and instructors may want to anticipate such moments (in the Günter Grass biography, for example, *Gruppe 47*, which warrants further explanation). Such additional information need not distract from the story, though, nor delay the reading activities included.

The stories for the most part are challenging and accessible, and I warmly welcome any text that facilitates the act of reading fiction in the target language. The editors observe that the text can be used over one or two semesters. I can imagine implementing such a reader in an intermediate class to complement a main grammar text with readings from a variety of nonfictional genres. Students do not always share a standard for what a “universal” human condition may mean, and often they relate more readily to texts about contemporary issues that are part of their life experience. Fiction is rarely a primary source of information about the world. In that sense, I find that some stories in this reader can err on the side of the ambitious; but again, at such a juncture, the instructor can help contextualize them and their themes. The stories challenge students to broaden their horizons through reading, and this goal is a worthy one, as I am sure we would all agree. Students will pursue their own local interests online and find texts of all kinds, from song lyrics and newspaper articles to stories and readings, but cannot always comprehend them immediately without assistance. It is for this reason that the pre- and post-reading exercises are so useful. In general, *Allerlei zum Lesen* is a great tool for enhancing reading skills at the intermediate level.

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Montana State University  
Bozeman, MT

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## **Motyl-Mudretzkyi, Irene and Michaela Späinghaus. *Anders gedacht*. 1st edition.**

**Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2005. ISBN 0-168-25983. Accompanied by a Workbook (*Arbeitsheft*) and audio CD.**

After years of working with the same texts at the intermediate level, I was very excited to discover *Anders gedacht*. At first glance, authors Motyl-Mudretzkyi and

Späinghaus not only seemed to offer a more complex analysis of topics relevant to the German-speaking world but also had designed challenging and innovative exercises and integrated technologically-advanced teaching tools. For years I had been frustrated with how much additional information and material I needed to provide because books at the intermediate level were not thematically current, their selection of audio-visual components was limited or repetitive, and their choice of activities did not make use of available technology. Apparently, this text solved some of the problems I faced, and I hoped it would give me the opportunity to enrich my classes.

I have used *Anders gedacht* in two very different classes at two different universities, resulting in two vastly different experiences. At the first university, I was a guest lecturer during the fall semester and was assigned *Anders gedacht* to teach an accelerated intermediate course, which meant that I had to teach the entire book during the first ten weeks of the semester. I then decided to introduce the book in my other courses at the university where I now teach on a permanent basis. Being in charge of syllabi design for German language at all levels, I adopted *Anders gedacht* for intermediate German (201, 202, and 203). Now, at one institution, I had to “jam” all the material into ten weeks, whereas at the other I could teach the material over 3 quarters, i.e., thirty weeks. Needless to say, I believe that both of these teaching scenarios were rather different from anything the authors had in mind when they designed the text. Most likely, the text was designed for two semesters in order that all the material could be covered at a normal pace.

*Anders gedacht* has a white cover with a colorful abstract picture in the center which leaves the reader wondering what it means. The title of the book, *Anders gedacht* (roughly the equivalent of “to think differently”), evokes a similar reaction and signals a different paradigmatic approach to foreign language pedagogy. However, it is not clear whether the authors imply the utilization of a different learning and teaching method or whether their focus is on the introduction of another type of topic analysis. In their introduction, however, the authors quickly come to the point and offer a short overview of their methodological approach. Their explanations do not surprise because, like most of their peers, these authors employ a student-centered, user-friendly approach that they try to balance with “intellectually stimulating content” and entertaining exercises to practice language skills.

Motyl-Mudretzkyi and Späinghaus have divided their book into ten units. Among other topics, they cover art, literature, and recent history. Some of these themes seem to be “rehashed,” such as traveling, the environment, Nazi Germany, and immigration policy. Although this assertion might be true, to some extent, it also demonstrates the importance of these very same topics in German-speaking countries. Moreover, the authors approach these topics in a new and innovative manner that one does not encounter in most other intermediate books. Many of the units are dedicated to the topic of Germany’s *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* (which means reflection and dealing with Germany’s Nazi past). For example, Unit Seven explicitly deals with this particular subject matter, and the authors provide excerpts from film, pictures, and poetry to engage the students in discussions. Students are asked to research the contextual background and to use their



interpretive powers to understand the material presented. Like number seven, many of the units make use of different tools such as interviews, literary texts, paintings, photos, poems, films, and the Internet. This variety provides change, lessens the danger of monotony in the learning process, and familiarizes the student with various tools for interpreting and analyzing these subjects. More so than with other books, the students become independent and creative actors in the learning process because the exercises challenge them to expand their knowledge beyond what is presented and to be creative participants (i.e., by writing poems or designing presentations).

It is also worth mentioning that this book draws attention to the culture of other German-speaking countries, unlike many intermediate-level texts. However, as much as I applaud this undertaking, I would have preferred a different layout, and I believe that each German-speaking country deserved an entire unit that discussed topics important to understanding their rich cultures. The authors dedicate Unit Nine to German, Austrian, and Swiss history. It is not quite clear what they intended here because they do not use the same timeline for all the countries. While I prepared this unit and later, during class, the question arose as to whether the emphasis was on history or gender issues and how the countries covered in this unit were connected. Why was gender equality worth discussing in relation to Switzerland but not to Germany? The authors might consider improving this chapter in future editions to clarify the link between German-speaking countries, or they might simply state that this chapter is not related to the others.

The units not only provide rich material that facilitates interesting discussion but also offer a variety of tasks to practice listening and writing skills, to expand vocabulary, and to review important grammar structures. The book limits the number of these exercises, but the workbook, on the other hand, offers many activities and explanations that thoroughly review grammatical themes and enhance vocabulary and writing skills. In addition, the authors supply an audio CD with songs, speeches, etc. relating to the main text. This tool is designed to be used both in and outside the classroom.

Overall, the use of the book was a success for me. In my accelerated course, I quickly had to learn to prioritize which topics were most interesting to students and to allow myself “to cut some corners” because I knew that I could not make use of all the material available in this book. I was fortunate that the university where I taught the accelerated course was technologically well-equipped and that I was able to integrate the Internet and other media to enhance student involvement and output. In my 201 course, I was much more challenged because I lacked the technology to use the book and the material as they were intended. I had neither the necessary audio/visual equipment nor Internet access in my classroom, which often meant that I could not show clips of movies or “connect.” Although the students still had plenty of material to work with, my lesson plans in this course were different from what I had hoped they would be. In addition, my students were frustrated because we were not able to use everything the book had to offer. When I cut something in my accelerated class, I found myself spending too much time on other units, which resulted in losing my students’ cooperation and attention. In the future, I intend to teach this book in two quarters in order to maintain a quicker pace.

*Anders gedacht* is a worthy addition to the intermediate curriculum and is highly recommended, especially in a technologically well-equipped teaching and learning environment. It has great potential to be a most effective aid in the enrichment and enhancement of work by students and teachers alike.

Simone Schlichting-Artur  
Director of Modern Languages and Senior Lecturer of German  
Drexel University  
Philadelphia, PA

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**Dai Zovi, Lonnie. French adaptation by Virginia Zeuli. *Cantiques, Rythmes, et Rimes: Chants, Rhythms and Rhymes for the French Classroom*. CD and Workbook.**

Albuquerque, NM: Vibrante Press, 1991 (Renewed 2005). CD: 30 songs. Workbook: 65 pp. ISBN 0-935391-98-4. Price: \$30.50 U.S. (plus 10% shipping and handling). For orders and information, please contact the publisher: Vibrante Press, P.O. Box 51853, Albuquerque, NM 87181-1853. Tel: (505) 298-4793. Fax: (505) 323-0049. E-mail: [Lonnie@vibrante.com](mailto:Lonnie@vibrante.com). Website: <http://www.vibrante.com>.

The foundation of *Cantiques, Rythmes, et Rimes: Chants, Rhythms and Rhymes for the French Classroom* is the use of musical rhymes to help teach vocabulary and grammar, as well as to improve general fluency in and out of the French classroom. The pedagogical technique of using rhymes is not a novelty. For years, poets have written rhymed verses that enable audiences to remember them better. Moreover, foreign language students have always benefited from mnemonic devices (e.g., Dr. and Mrs. Vandertrapp) as a way to recall important grammatical rules.

*Cantiques, Rythmes, et Rimes* is published by Vibrante Press, a teacher-authored and teacher-operated press. Its creator, Lonnie Dai Zovi, started writing when her own child was in her pre-school Spanish class, which inspired her to find more creative and effective means to teach foreign language. It should be noted that professional artists and musicians form an integral part of the unique team of Vibrante Press.

However, what distinguishes *Cantiques, Rythmes, et Rimes* from other musically-based programs for the French classroom is its usage of “funky” instruments (e.g., accordion, fiddle, washboard, spoons, shakers, triangle, banjo, bongos, conga drums, rattles, marimbas, bass guitar, and corrugated steel vest — derived from the washboard and used in Zydeco music), coupled with culturally authentic rhythms, such as Cajun, Haitian Rara, Zydeco, and Zouk. Therefore, *Cantiques, Rythmes et Rimes* not only taps into the varied multiple intelligences and different learning styles of students, but also incorporates the National Standards for Foreign Language Learning, specifically Cultures, Connections, and Comparisons.



The chants, rhythms, and rhymes are geared toward grades five through twelve but are ear-catching enough that other listeners will enjoy them as well. They are of four types: thematic, grammatical, general, and traditional. The thematic chants, rhythms, and rhymes are based on a vocabulary theme, such as weather, house, and family. The grammatical ones center on a structure whose difficulty is made easier through rhythm and repetition. The general ones are a mix (both thematic and grammatical). The traditional ones, not authored by Vibrante Press, are taken from the Francophone world, and chosen for their wide appeal and suitability for the French classroom. As the traditional ones are not musical, they have not been recorded on the accompanying CD.

*Cantiques, Rythmes, et Rimes* workbook's table of contents lists twenty chants, rhythms, and rhymes, along with their thematic and/or grammatical emphasis. Following the table of contents is a section with suggested activities, including a detailed paragraph on each chant, rhythm, and rhyme. The workbook provides a full transcription of each chant, rhythm, and rhyme, followed by "Pour écouter et écrire," an activity that the authors suggest may be used in one of two ways: prior to listening, so that students can try to guess what may be in the blanks, or as an active listening exercise, making it, in part, a musical dictation. The majority of the chants, rhythms, and rhymes have follow-up exercises. The author strongly recommends that the exercises be completed in class instead of as homework because many of them lead to group or partner work. A brief yet intriguing section on the origins of Cajun, Haitian, and Zydeco music, and the instruments used in each type of music, is provided at the end of the workbook. Finally, also included on the CD are the chants, rhythms, and rhymes recorded without the words (ten additional tracks), making it possible for teachers and students to make up their own original versions.

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### ***Publisher's Response***

*Cantiques, Rythmes, et Rimes: Chants, Rhythms and Rhymes for the French Classroom* was written at the urgent request of French teachers who taught in a classroom to a colleague in Spanish. They heard the other teachers using *Cantos, Ritmos y Rimas*, which we had produced a few years earlier, and saw how successful it was with students of Spanish. The French teachers wanted their students to feel excited, too. We didn't know if writing the French adaptation would be popular, but our experience suggests otherwise. We decided to also adapt the Chants, Rhythms and Rhymes series in German, Italian, ESL, and even Arabic. (We say "adapt" because as language teachers we know that we cannot effectively just translate songs if we want to take into account proper meter, rhyme, rhythm and cultural contexts. Plus, different languages have different areas that need stressing or reinforcing.) Producing these lively chants has been hard work, but very fun and exciting. I am constantly learning more about musical styles and different cultural instruments of the many countries. After producing the *Cantiques*, I went to New Orleans and bought a washboard vest and even took Cajun danc-

ing lessons! I love hearing the many stories from teachers who tell me how their students have come to love and excel in their language of choice because of these songs! I hope the stories never stop.

Lonnie Dai Zovi, author

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## **Traynor, Karen et al. *Carnaval de Québec: The Adventure*. DVD and Workbook.**

**Hamilton, ON: Tralco Educational Services Inc., 2005. DVD: 22 segments. Workbook: 60 pp. ISBN 1-55409-161-6. Price: \$36.95 U.S. (plus 10% shipping and handling). For orders and information please contact the publisher: Tralco-Lingo Fun, 3909 Witmer Rd., #856, Niagara Falls, NY 14305. Tel: (905) 575-5717. Fax: (905) 575-1783. Toll-Free Tel: (888) 487-2526. Toll-Free Fax: (866) 487-2527. E-mail: sales@tralco.com. Website: <http://www.tralco.com>.**

Having previously reviewed Tralco's *Carnaval de Québec: Video and Activity Package* (*French Review*, February 2003), I was eager to examine *Carnaval de Québec: The Adventure*, which is advertised as a complement. The most obvious difference between the two productions is that the latter is hosted by the young and charismatic Sandy Fortier, whereas the former has a voice-over narrator, who is never visually present. Fortier's presence is most engaging: witness the sheer delight on her face; during *Rafting sur neige* viewers' eyes will be glued to their screen as they watch her speed down the slope. Add to that the fact that her spoken French is easy to understand and non-intimidating.

Also new is that the DVD includes both French and English language versions, as well as extra scenes (extended coverage of the conversation with *Bonhomme Carnaval*, a conversation with Jean Pelletier, the General Director of the *Carnaval*, and ordering a little something to munch on: how about something exotic, like beaver tail!). Moreover, in response to teachers' requests, the DVD can be played in French with French subtitles — a superb pedagogical technique since the language acquisition process is greatly enhanced when students can listen simultaneously to native French and, at the same time, read a transcription of the text. Potential adopters of *The Adventure* should note that the workbook and VHS video (should they prefer video to DVD) are both available in French and English.

*The Adventure* is composed of twenty-two scenes: *Introduction*, *Arrivée*, *Jean Pelletier*, *Sculpture sur neige*, *Tour de glace*, *Concours d'agilité canine*, *Pourvoirie de Bonhomme*, *Hôtel de Glace*, *Cabane à sucre*, *Queues de castor*, *Patinage*, *Défilé de nuit*, *Bal de Bonhomme*, *Vieux-Québec*, *Petit déjeuner*, *Promenade en carriole*, *Familles*, *Bain de neige*, *Rafting sur neige*, *Palais de glace*, *Bonhomme*, and *Départ de Bonhomme*. Unique to *The Adventure* is an interview with *Bonhomme* (lo and behold, he speaks!), the tour of the hotel made entirely of ice (the water is highly purified so as to give a glass-like appearance) where magical weddings are held in its chapel and overnight guests use mummy-shaped sleeping bags, and the interview with the snow bathers (yes, they actually wear only their bathing suits as they bury themselves in real snow).

*The Adventure's* accompanying workbook contains a complete transcript of the entire film, a teacher's guide (*Pour le professeur*), and a detailed introduction to the Quebec Carnival (which is in addition to Fortier's presentation in the film). The workbook is divided into six sections: *Scènes 1-7*, *Scènes 8-10*, *Scènes 11-17*, *Scènes 18-22*, *Tout ensemble*, and *Corrigé*. The four "scenes" sections are all composed of the following: *Vocabulaire*, *Regardez et écoutez bien!*, *Avez-vous bien regardé?*, *J'utilise le vocabulaire*, and *Activités*. The workbook activities range from imaginative drawings to short written compositions. For example, in the *Scènes 11-17* activity section, students are asked: "Dessinez un char allégorique qui représente votre école, votre ville, votre pays ou vos intérêts. Si vous voulez, organisez les dessins en défilé!" For the written component of this same section, students are asked questions, such as: "Êtes-vous historien? Choisissez un des noms suivants et expliquez l'importance de ce personnage dans l'histoire du Québec: Jacques Cartier, Samuel de Champlain, Frontenac, Wolfe et Montcalm, Jeanne Mance, Marguerite Bourgeoys, Marie-Joseph Corriveau, René Lévesque." The *Tout ensemble* section, a comprehensive review section, is made up of *Vrai ou faux*, *Mots croisés 1*, *Mots croisés 2*, and *Activités*.

*The Adventure* is a superb accompaniment to Tralco's original *Carnaval de Québec* video, and I recommend it strongly. Both productions are timeless and provide something for everyone.

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### ***Publisher's Response***

Thank you for your positive review; the response from students has been great.

Effective January 1, 2007, the price will be \$39.95 for the DVD/book packet, which includes both English and French versions, as well as a lot of "extras."

A sneak preview of the video is available at [www.tralco.com](http://www.tralco.com) or [www.lingo.com](http://www.lingo.com)

Karen Traynor  
Tralco-Lingo Fun  
[www.tralco.com](http://www.tralco.com)

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## **Xueying Wang, Li-chuang Chi, and Liping Feng. *Chinese Odyssey: Innovative Chinese Courseware, Volume 1.***

**Boston: Cheng & Tsui Company, Inc., 2005. Includes: Multimedia CD-ROM set, Textbook, Workbook, and 5 Audio CDs. ISBN 0-88727-457-9.**

*Chinese Odyssey: Innovative Chinese Courseware* is a set of impressive, self-explanatory, "innovative multimedia language courseware." It has both simplified

and traditional choices — the CD-ROM conveniently caters to both options. Students can choose the version they desire simply by clicking on the button at the beginning of the program. However, the textbook does not include both versions: therefore, students must purchase either a simplified or a traditional-version textbook. The courseware consists of six volumes designed to cover a period of three years (e.g., first year with Volumes 1 and 2, second year with Volumes 3 and 4, etc.). The volume reviewed here is Volume 1, which targets beginners with no prior knowledge of Chinese. Since I primarily teach second- and third-year Chinese, I will approach this volume from a more general perspective (its overall organization and the practicality of the courseware).

There are a total of ten lessons in Volume 1, and each revolves around practical topics such as greeting people, talking about family and work, entertaining guests, and interacting with friends. The *kewen*, or main text, is presented in the form of a dialogue, which is very practical; students can easily apply the dialogue to real situations and learn common colloquial Mandarin. The level of difficulty increases as the lesson progresses. All language skills — listening, speaking, reading, writing, and grammar — are equally stressed. Toward the end of each chapter, discussion questions and a short essay are assigned.

The CD-ROM is the backbone of the courseware. It contains five sections: text, phonetics, vocabulary, grammar, and exercises. All of these are highly interactive. The main text, with the new vocabulary highlighted in a different color, is juxtaposed with a short video clip that illustrates the text in a real-life situation. The explanation of grammar is detailed and easy to understand. Every grammar point is presented in a slide-like page with examples provided for practice. The homework comprises textbook exercises and workbook exercises. It involves pronunciation practice, listening, reading, and other activities such as question and answer, word selection, and paraphrasing. In the homework assignments, students can record their voice to see if their pronunciation or intonation matches the correct answer. These assignments do a great job of forcing students to work with tones right from the beginning so as to make them an essential part of their linguistic knowledge. The listening sections and translation exercises provide students with additional practice. Beginning with Lesson 4, there are additional sections on writing email. Students are asked to email each other in Chinese. Doing so will help them learn how to type in *pinyin* and make them feel comfortable with electronic communication.

The workbook is a very good supplement to the main text, even though I don't think it is necessary to use it if one is using the CD-ROM. The workbook includes exercises, such as pronunciation drills, dictation, stroke order practice, radical recognition, listening comprehension, and filling in the blanks.

Though this is a great textbook for self-instruction, the instructor might have to reflect on at least two issues: one is related to technology, and the other to the instructor's own role. In order for students to use a CD-ROM in class, the classroom will need laptops for each student. Since the CD-ROM is included in this course set, students will no longer be required to go to a language lab so long as they have a computer at home. They can do their homework, practice language drills, and watch a video clip wherever they want. After they finish an exercise,

they can print out the score report, which provides information on their score and how much time they spent on each lesson. With its highly self-sufficient nature, this text inevitably requires the teacher to redefine or to rethink his or her role in the age of multimedia. If I were to use these materials, I would need to incorporate traditional classroom learning that emphasizes human contact and interaction among students and with their teacher.

*Chinese Odyssey's* testing software claims that its tests are modeled on the *Hanyu Shuiping Kaoshi* (HSK), and I think that they are correct in assuming that it will help students planning to study abroad or work in China to prepare for the exam. In summary, I am most impressed with this set of multimedia language courseware.

Chia-ju Chang  
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### ***Publisher's Response***

We are very grateful for the thoroughness with which Professor Chang reviewed *Chinese Odyssey* and we are pleased to get a positive assessment of the series.

We appreciate the reviewer's having identified the key pedagogical goals of *Chinese Odyssey*, which include: a focus on accurate pronunciation, realistic situations that the student can relate to, the incorporation of email writing exercises to build character recognition and remove anxiety about writing, modeling of dialogues through video clips, and an interactive multimedia component with a large selection of activities and exercises that will prepare students for HSK and AP testing formats.

We would like to emphasize that the series gives teachers great flexibility — both for traditional classrooms and for technology-based ones. For example, teachers who do not wish to incorporate the multimedia component into their classroom teaching can use the print textbooks and workbooks with audio CDs to teach in a more traditional way. Students can utilize the multimedia software at home or in a computer lab to complete homework assignments or to get extra practice learning proper pronunciation and reviewing the texts and vocabulary, thus allowing teachers more in-class time to interact with their students. Site licenses are available, so schools can install the software in a language lab for students' convenience.

In summary, schools at any level of technological capacity can benefit from *Chinese Odyssey*, whether it is by letting students use laptops in the classroom to complete the multimedia activities, or by utilizing the CD-ROMs for practice outside of class, thus freeing up class time for communicative activities. The multimedia component is an excellent self-learning tool that lets students practice their language skills independently, so teachers can spend more time in meaningful interaction with their students.

Cheng & Tsui is proud to add this innovative multimedia Chinese courseware to our many bestselling Chinese and Asian language textbooks. We seek to under-

stand what students and teachers need so that we can publish the best quality materials. We welcome questions and recommendations from everyone; please send feedback to editor@cheng-tsui.com.

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**Valdés, Guadalupe, Trisha Dvorak, Hannum Pagán, and Thomasina Angelelli. *Composición: Proceso y síntesis, cuarta edición.***

**Boston: McGraw-Hill, 2004. Includes workbook, CD-ROM. ISBN 0-07-281889-1.**

*Composición: Proceso y síntesis, cuarta edición* is a text designed to improve the writing skills of students of Spanish. Nonetheless, although it is written in Spanish, the skills and techniques provided in the main text are not language-specific and are easily transferable to writing in any language. *Composición: Proceso y síntesis* is based on the process approach to writing, understanding that writing is not simply an end product but rather a process, and that this process is not linear but interactive and cyclical, consisting of many starts, stops, and revisions. The text is composed of two key components: the main text and a workbook, the *Cuaderno de práctica*. Although this reviewer did not have access to the workbook, the introduction to the main text explains that it contains exercises and answers for additional practice of language, structure, and grammar skills.

Some additions made to the fourth edition of the text are in response to an ongoing interest in developing “purposeful language skills,” as well as feedback about prior editions and in keeping with the National Standards for the generation, interpretation, and presentation of ideas in a language other than one’s own. These additions include new readings and exercises, an auxiliary component called *Rincón del escritor*, which is a Website that provides numerous examples of different writing techniques and tools for both the student and the professor — some previously included in the text — such as a bibliography of activities, strategies, and research related to composition pedagogy, as well as links to Internet glossaries, dictionaries, and other sites with content in Spanish. Moreover, this edition includes an excellent writing software CD-ROM created in conjunction with *Ultralingua* called *Sin falta*, geared specifically for improving writing skills in Spanish. It consists of an easy-to-use word processor and text editor, language reference tools and a spell checker, and tools for assisting in pluralizing words and conjugating verbs. Instructors familiar with the text will notice other notable changes to its organization. In preparing this edition, the authors assume that students have some familiarity with the process approach to writing and, therefore, have removed the principles of this approach from the first two chapters (where they appeared in previous editions) and grouped them into a preliminary chapter that can be covered at the instructor’s discretion.

The content of *Composición: Proceso y síntesis* is divided into six chapters covering four different modes of academic writing: description, narration, exposition, and argumentation. Furthermore, each chapter highlights a logical grammatical structure that is common to the form of writing presented therein.



Chapter one, for example, which deals with descriptive writing, highlights the differences between *ser* and *estar*. Chapter two, dealing with narration, studies the differences between the preterit and imperfect. Chapters three and four look at the principles of expository writing, first dealing with the analysis and classification of this type of writing, and, second, explaining how to organize the exposition of ideas by meeting the criteria of comparing and contrasting or presenting cause and effect. In terms of grammar focus, these chapters highlight the passive voice of *ser* and the uses of the subjunctive, respectively. Lastly, chapters five and six turn to argumentation. Whereas chapter five lays the foundation for argumentative writing by differentiating between the purpose and form of expository writing and argumentation, chapter six presents the principles of argumentative writing applied to literary analysis. The grammatical points studied in these two chapters are, respectively, the use of relative pronouns and of non-personal forms of verbs, such as infinitives, gerunds, and participles.

The overall structure of each chapter guides students through the process approach to writing proposed by the text. The organization is logical and progressive in that each chapter builds on techniques and grammar points presented in previous chapters. To facilitate understanding of the process, each stage is presented with concise explanations and examples. An *Orientación* section opens each chapter, familiarizing students with the conventions of the writing mode considered and includes at least one model and an analysis of its organization and style. Following the initial overview, the chapters are divided into three main stages, or *etapas*. The first stage, titled *Antes de redactar*, focuses on the pre-writing or brainstorming stage, providing several techniques for generating ideas. The second stage, *La redacción y la revisión de las versiones preliminares*, deals with the process of converting those ideas into drafts and formulating plans of revision, and, lastly, *La revisión de la forma y la preparación de la versión final*, the third *etapa*, emphasizes the post-writing stages of proofreading and peer-editing.

Although *Composición: Proceso y síntesis* is intended for college students of Spanish in advanced composition courses, it also could be used as a supplemental text for intermediate- to advanced-level composition courses as well. Although I have not implemented *Composición* as a main text, I have found many of the strategies for pre-writing and editing useful, such as the semantic map and the control list, a type of editorial checklist modified for each writing style. The explanations of the conventions of each mode of writing, their commonalities and differences, are clearly presented and easy to understand. Additionally, although the text includes a wide variety of readings, the activities and exercises can be easily adapted to other texts an instructor may wish to use instead of those provided. In addition to the helpful ancillary components, the organization of the text, its thoroughness, and its user-friendly approach make *Composición: Proceso y síntesis* an excellent option for an intermediate- or advanced-level Spanish composition course, whether used as the main text or as a secondary resource.

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### ***Publisher's Response***

We are delighted to respond to Professor Collins' favorable review of the fourth edition of *Composición: Proceso y síntesis*. This Spanish composition text has been the preferred choice among many instructors, and it is especially gratifying that Professor Collins has appropriately noted the numerous changes in the Fourth Edition that keep the materials fresh and relevant for today's students and professors.

In addition to some key changes in organizational structure and content that Professor Collins has highlighted, we are particularly pleased that she has commented on the new and exciting media support available with this edition, including a Website and *Sin falta* writing software, the latter developed in partnership with Ultralingua, Inc. (As an aside, this writing software is also available independently of the textbook and can be packaged with any McGraw-Hill Spanish textbook.) Both of these components facilitate and enrich the learning and teaching experience. Even in today's technology-rich environment it is relatively rare to include media supplements for textbooks for upper division courses, and we are delighted to offer both of these important resources as part of the *Composición* program of materials.

We thank Professor Collins for her comprehensive description of *Composición* and for her thoughtful comments. McGraw-Hill World Languages is delighted to publish this important composition textbook and include it among our many Spanish titles.

William R. Glass, Ph.D.  
McGraw-Hill

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### ***Langlois, Steven. Educorock Español's Rockin' and Hip Hoppin' in Spanish: An Interactive CD-ROM.***

Atlanta, GA: World of Reading, Ltd., 2005. \$20.00 plus shipping and handling. PC requirements: Pentium II or faster Intel processor, Windows 98/NT 4.0+/XP or higher; Mac requirements are OSX, G5 or higher. Both systems require 32 MB of RAM (64 MB recommended), 256-color (8-bit) display adapter (24-bit recommended), CD-ROM drive, sound card, and Macromedia Flash Player. For orders and information on Langlois's interactive CD-ROM and his other products, please contact: Cindy S. Tracy, World of Reading, Ltd., P.O. Box 13092, Atlanta, GA 30324-0092. Toll free: 1-800-729-3703. Fax: (404) 237-5511. E-mail: polyglot@wor.com. Website: <http://www.wor.com>.

Since first meeting Steven Langlois, known to his fans as Étienne, at the 81st Annual Meeting of the New York State Association of Foreign Language Teachers (NYS AFLT) in Kiamesha, NY, in 1998, I have been a huge fan of his music and his teaching methodologies. His music, available for French, Spanish, and ESL classes, is aimed at teaching the tough-to-teach grammar points in the musical styles that



students love. Not being able to sing well myself, I had always been afraid to ask my students to sing in class (stemming from my theory that if I am uncomfortable doing something, how could I expect my students to be comfortable). However, Langlois convinced me to try his music by stating that I didn't have to sing; I simply had to press "play" on the boom box, and he would be there to help me. To this day, I continue to be very happy that I listened to him because whenever I use his music in class, my students unanimously give the activity a thumbs-up. If you have seen Langlois in action or have viewed his music video, you know how well students respond to his rap, reggae, hip-hop, classic rock, and club dance songs.

Now, for the first time ever, Langlois and World of Reading, Ltd. have made four of his Spanish songs from his *Educorock Español* CD available on an interactive animated CD-ROM. Each of the four songs available on *Educorock Español's Rockin' and Hip Hoppin' in Spanish: An Interactive CD-ROM*, "El Cuerpo," "En la Granja," "La Sala de Clase," and "Los Colores," focus on a different thematic unit. This was purposefully done so that FLES teachers or teachers of exploratory classes are able to use all the songs, even if the class is a beginning class dealing with vocabulary and is not yet teaching grammatical structures. "El Cuerpo" is a club dance song that teaches students the body parts as they respond to commands in a "Simon Says" manner (e.g., "toca las piernas"). "En la Granja" is a rap song that concentrates on farm animals and their corresponding sounds while giving some attention to *-ar* verbs. "La Sala de Clase" is another rap song whereby students acquire classroom vocabulary and prepositions (always a difficult concept to teach in any language because of the high number of irregularities). "Los Colores" is a familiar hip-hop tune that covers the ten basic colors (e.g. *rosa, naranja, amarillo, morado, negro, blanco, verde, rojo, azul, and moreno*), and its refrain is the classic tune "London Bridge is Falling Down."

If you already use Langlois's *Educorock Español* CD and accompanying resource manual, *Educorock Español's Rockin' and Hip Hoppin' in Spanish: An Interactive CD-ROM* is the perfect complement. However, if you don't use Langlois's *Educorock Español* CD and resource manual, there is no need to worry as *Educorock Español's Rockin' and Hip Hoppin' in Spanish: An Interactive CD-ROM* is an excellent stand-alone product because the four songs selected hit common vocabulary topics for a beginning Spanish class and because there are two printable activities for each song — a crossword puzzle and a fill-in-the-blank exercise. Most importantly, students will become so quickly and easily engaged in using the CD-ROM that their Spanish language acquisition skills are bound to explode. A highly illustrative example of the tremendous impact that Langlois's music has on students is the fact that the animations for *Educorock Español's Rockin' and Hip Hoppin' in Spanish: An Interactive CD-ROM* were done by Ryan Schoen, an extremely gifted high school student from Pennsylvania. Schoen was so motivated by Langlois's music that he created an animation for "El Cuerpo" as his independent study project for Spanish I and then sent it to Langlois as a sign of his admiration. The rest is history: a professionally edited CD-ROM of Schoen's animations coupled with the creative genius of Langlois's music.

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## Mitschke, Cherie, Cheryl Tano, and Valérie Thiers-Thiam. *Espaces. Rendez-vous avec le monde francophone.*

**Boston: Vista Higher Education, 2007. Includes: text, workbook/video manual, lab manual, audio CD, video CD-ROM, and a Website (*supersite*): [www.espaces.vhlcentral.com](http://www.espaces.vhlcentral.com). Supplementary materials for teachers include an Instructor's Annotated edition, video on DVD, Instructor's Resource CD-ROM, Testing Program, overhead transparencies, and self-correcting exercises, grade book, and other teacher tools. ISBN 1-59334-833-9.**

Following the success of their programs in Spanish, Vista Higher Learning has undertaken their first French text, for beginners at the college level. *Espaces* contains an attractive, well-integrated textbook accompanied by numerous ancillary materials. All chapters follow a similar pattern, organized around sections carrying the generic name *espace*. For example, *Espace Contextes* lists vocabulary in a meaningful context, with entertaining illustrations. *Mise en pratique*, on the same page, immediately reinforces the words just taught. Graded phonetic practice follows, with explanations in English and practice in French. *Espace Roman-photo* highlights some clips from the video and includes the written text. *Espace Culture* gives some background on the topic of the lesson, along with a *portrait*. Beginning with Unit 2, these are in French. *Espace Structures* explains the grammar in English, with clear color-coded charts and examples in French. The exercises are on the same page as the grammar, for immediate practice. *Le français vivant* illustrates these points with authentic materials on the facing page, such as posters or ads. A *synthèse* concludes with three multimedia activities, *Projet*, *Interlude*, and *Le zapping*, with materials on the Website. Finally, *Espace Savoir-faire* has two parts: *Panorama*, which addresses systematically a section of the Francophone world, and *Lecture*. A listening exercise and a writing exercise complete the lesson.

The video that accompanies the text uses native speakers in authentic situations, such as the university, a café, and a supermarket. The story consists of different episodes in the lives of several young people in Aix-en-Provence. They represent various parts of the Francophone world, but also include one American student. Their adventures are amusing and typical of teenagers and young adults. Although the story is entertaining, its plot may not be engaging enough to hold the students in suspense for the next episode. It does, however, address the structure and the topics of the lesson well. The actors speak slowly and distinctly. While this is comforting to the beginner, who always complains that they speak too quickly, it is not typical of ordinary conversation. Students can, however, watch the video on the video CD-ROM, or on the Web. They can repeat as often

as necessary and see the French text or an English translation. For the motivated learner, this is a great advantage.

The Workbook materials, available in paper or on the Website, are copious, with a section for written responses and a lab manual. Only the most diligent students could use all of them. The spoken materials are clearly articulated, and well paced. The student has the opportunity to repeat as often as necessary. Written and oral exercises, both in the workbook (or Website), and in the textbook, use a communicative approach. Directions are usually clear, although some exercises seem overly complex. In the textbook exercise on page 89, for example, three people briefly describe themselves, one after the other, without a pause, and students must mark *vrai ou faux* for ten statements, which mix all three people. This is only Lesson Six!

The text is divided into 15 *unités*, with each *unité* consisting of two lessons. They address the topics normally found in beginning texts, in an acceptable sequence. Unless a class meets four or five times a week, it would be almost impossible to cover the entire book in one year. The authors suggest three semesters. Teachers with three-credit courses might need four semesters to cover the material in any meaningful way.

The authors of the text are familiar with the ACTFL proficiency guidelines and the Standards. The targeted standard is marked in the text. Paired and small-group exercises focus on interpersonal communication. The reading and listening sections address interpretive communication, each with its own pre- and post-activities. The exercises incorporate appropriate techniques such as skimming and scanning. The final lessons present attractive literary selections.

The program explores all of France and the Francophone world, a rather ambitious undertaking, given the large number of countries encompassed. It uses good maps and illustrations and contains useful information about the regions or countries. The Website builds on the text. Four short readings explore topics typical of the region or of great interest to the student. The source of these materials is not indicated. One would hope that they are from authentic documents. Some are obviously from Websites, such as the *Ecole de Français de Lille* on pages 68-69.

Although this program focuses strongly on culture, there are some notable omissions. There is almost no mention of the important religious monuments and feasts, nor of the cultural perspectives that grow out of a religious heritage. Very few of the prominent historical figures appear on the pages of the text. In the chapters on food, the cafés sell tea, coffee, and soft drinks, but not wine. Professors who are conscious of “political correctness” will find the choices very attractive, and those who wish to supplement can always do so. On the other hand, the environment, health issues, sports, and artworks are well developed. Each video segment also contains a *Flash Culture*, totally in French after Unit 8.

This text is very much oriented to young people. It features people from their world, such as singers and sports figures, who may not remain as popular in the near future. In the video, the mother of an 18-year-old *lycéen* runs a small café. She and her employee are the only adults. Since many universities also enroll

adult students, this might hinder an instructor from choosing the program, which is on the whole very promising. *Espaces* should motivate and inspire students, and provide useful materials to the teacher.

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## **Underwood, John H. *Hablando de cine: Conversación avanzada.***

**New York: McGraw- Hill, 2003. ISBN 0-07-253507-5.**

*Hablando de cine: Conversación avanzada* is intended to stimulate conversation among advanced students of Spanish and to introduce them to Spanish and Latin-American cinema. The text is based entirely on films in Spanish. The films selected aim to give the student new insights into Spanish-language cinema and Hispanic culture, all within a conversational framework.

*Hablando de cine* has a textbook/workbook format. Lessons typically are eight to twelve pages long and include pictures in black and white of directors and actors. Several chapters also feature a small map or picture of the area where the film takes place.

### **The Films**

The reviewer has not seen all of the films selected. However, after reading excerpts, as well as going over the various exercises, the reviewer has concluded that all films selected must have considerable artistic merit and showcase a variety of themes and cultural issues. All films are in Spanish with the exception of *The Mission*.

Most of the films are readily available in VHS or DVD through video distributors online or video rental stores with a good selection of foreign films. Films selected seem suitable for classroom use but sometimes can be controversial; on the other hand, this should stimulate conversation. Because the films chosen are treated independently, the instructor may select only films appropriate to the class in which they are to be used, as well as decide on the order in which to show them.

*Avance*, a preliminary chapter consisting of short readings and a variety of exercises, introduces cinematic concepts and provides background on the history of Spanish and Hispanic cinema. It also contains instructions for preparing classroom debates and film critiques.

The text can be divided into four thematic units, each presenting three or four films. Themes covered include:

#### *La traición:*

These are films in which the plot deals with the consequences of lying or betrayal.

- *La historia oficial*. Argentina, 1983.
- *Tristana*. Spain, 1970.
- *Carmen*. Spain, 1983.

*El destino:*

These films have a foreboding of doom, suggesting actions carried out in a manner governed by fate.

- *El nido*. Spain, 1980.
- *Los amantes del círculo polar*. Spain, 1998.
- *The Mission*. United States, 1986. The only one of selected films which is in English.

*La mujer independiente:*

The films in this unit look at women who have coped with extraordinary circumstances but still maintained their integrity.

- *Camila*. Argentina, 1984.
- *Como agua para chocolate*. Mexico, 1992.
- *De eso no se habla*. Argentina, 1994.
- *Mujeres al borde de un ataque de nervios*. Spain, 1998.

*La amistad y la familia:*

Films in this category examine unusual forms of friendship and the relationships among friendship, love, and family.

- *Fresa y chocolate*. Cuba, 1993.
- *Con ganas de triunfar*. United States, 1988. Dubbed in Spanish from the original film *Stand and Deliver*. United States, 1987.
- *El abuelo*. Spain, 1998.

At the end of the text there are two appendixes: *Apéndice* and *Vocabulario de cine*. The latter contains a 68-word Spanish-English glossary of basic cinematographic terms, divided into three sections:

1. Vocabulary related to the making of a film: *La creación de la película*
2. Vocabulary related to description of the movie: *Descripción de la película*
3. Vocabulary related to the movie theater: *En el cine*

There is also an exercise that pairs terms from the glossary with definitions or cinematic situations. The *Apéndice / Otras películas de interés* is an alphabetical listing of other important Spanish-language films with a brief synopsis. This synopsis helps students or instructors select additional films they may wish to

view. Each synopsis also includes the name of the director of the film, the country where the film was produced, and the number of viewing minutes.

There are two main sections in each chapter: *Antes de ver la película* contains a short reading; this section helps students understand the film. *Después de ver la película* section offers exercises, as well as comprehension or post-viewing activities that focus on specific sections or parts of each film.

The section *Antes de ver la película* has five parts:

#### *El ambiente cultural*

This basically is a brief reading outlining the historical and cultural background of the story.

#### *La trama*

In this section the student finds a plot summary that offers an outline of the story, but without giving away crucial information.

#### *Hablando del tema*

There are floating question boxes that appear among the preliminary notes. The boxes contain a single question that aims to encourage students to reflect on what they have read, to relate it to what they already know about the subject or to their own experience, and to predict what might be expected from the plot or cultural situations described. This is a good exercise to be done in pairs or small groups of students, who then share results with the rest of the class.

#### *Para pensar*

The questions in this section are general and address crosscultural or social issues raised by the film and related to students' personal experience. These questions lend themselves to small group exploration, which could be followed by whole class discussion.

#### *Predicción*

Before viewing the film, students are asked to write a small paragraph or a few sentences, expressing how they think the story will turn out.

The section *Después de ver la película* has three parts:

#### *Las escenas*

This section prompts analysis and discussion of important scenes. The questions help students better understand what is taking place in each film and address specific parts of it. *Las escenas* also includes a vocabulary list. Each list is based on the spoken dialogues and includes words related to visual elements in the scenes. The vocabulary list aims to help students understand what they have seen and heard and to teach words useful for class discussion.

#### *Interpretación*

The questions in this section require students to reflect, analyze, and draw upon their personal experience. These questions usually involve motive.

## Actividades

This part provides structure for the last day of discussion of the film. It has two types of activities. One is a paper-and-pencil exercise to help students recall various parts of the film; it lends itself nicely to group activities. The other activity is a debate, a panel discussion, or a role play of significant scenes.

## General Comments

- The idea of using film in a conversation class is a good one because film, as a medium, takes us to different times in history and shows a variety of cultural perspectives. However, because this text concentrates on film exclusively, it should not be used as the only source in a conversation class. Discussion of current issues as well as materials such as books, newspapers, magazines, television programs, music, online research, and other topics of interest to students, also can be valuable tools in a conversation class.
- The films selected date from 1970 to 1998. Both the selected films, as well as the list of other films, needs to be periodically updated.
- Out of the thirteen films chosen, three are from Argentina, one is from Cuba, one is from Mexico, six are from Spain, and two are from the United States. In the Spanish-speaking world, Argentina, Cuba, Mexico, and Spain probably have the best and longest history in film making; in the English-speaking world, it is the United States. However, films from other Spanish-speaking countries should be included as well to provide greater cultural variety.
- The author states that the films selected are readily available online or at video stores with substantial foreign holdings. Many times it is not easy to obtain foreign films. A suggestion would be to include a DVD or VHS package with the book, which would include some of the films selected.
- On page 37, the name of director Carlos Saura is misspelled as Carlos Suara.
- On pages 114 and 117, the word *bordelo* is used. The *Diccionario de la Lengua Española, vigésima primera edición*,<sup>1</sup> does not recognize *bordelo* as a word in the Spanish language. The word to be used is: *burdel, m.*, defined as “a house of ill repute.” The *Diccionario de la Lengua Española* is the recognized authority on Spanish words and their usage.

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## Publisher's Response

It is with pleasure that we respond to Professor Jerez's review of *Hablando de cine: Conversación avanzada*. As Professor Jerez notes, this book serves to

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<sup>1</sup> Real Academia Española. *Diccionario de la Lengua Española, vigésima primera edición*. Madrid: Editorial Espasa Calpe, S.A., 1996.



engage advanced students of Spanish in conversation through a discussion of film. Simultaneously, students gain new insights into the richness of Hispanic cultures. Of course, as mentioned by Professor Jerez, not all conversation courses are developed exclusively around film, and thus it is left to the discretion of instructors to determine what other resources and materials they might want to bring into their course, based on curricular goals.

In her review, Professor Jerez has provided a comprehensive description of *Hablando de cine*, including an overview of the organizational structure and a listing of the films that are presented for discussion. Additionally, she has commented on the special features that facilitate learning and comprehension, as well as on the activities that promote conversation. We thank her for sharing these detailed comments. We also thank her for bringing to our attention the linguistic infelicities that she noticed. Through such observation we are able to improve our materials.

We very much appreciate Professor Jerez's comments and thank her for taking the time to provide the readership of *The NECTFL Review* with her review. McGraw-Hill World Languages is delighted to publish this exciting textbook and include it among our many titles.

William R. Glass, Ph.D.  
McGraw-Hill

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## **Bernabe, Marc. *Japanese in MangaLand 2. Basic to Intermediate Level*. Trans. Olinda Cordukes.**

**Tokyo: Japan Publications Trading Co., Ltd., 2005. ISBN: 4-88996-186-0. Pp. 208. \$21. Website: [www.nipoweb.com/eng](http://www.nipoweb.com/eng). Contact information: Kodansha America, Inc., 575 Lexington Ave., NY, NY 10002. Phone: 917/322-6200; Fax: 212/935-6929; for additional information contact Hector DeJean at [hdjean@kodanshaamerica.com](mailto:hdjean@kodanshaamerica.com).**

In the first decade of the twenty-first century, Japanese language courses are growing in popularity in America, but for quite unexpected reasons. Back in the early 1990s, when many American colleges and universities, partly out of fear and partly out of self-preservation, giddy from surfing on the first waves of globalization, created programs in Japanese, the expectation was that students would be interested in learning Japanese because Japan was an economic powerhouse and Japanese would be a vital skill in an ever more competitive job market. Well, that perception sure changed! Before anyone could say “ohayoo-gozaimasu” (“good morning”), the Japanese economic “bubble” burst, and American students, especially business students, whose interest in the language was more pragmatic than anything else, were discovering that Japanese, in fact, was a difficult language to learn (aren't they all, if you really want to learn to *use* a language?) and retreated to the relative safety of “bus law” and “stats.” By contrast, students today, increasingly, come to the Japanese language by way of popular culture, in particular



*manga*<sup>2</sup> and *anime*, and enroll in a Japanese language course to learn more about their favorite comic characters more than anything else and then gradually, as if by accident, discover another, deeper level of Japanese culture. The growth of Japanese in the U.S. has been accompanied by the publication of many new and sometimes quite innovative texts and programs, among them the text under review here. Also, in the 2006-2007 academic year, the Advanced Placement test program will implement a test in Japanese for the first time.

*Japanese in MangaLand 2* is the second in a projected series of three volumes. The author, professional translator and interpreter Marc Bernabe, a native of Barcelona, Spain, and a graduate of Kyoto University, set out to create a self-instructional text using *manga*, which probably is misleading because his text, in fact, does not rely heavily on *manga*. There are few authentic illustrations in this text, because, unfortunately, most *manga* panels have been altered and redesigned for obvious copyright reasons (8). Rather, Bernabe uses linguistic and cultural topics typically found in *manga* to teach Japanese to foreigners. What is original in this approach is not so much the material covered, which is quite traditional in terms of grammar topics and the order in which they are presented, as the concept of using *manga* to teach everyday conversational Japanese.

Volume 2 is targeted to those students who have an understanding of basic Japanese, and it picks up where volume 1 left off, with chapter 31 (the volitive form). Unlike volume 1, it does not include any *Romaji* at all: from now on every single word of Japanese will be in “real” Japanese: Hiragana, Katakana, Kanji. In his preface, Bernabe warns the prospective student to “strap a headband with the rising sun on around your head, just like the Karate Kid did, because you are about to enter the world of hardcore study” (6). Playtime is over, and students now have to buckle down and do some serious studying in order not only to survive in Japan but also to acquire a more sophisticated appreciation of the culture.

Volume 2 contains 15 lessons altogether, numbered from 31 to 45, following the numeration of the first volume. All 15 of these lessons are “grammatical;” however, 11 are also “conversational” and cultural. Grammar topics are presented in a very different way than in traditional textbooks, in what the author calls “condensed patterns” (7), i.e., according to specific subjects presented in a functional mode, and include: the volitive form, Can and Must, interrogatives and the future, the *-te* form, particles, suppositions and conjectures, transitive and intransitive verbs, Give and Receive. Topics are presented in a format that lends itself to pattern practice; surprisingly, however, there are hardly any exercises. More interesting, in my opinion, are the eleven “conversational” chapters, most of

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<sup>2</sup> The term “*manga*” literally means “spontaneous and meaningless drawings” (8), and is used in Japan to refer to comic books and cartoon strips. In the rest of the world, however, it is synonymous with Japanese comic books, which, believe it or not, make up a whopping 38.2% of all the books and magazines published annually in Japan. Moreover, *manga* is not only for children, as some Westerners might think. There are *manga* for just about everyone, from teenagers to businessmen and housewives. And *manga* come in a variety of styles. The heroes of *manga* are not all slender people with huge and shiny eyes, and all *manga* do OD in violent fantasies and science fiction.

which are very cultural in their focus and contain loads of useful material for someone visiting Japan for the first time. Cultural notes in these chapters have titles such as “The Visa,” “At the Airport,” “In the Hotel or *Ryokan*,” “The *Shinkansen*,” and “Shopping.” Each of these chapters teaches the student the bare essentials needed to survive in a given situation and takes a very pragmatic or practical approach. For example, first the guest makes a reservation at a hotel or *ryokan*, then checks in, inquires about available services, has dinner, goes to bed, and finally checks out the next morning. Students also receive practical advice on Japanese customs such as the wearing of slippers, taking a Japanese style bath or *onsen*, and enjoying a traditional meal.

The *manga* excerpts illustrate the grammar presented by providing succinct examples from popular culture. In other words, *manga* becomes a didactic tool, which is a novel approach in the American classroom. Panels from Japanese comic books illustrate the lessons’ grammatical and cultural topics. Not all teachers would see the pedagogical potential in *manga* or *anime*, and the author deserves credit for finding a way in which to appeal to mostly young learners who have been raised on a diet of popular culture. Actually, Marc Bernabe’s *Mangaland* is inspired by an American monthly magazine no longer in print, *Mangajin*. Each issue taught a linguistic subject using *manga* panels as examples. I rather liked it and think that the *manga* examples were more authentic and entertaining than in *MangaLand*, whose format at times strikes me as just a bit fastidious and repetitious.

Each chapter in *MangaLand* is capped by a perfunctory and rather unimaginative section of exercises consisting of conjugation and translation. No doubt this section of the text could be much improved and contain more interactive-type exercises that gave learners more real-life practice. This shortcoming would be easy enough to correct in a future volume, though, or perhaps the student could use the text together with another, more traditional Japanese language text, as a supplement.

Overall, *Japanese in MangaLand* offers a comprehensive, albeit somewhat condensed introduction to Japanese. Learners who are interested in *manga* will be thrilled to discover this text and will, I think, quickly take to this exciting approach to learning Japanese. The text is conceptually imaginative and sets a new standard for language learning. I strongly recommend it as a supplement to an introductory-level Japanese language class. As the author writes: “it brings fresh air to the area of Japanese language teaching” (Vol. 1, p.6).

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### ***Publisher’s Response***

Kodansha Publishing is pleased that Dr. Torimoto recognizes that the *MangaLand* series is an engaging and useful way for students to learn about Japanese culture as well as language. For more exercises connected to the lessons in this series of books, Japan Publications Trading is coming out with a com-

panion workbook series, the first volume of which, *Japanese in MangaLand: Workbook 1*, will be available in November 2006. Furthering the author's intention of helping students learn while having fun, the first workbook will feature 24 pages of original *manga*, in addition to over 150 varied activities building on the lessons of *Japanese in MangaLand*.

Hector DeJean  
Kodansha America  
New York City, NY

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## **Luschnig, Cecilia A.E. *Latin Letters: Reading Roman Correspondence.***

**Focus Classical Commentaries. Illustrated by Dona Black. Newburyport, MA: Focus Publishing, 2006. ISBN 1-585-10198-2. Paperback. 142 + x pages. \$18.95.**

In finding the best approach for an intermediate-level course on Latin prose, the instructor is faced with a plethora of choices. One approach would be to tackle a complete work, such as Cicero's *De Amicitia*. Although this approach is commendable, it also restricts students to work with only one text over a long period of time — in this case a philosophical one, at that — an option which some students may not find terribly appealing. Another option would be to adopt an anthology, which would attempt to use variety to compensate for the lack of unabridged texts. The admirable volume under review here offers yet a third possibility by inviting students to explore the treasures of the Roman epistolary tradition and gain the best of two worlds: variety and depth. A collection of letters drawn from a number of different authors combines the satisfaction of reading an unabridged text on a particular theme with the ability then to move on to other authors and different subjects.

Professor Luschnig provides a selection of approximately 40 letters drawn from different authors, recounting the most varied and unexpected aspects of Roman life. As is to be expected, the correspondence of Cicero and Pliny the Younger form the bulk of the volume, or as Luschnig puts it, "the two hearts of the present collection." This is a good thing, as students can gain an in-depth understanding of these important authors in an engaging context, and listen in on them discussing a range of political, literary, and domestic matters. Pedagogically, this variety can be most helpful, as it allows the instructor to assign texts that can involve students with different interests, perhaps even allowing them to choose a letter whose subject appeals to them. Pliny's letters discuss such well-known topics as the eruption of Vesuvius and government attitudes towards the early Christians, as well as his relationship with his wife, Calpurnia. The student is also given insights into Cicero's personal and domestic relationships, a useful and necessary complement to the self-image he often projects in his political and philosophical writings.

In addition to these important representatives of the Roman epistolary genre, there is a nice selection of many other significant authors. For example, there are samples from the moral epistles of Seneca and letters by the late Roman writer

Ausonius; then, Sidonius Apollinaris helps the student anticipate the evolution of the genre until the very end of the Western empire. In this section, more excerpts from prominent Christian writers, such as Jerome and Augustine, would have been helpful. The examples of letters by Augustus Caesar are valuable because of their inherent interest in showing us the personal and affectionate side of this complex statesman, but also because they demonstrate how letters preserved in state archives were utilized by historians such as Suetonius. The inclusion of women writers, for example, Cornelia, the mother of the Gracchi, and Claudia Severa, adds yet another dimension to this overall fine selection.

Luschnig's critical apparatus helps students without providing too much translation. Thus, there is no glossary in the back of the book. Instead, notes and glosses at the bottom of the page for each letter clarify the meaning of selected words and difficult idiomatic expressions, as well as offering helpful grammatical and historical notes. Students also are encouraged to work out the definition of words on their own, and to begin the salutary process of learning how to use a real Latin dictionary to increase their vocabulary. There are two appendices (30 pages), which provide opportunity for grammatical review, using examples from the letters of Cicero and Pliny the Younger. Topics reviewed include the more complex uses of certain noun cases and pronouns, various subjunctive clauses, gerunds and gerundives, deponent verbs, and compound verbs using prefixes. For each topic Luschnig also refers to Allen and Greenborough's well-known *New Latin Grammar*.

In addition to notes on the individual letters, Professor Luschnig provides an interesting introduction in which she discusses different aspects of the epistolary genre; it includes both the Greek background and the innovations of the Romans. In a section that students should find beneficial and enjoyable, she discusses the physical production of letters and how they were edited, "published," and circulated, as well as how the letters selected here serve as an important source for knowledge of everyday life in ancient Rome. This discussion is brought to life by illustrations of various ancient tools associated with writing. Several other illustrations are found throughout the text. A short section on the formulas of salutation commonly employed in Roman letters is included, as well as numerous suggested topics for research and writing, and a bibliography for further reading and investigation.

I strongly recommend *Latin Letters* for intermediate Latin courses. It would also be useful to graduate students and scholars of patristic, medieval, and Renaissance Latin seeking a solid introduction to that most influential genre, Roman letter writing.

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### ***Publisher's Response***

It is gratifying that this reviewer recognizes everything we sought to accomplish in this intermediate Latin text. The goals of the intermediate course are varied, but

we have sought in this book, *Latin Letters*, as in others, such as *The World of Roman Women*, co-authored by Prof. Luschnig, to provide short but authentic (unedited) readings that respect the student's abilities and interests at this level while providing glimpses into culture and language through the life and thoughts of real people.

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978/462-7288

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## **Jonathan Orr-Stav. *Learn to Write the Hebrew Script: Aleph Through the Looking Glass.***

**New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006. ISBN 0-300-11334-X. \$26.00 (paper).**

Jonathan Orr-Stav's *Learn to Write the Hebrew Script: Aleph Through the Looking Glass* is presented in an easy-to-read format. It offers an historical perspective on the evolution of the Hebrew script by presenting a unique procedure for writing. Orr-Stav's method differs significantly from the more traditional approach of teaching Hebrew as a foreign language, according to which students first learn to read and write only the written language, even though writing Hebrew at first feels awkward.

The introduction, titled "A Guide to the Perplexed," will appeal to the knowledgeable reader who will recognize the name of a famous text by the renowned twelfth-century scholar Moses Maimonides (the Rambam). In this section, Orr-Stav states the objectives of the text, as well as his philosophy of learning. In Part 1, he provides a comprehensive review of the development of Hebrew script throughout history and describes a logical connection between the Hebrew and European alphabets. He explains the term "chirodynamics," "the set of natural inclinations of the hand when writing on paper" (34) as being responsible for similarities between handwriting styles in several different countries. He identifies Modern Hebrew Cursive (*ktav rabut moderni*) as "a form originally developed for quick handwriting and secular purposes i.e. for purposes other than writing Holy Scriptures" (25).

In Part 2, Orr-Stav advocates a 3-step method for practicing the process of writing, using cursive Hebrew handwriting:

- 1) Mirror Writing. Get in the habit of writing backwards. Start practicing by writing English backwards... in reverse from right to left... in lower-case italic letters (a.k.a. Mirror Roman)... without joining the letters;
- 2) Phoneticize the words and drop certain vowels;
- 3) Finally and most importantly, simplify the resulting characters.

In Part 3, Orr-Stav makes the transition from writing Hebrew script to being able to read it. Finally, he provides a comprehensive appendix of words from

other languages that have been adopted into the Hebrew language and are written in direct transliteration. It is this section of his text which he recommends as the most conducive resource for practicing writing and reading Hebrew, since no new vocabulary or language would need to be acquired.

Orr-Stav has made a significant contribution to the origins and history of writing using Hebrew cursive. University students as well as adults will find this text interesting and educational and become motivated to learn how to write in a foreign language. This book can be used as part of a list of resources that provide a foundation for writing in Hebrew. However, this method would probably not be viable for teaching K-16 students to write Hebrew correctly. Although it makes logical links between prior background knowledge, such as the ability to write in one language, say, English, and the acquisition of another language, such as Hebrew, significant time, energy, and patience are required to practice a skill (writing English backwards and in mirror images) that does not immediately apply to the main goal of learning how to write Hebrew.

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## **Sacchi, Fabiana, Silvia Pessoa, and Luis Martín-Cabrera. *Más allá de la pantalla: El mundo hispano a través del cine.***

**Boston: Thomson Heinle, 2006. ISBN:1-4130-1010-5. Includes: *Más allá de la pantalla*, a Book Companion Website for students, featuring links and additional information about the films and their directors (<http://masalla.heinle.com>); Instructor's Website with a password-protected answer key, as well as ideas for expansion of the themes and useful links; Atajo 4.0 CD-ROM Writing Assistant for Spanish.**

*Más allá de la pantalla: El mundo hispano a través del cine* is a welcome addition to the growing list of textbooks that help us to use film to teach language and culture. This intermediate/advanced text is organized according to the principle that language and culture are intertwined and "is predicated on a belief in content-based communicative language learning." Moreover, it was designed specifically to adhere to the National Standards of Communication, Culture, Connections, Comparisons, and Communities; all the activities in the text highlight these five themes.

Many of us realize the importance of film in facilitating language acquisition and providing cultural context. Nonetheless, we may not have the time to locate either readings providing historical context, resources to create pre-viewing activities or comprehension exercises, or post-viewing discussion questions that lead to critical thinking and that make film an integral part of language.



Thankfully, for our students at the advanced and advanced-intermediate level, the authors of this well-designed book perform these important tasks for us.

*Más allá* is divided into four units, each of which presents four different films: (1) “*Memoria y olvido*,” features the films *La lengua de las mariposas* (Spain), *El silencio de Neto* (Guatemala), *La historia oficial* (Argentina), and *La boca del lobo* (Peru); (2) “*Inmigración y exilio*,” gives us *El norte* (Guatemala/USA), *Bread and Roses* (USA/Mexico), *Martín* (Argentina/Spain), and *Las cosas que dejé en la Habana* (Cuba/Spain); (3) “*Las identidades marginalizadas en la historia*,” presents *Camila* (Argentina), *Los olvidados* (Mexico), *Fresa y chocolate* (Cuba), and *Todo sobre mi madre* (Spain); and, finally, (4) “*El mundo hispano en la globalización*,” is based on the films *Johnny cien pesos* (Chile), *Amores perros* (Mexico), *Nueve reinas* (Argentina), and *La comunidad* (Spain). These unit themes reflect important issues also present in novels and essays, as well as in the popular press, and are bound to create lively discussion in the classroom.

The films selected represent different countries where Spanish is spoken in order to provide an exposure to a variety of accents and cultural contexts. Also, films were selected based on availability through such outlets as amazon.com, facets.org, fnac.es, and interlibrary loan.

Each chapter in every thematic unit begins with one or two literary selections to establish what the authors call “*Contextos*”; next, it provides a synopsis of the film and continues with pre-viewing activities that discuss the director, linguistic elements (such as the use of *vosotros* in Spain or *vos* in Argentina), as well as other relevant themes. After students have watched the film — either in class or on their own — the sections called “*La trama*” test comprehension and understanding of the plot in a variety of ways, while the exercises in “*Los personajes*” focus on the psychology and interaction of the characters. The book emphasizes the visual power of film in the section “*Imágenes*,” asking students to recall certain scenes and to reflect on them. For example, when I used the chapter on *Nueve reinas* to test first-semester intermediate students, I asked them to describe how Juan and Marcos dress and to answer the question, “*¿Parecen ladrones? ¿Por qué?*” They were also asked to describe the hotel where Valeria works and to understand how social class is presented visually. Students conclude the comprehension portion by associating fragments of the dialogue with the correct character. What is astounding about this text is that the authors provide such a variety of exercises. In addition to provocative questions and answers, students are asked to take polls, fill in charts and diagrams, do matching exercises, decide which character is “*el más...*,” study maps, learn songs, complete situations, and debate a host of contemporary issues.

Each chapter ends with more advanced exercises in critical thinking and independent research. For example, students who have seen *Nueve reinas* are asked to consider globalization and its effects as they answer questions in the section called “*Analizando la película*.” Students must go back to the section “*Un poco de historia*” for background information and do additional reading on the economic crisis in Argentina to answer such questions as “*¿qué papel jugaron las compañías españolas en la economía argentina de los años 90?*” Relating the

significance of the title to chance and global markets requires in-depth analysis appropriate for our more advanced students.

A section entitled “*Más allá de la pantalla*” concludes every chapter and includes additional exercises that ask students to role-play in “*Tú eres la estrella*,” write about topics such as “*El fin justifica los medios*,” as applied to *Nueve reinas* in “*Tú eres el escritor*,” debate such issues as “*Si fueras Juan, ¿empezarías a estafar en las calles para ayudar a tu padre?*” in the section entitled “*Tú eres el crítico*,” and research topics such as privatization in Argentina during the 1990s in the section “*Tú eres el investigador*.” Some chapters, such as the one on *Todo sobre mi madre*, end with brief synopses of additional films dealing with similar themes.

In our language classes, both at the advanced level in high schools and at the intermediate and advanced-intermediate level in colleges and universities, we have students with a wide variety of interests and a broad spectrum of majors. One of the many benefits of using film, especially with a textbook such as this one, is that there is always something of interest to all students. Film helps them learn Spanish faster and to better understand the Spanish-speaking world.

Users of the text are provided access to the *Más allá de la pantalla* Book Companion Website with links to additional information about the films and their directors, while instructors who use the book are given access to a password-protected site that contains answers to comprehension questions and additional instructional ideas plus helpful links.

The text can also be packaged with the *Atajo 4.0 CD-ROM Writing Assistant for Spanish* with its dictionary, verb charts, audio recordings, and word processing features. The appendices show how to structure film reviews, suggest vocabulary for expressing personal opinion, present the vocabulary necessary to hold a debate, and list a short glossary of cinematographic terms.

After showing the film *Nueve reinas* in my first-semester intermediate class and experimenting with the accompanying exercises, I can say that I truly look forward to using this text in a future course. The broad range of activities makes it most flexible as well, appropriate for use at the intermediate level, in composition and conversation courses, in classes that concentrate on culture, and in more advanced film-based courses. For film classes, though, I would supplement this text with additional readings on film theory.

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### ***Publisher's Response***

I would simply like to thank professor Kiss for her thorough and thoughtful review of the program. We hope it proves as successful for other teachers and students.



This flexible text, ideal for an intermediate to advanced course in Spanish conversation and culture, successfully unites language and culture through the study of film. Rather than relying on vocabulary drills and mechanical exercises, *Más allá de la pantalla* helps students learn Spanish by building on their prior knowledge and using language in a meaningful context.

Helen Alejandra Richardson Jaramillo  
Senior Acquisitions Editor  
Thomson Heinle

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## **Hirsch, Bette G. and Chantal Thompson. *Moments Littéraires. An Anthology for Intermediate French.* 2nd edition.**

**New York: Houghton Mifflin, 2006. ISBN 0-618-52773-7.**

The fourth- or fifth-semester (third-year) college French class marks a transition from the study of language, on the one hand, to the study of literature and civilization, on the other. After digesting the basics of French grammar, undergraduates are exposed to the wonders of French literature, among other things. The challenge for the teacher is to find a suitable text but, surprisingly, this is easier said than done even in this day and age when it seems that the textbook market is saturated with an abundance of titles on every subject under the sun. “Ideological” considerations add to the challenge, making the task all the more daunting for the neophyte instructor: is French literature limited to the canonical texts produced in the *hexagone*, or can it also include now classical texts from the four corners of the Francophone world? Is “literature” to be construed in its proper sense only, or does it, as someone like Peter Schofer or Donald Rice (authors of the anthology *Autour de la Littérature*) might argue, also include, for example, popular literature, fine films, *chansons*, and even commercial ads? The authors of *Moments Littéraires* clearly opt for a more conservative, “great books” approach to the study of literature, believing, as I do, that students should be exposed to the classics first and that this can be accomplished already at the advanced intermediate level.

Length is always a consideration when adopting a new text. Peter Schofer and Donald Rice’s classic introduction to French literature, *Poèmes, Pièces et Prose*, is a massive 725-page text, difficult to get through even in one yearlong course. Since most students’ course schedules today are jam-packed with major and General Studies requirements, which keep on growing, many, if not most, colleges have had to condense their curricula in Modern Foreign Languages and now only offer a one-semester introduction to French literature. This reorganization of the FL curriculum calls for a short and concise introduction to literature text, which, like the anthology under review here, includes all the famous writers but still has enough riches to give the instructor some choice.

I have used *Moments Littéraires* in my fifth-semester introduction to French literature for many years, with a great deal of success, I might add. What I particu-

larly like about the text is its chronological approach, emphasis on easily accessible classical masterpieces spanning all literary genres, and pedagogical apparatus, as well as its inclusion of numerous first-rate women writers from each period. Granted, the text *is* short, a mere 298 pages, including commentary, so what I have done is add various supplementary texts, such as excerpts from *La Chanson de Roland*, a wide range of poems by Christine de Pisan, Ronsard, Hugo, Baudelaire, and Rimbaud, and a play in its entirety, usually Molière's *Le Tartuffe*. Although the selection of texts in *Moments Littéraires* is highly representative of all the various styles of writing that account for the unique flavor and genius (in the ancient sense of the word, meaning "spirit") of French literature, I felt that students would be better served by being exposed in more depth to, say, Molière than to the rather dull (by today's standards, at least) medieval comedy *La Farce du Cuvier*. As it is, it is hard to squeeze all the readings into one single 14-week semester, so instructors will have to pick and choose texts judiciously. Sometimes I develop the historical introduction to each period, depending on whether or not students enrolled in the class also are able to take an Introduction to French Civilization.

*Moments Littéraires* is divided into seven chapters offering significant selections from the Middle Ages, the Renaissance, seventeenth-century Classicism, the Enlightenment, the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and for the first time in the second edition, the Francophone world. The selections in each chapter are both well known and accessible to a contemporary audience of undergraduates. Who said that classical literature has to be stale and boring? The first chapter, dealing with the Middle Ages, includes Marie de France's poem "Lai du Laustic" and excerpts from *La Farce du Cuvier*, both in modern French. Charles d'Orléan's poem "Le Printemps" rounds out the chapter and serves as a nice transition to chapter 2, on the Renaissance. As stated above, I also include excerpts from *The Song of Roland* in this section of the course, since it is a founding text crucial to the construction of a French national identity. The selections from the French Renaissance include all the well-known poems by Ronsard and Du Bellay but also a poem by Louise Labé, "Je vis, je meurs." The instructor can easily add other poems by women writers such as Pernette de Guiller and Marguerite de Navarre. The French seventeenth century truly was a golden age, and there is no shortage of masterpieces worthy of being anthologized. Hirsch and Thompson settled for La Rochefoucauld, an excerpt from Descartes's *Discourse on Method*, a few letters by Madame de Sévigné, several of the most loved fables of La Fontaine, and a lengthy excerpt from *L'École des femmes*. Time permitting, the instructor should feel free to include an entire play, such as *Le Cid*, *L'Avare*, *Le Tartuffe*, or even *Phèdre*. The eighteenth century is represented by writers such as Montesquieu (*Lettres persanes*), Voltaire ("Histoire d'un bon bramin"), Rousseau (*Émile*), and Marivaux (*Le jeu de l'amour et du hasard*). Only the excerpt from Voltaire is questionable: surely *Candide* would have been a better choice? The nineteenth century includes masters of both prose (Balzac, Flaubert, Zola) and poetry (Lamartine, Hugo, Baudelaire, Rimbaud, Verlaine). The selections all are obvious enough and students usually relate well to them, including the fastidious Romantic poem "Le Lac."

The section on the twentieth century still features Camus and Sartre but has been expanded to include lesser known and not yet "classic" authors such as

Jean-Christophe Rufin (?) and Amélie Nothomb (!), as well as a 50-page section on Francophone writers from Africa, the Caribbean, the Maghreb, and Canada. I am not thrilled about some of these selections and am convinced that there are many other more deserving authors.

Each selection is accompanied by a short introduction to the life and work of the author and by comprehension questions and discussion topics that are matter-of-fact but still quite personal in that they always ask the student to relate the text to his or her own life. The appendices include some useful pointers on literary analysis and tropes, but could easily be expanded to include a more rigorous introduction to French versification, for example. However, this is the sort of thing that the individual instructor can amend without too much difficulty.

If you are looking for an introduction to French literature that covers all the bases, you will not be disappointed by this cleverly organized and eminently pedagogical text. In summary, this is a wonderful little book in which a vast range of classical texts (“qui font partie du bagage,” as one of my old professors said of literary anthologies) is handled in a deft and readable way for the enjoyment of undergraduates with no prior exposure to French literature. With few exceptions the texts selected are classic texts which students should find enjoyable and capable of stimulating their interest in French literature.

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## **Samaniego, Fabián A., Nelson Rojas, Maricarmen Ohara, and Francisco X. Alarcón. *Mundo 21*. 3rd Edition.**

**Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 2004. ISBN 0-618-27579-7. Pp. 556.**

The 5 Cs really come alive in *Mundo 21*. This intermediate-level college Spanish text uses a content-based approach to second language learning, providing students with large amounts of comprehensible material presented through authentic readings on a variety of cultural topics. The multi-component course package offers several options for teachers and learners, including a textbook, workbook, laboratory manual, online interactive workbook, audio program, CD-ROM, and video. All components bring Hispanic culture alive, all the while developing learners' language skills.

The main text is organized into six units, subdivided into three or four individual lessons dealing with different parts of the Hispanic world. Each lesson is further divided into sub-sections which include short readings about contemporary cultural icons and selected historical information, as well as information about music, food, sports, politics, and much more. In addition, each lesson contains sections on literature and literary analysis, composition, and grammar.

All the Standards for Foreign Language Learning — Communication, Cultures, Connections, Comparisons, and Communities — are effectively addressed in this outstanding text. The *Communication* goal is achieved through surveys, interviews, and presentations based on the cultural theme of each lesson. Learners are exposed to useful words and phrases that facilitate discussion of the cultural topics presented in the *Mejoremos la comunicación* sections of each chapter, and they are pushed to use the newly acquired phrases in written and oral communication activities. To address the *Comparisons* goal learners also are encouraged to analyze and compare their own cultural ideas with those presented in each lesson. Additionally, because the entire text is based on the 21 major Hispanic cultures of the world (including the United States), students learn about cultural products and practices and are able to relate those products and practices to their own.

The *Connections* goal is addressed through the presentation and analysis of the art, literature, and poetry of the Hispanic world. Each lesson contains a section called *Introducción al análisis literario* in which learners are introduced to literary analysis techniques providing, as promoted in the Introduction to the *Instructor's Annotated Edition*, a bridge between language skills classes and upper-level literature classes. The ability to analyze Spanish literary works has obvious advantages for second language learners, but may also be helpful in other content areas, such as English Literature, History, Anthropology, and even Philosophy.

One of the major advantages of this text is the opportunity for students to learn about the many Hispanic cultures of the world while maintaining a focus on developing fluency in Spanish. The *Estructura* sections present a quick overview of grammatical structures that students should have already been exposed to in previous classes, and the authors expand on those structures by presenting a wider variety of contexts in which they may be used. Generally speaking, the activities in the grammar sections elaborate on the chapter theme. For example, *Unidad 6* presents a reading section that discusses the history of the exploitation of African slaves in South America, and the grammar section presents information about the use of the imperfect subjunctive in Spanish. Students are directed to review the grammar before doing the comprehension activity associated with the reading and then are asked to complete sentences in an exercise consisting of comprehension sentences using a particular grammatical form. In this way, learners not only must show comprehension of the reading, but also must use a specific grammatical structure to complete the task. By contextualizing grammar activities, learners can attend to grammatical form and content at the same time.

Although the text contains ample opportunity for reading, writing, and speaking, its use may be complemented by the Audio Program, the *Cuaderno de actividades* (workbook), and the opportunity to explore related Internet sites through the *Exploremos el ciberespacio* component. The workbook consists of two main sections: *¡A escuchar!* and *¡A explorar!*, which provide listening comprehension activities, pronunciation and spelling practice, and written grammar and vocabulary activities. In general, the activities in the workbook are related to the chap-

ter content; however, several are only loosely associated. For those teachers who believe that additional practice is necessary, this book offers a number of good activities.

The Internet component offers additional information about the chapter content in a well-organized Website. Students can explore various aspects of culture associated with the different Hispanic groups presented in the text. The Website contains *practice tests*, *web links*, *web search activities*, and *flashcards*. The *practice tests* are very short, but allow students to verify their understanding of grammatical structures presented in the text. The *web links* and *web search activities* are outstanding resources for out-of-class research and allow students to find information of personal interest. Finally, the flashcard component may be helpful to students; however, the software is cumbersome and time-consuming to use.

*Mundo 21* delivers! For those instructors who have been looking for a way to bring culture alive in their Spanish language classroom, this book may be the key. The cultural topics in this text are quite appealing and will allow learners to access the Hispanic world through interesting readings and engaging activities. Moreover, it offers a rich variety of cultural content often ignored in the first-year language classroom, and encourages learners to explore the Hispanic world from a multitude of perspectives by investigating a rich realm of fascinating and challenging cultural content.

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## **Long, Sheri Spaine, Maria Carreira, Sylvia Madrigal Velasco, and Kristin Swanson. *Nexos: Introductory Spanish.***

**Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2005. Instructor Tools: Instructor's Annotated Edition, Video, Instructor's Website, Class Prep/Testing CD-ROM, Test Cassette, and online Workbook/Lab Manual. Student Materials: Student Textbook/In-Text Audio CD, Workbook/Lab Manual, Nexos CD-ROM, Audio CD Program, and Student's Website. ISBN 0-618-06798-1.**

The *Nexos: Introductory Spanish* program was developed, with the National Standards and current foreign language methodology in mind, to enable beginning Spanish students at the college level to take full advantage of their first Spanish class and really learn how to speak the language. Not surprisingly, it provides everything teachers and students can ever need for a successful classroom experience. The instructor's materials include an annotated text, a video, an instructor's Website, a class prep/testing CD-ROM, a test cassette, and an online workbook/lab manual. The instructor's CD-ROM even includes sample syllabi and a sample lesson plan. In addition to the textbook and workbook, students

have access to multiple audio CDs, an interactive CD-ROM, and a student Website. These materials provide students with an abundance of oral and written input in many different contexts using multimedia.

The material in this textbook is divided into fourteen chapters organized around a situational syllabus focusing on the four language skills (listening, reading, writing, and speaking). The opening page of each chapter states its communicative and cultural goals, informing instructors and students of the objectives targeted in each chapter. Each chapter is sub-divided into seven different components: *Comunicación, ¡Imagínate! Vocabulario Útil, ¡Prepárate! Gramática Útil, Cultura, A Ver, A Leer, A Escribir*. Each of these components includes various output activities that promote paired and small group work, and are likely to provide students with multiple opportunities to communicate in the target language.

The viewing, reading, and writing sections are organized to help students develop their interpretive and presentational skills. There are pre- and post-viewing, reading, and writing activities, and strategies for each one. In addition, some activities encourage paired or small group work to develop interpersonal skills. Comprehension tasks begin with top-down processing in early chapters and move to bottom-up processing in later ones. Even when the strategy for a chapter is detail-oriented, the student is still reminded to focus first on the main idea.

The various ancillaries of the *Nexos* package reinforce the strengths of the textbook. The story in the video revolves around six Spanish-speaking university students in Costa Rica, and presents all vocabulary and grammar in context. The language used in the video is paced for beginning Spanish students, and the segments are adapted to the chapter topics. The video segments and the scripts are available on the Multimedia CD-ROM as well. This approach gives students the opportunity to view the video segments on their own time and read along while they listen. This CD-ROM also offers vocabulary games, art, listening activities, and other activities to help the students become familiar with the new material. When they play these games, for example, they receive immediate feedback from the CD-ROM.

The *Workbook/Lab Manual* works in tandem with the textbook and provides abundant practice activities that range from structured to open-ended. The *Lab Manual* is made up of a seven-CD audio program that features native speakers and includes activities at the word-, sentence-, and connected-discourse levels.

The online workbook is another way that students can complete activities on their own and receive immediate feedback. The Website provides even more opportunities for students to work at their own pace with search activities, practice tests, and cultural activities. There are even flashcards for those who need more basic practice. If students still feel that they need additional help, they have access to an online tutoring Website, where they can chat with a live tutor during specific hours each day.

Although the *Nexos* textbook package meets the established expectations of colleges and universities, we noticed several items of concern. Some vocabulary presentations are confusing, because too many vocabulary images and labels



overlap. Also, there are some images that promote negative stereotypes and could be insulting to some (see, for instance, the drawings used to introduce adjectives on page 41). In addition, the majority of the vocabulary presentations are in the form of bilingual lists, which do not foster direct binding.

The textbook activities in the *Nexos* program can also use some improvement. Even though the vocabulary and grammar tasks provided are very communicative, they do not always include input activities for the students to internalize new material. Also, in most cases, students are asked to complete sentence- or discourse-level output tasks immediately after the presentation of new vocabulary or a new grammar structure. This teaching sequence is not pedagogically sound and therefore should be revisited in future editions of this textbook.

It is evident that the materials in *Nexos* were carefully created to present language instruction with a communicative approach and to implement the National Standards for foreign language instruction. The instructor will find this text a valuable source to use due to its helpful tips that guide him/her on how to make the most of each chapter as well as pointing out which standards are covered throughout. Also, the modern topics, online resources, and humor could be a motivating force for the students. Overall, this textbook and its ancillaries provide valuable resources for experiencing language learning with meaning-bearing activities and dialogues.

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## **Dees, David B. *Quick Spanish for Emergency Responders.***

**New York: McGraw-Hill, 2006. ISBN 0-07-146019-5.**

The pocket-size reference book *Quick Spanish for Emergency Responders* represents an invaluable resource for emergency personnel who need to effectively communicate in Spanish in situations where time is limited and understanding and being understood are crucial. Although the book is targeted for use by firefighters, paramedics, and EMTs, it could be of great use to hospital and emergency room staff, as well as to search-and-rescue teams. A careful review of the book also shows its potential as an essential survival reference for travelers visiting a Spanish-speaking country. The book is organized into six concise chapters, each containing basic vocabulary followed by a more specialized list of terms frequently used in emergencies. The vocabulary is then put into context in an extremely useful collection of commands and key terms used in a typical scenario calling for an emergency responder. General culture and survival tips are then integrated into a comprehensive mini-dictionary of commands, key questions, and statements. Although sections are organized according to a natural pro-



gression, easy cross-reference is provided throughout to allow similar situations and communication terms to be effectively linked together. An interesting feature found throughout the book is the introduction of idiomatic expressions and the use of a warning flag (represented by a little face derived from the Spanish word ¡ojo!, “look carefully!” or “watch out!”), pointing out tricky points where a literal translation does not work.

The guide presents everyday colloquial Latin-American Spanish (typically spoken in Central American countries and Mexico), shying away from academic terminology and complex grammatical descriptions, thereby succeeding in providing a practical and efficient tool of communication. The distinctive characteristic of this text (and a strong selling point) is its clear organization. In fact, the guide takes a step-by-step approach, following the template of a how-to manual. Emergency response personnel are usually trained using procedural manuals to guarantee efficiency and safety; therefore, a similarly organized communication guide will be more accessible, more comprehensible, and ultimately more useful in real-life situations. *Quick Spanish for Emergency Responders* is an effective guide to basic Spanish which has been specifically designed to quickly overcome the language barrier without pretending to be a traditional language text, emphasizing conversation rather than formal writing, thereby opening a window on the reality of everyday language rarely found in more conventional textbooks.

Overall, I would rate *Quick Spanish for Emergency Responders* as a practical, innovative, and extremely versatile tool. Without hesitation, I would recommend the guide to be used as a training tool, as well as a “safety/communication belt” during everyday operations by emergency response personnel.

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## **Lafford, Barbara A. and Rafael Salaberry, eds. *Spanish Second Language Acquisition: State of the Science.***

Washington, D.C.: Georgetown UP, 2003. Pp. 332. ISBN 0-87840-907-6.

*Spanish Second Language Acquisition: State of the Science* provides the reader with an excellent overview of current research on Spanish second language acquisition (SLA). The first six chapters of the volume review several recently published important products promoting Spanish SLA, discussing such topics as phonology, tense/aspect, subjunctive, clitics, lexicon, and pragmatics/discourse. The next three chapters investigate the processes involved in SLA from three distinct theoretical perspectives: generative, cognitive, and sociocultural. The final chapter examines the effect of different instructional approaches on the SLA process.

In Chapter 1, Elliot provides an overview of the research on second language (L2) phonological acquisition. The author begins with a review of important learner variables associated with the acquisition of L2 pronunciation and then examines several theories that explain Spanish L2 phonological acquisition. He concludes with a discussion of the effect of formal instruction on L2 pronunciation.

Montrul and Salaberry investigate the acquisition of Spanish tense-aspect in Chapter 2. After a brief discussion of the complexities of the preterite/imperfect contrast in Spanish for native speakers of English, the authors summarize several studies on the development of past tense verb forms in Spanish.

Collentine's Chapter 3 reviews the research on the acquisition of the subjunctive. The author begins with an analysis of important studies on the development of the subjunctive in first-language and bilingual contexts. He then examines the factors that affect the acquisition of the subjunctive for L2 learners of Spanish, as well as the variables that influence their processing of complex syntax.

Lee provides an overview of the research on the acquisition of object pronouns (clitics) in Chapter 4. The author discusses this research from two distinct perspectives: processing information (decoding meaning) and producing language samples (encoding meaning). The final part of the chapter surveys the research on clitics within generative theories of syntax.

In Chapter 5, Lafford, Collentine, and Karp present an overview of the research on the acquisition of the Spanish lexicon. The authors distinguish among three different types of knowledge: partial/precise knowledge, depth of knowledge, and receptive/productive knowledge. The final section of this chapter reviews the research on how to promote L2 vocabulary acquisition.

In Chapter 6, Koike, Pearson, and Witten provide an overview of the research on pragmatics and discourse analysis in Spanish SLA. The authors examine several areas of pragmatics: speech acts, politeness, implicature, deixis, and presupposition. Their section on discourse focuses on the use of discourse analysis to investigate the nature of L2 production. In this section, the authors also review several studies on discourse and assessment, as well as interaction studies and Spanish SLA.

Sánchez and Toribio investigate Spanish SLA from the perspective of generative grammars in Chapter 7. The authors focus on four areas of Spanish grammar: null categories, clitics, word order, and predicate argument structure. The chapter concludes with a discussion of topics for future research in generative syntax: language attrition, language variation, and bilingualism.

In Chapter 8, Dussias provides an overview of the research on the effect of cognitive processes on L2 learning in Spanish. In the first section, the author examines issues such as explicit versus implicit knowledge, processing instruction versus traditional and meaning-based output, and attention to form versus attention to meaning. The second section discusses sentence processing among Spanish-English bilinguals.

In Chapter 9, Antón, DiCamilla, and Lantolf investigate Spanish SLA from a sociocultural perspective. The authors review the major components of

Vygotsky's sociocultural theory and then discuss concepts such as the zone of proximal development and scaffolding. Next they review numerous studies that focus on private speech, reading and comprehension recall, lexical organization, language play, and collaborative interaction.

Grove's Chapter 10 examines the role of instruction in Spanish SLA. He frames his discussion of instruction by using the integrated model of SLA proposed by Gass and Selinker (2001). The author illustrates how distinct perspectives on the roles of input, intake, knowledge integration, output, and interaction have resulted in a significant growth in the development of informed instructional practices. Grove concludes that focus on form and the development of functional proficiency are two of the major issues in language instruction, and he argues that the findings of future research must serve "as a resource for materials development, teacher training, instructional planning and testing" (310).

*Spanish Second Language Acquisition: State of the Science* achieves its purpose in providing the reader with a broad overview of Spanish SLA research. Each chapter provides a critical review of a certain aspect of Spanish SLA with an extensive bibliography. Another important feature of this volume is its organization into "Linguistic Topics: Products," "Theoretical Perspectives: Processes," and "Methodological Perspectives." The result of this organization is a complete and accessible volume on the state of Spanish SLA research — appropriate for both undergraduate and graduate courses in SLA or applied linguistics.

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## **Smith, Frank, ed. *Voces de España: la historia del siglo XX español (Voices of Spain: The History of Spain in the 20th Century)*.**

Nashville, TN: Champs-Elysées, 2004. Narrated by Iñaki Gabilondo, Ángeles Afuera, and Miguel Ángel Nieto. English translations and annotation by Jonathan Holland. 205 pp. and two audio CDs. ISBN 0-9724613-3-7. With audiomagazine subscription order, \$39.00. As a stand-alone purchase, \$59.00. Study Supplement (36 pp.), \$15.00. For orders and information on *Voces de España* and Champs-Elysées, Inc., audiomagazines, please contact: Champs-Elysées Inc., P.O. Box 158067, Nashville, TN 37215-8067. Toll free: 1-800-824-0829. Fax: (615) 297-3138. E-mail: mark@champ.xohost.com. Website: <http://www.champs-elysees.com>.

I first came to know Champs-Elysées, Inc. through their four audio magazines: *Champs-Elysées*, *Puerta del Sol*, *Schau ins Land*, and *Acquerello italiano*. Having long enjoyed the high quality and user-friendly format of the audio mag-

azines, I was intrigued when I learned of *Voces de España: la historia del siglo XX español*. Recorded in Spanish on three CDs, *Voces de España* includes a complete transcript of each presentation, a listing of milestones in twentieth-century Spanish history, gloriously reproduced vintage photographs, an extensive Spanish-English glossary, and thirty-six pages of comprehension questions with answer keys in the accompanying study supplement.

In the main text of *Voces de España*, the left-hand page contains word glosses and historical notes, while the right-hand page contains the transcript and period photographs. Each CD is complete by itself, and includes a brief introduction and conclusion. The accompanying study supplement comprises three types of questions for each of the three CDs in *Voces de España*:

- a.) audio comprehension exercises relating to the historical content of the program;
- b.) pre-listening and post-listening exercises, as well as exercises to be listened to while watching; and
- c.) grammar and vocabulary exercises.

CD1 covers the period from 1900 to 1936, which is the eve of the Spanish Civil War. As Frank Smith explains in his forward (*prólogo*): “Monarchists, liberals, and anarchists live uneasily side by side during this period, when barricades are thrown up and the monarchy deposed. Spanish cinema also begins to emerge, and people dance to the strains of the *chotis*, while Joselito vies with Belmonte in the bullring” (5).

CD2 begins with the tragedy of the Spanish Civil War in 1936 and continues until 1975. Those new to the recent history of Spain will be surprised to learn how General Franco was at first reluctant to join in the revolt against the Republic, how the real leader of the military rebellion died unexpectedly, and how Spain’s beloved poet Federico García Lorca was shockingly and brutally murdered. During this period, many Spaniards were forced into political exile, and Franco’s dictatorship resulted in Spain’s international isolation. Yet, in sharp contrast to these restricted and harsh conditions, Spain also began to welcome a growing number of tourists from abroad.

CD3 completes the last part of the twentieth century from 1975 to 2000. Known as the period of the rebirth of a modern nation, Spain made the transition from Franco’s dictatorship to the restoration of the monarchy and the establishment of democracy. The early eighties were marked by the arrival of Felipe González and the Socialists. Other major events of this period were the Middle East peace conference held in Madrid, the Barcelona Olympics in 1992, Expo ‘92 in Seville, the advent of economic stability in the 1990s, and the coming to power of the conservatives headed by José María Aznar.

*Voces de España*, thanks to its format centered on contextualized understanding, would serve as a wonderful supplement to any intermediate or advanced Spanish language, literature, or civilization course. The spoken Spanish on the CDs is clear (presented by professional journalists and comparable to the quality

of National Public Radio's "All Things Considered"), and the transcription always is precise. Moreover, the material presented is rich and varied: it is not simply an introduction to the history of twentieth-century Spain but also a springboard to expansion activities on understanding contemporary Spain. Those currently subscribing to *Puerta del Sol*, should know that *Voces de España* continues Champs-Élysées's well-deserved reputation for providing excellent supplementary materials, as well as a superb historical reference tool.

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Chair, Department of Foreign Languages  
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The Northeast Conference invites you to submit your name as a reviewer of textbooks, software, websites, programs, ancillaries, videos-in short, any product or opportunity or program that might be of interest to you and your colleagues. You can help others make their way through the wide array of materials they may see at a conference, in a catalogue, on a website, or through advertising! Share your knowledge and experience ... and see yourself in print! Don't be shy if you've never written for publication before: we are eager to work with you!

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# NEWS FROM NORTHEAST

## *A Message from the 2007 Conference Chair*



**Marjorie Hall Haley**

Dear Colleagues:

How exciting it is to chair the 2007 Northeast Conference! Now that we are firmly settled in the 21st century, one thing is certain: changing demographics will continue to shape and focus language teaching and learning. It has become abundantly clear that One Size DOESN'T Fit All, and therefore, we must commit ourselves to reexamining differing epistemologies. It is with this background we have chosen the theme, "The Many Views of Diversity: Understanding Multiple Realities." We hope to examine current U.S. and global demographics and the realities of what takes place in foreign language teaching and learning. This exploration will be framed by the importance of bilingualism and multilingualism in our new century. The goal is to investigate and understand the many aspects of diversities among both students and teachers: cultural, linguistic, and cognitive diversities. Sessions and workshops will address instructional practices and assessments in accommodating the wide range of teachers and learners.

One of the most rewarding aspects of this conference will be that each participant will receive a DVD that will include (1) WGBH's video, "Valuing Diversity in Learners"; (2) successfully-used activities and strategies for working with culturally, linguistically, and cognitively diverse learners; and (3) papers that address a bi-directional flow, teaching to research and research to teaching, to direct/instruct future research initiatives with the goal of creating life-long language learners and informed, culturally literate world citizens.

Plans are already well underway and we are working hard on your behalf to make the 2007 Northeast Conference the best ever! We look forward to seeing you there. Begin making plans now to be with us in New York City at the Marriott Marquis on Broadway, April 12-14, 2007!

Marjorie Hall Haley, PhD  
Tenured Associate Professor  
Director, FL Teacher Licensure  
Graduate School of Education  
George Mason University

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- "The event was well-organized; location was great: It was a total success!"
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- "Complimentary coffee was nice!"
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- "Thank you for offering FLES sessions at different times so I could attend many!"
- "I like talking with publishers."
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- "I like attending both K-12 and higher ed sessions to maintain an overview."
- "Love the 'Out on the Town' feature of Thursday night."
- "Conference is easy to navigate."
- "This conference offers a lot of special touches for exhibitors."

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# In Memoriam

The Northeast Conference is saddened to report news of the deaths of several individuals with links to our organization. We extend heartfelt condolences to their families, colleagues, and friends.

## Sandye Jean McIntyre, II



The Northeast Conference was saddened to learn of the death on October 8, 2006 of Dr. Sandye Jean McIntyre, II, at 83 years of age. We wish to express our deep sympathy

to the family, friends, and colleagues of this remarkable individual. Dr. McIntyre taught French full-time at Morgan State College (now Morgan State University) from 1948-1988, serving as Director of the Fulbright Scholarship Program there from 1951 until his death. His life beyond academe is the stuff of legends: as his son, Sandye J. McIntyre III, wrote in a piece celebrating him at his funeral, "He was a renaissance man in the truest sense ... a passionate advocate for international peace through intellectual and academic exchange (...) He could converse with anyone on a myriad of subjects, thoughtfully, intelligently and memorably." His son's tribute notes that Dr. McIntyre knew Dizzy Gillespie, Mahatma Gandhi, Pablo Picasso, Albert Camus, Anwar al-Sadat, Golda Meir, François Mitterrand, Jimmy Carter and Ronald Reagan, yet he states that Dr. McIntyre "was just as likely to have a conversation with a janitor at Morgan as he was a foreign dignitary or head of state, and infuse each dialogue with the same level of interest."

Honored with awards and recognition from his earliest years (he was Ohio's Boys' Tennis Champion at 9, he won academic medals in high school, he earned a Bronze Star Medal following his military service during World War II, he was the first African-American to receive a Fulbright Scholarship to France and had

Fulbrights to Israel, Senegal, Mali, Gambia and Liberia, as well), Dr. McIntyre was selected as the Nelson H. Brooks Award winner by the Northeast Conference in 1992. The Brooks Award recognizes an outstanding teacher with a long record of distinguished service in the profession. We are pleased to reproduce here the moving tribute written in 1992 by Board member Nancy Anderson.

*This year, the Nelson H. Brooks award for distinguished leadership in the profession is being presented to Dr. Sandye Jean McIntyre, II, Professor Emeritus of Foreign Languages at Morgan State University in Baltimore, Maryland. Dr. McIntyre is the Honorary Consul of the Republic of Senegal, having formerly been Honorary Consul of the Republic of Haiti. A native of Cleveland, he obtained his B.A. degree from Johnson C. Smith University and his M.A. and Ph.D. degrees in Romance Languages and French from Case Western Reserve University. He was decorated by the French government as Chevalier and later Officier of the Ordre des Palmes Académiques for his outstanding contributions to the field of foreign language study.*

*Dr. McIntyre has been director of the Fulbright program at Morgan State since 1951. In the period from 1953 to 1990, Morgan State students received 72 Fulbright or Fulbright-related grants, one of the highest, if not the highest, number of these awards given to any college or university in the United States [Morgan State emphatically leads the more than 100 Historically Black Colleges and Universities in this category; by the end of his career, Dr. McIntyre*

*had helped well over 100 individuals obtain these scholarships]. Dr. McIntyre has also served as president of the American Association of Teachers of French Maryland chapter and is a member of numerous other professional organizations. Named the Outstanding Professor of Foreign Languages in the state of Maryland in 1989, he is the author of approximately 50 one-act plays in French... All of this just barely does justice to the very impressive list of the contributions of Dr. McIntyre. In the past year alone, he has traveled and lectured in eleven countries and received numerous other awards. Dr. McIntyre, you fully represent the true meaning of distinguished service and leadership in the profession. We are very honored to present to you the Nelson Brooks Award.*

### Edward D. Allen



The Northeast Conference has learned the sad news of the death of Dr. Edward D. Allen on July 2, 2006, at the age of 83 years.

Dr. Allen, Professor Emeritus of Foreign Languages

at Ohio State University and Visiting Professor of Modern Languages at Ohio Wesleyan University, received the Northeast Conference Nelson H. Brooks Award for outstanding service and leadership in the profession in 1996. The tribute composed in his honor on that occasion is presented here with our sincere condolences to Dr. Allen's many colleagues and to his family members.

*The Northeast Conference takes great pleasure in awarding its Nelson H. Brooks prize to Edward D. Allen, currently Visiting Professor of Modern Foreign Languages at Ohio Wesleyan University. Dr. Allen is most frequently recognized by his col-*

*leagues — among them many former students — for his qualities as a mentor. At the Ohio State University, whose faculty he joined in 1945, no fewer than seventy doctoral candidates have completed degrees under Allen's tutelage. His contribution to our profession is thus a markedly personal and human one, and the example he sets is all the more valuable. "Service" and "leadership," the two criteria of the Brooks Award, assume their true and fullest meaning as Edward D. Allen's name is associated with it.*

*Edward Allen received the B.A. from Montclair State University, the M.A. from the University of Wisconsin, and the Ph.D. in Foreign Language Education from Ohio State. His research encompasses the areas of second language acquisition, cross-cultural analysis, and language proficiency. Dr. Allen has been awarded grants in support of his investigations by the U.S. Office of Education. He has also been honored by ACTFL, NYS AFLT, and the Central States Conference for his leadership and his work as a teacher educator. Allen received the Palmes Académiques and was elected to the Education Hall of Fame at the Ohio State University.*

*Allen's publications include Classroom Techniques: Foreign Languages and English as a Second Language, co-authored with Rebecca Valette and long a mainstay of methodology courses. In addition to gracing the shelves of all foreign language educators worth their salt with his text, Allen has conducted eight N.D.E.A. institutes in the United States and France, as well as teacher training institutes all over the country and the world.*

*The integrity and coherence of Edward D. Allen's career set a unique standard for his colleagues. He honors the Brooks Award with his acceptance and us with his presence at the 1996 Conference.*

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