

# **NECTFL** ***REVIEW***

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



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

Number 61

Fall/Winter 2007/2008

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## *From the Executive Director*

Dear Colleagues,

Those of you who attended the 2007 Northeast Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages were undoubtedly thrilled to receive a DVD resource kit on world language learning in today's diverse classrooms. Sponsored by Annenberg Media, the DVD included a video from that organization's [www.learner.org](http://www.learner.org) series, articles, instructional strategies, web links and more. Unlike print publications, the DVD format allowed us to create a brilliant, exciting and flexible set of tools for practitioners, researchers and students.

For those who could not be with us and for those who enjoy the experience of reading from a physical volume, we are pleased to offer a special issue of *The NECTFL Review* that reproduces in print the theoretical articles, teaching techniques and reflective pieces we had published on the DVD last spring. Your authors hail from elementary schools, community colleges, public high schools, universities, consultancies, and other professional contexts in the world language realm. They represent languages from Russian to Japanese to Spanish to French and more. Some are under thirty; others are... over thirty! Their years in the profession range from three to... more than three! This issue of our journal is truly reflective of the full spectrum of NECTFL constituents. We believe it will thus be of interest to all.

In addition, as always, we have provided pages of insightful critiques of textbook programs, software, videos and other materials, written by your colleagues and intended to help you select products that enhance your work and your professional lives. From Latin workbooks to a self-instructional series using Japanese manga, from a guide to French slang to German through film, from scenarios in Spanish to an interactive Russian program, the reviews section of our journal is a veritable goldmine!

In these pages, you will also find invitations to write for us, as a reviewer or as an article author. Please do consider this effective means of sharing your expertise and your ideas with colleagues around the country!

The NECTFL offices are buzzing as registrations for the 2008 conference pour in! It promises to be an unforgettable experience with a focus on the iGeneration members who people our classrooms and, increasingly, are found in the faculty lounge or the office next door. We invite you to visit the tech playground to experiment with hardware and software in a pressure-free and entertaining environment. You'll also find a huge exhibit area, hundreds of sessions and workshops, the opportunity to network and meet with fellow professionals — all in the center of Manhattan!

We look forward to hearing from you and to seeing you next March 27-29 in New York!

Cordially



Rebecca R. Kline

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# 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.
  - b. APA Research Style Crib Sheet: <http://www.docstyles.com/apacrib.htm> — this site by Russ Dewey at Georgia Southern University, offers a summary of rules for use of the APA style.
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:
- a. Use a **PC-compatible** word-processing program, preferably **Microsoft Word 2000 or a later version**.
  - 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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- 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**):

- a. Your name
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Example:

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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



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## 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.
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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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13. **Please reflect on the title of the article**. Quite often titles do not give readers the most precise idea of what they will be reading.
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  - c. The text of the article
  - d. **Notes, References, Appendices** — in this order
  - e. The **short, biographical 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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# Editorial Introduction — The Many Views of Diversity: Understanding Multiple Realities

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**Marjorie Hall Haley**, *George Mason University*

**Charles R. Hancock**, *The Ohio State University*

## Introduction — Setting the Stage

The DVD resource kit upon which the articles in this issue of the *NECTFL Review* are based features the Annenberg Media/WGBH Video, “Valuing Diversity in Learners” as well as a compilation of papers written by K-12 teachers, post-secondary professors, and teacher educators, all focused around the topic of *Diversity*. The video and papers highlight the importance of understanding the diversity of learners in today’s classrooms. Of primary importance is to acknowledge that our schools are filled with a wide range of learners: linguistic, cultural, racial and ethnic, socioeconomic differences, different experiential backgrounds, special needs, gifted, heritage language learners, students who learn differently, and those with different cognitive abilities. How can teachers accommodate

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this wide array of learners? One objective of this issue of the *Review* is to provide answers to this important question. Throughout the video and papers, a broad examination is made of the many views of diversity. Today's teachers must be accomplished as well as highly qualified, having multiple teaching and learning approaches that respond to diversity. Teachers face the challenge of meeting the needs of all learners.

If we were to ask ten people how they define "diversity" chances are very good that we would get ten different answers. Why? The most logical answer is that for a long time race, ethnicity, and culture were usually most closely aligned with how one defined diversity. We tended to think in terms of ethnicity or racial characteristics as a way to describe or define diversity. Today, however, the term is broader and more far reaching. Diversity is viewed through many lenses and along with those views are accompanying realities. The theme for the 2007 Northeast Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages, "The Many Views of Diversity: Understanding Multiple Realities," grew out of a critical awareness of the need for examining diversity as it is explored from multiple perspectives, particularly in language learning environments. For our purposes, the DVD was designed to examine some of the many views of diversity as linguistic, cultural, ethnic, and cognitive. Indeed, there are far more questions about diversity than answers, and for some, the topic of discussing diversity can be emotional and often controversial. However, when issues of diversity are explored through multiple lenses and inferences and commonalities are discovered, perhaps we can better situate the discussion in such a way that it in fact offers opportunities rather than challenges — opportunities for seeing that the global society of which we are members requires that we all be interconnected and that language is oftentimes the vehicle through which that connection occurs.

The year 2005 was widely recognized in the language teaching profession as The Year of Languages and ACTFL focused the FL Education Series volume that year on this theme. Audrey Heining-Boynton served as Editor and titled the publication *2005-2015, Realizing Our Vision* (2006). Myriam Met wrote one of the chapters for the publication and stated the following on page 55:

Many variables impact how well Americans learn foreign languages. They range from motivation to time on task to what is taught and how. It is the latter — what students learn and how we enable them to learn it — that not only impacts powerfully and directly the outcomes of language study, but also impacts the attitudes and motivations of those who currently study languages and those will study it in the future. Simply put, *good teaching matters*. [emphasis added]

This perspective about good teaching is likely to be widely accepted by those in the language teaching profession. And it is also a theme advocated by Gloria Ladson-Billings whose work on culturally relevant pedagogy is central to successful (i.e., "good") teaching. This initial chapter of the 2007 NECTFL Reports is grounded in these notions of good teaching being important and relating to the cultural backgrounds of our foreign language students as being central to the effective teaching of languages.

In order for language to be an effective vehicle for making connections between teachers and students alike, we as language educators and researchers must first identify these multiple realities and how they affect teaching and learning. For exam-

ple, what are the pedagogical implications of the changing demographics in U.S. schools? How should teacher education programs better prepare teachers for the multiple realities of learner diversity? How should we use technology to facilitate learner-centered instruction? First, we will examine the role and impact of demographics and its influence on diversity.

## Demographic Influences on Diversity

According to the U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics (2004), the number of children ages 5-17 who spoke a language other than English at home more than doubled between 1979-2004. Between 1979 and 2004, the number of school-age children who spoke a language other than English at home increased from 3.8 million to 9.9 million, or from 9-19 percent of all children in this age group. The percentage of racial/ethnic minority students enrolled in U.S. public schools dramatically increased between 1972 and 2004. Further, forty-three percent of public school students were considered to be part of a racial or ethnic minority group in 2004, an increase from 22 percent in 1972. In comparison, the percentage of public school students who were White decreased from 78 to 57 percent. The proportion of public school students who were Black or who were members of other racial minority groups increased less over this period than the proportion of students who were Hispanic: Black students made up 16 percent of public school enrollment in 2004, compared with 15 percent in 1972. Hispanic enrollment surpassed Black enrollment for the first time in 2002. Asian/Pacific Islander (4 percent) and Other minority groups (3 percent) made up 7 percent of public school enrollment in 2004, compared with 1 percent combined in 1972.

These statistics may be directly linked to a new language diversity in U.S. schools unlike any other time in our history. For example, Montgomery County, Maryland, and Arlington, Virginia, both within the metropolitan area of Washington, D.C., enroll students whose families speak more than three dozen languages. In parts of central California, more than one third of the total enrollment in public schools is from Southeast Asia.

As we consider the implications of demographic influences on diversity, there are certain realities that help frame the discussion. Valuing diversity in learners challenges us to understand multiple realities about teaching and learning. The following are three realities to consider when valuing and examining views of diversity:

## Views of Diversity and Understanding Multiple Realities

### Reality # 1. Demographics will influence pedagogical practices

Because every learner is unique in their cultural, personal, and experiential background, we must acknowledge that no single teaching method will work for every student. One size does *not* fit all! Students don't divest themselves of their cultural and linguistic background; they bring that with them to the classroom. Diverse learners have multiple pathways to knowing, multiple pathways to learning (Donato, 2004).

We must commit ourselves to teachers and students' understanding diversities and communicate acceptance and positive attitudes. Further, we must strive to enhance and accommodate diverse skills, interests, and abilities.

Every learner is unique, with his or her particular linguistic, cultural, and cognitive background. Our classrooms are comprised of individuals with a wide array of intelligences, learning styles, skills, interests, and talents. Research indicates that student achievement can be enhanced using multi-modal and multi-sensory instructional strategies and assessment practices (Gardner, H., 1983; Hall Haley, 2004; Hall Haley, 2001; Wiggins, G., & McTighe, J., 1998).

As foreign language teachers we must provide a curriculum that is not only standards-based but challenging, relevant, and integrative. We must approach teaching and learning from multiple perspectives — multimodal, multi-sensory, etc. We should regard ourselves as co-constructors of knowledge, rather than “knowers.” And in that same vein, we must allow learners to “show what they know” in varied assessments and evaluations.

The following are helpful strategies for ensuring that teaching and learning are receptive to the needs of *all* learners:

Gather information about the students in your class so that you are able to address their diverse needs. Use surveys, questionnaires, or informal interviews.

- Try to encourage students to approach a task using an intelligence that is different from his or her stronger intelligences or preferred learning styles.
- Reflect on your teaching to be certain that you are *not* always teaching to your strengths.
- Be aware of which kinds of learners pose the greatest challenge to you and why.
- Look for ways that learning differences positively affect learning in a foreign language classroom.
- Be aware that the needs of Heritage Language Learners sometimes differ from students studying a foreign language for the first time.
- Identify strategies that assist students who may be gifted and tend to finish ahead of others.
- Create ways to differentiate instruction and assessment that include aspects of learners’ background life experiences and cultural communities to ensure that you reach *all* learners.

The strategies listed above can assist teachers in looking introspectively at examining what and how we teach. How do teachers connect theory to practice? Here we briefly examine two noted researchers, Mary Ann Christison and Marjorie Hall Haley.

## **Addressing the Needs of Diverse Learners**

Mary Ann Christison has conducted field research that examined meeting the needs of all students in a learner-centered environment utilizing the theory of Multiple Intelligences (MI). Her work offers a rationale for applying MI theory to foreign language teaching with students at both the primary and secondary level. She argues that “the more aware students become of their own intelligences and how they work, the more they will know how to use that intelligence to access the necessary information/ knowledge from a lesson” (1996). Christison posits that in teaching students how to learn, teachers foster better retention of the material. Her work

describes a plan wherein all students are taught how to best work within each of the eight intelligences, allowing them to function in any variety of situations. Further, by ensuring that information is encoded through various modes, Christison's use of MI theory in the classroom assists recall in a variety of situations. By teaching students how to process more varied input, Christison hoped to encourage better reaction to a wider range of cues in the target language (1999).

Christison's model does not call for full curricular reconfiguration, but rather urges teachers to work multiple intelligences into their preexisting class structure. "Embracing MI theory in our teaching does not mean that we must overhaul every course and change the existing curriculum. Rather, it provides a framework for enhancing instruction" (1999). She suggests that teachers incorporate MI-based strategies, going beyond the normal teaching of the subject, to actually instructing the students in how to best process information.

Her methods for applying MI theory to the classroom involve the teacher constantly evaluating the incorporation of every intelligence into the class, on both the macro level, throughout the semester, and the micro level, from topic to topic (1996). Teachers should analyze which intelligences are evoked in each lesson, and adjust whenever certain intelligences appear neglected. By continuous consideration of class design, the teachers can overcome their own predilections for certain teaching styles, and be sure to incorporate activities relating to every intelligence.

Marjorie Hall Haley, another researcher who has looked at learner-centered instruction and assessment that accommodates culturally, linguistically, and cognitively diverse (CLCD) learners analyzed the effects seen in students exposed to MI-based foreign and second language teaching. In Phases I and II of her ongoing research of this topic, she demonstrated that foreign and second language students in MI-based classes both outperform and display higher affect toward learning than peers in control classes.

To examine this topic, Hall Haley enlisted the help of primary and secondary language teachers from around the country, and from Australia, Germany, and Japan who were willing to teach one section of their foreign or second language course using an MI-based framework, and a second section using a more traditional, teacher-centered approach (2004). These educators collaborated with each other and with Hall Haley to develop ways to apply MI theory to their lessons. Every student was given an intelligence profile survey, to determine their relative strengths and weaknesses (Armstrong, 1993). This was intended to help raise students' awareness of their own learning preferences, as well as to foster teacher recognition of variation within the class.

Throughout the semester, students were asked to describe their feelings toward the class design, while teachers were asked to summarize their reaction to the use of MI-based methods as well. Student grades at the end of the semester were also analyzed, with respect to previous assessments of students' achievements, to determine if MI-based language teaching fostered improved performance over instructional strategies to which students were previously exposed. Informal interviews and weekly logs were also examined to see how both students and instructors felt about MI-based foreign and second language classes.

Hall Haley's data showed strong support for applying MI theory to the foreign and second language classroom. Data showed that "learner-centered instruction from the perspective of multiple intelligences ... demonstrated students' strengths and weaknesses can be affected by a teacher's pedagogical style" (2004). Students in the experimental classrooms in her study showed greater progress in learning the second language than students in the teacher-centered classes.

Also, students in the MI-based classrooms expressed more satisfaction with the class structure and more motivation to learn the second language than did their peers in the control groups. "Teachers attributed this positive reaction to the greater degree of flexibility, variety, and choice that MI strategies allowed students in their classrooms" (2004). In these studies, MI-based pedagogy is noticeably raising student engagement in the subject matter and enthusiasm about learning. Teachers also reported feelings of enhanced classroom management.

Hall Haley's findings are extremely important, as they give empirical evidence that MI theory can be effectively applied to enhance the structure of the foreign and second language classrooms with culturally, linguistically, and cognitively diverse learners. In comparisons with traditional, teacher-centered classrooms, both performance and student affect were higher in MI-based classes. However, there are a few limitations in Hall Haley's studies, as she personally acknowledges (Hall Haley 2001: 359; 2004:171-172).

First, there is little commonality between the students studied; rather it is a very diverse community. Her research relied on data gathered from a variety of teachers in various educational settings. The students studied ranged from kindergartners to twelfth graders, and were at various levels in their second language progress (they were in foreign language classes of levels I, II or III, or English as a Second Language (ESL) classes at level B1). The students were studying under any of 23 different instructors, and came from eight states and four countries.

Second, the method of applying MI theory to the classes was also variable. Though Hall Haley encouraged interaction between the teachers in the study, and offered advice on classroom design, the teachers ultimately decided their framework, offering limited control of external factors, which could affect student performance and affect. Also, the participating educators had varied experience with MI theory.

In all, there were numerous factors which could be controlled in future experiments before arriving at a conclusive assessment of the effectiveness of MI-based second language teaching (Hall Haley 2001: 359; 2004: 171-2). Hall Haley's work suggests that MI theory creates a highly efficient structure for foreign and second language classes; however more systematic studies should be carried out to confirm this belief.

## **Reality # 2. Teachers must be trained to work with Culturally, Linguistically, and Cognitively Diverse (CLCD) learners**

Teacher preparation plays a vital role in providing both pre and in-service educators with an understanding of cultural, linguistic, cognitive, and related variables and their effects on the teaching-learning process. Additionally, training must include methods of using assessment data to plan instruction and to select, adapt, and/or develop curricula to meet the needs of culturally, linguistically, and cognitively diverse students (CLCD) with special needs.



Higher education's teacher training programs are faced with the challenge of providing excellent teacher preparation. Federal legislation, No Child Left Behind, requires that all teachers be "highly qualified." In the United States, the teaching force is facing an increasing number of CLCD children, some of whom have multiple forms of special needs. This teaching force is *not* well equipped to help these children adjust to school and succeed. There are far too many teachers who do not share or know about their students' cultural or linguistic backgrounds and too few have had the professional preparation to work well with CLCD students with special needs.

*Special needs, Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD), Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), or dyslexia* are terms that are frequently used to cover a very broad range of learning differences — these range from giftedness to disabilities. In brief, Levine describes learning differences in terms of problems relating to 1) attention, the most common kind of learning disability; 2) language, difficulty in interpreting and/or remembering verbal messages and instructions; 3) spatial orientation, poor reading and spelling skills because of difficulty with processing information visually and distinguishing similar-looking letters; 4) memory, difficulties with retrieval of presumably stored information because it is mis-stored and can't be found spontaneously; 5) fine motor control issues, which cause ideas to break down between the head and the paper; and 6) sequencing or difficulty organizing information and instructions into an appropriate order so that tasks can be successfully completed (Levine, 1984, 1-2).

Given changing demographics in the U.S., all educators must face the reality of culturally, linguistically, and cognitively diverse students in today's classrooms. School districts which never before had to instruct these students are now finding they must address and meet this need. Frequently, the number of CLCD, gifted, and special education-trained personnel is limited. We must include training components relevant to this need in all teacher training programs.

It is safe to say that there is an abundant need to diversify the education profession at practitioner, administrative, and personnel preparation levels in order to better serve CLCD students. Furthermore, there is an urgency to rethink pre and in-service training programs for general and special educators who teach CLCD students. As clearly evidenced in the changing demographics, this population will continue to grow and teachers must be adequately trained to meet the needs of these students.

This training should include the vital role of technology as a means to facilitate learner-centered instruction in the foreign language classroom.

### **Reality # 3. Foreign language teaching needs to embrace globalization through technology**

Integrating technology successfully begins with explicitly defining the pedagogical role for that technology (Ragan, 1999). Every individual teacher must choose why, how, and when to use technology. This choice is often influenced by access, ease of comfort in using technology and knowledge of *how* to use existing resources. Access to information technology (IT) differs among and within countries, states, and school districts. The digital divide is clearly visible. According to Cummins (2000), "I believe that IT also has considerable potential to promote language learning in a transformative way when it is aligned with a pedagogy oriented towards promoting collabora-

tive relations of power in the classroom and beyond.” Although technology can facilitate collaborative relations of power in social learning groups, scaffolding lessons and professional guidance offered by a qualified teacher are still necessary.

Garrett (1991) cautions us that using the computer does not replace methodology, since the computer is nothing more than a tool. According to Garrett (1991), the more critical issue is the quality of the software material available, and the ways teachers use the material to achieve the desired learning outcomes. “... Teachers must learn to use the new technology to allow students to interact more effectively with the same ‘old’ material. The change must be carefully and thoughtfully crafted, for we cannot continue to ask teachers to use the ‘newest’ devices if we continue using pedagogical practices that are no different from those previously used” (Moore, 1999).

Computer technologies can play a crucial role in facilitating the objectives of L2 instruction in at least four ways. Whether the learner is located in the classroom, computer laboratory, home office, or any other location for learning, computer technologies can facilitate L2 [foreign/second] language instruction by providing:

- diverse structure-focused activities with learner-specific evaluation and feedback;
- complex multimedia input to the learner;
- a variety of forms of dynamic monitored interaction with that input;
- diverse environments for interpersonal communication, both dynamic (synchronous) and delayed (asynchronous). (Fast, 1998)

Instructors and researchers agree that the use of any technology in the classroom must be integrated into the curriculum as a tool to support and enhance the learning experience rather than serve as the driving curricular force (Armstrong & Yetter-Vassot, 1994; Bedford, 1991; Garrett, 1992; Hughes & Hewson, 1998; Kearsley, 1998; LeLoup & Ponterio, 1996; Patrikis, 1995; Phillips, 1998). Kearsley (1998) warns against the seductiveness of integrating technology as a quick fix to more serious problems.

Byrnes (1996) notes that technology such as the Internet “inherently shifts the emphasis from teaching to student learning” thus creating new roles for both learners and teachers, and forcing us to rethink the process of learning. Patrikis (1995) points out that computer-based learning individualizes the learning process and gives students more control over both what and how they learn.

Will the computer replace the teacher? Probably not. Will teachers change the way they teach because of computers? Probably. Because of the growing use and popularity of new technologies, teachers find themselves being urged to keep up. More and more states and school districts are implementing a technology competence requirement as part of students’ standards of learning. Similarly, schools of education are requiring educational technology courses in teacher licensure programs. Thus, the role of the teacher has been and will continue to be redefined in part by new technology.

One direct influence of technology has been seen in teachers moving whole class to small group instruction, as well as a shift from students all learning the same things to learning different things. This affords teachers the opportunity to move from verbal thinking, to the integration of visual and verbal thinking. According to Cummins (2000), “...our task as educators in general, and as language educators in particular,

should be to assess the potential of Information Technology (IT) to improve the human condition. As educators, we are committed to drawing out the potential of the students we teach; as language educators, we strive to increase students' capacity to use language to fulfill their personal goals and contribute to their societies."

For the past decade, national and state standards have been emphasized in teaching at the K-12 instructional level. Built around the 5 Cs of Communication, Cultures, Connections, Comparisons, and Communities, both the ACTFL national foreign language standards and state foreign language standards have emphasized systematic instruction and assessment linked to sets of expectations about what students should know and be able to do as a result of their language study. The 5 Cs are, of course, interconnected and together constitute an overview of expected outcomes of language study. In this chapter, our argument is built on the idea that the culture competency, as defined in the ACTFL and most state foreign language standards, can appropriately be linked to the work of critical pedagogy as advocated by Gloria Ladson-Billings. Dr. Ladson-Billings is a recent president of the American Educational Research Association, whose work on what she calls *culturally relevant pedagogy* is widely recognized in research, multicultural education, and teacher education.

Ladson-Billings (1995) argues that including aspects of learners' background life experiences and cultural communities just makes sense. In this article, she wrote:

Culturally relevant pedagogy rests on three criteria or propositions: (a) student must experience academic success; (b) student must develop and/or maintain cultural competence; and (c) student must develop a critical consciousness through which they challenge the status quo of the current social order.

It is important to recognize that Ladson-Billings is not creating a new way of thinking about teaching, as she herself acknowledges. Instead, she is asking that teachers include a focus on both cultural competency and social consciousness on the part of our students as areas of emphasis in our teaching, including teaching foreign languages. In our profession, this goal is readily attainable because we already have identified *cultural competency* as one of our priorities.

In the national foreign language standards, for example, the focus on cultures sets an expectation that our students will *gain knowledge and understanding of other cultures* and two related standards are stated as follows:

Standard 2:1: Students demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between the *practices and perspectives* of the culture studied.

Standard 2:2: Student demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between the *products and the perspectives* of the culture studied.

In Ohio, where one of the co-authors works, these two standards were incorporated into the state standards as follows:

Students demonstrate an understanding of the insights gained into another culture through the examination of its *practices* (behaviors), *products* (tangibles such as monuments, food and literature, and intangibles such as laws and music), and *perspectives* (attitudes, values, and world views). (Ohio Academic Content Standards for K-12, Foreign Language, p 12) [*Emphasis added*]

The *culture competency* focus in foreign language standards is linked to the *communities competency* focus, which emphasizes the need to facilitate opportunities for foreign language students to participate in multilingual communities and cultures at home and abroad. The point is that Ladson-Billings' *culturally relevant pedagogy* is therefore already instantiated in the work that language professionals do in classrooms and field experiences on a regular basis. In the case of our profession, however, it may be helpful to re-focus our attention on students' home and community backgrounds as a key tool for our work. In other words, when heritage learners enroll in foreign language classes, how do we incorporate their identities and life experiences in their studies and interactions with their teacher and peers in the language class?

## **Cultural Capital**

Another concept that foreign language teachers need to become familiar with is cultural capital. This term was coined by the sociologist Pierre Bourdieu (1977) who described cultural capital to explain how people with high social status pass it on to their offspring. He argued that this "hereditary transmission of power and privileges" contributes to class distinctions that help some groups of individuals and hinder others. He argued that a lack of *cultural capital* keeps people from fitting in higher socioeconomic classes.

In terms of the foreign language standards presented previously, a person's cultural capital may include the neighborhood in which people live (even the name of one's community often describes one's cultural capital), positions held, one's club or organization memberships, college or university degrees, even a person's place of worship. Tangible signs of cultural capital typically include a person's physical appearance, speech patterns, choice of clothes. And, of course, in some cases these traits are not changeable, while in other cases they depend on one's resources. As foreign language teachers, it becomes important for us to communicate complex concepts such as cultural capital to our students as we examine the cultural *practices, perspectives, and products* intentionally built into our national and state program standards.

Everyone deals with cultural capital in our lives, and education both affects and is affected by cultural capital. As language professionals, it is important for us to recognize that schools are a key element in cultural capital since a student's status within a school often reflects the cultural capital that is valued in that setting. Teachers often set different expectations for students who are perceived to have higher cultural capital, even though the practice might have unintended negative as well as intended positive consequences (Hancock, 2001).

Bourdieu's concept of cultural capital is not an isolated sociological term. In fact, it is well connected to the work of other noteworthy scholars such as DuBois's notion of double consciousness and Said's notion of Orientalism. As language educators, we should be familiar with these works as they offer a socio-political perspective of student diversity.

## **Socio-political consciousness**

Foreign language teachers often include opportunities for students to meet individuals from other cultures, sometimes including people whose political views differ

from those of the students. The intent is to stretch our students' higher order thinking skills and to help them become more "critical" in the sense of reasoning and judging different points of view. Ladson-Billings (1995 and 1999) takes this notion a step further and encourages teachers to help students think critically by exploring various perspectives and then developing their own goals for impacting their own and other local communities. Gutstein (2006) also does an excellent job demonstrating how he has done this in his teaching in a Chicago public school setting, using middle school mathematics as the subject matter. In much of her work, Ladson-Billings argues convincingly that it is not sufficient for students to develop individual academic achievement and cultural competency successes, but, instead, teachers need to educate students develop a "broader sociopolitical consciousness" that fosters critiquing cultural norms and values as well as the institutions that produce these norms and values, particularly when they produce and maintain social inequities. Her work incorporates outcomes similar to those advocated by Freire (1995), Foucault (1980), and Bourdieu (1977). An example of this type of focus on cultural consciousness can be readily seen in the following example: One teacher worked over a month long-period with a group of African American high school students on what they termed "community problem solving." The students worked on a kind of social action curriculum in which the students tried to solve problems in their own community so the task was to use their studies, including the teacher as a resource, to identify local community "problems" and try to design concrete local solutions.

The link between the work of Ladson-Billings and the development of lessons that address community problem solving is evident in the above examples. But, how can these types of activities that promote social action and critical thinking be utilized in the language learning profession? One possible way is to create a bi-directional flow between second language acquisition research and the teaching practice.

Call for bi-directional flow—teaching to research and research to teaching

This chapter assumes that an important goal of all foreign language study is for students to become autonomous life-long learners. The steps in achieving this goal include teachers becoming familiar with the students' prior knowledge and regularly incorporating that component in their instructional practice. The steps also include the need for research to guide instructional practices as well as be guided by classroom and school context in which foreign languages are taught. While the notion of a bi-directional flow between research, often conducted in higher education, and instructional practices, including foreign language teaching at the K-12 level, is indeed a valid one, teachers and researchers need to work collaboratively to achieve mutual outcomes. This goal is particularly important in an academic field like foreign languages because the focus may not be as heavy on achievement testing as is the case, for example, in school subjects such as mathematics, science, technology (so called STEM subjects) or reading. These areas seem particularly impacted in contemporary American society because of mandates and requirements for accountability such as *No Child Left Behind*. In other words, foreign language students may have the good fortune not to be "tested, tested, and re-tested" as much as STEM subjects. Therefore, foreign language programs should continue to explore research-based (but not necessarily achievement test-based) answers to professional questions such as the fol-

lowing: Why is there a consistently high attrition rate between beginning and intermediate language courses in many school districts? What can language teachers do to increase the number of students who continue in language study beyond the required years? How can language teachers incorporate the students' cultural background into language study? What can be done in our profession to increase the number of students of color in language programs? How can language study be connected with other disciplines such as social studies and literacy study? The list of research questions is almost infinite, but can teachers be motivated to involve themselves in research-based answers while they still teach five or six language classes a day. Nieto (2003) has edited an interesting volume on the subject of what keeps teachers going. Gutstein's (2006) book describes in a convincing manner how a middle school teacher can incorporate on-going research with students by incorporating student's communities and life experiences in instruction. His example is researching and teaching mathematics. Both books are highly recommended reading.

## **Academic Achievement**

One focus of this chapter is culturally relevant pedagogy (CRP) and the myriad ways that it connects with foreign language instruction. Clearly, there is widespread agreement that an outcome of all teaching is academic achievement, and CRP is no exception. The goal for teachers who wish to emphasize a CRP approach is to motivate students to "choose" to become serious about their studies. And the 5 Cs approach in our profession provides an excellent opportunity to help students focus on academic achievement. And, finally, teacher expectations have long been recognized as being a very important influence on students' academic achievement.

CRP has the potential to become much more integrated in the teaching of foreign languages if PK-12 teachers are willing to employ the principles of this approach. In her work called the *Dreamkeepers*, Ladson-Billings describes excellent examples of teachers, both Caucasian and African American, who made the decision to learn about their students' communities and families and build their instructional program on what they learned. This book is a veritable resource for any teacher who wants to apply CRP principles in their work as teachers, irrespective of the subject-matter being taught. The teachers in this book share their insights about how they found ways to value their students' skills and abilities with the goal of channeling their students in academically important ways.

The 5 Cs are an invaluable source for foreign language teachers to help students see the interrelationships between COMMUNICATION, CULTURES, COMPARISONS, CONNECTIONS, and COMMUNITIES. Starting with the overall goal of "communication" in foreign language classes, teachers should seek ways to use both their students home languages (including dialects and non-standard English) so student feel validated and valued in this important area of their lives. Teachers have the opportunity as well to teach their students to make "connections" and "comparisons" in their language study. Gutstein and Ladson-Billings have described specific ways in which "communities," particularly the students home "communities" can become central in language study. It is clear that foreign language teaching provides

opportunities to explore novel ways to incorporate the 5 Cs and CRP to impact student achievement.

Teacher expectations, particularly ones that motivate students to work hard to reach for high academic achievement, are needed in any discipline, including foreign language instruction. When one couples teacher expectations with CRP and the 5 Cs, the end result can only be beneficial to foreign language students.

## Conclusion

This chapter began with a simple but deep question: How can teachers address the array of learners in their classrooms? This is a complex question because the array of students, of course, includes students who come from different socioeconomic backgrounds, cultures, and ethnicities. In addition, there are differing levels of ability, different learning styles, and even different purposes for studying world languages. Simply stated, teaching is a very complex set of interactions, but the outcome is the likely to be the same — lifelong language learners who can continue to benefit from their language study long after they finish formal instruction.

The argument of this chapter is that the array of students in our classes produces opportunities, rather than obstacles or challenges. In looking towards the future of foreign language teaching, the authors have identified three “realities” that they envision as areas of needed emphasis as the language teaching profession moves forward during the coming decades. A broad definition of diversity to include multiple lenses through which to view our work as language professional in PK-16 and beyond will be needed, a definition that focuses on cultural, linguistic, and cognitive (CLCD) diversity based on an important underlying assumption that all students can learn foreign and second languages. The profession would need to embrace an African proverb from Zambia, “Start where you are but don’t stay there.”

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Become a student yourself as you watch the videos, complete a range of activities designed to stimulate your teaching, and prepare to conduct action research in your own classroom. You will come away with a deeper understanding of the national foreign language standards, and with ideas for implementing effective assessment strategies and working with learners across a range of language and skill levels.

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# Teaching Literacy to Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Learners through Multiple Intelligences

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## Abstract

This paper examines best practices for teaching literacy to culturally and linguistically diverse learners through applications of the theory of multiple intelligences and how these applications can increase the effectiveness of instructional methods in reading and writing. Strategies for providing differentiated instruction that enhances English language learners' ability to read, write and speak English are presented. The paper includes a multi-faceted comprehensive model for teaching reading that includes decoding, word identification, spelling, oral reading, vocabulary, comprehension, and writing strategies that assist students in enhancing their creative potential and developing their reading skills.

In the concentrated effort to improve academic achievement and raise standards for student outcomes, the most important ingredient for academic success has often been overlooked. This ingredient is the focus on the uniqueness of each student's ability to learn. It has often been stated that all students can learn and succeed, but not in the same way and not on the same day. Students have the capacity to learn and achieve, but may need to learn in different ways. They can succeed if the process of learning is effectively designed or adapted to meet their needs. Because intellectual performances may vary on different days and in different ways, the academic success of students should be measured by multiple types of assessments in order to accurately assess their progress.

To achieve higher academic standards and student success, the educational system should focus more on the unique ways students learn and should integrate the theory of multiple intelligences in the learning process. Gardner (1983, 1993, and 1999) stated that individuals learn with at least seven different intelligences: linguistic, logical-mathematical, spatial, musical, bodily-kinesthetic, intrapersonal and interpersonal. For many years the educational system has valued primarily linguistic and logical-

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mathematical ways of learning and has placed a stronger emphasis on student test scores than on the students themselves.

This paper focuses on best practices for teaching literacy to culturally and linguistically diverse learners through applications of the theory of multiple intelligences. Information on ways to provide differentiated instruction that enhances English learners' ability to read, write and speak English is presented.

## **The Theory of Multiple Intelligences**

There are distinct characteristics that Gardner (1983) has defined for each of the intelligences that may affect curriculum and instructional methodologies and assessment measures.

**Linguistic** students have highly developed auditory skills, enjoy reading and/or writing, like to play word games and have a good memory for names, dates and places. They can possess well-developed vocabularies and use language fluently and are often able to spell words accurately and easily. They would learn to read more effectively through a phonics approach.

**Logical-mathematical** students like to explore patterns and relationships and enjoy doing activities in a sequential order. They often like mathematics, experiment to test things they do not understand, enjoy opportunities to problem solve, and reason logically and clearly. They learn best when information is presented in an orderly, logical, systematic way.

**Spatial** students enjoy art activities, read maps, charts and diagrams, and think in images and pictures. They are able to visualize clear images when thinking about things, and can complete jigsaw puzzles easily. They often need to see pictures before they can comprehend the meaning of words. Pictures can provide contextual clues to words and assist students in learning to read and/or spell.

**Musical** students are sensitive to the sounds in their environment, enjoy music, and prefer listening to music when studying or reading. They appreciate pitch, rhythm, and timbre and often sing songs to themselves. When musical students clap their hands, snap their fingers, chant words or move rhythmically, the rhythm can be used to engage them in the learning process. Through this process they are able to retain and apply information.

**Bodily-kinesthetic** students process knowledge through bodily sensations and use their bodies in differentiated and skilled ways. They need opportunities to move and act things out, and tend to respond best in classrooms that provide physical activities and hands-on learning experiences.

**Intrapersonal** students prefer their own inner world, like to be alone, and are aware of their own strengths, weaknesses and inner feelings. They often have a deep sense of self-confidence, independence, and a strong will. They can motivate themselves to do well on independent study projects. They may respond with strong opinions when controversial topics are being discussed.

**Interpersonal** students enjoy being around people, have many friends, and participate in many social activities. They learn best by relating and participating in cooperative/collaborative group environments. These students express empathy for the feelings of others and respond to their moods and temperaments.

## Teele Inventory for Multiple Intelligences (TIMI)

Several years ago the Teele Inventory for Multiple Intelligences (TIMI -Teele, 1997) was developed to examine the dominant ways individuals learn. The inventory is a spatial, forced choice inventory that does not require individuals to read English in order to complete it. It has been administered to people at many ages, from two to ninety-five.

The TIMI (Teele, 1997) has been utilized with students at the preschool level through college to identify their dominant intelligences. The instrument is currently being used in public and private school settings throughout the United States, as well as in 35 other countries. The results of the inventory have indicated that students possess different combinations of the intelligences and process information in many different ways. Many students at all grade levels have exhibited higher mean scores in both spatial and bodily-kinesthetic intelligences than in the others. This is an indication that students may learn more effectively through pictures or spatial images, and movement or hands-on activities.

The mean scores on the TIMI, shown in the following graph, indicate that students at the lower primary school level demonstrated a stronger preference for spatial, bodily-kinesthetic, linguistic and logical-mathematical intelligences. Elementary school students in grades four and five exhibited higher scores in spatial, bodily-kinesthetic, interpersonal and musical intelligences. Middle and high school students had the highest mean scores in interpersonal, bodily-kinesthetic, spatial and musical intelligences. A division by grade levels indicates the following dominant intelligences, and is listed in order of strongest intelligences (in descending order).

**A Student Profile of Multiple Intelligences —  
Based on the U. S. Results of the TIMI**

	Lower Elementary	Higher Elementary	Middle School	High School
Linguistic	4.09	3.48	2.73	2.74
Logical — Mathematical	4.05	3.66	3.04	2.86
Spatial	4.76	4.89	4.83	4.52
Musical	3.32	3.84	3.82	3.66
Bodily — Kinesthetic	4.39	4.75	4.76	4.98
Intrapersonal	3.39	2.95	3.26	3.54
Interpersonal	3.93	4.39	5.48	5.58

**Kindergarten** students were spatial, bodily-kinesthetic, linguistic, and intrapersonal. **First grade** students were spatial, logical-mathematical, bodily-kinesthetic, and linguistic. **Second grade** students were spatial, bodily-kinesthetic, logical-mathematical, and linguistic.

**Third grade** students were spatial, bodily-kinesthetic, and interpersonal; linguistic and logical-mathematical intelligences were tied for fourth.

**Fourth and fifth grade** students were spatial, bodily-kinesthetic, interpersonal, and musical.

**Sixth grade** students were bodily-kinesthetic, spatial, interpersonal, and musical.

**Middle and high school** students were strongest in interpersonal, spatial, bodily-kinesthetic, and musical intelligences.

Studies are currently being conducted utilizing the TIMI to examine how students at specific grade levels learn in Turkey, Belgium, Pakistan and Mexico. The similarities and differences with the results on the inventory are being compared to students in the United States. The preliminary results of this study support the fact that many different methods must be used when teaching students at all grade levels, particularly with culturally and linguistically diverse learners. The fact that there are both similarities and differences with the students in the United States and students in these four countries indicates the need to teach with strategies that include more than just linguistic and logical-mathematical intelligences. These findings also support the strong influence culture may play on student learning.

When working with culturally and linguistically diverse learners, educators must understand that students may learn in different ways than they are being taught. For example, Turkish students who were in the sixth grade reflected higher mean scores in linguistic and interpersonal intelligences, while students in the United States were stronger spatially. Students in the first grade from both the United States and Belgium demonstrated few significant differences in the ways they learn. However, in the fifth grade, students in Belgium were more bodily-kinesthetic, linguistic and logical-mathematical than those in the United States. If teachers can teach students learning English with methods that are more matched to the ways they learn, students may be able to develop proficiency more quickly.

## **English Literacy Development**

Currently, American learners are required to acquire a higher level of fluency and literacy in English than ever before. But according to recent surveys, more than 6.3 million school-aged children in the United States come from families where the language spoken at home is not English. In a 2003 report by the National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP), there were no significant reading assessment changes detected since 2002 in the average score for any of the racial/ethnic groups. White students and Asian/Pacific Islander students outperformed Black, Hispanic and Native American students on average in both grades four and eight. Students who are culturally and linguistically diverse have been documented to have a higher risk of experiencing reading problems. This can place these students at a disadvantage in performing at appropriate reading levels in order to experience academic success.

It is essential for culturally and linguistically diverse learners to understand both spoken and written language in English, and how the structure of the language and writing system in one language can affect students when learning another language. Literacy development in the stronger language can actually facilitate the development in the new language (Durgunoglu, 1998). When students know two languages they are more effective at detecting syntactic rules and can examine the similarities and differences between the languages (Durgunoglu, Nagy & Hancin-Blatt, 1993). Students who are able to understand the differences in the structure of the English language and compare that to the structure in their native language can improve their English skills

more quickly. One of the problems English language learners experience is once they learn how to decode words in text, they may not be able to comprehend the meaning of the words because the decoded words may not be an active part of their oral vocabulary in the new language. Using both languages to decipher new vocabulary words may be very important in accelerating the speed of the learning process. If English language learners can develop proficiencies in their native language, they can use those strengths to improve their ability in English.

To become fluent readers quickly English language learners must build their vocabulary. When working with English language learners, lessons on decoding, phonemic awareness and spelling should not be taught in isolation, but rather in a way that students can understand. Students should not only be asked to memorize information, but also receive assistance in understanding what they are learning. In order for English language learners to build word recognition, decoding and spelling skills they should be taught with engaging, developmentally appropriate methods they can comprehend. Because of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) requirements and implementation of high stakes testing, English language learners must acquire fluency and literacy in English more quickly while they are developing academic content knowledge that will allow them to experience success in the schooling environment.

It is important when working with English language learners to validate constantly knowledge of their own language and utilize that knowledge as they begin to learn English. If the teacher is interested in learning some words in the student's language, the teacher reinforces this validation. The gap between native and non-native speakers in vocabulary knowledge and reading can be reduced over a period of time when students receive an enriched program of vocabulary instruction.

In addition, teachers must encourage students to preserve their knowledge and proficiency in their native language as they learn English. English language learners should be taught to look at cognates they already know in their native language as that will accelerate the process of understanding the words in English. Older students' knowledge of cognates can facilitate academic vocabulary development. Students need to be taught new concepts and words in English but should discuss the meaning of these words in their native language. This can improve understanding of the words.

The following are several approaches to the development of literacy in English.

**Phonological skill development.** Many different languages have sounds that are not found in English just as the English language has sounds that are not included in many languages. For example *th* and *ng* are digraphs that are often new sounds to many English language learners. *Th* is a digraph that is not part of the Chinese, French, Italian, Turkish, Japanese, Korean, Spanish and Urdu languages. *Ng* is a digraph that is not part of the French, Greek, Italian, Spanish, Urdu and Vietnamese languages. Sounds that are not a part of students' native language need to be taught through multi-sensory methods to allow them the greatest opportunity to add these sounds to their new language. Students can integrate bodily-kinesthetic and musical intelligence with linguistic intelligence when they are asked to clap their hands if two words rhyme and snap their fingers if they do not rhyme. Word combinations such as *fat* and *cat*, *dog* and *top*, *house* and *mouse* and *look* and *room* can be used for this activity (Teele, 2004).

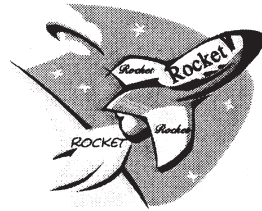
**Vocabulary development.** Students who have limited language development skills when they enter school will often have less developed vocabulary skills which can affect their comprehension ability. Educators must consider the diverse needs of students, the language differences and many different maturational experiences and ability levels of students as they teach them to read. It is important to build on students' prior knowledge, home language, and home culture in order to accelerate the process of acquiring a new language. Students need to understand how their native language and writing system intersects with their literacy development.

Students who are bodily-kinesthetic respond to Total Physical Response (TPR) methods. For example they can act out new vocabulary words such as run, hop, skip, jump, and skate. The words can first be taught to the students. Then students can provide a movement that matches the word. These words can be used with music or with a song like "Listen and Move" (CTP/Youngheart, 1978).

Spatial students can use pictures to provide cues for them to identify words they may not know. They learn to associate pictures with words or letters. Integrating a letter that a word begins with into a picture that describes the word reminds students of the sound and shape of the letter, and assists them in better retaining the letter-sound associations than when presented with a side-by-side presentation of the picture with the letter (Ehri, Deffner and Wilce, 1984).



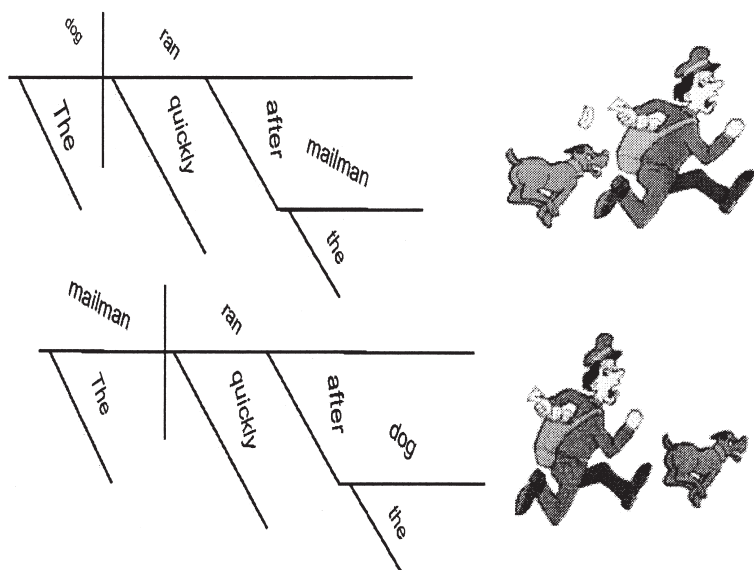
Teaching students spelling words by having them draw their own pictures and then write the correct spelling of the word several times within the picture can provide a combined snapshot in students' minds of the picture and the word. When the word is spoken they see both the picture and the correct spelling together. When students draw their own picture of a word and write the correct spelling of the word several times within the picture, this can assist them in encoding the word into long-term memory (Teele, 2004).



**Sentence construction development.** Students who are both spatial and bodily-kinesthetic can diagram sentences and then draw pictures and/or act out those sentences. For example, they can draw a picture of the following diagram and then act out two scenes: one where the dog ran after the mailman and a second where the mailman ran after the dog. They can discuss the differences in the structure of the language between the two sentences and compare the English structure to the structure in their native language (Teele, 2004).

Students who are learning English must receive differentiated instruction. Because no two individuals learn in exactly the same way, instructional strategies must be modified in order to provide success for every student. Vygotsky's (1978) zone of proximal development (ZPD) and Bruner's (1986) scaffolding provide a framework





for developing instruction so students advance toward mastery of skills. The more teachers can actively engage their students in the learning process and have them enjoy what they are learning, the more intrinsic motivation is enhanced and progress is made with encoding language into long-term memory.

## Reading Skill Development

The theory of multiple intelligences can be an effective way to enhance students' ability to learn how to read, write and speak English. Strategies can be presented through different intelligences that accommodate the unique ways students learn to read. It is important that reading skills be taught not only through linguistic methods in a prescriptive manner, but also through music, pictures and other visual media, acting things out or touching things, sequencing or processing in logical ways using both independent learning and group work. When skills are taught as an integrated part of the total reading process, culturally and linguistically diverse students can more effectively understand how decoding, vocabulary, word identification, spelling, oral reading and comprehension blend together to create fluency and develop independent readers.

A multi-faceted comprehensive view of reading that includes decoding, word identification, spelling, oral reading, vocabulary, prior knowledge, comprehension, and writing strategies is essential if culturally and linguistically diverse students are going to be able to master all the elements required in becoming fluent readers and writers.

Children begin to learn to read through visual picture clues, repetition of words and rhyming words. At the elementary level it is important to teach nursery rhymes in English to culturally and linguistically diverse learners as it allows them to hear the sounds of initial, middle and ending consonants and vowels. Nursery rhymes can assist students in hearing the rhythm of English. Fingerplay, poetry, rhymes, games and songs can be used effectively to teach phonological awareness. To teach reading to students who are musically intelligent one could rhyme words and sing songs using the sounds

they are learning. Books such as *The Cat in the Hat* (Geisel, 1985) and *Chicka, Chicka, Boom, Boom* by Bill Martin, Jr. (1989) assist musical students in learning words and letters of the alphabet through rhythms and rhymes.

Students have to make the transition from learning to read to reading to learn from the third or fourth grade on through middle and high school. They are required to read expository text that necessitates more in-depth vocabulary and comprehension skills. Pressley (2002) found many different researchers agreed that to teach comprehension skills, instruction must include modeling, scaffolding, guided practice and ways for students to develop the ability to regulate comprehension processes independently. Pressley also stated that the focus in teaching reading should shift away from teaching isolated skills to teaching students the skills necessary to be able to comprehend what they are reading. Comprehension skills have to be integrated into the decoding process at an early age in order for students to understand the relationship and interconnections between decoding and comprehension.

Reading requires students to become actively involved with the text and be able to understand their thought processes as they read. Students should be taught how to ask questions and try to locate answers to their questions. When they discover the answers, they can begin to make predictions about the text. Students can learn the process of asking questions through reciprocal teaching, questioning the author and question-answer relationships (Palinscar and Brown, 1984).

Reciprocal teaching is an instructional approach that is an interaction between the teacher and students while reading. It involves student groups generating predictions, questions, clarifications and summaries as they read. The teacher provides modeling and scaffolding to the group discussions to support the students' understanding and interpretations of what they are reading.

Questioning the author encourages students to judge and evaluate the author's ideas within the text. This strategy enables students to operate at application, analysis, synthesis and evaluation levels described in Bloom's (1956) six-level taxonomy of educational objectives. Too often students are only processing at the first two levels in the taxonomy: knowledge and comprehension (Bloom, 1956).

A question-answer relationship (QAR's) assists students in classifying questions and finding answers to these questions within the text. Students work in small groups, divide the questions into categories and provide sources of possible answers. When students who are English language learners can access their prior knowledge to a topic, they can connect more personally to the information they are reading. Students should be provided time to write, draw or make charts about what they already know regarding the topics they are reading.

Vygotsky's zone (1978) of proximal development (ZPD) can be supported by scaffolding each student's unique ways of learning. Some ways to scaffold instruction include: modeling, bridging, contextualization, schema building, metacognitive development and text representation (Walter, 1996). Modeling provides students with guidelines, standards, and examples of what they are being asked to do, such as samples of work from previous students or projects. Bridging links new information to students' prior knowledge. Think-pair-share models, graphic organizers, KWL charts (K-Already

know, W-Want to know, L-Learned), brainstorming, quick writes and review of the information being presented are all ways to provide bridging to students.

Contextualization provides opportunities for complex ideas to become meaningful, relevant and comprehensible to students. Manipulatives, visual images, charts, diagrams, maps, puppets, music, objects, analogies and metaphors, hands-on activities, demonstrations by the teachers and laboratory experiments allow students to utilize their spatial, musical and bodily-kinesthetic intelligences to enhance their linguistic and logical-mathematical intelligences. Schema building provides students with a conceptual map or connections to what is going to be taught. It allows students to understand the big picture of general knowledge being presented. Venn diagrams, word or semantic webs, storyboards, story mapping, advanced organizers, taxonomies and specific rules and regulations enable schema building to occur (Teele, 2004).

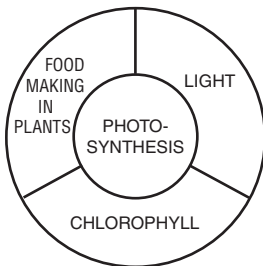
Metacognitive development provides learning strategies, explicit skills and vocabulary for students to monitor and assess their progress. Students need to think about what they are thinking and then plan, monitor and assess what they have learned. Learning logs, questioning, reciprocal teaching, self-assessment tasks and think-alouds assist in metacognitive development. Text representation assists in developing the higher levels of Bloom’s taxonomy by using application, analysis, synthesis and evaluation. Information is re-presented through different ways that students can understand. For example, scientific information can be represented through drawings or posters (Teele, 2004).

The following are several additional approaches to the teaching of reading in English, or for that matter, teaching reading in any language.

**Drawing pictures.** Students can create mental images of text by drawing pictures of what they read. This spatial method can support comprehension skills. Students can discuss their pictures with other students to decide if the pictures appropriately match the information in the text.

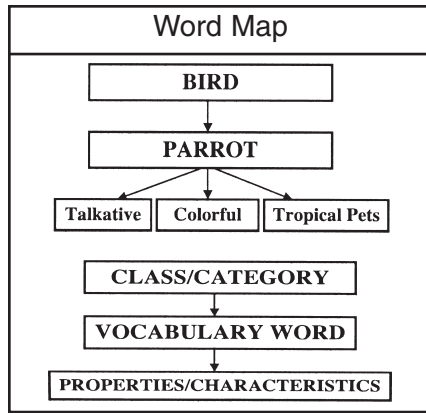
**Graphic organizers.** Graphic organizers provide a structure for students to construct meaning through an orderly, visual medium. Students can better understand how words are related to one another and ideas are represented when they see information presented in an organized way. Graphic organizers such as synonym and word webs, semantic word maps, descriptive maps, timelines, Venn diagrams, concept maps and wheels, story mapping, diagramming sentences, storyboards and story pyramids can assist culturally and linguistically diverse students in improving their com-

Concept Wheel



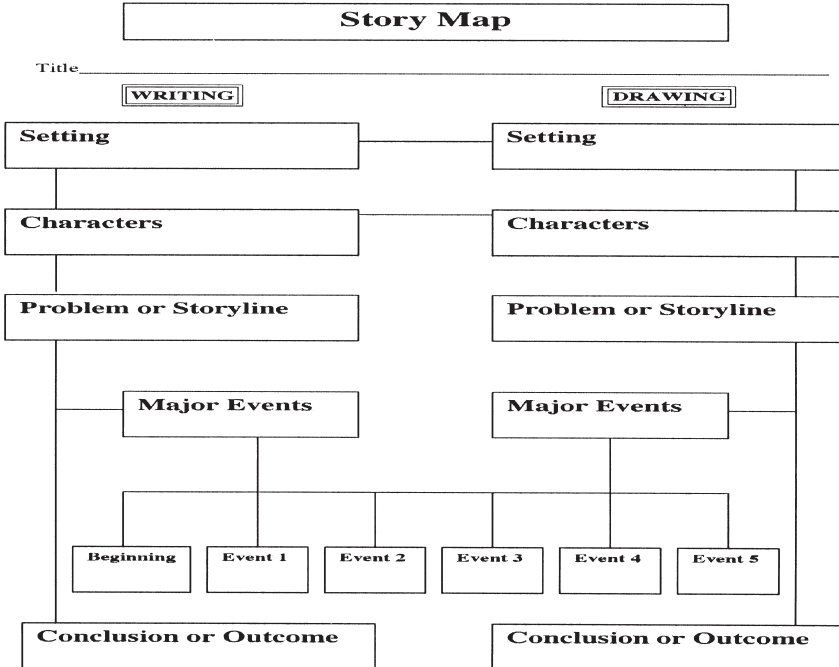
Descriptive Map





prehension and writing skills. These visual activities can present ways for logical and spatial learners to organize their thoughts, as demonstrated in the following graphic organizers (Teale, 2004).

**Story mapping.** Story mapping assists logical, spatial and linguistic students in analyzing a story in an orderly, sequential fashion by mapping out key events and understanding narrative text. Students work in teams to create a story map. Each team identifies an event in the story and discusses characters, setting, what occurred and the point of view. Each group meets with another group to discuss the events or elements



in the story. This enables students to connect the events together as they discuss all the key elements. They determine the main idea of the story and analyze the author's point of view. The entire class discusses the story, main idea, theme, and author's perspective and analyzes the characters, setting and how that affects the storyline.

### **Text Comprehension Strategies and their Corresponding Intelligences**

Pearson and Fielding (1991) have identified thirteen strategies that assist in developing text comprehension skills, as listed below.

- Previewing texts
- Making Predictions
- Monitoring and re-reading text
- Visualizing representations of text
- Asking questions about what is being read
- Relating text to personal background and prior knowledge
- Clarifying concepts
- Making inferences regarding text
- Thinking aloud
- Increasing vocabulary development
- Summarizing
- Synthesizing connections in text
- Evaluating and making judgments about what has been read

The following grid provides approaches for teaching these strategies and identifies ways different intelligences can be used (Teele, 2004).

<b>Comprehension Strategy</b>	<b>Approaches for Teaching the Strategy</b>	<b>Intelligences That Could Be Used</b>
Previewing	<p>Creative introduction to text by teacher through a visual, story, music, quotation, acting out, etc.</p> <p>Activate students' background knowledge.</p> <p>Establish a purpose for reading text.</p>	<p>Linguistic</p> <p>Logical-Mathematical</p> <p>Spatial</p> <p>Musical</p> <p>Bodily-Kinesthetic</p> <p>Intrapersonal</p>
Predicting	<p>Examine title, table of contents, chapters, and key words and make predictions about text based on this examination.</p> <p>Modeling is done by teacher on how to predict.</p> <p>As text is read, ask if prediction was correct or if it should be changed based on what is now known.</p> <p>Predict with a partner what will occur next.</p> <p>Predict at specific points, with subsequent evaluation of predictions and revision of predictions.</p>	<p>Linguistic</p> <p>Logical-Mathematical</p> <p>Interpersonal</p>

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<b>Comprehension Strategy</b>	<b>Approaches for Teaching the Strategy</b>	<b>Intelligences That Could Be Used</b>
Monitoring	Continuously check to see if students' vocabulary knowledge and comprehension of text is correct.  Re-read parts of text to ensure comprehension.	Linguistic  Intrapersonal
Visualizing	Ask students to visualize what is read.  Describe what is seen by drawing and then writing or writing and then drawing.  Create mental images of the setting, characters and action in the story.	Spatial  Linguistic  Intrapersonal
Clarifying	Discuss what parts of the text interfere with understanding the text.  Relate text to personal experience.  Consider students' personal background.	Linguistic  Logical-Mathematical  Intrapersonal  Interpersonal
Inferring	Examine illustrations, graphs and titles within text to make inferences and insights about the text.	Linguistic  Logical-Mathematical  Spatial  Intrapersonal
Think-aloud	Teacher modeling by verbalizing thought process while reading orally to students.  Students say aloud what they are thinking as they are reading.  Teacher describes pictures or images created while reading. Students work with partners by reading orally and sharing thoughts.	Linguistic  Logical-Mathematical  Spatial  Intrapersonal  Interpersonal
Summarizing	Teacher models how to summarize.  Students summarize segments of text with a partner using a set of rules or procedures.  Students use graphic organizers and charts to assist them in summarizing the material individually.  Differentiate, organize and categorize ideas.  Follow a step-by-step procedure to develop summaries.  Retell the text and focus on key information in the text.	Linguistic  Logical-Mathematical  Spatial  Intrapersonal  Interpersonal

**INTRODUCTION: SETTING THE STAGE**

<b>Comprehension Strategy</b>	<b>Approaches for Teaching the Strategy</b>	<b>Intelligences That Could Be Used</b>
Vocabulary Development	<p>Cognates.</p> <p>Create contextual word lists.</p> <p>Grammar and syntax — How specific words are used in a sentence.</p> <p>Read aloud.</p> <p>Figurative language—alliteration, metaphor, personification.</p> <p>Rhyme similar words and define or draw meanings.</p> <p>Semantic maps.</p> <p>Draw pictures of words and put word inside picture several times.</p>	<p>Linguistic</p> <p>Logical-Mathematical</p> <p>Spatial</p> <p>Musical</p> <p>Bodily-Kinesthetic</p> <p>Intrapersonal</p> <p>Interpersonal</p>
Questioning	<p>Reciprocal teaching.</p> <p>Question the author.</p> <p>Ask questions about the text that represent a range of levels in Bloom's taxonomy.</p> <p>Refer to the text to justify answers to questions.</p> <p>Question-Answer-Relationships (QAR's)</p> <p>Students generate their own questions about text.</p> <p>Think-Pair-Share</p>	<p>Logical-Mathematical</p> <p>Linguistic</p> <p>Intrapersonal</p> <p>Interpersonal</p>
Activating Prior Knowledge and Making Connections to Self, Other Texts, and to the World	<p>Students draw, make a chart, act out, compose a song or write what they already know about the text.</p> <p>Ask students if they have ever experienced anything like the events in the text.</p> <p>How does the content in the text compare to the world today?</p> <p>How do the characters in the story relate to characters today?</p> <p>Compare text to another text students have read.</p> <p>Graphic organizers such as Venn diagrams assist in making connections to other texts.</p>	<p>Linguistic</p> <p>Logical-Mathematical</p> <p>Spatial</p> <p>Musical</p> <p>Bodily-Kinesthetic</p> <p>Intrapersonal</p> <p>Interpersonal</p>
Synthesizing	<p>Respond to or rewrite a text from a different point of view.</p> <p>Design a visual, musical or action presentation of students' interpretation of text.</p> <p>Create connections in text and question what that means.</p> <p>Examine new insights, understandings or solutions to text.</p>	<p>Linguistic</p> <p>Logical-Mathematical</p> <p>Spatial</p> <p>Musical</p> <p>Bodily-Kinesthetic</p> <p>Intrapersonal</p> <p>Interpersonal</p>
Evaluating	<p>Make judgements and assessments about what is read.</p> <p>Determine if reading goals are met and how.</p> <p>Justify the ideas, problems or situations in the text.</p>	<p>Linguistic</p> <p>Logical-Mathematical</p> <p>Intrapersonal</p>

## Conclusion

Literacy development is affected by many factors: physiological, psychological, environmental, developmental, cultural, socio-economic, background knowledge and linguistic factors. These factors are all interrelated and critical to providing educational access and equity to culturally and linguistically diverse learners.

Educators should place more emphasis on the dominant ways in which students process information and allow them to learn to read, speak and write through their greatest strengths.

Reading instruction should be redirected in such a way that teaching, learning and literacy are equitable for all students, including students of culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

When students are taught reading skills in an integrated way English language learners are able to understand the entire reading process from decoding, vocabulary, word identification, spelling, oral reading, comprehension, writing and general literacy to fluency. They will have greater opportunities to learn to read and write in English when taught with methods that focus on the more dominant ways they learn.

The process of learning to read and write is very complex. Because students learn in many different ways there is no one way to teach all students to read and write. A match between student needs and the educational environment enables students to engage in active, academically rich learning experiences. A multi-faceted comprehensive approach to teaching reading is essential if students are going to master all the elements required to become fluent readers and writers.

The educational system must not only make it possible for all students to achieve academic success, but must also provide fair and equitable opportunities for them to reach their highest potential. The future mandates that education build on both students' and teachers' mutual strengths, respect individual differences, provide opportunities for students to deepen their academic content knowledge and skills, and offer students relevant practical experiences that assist them in understanding, retaining and applying their knowledge.

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# Revisiting Assumptions about Foreign Language Instruction in Diverse Student Settings

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## Abstract

Through pedagogically sound practice, a diverse student body can become part of the solution we have sought to help all language learners develop deep cultural fluency. In this article, I suggest the need to reconceptualize certain assumptions we hold about foreign language education, namely, the need to (1) teach language use as socioliterate practice; (2) change our focus from a monolingual ideology to a view of the classroom as a multilingual, border-crossing space; (3) explicitly address and problematize classroom diversity rather than try to minimize it; and (4) revisit our role as teachers in the foreign language classroom. These conceptual changes can positively impact our pedagogical practice by helping us focus on language as a multifaceted, social activity; negotiate concepts in the students' shared language; teach and encourage the use of critical thinking and cultural analysis; and, finally, by giving the teacher the role of agent of change in the overall process.

## Introduction

For almost as long as foreign language has been taught in North America, theoreticians and practitioners alike have felt the need to defend its place in the K-16 curriculum. Because there are other, apparently more relevant, disciplines to fill limited instructional time and space, some have wondered about the value of teaching and learning a foreign language (Lantolf & Sunderman, 2001). One of the stronger arguments which has helped solidify its place in the curriculum has been the contention that through foreign language education students are exposed to other people's values and ways of seeing the world. Such exposure, many have suggested, expands students' view of themselves and of others and enables them to become better rounded individuals and citizens of a democratic society and of the world. McCrossen (1943), for example, argued over sixty years ago that "Foreign languages, perhaps more than any other force in American educational life, combat provincialism, insulate one against propaganda and chauvinism and one-sidedness or viewpoint,

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and help one toward a broader vision in becoming a wee bit of a better citizen of the world” (p. 99 quoted in Lantolf & Sunderman, 2001, p. 10). Such is still our aspiration at the beginning of another century. There is, unfortunately, little evidence that the teaching of foreign languages, in and of itself, has helped accomplish this broader goal of open-mindedness, understanding, and appreciation of others and their cultural and social backgrounds. It has been difficult to help foreign language students—in the past, primarily middleclass, college-bound, Caucasian students—see past their own socio-cultural assumptions, values and practices for a variety of reasons. Helping a fairly homogeneous, monolingual group of students walk a mile in someone else’s shoes has been particularly hard considering that the people wearing the shoes may live literally thousands of miles and oceans away from where they live. In addition, teachers have felt the need to implement, by curricular mandate, a “pedagogy of coverage” (Guilherme, 2002) which focuses primarily on teaching the linguistic system. Finally, the “messy” nature of teaching a foreign language, not just as “communicative competence”, but as the deeply social activity that it is has eluded many of us. Many foreign language teachers who have attempted to help students develop cultural understanding primarily through the use of artifacts, events, dates, places, and other surface level “cultural” knowledge have reached the conclusion that such knowledge is at best limited and at worst detrimental to the students’ development of true cultural fluency (Kramsch, 1997). The problem with this kind of “tiny truth” approach is “not so much what students don’t know, but what they think they know” (Shumway, 1995, p. 252) Although the teaching of culture as content, rather than process, has often been the approach used to encourage cultural understanding, unfortunately, it has not worked (Storme and Derakhshani, 2002). Out of our own experience, observation, and research, most of us have come to accept that in order for students to understand the deeply social and cultural nature of their own language as well as that of someone else, they need to participate in a kind of culture-rich, analytical environment which goes beyond the learning of cultural facts and stereotypes. Our awareness of these issues has been raised, in large degree, by the work of authors such as Michael Byram (1989, 1997a, 1997b, 1999) and Claire Kramsch (1983, 1993, 1995, 1997, 1998) as well as many others, who have produced both evidence for change and some very sound proposals to promote the kind of deep cultural understanding students need to become successful participants in a democratic and globalized world (see especially Kramsch, 1997). Now, it seems, the world has come knocking on our door. The progressively larger presence of a diverse student population in K-16 institutions is an encouraging sign that not only are classrooms reflecting more equitably the makeup of society at large but that, indeed, the term “foreign” in foreign language may soon need to be revisited. As a group, students enrolled in any given foreign language class nowadays may already speak as many as ten or more home/ primary languages and probably fall into at least two or three of the four categories outlined by Shrum and Glisan (2005): “(1) those who have no home background other than English; (2) those who are second- and third-generation bilinguals schooled exclusively in the United States; (3) first-generation immigrants schooled primarily in the United States; and (4) newly arrived immigrant students.” (p. 334). As mentioned in

the WGBH video, *Valuing Diversity in Learners*, students may be at different levels, come from a variety of backgrounds, and have a variety of needs including the need for different instructional strategies. While, at a macro level, foreign language educators applaud and welcome the increasing equality of access of such a diverse student body, at the program- or classroom-specific level, these same educators still have far more questions than answers about how to deal with student diversity in their professional practice. Diversity has become a “problem” teachers must address. As Clarke and Silberstein (1988) have noted, “For teachers, day-to-day reality can be characterized as a series of problems to be solved: obtaining some level of orderly progress, covering the material, [and] attacking persisting language problems” (p. 686). To the long list of standing issues that language teachers need to deal with, the more recent student linguistic, cultural, social, and socioeconomic diversity of students imposes itself as something which cannot be ignored. Partly because it is only now coming to the pedagogical fore, widespread classroom diversity can be said to fall into the category of “problems for which there are no prescriptions, even though they may have solutions.” (Clarke & Silberstein, 1988, p. 697, authors’ italics). The obvious question, then, is: so, what are the solutions? In order to find some of them, of necessity, we will need to revisit some of our constructs of and assumptions about what it means to teach a foreign language, as well as our pedagogical choices in teaching it.

## **Foreign language learning as socioliterate development**

True linguistic competence in a foreign language, or any language for that matter, entails more than a person’s ability to use the linguistic system to communicate sounds or read words. The meaning or meanings of a word or expression exist, in the first place, because there is a linguistic community that attributes meaning(s) to it. And the several possible meanings of each word are deeply intertwined in the development of that community, its history and shared value system; they are, in Rogoff and Angelillo’s words, a result of the “integrated constellations of community practices” (2002, p. 211). Consequently, we cannot really assume that a person has communicative competence in a language unless that same person has at least a basic grasp of the social and cultural contexts in which the language is situated and within which such a community developed and has maintained itself. For example, although a person may have developed great linguistic proficiency in Portuguese with the help of a very comprehensive dictionary, such linguistic knowledge will probably be inadequate once the person attempts to address a speaker of a Portuguese-speaking community past the most basic of needs. The social nature of language is truly inherent to its very existence. According to Atkinson (2002) “obviously but nontrivially, language is social—a social practice, a social accomplishment, a social tool” because “language never occurs apart from a rich set of situational/historical/existential correlates, and to separate it out artificially is to denature it” (p. 529). In spite of the social, cultural, and cognitive nature of language in general, however, language learning has long been conceptualized primarily as a cognitive activity that takes place in the heads of individual learners on the basis of comprehensible input. Most research on second language learning, until recently, has focused primarily on the processes by

which learners internalize, process, and use language, independently of the social milieu in which language learning and use takes place. However, as Atkinson (2002) has argued: Cognition is not a private activity that occurs exclusively in the confines of an independent, isolated cerebral space, but rather that is at least a semipublic activity produced as part of a substantially open system. Whenever we participate in social activity, we participate in conventional ways of acting and being that are already deeply saturated with significance. (p. 531) Consequently, if our goal is for our students to become *de facto* members of a new linguistic community rather than speakers of a disembodied linguistic system, our approach to foreign language teaching needs to include both the cognitive as well as the social aspects of language learning and use. Rather than maintaining our “obsession with the decontextualized, autonomous learner” (Atkinson, 2002, p. 526), and knowledge of the linguistic system as the *bona fide* meaning of linguistic competence, we need to reconceptualize our activity as language teachers as we and our students engage in the profoundly social activity language and language learning constitute. The obvious pedagogical implication of this view of language learning as literate practice is that, indeed, students need to understand the “linguistic and cultural-historical repertoires” (Gutiérrez & Rogoff, 2003, p. 22) and be exposed to the ideas, assumptions, values, experiences, and expectations of the linguistic community or communities that use the language they are learning. A diverse student body can be of great help in that regard. If we do, indeed, believe that language learning is an activity with both cognitive and social components, and language is nothing if not a sociocultural activity, then we have reason to rejoice that we have a classroom community in which we can enact those principles. It is “through the participation in culturally mediated, historically developing, practical activity involving cultural practices and tools” (Gutiérrez & Rogoff, 2003, p. 21) that people develop their first language literacy. In the classroom, where students are developing their foreign language literacy, all can benefit from a speech community with students who may have different culture-specific patterns of interaction and socialization backgrounds. If we approach such diversity explicitly and thoughtfully, we can help all students understand the deeply cultural and social nature of language in general and, by extension, of the foreign language they are learning in particular.

## **Towards a multilingual view of the classroom**

Foreign language instruction, as part of the North American K-16 educational system, has been accused of a certain elitism. In the past, we have worked with a primarily monolingual student body and a concomitant monolingual ideology. Some contend that while we have long promoted second language acquisition among monolingual English speakers, we have failed to welcome or fully support students who are still developing their English language skills, for example, or students who may already speak one or more languages because of their national, cultural, and/or linguistic background. It has seemed that while we have strongly encouraged students’ ability to speak a second language, what we have encouraged indeed is a notion of a certain kind of speaker (usually a monolingual English speaker), speaking a certain kind of language (usually an Indo-European language) for a certain kind of purpose

## INTRODUCTION: SETTING THE STAGE

(literary study and analysis or brief foreign encounters in the form of vacations). Although foreign language education has a tradition of using the monolingual speaker as a model (Blyth, 1995), the reality is that multilingual communities the world over are the rule, not the exception. A multilingual classroom, in which students learning a foreign language may, themselves, speak two or more languages, is a much more accurate sampling of society at large and a much better model for foreign language instruction. As highlighted [VIDEO] in the WGBH video, *Valuing Diversity in Learners*, suggests, some students in our classes may indeed be learning their third language. Some may well be learning a fourth language as well. Arguing for the need to conceptualize the classroom as a multilingual speech community, Blyth (1995) contends that: The foreign language teaching profession is caught between a monolingual ideology and a multilingual reality. Students are likely to find foreign language courses increasingly irrelevant and anachronistic unless teachers can find ways to address the growing cultural and linguistic diversity inside and outside their classrooms. It is time to “reimagine” our classroom communities. (p. 174) Further discussing textbooks and other materials used to teach foreign language and how language and culture are portrayed in them, this author concludes that “One of the most insidious but least recognized myths that such textbooks perpetuate is the myth of cultural and linguistic homogeneity, the myth that foreign language speakers are ‘unified subjects’” (p. 169). The diversity that multilingual students bring to the classroom will require that we reconceptualize our classrooms as authentic speech communities. Rather than attempting to have students accommodate to a monolingual, monocultural view of the world and of the foreign language they are learning, an active diverse classroom takes student diversity as a point of departure for cultural and linguistic learning. The focus, then, is on active negotiation of culture and language in the classroom context by starting with the students’ own critical analysis and discussion of their own cultural values and practices (Kramsch, 1997). The fact that most students probably do not come from the same cultural background as the speakers of the target language should not deter us from addressing cultural constructs. By looking inside themselves, at their own values and assumptions and the different ones held by their classmates, students will be better prepared to tackle other ways of feeling and seeing the world. But, perhaps more importantly, students will realize that the concept of one-language-one-culture is, at best, a myth and will realize the enormous diversity of values and perspectives people speaking a single language may have. Such active discussion/negotiation helps students understand the fallacious nature of cultural stereotypes. It opens the door for the kind of dynamic culture in action approach that students need to adopt in order to function effectively in a progressively more diverse world. Although it is clear to teachers and students alike that there is often a need to communicate relevant ideas in the students’ first or classroom common language, there is a sense that the use of the learners’ first language is a form of cheating the system. In his report of a questionnaire study with 600 foreign language students and 163 instructors on first and second language use in the classroom, Levine (2003) argues that in spite of the fact that the “‘recourse to- L1’ position has created a classroom dynamic in which the use of the L1 is at best discouraged and at

worst stigmatized... [a few] scholars have staked a claim for a sanctioned role for the learner's LI in the language classroom" (p. 344). The results of his study reveal that both the target language and the students' first language play an important role in language learning and that "our task as instructors is to identify effective pedagogical principles that both acknowledge and support the classroom as the multilingual environment that it is" (Macaro, 2001, cited in Levine, 2003, p. 356). Similarly, Blyth (1995) argues for the benefit of using the students' LI in foreign language classroom discussions. There is much to talk about to help students start to become literate in the target language that often cannot be articulated in the foreign language simply because the students are not proficient enough it yet to tackle some concepts and ideas. Students and teacher alike need to feel permission to "break" for "English moments" in which relevant topics may be discussed. There is little doubt that we need to discuss nonlinguistic issues, however, according to Kubota, Austin and Saito-Abbott (2003), those discussion topics: Are difficult to incorporate in beginning-level courses because students lack the target language control to discuss them, even if they have knowledge and opinions about them... Indeed, beginning-level instruction might inevitably focus on basic linguistic and cultural skills in order to prepare students for more complex topics to be handled later. However, not all students continue on to advanced study. Some students may leave foreign language with the impression that learning a foreign language entails only how to communicate basic personal needs or facts. This view leaves out entirely the sociopolitical dimension in which language and culture are intrinsically embedded. (p. 21) For this reason, and in order to teach foreign language as literate practice, we need to be able to open the way for the discussion of topics that students may lack linguistic ability to tackle but which are nonetheless essential to their developing literate proficiency. It is at those times in particular that teachers need to remember that the foreign language classroom is indeed a multilingual speech community and that some of the goals for foreign language education go beyond mastery of the linguistic system.

### **Explicit focus on problematizing student diversity**

In most discussions regarding classroom diversity, teachers have been led to believe that the primary way to deal with it is to focus on differentiating and individualizing instruction (Shrum and Glisan, 2005). The responsibility of minimizing the effects of diversity falls on the teachers who, through their own means and ingenuity, are asked to deal with diversity by trying to create a methodology that allows them to reach every student in some way (see WGBH video, *Valuing Diversity in Learners*). While this may be necessary, particularly with students with special physical or cognitive needs, it is hardly possible in a classroom in which the diversity may be linguistic, cultural, socioeconomic, and cognitive, among others. Naturally, many of us, unable to wrap our minds fully around diversity or reach each student, have disregarded it and focused instead on the obvious issue at hand: the teaching of the linguistic system of the target language. This approach, while ensuring a common goal, fails to acknowledge that language is more than a linguistic system and students more than just heads learning that system. Clarke and Silberstein (1988), for example, argue that

one of the main epistemological errors in language teaching is that “stability in the form of uniformity is possible and desirable” (p. 696). An emphasis on uniformity fails to capitalize on the asset a diverse classroom can be for multicultural and multilingual development and learning. Rather than addressing diversity by attempting to minimize it or circumvent it, teachers need to bring diversity to the fore theoretically and instructionally so that the multiplicity of backgrounds, values, and views held by the students in such a classroom can be openly and explicitly addressed. Such a classroom is fertile ground for authentic linguistic and cultural learning precisely because it is a microcosm of society at large and, if addressed as such, it can provide the in-house means for deep culture and language-in-the-world practice and learning. The diverse foreign language classroom, a truly rich environment for learning, should not be “sanitized” (Cummins, 1989); instead, it needs to be treated as the “messy reality of day-to-day life” (Clarke & Silberstein, 1988) it really is. As we explicitly articulate aspects of diversity in our classrooms to ourselves and our students, we help make it a true asset and an integral part of the acquisition of broad-based knowledge of language and culture. The problematizing of diversity—the open and critical discussion of the heterogeneity in our classrooms—can be best accomplished through the development of a pedagogy that focuses, as a first step, on student reflection and critical analysis of self and one’s own cultural expectations, practices, and biases—a setting in which “foreign language students can be helped to organize and abstract their cultural constructs” (Kramsch, 1997, p. 471). The creation of a safe classroom environment in which the students can feel free to explore and analyze their own assumptions and values and ‘rotate the axes of... [their] thinking without losing... [their] cultural identity’ becomes, therefore, the sine qua non condition for that to take place (Kelly, 1963 quoted in Kramsch, 1997, p. 475). Especially for students from minority groups who “appear to have developed an insecurity and ambivalence about the value of their own cultural identity as a result of their interactions with the dominant group” (Cummins, 1989, p. 31), such a safe classroom environment will prove invaluable. As students are allowed to reflect on their own values and assumptions, they are better prepared to enter a “dialogue of cultures” (Savignon & Sysoyev, 2002) which, according to Guilherme (2002), can only happen if “cultural knowledge... [is not] viewed as a distant object to be acquired but as a process of reciprocal identification and representation, accomplished mostly through interpersonal relations” (p. 89). Through dialogue, students can create a borderland for ‘critical analysis and as a potential source of experimentation, creativity, and possibility’ (Giroux, 1992, p. 34), where they can get a foothold in the sociocultural dimensions of a second language. According to this same author, “Through reflecting upon and speculating about their everyday observations and their significant incidents or discoveries, students learn about the complexity of social relationships, find out about the difference between appearance and reality, look for underlying normative frameworks that impose meanings, values and beliefs and recognize asymmetrical relations of power that determine the structure they are becoming more aware of.” (Giroux, 1989, p. 81) A critical analysis and dialogue pedagogy becomes essential because it allows the students to be actively engaged with the material, but, more importantly, it forces them to engage



with each other. As Guilherme (2002) has suggested: The critical notion of a pedagogy of dialogue, one that relies on ongoing, reflective and dialectical dialogue, makes it clear that this approach is not about adding a few novel aspects to classroom interaction, but instead is about questioning the very nature of teaching/learning. (p. 48) A planned and structured social engagement can, therefore, broaden students' perspective by giving them "explicit training in strategies for coping with certain social and cultural situations" (Savignon & Sysoyev, 2002, p. 508) outside of the classroom. It is this focus on open discussion and analysis which will help make the multilingual classroom a truly multicultural space as well and prepare students for living successfully in a pluralistic society.

## Teacher as conceptual agent of change

I have, to this point, proposed a few ways of thinking of and teaching in a diverse foreign language classroom. As is readily obvious, very little of what happens in foreign language education will change because of what is presented in papers like this or through large-scale decision making and/or legal mandate. According to Freeman (1991), "Classrooms are not isolated environments, nor does what goes on in them necessarily reflect in a causal manner the decisions, priorities, or commitments of the wider setting, as curriculum planner might have us believe" (p. 33). The teacher is, not surprisingly, at the heart of any effective local change and no amount of theorizing will make up for the absence of teacher buy-in of an idea and its implementation. As the only true "conceptual agents of change" (Guilherme, 2002), teachers can take an active role in reconceptualizing the relationship they have with their students, the relationships students have with each other, what gets accomplished within the instructional time allotted, and how they bring about the fulfillment of curricular expectations. The mental attributes of the teacher in the areas of knowledge, beliefs, goals, and thinking processes have great impact on teaching. Teachers' beliefs about what they are supposed to accomplish guide their orientation toward class preparation and everything else they do in connection with their professional life (Artzt and Armour-Thomas, 1998). Only if teachers feel empowered to effect change can they encourage their students to do the same. According to Guilherme (2002), teachers themselves must be conceptually and critically engaged in the mission of empowering their pupils by empowering themselves. This notion provides for an informed praxis, by relating theory to practice and vice versa, and deepens their own commitment to democratic principles. By negotiating between the relativity of their own and their students' perspectives and universals which ensure human rights, they forge civic courage, social and political initiative (p. 22). One way in which teachers can start taking action locally is by finding out who their students are. Kroll (2002) makes the point that teachers spend a fair amount of time talking to each other about their students or talking to their students, but seldom do they spend any time talking with their students. If we do not take the students' specific linguistic, cultural, and cognitive background into consideration as we make classroom-specific decisions, we will fail to establish a critically negotiated common ground on which students can stand for further learning. Such a threshold is necessary and it can only be brought about by intentional and focused planning and action on the part of the teacher. One

of the more radical changes teachers may need to make in the diverse classroom may be that of focusing on the creation of an environment of inquiry in which students are engaged in the critical analysis of their assumptions and values and the role language plays at many different levels. Students need to learn to ask questions of themselves and of others. Severino (2001) suggests that while the teacher may feel good about being “Ms.-know-it-all-cultural-liasion,” a better role for the teacher is that of preparing the students to ask the questions themselves. By bringing “broader perspectives on critical issues to their students rather than replicating past blindness to issues of difference and inequality” (Kubota, Austin, and Saito-Abbott, 2003, p. 22), teachers can truly become conceptual agents of change.

## Conclusion

Over 14 million people immigrated to the US in the 1990s. In 2003 there were 10.5 million children of immigrants in the school system, and of these, over a quarter was born outside the U.S. (Fix and Passel, 2003). Foreign language educators have many reasons to embrace and capitalize on the rich linguistic, cultural, and social diversity that students bring to the classroom. I have argued for the conceptualization of foreign language teaching and learning as literate practice, for the classroom as a multilingual speech community, for the problematization and explicit critical analysis of students’ diverse backgrounds, and for a change in the role of the teacher as “conceptual agent of change” (Guilherme, 2002). There are, however, many other issues that will come to bear on the successful instruction of a diverse student body. In a pluralistic, democratic and globalized society, the choices educators make matter greatly. For example, the choice of textbooks and other instructional materials and resources have obvious impact on what students read and write, what the classroom discussions focus on, what is assessed and what, in the end, students consider to be their range of linguistic competence. This is the reason why the change we must make, although felt at a local level through the action of informed teachers, needs to be broad and encompassing. The critical dialogue we hope to involve our students in needs to be echoed at all levels of the educational system. Teachers, researchers, administrators, theoreticians, and all those involved in the educational venture need to become true stakeholders in the process. Only then will there be a chance that change will occur locally at the large scale it needs to happen. As Guilherme (2002) has so aptly put it, “The major challenges educational systems have to face are the dynamics of change itself and the interaction between the local and the global, that is, to confront both diversity and universality at an incredible speed” (Guilherme, 2002, p. 3). Most of us, I believe, are up to the task.

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# Learning about Diversity through Diversity

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## Abstract

This article will illustrate how teachers and a teacher educator design innovative programs for world language instruction using principles from sociocultural theory, postcolonial theory, and critical theory. During the course of their planning and reflections, they address issues of diversity in the U.S. and in the world as a significant factor in instructional practice. Their dialogue demonstrates that diversity cannot be framed by outmoded thinking that equates the term with realities faced by and an issue confined to “minorities.” Rather, in this chapter, our conversation introduces specific examples of how teachers can design curricula that prepare all learners to move beyond their habitual worldviews and to consider instead the multiple perspectives of users of world languages in an ever-changing environment. Concretely, this approach to diversity calls for a reframing of issues to include 1) an identity-building shift from the “tourist” to the responsible democratic citizen; 2) a shift from the frame of an individual to that of a community; and 3) a shift away from an orientation that sees diversity as problematic and towards the expectation that one will benefit from critical cross-cultural encounters with difference (“the other”). Accompanying these shifts in thinking are language instructional practices that build recognition of diversity locally and internationally. Our language programs thus use classroom diversity to understand wider circles of diversity and foment understanding of difference such that language learning engages us more critically in understanding ourselves in relation to others.

## Introduction

This article will present one example of how the process of learning *through* diversity shapes learning *about* diversity in a language teacher education program. The appreciation for diversity may be easier claimed than actually experienced in institu-

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tional contexts. In general, institutions are conceived as a normalizing force in any society. It is their natural function, therefore, to create and replicate both knowledge and power relations within society (Foucault, 1980). Schooling, through the use of sanctioned curricula, activities, and materials, typically replicates external societal relationships which often devalue the divergent types of knowledge that non-dominant groups create. Such divergent knowledge may likewise be disparaged in school settings. Bourdieu has called these knowledges social “capital.” A widely recognized push to reframe the school’s responsibility to all learners acknowledges not only the value of what all children bring to the classroom (constructivism) but also the need to build upon these “knowledges” to serve children and their communities at local, regional, national and even international levels (Nieto; 1999; Au, 1998; Minami & Ovando, 2004).

In world language teacher education, the normalizing forces are recognizable. Most professional development programs are obligated to seek alignment with state, national and sometimes international standards for their subject matter and grade level. As such, they become normalizing forces and exert a homogenizing effect on populations entering a teacher education program, on what those individuals learn, and thus on who is eventually accepted as a teacher. The national failure to recruit and support large numbers of language and ethnic minority candidates for the teaching profession is a result, in part, of these homogenizing forces. It is these forces that are working, unwittingly or not, to exclude numbers of language and ethnic minority candidates (Irvine, 1988; Darder, 1993; Wilberschied & Dassier, 1995; Moore, 2005). Nonetheless, attempts are being made to address the growing needs of an increasingly diverse student body. Institutional commitment with respect to these issues varies in degree. Examples of programmatic efforts to build social justice, critical multicultural, and democratic values into teacher preparation programs include creating community outreach programs for school community partnerships in learning (Solsken & Willett, 1994), actively recruiting future teachers from the paraprofessional ranks where a large number of language and ethnic minority candidates exist (Ernest, 2005, 2006; Austin & Rintell, 2006), and working to sustain in-service professional development opportunities to better serve diverse students ( Nieto, 2003; Solsken, Willett & Wilson, 2004). In less ambitious cases, efforts are limited to one lesson or course on diverse populations to satisfy a program’s “diversity requirement.” The quality of preparedness and resources that teachers can draw on to be successful in teaching children that are different from themselves depends directly on the quality of effort put forth.

These various initiatives have also produced a resistance documented at both the macro societal level and the micro level in the classroom. Gradually increasing since the late 1970’s, attacks on the preparation of teachers have included a rejection of calls to address explicitly multicultural issues as “political correctness” and “useless knowledge” (Gaarder, 1976; Ballou & Podgursky, 2000; Finn, 1999). Throughout the 1990’s, concerted efforts to denigrate the value of these diversity and multicultural courses coincided with the denigration of the social capital of liberal arts, higher education, and, in particular, teacher preparation programs located in schools of education (Stotsky, 1999; US Department of Education, 2002). Ironically, businesses have

increasingly come to value such education and have implemented highly visible programs to educate employees at all ranks about antiracist policies. At the same time, federal funding has increased the participation of women and underrepresented ethnic and non-anglophone populations in math and science education, which has facilitated their entry into higher education and professionals contexts where they had previously been underrepresented. Unfortunately, this redirection of funding has come at the cost of major cuts to all “non essentials” or, in the parlance of local schools, “specials,” meaning programs in the arts, physical education, and to some extent (until recently), world languages at the elementary level, historically a place where many women have entered into professional life as teachers, administrators, counselors, etc. Thus as “gendered” and economically productive sectors in our education system open, other sectors have become vulnerable.

Today, at a time when the diversity of the student population most warrants a culturally responsive education and at a time when global matters demand critical understanding of diversity, many institutions in the U.S. have yet to be successful in raising the graduation rates of language and ethnic minorities from high schools and colleges (Moore, 2005). Wong Fillmore (1997, p.131) states “... we do a good job educating children who are judged to be capable; we do much worse than most nations with students we judge to be not very promising. It is a fact that poor and minority group students in this society are far more likely to be at the lower end of the educational scale than at the higher.” According to the authors of the most recent national study, Cochran Smith & Zeidner (2005), more than 80% of pre-teachers come from White European backgrounds and many come from suburban neighborhoods, vastly different from the communities in which they may find their first teaching assignment. For in-service teachers, the communities in which they are teaching are growing more diverse with populations that outpace national birth rate growth (Latinos and Blacks), as well as immigrants, migrants or refugees. Furthermore, as Marilyn Cochran-Smith has indicated, even teacher educators, given that most of them are also from the dominant group, may resist challenging their own assumptions about persistent social inequities that affect diverse learners’ (Cochran-Smith, 2006). This problem is compounded by the fact that the United States is often portrayed internationally as not having sufficient understanding of, much less concern with, perspectives or cultural values other than its own. Many K-12 educational institutions have had little impact upon their students’ understanding of social, political and cultural matters in a global context.

Nationally, many scholars have identified the need to address these issues, among others, Wilberschied & Dassier 1995; Villegas & Lucas, 2002; Nieto, 2004. In addition to coursework intended to prepare culturally responsive educators, Villegas and Lucas (2002) identify two pre-service program characteristics that are of particular importance for becoming a successful teacher in culturally and linguistically diverse classrooms: learning experiences and fieldwork. Banks, et al., (2001, p.97) identify essential principles, in which teachers need to:

- Uncover and identify their personal attitudes towards racial, ethnic, language and cultural groups.

## INTRODUCTION: SETTING THE STAGE

- Acquire knowledge about the histories and cultures of the diverse racial, ethnic, language and cultural groups within the nation and within their schools.
- Become familiar with the diverse perspectives that exist within different ethnic and cultural communities.
- Understand the ways in which institutionalized knowledge within schools, universities, and the popular culture can perpetuate stereotypes about racial and ethnic groups.
- Acquire the knowledge and skills to develop and implement an equity pedagogy.

So how can teachers and teacher educators, and those who prepare world language teachers in particular, take these points to build classrooms that create democratic citizens who can use their language abilities to communicate productively with the diverse populations in the local and global target-language communities? How can the institution of language teacher education encourage responsiveness to interethnic, interracial, and intercultural diversity, as well as openness to educational innovations that address existent and emerging inequities in educating underserved populations? How can technical knowledge about languages and language learning be used in these neglected areas so as to address populations least served in world language education?

Given the normalizing forces of institutions, there is a modernist inclination to believe in a one-to-one relationship between their policies and their implementation. However, insights from poststructuralist theories show the inconsistencies, contradictions, and gaps that also exist in the practices of any institution, (Cherryholm, 1988), including school. Thus, in preparing teachers, we should never ignore their potential for influencing their future educational institutions. Given the potential for human agency to dynamically shape social forces through both activities and language use (Ohara, et al., 2000), modifying language use to value diversity can have a significant impact. Therefore, regardless of how strict or confining a curriculum may be for a teacher, the values expressed by that teacher through the process of instruction can affect the classroom environment and beyond in powerful ways.

As teacher educators in the FL teaching profession, we must rise to the challenge of preparing teachers who can thrive by drawing on diversity as a resource with the goal of “building new realities for diverse learners.” But even within world language-teacher education programs, depending on the level of institutional commitment to promoting equitable education to diverse populations, diversity requirements may be deeply embedded throughout the program’s entire curriculum or they may be limited to one course. Given the impact of difference and diversity on the formation of teachers themselves, as well as on their future learners, I draw on principles from socio-cultural theories, postcolonial theory, and critical theory to conceptualize content for a course I have designed to prepare teachers to develop appropriate foreign-language programs and curricula. In developing such new language programs, teachers can use classroom diversity to understand the broader diversity beyond the school walls. In other words, I want to cultivate an understanding of difference as a way not only to approach linguistic diversity but also to engage more critically in understanding oneself in relation to others “of different backgrounds.”



Below I draw on three examples of student work to illustrate the processes that occur in this the aforementioned course. I hope to show how these students conceptualize dynamic, culturally-responsive curricula which have the potential to address diversity both in our teacher education program and in their future teaching.

In the Language, Literacy and Culture practitioner program at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, students select from a list of 33 credit-bearing courses that draw on various socio-cultural perspectives on language learning: sociocultural theory, critical pedagogy, post-colonial theory, and feminist theories. In my course, students are given the opportunity to creatively apply ideas and theories from their previous coursework to design a summer language program. The course relies on dialogic interaction from which ideas are generated, discussed, and refined. Students then apply these concepts to the summer language program that is their curriculum design practice, and then critically reflect on their experience to assess whether they have achieved what they intended.

The course examines a variety of issues pertaining to diversity in the U.S. and the world within the context of instructional practice, such as the differences in language use that exist in any community (sociolinguistic) and how power relations impact our treatment of difference (relative inclusivity). In addition, we also look at the creative impulse that emerges from interacting with diversity of opinion: the freedom of thinking and ability to transcend previous limits of conceptualization experienced by an individual in contact with people who think and speak differently than he or she does. As such, our dialogue in this course demonstrates that diversity-responsive instruction cannot be framed by outmoded thinking equating issues of diversity with “minority” concerns (Fraynd, 2003). Rather, in this chapter, the process of considering multiple perspectives through dialogic instruction allows for participants to 1) conceptually move beyond their habitual ways of interpreting the world of language teaching and learning, 2) offer alternatives from their positions of power as program directors, and 3) reflect on the knowledge constructed through engagement with difference. The specific examples cited here are from participants who designed curricula responsible for preparing language learners to enter what has become a rapidly-changing social universe of world languages users. Concretely, this perspective on diversity calls for a reframing of curricular issues to include 1) a shift from building curricula for learners as “tourists” to one for learners as responsible citizens of the world, 2) a shift from the frame of independently functioning individual to one of participant in a community, and 3) a shift towards expecting to benefit from critical cross cultural encounters with difference (“the other”). Accompanying these shifts in thinking are language instructional practices that are built upon recognition of the immediate relevance of local and international diversity.

## **Responding to Diversity at the Program Level— A Process for Innovation**

In world language education in the U.S., we are facing a major challenge to tailor instruction about a wide variety of languages to an increasingly diverse and multilingual student population. At the same time, the national teaching force is primarily con-

stituted by a population that is increasingly and persistently from middle-and upper middle-class suburban backgrounds far removed from the experiences typical of diverse urban populations (Cochran-Smith & Zeichner, 2005; Melnick & Zeichner, 1998). In addition to recruiting more teachers from outside the middle-class suburbs, we must thus train the current population of teachers to view diversity as a resource.

Every semester I enter into my course on language program design and evaluation with great anticipation. This course is an elective in our teacher education master's program and is offered to help educators envision "what can be" in terms of world language or English as a Second Language curriculum. Participants are guided through planning programs of language study, shown how to advocate for their language programs at a public poster presentation, and given assignments to put their new understanding into practice. During the following semester, they refine their instructional plans, implement their language curriculum for ten days, and evaluate their students' and their own learning. Later they construct a portfolio which includes not only documentation of the process of planning their curriculum but their critical reflections throughout the experience as well. This program-design course attracts upper division undergraduates from the world language departments as well as international and local graduate students in our Language, Literacy, and Culture program.

I look forward to the program-design course because it requires a creative synthesis of the principles we teach throughout the master's level program. These principles are derived from sociocultural understandings of language as more than a "linguistic system in the mind." We work within perspectives that see language playing a significant role in shaping social interactions and language as a resource with which learners 'make sense' of the social world around them (See Hall-Kelly, 2000; Kramche, Thorne, Wong, 2006). Rather than traditional views that define language by its linguistic structures, we conceive language as an essential tool for acquiring knowledge and a constituent part of the architecture of that knowledge, both of which are changing and dynamic. Through social interactions, class members learn about language as they learn to use language to socially construct knowledge of the world and their own identities (See Norton & Toohey, 2004). 'Reading' in the sense of interpreting that social world thus helps develop their identities not as passive observers of the world but as active participants who recognize how their activities contribute to shaping that world. We try to build critical literacy in our students so they can appreciate how language works in powerful ways to shape social relations through texts. In particular, teachers need this appreciation to construct more democratic and equitable opportunities for learners to use language to shape their lives and communities (Leeman & Martinez forthcoming; Jenks, 2000; Comber, 2003).

Given that the increasing demographic diversity in the U.S. and the immediacy of global contact places a multitude of social worlds in direct contact with each other, it is essential to develop critical literacy of academic language practices or genres. Three aspects of critical literacy are identified by Luke (2000) as (1) a meta-knowledge of diverse meaning systems, (2) the socio-cultural contexts of production, and (3) the use of these meaning systems in everyday life. Teachers have to decide how knowledge, ideas, and information are being structured in different media and genres.

In the context of language teaching and learning, a “critical literacy” for teachers would include the expectation that they interpret how current instructional practices in world language classrooms operate to structure learning about language, construct world views reflective of that language’s culture, and perpetuate unchallenged assumptions about learners. I would add to this the need for developing a critically literate stance that examines opportunities to aid the individual learner’s active participation in diverse communities, through which teachers may gain access to deeper understanding of those communities (Nieto, 1999; Kubota, 2004; Kumagai, forthcoming; and Burns, 2006).

While these ideas have been taken up by the English as a second language field (Maley, 1997), they have not been as widely embraced by the world language field. Diverse perspectives about the nature of language, literacy, and critical multicultural education are cycled throughout the courses in our Master’s program. These perspectives are highlighted in several courses on assessment, curriculum for L1 & L2 literacy, content development, foundations for language, literacy and culture, classroom observation, and student teaching. In essence, the principles are 1) language and literacies are viewed as socially constructed; 2) knowledge and ideas are structured in socially recognizable genres that have consequences for those knowing how to use the genre; 3) knowing how to interpret and produce these ways of using language and literacy requires social knowledge that is gained by learners through guided experiences; and 4) preparing learners to collaborate as active culture agents in shaping their communities means building from what they bring to the course and expanding their repertoires.

## **Entering into Discussions with Diverse Academic and Social Backgrounds**

Our teacher education program includes simulated interactions that are familiar to many who have “engaged learning” activity-oriented experiences such as internships and student teaching practica, inter-group dialogue experiences, and interdisciplinary team teaching, or who have engaged in building and being a member of learning communities. What these approaches share is the provision of opportunities to modify assumptions about diverse “others.” Students in the language program design course enter at various points in their progress through our Master’s program. For some near the beginning of their studies, the principle concepts and theories often seem like little more than “technical” vocabulary and are not fully appropriated until action has transformed their initial understandings of the terms. For other students who have been socialized through several of our Master’s courses, the principles are more conceptually clear; yet they still need practice in implementation. Putting their interpretations into an action plan and dialoguing with peers about that plan are two steps that foster the critical reflection and creativity necessary to moving emergent concepts toward an initial design. Freire (1998) wrote, reflection is invaluable... as men and women simultaneously reflecting on themselves and the world, increase the scope of their perceptions by beginning to direct their observations toward previously inconspicuous phenomena. (p. 63). Regardless of when the

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Masters' students enter the degree program, they are encouraged to make use of these principles in all their course work.

In the course under discussion here, the students move conceptually back and forth between abstract ideas and concrete expression through classroom discussions of course readings and the continuing formulation of their own innovative language programs. Out of the diverse opinions that emerge from classroom discussions, they struggle to bear these principles in mind even as they design and redesign their language programs. At a certain point in these discussions, they need to create a theme that represents how their language and literacy objectives will be used in instructional activities. Later, when they have implemented their language curriculum, they evaluate the viability of their theme, but they also assume the responsibility for evaluating the impact of their programs on learners, the wider community, and even themselves. Throughout their experience planning their programs, their reflections and subsequent conceptual shifts become valuable lessons for them as language program directors, curriculum planners and educators.

Learning in this course is defined as shifts in language use and conceptualization. Thus, as the program developers define their directions, their plans are given critical feedback from other peers. It also represents a parallel path to addressing the projected shifts in language use and identity of their future students. In the context of world language pedagogy, this means challenging the "given" images in textbooks to help learners become critically literate and intellectually appreciative of their own positions vis-à-vis other cultures. This orientation also shifts the program developers' visions from the frame of individual learning in classrooms to collective learning from the resources of a diverse community, resources that not only teach but need to be respected, critiqued, and augmented by the learner him/herself. In other words, language learning becomes a process of developing membership in an "other" community. This orientation also extends a Neo-Vygotskian position<sup>1</sup> on an individual's co-construction of learning with more expert others (Wells, 1999a, 1999b) to the consideration of the type of communities we hope to build from diversity.

The students' language programs are built to respond to what are perceived as inadequacies in society. Using a Vygotskian definition of learning as a conceptual shift reflected in changing language practices, I direct the classroom's perspective on diversity from a humanistic relativist position (all diversity is universally valued) to one more aligned with post-colonial expectations. Post-colonial orientations identify and then analyze who or what is perceived as occupying the normative center and who or what is being marginalized. Further theoretical insights are drawn from critical theory that looks at critical cross-cultural encounters with difference ("the other") and asks who benefits from difference<sup>2</sup>. This line of thinking pursues the question of how benefits are produced and why. Incorporating these shifts in thinking in our teacher education program offers possibilities of building instructional language practices that incorporate recognition of diversity both locally and internationally. Through efforts to build diversity into our program development process and to reflect upon its consequences, our future language curricula developers will hopefully integrate different voices into their own ways of operating in the world that result from their experi-

ence of grappling with considerations of difference in both their language curricula deliberations and their implementations of those curricula. Clearly, teacher education programs embrace certain forms of dialogic learning, such as inquiry-based learning, community-service learning, and project-based learning (1997). However, these do not necessarily require challenges to neglect of diverse views nor to the value of drawing on diversity as a resource<sup>3</sup>. Whenever teachers experience and develop skill in working together as a diverse group, it is our expectation that they will be able to bring this valuable social capital with them into their other classrooms and schools.

The examples below were selected to show these conceptual shifts in diversity understanding. They draw on our course discussions and on students' posted reflections in WebCT, courseware that, in addition to logistics and announcements, allows for shared reflections on course texts and classroom observations. The student posts on Web-CT are not graded but do count towards their final grade as participation in class discussion. The posts serve to make public the in-process thinking about the texts we read and allow for further in-class discussion reflecting concerns, questions, and doubts. An important characteristic of these discussions is that all concerns, regardless of what principles they challenge or whose concerns they represent, have a realistic chance of being voiced, critiqued and implemented.

During the 13-week semester, these future language program directors are charged with designing an entire program — including publicity, recruitment, selection and enrollment of students, curriculum design, supervision of other teachers, assessment of student learning, and program evaluation. From the very beginning, they must imagine the students who will be recruited into their programs. It is in this imagination that “diversity” is anticipated. Often the diversity is an expression of what they are already familiar with, a response guided by their experiences in learning or teaching language. In the Master's program, the issue of learning how to use the students' diversity as a resource in the classroom is one theme typical of the face-to-face meetings with our course instructors. In turn, this helps in exploring diversity in their own language curriculum. This fact frequently comes out through our weekly process of student presentations and discussions about our principles, goals, and objectives, whose theoretical foundations are negotiated and supplemented by our assigned readings. Students draw on weekly assigned readings and written responses to discuss their planning with their instructor and their peers. They conduct observations of other world language classrooms in the area to see the degree to which diverse students actively participate in classroom activities. These observations provide an additional opportunity to question the normative content of our professional practice. Such questioning requires a disciplined effort to identify the concrete value-implications of a particular instructional practice. In analyzing lessons and discussing student engagement in learning, they become keen to better design the instruction to be used in their own evolving world language curriculum. Later, at the end of the course, these future program directors display and present a poster of their courses to a wider audience at a forum open to the public, and in their final reflections, they respond to the feedback received from that presentation. This is the cycle of discursive and physical activities that precede the implementation of their language course curricula.

Below are representations of oral discussions and written commentary that form the language data set collected during one semester (Spring 2006) for tracing the generation of ideas that students weave into their projects and for providing explanations of their theorizing. Notice how the selections incorporate “events” in which student questions initiated new directions of inquiry, examples of how the collaboration draws on learned principles that become reinterpreted into themes that help guide their process of curricular development. These three vignettes are admittedly critical moments selected from among the interactions of five selected students who took on the role of language program directors to develop new curricula. They are also illustrative of general tensions that emerge when making programmatic decisions of this nature. In dialectical fashion, the issues produced by these tensions are confronted and then surmounted to produce a more responsive curriculum. In essence, they are a part of “putting into action” the participants’ theory-building.

**Example #1—From the center to the margins**

Mohammed, a French teacher in his late thirties from Morocco speaks about his plans for his program.

*Mohammed:* I have taught French before and often the curriculum is designed to help students see themselves as future tourists in Paris, France. Everywhere in advertisements for French instruction, you can always see the Eiffel Tower and scenes from Paris. I don’t think the textbooks help students see the wider Francophone world.

*Theresa:* So are you saying that you want to challenge the tourist orientation and focus on the Francophone world?

*Mohammed:* I hadn’t thought about it that way. But I would like to focus on the Francophone world and help high school students in the U.S. get a better sense of geography. I interviewed a local French teacher and she welcomed the idea of helping students improve their knowledge about geography. Perhaps I hadn’t questioned their identity as tourist, but I did think of them as future tour guides who could design posters for the various countries. So I guess I was questioning their identity as consumers of stereotypes based only on France. I wanted to give them a chance to represent a Francophone country based on what they find out about the country. I was thinking I could allow them choice and through this choice they would bring in their discoveries about diverse countries and later present through their posters. This would allow the whole class to learn through their own diversity and still allow for creative use of French for learning geography.’

Mohammed had taken to heart the notion that diverse learners would appreciate various means of engaging their talents. It was clear he was drawing on concepts from multiple intelligences (Hall-Haley & Austin, 2003; Annenberg World Language Program) and inquiry-based learning (Wiggins & Tighe, 2003; Tchudi & Laffer, 1997). Mohammed wanted to create an opportunity for students to use French language to learn a content area and incorporate various systems of representation to allow for communication of what the students had discovered. From here, he could introduce

the language that fit their needs to communicate their understanding. Yet one additional step that was as yet as an unrealized possibility for him was critically reading the currently available curricular materials as providing a limited number of identities for learning French. The middle-class orientation of learning French for tourism or travel would be nearly impossible for many cash-strapped families, let alone those who are impoverished and barely surviving. In presenting a system of deferred gratification for learning French, textbooks actually could be read as disincentives for those who cannot imagine themselves in the identities provided by language textbooks. Our discussion moved our thinking to consider the ways in which textbooks and materials actually may perpetuate colonialism through focusing students' attention on Parisian French as the center and not valuing the local varieties of French in use throughout the Francophone world (Canagarajah & Canagarajah, 1999; Tollefson, 2002; Pennycook, 1998). Were there other French users in the Francophone world who could be the focus of French language learning, and thereby shift students' interest to inquiries on variety within a language-speaking community, reflecting Mohammed pondering of where he fit in to the preexisting model of French as white Paris? Mohammed's curriculum could be further expanded to encompass issues of intercultural education, issues of immigration and how communities respond equitably to newcomers (Oster & Starkey, 2000). Later Mohammed took up these ideas and continued developing his language program to offer alternative narratives to that of France as the exclusive center of French cultures.

**Example #2—"Cultural representations are not that easy. How do I get away from creating stereotypes?"**

This was the question that Linda, Arlene, and Bonnie were grappling with. They had decided to collaborate on building a program that would address the segregation that was occurring in their urban school district. They wanted to bring teens together to communicate in Spanish, to learn from each other, and "to have fun." Linda, an Afro-American teacher of Spanish in her mid-thirties, worked in an urban school, and was well aware of studies that examine the educational and social benefits of diversity upon the quality of learning in general (Hurtado et al., 1997; Zuniga et al., 2002). Student-body diversity brings with it richer opportunities for exposure to multiple perspectives and an opportunity to overcome racial and ethnic stereotypes. Nonetheless, while the national population is increasingly more diverse in our nation, re-segregation has also taken place due to suburban flight, charter schools, and increased income disparity (Orfield & Lee, 2005). In Linda's school district, the student population reflected these national trends. She wanted to reach out to attract the students' interests in music through teaching what is often minimized or left out: the contributions of African Diaspora communities in the Americas.

Bonnie, a White woman in her late twenties, who had taught for a few years previously in Hawaii and Central America, thought their efforts could make a difference here by using the 5 Cs as described in the standards to go beyond the individualistic notion of communicative competence and strive for building "communities of practice," a notion that derived from both socio cultural theory and critical feminist theory. Arlene, another White woman in her late twenties just entering into teaching,

agreed to join in with conceptualizing this program because she felt she could also improve her command of Spanish while at the same time collaborating with Linda and Bonnie, a past high school friend. In my discussions with this group, who created an acronym for themselves as the “LAB,”<sup>4</sup> they struggled to come up with a theme that would appeal to teenagers and would incorporate each of their strengths or “funds of knowledge.” Collaborative learning is an important feature of addressing diversity (Annenberg, 2004). However, collaboration is successful when members’ cultural funds are tapped and valued in the creation of some jointly-constructed activity. Here, respecting and allowing for diverse members to shape the procedures and outcomes is a naturally embedded test of not only recognizing the power of collaboration, but enacting it as a struggle with vocal differences in viewpoints. This group’s process illustrated a struggle to collaborate with a greater recognition of conflicting values and points of view. Each member, Linda, Arlene and Bonnie, brainstormed individually about a subject theme. They debated merits of their goals, and proposed language and literacy and content objectives until eventually their different perspectives were reconciled. Their deliberations over which oral and written genres to incorporate as goals had to be negotiated before addressing the participants in our course. Bonnie’s ideas often prevailed because hers were typically the first viable ideas about their programmatic theme during the limited time they spent together during each planning session. Gradually, as the LAB group successively met, the thematic content changed from learning language to constructing a yearbook, to learning social literacies party planning, to learning language through a history of popular music and burning CD’s of party mixes.

When the group presented their initial draft in a public forum, the comment from a professor that most resonated with them was that their theme “Salsa and Chips” could be interpreted as a stereotype of Spanish as a language only good for fiestas and partying. The stinging realization that they could be seen as diminishing, rather than increasing, the cultural value of Spanish usage was a major reason for their decision to reconsider their theme. This new found insight also opened them to serious consideration of Linda’s earlier suggestion that they incorporate music from the African Diaspora into their program for Spanish language study, something that Bonnie and Arlene had not initially accepted. In the end, they decided to make learning this music a major part of their language program, as it not only appealed to teenagers but gave them a different medium for the study of language, literacy, and cultural change. Their final efforts shifted to creating a program for teenagers to learn Spanish language through music and sharing their compilations with others across ethnic and racial groups.

### **Example #3—Working with Diglossic Languages: Choosing between Oral and Reading and Writing Objectives**

The most challenging language program to design was also in the newest language to be offered, Arabic. Fatima, a teacher for the previous five years in a private school, was the pioneer for this course. She had long thought about the diversity of written Arabic and its disconnect from the oral vernaculars of many Arabic groups. Most language programs taught Classical Arabic as if it were a spoken form rather than what



it actually is — primarily a written language. For her new Arabic program, Fatima was wondering “Could critical literacy be introduced when the written mode was so distinct from the oral?” The curricula of less-commonly-taught languages often simplify the complex diversity that characterizes their usage. Thus has frequently been inadequately dealt with in the Arabic teaching profession. When there is diglossia, the written form is wholly distinct from the oral language. Yet all too often in FL academic settings, the written receives more attention. The problem goes beyond the mere register differences that are common to users of Romance, Slavic, and many other languages. For languages in this diglossic group, conventions of use are traditionally prescribed from a long history of separation between oral and written language usage. On the other hand, the emergence of cyber communities has given rise to the use of vernaculars in writing. Songs and other popular media also become sites for this mixing of written and oral. Typically, the slice of the world that is provided in Arabic-as-a-world-language classrooms is often the most traditional, accepting diglossic separation and favoring the written over the oral, despite the obvious defiance by the users in the real world (Al-Nowaihi, 1999; Al Batal, 1993; Palfreyman & al Khalil, 2003; Simawe, 1997.).

Fatima anguished over how to support students as they begin to face the actual complexities of the Arabic-speaking world. Her main idea was to bring learners into various social routines involved in family life. In this way, her social goal of creating a family constituted by her students could then re-enact identities that would afford opportunities for looking at relationships that become normalized through spoken Arabic and that lent themselves to shaping one’s language use. She initially planned on sharing meals as her theme, inviting guests whom her students would prepare to receive, and concocting a banquet with these invited guests as the culminating activity. She was still concerned about how to introduce the written forms that corresponded to the language they were learning orally. She planned on using English to explain the difference between the oral and written language, but how? Since I was not aware of how the diglossic situation was culturally expressed in various social interactions in Arabic countries, I asked her to brainstorm the media and genres that made use of oral language conventions. Popular music, comics, e-mails, websites, theater, and short stories all came to mind. Furthermore, this led to the realization that within the Arabic-speaking world, Saudi versions of oral communication have become the most widely-understood variety due to their dominance in producing mass media. She began planning to create lessons of the written transliterations of oral Arabic that would lead to student understanding of written conventions, but also to use oral Arabic in authentic genres to demonstrate her organizing theme of familial language practices. Fatima could also incorporate her idea to challenge students to look at the Arabic representations in the media in the U.S., and to question the images being created by the few corporations that control the production of news in the U.S. She decided that this approach could accomplish various goals of language learning at three levels: socially intimate (family), mass media, and in the public sphere. She also felt that this pragmatic knowledge, appropriately applied, should work for language in both the U.S. and Arabic-speaking worlds. She set out to build these into a viable working plan for ten days.

## Discussion about the Classroom Examples

In each of the above three examples, our Master's students gradually took up identities as language program directors — informing their program decisions with interpretations that sprang from our discussions of principles from their readings and past learning. They responded to critical feedback from their instructor and their peers and then returned to redesign their programs based on the experience. We have no expectation that these initial steps will always result in the implementation of flawless language programs, for there is ample evidence that the building of teacher skill and confidence to work successfully with diversity and difference must be first grounded intellectually and supportive of experientially rich learning. As their instructor, I gradually took on the consultant role, learning while at times prodding and pulling out decision-making knowing that those decisions might need to be revisited later on. In creating our programs together, we had to decide how to take into consideration such issues as our own prior experiences, those notions that had been pre-sanctioned by the research, and material from past courses on language and learning. At the same time, we had limited information about who would be our future “diverse” students. From these often contradictory sources of information, a principle-based language and content curriculum emerged that would address the state standards, meet the students’ own objectives, and meaningfully engage diverse learners during the 10-day summer course of language and content study.

In these vignettes, I have represented a selection of critical moments that reflect the practices that we encourage in future language professionals: namely, (1) drawing on diverse texts (own life experiences as text, others’ lives, and professional ) and resources (professional & state standards, students and their community, and diasporic communities), (2) collaborating with diverse colleagues within diverse power relations (peers, consultants, community leaders, researchers), (3) developing a critical stance towards how normative practices in selecting units of language instruction affect diverse students, (4) developing a reflective stance towards creating programmatic innovations that address inadequacies in currently existent programs, and (5) being professionally responsive to emergent and often unexpected learning by diverse learners that could inform the direction and quality of instruction.

The vignettes I have selected are examples that represent the kind of reoccurring episodes in the course which challenged normative ways of thinking in our profession. All these practices contribute to shaping a professional stance that reflects our understandings of how to use language and language instruction to build new realities for diverse language learners. This stance is most closely linked to a concept known as “engaged learning” in which learners address complex, real-world problems. According to Colby (2003) and Palmer (1998) : typically, learning from this type of instruction takes place in 4 four configurations: 1) academic course work, volunteer experience in local communities and structured reflection, called ‘service learning;’ 2) joint faculty, students and community members participating in research to solve problems within a community; 3) students in learning from peers, as well as faculty in collaborative groups; and 4) project or problem-based learning about complex, real-world issues which becomes the structure for learning.

Now more than ever, this space for critical practice is needed. As nationally prescribed curricula become reified for all students, professionals need to be ever-vigilant in assessing across programs the curricular effects on diverse learners. As the process of multiple perspective building is learned by teachers, they build skill in enacting Bourdieu's notion of reflexivity, which is accounting for one's location and habitus in order to sustain engagement with ideas and social issues as practical problems. Bourdieu encourages researchers to develop a 'multiple perspectives' orientation (Bourdieu, et al., 1999, p. 3). As a teacher educator and language researcher, I see that this multiple perspective orientation is useful not only for researchers, but for anyone working toward a pluralistic vision of education. I am challenged to face the diversity of my students as they develop interpretations of our teacher education programs' goals, the current professional literature, and the growing diversity of their own students. As my students push to deepen their understanding and probe my knowledge with their interpretations and understandings, my learning through this course continually also helps me to challenge the venerable tenets of our field as they are applied locally in classrooms. Our discussions aim to re-assemble our understandings into curricular configurations that will affect local students' learning across a language program.

What are the instructional approaches for world language and content that help prepare teachers and students to "read" a culturally particular world outside their own familiar sphere of experience? In the earlier vignettes, the directors initially designed their programs anticipating diverse students, presented their plans to receive critiques, and then responded by searching for further answers. The cycle of making tentative approximations or "drafts" of their language curricula and seeking and giving critical feedback (about whom the curricula serve, what language and literacy practices indicate this, how the curriculum connects to diverse student lives by extending language learning in a meaningful way outside the classroom, and how their curriculum builds more complex thinking through language and literacy) contributes to socializing the future program directors to seek outside "readings" or interpretations of their curriculum. They help form an awareness and appreciation of how "other" stakeholders respond to their projected curriculum. Over the years that I have taught this course, I have observed that this process affects how the program directors also involve students in making approximations, tentative understandings about the world language and culture being taught during the implementation phase of their programs. The directors, who then become the instructors, engage students in similar inquiry to find patterns across their understandings to check them with "others" and use literacy practices to write to outside sources, to interview "others" to seek verification of their understandings. Often the process leads to more student questions that inevitably require ending the cycle before all questions are answered. Frequently, the directors are approached, particularly in the elementary and middle school programs, by learners' parents who are impressed with their children's newly developing language learning and who want to find ways to continue the program. This response has been consistent across the language programs offered thus far, Chinese, Japanese, Russian, Spanish, Swahili and French. No doubt this approval legit-

imates the directors' identities as professionals. For several, the experience has launched their careers in many ways that I had not anticipated.

How does this educational experience affect diverse students relative to their progress in learning language through our academic institutions? Because the programs last for only ten days, the program directors do not collect data on their students beyond their programs. Funding would be needed to do follow-up research on how this experience may affect diverse learners. What is evident from my review of the programs created thus far is the growth in the directors' attention to monitoring their own cultural assumptions about language and language learning that might affect diverse learners. I do also find evidence of growth in the directors' recognition of the value in understanding and drawing on diversity in target language communities abroad, as well as their global diasporas, to better understand and change their interpersonal and instructional practices.

Moreover, as each new cohort of directors create their own language programs and later act to implement their curriculums, particular answers to these questions on diversity and difference are dynamically shaped. Their work helps them question ready-made curricular materials that have minimum responsiveness to local diverse communities. Undoubtedly for me, this course has opened up an area of research. More importantly though, directors' own professional voices about their progress have been expressed outside of my course. Several have gone on to receive funding to implement their work in local school districts (Abel, 2002-03). Others have presented at regional conferences such as the Northeast Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Language (Ites, 2005; Xie, 2005). The impact of these activities outside the course demonstrates that their learning has reached a level that enables them to participate in innovatively shaping the realities of professional discourse and educational institutions.

## **Conclusion**

In order to foster awareness in future teachers of any educational program's curricular effects, it is important to engage teachers in unpacking the larger language program's own assumptions about normative language and language learning, while also examining how the teacher education programs shape teacher identities in the ESL and FL professions. The course described here challenges cultural perspectives with multiple opportunities for thoughtful reflection and feedback. Teachers build understandings of their theoretical framework by selectively drawing on language and language learning principles. Peers, as well as their instructor, are guided by critical dialogic learning experiences that address complex issues in language instruction, through use of "pedagogies of engagement." In this way, teachers experience co-constructing knowledge with communities of diverse teachers and learners (Palmer, 1998).

Specifically, the teachers are guided to consider: 1) the missing "others" from diverse social language groups that have been largely ignored by normative curricula, 2) "others" that have been socially isolated from groups in the same community, and 3) "others" whose diglossic communication systems have been reduced to reified standards of written language. They are engaged in exchanging and critiquing their positions with their colleagues, and then turning their analyses back on themselves.

Hence this article advocates for curricular attention to diversity not only in the content of the teacher education program (Shultz, 2000), such as including courses that introduce critical multicultural theories, multiple intelligences and critical literacies, but also in the process of preparing teachers in their course work as well. The teacher education program that includes space for teachers to design and implement new programs for their learners also helps to build in healthy skepticism about the very applicability of the teacher education program's tenets. Therein the program facilitates a built-in process for questioning the relevance of the tenets to local schools. In this way, as the teacher education-program participants negotiate and sustain a 'habitus' that is receptive to and relevant to changing local communities, teacher educators are afforded the opportunity to continue to grow with the diversity. As such, their programs also can allow for the possibility to let these differences shape the program to be relevant to new and complex times of learning and instruction.

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## INTRODUCTION: SETTING THE STAGE

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## Notes

- 1 For discussion of diglossia see Ferguson (1959). Other languages that belong in this group are Greek, written Mandarin Chinese in Cantonese and other non-Han dialectal regions. For further reading on Vygotskian contributions specific to foreign and second language learning, see Wong, 2005; Lantolf & Negueruela, 2005; Hall-Kelley, 2000; Donato & McCormick, 1994.
- 2 Recent second and foreign language research informed by postcolonial theoretical contributions can be found by referring to Mahir, 2003; Pennycook, 1998; Canagarajah, 1999; Phillipson, 1992.
- 3 The term diversity is an inclusive term that includes many social, biological, and ethnic distinctions. I follow Melnick & Zeichner (1998) in focusing on "social class, gender, race, ethnicity, and language differences under the heading of cultural diversity," (p.94).
- 4 Two of the students had read about the Bakhtinian Circle in earlier classes and this seems to have helped them see themselves as "intellectuals" contributing new knowledge as a group, while simultaneously playing with the notion of creating a music laboratory with the students.

# *Twice as Smart: The Exchange of Cultural Capital in a Two-Way Immersion Program*

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## **Abstract**

How is the classroom dynamic affected when native English speakers and heritage language speakers learn academic content together in two-way immersion programs? What influenced teachers to believe that their students were “twice as smart” as those who were enrolled in either traditional bilingual education or all-English programs? This article examines qualitative data from interviews with two-way immersion teachers and administrators in five elementary school two-way immersion programs in which culturally and linguistically distinct groups of students learned academic content together through their two languages. The article addresses how cultural capital differed for students, families and teachers from the two language groups, how the exchange of cultural capital occurred within the TWI, and the extent to which each group was advantaged or disadvantaged at school.

## **Introduction**

Foreign language, world language, and bilingual teachers are well aware that language education has to do with a great deal more than just language. As Pierre Bourdieu might argue, whose language gets valued and how language groups are viewed are issues of power and social stratification (Lareau, 2003). In today’s climate of accountability and standards, the ability to understand, speak, read and write standard English and to perform well academically on tests in English form the core of the debate over annual yearly progress (AYP) and academic achievement gaps under No Child Left Behind. Little pressure exists for students in the United States also to perform well in other languages. The strong value for English both socially and within educational institutions in the United States can inform our understanding of expectations and academic outcomes for children who speak other languages, and also for what happens when English-speaking children are placed together in the same classrooms with children from other linguistic and cultural backgrounds.

This study examines the perceptions of teachers and administrators in five two-way immersion (TWI) programs in the southwestern United States. The purpose of this article is to examine the exchange of cultural capital among native English speakers (NES) and native Spanish speakers (NSS) and their families, as well as associated changes in relationships of power and status in TWI programs. The design of the two-way program, in which two language groups study academic content together in both

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Spanish and English, provides a unique opportunity to examine intergroup relations, the kinds of cultural capital each group brings to the educational context, the dynamics associated with differing styles of parental involvement, and the ensuing expectations for both teachers and students. Through a critical, multicultural approach to qualitative research, the article investigates what influenced teachers to believe that TWI students were “twice as smart” as children in other programs and how these beliefs may have helped shape program outcomes.

## Theoretical Framework

The theoretical work of Pierre Bourdieu suggests that social structures are inherently unequal in power, and that power determines whose activities are valued in a given social situation (Bourdieu, 1977, as cited in Lareau, 2003). Power and privilege are passed from one generation to the next as part of a process that is largely invisible, accepted as the “natural order,” and legitimized by society. Members of both dominant and dominated groups tend to accept that “status, privilege, and similar rewards are ‘earned’ by individuals; that is, they are perceived as resulting from intelligence, talent, effort, and other strategically displayed skills” even when these privileges have actually been conferred as a result of their social class membership (Lareau, 2003, p. 275).

Bourdieu theorized that individuals are socialized to acquire class-based knowledge regarding normalized ways of acting, thinking, and interpreting meaning that feel natural and comfortable. What Bourdieu referred to as individuals’ *habitus* influences, in turn, their access to *cultural capital* during interactions with social institutions such as schools (Lareau, 2003). Cultural capital consists of personal dispositions, attitudes, prior knowledge and experience that facilitate access to social networks and institutional resources. The cultural capital of middle class families tends to confer advantages for their children due to its congruence with the systems of social relationships within educational structures (Lee & Bowen, 2006).

In a study of racially diverse middle class, working class and poor families, Lareau (2003) found that while race was an important factor in many social situations, social class trumped race in conferring advantage to children in school. She also identified an important class-based difference in families’ childrearing practices. Both White and Black middle class parents tended to approach childrearing through *concerted cultivation*, characterized by the active effort to systematically promote and monitor their children’s repertoire of “talents, opinions, and skills.” Middle class parents in the study tended to maintain tight control of their children’s schedules, and to cultivate a reasoning-focused discourse during family discussions. They were also observed to “hover” over their children both in and outside of school and “did not hesitate to intervene” on their behalf. Middle class children, in turn, tended to exhibit a sense of entitlement displayed through a predisposition to question authority, and to “talk back” to adults.

Working class and poor families, in contrast, tended to prefer childrearing practices which Lareau (2003) termed the *accomplishment of natural growth*. These parents were more likely to allow the “spontaneous unfolding” of children’s development.

Their concern centered around providing a basis of security, support and basic needs such as clothing, housing and food. Children were allowed a good deal of autonomy to initiate informal play and to interact with peers, siblings, and cousins. The researchers observed fewer adult-initiated activities, fewer disputes with siblings, and less talk, including less “talking back...whining and badgering.” At the same time, clear boundaries were maintained between adults and children through a tendency for adults to use more directives than reasoning-oriented discourse with their children. These families seemed to regard language as a means of communication rather than as an end in itself. Poor and working class parents avoided questioning their children’s teachers, and seemed less confident in their efforts to intervene on their children’s behalf. The author concluded that neither approach to childrearing is fundamentally superior to the other, except that the concerted cultivation approach seemed to prepare children for greater success in school and subsequent career paths. This, she argues, has more to do with the congruence of cultural capital between middle class families and the U.S. educational system than to any inherent differences of intelligence or ability on the part of the children.

## **Setting**

Aymes Independent School District (AISD) is a large, urban school district located in the southwestern United States (pseudonyms are used to protect privacy). Like many large cities, the district enrolled a substantial proportion of students whom it classified as low-income (82%) and “at-risk” (60%) at the time of this study. Nearly two thirds of AISD students were Hispanic, and close to one third were learning English as a second language. The schools selected for this study were located in a variety of neighborhoods, including a mostly European American, middle class neighborhood; an inner-city neighborhood that was in the process of gentrification; a mixed working class/ middle class neighborhood housing African Americans, Latinos and Whites; and two neighborhoods that were inhabited by primarily low-income Latino families consisting of recent immigrants from Mexico, Central and South America as well as second and third generation Hispanic families. *Aymes Two-Way Immersion Programs* AISD has offered bilingual education to Spanish speakers for a number of years. As research findings regarding effective programs have emerged (e.g., Ramírez, Yuen, Ramey, & Billings, 1991; Thomas & Collier, 1997), the district has adapted its model accordingly. Current program rationale, for example, cites Thomas and Collier’s (1997) conclusion that English language learners who begin kindergarten with no proficiency in English and who enroll in enriched academic programs such as two-way and one-way developmental bilingual education can reach grade-level academic standards in English by the end of elementary school and maintain this level of achievement throughout the secondary grades. Based on this research foundation, the district has transformed all of its bilingual education programs to better correspond with what is known about effective practice. One-way developmental bilingual programs (DBP) and two-way immersion (TWI) in Aymes follow an identical model, with the objectives of developing proficiency and high academic achievement in two languages, improved self esteem, and positive attitudes toward other cultures. What

distinguishes two-way immersion from all of the others is the integration of native English speakers together with native Spanish speakers in the same classrooms, whereas all other bilingual programs in the district enroll Spanish speakers only.

The first two-way immersion program in the district began in 1994 at McClure Elementary School. The program was considered so successful that it has expanded to 15 schools, including 10 elementary schools, three middle schools, and two high schools. The goals for AISD two-way immersion (TWI) program students include: (a) development of communicative competence and literacy in Spanish and English; (b) high academic achievement for all subject areas in both languages; (c) development of positive attitudes among groups and toward other cultures; and (d) improvement of self-esteem. Children in both language groups were expected to function at grade level in both languages by Grade 4.

Like the other bilingual programs in the AISD, TWI followed the 90:10 design, in which students received instruction primarily in Spanish during the early grades, gradually increasing the amount of instructional time in English until Grade 4 and beyond, when instruction was divided about evenly between the two languages. Within the early grades of TWI programs, students received reading and writing instruction and language arts, as well as most other subjects, in Spanish. In all grades, students were scheduled to receive 45 minutes per day of English through Art, PE, and Music, in addition to an English as a second language (ESL) or English language development (ELD) block which gradually increased in duration from kindergarten (30 minutes per day) to Grade 3 (60 minutes per day). The ESL/ELD component was integrated with Science and Social Studies. In Grade 4, the two languages were to be equally distributed, with 50% of instructional time in English and 50% in Spanish.

## Sample

As principal investigator for this study, I worked closely with AISD Multilingual Office staff to select a sample of TWI programs that were both well-established (with a minimum of seven years since inception) and well-implemented (conforming to Multilingual Office guidelines for TWI programs). The final sample consisted of five programs located in three subdistricts of AISD. Because this investigation focused on the early grades of TWI, I selected teachers who had taught Grades K-3 to participate in the study. Fifty-eight of the original 66 K-3 teachers who had taught in the sample programs during the years from 1996-97 to 2002-03 completed surveys. Of these, 25 took part in in-depth interviews. I also interviewed six central office staff, five principals and five support administrators, including assistant principals, dual language coordinators, Title I coordinators and reading specialists. All of the teachers in this study held bilingual certification and, with two exceptions, were native Spanish speakers. The 300 children who had been enrolled in these programs during the study years consisted of 233 native Spanish speakers (NSS) and 67 native English speakers (NES). Ninety-six percent of the NSS qualified for free or reduced lunch (an indicator of poverty), while 67% of NES fell into this category. In terms of ethnicity, 100% of NSS were classified as Hispanic. The NES group was made up of 65% Hispanic, 22% White, 12% African American, and 2% Asian. Despite the high Hispanic composi-

tion, only 2% of the students in this latter group were proficient in Spanish at entry to Kindergarten.

These demographics were further distinguished in the ethnic and socio-economic breakdown by school. Four of the TWI programs enrolled a high poverty (92 – 100% free and reduced lunch), majority Hispanic (92 – 97%) student body, a demographic that generally applied to both NSS and NES groups. Due to these demographics and the difficulty of attracting English-dominant Hispanics to the program, only one school in this sample attained a 50:50 mix of NES to NSS. However, every TWI enrolled at least some NES. McClure Elementary School differed from the other four schools in that it was located in a neighborhood with a larger and more affluent European American (referred to by participants as “Anglo”) population, permitting the TWI to attract more native English speakers. The NES student body, in contrast to the other four schools, was 40% White, 15% African American, 2% Asian, and 43% Hispanic. Of the NES group, only 30% qualified for free and reduced lunch, indicating that the English-speaking students came from a higher socioeconomic status than the NES groups in the other four schools. McClure’s NSS students were also somewhat different from those enrolled in the other four schools, with 80% qualifying for free and reduced lunch, meaning that one fifth of this group did not come from impoverished families. Interview data indicated that the higher SES Spanish speakers at McClure may have been children of diplomats and foreign business people, presumably from families who had also attained greater levels of formal education than the low-socioeconomic status (SES) Spanish-speakers.

## **Data and Method**

Findings reported here are derived from the exploratory phase of a larger investigation that examined the long-term bi-literacy achievement of English language learners in two-way immersion programs (Acosta, 2005a, 2005b). During the first phase, I conducted interviews with teachers and administrators in the five TWI sample schools in order to examine the sociocultural context for the investigation and to identify factors that might predict ELL literacy development in the programs. The scope of the larger study focused on the influence of teachers’ instructional practices on student outcomes, and thus did not extend to interviews with students or parents. The current investigation utilized qualitative data from the larger study in order to analyze teachers’ and administrators’ perceptions of the interaction between the two language groups within the TWI classroom.

For purposes of the current study, I applied a critical, multicultural approach to qualitative analysis. This poststructural approach was appropriate because it allowed a more layered and multiculturally responsive level of analysis than some of the more traditional qualitative paradigms. Approaches such as positivism and postpositivism (Guba & Lincoln, 1994), in which empirical data are assumed to faithfully represent the world, may work relatively well when participants and researchers share a common set of cultural assumptions. The critical, multicultural approach, in contrast, permits a deeper analysis of race, class, and language issues among groups who hold divergent perspectives. Researchers using this approach examine the perceptible fil-

ters of participants for hidden, culturally-mediated assumptions and alternative interpretations of meaning. This framework further permits a focus on power relations among groups, whereby power is seen “not simply as one aspect of society, but as the basis of society (Kincheloe and McLaren, 1994, p. 145).” The multicultural, critical approach thus allows the critical analysis of the perceptions and underlying assumptions of group members, as well as the ways in which each group is advantaged or disadvantaged by power relations.

I conducted teacher interviews collectively in most cases, in three schools as a whole group and in two schools by grade level. Only K-3 teachers were selected to participate because these early grades were considered pivotal to the students’ development of multilingual and multi-literate identities and to their development of attitudes and behaviors surrounding language, culture, and ethnicity. Participation was voluntary, with the permission of school principals, and identifying information was changed to protect confidentiality. Interview guides combined a structured set of questions with an informal conversational approach in order to assure that research questions were addressed across all five sites and to provide opportunities for unanticipated topics and issues to arise (Patton, 1987). Most interviews took place in English except for one case in which the teacher was a Spanish monolingual. The interviews were recorded, transcribed, translated by the author into English if necessary, and then coded for purposes of the larger study. At various points throughout the study I consulted with individual participants either in person or by telephone to clarify information and to assist interpretation. The data were then re-coded for the current investigation, attending to issues of race, class, culture and power within a grounded theoretical framework that was informed both by the participants’ and the re-researcher’s perspectives and by related research literature. During data analysis, data were triangulated when possible across multiple sources in order to increase the reliability and validity of the findings. I sought new themes that emerged from my data, as well as alternative explanations and contrary patterns that might invalidate my original thinking (Patton, 1987).

## Findings

### Quantitative Findings from the Bi-Literacy Study

Quantitative findings from the larger, bi-literacy study are briefly summarized here in order to provide context for the findings of the exploratory phase that form the focus of the current article. The bi-literacy study examined the long-term reading achievement of native Spanish speakers (NSS) and native English speakers (NES) in the five AISD sample TWI programs. In order to control for prior ability, scores on the Language Assessment Scales — Oral (LAS-0) at entry to the program were entered into a regression analysis together with post-test achievement scores. The pre-test scores indicated that NES students performed just under the proficient level ( $M = 3.8$  on a scale of 1 – 5) in their native language, and not proficient ( $M = .8$ ) in Spanish. NSS scored on average in the limited English proficiency range ( $M = 1.8$ ) and, similar to many low-income Spanish speakers, only moderately proficient ( $M = 2.8$ ) in their native language, with no indication that either group as a whole or on the schoolwide level exceeded norms for academic potential.

After program treatment, outcomes on standardized tests of reading indicated that both groups were achieving above grade level in Spanish throughout elementary school, with native Spanish speakers (NSS) scoring somewhat higher than native English speakers (NES). When students were tested for the first time in English at Grade 5, NES performed, on average, on or above grade level, and maintained this level of performance through Grade 7, the last year in which data were available. Native Spanish speakers achieved somewhat below grade level in their second language at Grade 5, and effectively closed the achievement gap by attaining grade level norms by Grades 6 or 7. (Acosta [2005a, 2005b] analyzes these data for the influence of three different early reading approaches on long-term outcomes in both languages.). These outcomes support previous findings (Thomas & Collier, 1997, 2002) indicating that TWI is one of the few program models for ELLs that has succeeded in closing achievement gaps with native English speakers by the end of elementary school.

### **Qualitative Study**

The qualitative findings fell into five over-arching themes related to how cultural capital differed for students, families and teachers from the two language groups, how the exchange of cultural capital occurred within the TWI, and the extent to which each group was advantaged or disadvantaged at school. The first theme, *Crossing borders*, discusses how negative attitudes on the part of some families and school personnel toward bilingual education changed when they observed the success of the native English speakers in the program. *Is it real?* addresses teachers' doubts about the "realness" of some of the two-way programs where only a few (mostly Hispanic) NES were enrolled, and why this mattered. *"Under the gun"* discusses Anglo and Latino parents' differing ways of becoming involved in the school, and *"Creating a monster"* follows what happened when Latino families exchanged cultural capital with Anglo families through a parent involvement program. The last theme addresses how TWI teachers came to believe that their students were *"twice as smart"* as students from bilingual programs that did not enroll native English speakers.

### **Crossing borders**

What happens when native English speakers "cross the border" into the bilingual classroom? The formation of two-way programs in these five schools seemed to provoke conflicting attitudes about languages and language groups, particularly in the early years. Initially, some school personnel outside of the TWI opposed the program, reflecting the pervasively negative attitudes toward bilingual education in the community. "We English speakers really took a lot of heat from family members, from friends, from neighbors," reported the Anglo American coordinator of a TWI who had enrolled her own child in the program. "People telling us we're crazy, you're going to ruin your kid's education. Even my child's father wasn't real sure about this and he was a Spanish speaker, although he didn't speak Spanish much at home." Many teachers in the English strand at these schools reportedly agreed in the early years that "there's too much Spanish here anyway, these kids need to speak English." "I'm an Anglo ...and I love English. I thought it was sheltering [the Spanish speakers] in



Spanish, and that it was too much [of their own language],” a librarian at one school acknowledged. “But I was wrong.” After the program had been running for four or five years, these kinds of doubts seem to have been dispelled. This evolution in attitudes may have been at least in part the result of watching achievement scores rise. It may also have had to do with the status ascribed to learning Spanish by the native English-speaking families.

Once their children were enrolled, NES families, according to one school principal, often expressed their delight that their children were learning Spanish. “Pretty much the children are very comfortable and parents and grandparents come back and tell us, oh, my goodness. It has only been the second month and they are already saying all these words and they are teaching us. As we sit at the dinner table or we are driving down the road, they are naming things in Spanish.” As one teacher explained it, “The Anglo parents see the value of learning to speak a different language. They see it, they capitalize on that, I don’t have to send my kid to Europe to learn this, he can do it here. It’s like a status thing. It’s like get him in while it’s still hot.” It had even been suggested, according to another teacher, that the district form dual language classes without Spanish speakers (presumably a foreign language immersion program). This, in her view, was “a kind of discrimination” that would value bilingualism as an asset for English speakers and as a deficit for Spanish speakers.

Marta, a teacher at Esparza, reported that in the early years of her school’s TWI, an Anglo American parent stood up in a parent meeting to suggest that “‘this program is just for the Spanish speakers, because it is really in their language and they are getting all the information and they are learning.’ And then one of the Spanish speakers said, ‘Oh, wait a minute. I thought it was for the *English* speakers, that they were learning Spanish.’ So, they both kind of went, ‘ohhhh!’ ” This incident, said Marta, seemed to epitomize the way both groups began to realize that they needed each other in order to succeed. The Spanish-speaking children relied on their English-speaking peers in order to access instruction in English, and the native English-speaking children relied equally on the Spanish speakers to access instruction in Spanish. At the same time, the presence of NES seemed to raise the status of the program in the eyes of the community, many of whom had previously harbored doubts about bilingual education.

### **Is it real?**

Because many schools in AISD were located in majority Hispanic neighborhoods, three of the five programs struggled to attain the 50:50 ratio called for by the two-way model. Some teachers expressed doubt that the programs in the highly Latino schools qualified as two-way immersion. “I think if you only have two or three English speakers in each dual language class, that doesn’t make it a real dual language program. It should be 50:50,” asserted Rosa, a teacher at Esparza, a school that was still struggling to increase its NES population. “I know that some schools get away with having Hispanic children having English as a native language and that’s how they can claim 50:50,” added Minerva, “but in my opinion it’s not.” Her TWI colleagues agreed when Minerva explained that she believed this because “I would have liked to have seen more cultures.” This belief, thus, provoked the question of how the presence of

native English speakers made a difference in the program, and whether the culture and ethnicity of the NES mattered.

Teacher participants mentioned the speed of English acquisition for NSS as one of the most observable advantages of integrating NES into the program. “One of the major things I saw different in bilingual and dual education,” observed Ana, a kindergarten teacher at McClure, “was that the [NSS] children began to speak English pretty fast at lunch time. Where before [in traditional Bilingual Education], they always had spoken Spanish when they were isolated with only Spanish speakers.” Sara, another McClure teacher, said she believed that teaching English to NSS was easier than teaching Spanish to NES because of the strong dominance of the language in the socio-cultural context. “It’s easier in a sense because the Spanish-speaking [children] here at McClure are so exposed to English in the world and in the classroom and playground and in the lunchroom.” Some teachers at other schools with a smaller NES enrollment agreed that even when there were only one or two NES in the classroom, NSS tended to shift toward English during informal social situations. “There is a lot of interaction ... and they talk a lot in English on the playground, at lunch, and even those who do not know a lot of English start developing it in a few months, [even if] it is broken English,” reported a third grade teacher at Hawthorne who had fewer than half NES in his classroom.

Even when their classrooms contained only a few NES, some teachers felt that these students served as important models for literacy and academic success. It was important for this purpose that the NES were academically strong. “Having [native English speakers] makes a difference providing they do come to the class and bring some skills from home or from another grade level,” suggested Antonio, a third grade teacher at Hawthorne. It didn’t matter if the NES came from a low-income family, he added, “but if an English-speaking kid doesn’t know how to read English what difference is that going to make in helping another friend, but if they do come and they do have some writing abilities of course that’s going to help.” Requiring both groups to learn academic content through a second language was also perceived as important for equalizing their status. “I think it helps children to not feel like they’re second class citizens if both English speakers and Spanish speakers are having the same trouble learning the other language, I think that helps with their self esteem,” suggested Juana, a kindergarten teacher at Boyd.

Another benefit teachers mentioned for integrating the two groups was the opportunity to exchange cultural knowledge. “I think it broadens the possibility of knowledge because of ... the way the groups are together, so they have more exposure to a broader content of knowledge,” added Imelda, a second grade teacher at Esparza. “The cultural background brings along knowledge. This morning [in my traditional bilingual education classroom], I was talking about foods and products of this country, [and] I just realized my Hispanic students have no idea.” If there had been native English speakers in the classroom, as in her TWI classes, she suggested, they might have been able to impart this important background knowledge.

This exchange of knowledge, furthermore, did not have to occur at the expense of losing students’ home culture. Native Spanish speakers “get to do a lot of activi-

ties to bring their background information from home and their culture and they get to share a lot of their knowledge,” asserted Silvia, a Kindergarten teacher at Hawthorne.” In this way, added Imelda, “the native Spanish speaker is at the same time discovering another culture, while she’s not losing the knowledge or appreciation of [her] own culture. So it’s enrichment.” In sum, the effect of including English speakers in their classrooms was perceived as quite positive. Both groups of students, according to their teachers, benefited through the development of their two languages, increased cultural understanding, enhanced self esteem, and equalized social status.

### “Under the gun”

The integration of Anglo American families with Latino families in the TWI may have affected the level of expectations for both students and teachers. In four schools, English-speakers came predominantly from second or third generation Latino families who had assimilated to the dominant language but may have continued to maintain differing cultural capital that influenced the ways they interacted with school personnel. In the one school in which the English-speaking families were primarily Anglo American, these families seemed to become involved in their children’s education in a qualitatively different way than did the Latino families.

“There’s a huge difference,” observed a TWI trainer, “between those teachers that teach at the schools where the English speakers in the program are Anglos and the things that they say and the ones who teach at schools where the English speakers are also Hispanic.” Anglo American parents, in contrast with both English-dominant and Spanish-dominant Latino parents, seemed to apply a great deal of pressure to teachers regarding their everyday practices, according to reports from several participants. The dual language trainer, who worked with teachers from TWI programs throughout the district, was one of the first to notice this phenomenon as she interacted with teachers from schools in very different neighborhood contexts.

The teachers that are at the Anglo schools feel like they are under the gun all the time with their parents... The second grade teacher at [McClure, for example, where the English-speaking families tend to be Anglo]... is just inundated with concerns and why this is translated and how can I help my child at home. That has been a continual theme coming out of that school. We talked a lot about that [at the training] on Saturday. The others [who worked at schools where the English-speaking families were primarily Latino] really didn’t understand what we were talking about. It’s funny. I guess that is what cued me in is, they were sitting there and I could tell they were a little bored with the conversation. It just does not apply to them.

One of the effects of this constant parental pressure at McClure, according to several participants, was an unusually high teacher turnover rate at second grade, when teachers tended to feel inundated by parental interference in all aspects of their practice. Four consecutive second grade teachers in the TWI at this school each resigned after just one year. Several participants puzzled over the possible reasons for this pattern of teacher turnover. “My conclusion,” asserted McClure’s principal, “is that the English-speaking parents drive [the teachers] away.” This phenomenon seemed to

come to a head at second grade, according to one administrator, because “you are starting to make that shift at that point from learning to read to reading to learn. That is when the parents start to realize that they are in this for the long haul. The honeymoon has kind of worn off.” It is at this point that the Anglo American parents began to actively intervene, in large part perhaps out of the fear that they may not have been able to attain their desired level of control over their children’s educational experiences and outcomes. “The English-speaking parents, the affluent parents, are real compulsive about their kids,” the principal explained. “They get very upset if it’s a 93 and not a 94, and so on.”

Most TWI teachers, predominantly Latinos themselves, had never had to deal with Anglo American families before teaching in the program. An Anglo American administrator who also had a child in TWI speculated:

That is what is hard for these bilingual teachers to take, because they are not used to us [Anglos], culturally, a group of parents, doing that... Because traditionally, Hispanic families — they even have a saying. I give you my child. They give their child to the teacher to educate. They don’t question... A teacher is viewed, in the Latin American community, as esteemed. Whereas, in the upper middle class, White community, [it is thought that] you are a teacher because you couldn’t do anything else. They feel quite comfortable in questioning anything a teacher says, because if you had been competent, you would be a doctor like I am or a lawyer or whatever.

Conversely, however, some participants suggested that teachers who survived this pressure and decided to remain in the program tended to raise their expectations for themselves because they knew they would be held accountable for everything they did in their classrooms. It is quite possible that, because of this phenomenon, the programs with larger Anglo American enrollment may have experienced a corresponding increase in instructional quality as well as a difference in the school-wide culture of literacy. (Sample sizes were too small, however, to detect significant differences in achievement at the school level after controlling for enrollment in free and reduced lunch.) McClure, furthermore, housed a gifted and talented (GT) magnet program in addition to the TWI. Those parents, according to the coordinator, had “a tremendous regard for literacy and that has permeated throughout the school... And whereas our Spanish-speaking families came from a [lower] educational background, they came to see that when kids exchanged gifts, maybe they got a book, and they saw that books were valued in the community.”

### **Creating a monster**

Teachers and administrators at McClure reported that one of the greatest obstacles in the first years of the program “was the reluctance of the Spanish-speaking parents to get involved.” Prior to the creation of the two-way program, for example, teachers reported that many Latino families were so uncomfortable about coming into the school that they used to wait a block away to pick up their children. So when the TWI began, school personnel obtained a grant to conduct a parent involvement program. After that, “we had a lot of parent training, a lot of parent activities, this is your school, come to school. And so those parents who started, really saw a different change and

then they did feel that they were part of the school.” [Our principal] had Make and Takes for parents. Standing watching it almost made you cry. People with advanced degrees were staying home with kids while Spanish-speaking parents were teaching and helping English-speaking parents and you could just see their self esteem rise. I almost cried when I would see these women helping the other parents and English-speaking parents taking to it. But after a couple of years we said we had created a monster here because we had taught them to be as aggressive and demanding as English-speaking parents...It was actually kind of nice to see. They are as likely to be in the principal’s office whining about something as the English-speaking parents are.” The Latino families “became very empowered and they were also beginning to question the teachers and the teachers were just ready to throw their hands up and scream,” the coordinator reported. When teachers would come to her to complain, she laughed and reminded them that “this is exactly what we wanted...to empower parents.”

### Twice as Smart

Participating teachers from all five schools consistently described their TWI students from both language groups as “smart,” “academically gifted,” and “special.” “That group I had was a very smart group,” observed a first grade teacher. “They were probably all GT.” “You can tell a kid who’s smart,” added a third grade teacher, when “he is good in one language and the other, period, they just seem to get it.” These teachers had differing hypotheses about how the children became “smart.” A number of them seemed quite sure that the children must have been more gifted than their peers to begin with. “The children were special before they came into the program,” proposed Elaina, a teacher at Boyd. “When I started [in the early years of the program],” suggested her colleague Sandra, “they were supposed to be selected. That is part of the program. These kids are supposed to be — let’s just call them smart.” Some suggested that English speakers were particularly smart, and that this explained why many of them learned to read so quickly. “English speakers [in TWI] always started to read first. [Once they learned to read in Spanish] they were transferring the reading from Spanish to English with no English [reading] instruction at all.” Nelda, a teacher at Myers, observed that “there was a big discrepancy between the second grade dual language program and the Developmental Bilingual Program. [My counterpart in the DBP] would say, ‘[the DBP] class is so different, they just don’t get it. And oh, it’s so great when I have your [two-way immersion] kids ‘cause they can do everything and my kids can’t.’” Her explanation for this difference was that TWI students from both language groups must have been selected based on ability, and that DBP students were simply not as capable academically.

If there had been a selection process, students’ high academic achievement could have been explained as a result of prior ability. Data provided little evidence to support this explanation, however. Although a selection process was originally planned in three of the five schools, administrators reported that they did not ultimately implement it because there had been enough space in the TWI for every child whose parents applied. Pre-test data from the LAS, as described above, did not indicate any special academic or linguistic abilities prior to enrollment for either NSS or NES; in effect, oral language assessment scores for NSS, as for many low-income Spanish-

speakers, indicated that the children scored, on average, less than fully proficient even in their native language.

An alternative explanation is that the children's families may have self-selected; that is, the families who applied to the program may have done so because they were actively seeking a rigorous academic program for their children. Several teachers suggested that the TWI parents from both language groups already tended to be highly involved in their children's education when they enrolled them in the program. "These parents would have been involved with their children no matter what program they were in," suggested one teacher at Boyd, one of the schools that enrolled a high-poverty, high Latino enrollment. "I think that's why the students were so ahead of their peers," added another in the same school. As one teacher reported, "I know parents from both sides, some of the higher kids, are really involved and I have noticed that some of the low learners the parents are not involved at all." Teachers in all five schools agreed that parental involvement made a substantial difference for children from both language groups, and many agreed that it was a critical factor in the children's academic success.

There may be an additional explanation for teachers' perceptions that children were "smart." Teachers may have been influenced by the elite status of the program, which may have raised their expectations for all of the students. Furthermore, as Celia, a third grade teacher at Boyd suggested, TWI students were "twice as smart" because by building on the child's two languages, "you are molding and creating two people. You have the person that's going to go out to the world and be able to work in English in the English world and the person who's going out into the Spanish [world]. And then you have a well-rounded person because that person's going to be able to work in any situation." This explanation moved the discussion away from the child who was already "smart" prior to entering the program to the child who, through dual language instruction, would be able to live well in two worlds and to move easily from one world to the next. For those teachers who had not yet completed this conceptual transformation, however, it may have felt more comfortable to ascribe students' academic achievement to a preexisting "smartness."

## **Conclusion**

Findings from the larger bi-literacy study (Acosta, 2005b) that followed the exploratory phase examined in the current article support the conclusion that the TWI made an important difference in students' social, academic, and linguistic development. In contrast with ELLs who participated in more traditional, deficit-oriented programs (Thomas & Collier, 1997; 2002), English language learners in this TWI program were able to continue developing their home language while closing the achievement gap in English. Concomitantly, native English speakers in the program performed well academically while also acquiring a second language. It was apparent that the languages and cultures of both groups were valued within the program, and that participation in the TWI helped equalize social status in the eyes of many participants. The programs in these five schools thus appeared to be achieving their goals of bilingualism, biliteracy, positive interethnic relations, and high self-esteem for both groups.

Of note, even TWI teachers who had previously taught in the Developmental Bilingual Program, which followed an identical design except for student enrollment, said they noticed a strong difference in both quality and prestige. Considering that the main difference between the two programs was the presence of native English speakers, the integration of the two groups may have had an important effect on program processes and outcomes. Findings from this study indicate, moreover, that the enrollment of dominant group members in the TWI may have helped to raise the status of the program, to the extent that teachers, students and their families felt “special.” European American families’ high regard for the program seemed to help transform negative attitudes about bilingual education (and Spanish speakers) and to elicit positive perceptions of the TWI. The involvement of these families may also have helped attract additional resources, professional development, attention, and a willingness on the part of teachers to work harder than they had in other bilingual programs.

Over a decade ago, Fern (1995) observed a similar phenomenon at the Oyster dual language school in Washington, DC. Like many TWI, the author pointed out, Oyster was perceived as a “public school of the elite,” an island of excellence in an otherwise decaying inner city school system. Because European American families placed such a high value on bilingualism for their own children, and because the school was considered one of the few high quality academic programs in the city, the program became highly sought after. Every winter, parents would camp out for days on the sidewalk outside for the chance to enroll their children for the following fall. This elite status “[drove] up the academic standards, attract[ed] the best teachers, increase[d] parental and community support, and generate[d] money and advocacy for the development of school projects” (Fern, 1995). The poor, Latino and African American families, argued Fern, thus appeared to benefit directly from the integration of middle class White families in the dual language program in ways they would not have enjoyed in more traditional educational programs.

The socioeconomic status and ethnicity of the native English speakers may have made an important difference in the extent to which Spanish-speaking children and their families were able to acquire some of the cultural capital important to their school success. While it was difficult to determine from this study whether it made a measurable difference in academic outcomes, it is quite possible that the *concerted cultivation* approach employed by Anglo parents at McClure may have raised expectations for both teachers and students. Interestingly, Latino parents at this school who learned to adopt the Anglo parenting approach may have compounded the effect for teachers, leading them to feel they were being held more accountable than they would have been under the *accomplishment of natural growth* approach, in which Latino parents typically entrusted their children to teachers without question. At the same time, Spanish-speaking parents who adopted a more Anglo style of interacting with their children may have exposed them to socialization practices that were closer to those of the dominant group — and to the culture of the school.

The presence of native English speakers combined with the valuing of both languages in the two-way program seemed to help reframe some teachers’ perceptions of which children were “smart,” “talented,” and “good students.” Popkewitz (1999) sug-

gests that teachers' discursive practices form a part of their systems for ordering and classifying students. These systems, in turn, "normalize" students by establishing categories to distinguish among "normal" students and "abnormal students;" students who are "capable" and those who are not; those who can succeed, and those who cannot.

The current findings suggest that when value was ascribed to their language and culture by members of the dominant group, the native Spanish speakers came to be perceived as vital members of the group. This paradigm shift, in turn, transformed the teachers' discursive practices surrounding "smartness" and raised their expectations of the children's capabilities. As teachers' conceptions were thus reshaped, they may have transformed their practices in ways that led to greater student success. To some extent, the dual language discourse of some participants and observers seemed to move away from the traditional conceptions of solving inequity by "helping" the marginalized to access the power of the dominant group by becoming "more like us" (Popkewitz, 1999). Instead, this discourse helped move the two language groups toward a different kind of equity in which power was assigned to difference, and in which the Spanish language as well as Latino culture were elevated closer to the status of the dominant language and culture. However, some teachers' tendency to attribute the success of their students to a pre-existing "smartness" reflected the more dominant class assumption in which "status, privilege, and similar rewards are 'earned' by individuals" (Lareau, 2003, p. 275) due to their superior abilities, efforts and skills rather than to a structural change in power relations.

As a final note of caution, these findings should by no means be construed to imply that the Anglo style of parent involvement was inherently superior to that of the Latinos. Ultimately, the choice of which parenting style gets valued is a function of "arbitrary" standards that schools establish, with the assumption that these standards are somehow culturally neutral and rational (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977, as cited in O'Connor & DeLuca Fernandez, 2006). Furthermore, as O'Connor and DeLuca Fernandez (2006) argue, "the normative culture of the school ... places poor [and non-White] children at risk by privileging the developmental expressions more likely to be nurtured among White middle class children (pp. 8 -9)". The concerted cultivation approach appears to favor the kind of academic achievement that is normalized and measured on standardized tests; that is sought by many elite, competitive colleges; and that can lead to employment in prestigious professional work.

In conclusion, findings from this study suggest that two-way immersion programs are successful with low-income Spanish speakers not because the programs mitigate the effects of poverty for "at-risk" children (O'Connor & DeLuca Fernandez, 2006), but because TWI transforms the power relations between the two groups. In contrast to subtractive, deficit-oriented programs that ask students to relinquish their native language and culture in favor of the dominant language and culture, two-way immersion programs build on the prior knowledge, cultural identities, and languages that children bring with them to school. Two-way students thus maintain their own cultural capital while also acquiring some of the cultural capital of the dominant class, allowing them to become successful in both of their worlds. Thus, unlike their counterparts who attend more traditional U.S. programs for English language learners,



Spanish speakers in TWI programs are not forced to choose between maintaining their cultural identities and achieving success in society.

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# ***The Transformative Power of Diverse Realities: A Case Study of Accommodation and Teamwork***

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## **Abstract**

This case study details the changes in a novice TA—his change in attitude, the expansion of his knowledge base and repertoire of teaching strategies; the development of his ability to make accommodations for learners; and his growth in insight and skill—prompted by his willingness to conduct teacher research. His growth over a period of six months marked a parallel rate of growth in proficiency in his many of his students.

## **Introduction**

Rafael [Please note: His name and all others are pseudonyms.] having arrived from Mexico the day before, reported for a week-long orientation at the university where he would study and serve as a teaching assistant (TA). He was unaware that, in addition to the duties usually assigned to TAs, his future responsibilities would include individual tutoring for a student whose needs were substantially different than those of “typical” students at an American university. When this new foreign language (FL) educator encountered elements of diversity that prevented him from teaching in the ways that he himself had been taught, his understanding expanded and deepened with the challenge.

This case study details the changes in a novice TA—his change in attitude, the expansion of his knowledge base and repertoire of teaching strategies; the development of his ability to make accommodations for learners; and his growth in insight and skill—prompted by his willingness to conduct teacher research. His growth over a period of six months marked a parallel rate of growth in proficiency in his many of his students.

One particular student, Azhar, became a decisive influence upon him and his colleagues, despite the fact that his rate or degree of acquisition did not match that of his classmates. His own obvious motivation to learn and a wide range of extra help were insufficient in helping him gain the same level of proficiency as many of his peers,

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but his accomplishments were valid and pleasing to him and the support team that Rafael helped to establish for him.

Azhar, Rafael's tutee, seemed to be the embodiment of diversity itself—an aging, blind, African-American Muslim who neither read Braille nor used computers but who wanted to “learn to speak Spanish.” Rafael had few illusions about his ill-preparedness to accommodate diversity, but he welcomed the challenge of tutoring Azhar. As Rafael conducted action research, shifts in his thinking and practice helped him to recognize the need for an accommodation team for Azhar, and he was instrumental in its coalescence.

Through the empowerment of action research, Rafael transformed himself from a trainee into a leader and helped to create a learning community that extended beyond the classroom.

Rafael and other team members examined the implications of Haley's (2004) statement that “planning is a pivotal point of accommodation.” Planning, they determined, is diminished in worth unless it is integrated with several types of assessment of student learning, including those associated with action research. In addition, they learned that the collaboration of the support team that ensued from each person's efforts greatly reduced the demands on any given individual. The main purpose of this study is to document the transformations in the learner, Azhar, and in the tutor, Rafael, as the latter implemented reflective practice, engendered by his own action research and connected to theory. But, these changes did not occur in isolation, and the effects on other individuals in the collaborative team are integrated.

## Theoretical Background

Three conceptual frameworks guided this study, as well as Rafael's own investigation, and the instructional strategies of many members of the team. These are action research, alternative assessment (often used in implementing accommodative instruction) developed most particularly through backward design, and Gardner's Multiple Intelligences theory (see Haley, 2001).

**Action Research and Reflective Practice.** Many teacher educators have recommended practitioner action research as a way to reduce the perceived gulf between research and practice and to promote teachers' reasoning and reflection on their work in the classroom (Freeman & Johnson, 1998; McDonough, 2006). Lacorte and Krstel (2002) emphasized that action research casts the teacher into the new role of researcher. Teachers conducting action research must systematize what they do naturally in classroom teaching situations, when faced with a dilemma: Ask relevant questions; devise a plan to answer them; collect data and analyze it; draw conclusions from the analysis; determine appropriate courses of action and take them; and then evaluate the results (Donato, in Annenberg, 2004). This critical, reflective process helps to inform and to enhance awareness of L2 learning and teaching processes (Annenberg, 2004; Burns, 1999; Wallace 1998; Zainuddin & Moore, 2004). Several recent case studies have documented increased awareness and reflective practice. Zainuddin and Moore (2004) concluded that conducting action research facilitated construction of teachers' personal understanding of second language (SL) acquisition.

McDonough (2006) found evidence of broader insight into research, appreciation for peer teamwork, and adoption of new FL teaching practices. Rankin and Becker (2006), in addition to finding similar evidence, concluded that teacher reflection, when influenced by research, produces change. That is to say, a crucial element of reflective analysis is for the teacher to interpret his or her instructional behaviors in light of a theoretical framework and the evidence of data. The format of action research continues to prove itself adaptable to varied contexts and dimensions. Grant and Sleeter (2006) incorporated action research activities into the analysis and revision of lesson plans in order to promote pre-service teachers' understanding of theory and practice that meet the needs of diverse learners, Goker (2006) developed a model that aims to create a collaborative learning community characterized by reflective learning and growth for all stakeholders: students, teachers, and principals.

**Alternative Assessment.** Recent thinking advocates a view of assessment that involves both the learner and the teacher interactively in the ongoing practice of observing and appraising the learner's performance (Pierce, 2003; Hancock, 1994). Alternative assessment involves techniques or procedures that can be carried out within the context of the daily activities of instruction. Its purpose is to determine what the student knows or is able to do, but it also informs instruction (Maden & Taylor, 2001). Pierce (2003) explains that alternative assessment not only provides an accurate measure of what the student is able to do but also is integrated into the learning process so that assessment activities potentially promote learning. Other benefits of alternative assessments include the provision of descriptive feedback and the involvement of the student in self-assessment. In fact, according to Ross (2005) certain types of alternative assessment procedures that give more control to the student (through, for example, cooperative work or portfolios) result in higher student engagement and have significant effects on growth in language proficiency.

The term alternative assessment includes informal, authentic, portfolio, direct, descriptive, or performance assessment (Pierce, 2003). Limitations of space prevent a detailed description of each type; however, most instruments of this type share several characteristics: the student must perform, produce or create a response; the elicited responses are as close to real-life, authentic discourse as possible; the responses are assessed based on performance, not solely on knowledge; multiple language skills are integrated; both process and product are usually considered; the student's skill or mastery is observable at in-depth levels; and responses often demand higher-order thinking skills (Maden & Taylor, 2001, p. 3).

**Backward Design.** The backward design process identifies outcomes and assessments before learning experiences are planned. This is an essential element of the Learning by Design approach developed by Wiggins and McTighe (1998) and integrated into best practices for FL instruction (ACTFL, 2006; Annenburg, 2004). This type of instructional preparation calls for thinking first about what the learner will ultimately know and/or be able to do in the FL; second, how the learner will demonstrate such knowledge or skill; and finally, what activities, lessons and instruction will be needed to bring the student to that point. A teacher implementing backward design (also called backward planning) to plan a unit first identifies the culminating

product, performance, or task. Then, the teacher works in reverse to identify the successive benchmark assessments and learning activities that will be needed. Such planning encourages consistent focus on the desired results and is “an approach to curriculum and instruction designed to engage students in inquiry, promote transfer of learning, provide a conceptual framework for helping students make sense of discrete facts and skills, and uncover the big ideas of content” (Wiggins & McTighe, 2005, p. 4). Tomlinson and McTighe (2006) explain that differentiation of assessment and/or differentiation of instruction can be incorporated with backward design in order to meet the needs of each learner more effectively and to ensure that each student acquires the desired skills, knowledge, or understanding.

**Multiple Intelligences and Learning Strategies.** Some of the best approaches to bringing the student to the desired end(s) involve the implementation of Gardner’s Multiple Intelligences theory and overt instruction in learning strategies. Haley (2004) explains that the use of multiple modalities facilitates the best demonstrations of student comprehension and proficiency. Further, Oxford (1990) and others have developed learning strategy inventories that can be used as a point of departure for strategy instruction to complement multimodal learning activities. Howard Gardner’s Multiple Intelligences Theory (1993) is based on his research findings that each learner has at least eight intelligences. Al-Balushi (2006) has summarized these as follows:

1. interpersonal: ability to interact, lead, inspire, and motivate other people
2. intrapersonal: ability for introspection and self-understanding, for personal problem-solving, and for ethics and/or self-discipline.
3. linguistic: ability to use language effectively, to manipulate language, to be sensitive to words and meaning
4. logical/mathematical: ability to analyze problems logically, to use numbers, and to recognize or to create sequences and patterns
5. visual/spatial: ability to manipulate objects mentally in order to solve problems
6. musical/rhythmic: ability to recognize and reproduce tunes, sounds, pitches, melodies, and/or to compose
7. bodily/kinesthetic: ability to use the body and movement to express ideas and feelings, to handle objects nimbly in sports, crafts, art, etc.
8. naturalist: ability to understand various aspects of nature with appreciation, enjoyment, insight, and/or skill

Gardner (1993) provides examples of historical figures who best embodied each of the intelligences and explains that intelligences vary in dominance and strength in each individual. The intelligences determine how an individual processes, makes meaning of, stores, and expresses information. Each person, then, has an intelligence profile that incorporates each of the eight intelligences to a greater or lesser degree. The theory has impacted curricular design and provided an impetus for alternative assessment. Using teaching methods to enhance the various intelligences (cooperative learning, guided imagery, brainstorming, questioning, scientific inquiry, project-based learning), Al-Balushi (2006) implemented activities drawing on imagination, creativity, cooperation, social skills, self reflection, linguistic abilities, critical thinking, scientific thinking and attitudes towards nature, with the goal of improving different talents in blind children.

The application of MI theory has been found to lead to gains in standardized test scores and to reduce the achievement gap between white and minority students in MI-based K-12 programs (Shore, 2004). Students in these programs have been found to outperform their peers on basic skills tests at the district, county, and national levels. Other beneficial outcomes have been described: reducing behavior problems, facilitating inclusion, encouraging parent involvement, and creating an environment that encourages critical thinking (Shore, 2004). In adult instruction, specifically in teacher preparation courses, both Haley (2004) and Shore (2004) found that the study of MI theory and implementation of MI-based tasks in course work resulted in deepened understanding of diversity and greater ability to plan meaningful instruction after reflection. Reflection upon the strategies that one employs to learn a new language has encouraged language learners to be more autonomous (Oxford, 1990). One possible classification of language strategies is into two broad categories, language learning or language use (Hsiao & Oxford, 2002). Learners employ language learning strategies to improve their knowledge and understanding of the FL. These are conscious thoughts and behaviors that include cognitive, metacognitive, affective, and social strategies. These help the learner to memorize and manipulate FL structures, manage and supervise strategy use, gauge emotional reactions to lower learning anxieties, and enhance learning (for instance, by cooperating with other learners and seeking to interact with native speakers). Learners employ language use strategies when the language material has become accessible, even in some introductory form. These strategies may help learners use elements of the FL they have already learned. This category includes strategies for retrieval of information about language already stored in memory, rehearsal of language structures, and communication in the FL, even if there is incomplete knowledge (Cohen, 2003). Training language learners in strategy use may help language learners to self-assess their learning strengths and weaknesses, to develop awareness of what helps them to learn the FL most efficiently, to acquire a variety of problem-solving skills, to determine approaches to language tasks, to self-monitor and self-assess performance, and to transfer strategy use to other learning situations (Oxford, 1990). Peacock and Ho (2003) found a positive association between strategy use and proficiency, which corroborates findings of several previous studies. These three areas—action research, alternative assessment (guided by backwards design), and MI theory (augmented by strategies use instruction)—frame the case study described in these pages.

## **Method**

### **Context**

Our setting was a Midwestern urban university of 15,000 students, where the student population is, by nature, diverse. Those ordinarily considered nontraditional students are the majority here—not living on campus, working full time, older, returning, part-time, transfer, and co-op. Many are the first in their family to attend college. The demographics of this student body are as follows: 62% Caucasian, 18% African American, 2% Hispanic, 3% Asian, .2% Native American, 5% nonresident alien, and 9.8% unknown.

General language study requirements are based on whether the student has successfully completed two years of study of a foreign language in high school. Those students who have not done so must successfully complete one year of foreign language study at the university level. If a student has completed one year in high school but not two full years, the student must complete one semester of the same language at the university level. Students graduating from programs in the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences must complete an additional two semesters beyond the general requirement. The Chair of the Modern Language Department serves as the basic language coordinator, and there is a Coordinator for beginning level (Spanish 101, 102, 201, and 202—years one and two) as well as a Coordinator for Graduate Studies in Spanish. Graduate students in the Spanish program may earn a Masters degree with a concentration in either literature or linguistics and have course requirements totaling 36 to 40 semester credit hours, depending on whether they complete a thesis, an exam, or extra course work. TAs in this program generally teach one section of Spanish 101 during the first semester of their first year and one of Spanish 102 of the second semester. They also attend and complete requirements for the TA teaching seminar, which is taught by the Coordinator of the beginning level program. Rafael, as a beginning TA, followed this sequence.

A number of circumstances and events conspired to bring Azhar and Rafael together. First, through a series of communication misfortunes, we were nearly one month into the semester before Azhar could join his Spanish class. The lateness meant that we had to configure a team and devise strategies quickly. Second, Disability Services lacked personnel who could read Spanish rendering it impossible to have the textbook recorded onto cassettes. Further, the aide who could accompany Azhar to class to provide a running description of the visual cues could be funded for only a limited number of hours.

### **Participants**

The learner (Azhar) was returning to the university in order to complete his undergraduate degree in social work. Azhar had several challenges in addition to the loss of his sight 25 years earlier. Other physical problems such as high blood pressure and diabetes occasionally caused him to miss classes or tutoring sessions. Because he did not read Braille, and his computer skills were not extensive, the use of either of these resources (for input or output, for memory aids) were proportionally limited. For Spanish class, he relied on his memory, aided by re-playing class lectures and tutoring sessions on audiocassette. Most of the input as well as the information (grammar rules, especially) put a strain on his memory. In addition, Azhar tended to be very hard on himself. He consistently reported feeling impatient that he was not learning more or not learning faster.

The tutor-researcher (Rafael) was a 25-year-old male, a native of Mexico, newly arrived at the university in order to complete a Masters in Spanish. He taught one section of Spanish (in which Azhar was not able to enroll, for scheduling reasons) and supplemented his income by working in the Tutoring Center. Two instructors (Don and Elizabeth) were members of the team. Elizabeth, the language coordinator with more than 25 years of teaching experience, had been Azhar's first-semester Spanish

instructor. Don, Azhar's second-semester instructor, was 23 and in his first year of a Spanish Masters program. Although a native of the city in which the university was located, he had studied in Puerto Rico for a year and had returned with extensive knowledge of Caribbean music.

Others—who did not take part in the research but who formed part of the team—included Disabilities Services personnel, who remained in contact with Azhar because of the support that they provided for him in his other classes. In addition, they devised a way to make the most of the strongest resource that we had on the team: they rerouted some of their sparse funding so that Rafael's five hours weekly could be set aside solely for Azhar. Three additional TAs formed the Masters cohort for that year and happened to have office hours during time periods when Azhar came for tutoring or supplemental sessions. Because of the nature of the interaction, they became interlocutors, cheerleaders, sources of enrichment, and sounding boards for Azhar and Rafael. Thus, the physical environment provided closeness for the team, greatly enhancing the likelihood and the quality of any interaction with Azhar or support for Rafael's research.

## **Research questions**

### **Preparations for Accommodation and Research.**

As Azhar was in the process of joining Elizabeth's class, she, in her capacity as coordinator, was presenting the concepts of accommodation and alternative assessment, as well as action research and backward design, in her seminar for TAs. In addition, she was reviewing the principles of second language acquisition research and theory. Seminar questions encouraged the TAs to connect the issues with their experiences in the classroom. The topics included the limitations of several theories that contribute to an explanation of second language learning, factors that affect second language learning, interlanguage, and effective error correction. Elizabeth also supplied Rafael with some books and articles regarding FL teaching and blind students. After two meetings with Elizabeth, Rafael formulated the questions upon which he would focus his action research:

1. What can the student do, assisted and unassisted, to learn Spanish?
2. Using backward design what [alternative] assessment will show that the student has developed proficiency to a level that would satisfy state requirements for university students of foreign language?
3. What teaching strategies, beyond class, will help this student most?

Rafael agreed to be the focus of this case study, and he helped to construct a plan for collection of data that could be used in either his own action research project, in the case study, or in both.

### **Data Collection**

For this study, a mixed design was used, as explained by Miles and Huberman (1994, p. 24). The sampling strategies in such a design allow for triangulation (here, with Rafael's research and with student outcomes) and meet more than one need (investigating more than one type of growth). The sampling process of mixed design is "theoretically driven," in that it is guided by conceptual questions regarding the effi-



cacy of teacher research, the relevance of accommodation in instruction, and Gardner’s Theory of Multiple Intelligences (see Haley 2001). At the same time, the data for this case study proved to be useful to Rafael during his action research. We made a chart of the documents that would be analyzed as data, which are listed below, along with the abbreviations that would be used to identify them.

**Figure 1. Documents analyzed as data**

<b>Source (coding for source)</b>	<b>Generated by</b>	<b>Number of documents</b>	<b>How often written or recorded</b>	<b>How long for each session</b>
Weekly post-teaching reflections (Raf)	Rafael, Semester I and II tutor	17	weekly	75 minutes
Weekly post-teaching reflections (Elz)	Elizabeth, Semester I instructor; Spanish coordinator	15	weekly	75 minutes
Interviews (notes, transcriptions) of Azhar, Rafael, instructors (Don and Elizabeth)	2 outside interviewers	8	Beginning and conclusion of project	20 minutes each
Minutes of team meetings (Min)	Elizabeth	10	weekly	10-20 minutes each
Class observations, office hours, and tutoring observations (Obs)	Member of Spanish faculty; Member of Liberal Arts faculty; Elizabeth; Disability Services Coordinator	6	Beginning, middle, and end of Semester I and Semester II	Class: 75 minutes; tutoring and office hours: varied
Coordinator notes on Student work (AzTar)	Elizabeth	9	Bi-weekly	

**Data analysis**

For this study, data analysis was done using an effects matrix. Miles and Huberman (1994) define a matrix as two lists of qualitative data, one in rows and one in columns, set up to intersect with one another. An effects matrix helps to clarify which outcomes have occurred (p.137-141). The matrix provided a progressive view of the changes in Azhar, in Rafael, in other members of the team, and in the team as a whole. A random sampling of approximately 33% of the documents was shared with two members of the College of Education, who read them in raw (untranscribed) or transcribed form in order to corroborate the effects analysis. The majority of the analysis here will focus on the changes in Rafael.

## Findings and Discussion

The most important transformation, for members of the team, was Azhar's. Rafael continuously focused on the questions for his action research and allowed these to guide the accommodations he made.

### **Transformation One: Results of Accommodation Action Research for Azhar**

#### **1. What can the student do, assisted and unassisted, to learn Spanish?**

Rafael, in collaborating with the instructors, concluded that, although Azhar had daunting limitations, his personal strengths were impressive. These included integrity, maturity, intelligence, persistence, earnestness, insight, humor, extroversion, altruism, rhythmic and musical talent, prior L2 learning experience (a brief FLES experience with Arabic). The major liabilities had nothing to do with personal traits, but they were sufficiently serious: These included the lack of training and skills that would have reduced the load on his memory, and a lack of resources at the university and social agency to provide such training.

#### **2. What alternative/ accommodating assessment would show that the student has developed proficiency to a level that would satisfy state requirements for university students of foreign language?**

Rafael planned and implemented his tutoring sessions with a focus on facilitating Azhar's ability to perform in both formal and informal assessment situations. Formal assessment consisted of projects, mainly biweekly recitations and one project for each of two semesters. Both semester projects would be tape-recorded; the first was a narrative using regular and irregular verbs in the present and simple past (*pretérito*) tense; the second was a set of two originally composed *bomba* songs (along with a third, unassigned song, entitled "Gracias"). The informal assessment consisted of documenting the length and nature of Azhar's participation and interaction. At year's end, he had completed more than twice the contact hours of other students in the first year classes. This does not include the time that he spent going to extra class sessions (the same unit, taught by a different instructor); (re-) listening to class tapes at home; completing exercises on CD-ROM; seeking out, interacting with, and practicing with native speakers who were not affiliated with the university; attending Hispanic cultural events on and off campus; assessing and applying learning strategies; and immersing himself in intercultural interaction during and beyond tutoring sessions. At the end of two semesters, he had attained several of the benchmarks outlined in the K-12 Standards of his resident state. His contributions to his class by modeling aspects of Spanish, L2 learning, and living were invaluable to his support team and classmates. However, if the team had considered only his proficiency level, disappointment would have prevailed. Azhar's proficiency was below that of many of the other students who had completed the second-semester course, at Novice-Mid. The ACTFL *Standards* describe ACTFL's Guidelines for speaking at this level:

... communicate minimally and with difficulty by using a number of isolated words and memorized phrases limited by the particular context in which the language has been learned ... utter only two or three words at a time or an occasional

stock answer. They pause frequently as they search for simple vocabulary or attempt to recycle their own and their interlocutor's words. Because of hesitations, lack of vocabulary, inaccuracy, or failure to respond appropriately, Novice-Mid speakers may be understood with great difficulty even by sympathetic interlocutors ... to handle topics ... associated with the Intermediate level, they frequently resort to repetition, words from their native language, or silence. (p. 13)

Yet, his desire to communicate and his initiation of conversations were stronger than ever, and certainly much stronger than those of most of the students in all sections of second semester courses.

### **3. What teaching strategies will help this student most in the tutoring session and in class?**

Rafael inventoried the variety of teaching strategies that each team member used when working with Azhar and tried to build on them, as well as implementing his own.

The following description of roles includes a variety of strategies used by each team member, along with other aspects of his or her role. However, it is important to repeat that these strategies were employed because they were appropriate for this particular learner in this particular context, which is an important consideration when planning for accommodation (Haley, 2004). Each team member, within the role s/he played in working with Azhar, employed various strategies and completed various instructional duties.

**Tutor.** Rafael's background reading provided him with strategies and gave him confidence that he could implement them (Haley, 2004; Kashdan, 2002). These included but were not limited to: bringing the language into context (for example, using Spanish entirely throughout a meal, from ordering to eating); using multiple modalities; rhythmic repetition, call and response, dance, song, authentic conversation; generating and working with vocabulary lists aligned to Azhar's interests; and enriching Azhar's understanding of Mexican culture.

**Teacher 1.** Assuring that Azhar had equipment (text CDs, CD-Rom player); ensuring that Azhar had help from and interaction with classmates; taking class time to ensure that Azhar understood the concepts; devising short recitation assignments due on cassette every two weeks; meeting weekly for oral practice, progress checks, and needs analysis.

**Teacher 2.** Having Azhar act as the speech model and the inspiration for the class; consistently interacting with Azhar (for input) during class; ensuring that Azhar had help from and interaction with classmates; devising the final project for semester two and providing background information and materials; accompanying Azhar and his tutor in rehearsals and on language-speaking excursions; enriching Azhar's understanding of Puerto Rican culture.

**Coordinator.** Acting as liaison among team members; conducting initial and ongoing needs analysis; guiding accommodation, assessment, and action research; inventorying

Azhar's strategy use and teaching new strategies; working on affective aspects of learning.

**Disability Services.** Intervening regarding initial placement; funding Rafael for tutoring Azhar exclusively; providing a classroom aide, when one was available; monitoring Azhar's progress in light of his entire schedule.

**Department TAs.** Engaging Azhar in authentic L2 conversation

### **Transformation Two: Results of Conducting Action Research for Rafael**

Rafael revealed himself to be exceptionally bright, articulate, and refined, but very worried about his lack of teaching experience. Nonetheless, his action research project yielded a record of his growth as an educator. In addition to working with Azhar and the team, he extended his research, forming it into a final project for his graduate class in sociolinguistics, and made a presentation on accommodating diversity at a state FL conference.

In between that first day and year's end, Rafael documented his growth in many areas. The following quoted excerpts are from the weekly reflections that he submitted and from a transcribed end-of-the-year interview with him. Each of them has been triangulated with two other substantive sources—a combination of interviews with Azhar, minutes from team meetings, and/or notes from observations.

**1. Theory and practice—not only integrating but also critically evaluating.** “Management of the affective filter is not easy because it may change in one second. However, it is important that we learn how to manage it due to its importance in learning. While practicing the management of the affective filter, I found that it is more difficult to diminish the level of anxiety than to increase it.” (Rafael journal, 11/4/05)

**2. Understanding and incorporating ACTFL standards (5 Cs).** “I conclude that the comparison among cultures and even a comparison made in the same culture can be a determinant for a better understanding of the target culture and of its variety and, therefore, richness.” (Rafael journal, 11/23/05)

**3. Understanding more about the extent and the limits of his repertoire of teaching Strategies.** “My guess is that my apathy came from my lack of imagination for more activities.” (Rafael journal, 9/21/05) “I realized that there are many ways to teach Spanish and that I'm able to adapt myself to whatever situation, and, above all, to adapt my teaching style to the varied learning styles of students.” (Interview with Rafael, 6/1/06)

**4. Helping to create and animate the learning team, and perceiving himself as part of a learning community.** “I realize that I can use many more resources, and I am part of an educational community. I can make use of help from my supervisors and colleagues ... I have never seen a team join together to create a form of teaching and evaluation with a student. It was a big effort on the part of the teachers so that this student could have the necessary tools to learn the language.” (Interview with Rafael, 6/1/06)

**5. Incorporating reflection into daily practice.** “After each session I analyzed what I did with him, the work we did, and above all, what we accomplished. I was always left thinking about what I could do in the future for him, so he could acquire the language.” (Interview with Rafael, 6/1/06)

**6. Including a research component in the teaching process.** “Documentation in this case was of extreme importance, just as much as the work done with him. The information that his teachers and my supervisor provided me gave me a perspective about teaching and Azhar’s interaction and progress impossible to obtain from any other source. Also, in the future it will be remembered that the student is the most important source of information about how to teach that student.” (Interview with Rafael, 6/1/06)

### **Weaknesses of the Case Study**

Because this is a case study, the results and conclusions apply only to the context in which it occurred. It does, however, illustrate some possible strategies for accommodation for diverse students, including alternative assessment. It affirms the effectiveness of multimodal approaches to instruction, and it affirms the transformative influence of teacher action research.

### **Conclusions**

It was interesting that Rafael and the instructors initially used expressions related to “groping in the dark” (Minutes from team discussions, several dates). Because of the limited background knowledge and experience in accommodating instruction for a student having the needs that Azhar had, several felt as though their lack of procedural knowledge was a handicap similar to blindness. In retrospect, Rafael said, “This probably helped us to understand what he needed so much more quickly and so much better” (Minutes from team discussion, 3/14/06). Many teachers could frequently feel the same, if they are expected to make adaptations for learners without having much background about the learners’ conditions or needs. Looking realistically at Rafael’s growth and what he was able to facilitate in Azhar’s proficiency may provide some comfort or at least some reminders of some resources that are available, even if nothing else seems apparent. These include theory, the ability to do research, the ability to reflect, a potential community of educators at some level, ACTFL Standards, and some repertoire of teaching strategies upon which to build or to adapt (no matter how limited we may perceive that repertoire to be). This is by no means to say that teachers should expect to rely solely on these resources, without support from school administrative personnel, community agencies, or families. However, as Haley discussed (2004), diversity is becoming more and more the norm and, supported or not, teachers who make effective use of any available resources are more likely to derive the benefits, as well as experiencing the satisfaction of their students’ growth and motivation. Minutes from team discussions (Minutes from team discussions, 2/8/06, 3/8/06) testify to the benefits of empowering the learner. “The more you do so, the easier it is for teaching, and the more you learn yourself,” said Rafael. The more that we can learn about our students—how they best learn and

how they can help us teach them—the more we can devise appropriate teaching strategies. One overarching strategy, as Haley (2004) mentions, is to give students options. For example, Azhar helped to generate a list of options for his final projects and then selected the one that he would ultimately prepare. In addition to empowering the learner, teachers may become empowered and supported through collegial relationships within a learning community. Several team members on several occasions discussed the benefits of interacting with a learning team or community. Although the team could conceivably consist of a teacher and his/her students, there are possibilities for online collaboration through one's state or regional FL teachers' association, through websites such as *FLTeach*, or those initiated by TESOL International, to name a few. Such relationships can help to amplify strategies for accommodating diversity and exploring theory. The team mentioned during meetings that collaboration gave them additional energy through the sharing of ideas. The ACTFL Standards remind us that we are part of a much larger learning team or community, and they help to identify appropriate answers to what the student will be able to do in the target language—not only Rafael's initial question, but the question that initiates effective planning.

The reality of one of the primary findings of this study—the fact that all the extra work, student motivation, research, etc., did not bring Azhar to the same level as the other students in his class—warrants additional analysis. Because his assessment and instruction were individualized, it is reasonable to accept that Azhar's gains could be viewed by different means. The obvious modes would be student self-report and observations by members of the team members.

Azhar reported to Elizabeth, Don, and Rafael, as well as to personnel in Disabilities Services that he felt thoroughly supported throughout his learning experience; that he would continue to expand upon the outcome of his efforts (his songs) in his creative work and in his efforts to engage in conversation with native speakers of Spanish. He felt that his work served as an example for sighted and non-sighted students alike, in that he was able to serve as an example for what was needed and what could be accomplished. He gained insight into his learning strategies and how to adapt them to various tasks and content areas, including those not directly related to foreign language learning. He expanded his repertoire of communication strategies. His self-reflection throughout the year, he felt, would be helpful in his future work with clients. (Personal communication from Azhar, several dates; corroborating observations by team members, several dates).

One of Azhar's most significant gains, he felt, was his insight into the many ways in which African culture has influenced other cultures, not only through music but also through themes, values, and ways of living (i.e., the products, practices, and perspectives of the Cultures aspect of ACTFL's 5 Cs). He said that he was tremendously proud to learn of the contributions of his heritage and just as proud to be able to share his knowledge with other African-American friends. Their heightened awareness prompted further questions, and so Azhar's inquiry has become ongoing (personal communications from Azhar to Rafael). The depth and intensity of accomplishment in cultural proficiency served to compensate for more slowly devel-

oped linguistic proficiency. Ultimately, observations and self report do confirm that, for all of his efforts, Azhar's accomplishments were indeed commensurate with those of his peers.

A final insight may not be generalizable beyond the limits of the particular learning community in question. During one of the informal discussions of the team (Observation, 3/13/06), Rafael rehearsed portions of the conference presentation that he would soon deliver. At one point, some of the TAs recounted the case history of one or more diverse students for whom they, too, had made accommodations in instruction that year—the student in the wheelchair, the two with documented cognitive processing difficulties, the student with autism, the student with schizophrenia. Rafael observed, “It has been such a gift. Each one of these students, not just Azhar, has such incredible persistence. To teach them is a learning experience for us.” The little circle became quiet. Don replied, “There’s so much hope in that—persisting in the face of obstacles that seem so hard ... and the idea that they become our teachers. Wow—no diversity without community. The hope in persistence. I’m really proud to be here.” He was sincere, and the stillness of the little circle indicated that many were reflecting on Don’s insight.

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## INTRODUCTION: SETTING THE STAGE

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## Some Additional Resources

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## Appendix

Lyrics for Azhar's songs are available by visiting the writer's website at:  
[[http://www.csuohio.edu/mod\\_languages/wilberschied.htm](http://www.csuohio.edu/mod_languages/wilberschied.htm)].



## Attending to Learner Diversity in the Lesson Plan: Planning for Intensity of Engagement

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Research on foreign language learning outcomes (Brecht, Davidson and Ginsberg, 1993; Carroll, 1967; Davidson, 1998, 2002, 2003; Magnan, 1986; Rifkin, 2005; Thompson, 1996; and Tschirner, 1996) has shown that time on task is an essential ingredient for successful foreign language learning. This is not to say that other factors are not also important for successful foreign language learning, but rather to say that even when all other factors (motivated learners, qualified teachers, sound learning materials) are in place, foreign language learning, understood as the mastery of interpretive skills of listening and reading, interpersonal and presentational skills of reading and writing, is impossible *without sufficient time on task*. American culture is permeated with evidence of the myths of language learning against which language and culture teachers must struggle:

- Buy our CD-ROMs and in 24 hours you'll speak Italian like a diplomat!
- Learn French naturally with our CD-ROM immersion!
- Learn German in your car!
- I'm going to Mexico on a 3-week vacation immersion to pick up Spanish.
- I'm going to listen to the tapes on the plane so I'm ready for Tokyo.

These, and many other similar expressions of personal intent (to "pick up" a language) and commercial purpose (to sell a language learning product), implying that language learning requires neither time nor effort on the part of the learner, fly in the face of what most Americans know to be true with regard to other skills, such as learning to play the piano, fix a car, or score a touchdown, skills that require a great deal of practice. After all, when asked how to get to Carnegie Hall, many Americans know that the answer is: "Practice, practice, practice!" The extraordinary importance

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of time on task in the foreign language curriculum, time in the classroom to practice using the language, is severely constrained by the place of foreign language in the P-16 curriculum. Many school districts do not accord foreign language study the same kind of attention in the curriculum as that provided mathematics or science, thereby depriving foreign language students of daily exposure to foreign language in use. Many post-secondary institutions assign foreign language classes, even introductory classes in the most challenging foreign languages (such as Arabic or Chinese), only three hours per week, because that is consistent with offerings in environmental studies, philosophy or sociology. The problem in both contexts is compounded when three or four hours of class meetings a week are concentrated in just two sessions for reasons whether due to needs of the administration (block scheduling) or the personnel (half-time teacher coming in only two days a week). While foreign language instructors at any level can hope to find and procure funding for new instructional materials, improve classroom activities, acquire new listening and reading texts, invite native speakers to class or take students on field trips to community centers and cultural events, on the whole we are largely powerless to increase the amount of instructional time we are given. There are certainly instances in which programs are enhanced with an extra class hour per week, but we are all constrained by the fact that our students move from pre-school to kindergarten in one or two years' time, from elementary to middle school in five years' time, from middle to high school in three years' time, from high school, we hope, on to college in four years' time, and in another few years, they leave the college curriculum as well. In each of these instructional contexts, foreign language is but a component of a larger educational mission; unlike the European model of higher education, there are very few, if any, educational contexts in the United States where learners are able to focus exclusively on foreign language studies without also completing requirements typical of the American liberal arts educational mission. Generally speaking, the American liberal arts paradigm is extraordinarily successful in training for critical thinking; this curricular pattern brings to the foreign language classroom students who might otherwise have never joined us. These students, in most contexts, constitute the majority of our learners: they enrich our classrooms with the diversity of their backgrounds, experiences, aptitudes, and purposes. Many may not have the desire to attain high levels of proficiency, but some who lack that interest at the outset may become "infected" with foreign language learning zeal. Those who resist that infection still exit our programs with significant cultural learning and some communicative skills and learning experiences that, no doubt, help them navigate their educational and career paths with greater success. Rifkin (2005) has shown that students learning Russian encounter a ceiling at the intermediate mid or high levels: after even more than 600 hours of classroom instruction, students are unable to attain higher levels of proficiency in Russian without an immersion experience, whether in the United States (e.g., Middlebury Russian School) or on study abroad in a Russophone cultural environment (e.g., Russia, Ukraine, Kazakhstan, and so forth). Rifkin's findings are consistent with other studies in French (Magnan, 1986), German (Tschirner, 1996), and Russian (Thompson, 1996; Davidson, 1998, 2002, 2003), and are confirmed also for Spanish (Liskin-Gasparro,

2005, personal communication). Given that we cannot seem to budge the needle of the proficiency “meter” beyond the intermediate mid level without immersion instruction, we must reconsider the nature of classroom instruction to see if we can give it whatever “boost” is required to engage students more deeply in foreign language learning. Such a “boost,” an increase in the intensity of student engagement in the foreign language classroom, would have two potential consequences:

(1) students more intensely engaged in foreign language learning may be more likely to seek additional learning experiences, including immersion experiences, thus extending their language learning beyond the sequence of their current program;

(2) students more intensely engaged in foreign language learning may be more likely to attain higher proficiency levels, greater cultural competence, greater self-confidence, and improved study habits and language processing strategies. Although Rifkin’s findings contradict those of Carroll (1967), Rifkin argues that Carroll’s results are not reliable (Rifkin, 2005). In the course of three decades three authors of different studies of foreign language lesson planning (Knop, 1983; James, 1993; Rifkin, 2003) have argued that the ideal foreign language lesson has several phases which may be summed up thusly:

- 1. Overview or Preview:** Brief statement of lesson purpose and agenda
- 2. Prime, Preparation, or Review:** Review of previous work related to the current lesson, reminding students of material or skills they will need for the current lesson
- 3. Presentation and Drill:** Presentation of new material and teacher fronted drill
- 4. Practice:** Learner-centered practice with new material
- 5. Prove, Check or Accountability Phase:** Demonstration, by students, of mastery of new language material

Rifkin (2003) calls for a sixth phase for follow-up and extension activities as well as explicit discussion of strategy use.

These foreign language lesson models are all fine in the abstract, but together they lack attention to what is arguably the most important factor in the language learning dynamic: the learner him- or herself. Each learner is different: each learner comes to the learning process with a different set of background experiences, aptitudes, intelligences, interests and purposes. The established models for foreign language lesson planning do not accommodate the diversity of learners in our classrooms. When, in a typical classroom (whether in a foreign language or other discipline), the instructor asks students questions, calling on one student at a time to answer each question, providing feedback to each student in turn, an interaction pattern in which the instructor’s voice dominates is established (see figure 1). This interaction pattern provides an opportunity for the instructor to mediate every learner contribution to class discussion; indeed, the instructor’s voice is heard in one out of every two speech turns. Students in this kind of classroom learn quickly that they need not pay very much attention to classroom discourse because they are likely to be called upon to contribution to that discourse only once every  $2n$  turns, where  $n$  = the number of students in the class. Fifty percent or more of

the discourse in the classroom is taken up by teacher talk; the remaining speaking turns are divided up, whether equitably or inequitably, among the students, who may not be engaged in listening or responding to the comments made by their peers. This kind of classroom is one that we shall classify as featuring low intensity of engagement, for the purposes of this argument, because students are not intensely engaged in the classroom discourse. There is a time and a place for this kind of interaction pattern in every classroom setting. Just as Arens, Morgan and Swaffar have argued in their study of classroom activities in classes taught by teachers espousing communicative language teaching (Swaffar, Arens, Morgan, 1982), the implementation of a single translation activity does not mean that a class is not communicatively focused, rather it is the importance on translation as an activity within the larger context of other activities that determines whether the instructor is practicing communicative language teaching. So, too, the use of teacher-fronted instruction from time to time does not mean that a class, on the whole, is not learner-centered; the importance, frequency and priority of teacher fronted activities must be considered in the larger context of classroom instruction. That being said, it is essential to bring the learner into the lesson planning process as a factor to be considered at all stages of instruction. Teachers should explicitly identify learning objectives (stage 1 in Knop's, James's, and Rifkin's model lesson plans), prepare learners for instruction (stage 2), present and drill new material (stage 3), provide students with opportunities to practice using material (stage 4), and require students to demonstrate mastery (stage 5), but they should also plan for the role of every participant in the learning process at every stage of the lesson. When two students do a pair activity (practice, stage 4), and later report back to the larger class (accountability, stage 5), what are the other students expected to do when these two students are reporting back? If they are expected to listen, what makes them accountable for or engaged by that listening?

Teachers should extend their planning to build into their lessons activities which require intensity of engagement, activities which require *every learner* to actively engage in language use, whether receptively or productively, *for the entire language lesson*. If students are working hard in a foreign language classroom characterized by a high level of intensity of engagement, students should leave the classroom feeling tired from the cognitive efforts of language use and active language learning. In a high intensity of engagement classroom, when one learner performs, all other learners are held accountable for processing the language used in that learner's performance. This principle will be illustrated below with pairs of classroom learning scenarios illustrating first low, then high intensity of engagement. Each pair of scenarios integrates different combinations of language modalities, some with grammar study.

**Ia: Listening and Presentational Speaking.** The class listens as learners, one at a time, make brief presentations on the topic of housing (including homelessness and gentrification) in the target culture. While one student talks, the others should be listening, but are dazing off into space. Students whom we believe to be listening (or students who are pretending to listen) are not held accountable for the content of student presentations.

**Ib: Presentational Speaking, Interpersonal Speaking, Listening, and Writing.** Learners listen in pre-assigned groups as members of another group pres-

ent, in turn, on the topic of housing (including homelessness and gentrification) in the target culture. Groups draw plans for apartments, homes, apartment buildings or housing projects; these plans are presented as illustrations for group presentations. Each group brainstorms questions (and writes them down) for the presenter and objections to the presenter's report in preparation for a debate between the groups. Groups debate on assigned topics, using notes from questions and images (plans) from pre-debate presentations.

**2a: Culture, Reading, and Listening.** Learners read the lyrics to a song in the target culture: the text of the lyrics is incomplete. Students complete the text by listening to the song and filling in the missing words. After students have completed the text, they answer comprehension questions (either working individually or in groups). When students do not identify cultural background or bias in the text, the teacher lectures to the class to cover the important points of the text. Some students pay attention to the lecture, others do not.

**2b: Culture, Listening, Reading, Interactive Speaking, and Writing.** Learners working in groups read the lyrics to at least two different songs, on a similar or related topic in the target culture: each group has a different song. The text of the lyrics for each song is incomplete: students in each group complete the text by listening to the song and filling in the missing words. Each group learns its assigned song and performs it, singing along with the CD or cassette, teaching the song to other students in the class. Students who play a musical instrument are encouraged to learn to perform the song on their instrument. Each group becomes an expert on its own song. After all the groups have presented their songs, students discuss the differences among the songs that treat a similar topic or theme. Groups brainstorm their ideas and put their analyses on the board for larger class analysis and discussion.

**3a: Listening and Interpersonal Speaking.** In an all-class discussion of hobbies and interests, three students dominate the conversation. Each of these three students addresses the teacher directly, ignoring other students in the class, when s/he is talking.

**3b: Listening, Writing, and Interpersonal Speaking.** Students work in groups to create a survey about hobbies and interests. The teacher checks the surveys for accuracy. In the next class meeting, students mingle with one another and survey each other, then report back to their groups to analyze the data and create group presentations. As groups make their presentations, all students are asked to compare data and consider survey bias, taking notes on the data and conclusions presented by each group. The class concludes with a larger discussion of cultural patterns.

**4a: Listening.** Students listen to a teacher's presentation on the geography of the target culture and answer comprehension questions as the teacher poses each question to an individual student in the class.

**4b: Listening, Reading, and Presentational Speaking.** The teacher gives students a list of questions about the target culture's geography and a list of target-culture web search engines. The students come back to class the next day with notes and print-outs of information from websites, and work together in groups to create

Powerpoint presentations on one or more aspects of the target culture's geography, based on the information they found on the web. Each group also creates two quiz questions based on their presentation. After each group presents, the teacher administers a quiz consisting of questions based on each presentation.

**5a: Reading.** Students read a short story and come to class for discussion of the text. The teacher asks a few questions; students respond that they do not know or with one-word answers. The teacher lectures and students doodle.

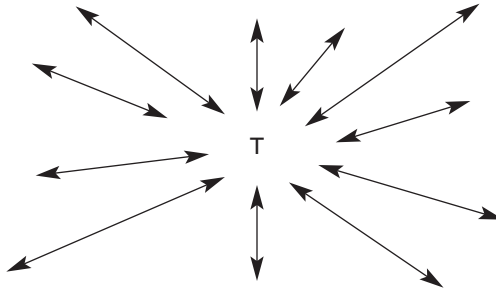
**5b: Reading and Interpersonal Speaking.** Students read a short story and come to class assigned to retell the story from the point of view of another character in the story or another character in another story. Students retell the story to one another in pairs; each successive retelling must be longer, embellished with more detail, than the previous one. Students are encouraged to include scenes imagined, but not depicted in the text they read. The groups come together for a whole-class discussion of the question, "How would the story have been different if one of the characters had been American?"

**6a: Writing.** Students write an essay and hand it in for the teacher to grade. The student writes for an audience of one.

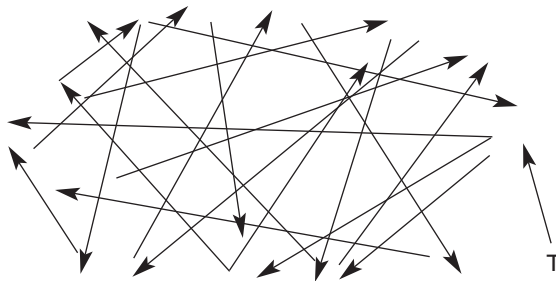
**6b: Writing.** Students complete a multi-phase, process-focused collaborative writing assignment with a public presentation of their writing (publication in class magazine) and discussion. Students work with a reading or listening stimulus to start the writing process, work with a partner to write topic sentences, compare essays written at home with their partner, combine the two different essays into one best effort. Students work with partners to create an illustration for each story. Different pairs of students work together to edit their compositions. Final papers are published in a class magazine. (See, for example, Mangan, 1985.)

**7a: Culture and Reading.** Students read a text about the design of an important architectural landmark in the target culture and answer comprehension questions in class.

**7b: Culture, Reading, Listening and Interpersonal Speaking:** Students are separated into groups; each group is given images of an important (but different) architectural landmark from the target culture. Students work in pairs: each pair consists of two students from different groups. Students, working in pairs, coach each other to build (using clay or popsicle sticks) a model of the architectural landmark: one student describes the landmark for which s/he has seen images, while the other tries to build something that corresponds to that same description. After the various models have been constructed, students come together to discuss how this process helps them appreciate the aesthetic qualities of the various landmarks. They then work in groups to brainstorm questions they would like to answer about these landmarks and their importance for the target culture. Analyzing the several different pairs of learning activities listed above, one can see a clear trend: the first proposed activity of each pair of activities consists of a traditional, teacher-fronted activity

**Figure 1**

*Key to Figure 1:* Every arrow indicates a spoken utterance addressed to a student (not marked) or to the teacher (marked T). The teacher is the addressee or source of every utterance.

**Figure 2**

*Key to Figure 2:* Every arrow indicates a student (not marked) or teacher (T) utterance. The arrow points to the utterance's addressee. There is the same number of utterances in Figure 2 as in Figure 1. However, in Figure 1 every student utterance is elicited by a teacher utterance and every student utterance is addressed to the teacher; in figure 2 each student utterance elicits a response from another student. There are, therefore, twice as many lines in Figure 2 as in Figure 1 because each student utterance elicits a response from another student, not from the teacher.

focusing on one kind of learner intelligence, namely verbal and linguistic intelligence (as defined by Gardner, 1983), while the second proposed activity of each pair of activities brings other intelligences in to the learning and teaching process. In activity 1b, students use visual and spatial skills to draw housing plans, while in activity 2b, students use their musical and rhythmic intelligence to learn and perform a song, later to teach it to their classmates. In activity 3b, students use logical/mathematical intelligence to analyze quantitative data from a survey and to create presentations based on these data, while in activity 4b students use interpersonal intelligence as well as visual and spatial skills to integrate different sources of information (found by the different students in the group) into a single Powerpoint presentation. Students use interpersonal and intrapersonal intelligence to understand character perspective in activity 5b, whereas in activity 6b students use these skills and visual intelligence to develop collaborative essays and illustrations for these essays. Finally, activity 7b features bodily/kinesthetic intelligence as well as visual/ spatial intelligence.

Of course not every student has strengths in all these different intelligences, but students strong in one area can help their classmates in that area. This kind of arrangement helps all students develop self-esteem and confidence that they can use their language skills successfully. Varying the focus of classroom activities in this way helps teachers “differentiate instruction” by providing multiple modes for teaching and learning, as described by Donato in *Valuing Diversity in Learners*: “Not all learners will be served in the same way: learners have multiple pathways to learning” (American Councils, 2004). When teachers provide a variety of different approaches to learning to communicate in a foreign language, more learners, and learners from more diverse backgrounds, are able to participate in and benefit from language instruction. In the first of each pair of activities the teacher is more the “sage on the stage,” dominating classroom discourse; in the second, the teacher as “guide on the side” facilitates and encourages student interactions without dominating them. Indeed, a diagram of the interaction patterns of the second of each of the pairs of activities shows a web of interactions in which the students interact intensively with one another (Figure 2), having more speaking turns because the teacher does not mediate every student contribution to the classroom discussion. It is possible to intensify the engagement of learners in the group activities described above in the second of each of the pairs of activities by carefully planning the student composition of each group and assigning roles to students within each group. Students can be divided into groups randomly (all those wearing red shirts, blue shirts, green shirts, for example), or by some design. If by design, for example, students reluctant to speak can be grouped together so that they cannot take the easy path of letting loquacious peers dominate in mixed groups. Teachers can group students by performance on an assignment, making sure that each group has a range of students with different performance profiles. Within groups, students can assign students different roles, giving a heritage student, for example, the task of providing lexicon as needed, while asking a student who tends to score well on grammar quizzes the responsibility of checking the grammar in his or her peers’ group writing task. Different roles assigned could include: time monitor (check to make sure task is accomplished within time allotted), moderator (make sure that everyone gets a chance to contribute his or her ideas), vocabulary and/or grammar checker (compare written work with material in a textbook or dictionary), illustrator, distributor/collector of materials, media specialist (collect photographs, music, or video clips and integrate them into the presentation), and others. The judicious assignment of group task roles can help engage students on the basis of their special strengths, their unique combinations of intelligences, learning interests, and learning purposes. Providing for a variety of language learning activities, teachers attend to the learning needs of diverse learners, whether the diversity comes from:

- Heritage learners with different kinds of family language background (e.g., some with and some without formal schooling in the language)
- Gifted students
- Students with learning disabilities
- Students with physical or emotional disabilities



- Students at different levels of instruction in the same class (e.g., levels 3 and 4 in the same class session)

As Abbott noted (American Councils, 2004), “If there are 30 different learners in the classroom, there are 30 different places they are at in their language development.” By planning for different kinds of learning activities that require different kinds of intelligence, teachers will be able to engage more of their learners in successful language learning. Barr-Harrison and Daugherty wrote, “... if one uses a variety of activities and multisensory approaches in teaching, one can reach most learners by encouraging their cooperativeness and addressing the particular learning difficulties that some students have in foreign language classrooms” (Barr-Harrison and Daugherty: 86). Heritage learners, for example, can be paired with traditional foreign language learners in an exercise designed to give each student a sense of his or her own expertise. Just as a heritage learner helps a foreign language learner with vocabulary for a particular exercise, so the foreign language learner can help the heritage learner with spelling (or in some cases, at a more basic level, with writing). The collaboration teaches both partners that the skills and background they bring to the language learning process are both valued contributions, even if neither is complete. The knowledge of the foreign language learner may help instill in the heritage learner the drive to continue to improve his or her skills to communicate both in speech *and* in writing in the target language, while the knowledge of the heritage learner instills in the foreign language learner the desire to acquire more vocabulary. In order to design and implement appropriate classroom activities for any class, instructors must, as suggested by Pope Bennett (American Councils, 2004), conduct class surveys to learn about their students’ language backgrounds, learning styles, perceived areas of strength and weakness (multiple intelligences), learning purposes, and career interests and goals. This information is critically important for the instructor’s understanding of his or her own class. Having such information in hand, instructors then must set about planning activities carefully, matching the multiple intelligences reflected in their classes with learning activities, making sure that every learner is accommodated. Throughout this process, instructors must be careful to consider the role of the learner in every activity presented in the class: at every moment, every learner should be engaged; there should be a role for every learner throughout the lesson; every learner should be held accountable for processing language (meaning) throughout each lesson. In the process of planning these activities, teachers should not be too focused on summative assessments and not let summative assessment drive the lesson plan. Too often, concerns about summative assessment prevent teachers from introducing pair or group activities into their classroom because such activities may prove to be a challenging framework for the assignment of individual grades. If, instead, teachers concentrate on promoting student learning, the role of pair and group work will be paramount; there is time for individually focused summative assessments at regular intervals, as appropriate. Marjorie Hall Haley observed, “Planning is the pivotal point for accommodating diverse learners” (American Councils, 2004). The planning of learning activities characterized by high intensity of engagement is surely a challenging task and may seem burdensome to teachers as

they begin the process. However, with time, this kind of planning becomes “second nature” and teachers will find that it gets easier and easier because the same frameworks can be recycled with different language content. The most important incentive, however, for developing this “planning habit” is the success of *all our learners*, in all their splendid diversity.

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# Viewing Diversity of Subject Matter: The Case of Reading in Chinese

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## Abstract

The recent trend of schools introducing non-European languages such as Chinese into their curricula suggests a different dimension of diversity that might be termed “diversity of subject matter;” in that these languages present unique learning, teaching, and administrative challenges that must be addressed if these programs are to be successful. By using learning to read in Chinese as its primary example, this article explores diversity of subject matter from the viewpoint of a number of stakeholders in the overall Chinese language learning endeavor, and stresses the importance of the various partnerships that must be formed if Chinese programs are to thrive in our nation’s schools.

## Introduction

Within the field of first (L1) or second (L2) language learning, the notion of diversity brings to mind the differences in our learners, running the gamut of many complex issues such as ethnicity, socio-economic status, or cognitive capabilities, just to name a few. Such a focus on diversity is not only appropriate but critical to consider if we are to prepare all of our nation’s children to construct and participate in a thriving democracy. Yet, what often gets lost in the shuffle is the fact that a variety of foreign languages are currently rising in demand as subjects that should be taught in our schools, languages of non-European origin that have been marginalized and largely ignored in traditional mainstream American education. Consequently, we often lose sight of the fact that the subject matter that we wish to teach in our schools can be as diverse as the learners who are trying to master it. This article will attempt to show how the diversity of subject matter in the K-12 environment can have ramifications for many stakeholders involved in foreign language education, stakeholders who must be informed about the latest developments in how this subject matter is both learned and presented. By highlighting learning to read in Chinese as an example of this diversity of subject matter, we come to understand that the challenges presenting themselves to students, teachers, administrators, and colleagues are unique, especially in a time when demand for Chinese language learning programs is on the rise. Teachers of Chinese, for example, must understand the research in reading if they are to design effective pedagogical measures for their students who have never learned a language that differs so

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markedly from English or from foreign languages more commonly taught in the K-12 curriculum. Administrators must also be aware of the issues germane to successful program development, particularly in terms of the complexity of the unique pedagogical knowledge their Chinese teachers need to master if students are to succeed in learning to read in this particular language and how best to forge partnerships to better understand and account for this complex process. Lastly, language educators in the more commonly taught languages must be given a perspective on what the challenges facing teachers of Chinese. In concert with this volume's theme "The Many Views of Diversity: Understanding Multiple Realities," it is hoped that all those who interact with the process of teaching Chinese will gain an understanding of the multiple realities that Chinese presents, both as subject matter to be learned by students and as pedagogical knowledge that needs to be mastered by its teachers if they are to be integrated seamlessly into our profession. It seems that not a day goes by without the appearance of a newspaper story or news account trumpeting the demand for Chinese language learning in the United States (for samples, see *In the News*). Yet, for the high school or even college learner who decides to take Chinese, there are a number of issues to signify that learning to read in this language will be different from anything else they have tried to master. Chinese is one of the four languages (along with Korean, Japanese, and Arabic) that is classified by the U.S. government language training community as a Category IV language, or one that takes American learners longest to learn. Besides the issues of linguistic code and sociopragmatics, Walton (1992) noted that the Category IV languages required additional time for American learners because of the time necessary to master their non-alphabetic writing systems. Chinese, for example, does not employ an alphabet, but instead uses "characters," or written symbols that are based not on an alphabetic principle of letters or letter groups representing sounds or phonetic elements, but instead is termed a "logographic" script whereby characters represent words or morphemes. In spite of the fact that Chinese characters have long had the reputation of being "ideographs" or "pictographic writing," it is estimated that approximately 80-90% of modern characters are compound characters (Taylor & Taylor 1995), that is, characters that contain elements that to varying degrees of precision hint at the sound (termed "phonetics") or meaning (termed "radicals") of the character. Given the fact, then, that beginning students cannot give an accurate or approximate pronunciation of a character by looking at it as they could if they were learning a language that employed a Roman alphabet, students first learn a "helping" language termed "romanization" that actually represents Chinese sounds with the roman alphabet. Although there are different romanization systems available, *pinyin* is the most commonly used system in teaching Americans and is the same system used to teach initial literacy to Chinese children on the Chinese mainland. Various pedagogical strategies and opinions are held as to the "best time" for students to begin learning Chinese characters. Some educators have advocated for learning a large amount of spoken Chinese via romanization before attempting to learn characters as it is thought that a firmer spoken base will make the transition to learning characters easier. Regardless, the one thing that research indicates is that beginning learners employ a variety of creative and labor-intensive memorization and practice strategies to cope with the demands of this new system. In addition to difficulties learners encounter in trying to come to terms

with the visual, semantic, and phonological aspects of Chinese characters, the mere notion of what constitutes a “word” in Chinese is not a straightforward issue even among Chinese linguists. While an individual Chinese character can indeed stand alone to form a one-character “word,” the majority of words in modern Chinese are formed by having two characters combine with one another to form multi-character words (Hoosain, 1992). One problem for learners of Chinese, however, is that these demarcations are not represented in Chinese text; that is, there are no spaces between words or word units that are displayed in Chinese text. This stands in contrast to alphabetic systems whereby word boundaries are clearly displayed for readers in the actual text.

## Research Findings

It should come as no surprise that the research base investigating how Western learners go about the process of learning to read in Chinese is somewhat limited, though it has gained attention during the last two decades. This interest is probably not unconnected with a corresponding research interest in foreign language reading in general, a topic that gained prominence during the late 1980's and early 1990's as witnessed by the release of influential works dedicated solely to the field of foreign language reading (Barnett, 1989, Bernhardt, 1993; Swaffar, Arens, & Byrnes 1991). As well, the field of reading was energized during this time by theory and models taking on a more schema-theoretic view of reading, or models that emphasized the role of background knowledge and other “inside the head” factors that took the theoretical emphasis away from factors highlighting aspects of print perception notable in so-called “bottom up” models of reading. In spite of this trend, Bernhardt (1986) in her highly influential NECTFL article stressed that: perceptual questions are particularly relevant to *research with readers who must switch orthographic or logographic system in acquiring reading skills*. A credible hypothesis is that the apparent inherent difficulties in the learning of non-Western languages and of languages in non-Roman alphabets may be due partially to a set of developmental, perceptual stages through which readers must progress in order to reach a level of preparation for comprehension. (p. 97) Indeed, this idea would prove to be portentous, as many of the research studies conducted among learners of Chinese clearly demonstrate that readers are greatly challenged at all proficiency levels by so-called “lower level processes” such as word recognition and aspects of the orthography that present obstacles to effortless and efficient processing during reading.

In addition to the interest generated among the FL and ESL reading community, there has also been remarkable activity in the field of L1 literacy research describing how Chinese children learn to read, again with the publication of excellent volumes discussing the Chinese script and how it is processed, as well as how literacy is acquired in various societies who learn to read in Chinese in different ways (Hoosain, 1992; Li, Gaffney & Packard, 2002; McBride-Chang & Chen, 2003; Wang, Inhoff, & Chen, 1999). This convergence has been beneficial to the L2 reading field in leading to more general volumes recently published that are more careful and inclusive in dealing with reading in situations that are cross-orthographic (Grabe & Stoller, 2002; Koda, 2005) thus putting reading in non-Roman scripts on the map as a factor that can no longer be ignored in the L2 reading landscape.

With regard to initial research conducted into how learners of Chinese begin their task of learning Chinese characters, there has been a variety of research techniques used to investigate this area. Survey research, for example, has been an important means of understanding from our learners what they do when faced with the challenge of learning a writing system that differs so markedly from the alphabet used to represent their native language. McGinnis (1999) conducted a study among learners in an intensive beginning nine-week program which discovered that students used a variety of character learning strategies. Among these memorization strategies were rote repetition, creating idiosyncratic stories about how the characters looked or how they were pronounced, and using the character's semantic or phonetic information in the character's components. Interestingly enough, this latter strategy was not one that was favored by the students, who instead favored making up stories or memorizing the characters by rote means. Ke (1998) also sought to investigate the learner strategies of beginning Chinese students, and found that learners indeed valued the use of character components in learning the characters; however, they stated that learning the characters wholistically through repeated writing of characters was an important strategy, especially practicing characters as parts of two-character compounds that comprised much of their vocabulary, rather than practicing characters individually. Perhaps the most important finding was uncovering a relationship between valuing and understanding Chinese character components and character recognition and production, indicating that students early on appreciate the principled structure and composition of Chinese characters as an aid to memorizing them.

Although these findings may seem contradictory, it is important to view them within the context of developing proficiency. The McGinnis (1999) study was conducted among learners who had been studying Chinese for just four weeks, while Ke's (1998) study involved students who had been learning Chinese for a year. It seems that the extra time devoted to learning characters by the latter group of students gave them a beginning sense of orthographic awareness, or a sense that there is a principled and systematic structure to how Chinese characters are constructed. This seems to indicate that learners must be exposed to enough characters to discern examples of different character components used in different ways, thus making them aware of the systematic nature of Chinese orthography. Without these experiences, students will feel that Chinese characters are constructed in a random and haphazard fashion, thus requiring them to learn characters through rote memorization for a specific period of time. In fact, Ke's (1996) model of orthographic awareness speaks to this idea, thus predicating that learners develop specific and measurable thresholds of character understanding.

To carry this investigation further using more precise statistical analysis and learner samples of greater proficiency, Shen (2005) designed three different survey instruments to collect strategy data over three samples of learners at the university level (1st, 2nd, and 3rd year). Her first survey questionnaire contained open-ended questions to elicit from learners the types of strategies they used for learning characters so that a more thorough inventory of strategies could be constructed. A second questionnaire using a Likert-scale was developed to determine how frequently the learners used the strategies in the inventory, with a third questionnaire developed to rate the students percep-

tions about how useful commonly deployed strategies were across the different learning levels. Shen's (2005) research differed somewhat from the studies mentioned previously in that her goal was to detect a commonality and set of patterns among the strategies that learners indicated they used. Factor analysis facilitated achievement of this goal, with a total of eight factors being derived from the 30 commonly used strategies as chosen by students. Importantly, the most heavily loaded factor was that of the use of orthographic knowledge, described as employing graphic structures of characters, connecting with previously learned characters, visualizing graphic structure, and using semantic and phonetic radicals. A total of 24.5% of the variance was explained by this factor, far more than even the second most commonly chosen factor, that of preview and review. A second important finding of the study was that among cognitive strategies, learners considered those represented in Factor 1 to be most useful, with this perception increasing as learner proficiency increased. These three studies when viewed together seem to indicate that the understanding and use of the principles that make up the Chinese writing system are not only good to know for background information, but that they actually become part and parcel of a Chinese language learner's reading development. Moreover, it might just be that this knowledge is integral for our learners if their proficiency is to increase. One study that attempted to investigate this was conducted by Shen (2004) when she tested whether using character presentation strategies would have an effect on short and long term retention of new two-character words. In this study, Shen would introduce 10 new two-character words in three different sessions over three days under one of three conditions to three separate groups of second-year Chinese language learners. In all conditions, the ten words were shown on an overhead projector with their English meanings and pinyin pronunciations. In one condition, termed rote memory, the students were repeatedly introduced to the words by the instructor through presentation and pronunciation of the pinyin and English meaning by overhead projector, with the student asked to name the sound and meaning. Under the condition of self-generated elaboration, students were told to use whatever strategies they wanted to learn the words, and to write down in English what these strategies were; in the last condition, instructor-guided elaboration, the researcher introduced the words through etymological aids and radicals, and used the words in context. After a 20-minute learning period, the students handed in their lists of words. This activity was followed by a 20-minute grammar review period, where the newly acquired target words were not reviewed or studied. After this period, the students were given the list of new two character words they had learned during the first 20 minute learning period and asked to write their pronunciation in pinyin and their meaning in English. The students were also required to perform this same task with these same two-character words 48 hours later.

Among the many findings of this study were that rote memory learning resulted in consistently less retention of the sound and meaning of characters than the two elaboration conditions. Regarding the two elaboration conditions, retention of sound and meaning of the characters was superior for the instructor-guided elaboration condition than for the student self-generated condition for the first 20-minute interval of retention, but the advantage dissipated for retention at the 48-hour period. Shen (2004) theorized that the processing of the characters was deeper under the instruc-

tor-guided condition because it draws more heavily on concept-driven processing. The elaboration required in concept-driven processing requires students to associate prior knowledge of orthographic structure with the new items in the vocabulary list, thus promoting the creation of new and unique information based upon knowledge already stored in memory. This theory holds that the students often are unable to access this old information by themselves, thus depriving themselves of its access. Through instructor-guided elaboration, however, students are able to receive consistent instruction about the various orthographic principles of Chinese characters, as well as how this knowledge can be linked and elaborated when learning new characters.

## Think-Aloud Protocols

As can be seen, the research methodologies used to determine learners' strategies have relied largely on some basic survey methodology, as well as the creation of strategy inventories to determine the factors that these strategies seem to comprise. Another approach involves the use of think-aloud protocols, a method whereby the learner talks about what he/she is actually doing while they are reading, so that the researcher can obtain a window into their problem solving strategies as they make their way through a text. In applying this methodology to Chinese learners, Everson and Ke (1997) were interested in seeing what Chinese learners verbalized when they were reading a portion of a Chinese newspaper text. They used two samples in their study, one composed of learners that had completed two years of university Chinese and one with two learners of Chinese who were advanced graduate students, each having studied Chinese for about five years. Among the many findings in the study was the observation that the learners who had studied Chinese for two years still experienced problems dealing with their lack of vocabulary, as well as issues dealing with word knowledge and word formation. The advanced learners, on the other hand, were particularly skillful in figuring out words and characters which the think-alouds revealed they did not initially know when they began the reading task. For the purposes of this study, it is important to note that the data clearly show that the advanced learners consistently attempted to pronounce unknown characters based on the phonetic element that was present, and in some cases, used the semantic element to identify certain classes of characters. Given this impressive evidence of breaking down of characters into their constituent elements to try to solve word recognition problems, the advanced students were able to rely on the different elements of the characters as trusty sources of information.

In conclusion, different types of research methodologies have given us some unique insights into how learners of Chinese at different proficiency levels deal with word recognition and reading. It seems that an understanding of how Chinese characters are constructed develops quickly, and is used and valued as a strategy for word recognition as proficiency of the learner increases. Initial research also indicates that there is promise in presenting vocabulary in the Chinese classroom in ways that highlight the orthographic structure, and that this information may indeed be one of the important building blocks for providing a sound foundation for later Chinese reading proficiency. It should be pointed out, however, that this review was presented not so much to highlight what we know about how learners read or begin to learn to read



in Chinese, but to highlight how little we actually know about this process and how much more research needs to be done. This point is emphasized because given this small knowledge base, a series of initiatives is currently moving forward which indicate that perhaps at no time in our nation's history has our society been more serious about the learning of the Chinese language. Perhaps this is the way of it with diverse subject matter—it remains highly specialized, the domain of a small group of experts used to professional conversations only amongst one another. Yet, this conversation has widened considerably in the past few years, with Chinese language specialists involved in activities on a much larger scale.

## Surveying the Landscape: Then and Now

Whether this sudden interest in Chinese language learning is due to the terrorist attacks of September 11 giving us, in Congressman Rush Holt's words, "a Sputnik moment" (National Language Conference, 2005, pg. 2) akin to the Soviet Union's satellite launch which so startled our society in 1957, or whether there is a confluence of The Case of Reading in Chinese 14 other factors involving China such as their economic and potential military rise in the future, the perception of the importance of Chinese language learning is striking. Indeed, several initiatives are afoot that are good news for those involved in Chinese language education, and present us with challenges and opportunities to understand this diverse subject matter in numerous ways. In January of 2006, the Department of State announced the National Security Language Initiative (2006), "...a plan to further strengthen national security and prosperity in the 21st century through education, especially in developing foreign language skills..." with languages such as Chinese specifically named as requiring attention from kindergarten through university. The three goals as stated in the program are for "critical needs languages" to be started at younger ages, for an increase in the number of advanced-level speakers of these languages, and for an increase in the number of foreign language teachers and the resources needed to develop them. This initiative is notable for the number of programs and extent of financial resources the government will be expending to realize these goals.

Recognizing the need for greater competence in language and regional area skills, the Department of Defense published its Defense Language Transformation Roadmap (2005), establishing four goals for language transformation. These goals include: 1.) creating foundational language and cultural expertise in the officer, civilian, and enlisted ranks for both Active and Reserve Components; 2.) creating the capacity to surge language and cultural resources beyond foundational and in-house capabilities; 3.) establishing a cadre of language specialists possessing a level 3/3/3 ability (superior reading/listening/speaking ability); 4.) establishing a process to track the accession, separation and promotion rates of language professionals and Foreign Area Officers (FAO's). While these two initiatives hold enormous potential for increasing interest and facilitating the learning of Chinese from a strategic standpoint, two other ongoing ventures also address the "nuts and bolts" of Chinese at a more operational and curricular level, and again share with the other initiatives the goal of taking learners to higher language proficiency levels. The first is the Oregon Flagship K-16 Chinese Language Program (Oregon Flagship, 2005), a joint venture between the University of

Oregon's Center for Applied Second Language Studies (CASLS) and the Portland Public School District who were joint recipients of a grant from the National Security Education Program. An ambitious program, implementing Chinese language learning from kindergarten to university (K-16), it "...is structured on the total language learning approach incorporating content-based curriculum, explicit language instruction, and experiential learning practices."

The other initiative important to mention is the development by the College Board of the AP Chinese Language and Culture course for secondary schools (Draft: AP Chinese language and culture course description, 2006). Approved in 2003, the course is designed to be equivalent to fourth semester college/university level courses in Mandarin Chinese, with coursework reflecting Intermediate range proficiencies according to the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) Proficiency Guidelines. For the purposes of this discussion, the draft objectives are very specific in their targeting of ambitious goals in the area of reading where learners will progress from an exposure to highly contextualized texts "...through careful readings of more densely written texts excerpted or adapted from newspapers, magazine articles, contemporary literature, letters, and essays." Authentic materials will be used that include "... newspapers, fiction and nonfiction books, plays, poetry, films, and Chinese educational system textbooks."

These four initiatives are among a host of efforts currently underway that reflect a renewed and more focused interest in Chinese language learning. They are included here to show the seriousness of government and education to explore largely uncharted territory in the commitment to longer sequences of learning and proficiency-based curricular development and assessment. The last two efforts also target Chinese in the K12 (or K-16) curriculum, and provide a basis from which we can make recommendations about how teachers, administrators, and colleagues can facilitate the introduction of a language that represents diversity of subject matter into the curriculum in a principled manner.

## Lessons Learned, Lessons Applied

But first, we might want to ask ourselves what we already know that can help us move forward with teaching a subject matter that is as diverse as the students who will eventually learn it. Our first lesson for all stakeholders is perhaps in the area of teacher education, in that if we are ever to put Chinese language and reading programs into our classrooms, we must approach the project now in a systemic way. At this point, we are fortunate to have at least some research that has provided a basis for understanding some of the challenges facing our learners when they attempt to start reading in Chinese. The settings where this occurs in the K-12 world are, however, less understood and less researched. Fortunately, a study conducted by Moore, Walton, and Lambert (1992) was pivotal in investigating a large array of issues in Chinese language education at that time, thus providing key data as to the strengths and weaknesses of selected high school efforts in Chinese which were funded by the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation. Given the fact that such high school Chinese initiatives were largely pioneering and experimental, the research findings were not all that surprising. Their survey indicated a lack of consensus among teachers in a variety of key areas such as

curriculum, which Chinese characters and grammatical patterns should be taught, and how the teaching of Chinese culture should proceed. This disagreement among teachers is a serious consideration as the school principals who were surveyed in the study stated that "...the quality of the teacher is viewed not only as a safeguard against the demise of a program but as an essential ingredient in its success." (p. 25). In his prescient NECTFL article dealing with a variety of issues concerning less commonly taught languages, Walker (1989) stated that when evaluating less commonly taught languages as different and distinct entities, "...not all the difficulty derives from the obvious linguistic or orthographic distance from the background of the English-speaking learner. One source of the discord may be the teacher himself" (p. 118). Walker's point was that at that time less commonly taught languages such as Chinese and the instructors were considered somewhat "exotic." This lack of pedagogical understanding prevented these languages from being fully integrated into the school's curriculum. This marginalized or "boutique" status also had the deleterious effect of preventing true integration of these programs into the fabric of the school's culture, thus leading to their being cut at the first sign of enrollment slippage. Moreover, for the purposes of this paper focusing on Chinese reading as diverse subject matter, Walker (1989) noted that to native teachers of languages such as Chinese, Japanese, and Korean, "...the writing system often embodies the very image of their language" (p. 119).

What, then, are some of the ramifications that introducing "diverse subject matter" into a school, especially for administrators who are often in a position to determine whether the program survives or dies? First, from the point of view of the learner, it is important that we do not underestimate how long this subject matter takes to master. Taking students up through novice and intermediate proficiency levels will not happen overnight, so some of the objectives as foreseen in the AP curriculum may be more difficult to achieve than is anticipated. Administrators and parents, then, should have patience with the program and understand that achieving these sequences will take time, and that the important thing is for learners to achieve realistic goals that are appropriate for their age and for the number of hours they are exposed to the subject matter.

Second, administrators must understand that sending untrained teachers into the Chinese language classroom is a recipe for failure. Teacher education is a "pay me now or pay me later" proposition, with administrators needing to understand that the problems which can eventuate later, due to having a poorly trained instructor in the classroom after the program is launched, can far outweigh the time and preparation that should be put into the care of selecting a teacher initially. In order to teach this diverse subject matter, teachers will need to understand Chinese-specific pedagogy for teaching the language and culture to American learners within the constraints of the American school system at age-appropriate levels. All too often, this balancing act has been difficult to accomplish, but the last few decades have indicated through research and experience a greater understanding of the processes in play among our learners, which we must translate into lessons learned for better curriculum development.

Moreover, given the current interest in starting Chinese language programs, The Asia Society has written an excellent report that asks the question, "what would it take to have 5% of American high school students taking Chinese in 2015?" (Stewart & Wang,

2005). One notable conclusion in their recommendations is that the current infrastructure for delivering the necessary cadre of certified teachers is woefully inadequate. In discussions about how to deliver teachers, it is clear that institutions with teacher certification programs for the specific licensure of Chinese teachers are rare, and so must be expanded. In addition, ways are being investigated to “fast track” teachers in the certification process, though pathways to alternative certification vary greatly from state to state. Additionally, it is an attractive alternative to consider “retooling” native Chinese ESL teachers to teach their own language, but caution should be exercised in embracing this model without question. Clearly, it is reassuring that these teachers are trained in, presumably, the latest methodologies for classroom language instruction. In one case, however, Bell (1995) documented in a first-person descriptive research study that although her Chinese teacher was a trained ESL instructor, she reverted to teaching strategies that she encountered as a young girl learning to write in Chinese, strategies that were incompatible in Bell’s mind with efficient and measured learning and progress. While the cultural attitudes towards writing that were manifested by the native Chinese teacher were not necessarily “wrong,” they were clearly at odds with what Bell felt was appropriate for a foreign language learner of Chinese. Clearly, these types of issues have to be discussed in teacher education programs if there is to be an appropriate meeting between the teacher and student in the Chinese language classroom.

Thirdly, administrators must try to integrate Chinese language instructors into foreign language departments as full-functioning professional members instead of marginal, part-time help. Success in this area will not only be contingent upon administrative leadership but also willingness on the part of other foreign language teachers to accept and aid in the professionalization of their fellow teachers. Fortunately, there is now more of a common metric in the development of Chinese language teachers which will give them shared professional grounding with colleagues in more commonly taught languages. That is, work has begun to train teachers in more communicatively-oriented methodologies, introducing them to movements such as the National Standards in Foreign Language Education, as well as initiating an AP curriculum. Until enrollments are built up and stabilized in K-12 programs, it may be the fate of Chinese teachers that they are itinerant and thus remain somewhat marginalized from the cultural fabric of the schools in the eyes of their colleagues and their students. Administrators and fellow language teachers, however, should heed the research into start-up programs in less commonly taught languages which indicates that variables such as physical location of classes and the institutional support expected by these teachers can serve to undermine their ability to achieve a sense of place within the greater educational mission of the school (Schrier & Everson, 2000).

Lastly, administrators must try to facilitate the conduct of research if we are to understand how best to configure our reading programs so they are carried out in a principled manner. At present, most of the research that has been done in the area of Chinese reading involves adult learners, mostly in post-secondary environments. Rarely have we had opportunities available to us to conduct research in Chinese programs available in elementary or high school settings. Rarer still are opportunities for research in programs attempting to connect even longer K-16 sequences such as the flagship program in

Oregon. Such venues can give us research into what foreign language educators have wanted and have advertised as the best possible route to language mastery: long sequences of language instruction. Additionally, this presents a golden opportunity to study bilingual literacy development in both alphabetic and logographic writing systems, thus providing researchers a laboratory to study a unique literacy development setting. With this overall systematic approach to teacher development, program support, and research opportunities, subject matter such as the reading of Chinese will have a far greater chance for successful integration into the curricula of American schools.

In conclusion, it is hoped that the suggestions put forth in this article can serve as a model for how to conceptualize the teaching and administration of other less commonly taught languages. While languages such as Chinese and Japanese have enjoyed at least some success in making themselves accessible to an increasing number of learners, languages such as Arabic and Hindi are attracting interest and deserve more visibility in our nation's schools. These languages will present their own sets of challenges in terms of diversity of subject matter, and therefore are entitled to the care and attention owed all forms of diversity if they are to be welcomed as partners within the field of foreign language education.

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## Diversity in the Classroom: Differentiation in a FLES Setting

*Jessica Haxhi, Maloney Interdistrict Magnet School*

*“When the learners enter the classroom, they don’t divest themselves of their cultural experiences or their linguistic background, they bring all of that with them...It is incumbent upon the teacher to accommodate that wide array of learners.”*

*Marjorie Hall Haley,*

*Teaching Foreign Languages K-12 Workshop:Valuing Diversity in Learners (2004).*

As twenty-eight fifth graders noisily enter the classroom, I am reminded of the quote above and all that the students bring with them to class today. Listening to their chatter, I hear that they also bring concerns about lunch gossip, bus bullies, recess scuffles, and other distractions. We begin the class by singing a popular Japanese song. I notice that about five students aren’t singing at all, five are dancing at their desks (but not singing), two are bickering, eight are checking their Romanized versions of the song, another five are reading their *hiragana* character versions, and one is holding her hands over her eyes as she sings to prove to herself that she has memorized the song completely. In order for me to reach all of them during this class, they must be engaged, appreciated, successful, and convinced that what they are learning is worthwhile. The group before me exemplifies the need for differentiated instruction. I didn’t always know what “differentiated instruction” meant. For me, a move toward more differentiated instruction began as a desperate quest to find ways to capture the attention and the imagination of this large, noisy, crowd for just 25 minutes three-times-per-week, so that I could make sure they all learn some Japanese, love learning languages, and feel motivated to continue their studies in the future. Happily, this process has helped me to get a little closer to creating a classroom that is meeting the needs of all learners, within the boundaries of the Foreign Language in Elementary Schools (FLES) schedule. It has been a journey that has required me to completely rethink planning, assessment, instruction, and control in the classroom. In the following sections, I will summarize practices I have found most useful in creating a more differentiated classroom. There are still days, however, when I feel overwhelmed by this task. It is easy to discuss learner diversity in concept; it is much more difficult to comprehend the enormity of variations in what each of our students understands on a daily basis and how they differ from what one might expect. When students don’t know something, I still have a knee-jerk reaction of shock and want to say

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“but I taught you that!” The truth is that I didn’t teach that student in the way that he/she needed to be taught. I probably taught them in the way that I learn best. The process of becoming a teacher who uses differentiated instruction is as much about knowing yourself and your own learning styles and expectations as it is about knowing your students.

## Planning

What do kids want to learn? Carol Ann Dahlberg (co-author, *Languages and Children: Making the Match*, 2004), often shares a question formulated by Kieran Egan (1996). He tells us to ask, “Why should it matter to children?” This question has transformed my planning. It helps me to find the problem with almost any unit, lesson, activity, or even a whole curriculum. If things aren’t going well in terms of student motivation or attention, it is probably because I haven’t done a good job at making the unit meaningful for students. They have to want to learn the skills they need to complete a task or project. In order for that to happen, it has to appeal to them for its utility in the real world or, for the younger students, its appeal in a fantasy world. Differentiation is most appropriate when the teacher tries to determine just what it is that matters to the particular students in the class. I recently completed a pen pal unit in which students seemed very excited to decipher letters from three Japanese girls. They were certainly more excited than if I had written the paragraph for them to read. After a few weeks, however, I noticed that the boys in the class were not as motivated as the girls to read and respond to the pen pal letters. The addition of some male pen pals in Japan fixed the problem. Then, the context of writing a pen pal letter motivated all of them to want to write perfect Japanese sentences. They took the task seriously and were highly motivated to learn how to write well. Teachers can also create meaningful context in a “fantasy” type unit. My third graders are planning a Japanese wedding reception for a stuffed monkey and deer in our classroom. They are completely invested in learning dates, talking about cities, discussing costs, and debating about foods. Some have brought in special clothing and stuffed “family members” for the monkey and deer. It sounds corny, but there is context, emotion, and meaning for them in what we are doing. In addition, there is enough variation within the unit content to appeal to many different students. If teachers start with a concept or unit idea that will “matter” to your students, you will be well on your way to reaching all of them.

## National Standards: The 5 Cs

A unit that includes activities to develop student abilities in Communication, Cultures, Connections, Comparisons, and Communities (the 5 Cs) as defined by the national Standards for Foreign Language Learning (1999) has a richness through which many students can find meaning and purpose. Some students “light up” when we are immersed in cultural topics, while others are clearly in their element when we are doing math computations for a shopping activity. When making comparisons, students can differentiate the topic for themselves by personalizing the discussion or project to their own lives. All students seem to find motivation in speaking with an actual Japanese person, especially a peer. If I plan by the 5 Cs and find my objectives in our state framework (Connecticut), I know that the unit will be standards-based and have high appeal for many students. I use the Five Cs as the main organizer to plan the content of all my thematic units.



## Backwards Design

Many educators are talking about the concepts presented in *Understanding by Design* (2005) by Grant Wiggins and Jay McTighe. One of the most important lessons of backwards design, for me, has been to decide my assessments very early in the planning process. Before you begin teaching a unit, it is much easier to make sure that your assessments will reflect the standards, that they are meaningful and interesting for students, and that they have room for student creativity and choice. This process also allows you to differentiate the instruction as you go along, as long as you are still targeting the assessment. If some students don't seem to be progressing, I might create a song for the vocabulary, use some Total Physical Response (TPR), do some information gap activities, or use another strategy to appeal to learning styles that I may have neglected. As long as my focus remains on the final goal, I can easily see where students need assistance. Previously, I might have made an assessment to reflect what I thought students got out of a unit. Now, my assessment is the standard to which I teach.

## Assessment

When designing final performance assessments, I try to give students the opportunity to enhance their projects and reflect the extent of their knowledge according to their personal strengths. I always have “non-negotiable” areas of the assessment — content which must be included in the final task. Then, I give students alternatives for demonstrating their understanding through offering different choices, extra credit for additions, or a completely “wide-open” area in which students create the final project. For example, my fourth graders learn about Japanese restaurants. As a final assessment, they work in groups to create a commercial for a Japanese restaurant. The commercial must contain prices, a menu poster, some dialogue, a description of what foods they offer, and the telephone number. The students design the commercial themselves, including the actual wording and props. The commercials vary widely, from students singing their own restaurant jingles to break dancing to presenting elaborate foods made of paper. Students watch each other's performance on the final DVD and peer-score the results. This assessment combines with other assessments during the unit to give a complete picture of student progress.

## Instruction

After designing the final assessment, I also web my units of instruction according to Howard Gardner's Multiple Intelligences (1983). I cannot possibly teach to all the intelligences every class. In 25 minutes, we do usually manage to do some Total Physical Response, some singing or rapping, some reading, and some interaction in pairs or groups. When pairing or grouping, I try to consider differing ability levels and strengths whenever possible. In each unit, I try to plan at least one activity that appeals to each intelligence. For example, in a unit about school and students in Japan and the U.S., the lessons include working with large photos and a map of a Japanese school, “rapping” the school subjects, listening to real Japanese students describe themselves, writing a letter to Japan describing oneself, describing a friend to the class, working in pairs to make sentences about likes/dislikes, charting likes/dislikes and comparing to a Japanese class, figur-

ing out percentages of students that like various subjects and hobbies, and role-playing a teacher visit to your home. Along the way, most students find at least one or two activities that appeal directly to their strengths. Hopefully, students develop all of their intelligences as they participate in the unit. Even with careful planning, it is easy to slip back into teaching to one's own stronger intelligences or learning styles. When students seem to be struggling with vocabulary or concepts in a unit that is otherwise meaningful and engaging, a jolt of instruction that appeals to other intelligences is sometimes the key. If I add movement, music, or rhythm, most of my students will quickly pick up difficult vocabulary or phrases (think of all the songs you know). For reading activities, many students internalize concepts better when they can touch and manipulate characters and words with flashcards at their desks. Writing Japanese characters with a brush beautifully combines visual, kinesthetic and verbal/linguistic learning. It is usually when a set of lessons has been too easy to plan, or seems very logical to me (and my strengths!), that my students' faces remind me to offer some more varied activities such as these.

## Control

The most challenging part of differentiated instruction is the relinquishment of some control of the classroom. When I am not instructing within my own learning style, it feels a little uncomfortable. When students are working in cooperative groups, the classroom is noisy and chaotic. When I am waiting for students to come up with answers *on their own*, sometimes I feel impatient. When I am helping students set up the elaborate props for their video projects, I wonder why I can't just give a paper-and-pencil test anymore. The joys, however, are in the results. It is when the students find their own voice in Japanese and use it to communicate in their own styles that they truly learn and remember how fun it was to learn.

## Conclusion

With so many students and very little time, I cannot delve into differentiated instruction as much as I would like. In a homeroom or immersion setting, I would be able to identify students' specific strengths and weaknesses and offer them more tailored instruction, content, and assessment. The efforts that I make to differentiate combine the methods that are known to reach the most students along with a balancing act of activities that appeal to a variety of students. Every lesson is not a perfect example of differentiation, but when it does work, I can tell. The chatter has stopped, the kids are engaged, and they say "that class went by too fast!"

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## Accommodating Diversity in Lancaster PA

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*Jennie Steeley, Manheim Township (PA) Public Schools*

“How do you accommodate diversity in the classroom?” I was first expected to respond to this question in my Educational Diversity class as an undergraduate student at Dickinson College. At that time, I didn’t realize how often I would be asked this question, and how my approach to it would evolve. While sitting in class at Dickinson, I had no qualms about equal acceptance and opportunity for students of all backgrounds. In fact, I relished in the characteristics of students of various cultures (to some of which I had been exposed, some I had not) and enjoyed reading about what contributions these students could make to the school environment. I couldn’t wait to nurture the expression of various perspectives in my classroom. Diversity continued to be an underlying theme throughout my undergraduate experience, and once I began looking for a teaching position, I was asked that familiar question over and over again, “How do you accommodate diversity in the classroom?” Through my schooling and student teaching experiences, I had learned that diversity does not address race and culture exclusively, but it also attends to issues of multiple intelligences and the diverse ways in which students learn. As a third-year French teacher in suburban Lancaster County, PA (which, by the way, has a significant immigrant population, despite its stereotyped rural, Amish image), I find myself facing the challenges of addressing individual diversity of learning styles on a daily basis. Although I am only 8 years older than some of my students, I see a huge rift between how I was taught and how they need to be taught. This paradigm shift is undoubtedly influenced by the exponential advances in technology that have occurred since I was in high school, as students face distractions from iPods, Instant Messaging, text messaging, TiVo, etc. Because they’re accustomed to constant communication and stimulation, students need to be actively engaged in their learning. This evolution in teaching and learning has forced me to think about my personal experience as a student and to create new assessment methods that accurately reflect the diverse abilities of my students. As world language teachers, we are lucky to have so many facets of student learning to observe—speaking, writing, listening, reading, and cultural analysis. If we design our assessments to allow students of all learning styles to demonstrate their comprehension of language and culture, then we are encouraging success through diversity. When I present my syllabus and class expectations at the beginning of the year, I inform students that their major assessments will vary in form from chapter to chapter. While one chapter’s material may be tested through a tradi-

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tional pencil and paper test, the next may be through a project (either group and/or individual). The first major assessment for my level two students this year measured their ability to use reflexive verbs in the context of their morning routine (see *rubric*). I have students work in groups of four to develop a script and film a typical morning at their house. They record what happens between the time they wake up and the time they leave for school, narrating the actions along the way. Students are instructed to vary narrators/perspectives, so that all subject pronouns/verb forms are used. Students earn a group grade for the visual component (the taped skit), since it is a group effort, but are also afforded the opportunity for individual achievement through their submission of a hand-written script. I require every student to submit a hand-written copy of the script of their skit, so that I am certain that one student didn't type the script and simply print out a copy for each student. I explain to my classes that the responsibility rests on them to check for spelling, verb agreement, adjective agreement, and so on. I have found that students who prefer traditional, written assessments still enjoy this project because they have the opportunity to demonstrate their writing skills. At the same time, students who express themselves well orally (especially native speakers and heritage language learners) achieve success, as they share their oral abilities, and for some, flaunt their flare for the dramatic. Every year that I've assigned this project, I've found that the recorded skits become more and more aesthetically pleasing, as students have access to advanced editing software. I have had several students who have expressed interest in pursuing careers in filmmaking, and their talents are clearly observed through their work on this project. I recognize that informal assessments can provide as much feedback on student learning as formal assessments. As with my formal assessments, I allow for students to express themselves through diverse means of informal assessment. One activity that I enjoy monitoring is a vocabulary activity wherein I have students work in pairs to sculpt representations of their new vocabulary from Play-Doh. Students take turns molding the objects and guessing what the object being molded is. I can ascertain who is having difficulty producing words and who is achieving success. Tactile learners benefit from the hands-on nature of this activity, and oral learners can demonstrate their strengths. It is a very entertaining, amusing form of informal assessment both for students and for me!

### **A student model “un contrôle de sécurité.”**

In order to determine how well I am meeting students' diverse needs, I administer student feedback surveys throughout the course of the year. This year, I distributed the first survey a month into the school year, several days before our annual Parents' Night. I compiled the results to share with parents. I explained to parents that while the data seemed to contradict itself in terms of the types of activities that students find meaningful, it supports the theory of multiple intelligences. I described the diverse ways in which students learn and how I approach this diversity in my classroom. Parents nodded in agreement, and some even thanked me for providing so many outlets for intellectual expression. After sharing the results of the survey at Parents' Night, I presented them to my students. They were naively surprised to learn that their classmates prefer learning in ways that differ from their own! There were even friendly accusations of “You actually LIKE to take tests?!” and “Why would you

want do extra work on a project outside of class?!” After we discussed opposing viewpoints, I challenged students to do a better job at teaching diverse learning styles than I. I had to word this challenge carefully, as I didn’t want them to feel as if they were being punished for being candid in their responses, and I also didn’t want to appear as if I doubted my pedagogical abilities. I did want to portray myself as an educator who was open to new ideas to better instruct my students. I allotted a two day period to each of my classes to develop a lesson based on the material in the current chapter. I spent about 25 minutes on the first day leading them through the lesson planning process. I posted a blank lesson plan on my Moodle site for students to modify and print. Moodle is an open-source course management system that allows users to access documents and share information as well as to participate in online discussion. I required every student to hand in a lesson plan as complete as those that I produce daily (including the appropriate ACTFL standards, of course!). In planning their lessons, I encouraged students to incorporate engaging activities and effective approaches observed in their other classes. When the time came to present their lessons, few groups offered activities beyond what we normally do in my classes. Whether this was due in part to apathy or because they understand the reasoning behind the activities we do in class was debatable. To find out more, I asked students to complete a post-lesson reflection (see *below*). The data collected from this assignment supported my position on a combination of apathy and satisfaction leading to lessons similar to those I deliver. As expected, some students expressed a desire to teach again, while others demanded that I reclaim my duties as sole educator.

### **Students work in groups to plan their lessons.**

Allowing students to lead their peers through the presentation of new material allowed me to assume the role of a student, and I examined my attitude toward familiar activities from a different perspective. On a personal level, it was self-affirming to have students comment on how they gained understanding into why I present material/test in certain ways, as well as what a complex and difficult task teachers face in presence of diverse learners. Having answered the question numerous times, I turned the question on my students: “How do YOU accommodate diversity in the classroom?” And we learned together.

## **Chapitre onze: Projet**

### **(70 points)**

Instead of a test for this chapter, you will be graded on a two-part project. The first part will be done in a group; the second part is to be completed on your own. Both parts are due in class on \_\_\_\_\_. Be sure to consult the following directions and rubric as you work! You must turn in the rubric with your project.

#### **I. Skit**

As a group, you will film a short skit that follows your group through its morning routine. In this routine, you must do the following:

- a. Use 9 reflexive verbs from Mots I in the present tense in complete sentences. In doing so, you must use all subject pronouns (je, tu, il/elle/on, nous, vous, ils/elles).

- b. Use 5 other verbs of your choice (in complete sentences) describing what occurs during the morning routine.
- c. Ask a question using “Qui.”

In order to meet these requirements, you may have to take turns being on and off camera (especially to ensure that all 6 subject pronouns are used).

**BE CREATIVE!!!!!! ☺**

**II. Script**

Each person in the group must hand in his/her OWN script of the skit, written in his/her OWN handwriting. **TYPED SCRIPTS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED!!!**  
 Requirement Points Possible Points earned Skit: 9 reflexive verbs in the present tense (which use 6 different subjects) 27 Skit: 5 other verbs 5 Skit: “Qui” question 2 Script: 9 reflexive verbs in the present tense (which use 6 different subjects) 27 Script: 5 other verbs 2 Script: “Qui” question 2 Overall performance 2

TOTAL 70

Nom: \_\_\_\_\_ Classe: \_\_\_\_\_

**Student-presented lessons**

***Please respond thoughtfully to each of the following questions:***

1. Overall, how did it feel to instruct your peers?
2. What did you consider when planning your lesson? Why did you choose the activities you did?
3. How did it feel if/when students didn’t pay attention to your lesson? How did you respond?
4. How has this assignment given you insight into the duties/responsibilities of teachers?
5. If presented with the opportunity to deliver a lesson again, what would you do differently? What would you do the same?
6. How did it feel to be instructed by your peers?
7. Other comments:

# *A Differentiated Approach to Community College Language Instruction*

*James E. Bernhardt, Northern Virginia Community College*

## **Abstract**

This article describes a differentiated approach to Russian language instruction in the community college. The paper examines standards and their relationship to students' learning goals. It suggests some classroom activities and argues for a differentiated approach to homework and assessment, with special emphasis on preprogram assessment.

Each student comes to Russian class at Northern Virginia Community College (NVCC) different in his or her own way. As their teacher, I strive to provide each student with a standards-based program that will enable him or her to make maximum progress towards achieving his or her goals. I do that by differentiating instruction based on several careful assessments of students' background, learning styles, and final objectives.

A quick look at how scholars have defined differentiated instruction helps frame this discussion. The Annenberg Media Learner.Org series entitled "Teaching Foreign Languages K-12," in its video called "Valuing Diversity in Learners," defines differentiated instruction as instruction that "occurs when teachers adapt tasks to meet the diverse needs—the different ability levels, proficiencies, learning styles, heritage backgrounds, ages, or grades—of students in a classroom."

There exists an abundance of literature that supports the use of differentiated instruction in foreign language education. In *The Differentiated Classroom: Responding to the Needs of All Learners* C.A. Tomlinson writes "In differentiated classrooms, teachers begin where students are, not in the front of a curriculum guide. They accept and build upon the premise that learners differ in important ways. Thus they also accept and act on the premise that teachers must be ready to engage students in instruction through different learning modalities by appealing to differing interests, and by using varied rates of instruction along with varied degrees of complexity." (Tomlinson, 1999).

In a book rich with helpful and practical suggestions and activities for foreign language classrooms, *Differentiated Instruction: A Guide for Foreign Language Teachers* Deborah Blaz identifies several beliefs and practices that underpin a well differentiated foreign language classroom. She writes that students have choices in what and

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how they learn, that students make connections with what they already know, that students learn how to learn, and that they can do all of this through multiple learning modes (Blaz, 2006).

Differentiating instruction is an approach to teaching rather than a specific technique or method of instruction. Differentiated instruction takes advantage of everything the student brings to class in an effort to facilitate language learning and give each student an equal opportunity to learn. Often, as Professor Donato notes in the Annenberg video, teachers teach to their own learning styles. In a differentiated classroom, the teacher teaches in a wide variety of styles giving each student a chance.

## Standards

Can we teach many students in many ways and still maintain standards? In the world of foreign language teaching we are lucky to have two long established and widely recognized sets of standards, each nearly requiring differentiated instruction. The Interagency Language Roundtable (ILR) Proficiency scale was developed, initially, in the 1950s. The American Council of Teachers of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) proficiency scale was derived from the ILR scale in the 1980s.

The State Department identified and recognized the importance of proficiency-based instructional design for its trainees in the 1950s, following an internal Department review, which found that training needed to focus more sharply on what individuals did with the acquired language rather than on the socio-anthropological study of culture, which had been the main thrust of training at the Foreign Service Institute from 1947 to the middle 1950s. The publication in 1958 of William Lederer and Eugene Burdick's *The Ugly American* focused the nation's attention on diplomats and their inability to communicate with people in the countries where they worked. Finally, the October 4, 1957 launch of the Soviet satellite, Sputnik, put significant pressure on the State Department to improve its language training because the nation came to believe that American was dangerously behind the Soviet Union in many areas, including foreign language education.

After canvassing its employees on their language abilities, the State Department determined that self-assessment was not a reliable way to evaluate on-the-job language performance. The Department began a program of testing in the summer of 1958, based on proficiency in language use, rather than knowledge about the language, or achievement in specific training programs or classes.

Pleased with the information it was gathering about employee proficiency, Congress directed the Secretary of State in The Foreign Service Act Amendments of 1959 "to designate every Foreign Service office position in a foreign country whose incumbent should have a useful knowledge of a language or dialect common to such country"<sup>1</sup> Thus, at the State Department, each job at an embassy has a proficiency requirement, which could be at a specific level of proficiency, or a statement that some knowledge of the local language would be nice, or a statement that the position requires no knowledge of a language other than English. Depending on the employee's proficiency in the required language, he or she may proceed directly to work, or be assigned to language training at the Foreign Service Institute (FSI).



From 1960 on, proficiency at the State Department was measured in terms of what an employee was going to be required to do with the language and how he or she would use the language on the job, rather than by some other standard. The ACTFL proficiency guidelines retained the focus on end user needs even though most teachers do not know exactly how their students will use the language in coming years.<sup>2</sup>

The Speaking 2 (Limited Working Proficiency) level on the ILR scale leads with the sentence, “[Speakers are] able to satisfy routine social demands and limited work requirements.” The example portion of the skill level description at this levels continues, “While these interactions will vary widely from individual to individual, the individual can typically ask and answer predictable questions in the workplace and give straightforward instructions to subordinates” ([www.govtilr.org/ILRscale2.htm#2](http://www.govtilr.org/ILRscale2.htm#2)). The ILR standards implicitly recognize that the final learning objectives for each student will be different. Since the objectives are different, because the jobs are different, the training for each student needs to be different as well.

If we look at the ACTFL proficiency scale at the same level, we see a similar approach. At the Advanced Mid level speakers “are able to handle with ease and confidence a large number of communicative tasks. They participate actively in most informal and some formal exchanges on a variety of concrete topics relating to work, school, home, and leisure activities, as well as to events of current, public and personal interest of individual relevance” ([www.actfl.org/files/public/Guidelinespeak.pdf](http://www.actfl.org/files/public/Guidelinespeak.pdf)). While ACTFL does say that speakers at this level need to be able to handle all verb tenses, the thrust of the description is still focused on the individual language user rather than on specific aspects of the language.

The standards established by both the ILR and ACTFL clearly call for student centered, differentiated instruction. In order to apply the standards in concrete situations, the teacher needs to know why and how the students will use the language. In the government, the teacher needs to know what job the student will do and how that job uses language. In the schools the teacher needs to know the students’ individual areas of interest and the students’ own developing goals.

## Goals

As we have seen from both the ILR and ACTFL skill level descriptions, student goals play a key role in realizing standards for the foreign language classroom. I collect information on student goals by having the students fill out a questionnaire during the first class period and by having them talk about their goals in a class discussion. I try to understand their real world needs for the language and the connections they are trying to make with other courses or other aspects of their lives.

Students take Russian language classes at NVCC for a wide variety of reasons: 25% of the students beginning Russian classes in the fall of 2005 said they were taking Russian because they wanted to learn the language. A few said they were taking Russian because they were interested in languages in general. 12% were taking the course because it meets a graduation requirement. A number of students take Russian language classes because they will help them on the job. Some take Russian for family reasons: to adopt children from Russian speaking countries, to talk with in-

laws, to talk with spouses (including Internet brides), or to get in touch with family roots. I have had several students take Russian for religious reasons: either to understand their own religions better or to travel to Russia as missionaries.

Most NVCC students are early to mid-career professionals, which is consistent with observations made by several speakers at the June 2004 “National Language Conference: A Call for Action,” sponsored jointly by the Center for the Advanced Study of Language (CASL) and the Department of Defense. They noted that as course requirements for majors increase and courses of study become more rigorous, fewer and fewer non-language majors are able to take courses in foreign languages beyond the courses required for graduation. Students who were not able to take foreign language classes, for whatever reason, during their regular college careers, seem to be turning to the community college for those classes once they are out in the real world. This seems to be especially true at NVCC. Over 50% of a typical NVCC Russian class in any given year has completed at least a Bachelor’s Degree, with several students having done some work at the graduate level.

Of the people taking Russian at NVCC who have only completed high school, more than half have established some sort of career for themselves and are coming back to college.

A small number of students in any given year take Russian at NVCC as part of their high school programs. Several home-schooled students have enrolled at NVCC, as well. Every year a number of retired people take Russian with a view to enriching their lives.

Over the past five years, Russian language students at the NVCC have had a range of different goals in mind. Some students wanted to focus on listening comprehension because they were preparing to take the Defense Language Proficiency Test (DLPT). Others have taken language classes to better communicate with co-workers on the job (a typical need for the auto mechanics, people working for NGOs, and the one professional ballerina who took my class). Like the military students, these students were also interested in listening comprehension in general and, in many cases, very specific technical or office-related terminology. The students who have taken Russian language classes because they were planning to marry or adopt Russians wanted to learn basic survival language for the home and travel to and from Russia.

Several students wanted to focus on developing their reading skills and learning the vocabulary used in diplomacy, international relations, and history since they were studying the language as part of, or preparation for, their graduate coursework in international relations. The retired students who studied the language for personal growth, seemed most interested in the story of Russia and sharing their own stories about Russia over the years. I learned to value the senior citizens in the class as making some of the most interesting contributions to our studies.

## Assessment

Assessment plays a key role in differentiating instruction. Three key types of assessment underpin my instructional design: preprogram assessment, interim assessments, and end-of course assessments. I believe that good assessments are interac-

tive, with the students' assessment of the class playing as important a role as my evaluations of their progress with Russian.

Preprogram assessment takes place over the first couple of sessions. During the preprogram period, I gather baseline information about the students' proficiency in the four skills of speaking, reading, writing and listening. We also talk about learning styles, and I have the students do an online learning styles assessment. Finally, I try to learn what I can about the students' background that may help them in their language learning. Students come to NVCC with a wide range of language -related experiences and competencies. I have taught a mix of native and heritage speakers, including students with backgrounds in Russian, Bulgarian, Hawaiian, Hebrew, Italian, Kazakh, Korean, Portuguese, Shoshoni, Spanish, and Uzbek languages. Students also come with a wide range of backgrounds in the study of foreign languages. As one might expect, many students studied Spanish, French or German before coming to NVCC. An increasing number of students have experience with Arabic, and a smattering of students have studied other, less commonly taught languages. A small percentage of students have had no prior experience studying languages.

Students' education background, in general, and background in the study of foreign languages in specific, become major factors in producing an instructional design for any given class. I attempt to present grammar in several different ways, for instance. While students with undergraduate majors in foreign languages are quite comfortable with the grammatical terms, every class has students who panic when they hear words like 'adjective'. As I present the Russian case system in first-year Russian, I use the traditional names of the cases in both Russian and English, but also give students the option of calling the cases 'case one,' 'case two,' etc. Several students seem very pleased with this option each year. I tell the students that the class is designed to train them to use Russian and that I will never test them on grammar points specifically. So, if the grammar explanations are helpful, they should pay careful attention. If they are not, I will work with them to find other ways to cope with the structural requirements of Russian.

Like adults in any learning situation, NVCC Russian students make connections between what they are learning and what they have already experienced. As a trainer, the first challenge is to help students build on what they know without distracting or discouraging other participants. Typically, a few students will drop first year Russian in the early weeks, believing that the class is not at a beginning level, or that all the other students in class are smarter, or faster, or better than they will ever be. I try to reach out to all students and support them until they start to establish their own footing in the language. I do not always succeed.

The second challenge is to understand students' background well enough to be able to design a teaching plan that will take them from their current levels of knowledge and skill with Russian to the next level. Knowing about student backgrounds, and taking that knowledge into account when designing a teaching plan helps me help the students make progress with Russian efficiently. Take grammar, for instance. While my classes are proficiency based, language use is a rule governed activity. Giving adult learners just the right amount of grammar helps them make rapid progress. Students

who come to Russian with a background in one of the commonly taught languages bring certain strategies to the study of Russian, on the one hand, and expect certain types of grammar explanations and classroom activities on the other. Many students come to Russian class expecting to learn about prepositional phrases, for instance. I try to help them come to grips with the fact that while Russian has prepositions, the use of prepositional phrases as a grammar concept is not of much interest.

Students who have successfully learned Romance languages often want to begin their Russian studies by learning lots of words. While learning vocabulary is a key component in any course of language study, it is not what students should spend most of their time on in the early weeks of Russian. Word endings and cases often play a much more important role in Russian. Students, who focus on learning words in the beginning, rather than on acquiring the system of endings, tend to end up with a kind of fluent garbage at the end of the course.

At several points during the course, we stop and assess where we are and where we are going. I have done that by replicating the preprogram assessments for the four skill areas, by using traditional achievement tests, and, most importantly, devoting a period to talking about the class. Students are more than willing to tell me if something is wrong, or if my teaching style is not meeting their needs. Students have asked me to write on the board more frequently, have more frequent vocabulary tests. I have been asked not to call on some students too early in an activity, because they wanted more time to think about what we were doing. I have found these interim assessments to be among the most helpful pieces of feedback I get.

Recently, I have begun negotiating end of training assessments with individual students. Students talk with me about the final exams and how they would like to fulfill that part of the course requirements. Some students have opted for taking a traditional sit-down test. Others have written papers in Russian or done oral reports. Some students have created PowerPoint presentations on their topics of interest. One student did extensive translations. All students are measured against the standards for the course, but have options in determining how they will demonstrate their progress with Russian.

The basic concept is to take students where they are and lead them one step at a time to where they need to be. If you don't know where they are, if you don't know what their backgrounds are, you will have trouble moving them in the right direction. And, of course, the next logical step in this line of thought is that you can't take student in the right direction if you don't know where you are going. In order to know where to go, you need to know the students' reasons and goals for learning Russian.

## Homework and Classroom Activities

Lesson plans for a diverse group need to include in-class activities and homework assignments that facilitate growth in the key skill areas for each subset of students: listening for the military students, reading for those going into graduate programs, speaking for people who need to communicate on the job and at home, and culture for the personal enrichment crowd. While writing training facilitates growth in all skill areas, few students need it as a primary subject.

A significant factor in determining the range of activities appropriate for a specific class is the diverse set of learning styles or preferences students bring to their studies. Some students learn by doing, others learn by seeing. Some thrive on rules and explanations while others prefer to discover the patterns for themselves. Some want to learn like children. Some want to just absorb the language from the air around them. Still others want to explore how this language is like the others they have studied.

In *Understanding Second Language Learning Difficulties*, Madeline E. Ehrman writes, “When there is a mismatch between the learner’s style [...] and the curriculum and teaching style of the course, there will be effects on the efficiency and effectiveness of the learning” (p. 50).<sup>3</sup> When there is a preference mismatch, some students are left behind, or, as is often the case, leave the language class altogether. Attempting to understand student language learning preferences and finding ways to make class time productive for everyone is difficult, but rewarding. When 30 students populate the room on the first day of class, matching teaching style to learner preferences may seem like a Herculean task; on the other hand, few other efforts on the part of the teacher yield such significant results.

In “Understanding Learner-Centered Instruction from the Perspective of Multiple Intelligences,” Marjorie Hall Haley presents a chart matching the eight intelligences with instructional activities (p. 364).<sup>4</sup> The chart could be extremely helpful in planning lessons for all learning styles, since learning styles are not unlike multiple intelligences. For instance, Hall-Haley writes that word order activities may appeal to logical and mathematically inclined students, while role plays might be especially good for kinesthetic ones.

While most students tend to want material presented in a sequential manner and follow the preferred order of the transfer sequence, NVCC is particularly welcoming to the enrichment learner. Students who have studied Russian previously (about 50% of the population) often take the courses out of order, as do heritage learners and native speakers. By including activities that can be done by students at several levels of proficiency, I am able to challenge students who are taking courses out of sequence, as well as those who come to the class with substantial backgrounds. By making classroom activities multileveled, I am able to set up situations where students can learn from each other and where I do not have to be the center of attention, or the “sage on the stage” (to borrow a phrase from Professor Donato in the Annenberg video).

For instance, we often listen to the evening radio news broadcasts from the Voice of Russia over the Internet at [www.wrn.org](http://www.wrn.org). As a pre-listening activity we talk about what is happening in the world and what might be included on the Russian news. That allows us to talk about differences in selection of stories and differences in world view. Students predict what words they might need to be able to understand the story (and I supply them with those words if they do not know them already), as well as the kind of slant the news might have. Students at lower levels of listening comprehension may be able to confirm whether we successfully predicted the topic areas for the news by identifying geographic terms, proper nouns and personal names, recognizing some cognates. Students with higher levels of proficiency may recognize more words and may be able to pick up any ‘slant’ on the news. They may also be able

to identify any stories that the group had not foreseen. As we debrief on the stories I ask them specifically what they heard, which words and phrases gave them a hint about the topics and/or content of the stories. By working together, all students are able to contribute and are able to learn from one another.

Listening to ads on the radio is another radio-based activity that allows for students at several proficiency levels to exhibit and practice their skills. Students at lower proficiency levels may be able to pick up phone numbers while students with higher levels of proficiency are able to identify products and types of sales pitches. All of the students can talk about the style of radio advertising.

Sequential learners can be helped with the introduction of a 'road map' lesson very early in the process. I take one class period and 'teach' students everything there is to know about Russian. We go over all six cases, adjective noun agreements, word order issues, all of the verb forms, and rules for spelling. No student remembers it all. Sequential learners love the lesson, though, because it gives them the lay of the land for the language, which, in turn, helps them know where they are in their own sequence of acquisition. The overview lesson also helps most students focus their studies on what is important at any particular stage of acquisition.

Aural and visual learners have different needs in the classroom. Visual learners need to see what they are doing. Early in the year I tell students to remind me to write example sentences on the board for them, since that is something I frequently forget to do. When working with new words or dialogues, I always read them to the students in order to help the aural learners process the information.

Paper and Pencil Response (PPR) activities (also known as dictation) seem particularly successful in helping aural, visual, and kinesthetic learners process new information. The trick to PPR activities is to keep them at the practice stage of learning rather than letting them slip into a form of testing. Here's how it works: I hand out blank pieces of paper (the most common type of handout I use in class). I instruct the students to either fold the paper or draw a certain number of horizontal lines on the page. All of my instructions are done in the target language, of course. Once the students have folded or lined the pages, I have them number each line or box. I then replicate the pattern on the board. Then I tell the students to write the item on a certain line or within a certain box, "On the line with the number 19, write the sentence..." Finally, I write the sentence on the board and the students carefully check their work to see if they got it right.

At the end of this first stage of dictation, the students have a paper that can be manipulated for a wide variety of purposes. If we are studying subject verb agreement, I may ask the students to change various subjects. For adjective-noun agreement, I may ask them to replace one noun or adjective with another. Both aural and visual learners are actively engaged in learning. By the end of the semester, PPR activities are among the most popular.

PPR, of course, suggests the use of TPR (Total Physical Response) and TPRS (Total Physical Response with a Story) activities. I have found that morphing traditional early level TPR into a form of light aerobics is quite successful, especially for community college evening students who have already spent a hard day on the job and enjoy a

little bending and stretching. Kinesthetic learners thrive during the TPR periods! One year I was blessed with a native-speaking student from Moscow who worked as a personal trainer. Nothing could be more authentic than an aerobics class conducted by a coach who is also a native speaker!

The Meyers-Briggs personality test yields interesting information about learning styles. I have found the discussions about the dichotomy between Introverts and Extroverts extremely useful and productive where classroom activities are concerned. The primary difference between the two types of people is the manner in which they recharge themselves. Extroverts do it by seeking interaction with others. Introverts, on the other hand, energize themselves through introspection and reflection.

For language classes, however, it is more relevant to consider whether students process information internally or externally. In *Achieving Success in Second Language Acquisition*, Betty Lou Leaver, et al., writes “If you are an extravert, you are more likely to talk a lot in the classroom and seek new acquaintance in non-classroom language-learning settings. If you are an introvert, you will also want to talk (some more than others [...]) in class but will probably want to think about it first, even if briefly.”<sup>5</sup>

The language class that gets students to talk right away puts introverts at a real disadvantage. Introverted students need to be able to process their thoughts before they speak. Thus, at a minimum, speaking activities should be sequenced to let the introverts speak last. Some would like to know in advance what speaking activities will take place in the next class, so they can spend homework time thinking about what they will say. Extraverts, on the other hand, often think out loud, giving the teacher key insights into how the student is learning. Some fellow students may find such constant commentary disruptive, while others will use it to help in processing new information.

For me, the biggest difference between the traditional classes I used to teach in the 1980s and my work now concerns the area of homework. While classroom activities for a group of 30 or more students can be varied and targeted, they all still tend to take place at the same time and in the same space. Homework, on the other hand, presents a broad spectrum of possibilities and options.

During the first days of class at NVCC, I tell my students that I believe homework is very important, and that students who do homework tend to be better learners than those who don't. While I give them a syllabus that predicts where we will be in the textbook on any given day and suggests homework assignments in the workbook that accompanies the textbook, I also ask the students to think about the effect homework is having on their learning. I ask them to stop after a homework session and ask themselves whether they know more Russian now than they did when they started the day's assignment. If the answer is yes, we may be on the right track with homework. If it is no, and especially if it is no several times in a row, then it is time to think about other kinds of homework.

The activities in the workbook for the course are fairly traditional grammar-manipulation exercises or tasks. Sequential learners and deductive learners may find that kind of activity satisfying and helpful. Many students do not.

Some students keep journals in Russian. In the beginning, students often block on topics, but as they do more and more writing, it comes more and more easily. I look

at the journals when the students are ready for me to look at them, usually once every couple of weeks. I respond to the substance of the students' writing and do not focus on their mistakes. Students who do journals tend to build vocabulary nicely, but can also build some bad habits in terms of structure. I work with the students to develop a style of feedback that is most helpful to them. Some students want their mistakes circled in red. Others would like me to use the word or structure in my response. Some would like me to read and respond to the substance of what they have written. Those students who write and read in about equal doses tend to make the most progress.

A fairly large number of students have been drawn to translation as a homework activity. They choose articles or poems or songs and work on translating them into or out of Russian. The students choose their own texts to translate, and, thus tend to work in topic areas of particular interest and build vocabulary that is meaningful to them.

Many of the students at Northern Virginia Community College, as noted earlier, have close contacts of one sort or another with the local Russian speaking community. For many students, trying out what they have learned in class with coworkers, friends or spouses is an excellent approach to homework. Several students without ready made Russian conversation partners have found restaurants with Russian servers and stores with Russian speaking clerks as good places to practice their new language skills.

This year, one student asked me to make homework a course requirement for her and to count it as one-third of her final grade. She had found that if the homework wasn't required and if it didn't count as a specific part of her grade, she wasn't going to do it. After we created a homework 'contract' her performance improved significantly.

## **Students with Special Learning Situations**

The fourth area for consideration in differentiating the foreign language class is students' special learning situations. I have had a number of students in class with real learning issues, including several ADD/ADHD students. Early in my career at NVCC, I had a student with autism. The student could work well in carefully chosen groups but did not work well with all other students. There were times when the student made astounding, off-the-wall connections. At other times, he just sat quietly in class. Working with the college's learning specialist, I learned to give all my assignments in writing, which helped the student remember what needed to be done. By the end of our two semesters together, I grew to have great respect for the student, since he had made it to college and succeeded in passing two semesters of Russian with fairly good grades! My student turned out to be a stellar learner of verb forms!

A mature student body means that many students have full-time jobs and significant family commitments. Since NVCC is usually the only institution offering evening Russian classes in the greater Washington area, many students travel significant distances to get to class. Many students have travel as part of their jobs (several have gone to Russia during the semester) and need to miss class time. Time is an issue for every-



one. For these students, a flexible approach to deadlines is exceptionally important. While I publish a calendar for the class, I am always ready to accept late homework or have students take their tests in the testing center rather than on the appointed night in the classroom. My flexibility is key to the ability of many to take the class. In my final assessments for the class, I try to evaluate each student's progress towards his or her own goals in light of the ILR/ACTFL skill level descriptions

Teaching at the community college level has its challenges and rewards. While we, as the teachers, may not be able to assess the needs of each and every student, we can still effectively impart instruction by differentiating instruction and expectations within the spectrum of students' goals, backgrounds, learning styles, and special situations. By introducing varied and interesting learning components in class and homework syllabi, we can address the wide variety of needs, concerns and learning preferences NVCC's diverse student body brings to any language class.

Through a differentiated approach to foreign language instructional design, we can make even very large classes feel much more like individualized lessons. The time a teacher spends understanding student backgrounds, identifying goals and learning styles and accommodating special situations, is time well spent. Students learn more successfully and come back for more classes.

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# Planning to Meet a Learning Community's Needs

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## Abstract

In the 2004 Annenberg video focusing on addressing the needs of diverse learners, Hall Haley and Donato conclude their discussion by emphasizing the vital role of planning in a successful modern language classroom. In order to better reach all students, essential components must be present: (1) a school-wide commitment to student success, (2) teachers who collaborate with one another across disciplines and know what happens in one another's classrooms, and (3) planning and assessment that allow "multiple pathways to learning... multiple pathways to knowing" (Donato, 2004). This article offers a vision for addressing the needs of all learners in a modern language program from the planning process to the implementation of integrated performance assessment.

## A Home for a Vision

In July 2005, modern language teachers at Casco Bay High School arrived full of hope of developing a new integrated, performance-based curriculum. Their plans fit well within the scheme of expeditionary learning, an educational model that combines rigorous academics with active field work and real world experience. One staff member had been in several other language departments hoping to shift focus from text-driven, de-contextualized programs to a performance-based curriculum. In each setting, traditional assessments had been so institutionalized that change seemed years off. These language teachers had the vision, they just needed the environment to support and nurture it. There on that warm July day, they found the home for the vision as they set off in their caravan of canoes on the Presumpscot River—their first collaborative effort as a learning community.

In the context of Casco Bay High School for Expeditionary Learning, it is difficult to separate the experience of the modern language teacher from that of the other teachers in the school community. Therefore, a discussion of the first year of our modern language program and the efforts to create a highly integrated curriculum had to include the whole school, as modern language would not be as effective without the support of colleagues in math, science, humanities, and wellness. At Casco Bay High School, teachers know the learning styles of their students because they guide them through a two-week learning styles expedition in ninth grade. Once empow-

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ered with that knowledge, students can tell teachers how they learn best. They are encouraged not only to advocate for their own learning styles but also to develop any areas of weakness. During these two weeks, modern language teachers work with Humanities teachers to explore ways of learning new vocabulary and how best to study those newly acquired terms. The French and Spanish teachers launch the study of second languages by analyzing how children learn a first language. As a result, students know exactly why *the teacher never speaks English in class*.

## Planning with the Standards—A New Grading System

In inaugurating Casco Bay High School, the learning community created a new standards-based grading system (see Appendix A). The first challenge involved selling the system to students, parents, and ourselves. The work began during the weeks of August preceding the opening of school. There the principal presented his vision to the grading committee, composed of stakeholders from all groups of the school's community. The committee came to a consensus and brought its proposal to the whole group through a skit in which the principal rated the quality of various types of chocolate cookies. In a cookie-baking task, to *approach* the standard (a grade of two on Casco Bay High School's four point scale) means that the student submits cookie dough as the final product. To *meet* the standard (a three on the CBHS scale), a student may submit an ordinary chocolate chip cookie. The student who *exceeds* the standard (a grade of four) presents to the class a chocolate cookie flavored with cinnamon and nutmeg and the essence of hazelnut. The group accepted the new grading system and thus ended the first in a series of on-going conversations about what constitutes a standard, how one meets it, and how much time one must have in order to meet it. In this grading system, students no longer receive grades that average their performance across a grading period. Rather, they have multiple opportunities to meet each standard. Just like the baker who burns the first batch of cookies and prepares a second batch, students in this standard-based system have opportunities to improve their performance with practice and revision. Through this system, Casco Bay High School acknowledges that each individual reaches the standard at a different pace and in a different way.

## Planning the Curriculum—Expeditions

In addition to implementing a new grading system, Casco Bay High School is innovative as one of twenty Expeditionary Learning (EL) High Schools recently started around the country. The EL curriculum revolves around learning expeditions—long-term, in-depth studies of a single topic that explore vital guiding questions, incorporate standards, involve fieldwork, and culminate in a project, product or performance. The culminating event for the 2005-2006 school year was a conference organized by students in which they presented belief statements to a panel of stakeholders from around the state. Their belief statements held their visions for the future of education and work in Maine. Students received immediate and direct feedback from the stakeholders. One of the stakeholders, impressed by the students' work, later presented the students with a \$10,000 grant to purchase laptops for the school.

In their ideal form, Learning Expeditions involve a high level of integration of content areas. In her work with elementary content-based foreign language instruction, Met

(1991) asserts that teachers must know the school-wide curriculum and the sequence of instruction of the material. In the modern language department at Casco Bay High School, teachers struggled with how to participate in a highly integrated expedition and at the same time honor the process of language acquisition. Learning Expeditions assume that all teachers involve all students in learning activities whose themes cut across the curriculum. However, how can a student in a first year language course discuss the state of the fishing industry when s/he cannot yet say hello? The most pronounced issue in a content-based curriculum—one that became evident almost immediately after beginning planning work at Casco Bay HS—is that it “may sequence some language objectives according to the curriculum of other content areas” (Met, 293). The Expeditionary Learning model assumed a highly collaborative relationship between modern language and other content areas. The Expeditionary Learning model requires that teachers plan learning experiences that culminate in common synthesizing products, such as the above mentioned conference. In theory, it would have been an ideal setting for highly integrated, content-based instruction. However, combining the overarching theme of the *Working Waterfront* with a curriculum rooted in functional objectives guided by the ACTFL Scale for Oral Proficiency presented certain challenges early on. With modern language teachers committed to preparing students for success in proficiency-oriented assessments, an immediate theoretical conflict developed. Colleagues in Humanities encouraged modern language teachers to explore the vocabulary of the waterfront and the fishing industries. Such tasks would undermine the goals of the modern language program. The modern language teachers responded by inviting the Expeditionary Learning school designers and the rest of the high school staff to consider the language functions necessary in the proposed case studies. The *Working Waterfront*, the year’s first expedition, presented a context rich with vocabulary but the guiding question for the expedition (*How do we sustain a working waterfront?*) required language well beyond the novice level. Furthermore, modern language teachers would have struggled to find sufficient connections in that context to sustain a trimester’s worth of study. In the end, in consideration of the ACTFL Performance Guidelines Scale, and refocusing attention on *preparing students for the future*, the staff compromised that modern language would work independently until the expedition planning which focused more closely on the needs of modern language learning. In fact, during the first two expeditions, modern language teachers continued to work independent of the rest of the school. Modern language learning involved the fieldwork paramount to Expeditionary Learning (e.g., visits to local target-language speaking restaurants, target language community outreach, and presentations at other high schools in the city) and culminated in a final project. However, instead of exploring the *Working Waterfront* and Greek theater, French and Spanish students acquired essential survival skills in conversation through investigations into the French- and Spanish-speaking communities of the city and through a restaurant expedition. In the end, first-year language students couldn’t say much about the waterfront, but they could describe themselves, their families, and others; order food in a restaurant; and find their way through a marketplace. The collaborative EL ideal—full collaboration during all three expeditions in a school year—felt unmanageable. The work of the modern language teachers at this school was (and still is) to find the intersection between a proficiency-oriented model and a content-

based model. Bragger (1999) in her Developmental Model for Content-Oriented Instruction, proposes a system that expands Krashen's (1988) input hypothesis to account for the needs of content-based instruction. She asserts that "for learning to occur [in a content-based classroom], there must be familiarity with either the language needed to deal with the content or [with] the content itself" (379). In the context of a proficiency-oriented program which focuses on the three modes of communication identified by ACTFL, further development of Bragger's model is necessary. Not only must the modern language teacher consider the appropriateness of the content and the language according to Bragger's model, one has to consider the functional language objectives that can emerge from the content at the student's level. It is at that intersection of content and language function that we develop curriculum at Casco Bay High School.

## Casco Bay High School Planning Model for Content-Based Modern Language Instruction

### Planning for Assessment —The Integrated Performance Assessment

Donato (2004) asserts that knowing what we plan to do with learners and how each of them learn is vital to successful teaching. Modern language teachers at CBHS begin planning by developing the Integrated Performance Assessment (IPA) that students take at the end of the trimester. The EL planning template—developed using the work of Stiggins and Chappius (2006)—facilitates the process beginning with the guiding themes and questions that learners will address in the Expedition. From there, teachers plan backward to differentiated activities that lead to the desired outcome—meeting standards on the assessment. The IPA fits naturally in such a planning model, as it was developed considering the research of Wiggins who with McTighe (1998) proposes a backward planning model. The IPA highlighted in this paper was developed at that initial planning phase. After the teacher consulted with the 9th grade team on possible expedition topics, s/he confirmed that the theme woven throughout the three phases of the IPA (work) fit into the planning model (e.g., the context allowed for sufficient activity development at the proficiency level of the students). The stage set, development of the IPA began.

### Language Function CBHS Content ML Program Phase One—Interpretive

For this task, students read an article from *Okapi*, a French magazine for youth. The article highlighted three different professions, indicating those personality traits that best suit the job and the education necessary to find employment in the profession. Depending on the student, they received a novice level or intermediate level comprehension guide. According to the level:

#### Novice Level

- Identify cognates
- Find important ideas in the text
- Identify the main idea of the text

### Intermediate Level

In addition to the novice level tasks, students:

- Make meaning of words from context
- Make inferences about the author's intent

### Phase Two—Interpersonal

In the next class, the students received the feedback sheets from the Interpretive Phase and began Phase Two, the Interpersonal Phase. In this part of the assessment, students received the following prompt:

*You are studying in France and you decide to get a job to earn some spending money. You read about three professions in an article in Okapi. From there, you begin thinking about jobs that you may like to pursue. Now you are going to a job center. There, you will be interviewed by a person to find out what type of work best suits you. You will have to tell him/her about yourself (family, pastime activities, likes/dislikes). Tell him/her about what professions interest you.*

To complete the task, students responded to a series of prompts intended to elicit spontaneous speech in which they show how they can use the vocabulary familiar to them in a slightly different context. As in the Interpretive Phase, the teacher rated the students' samples using the ACTFL IPA rubrics from the IPA manual and gave the feedback to the students before they began the next phase. One phase informs the next both in content and in language acquired.

### Phase Three—Presentational

In the final portion of the IPA, students imagined that they worked for a French job agency. Their task was to put together a presentation on a particular job to a group of potential applicants. For the following class, they had to prepare a poster highlighting the career of their choice using the format presented in the Okapi article. The poster had to present: (1) the type of person that chooses this career, (2) the type of studies that one must complete, and (3) where one finds that type of work. The students presented the posters to the class the following day.

### An Authentic Product for an Authentic Audience

The poster that students prepared for the final phase of the IPA also served as a rough draft for a presentation they gave at the end of the year to another French class at a different high school in the city. Students were not only motivated to complete phase three because it was the part of an assessment, but also because they wanted the feedback from the IPA to revise their work for the presentation to the other class. Having planned backward from the IPA, the teacher could identify the most appropriate pathways that students would follow to acquire the language skills necessary for the assessment. Learning activities ask students to:

- Find cognates and important ideas in texts
- Recall information from stories told to them
- Retell parts of those

- Speak spontaneously in scenarios
- Present information to others in the class

## Student Experiences

In introducing any change into a system, students need time to adjust. Implementing a new system of assessment requires taking the time to accompany students through the new process. **It is a messy process and nothing is perfect in the beginning.** However, by the end of the trimester—after weeks of using the IPA terminology and raising students’ awareness about the Modes of Communication—students had phenomenal insight into their learning as they completed the IPA. Below are some of their reactions:

*I think the IPA relates more to if we were actually going to a French-speaking country. It was better for me because it was the stuff we learned all year. This is very different—and a lot better—because you actually learn it and don’t forget it. You’re actually learning even during the test.*

Students actively engage in the IPA and “actually learn” during an assessment. To engage students in the Interpretive mode, students read in the *Okapi* a passage in which Christian, an ambulance driver, says that one of the aspects of his job that he really likes is “the contact” (le contact). In reading this passage, a student asks the following question:

*S1: What does this mean? It says that he says that “he likes contact” but the sentence stops there... What do I write??*

*T: What do you think he could be talking about based on the context of that statement?*

The student can draw the conclusion that Christian can only be referring to “contact” with *people* or continue reading to find that Christian continues:

**I not only drive people, I listen to them and reassure them during difficult experiences.**

Another student questioned the cognates “to create” and “créer”:

*S2: I don’t know if this (pointing to “créer”) is a cognate. It isn’t spelled exactly the same.*

*T: Think about what we said a cognate is and then check through the rest of the text.*

In each instance, the teacher redirected students to access what they already know about cognates in order to determine whether or not the word in question is a cognate. According to Vygotsky (1978), these students’ problem was solved within their Zone of Proximal Development. The ultimate evidence of the value of IPA came from one student who struggled to see the purpose of the different phases. She exclaimed during the assessment, “I get it! The same theme goes throughout the different parts so that we don’t have waste time to change from one part to the next!”



## Meeting Casco Bay High School Grading Standards = Meeting National Standards

The academic standards students must meet in French and Spanish at Casco Bay High School reflect the Maine State Learning Result and the *National Standards*. Students interact with the National Standards—the three modes of communication, the role of community and culture, the nature of comparisons—because they see them on their report cards. Connections to other content areas are a given because of the nature of the EL model. Students routinely reflect on how their learning in one content area connects with that of others. Students have multiple opportunities to meet the standards with our performance-based assessment system. When students see the Modes of Communication on the IPA, they recognize them because we refer to them often and these make up three of the seven academic standards that students must meet.

### The IPA, the CBHS Grading System, and Individual Differences

The Integrated Performance Assessment assumes that if a student does not meet the standard in the Interpretive Phase for example, the student does not continue to the next phase as there is important information in that phase that the student needs to understand before moving on. If the student does not have the proficiency skills necessary to access that information at a given level, the student must continue to practice at that level until s/he can meet the standard on the IPA. Different students will reach the standard at different rates. The CBHS grading system allows the IPA to truly rate student performance as opposed to traditional grading systems, which would insist that the IPA convert to a letter grade.

### Implications for the Profession

As a startup school, Casco Bay High School has a unique opportunity that other schools do not have. All teachers, however, can employ some of the strategies of this school. They can look beyond their classrooms to plan collaboratively. Teachers must talk to other teachers to help students determine their preferred learning styles. They can incorporate grading systems that provide diverse student populations multiple opportunities to meet standards. Not all schools have the same opportunity for collaboration; however, all schools can, to some degree, have

- a school-wide commitment to student success
- teachers who collaborate with one another across disciplines and know what happens in one another's classrooms,
- planning and assessment that allow “multiple pathways to learning [and] knowing”

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## Notes

1. The reader should consult the *ACTFL Integrated Performance Assessment Manual* (Glisan, Adair-Hauck, Koda, Sandrock, & Swender, 2003) for the entire set of Interpretive, Interpersonal, and Presentational rubrics.

## Appendix A

### Casco Bay HS Grading Language and Scale

Each Casco Bay High School course will be built around ten to fifteen *course standards*. A course standard is a description of a learning target that can be achieved during a particular course; they represent the essential things all students must know or be able to do in a course. Our standards based grading language and scale is consistent with the scale that the state uses for the MEA's and mandates for the Local Assessment System.

**1 = Does Not Meet the Standards**

**2 = Partially Meets the Standards**

**3 = Meets the Standards**

**4 = Exceeds the Standards**

For each major assessment, teachers will develop *rubrics* (often with student input) that make clear the criteria that a student will have to meet in order to receive a 2, 3 or 4.

**What specifically do these grades say about student achievement on a particular assessment of a course standard?**

**1 = Does Not Meet the Standards:** A "1" is given when, in the absence of extenuating circumstances (e.g. an excused absence), a student does not demonstrate substantive progress towards meeting the standards or criteria of a given assessment by an established deadline. This may mean that a student has not met the majority of

performance indicators or criteria for that assessment, or they have not genuinely attempted to meet the rubric criteria. ***This is not a passing grade.***

**2 = Partially Meets the Standards:** A “2” is given when a student has demonstrated a substantive attempt to meet the standards of a given assessment by the established deadline, but needs more time to achieve competency. This may mean a student has met the majority (51%) of the performance indicators or criteria for that assessment or genuinely attempts to meet the rubric criteria. ***This is not a passing grade.***

**3 = Meets the Standards:** The student’s work fundamentally meets the standard being assessed and the assessment requirements. It is competent work that demonstrates the essential skills and knowledge for that grade level or course. *All* of the criteria for Meets the Standard (e.g., in the rubric) are demonstrated in the work. ***This is a rigorous standard and a passing grade.***

**4 = Exceeds the Standards:** The student’s work goes substantially above and beyond the course standards in quality. The work may not be perfect, but it includes complexity, sophistication, originality, depth, synthesis and/or application that clearly exceeds what would be expected to meet the standards in this assessment. Sometimes, a student will have to opt to complete a particular task(s) or prompt(s), not required of all, in order to be eligible for an Exceeds. *All* of the criteria for Exceeds the Standard (e.g.: in the rubric) are demonstrated in the work.

**What specifically do these grades say about student achievement when used for an overall course grade?**

**1 = Does Not Meet the Standards:** A student’s work has not met the majority of the standards assessed.

**2 = Partially Meets the Standards:** A student’s work has met a majority of the standards assessed, but the student’s work has partially met one or more. This is *not* a passing grade.

**3 = Meets the Standards:** A student’s work has met (earned a 3) on each and every one of the course standards assessed up to that point. This does *not* mean that a student has to pass each and every assessment. It does mean that a student has to pass at least one assessment (and sometimes more) of each and every course standard. At the end of a trimester, this grade and above earns course credit.

**4 = Exceeds the Standards:** A student’s work has consistently and/or lately Exceeded the Standard in each and every course standard assessed up to that point.

**Between 3 and 4** On many assessments, especially those that are less complex (e.g.: a quiz), only the grades listed above are possible. (On occasion, on assessments of crucial factual knowledge (e.g.: safety) only grades 1-3 may be possible.) On more complex assessments that include rubrics with multiple criteria for a standard, a grade between 3 and 4 is possible. On a given assessment of a course standard, this means that in addition to meeting the criteria for a 3...

## LEARNING IN A DIVERSE SETTING

**3.25** A student's work meets about 25% of the Exceeds criteria.

**3.5** A student's work meets about 50% of the Exceeds criteria.

**3.75** A student's work meets about 75% of the Exceeds criteria.

For overall grades, students may receive grades between 3 and 4. What does this say about student achievement?

**3.25** Consistently or lately, the student's work has exceeded the standard about 25% of the time and/or met about 25% of the "Exceeds" criteria.

**3.5** Consistently or lately, the student's work has exceeded the standard about a 50% of the time and/or consistently met about 50% of the "Exceeds" criteria.

**3.75** Consistently or lately, the student's work has exceeded the standard about 75% of the time and/or consistently met about 75% of the "Exceeds" criteria.

**Between 2 and 3** On a given assessment, a teacher may opt to give 2+ to indicate that a student is very close to meeting the standard. This grade is only for communication purposes on assessments. It will not be used on a trimester report card or to reflect overall standing on a course standard. Teachers may use narrative comments or other means on a report card to indicate what a student needs to do in order to move from a "2" to a "3" on a given standard.

*In exceptional circumstances, an "Incomplete" grade may be granted at the end of trimester (e.g.; in the event of an extended, excused absence). In this circumstance, an Incomplete Contract will be developed that details the standards and assessments still to be completed and a timeline for completion.*

### Academic Honors

#### Honor Roll

Meeting the Standards in a course is a significant accomplishment. Although a direct translation to a non-standards-based grading system is not possible or advisable, the GPA translation of 3.0 fairly reflects our rigor. All students who Meet the Standards in all of their classes by the final day of the trimester will:

- 1) Be eligible for an Elective Intensive
- 2) Be recognized for achieving Honor Roll
- 3) Have a GPA of at least 3.0

#### With Honors

Doing work that consistently Exceeds the Standards is an exceptional achievement. It often requires completing not just more work, but different, more sophisticated and rigorous work. Any student who completes the trimester with an overall grade of 3.75 or higher will be said to have completed the trimester "**With Honors**" in that course. This will be designated on their transcripts with an "H."

#### High Honors

Students with a GPA of 3.75 or higher for a trimester achieve the High Honor Roll.

### Course Credit

Partial course credit (.66) is awarded at the end of each trimester.

### Assessing Habits of Work (HOW)

Our Habits of Work checklist assesses how you interact with others, how you approach learning challenges and how you participate in class

Habits of Work are assessed in each course, each marking period, using the same grading scale (1-4).

A universal checklist defines quality Habits of Work. The number of checks from a teacher will determine the grade received. Space is provided on the checklist for teachers to provide comments as necessary.

There will be a HOW Honor Roll for all students who earn a 3 or higher for a HOW grade in every class.

### Reflecting on Character: The Pathways to Success

In September 2005, students created “The Pathways to Success.” The Pathways identify what students will need to do in order for them to become the people they dream to be and the citizens we need them to be.

1. *Persevere when things are hard.*
2. *Learn from our failures.*
3. *Be willing to learn and try new things.*
4. *Have wonderful ideas and use them without fear.*
5. *Discover yourself. Overcome your fears and find your strengths, values, passions and responsibilities.*
6. *Be community. Build, encourage and share.*
7. *Be supportive and make sure people feel safe and comfortable.*
8. *Be a good role model.*
9. *Question.*
10. *Seek positive change.*

The Pathways will *not* be graded, but they will be routinely reflected on (e.g.: as a part of expeditions, portfolios and/or conferences).

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# Multiple Realities of Professional Development

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## Introduction

To provide effective learning experiences for their students, teachers must continue to develop as professionals. Sparks (2004) believes that career development stimulates both the intellectual capacity and the professional judgment of teachers. In Zimmer-Loew's (2000) description of the results of an 800-teacher survey conducted by the National Education Association (NEA), teachers reported that "their major reason for participating in professional development was to improve student achievement by improving their teaching skills" (p. 185). But while many teachers regularly attend professional conferences at the state, regional or national level, the daily pressures after such conferences soon sap the energy of participants so that genuinely good ideas often go unimplemented. Still other teachers say that they do not have the time or money for conferences. Thus one group might benefit from access to job-embedded ongoing conversations surrounding standards-based practice while the other could profit from professional development opportunities brought to them locally in a variety of formats. Hirsch et al (2001) found that 80% of public school teachers receive their professional development from school- or district-sponsored workshops or in-services. Zimmer-Loew (2000) describes a 1996 Joint National Committee for Languages / National Committee for Languages and International Studies (JNCL/ NCLIS) "nation-wide survey of the leadership of language organizations and educational institutions at the local, state, regional and national level" (p. 189). Teachers responded that they had an opportunity for professional development approximately once a year, that it was not sufficient for their needs, and that they had no input into its format.

The Annenberg Video Library of Effective Foreign Language Teaching Practices, which provides a variety of videotaped lessons from diverse, real classrooms and supplemental materials in a flexible format that encourages teachers to examine best

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practices and to determine how to integrate them into their own teaching, might address these issues. These lessons are available on streaming video and videotape, and ancillary materials can be downloaded from the web at no charge. This article examines the experiences of a school system that used this series over the course of a year and a half in three different classes, allowing a community of scholars and informed, reflective foreign-language practitioners to develop and flourish through an innovative approach to professional development.

## Definition of Professional Development

The various definitions of “professional development” often include similar elements. Hall (2001) states that “professional development is a broad, comprehensive term that refers to activities and experiences geared to supporting the lifelong development of teacher expertise” (p. 230). The document *Program standards for the preparation of foreign language teachers (2002)* indicates that “professional development is a life-long endeavor and an indispensable asset to becoming a contributing member of the profession” by which teachers “develop the ability to reflect on the outcomes of their involvement in these professional communities and on how their continued participation will strengthen their own learning and cultural competence and refine their pedagogical practices” (p. 53). Zimmer-Loew (2000) says that professional development “fosters a deepening of subject-matter knowledge, a greater understanding of learning, and a greater appreciation for students’ needs” (p. 186) while Diaz-Maggioli (2003) defines professional development as the “on-going learning practice in which teachers engage voluntarily to learn how best to adjust their teaching to the learning needs of their students.” Many others identify the positive link between the professional development of teachers and increased gains in student learning. Over the course of the last twenty years, Schulman (1986), Crookes (1997), Zimmer-Loew (2000), Allen (2002, Lozano et al. (2002), and Diaz-Maggioli (2003) have all stressed the importance of providing professional development opportunities that will allow teachers to make the sorts of critical pedagogical decisions that will directly benefit student achievement.

## Characteristics of Quality Professional Development

Professional development for in-service teachers, both new and experienced, needs to respond to the diverse backgrounds of teachers, including their preparation and training. In *Methods for teaching foreign languages: Creating a community of learners in the classroom*, Hall (2001) notes that any professional development activity should be part of a coherent plan that focuses on authentic issues related to the local needs and concerns of teachers who would provide a context for the activity. She believes that professional development opportunities should be voluntary, with teachers having a voice in the selection of topics and activities in which they will participate. Professional development activities should challenge teachers to be innovative; they should encourage risk-taking change. They should also allow teachers to develop partnerships and networks that will support them in their ongoing growth. Velez-Rendón (2002) argues that “in order to be effective, professional development needs to be intentional, sustained and integrated into the life of the teacher, and it requires participation and reflection on the part of the edu-

cator” (p. 126). Hirsch et al (2001) state that “the emerging research demonstrates that the quality and duration of professional development programs is an important determinant of their ability to improve teacher practice and impact student achievement” (p. 10).

Many other authors support the notion of collaboration between and among teachers as a critical element of professional development. Hall (2001) remarks that professional development should “provide opportunities for teachers to share their expertise and ideas with other teachers, exchange information and materials, collaborate on curricula, and, more generally, to sustain ongoing dialogue with their colleagues” (p. 231). These “communities of practice” (Diaz-Maggioli, 2003) are also endorsed by Tedick and Walker (1994), Schulz (2000), Zimmer-Loew (2000), Velez-Rendón (2002), and Sparks (2004), who believe that formal and informal interactions and networks provide support for effective professional development. Mentoring also plays an important role in this collaboration with experienced teachers sharing their ideas and beliefs with less experienced teachers in the informal discussions that these professional development activities elicit.

According to Diaz-Maggioli (2003), the minimum conditions for quality professional development include: clarity of goals; adequate levels of challenge; the ability to capitalize on previous knowledge; the ability to sustain long term professional development, organized support, and an alignment with the goals that have been set. In a more generic and clinical vein, Tillema (1994) states that new knowledge which is usually presented during professional development activities “only becomes meaningful in so far as it complements already existing structures or confirms existing scripts of knowing-how” (p. 60). Those who develop and provide professional development opportunities must be aware of teachers’ prior knowledge and must determine how best to restructure or fine tune this knowledge such that teachers can work with newly acquired information in their own classroom settings. He recommends an “experience-based approach” which gives explicit attention to what participants bring with them into the course. It relies on explication and exchange of beliefs, prior experiences and preconceptions, together with greater emphasis on trainee-controlled presentation of subject matter. In experience-based training, the focus is on sharing of ideas, often originated in practice and learning to reflect on one’s behavior. The sessions are structured through discussions and time for self-reflection of learning experiences. (pp. 602-603).

Tedick and Walker (1994) also support this idea as they see that it is “the responsibility of individuals working as a collective network to confront their beliefs and to be willing to embrace the challenges and begin to work toward substantive, lasting change” (p. 309). Hall (2001) concurs:

professional development. . . is based on a coherent plan that is fully integrated into school policies; it is considered a social process, facilitated through joint activity; it is located in the experiences and skills of participants, with issues of interest emerging from the local concerns and needs of teachers in a particular schooling context; teachers play an active role in designing professional development activities; the activities are incorporated into the normal working day of teachers; and it is supported by a schooling community that encourages risk-taking, change and innovation. (p. 238).



## The Wicomico District Plan

Wicomico County is located in Salisbury, Maryland with a school system comprised of twenty-four schools K-12. Among those schools, four middle schools and four high schools offer foreign languages, including French, Latin, and Spanish from level one through advanced placement, with a foreign language exploratory program for students in middle school. The district sets, on average, four days of *in-service* training within the school calendar and offers a complementary series of continuing education credit classes scheduled during evenings and weekends. Prior to the creation of this project, no focused *course* specific to foreign language instruction existed. Participating instructors included the supervisor of foreign languages and a modern language professor from Salisbury University, both of whom were frequent presenters in the district and well known to the foreign language teachers in particular.

The Annenberg session at the 2003 conference of the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages provided the inspiration for this project. This session involved the introduction of the then-new Annenberg Foreign Language video library, consisting of twenty-eight lessons at every instructional level in a diverse number of languages. The library also included one tape devoted to national standards and another to assessment. Even with the brief introduction of a single conference session, it was clear that this tool could be a powerful component in crafting a high-quality, ongoing professional development program for district teachers. Velez-Redón (2002) talks about “an apprenticeship of observation,” which allows teachers to connect theory to practice, and acknowledges that teachers can become keen observers, working on meaningful, focused tasks that will enable them to interpret the data they find. Allen (2002) suggests that teachers need opportunities to examine standards-based models and compare them to their own teaching situations. The Annenberg library seemed the perfect vehicle by which to put that research into practice.

With the initial thought of utilizing videos within the structure of the designated in-service days, the Annenberg library was purchased. Though the entire library is available online through streaming video, purchasing the tapes provided flexibility in planning and in adjusting the lessons with the specific teachers in mind. After viewing the entire library, project developers realized that utilizing the tapes in the sole context of the few designated in-service days would not capitalize on the entire experience that the tapes provide; employing the structure of a continuing professional development course with credit was clearly a more promising and better choice. The overarching goals were to provide opportunities for classroom foreign language teachers to access examples of quality, standards-based instruction and to establish an ongoing professional learning community around the experience.

Foreign language teachers were surveyed to determine that sufficient teacher interest in multiple courses existed. The survey also assisted in demonstrating teacher priorities with regard to scheduling and structure (i.e. summer courses, during the school year, at night, on the weekends, etc.). Blending the survey results with the knowledge gained from watching the entire video library, project developers decided to create three distinct theme-based courses. Each course would consist of thirty hours of instruction via ten three-hour classes, meeting once a week. In gaining

approval to offer continuing education credits for the coursework, project developers established that all of the courses would conform to the Maryland State Professional Development Standards.

The three courses each included eight video lessons, a guest speaker, and a gallery walk of some kind to demonstrate learning. As the specific video lessons were selected, particular attention was paid to ensuring that each course had a variety of languages and a variety of grade levels demonstrating effective instruction. Utilizing the accompanying facilitator resource guide, a structure was created that would provide the foundation for the experience. Each lesson included a warm-up activity which linked to a previous video or set up the topic of that evening, a review of the previous lesson via recurrent themes, a video guide that included specific standards and key teaching strategies to focus the viewing of the lesson, a post viewing discussion, and an assignment in the form of a journal entry linked to the participants' classroom planning and instruction. A door prize at the conclusion of each session provided an added bonus. The giveaway item, related in some way to the session's video, encouraged immediate implementation of new strategies and stimulated thinking among all participants. Items included such things as noisemakers for games, magnetic tape and magazines with pictures for manipulatives, and copies of a children's book featured in a particular video. Resources provided in the appendices of the facilitator's guide were also given to the participants. Though the activities in each class varied greatly, the structure was consistent throughout the courses. In fall 2004, "Seeing is Believing: Effective Instructional Foreign Language Teaching Strategies" came to life.

The theme of the first course was centered on national standards and taking them from paper to practice, and it included a guest speaker, Ms. Martha Abbott, a nationally recognized spokesperson and a past president of the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages. Teachers enrolled in the class had widely divergent experience levels: some had more than twenty years of teaching experience, others were in the five-to ten-year range, and still others had not yet completed their first year. All participants had some familiarity with the national standards, but all agreed that the standards were not fully operationalized and, in many instances, that they were uncertain how a particular standard might look or sound in practice.

The first lesson was a high school Japanese class and provided an essential point from the very start of the course; understanding the language was not a requirement for critical viewing. Instead, participants focused solely on planning techniques and instructional strategies of implementation. This lesson set the stage for future videos at all levels (including kindergarten) and for a variety of languages. Early in process of using the Annenberg video library, participants realized that they could rely upon the laser-like focus of instructors featured on the videos to design instruction that promoted active communication among students in the target language. The discussions following each viewing pointed to a growing realization among participants that their classrooms did not currently look or sound like those featured on the videos but that they definitely could. The gallery walk during the final class allowed participants the opportunity to display changes that they were making in either a unit or group of lessons based on the learning and experiences gained in the class.

Evaluation of the first course used the standard form for the district. Results were overwhelmingly positive, with all participants reporting a high degree of satisfaction with the helpfulness, usefulness, and relevance of content. Comments clearly demonstrated that the class had met a need and that participants had had a positive experience: "I feel this class has made me more aware of what I need to do to reach all students," and "each class I learned at least one new thing that I could use in my classes the following day or at least in the near future." This satisfaction level was also apparent when the second class was announced and enrollment increased, with almost all of the previous participants electing to continue and additional colleagues joining thanks to word of mouth praise for the program.

The second class, "Seeing is Believing II: More Effective Foreign Language Teaching Strategies" was centered on the theme of assessment. It included videos in which formal assessment occurred and provided examples of how instructors conducted formative assessments throughout the lesson. The overarching question throughout the second course was "How are students demonstrating that they understand?" There were extended discussions on and examples of such concepts as the use of graphic organizers and rubrics, along with examinations of all sorts of formative and summative assessments in the target language. Emerging from this class as well were the recurrent themes of standards in practice, effective instructional strategies, specific strategies to remain in and encourage the use of a target language, and use of multiple intelligences to meet diverse student needs. Though these same categories had been identified as themes during the first course, they were not captured in a systematic way, and their recurrent nature was lost. During this second course they were emphasized through a "rolling themes" segment in which participants charted elements from each video and addressed them during the opening segment of the subsequent class. The discussions and recollections were often remarkable in their level of detail and in the motivation they provided for changes in practice. The charts simply listed the strategy at the top and left space to note the title of the lesson along with a description of that specific strategy in practice. Each participant had a copy of the charts and kept it over the entire course of the class; thus they then had small reminders of particular strategies or techniques that could help to improve effectiveness.

A guest speaker, Mr. Pablo Muirhead, an instructor featured in one of the videos used during the first course, was invited to speak to teachers in the second course. In addition to watching that lesson again with instructor commentary, participants had the opportunity to ask Mr. Muirhead questions about the actual taping experience: "Were the students hand picked to appear?" and "Did having the cameras in the room change their behaviors?" These questions helped to persuade participants that similar results could be achieved in their own classrooms. Additionally, Mr. Muirhead agreed to teach two master classes, working with Spanish students from one of the district's high schools as the teachers observed. Participants in this activity included both teachers who were taking the course and those who were not. Immediately following the master classes, he also conducted a session on Total Physical Response Storytelling. All the activities were extremely well received. Such guest speaker activities led to even greater enthusiasm for and motivation to join what was becoming a vibrant professional learning community.

By the midpoint of the second course, as the critical viewing skills of the participants grew, small-group discussion with debriefing increasingly replaced the whole-group discussions that had been the hallmark of the first class. This evolution in approach allowed for an increased level of participation and greater generation of ideas. A community of learners who supported and encouraged change began to emerge. Over the span of the two courses and throughout the remainder of that school year, classroom observations also pointed to a growing change in instructional behavior among those taking part in the classes. This change took the form of significantly greater target language production overall and far more use of the target language by both teachers and students. Lessons were more clearly and deliberately aligned to the standards, and the focus moved away from discrete grammatical concepts and skills through worksheets.

The participants' understanding of the standards in practice also became apparent during a summer workshop on middle to high school articulation in which teachers (some who had taken the class and some who hadn't) worked on a draft copy of Maryland's state standards for foreign language. The Maryland standards were drawn from and organized much like the national standards. The task facing the summer workshop participants was to decide after what year of instruction foreign language students should be able to master a particular indicator and objective. Those who had taken part in the class had a much easier time deciding since they had a clearer image of what the mastery evidence would look and sound like in practice.

Again evaluations for the second class indicated a very high level of satisfaction among the participants: "It encouraged me to keep my students engaged and find authentic materials for them," and "I like having to do assignments where we create an activity and then swap ideas." There was significant motivation to continue the change process. As part of that process, participants shared, via the gallery walk, a previously developed assessment as well as the changes that they had incorporated because of the course. Assessments went from being traditional paper/pencil items of discrete knowledge to varying degrees of performance-based tasks with accompanying rubrics.

By the third class, participants represented every school offering foreign language instruction in the district, as well as participants from other disciplines. Moreover, there was a waiting list for enrollment. To ensure that the learning and experiences would be fresh for the teachers returning for the third time, a small design change was instituted and a subsequent title change was made. Because many participants had now acquired new skills and techniques, encouragement for implementing them became a priority. The course shifted its focus from observation to implementation and was entitled "Trying is Believing: Effective Foreign Language Strategies in Practice." Instead of a final gallery walk, participants were given specific targeted assignments with each session to encourage continuously improved language production in their classrooms. These assignments then became the subjects of journal entries that could be supported by evidence from, for example, student work samples and lesson designs.

Considerable attention had been given to the concept of diverse student needs throughout the two prior courses, but it became the essential theme for the third course. To encourage deliberate planning with both standards and multiple intelli-

gences, teachers utilized a chart created by the instructors called “The National Standards and Multiple Intelligences” so that they could see if they were emphasizing one intelligence over others. Charting was combined with an activity during the first class meeting that asked teachers to design activities targeting specific grammar skills, typical areas of culture, and vocabulary. As the groups reported, each activity was charted for both standard and multiple intelligences. Not surprisingly, some areas were over-represented while others were under-represented, a result that demonstrated the need to examine the standards with multiple intelligences in mind. Sharing resources for completing multiple intelligence inventories with students encouraged teachers to determine the ones favored by their particular classes. Throughout this course, teachers were asked to consider “The National Standards and Multiple Intelligences” chart to design instructional activities with diversity in mind. Subsequently, the activities created by the instructors for each individual lesson also mirrored that goal to reinforce the concept.

The standard elements and structures from the other two courses—rolling themes, warm up activities, viewing guides, small-group discussions, door prizes, and a guest speaker—were all continued in this final segment of the experience. Repeating the format from the previous class, Mr. John Pedini made a presentation as the guest speaker. Again, the class watched the lesson while he provided running commentary. Following the presentation, participants engaged in a lively conversation about ways to encourage target language use from the first days in beginning level classes.

The discussions during this course centered less on how the standards were addressed and more on instructional strategies utilized to achieve goals. Participants’ critical viewing abilities had grown to such a point that questions now often focused on how to develop lessons or on suggestions for making lessons even more effective.

Evaluations at the end of this final installment continued to confirm the powerful nature of the experience. The comments of one participant perfectly summarized what the class had become: “I feel a lot more confident in what I need to know as a teacher, but more importantly, I’ve seen so many techniques put into practice that it gives me something to reach for as I get better at teaching. It was also a great networking experience to meet other teachers and talk about actual classroom practices that I could implement in mine.” By the end of the course, participants were also displaying anxiety about the prospect of disbanding the learning community suggested that teachers within the district create videos to continue the course structure; many wanted to continue to meet, just to discuss items of interest. Ultimately, the decision was to continue the program with the community through a series of workshops, each focused on a particular theme. This activity is currently underway with all of the course attendees and continues to attract participants.

The three courses, which were approved as continuing professional development credits by the Maryland State Department of Education, have been replicated in three other districts in the state. The structure of the courses has been shared with educators in North Carolina and South Carolina. The design of the experience provided powerful confirmation that high quality and ongoing professional development opportunities for teachers can lead to substantive changes in instructional behavior.

## Conclusions

Professional development should allow teachers to integrate their professional learning with their pedagogical practices in the classroom. In order for the substantive, lasting change that Tedick and Walker (1994) mention, to occur, professional development needs to involve coherent, innovative, challenging, ongoing, collegial activities that relate to the daily lives of teachers. Velez-Redón (2002) emphasizes the “importance of pedagogical reasoning which is the ability of translating subject matter into instruction that is appropriate to the various levels of abilities and backgrounds brought by students” (p. 462). She also thinks that teaching is very much a decision-making process, ongoing and complex, which can allow teachers to “rethink their roles and renew their practices” (p. 464) in order to become more self-aware of their professionalism. Lozano et al state that “the success of a professional development program lies inherently in teachers implementing new skills and knowledge and students benefiting positively from this exposure” (p. 169). Sparks (2004) takes that one step further by saying that “students’ abilities to craft creative, innovative solutions to problems are linked to the opportunities that teachers have to approach their work in the same way” (p. 305). The experience of this project provided powerful confirmation of these ideas. Indeed, “Seeing is Believing” stands not only as a metaphor for the experience of teacher-learning but also relates directly to the power of high quality, ongoing professional development that encourages and nurtures change. Ideally this experience is what we would like to have in all of our foreign language classrooms, regardless of the multiple realities in which our teachers and students find themselves.

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# “I Want to Live in America” An Immigration Simulation

*Lori Langer de Ramirez, Ed.D., Teachers College, Columbia University*

## Abstract

Simulations can play a crucial role in the exploration of issues surrounding identity, culture and diversity in the world language classroom. This immigration simulation presents students with situations to enact and new perspectives to discover and allows students to develop their own opinions about this important topic.

## Introduction

In my teaching of Spanish, simulations play a crucial role in the exploration of issues surrounding identity, culture and diversity. Used as a teaching tool, simulations present my students with situations to enact and new perspectives to discover. By diving into a simulation from a first-person point-of-view, students can dissect cultural products, practices and perspectives and give their own interpretations, comments and solutions. In small discussion groups, students share their thoughts on the topics raised in each simulation. They debate current events and sociopolitical issues and elaborate by sharing their own experiences with similar issues.

Simulations are different from role-plays in that in a role-play, students are given a set part to play, with limited options for acting out a scene or situation. Students almost always know how a role-play will end, and are not usually invested in the outcome. In a simulation, the teacher is less in control of the activity, and students feel the action in a more visceral way. The ending is never quite predictable in a simulation and in my experience, students take the activity more personally. When dealing with issues of immigration, a simulation exercise works well since it gives students the opportunity for empathy — something for which a role-play falls short.

## Philosophical Framework

The activity described in this article aims to situate issues of immigration and culture in the paradigm of power struggles, hegemony, and the idea of oppressive forces outlined in the works of Paulo Freire. Freire states: “...(discovery) cannot be purely intellectual but must involve action; nor can it be limited to mere activism but must include serious reflection: only then will it be a praxis” (Freire, P., 1995. *Pedagogy of*

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hope. New York: Continuum.). While Freire's work with literacy projects in the slums of northeastern Brazil in the 1960s led him to develop this concept, his call to blend theory and practice has great meaning for the study of cultural perspectives in the United States in the twenty first century. Freire's concepts not only help to structure the format of the following activity, but also provide a lens through which to view current immigration and the lives and experiences of immigrants in the United States.

## Background

I work in a multicultural school district. Made up of approximately 35% Asian-American students, the halls of Herricks High School resound with the sounds of Korean, Malayalam, Punjabi, Gujarati, Hindi, Urdu and Mandarin Chinese, not to mention a little Greek, Farsi and Spanish. Many of our students are first generation children of immigrants to New York — some students even recent immigrants themselves. With such a diverse student body, it would seem unnecessary to have to talk about issues of immigration with our students. And yet students still need to understand on a deeper level the struggles that immigrants go through to make it to the United States. Even more so now, in this post "9-11" world, there is a greater need to help students to balance feelings of patriotism and an understanding of the diversity in our country. As a teacher of Spanish, I find myself in the challenging position of teaching content in a language that is not my students' mother tongue. I am constantly searching for ways in which to engage the students, both on the intellectual and the linguistic level. This year, my 12th grade Spanish 5 class was divided into two semester long thematic units, the first of which was "The Politics of Latin America". I began by focusing on politics as it relates to Hispanics in the United States. Long Island, the home to our school district, has seen a recent influx of Central American immigrants in the past few years. Since the immigration of Spanish speakers into the United States has often been fraught with controversy, it seemed like a fruitful place to start.

## The Lesson

We began the unit by focusing on one country, Colombia. As the wife of a Colombian-American who emigrated to the U.S. over twenty years ago, I was able to provide students with anecdotal accounts of immigrants' histories and stories. I invited my husband to our class to give students more background about the current political situation in his country. As he spoke to my students in Spanish, I could tell by their faces that they were riveted by his tales of violence and economic hardship. Students asked questions — many of them based on stereotypes about drugs, but just as many insightful queries about the government and everyday life. Hearing one person's real life story suddenly made the situation more authentic for my students and also served to clarify some misconceptions about Colombia. I knew that my students were slowly adding layers to what they already knew (or thought they knew) about Hispanic immigration to the US. The students then went to the Internet for more information. They visited sites as diverse as those of Café de Colombia/Colombian Coffee ([www.juanvaldez.com](http://www.juanvaldez.com)) and the Colombian Consulate in New York. We read a web-based picture book about a young boy's struggle with having to leave his home in Bogotá to move to Queens ([www.miscositas.com](http://www.miscositas.com)). Finally, my students wrote letters to Colombian stu-

**Servicio de Inmigración y Naturalización**  
**Audencia de ASILO POLITICO**

Apellido: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Nombre: \_\_\_\_\_ Sexo: H / F  
 Edad: \_\_\_\_\_ País de Origen: \_\_\_\_\_

¿El/Le solicitante ha sufrido persecución?  SI  NO

¿Tiene miedo de persecución por su:  
 opinión política    
 religión    
 nacionalidad    
 raza    
 asociación social

Entrevista oral:

Determinación:

Figure 1

dents in a High School in Pereira and asked questions about the daily lives of kids their own age. After gathering as much information as possible, we were ready to begin the simulation activity. Students were asked to invent for themselves an identity. They needed a name, an age, a profession and a short biography (including information like family background, schooling, hobbies, skills, etc.). They were then given time in class to share their identities with their classmates and encouraged to start forming groups based on similarities. Some students joined together to form families. Others were business partners or university classmates. These groups were then charged with the task of filing a petition for political asylum. They were given a document printed in Spanish taken from the Colombian Yellow Pages (a publication created for the Colombian community in New York) with the rules for filing for asylum. As the groups read the rules, they elaborated on their biographies and created a rationale applying for legal alien status. Along with their bio sheets, each student was required to attach a digital photograph (2" x 2", as required by the Immigration and Naturalization Service) to the documents. We took these photos with a digital camera in class against a white board. As American students are prone to do, each student smiled as I raised the camera to my face. I explained that these photos were for official documents and that very few prospective US immigrants would smile for such a photo. The stoic stares that resulted in the photos helped to heighten the intensity of the project for the students. As students prepared for the culminating activity — their INS hearings — they were encouraged to create one item that they would be allowed to take with them to the interview. Some students designed a photo album depicting the horrible conditions they were forced to work in their home country. Another group brought along a bag of coffee a new strain that they had created and that the FARC (las Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias Colombianas/the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia) wanted to steal from them. Yet another trio of students created and presented their daughter's birth certificate and a marriage license. The day of the hearings, students presented their cases in front of me (the hearing officer) and their classmates (a committee of INS agents). They stood at desks placed in front of the room and one by one, spoke about their lives in Colombia and why they were filing for political asylum. The

“agents” all asked relevant questions, trying to adhere to the guidelines for political asylum that they had studied. In order to help them make determinations about each case, students filled out a checklist based on the INS guidelines (see figure 1).

The applicants showed their photographs, explained their home situations, and pleaded their cases. The tone of the room was tense and serious, and some students were visibly shaken by their classmates’ stories. The passion with which each group of students presented its case was impressive. Students had become their characters and stated their cases with enthusiasm and even a sense of urgency. There were tales of kidnappings, financial struggles and family hardships. But despite the students’ enthusiasm and eloquence, in the end, not all students were granted the asylum they so desperately sought. The applicants needed to prove some form of persecution, and many students chose to provide a financial rationale when establishing their cases. When each group of students received their applications stamped with a large “aceptado/accepted” or “negado/denied”, their reactions were accordingly either jubilant or mournful. Some students, rather than arguing for better grades on the project, were more concerned about being granted their simulated asylum.

## Conclusion

The goal of this project was twofold: first, I wanted to provide my students with a meaningful context through which to improve their growing proficiency in Spanish. Along with the language goal, I wanted to address current topics in Latin America (in this case, the politics of Colombia) and also immigration issues in the United States. After our simulation, students admitted that they had no idea that immigration to this country was such an arduous task. Following the lesson, some students even expressed an interest in speaking to their parents about their own family’s path to America. In focusing on the struggles of one group of American immigrants, students could better understand those of other groups — their community’s, their classmates’, even their own. By allowing students to do immigration, and not merely learn about it, we expose them to feelings, thoughts and experiences that will stay with them and facilitate greater openness and interest in learning more about the issues. Simulations make students feel the issues — as evidenced by one student’s face as she read the “negado/denied” on her application. She looked up at me and asked in earnest: “Now what?” “What a good question,” I thought. Now what? Did the student ask in Spanish? In the months that have followed since this activity, students have formed their own political parties, created propaganda to enlist members and staged a group protest. Students often mention that they regularly think back to the immigration simulation and how they felt during that activity. The memory of the application process, the gathering of materials for their presentation, and the actual hearing itself have stayed with them and the feelings raised in those activities continue to inform their current projects. The simulation project by no means told the entire story of U.S. immigration, nor did it address all of the possible issues. It was never meant to accomplish such a goal, given the constraints of having only several 45-minute periods in a school setting. It did, however, set the stage for future learning. The students look at their own community somewhat differently now, with a bit more understanding, and a greater desire to learn even more about their country and themselves.

# Weaving and Life in Guatemala: Life and Weaving in Guatemala

*Mari Haas, Columbia University*

## Abstract

Guatemalan women weavers today work on backstrap looms that are the same as their mothers and grandmothers used. They have passed their weaving skills to their daughters, as well as to some of their sons. Some Mayan women today wear Western store-bought clothing such as jeans and high heels. In rural areas though the woman and girls still wear their traditional *huipiles* (woven blouses) and *cortes* (long woven skirts). The Maya have historically survived as subsistence farmers. Each family would grow its own food and sell or give away what they didn't need. The *milpa* or cornfield was, and still is, especially important as corn continues to be one of Guatemala's staple foods. Today, the Maya are finding it very hard to survive on subsistence farming because they don't have enough land to support their families. This demise has required women to sell their weavings in order for their families to survive. Maya weaving has lasted throughout the centuries as a means of economic survival. It continued to exist during the collapse of Classic Maya society, during Spanish domination, political control, and during exploitation by foreign tourist markets. Life in the 70s and 80s in Guatemala was hard for the Maya. From 1978 to 1986 the Guatemalan Maya were the victims of Civil War and ethnic cleansing during which hundreds of people were massacred and their houses burned. One of the goals of the gorilla movement was to eradicate the Maya culture. The Maya are very proud of their traditional dress. Recent re-adoption of traditional dress symbolizes the Maya's continued pride, survival and solidarity in the face of terrible impediments. The voices of Maya weavers are incorporated in this paper.

*Ixchel or Chac Chef is the Mayan goddess of weaving. "Mayans speak of cloth as being 'born' on the loom. The sacred Maya text, the Popol Vuh, warns the Indians against forsaking the crafts that have been handed down through the generations: abandoning those crafts will betray the ancestors." (Giantureo, P. and Tuttle, T., p. 30)*

## Introduction

Guatemalan women weavers today work on backstrap looms that are the same as their mothers and grandmothers used. They have passed their weaving skills to their

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daughters, as well as to some of their sons. Typically, Mayan clothing was woven of cotton. In fact, cotton cloth was worth a great deal during the Classic period. Only the upper classes could wear the beautifully woven cloth that was also used as part of the Maya tribute to the Spanish. After the Spanish introduced sheep, weaving with wool was commonly used in the mountains where the weather tends to be colder. The cotton and the wool were dyed with natural colors created from plants, such as indigo and insects like the cochineal parasite found on prickly pear cactus leaves.

Some Mayan women today wear Western store-bought clothing such as jeans and high heels. In rural areas though the woman and girls still wear their traditional *huipiles* (woven blouses) and *cortes* (long woven skirts). Many women also carry a *tzute* (ZUH-teh) on their heads. The *tzute* helps keep off the hot sun, and when unfolded, it can be used to carry a child, a bundle or as a shawl when necessary. The men wear loose pants and a shirt.

The Maya have historically survived as subsistence farmers. Each family would grow its own food and sell or give away what they didn't need. The *milpa* or cornfield was, and still is, especially important as corn continues to be one of Guatemala's staple foods. Today, the Maya are finding it very hard to survive on subsistence farming because they don't have enough land to support their families. This is because land has been distributed unequally to the Indians and the Ladinos (non-Indians). A growing population has also contributed to the demise of subsistence farming in many areas. This demise has required women to sell their weavings in order for their families to survive. Maya weaving has lasted throughout the centuries as a means of economic survival. It continued to exist during the collapse of Classic Maya society, during Spanish domination, political control, and during exploitation by foreign tourist markets.

Life in the 70s and 80s in Guatemala was hard for the Maya. From 1978 to 1986 the Guatemalan Maya were the victims of Civil War and ethnic cleansing during which hundreds of people were massacred and their houses burned. One of the goals of the guerilla movement was to eradicate the Maya culture. They smashed thousands of weaving looms and even studied *huipil* design patterns to tell which villages people came from. Women were afraid to wear their traditional dress as their village could be identified and terrorized because of the *huipil* and *corte* designs. Often referred to as the "Silent Holocaust", the campaign left 200,000 civilians dead at the hands of the military death squads with 440 Mayan villages were wiped off the map. (Global Exchange, 2005)

The Maya that moved to the capital or larger Guatemalan cities encountered social, racial, and cultural discrimination from the dominant Ladino society and they too had to stop wearing their traditional dress. A return to traditional dress styles is one of the many expressions of these movements. This has been aided in large part by the formation of weaving cooperatives that have allowed Maya weavers to recapture and continue the rural Maya tradition of wearing *traje* or traditional dress as well as to provide jobs in the production of *huipils* for sale to tourists. The Maya are very proud of their traditional dress. Recent re-adoption of traditional dress symbolizes the Maya's continued pride, survival and solidarity in the face of terrible impediments. (<http://www.anthro.fsu.edu/wovenvoices/warandup.html>)

Weaving the Heavens: Pre-columbian Guatemala (Reese, L., 1993), one of the units in the Spindle Stories World History Series, recorded the testimonials of a variety of women weavers from the Guatemalan Highlands. The following are some of their stories:

*“When one has suffered discrimination and oppression, one starts to feel like they’re not important... So many people are telling you, ‘You’re not important’ you start to believe that your dress isn’t worth anything. After finding out what the colors and designs mean in the huipiles, though, you feel more Indian, more part of the culture. Learning about the designs on my dress and the colors has been the most important part of my healing from the torture this year” (Unidentified woman, 1986 p. 2).*

*“I am 12 years old... I used to go to school. But I don’t go to school anymore. I must help my mother do laundry for the plantation owner’s family, because we need the money... Our water comes from a stream, about a mile from home. Everyday I go there with my friends, and we carry water back in large water jugs, balanced on our heads. Many afternoons, the girls in my community get together in the shade of a huge tree and do our weaving. We talk and weave, and our grandmothers sometimes join us to tell stories” (Janita Tzul, 1992, p. 3).*

*“I used to weave and sew all of the clothes for my family but thread is very expensive now. Sometimes I have to buy clothing made in Taiwan or El Salvador. I did make my huipil, and I have worn it everyday since I married 30 years ago. I teach the young girls how to weave and that makes me very happy to see them carry on our traditional patterns.” (Juanita Tzul’s grandmother, 1992 p. 3).*

*“I can’t get accustomed to taking off my traditional clothes. I can’t adjust to putting on other clothes. I can only wear other clothes for an hour or two I can’t leave my dress, it’s part of me. Without my dress I don’t feel calm inside, I feel like I’m missing something, something from me...” (Reese, L. 1993, p. 2)*

San Antonio Aguas Calientes, a popular tourist destination, lies about four kilometers southeast of the city of Antigua. It is a twenty-minute bus ride to the small weaving town. Tourists spend the day shopping in the market and the weavers’ cooperative, taking advantage of the *huipiles* of the village that are best known for their tight two-faced weave or *Brocado* technique that produces an identical image on the front and back. The textiles of San Antonio Aguas Calientes are often considered to be the finest in all of Guatemala. The Guarán family is one of the most prominent weaving families in San Antonio Aguas Calientes. They are a family of six siblings, four women and two men. Their mother, an internationally known weaver, died in March of 2006. The following interviews are with three of the Guarán sisters, Carolina, whose textile store and small collection of ancient textiles is at the entrance to town; Dolly, who travels to markets such as the one in Chichicastenango and other small village markets to sell her weavings; and Álda, who owns the Museum of Ancient Textiles in Antigua and sponsors the Asociación Primal de Artesanos de Guatemala. Here are their voices:

## Carolina

***I know that your mother recently died. Can you tell me something about her or describe her?***

Yes, I can describe her. I can tell you that she was a woman who worked very hard. She always dedicated herself to textiles, that is, something of a heritage for us, yes, because here everyone has to teach their daughters to weave. But, because this is like the future for our lives, because before in the village we didn't study. You have to know how to weave. It's something that parents worry about. Like in the case of my mom, she worried a lot about us so that we learned to weave. But there is a very special case like the one of my brother Marines because he weaves. Now in the village there are something like eight men who weave. But this is something strange, well, for our village. But for us, well, weaving is very important. Then we have a good memory of my mom who taught us many good things, that is work. It is something that we have preserved and we love it will all of our heart...I love it a lot, not for money, yes money is important, but more than anything is love of your work. I have many good memories of weaving.

***The traditional dress you are wearing, Is it the dress of San Antonio?***

Yes, it's the dress of San Antonio.

***What things define your identity?***

Like my dress and the pride in being indigenous.

***How are your indigenous beliefs and your Christian beliefs affected?***

***Are there any problems between the Christian and indigenous values?***

No, nothing. Here we live in the village. There are Catholics, Evangelists, there are different beliefs...everyone lives in peace.

***Do you still believe in the Maya beliefs such as the natural gods?***

We believe that they existed but we don't believe in them.

***Are there any programs supported by the government to conserve the language?***

I think that maybe a little bit. Now in the national schools there are many bilingual teachers because there are many villages in which the children do not speak Spanish. Then there are bilingual teachers. It is necessary to have bilingual teachers. Yes, the girls go to school now. Before it wasn't important. They have to learn to study, to have a career. It has been very important that they study. My daughters are also professionals. Yes, they are teachers and they know how to weave very well. I am very content to be able to give this to my daughters who know how to weave. This is very important for me...and that I always wanted them not to lose our culture...it is something that I think that within a few years it is going to disappear. It will be lamentable because it is a very important culture. I have small collection of *trajes* back here. It is very nice for us, well, work. I am enchanted with the ancient pieces.

***Do they teach weaving in the schools?***

No, it has been very difficult. But one of my daughters has a school. The teachers don't want to teach weaving to the girls because it requires a lot of patience.

## Dolly

### ***Can you describe or tell me about your mom?***

She was a decisive woman. She tried to make, dealing with weaving, everything she presented and also she tried to make very different things than those that they wove in the garden. She was very creative, had a lot of imagination, and she created her own designs.

### ***What values did she pass on to you all?***

We come from an Evangelist Christian family. And that was the major heritage that they could give us...yes because actually in the world there is a lot of violence, a lot of disorder, yes, worldwide...But, thanks to god, all six brothers and sisters believe in one god. We come from a Evangelist Christian family and that is the success of our lives. I, being the youngest, God has blessed me a lot in relationship to work...Everyone is involved with folk art and we are a family that the parents never gave us money to begin our businesses. All of the six brothers and sisters began to go forward ourselves. It was like support from our parents, but not economic support, moral support instead.

### ***For you, what does it mean that your heritage is Maya?***

We are Mayas, but we don't share in their traditions, because they adore/pray to a wooden god. And we adore/pray to an earthly god. That is the big difference. We don't practice rituals or other situations outside of our beliefs. I like the Maya beliefs a lot. I have studied them, yes. They have a place where they go to have their ceremonies. They bring their firewood and dance around the fire. You transfer a pride in being Maya because we have a lot of tradition, a lot, eh, of knowledge.

### ***Are you doing anything to pass on your skills and values to the next generation?***

I don't have daughters, only sons. But I give work to many children and young people that want to work with me. There are many children who don't know how to weave. In the first place the economic situation, the material is very expensive now and they don't have the possibility of buying material. Then, what I do is to make them a loom and teach them to weave. My idea is to never stop doing this. Now we have a serious problem. We can't find the thread to make their looms. It is cotton thread. But the problem is that we can't find the material...there is some thread that is of inferior quality.

## Álida

### ***Can you tell me about or describe your mom?***

First I believe that I give thanks to god, yes, for giving me such a special mother. She was my life, my company during my fifty years. She traveled a lot with me...not only my mother, but my father also. They guided us to a good life, especially recognizing that there is one true god according to them...They taught us the path to follow and later to work. They said 'he who works eats and he who doesn't work, doesn't eat. Well we learned a lot about work from her. I believe that we learned a lot from her. Yes, They are important values for the rest of our lives. And I was a very special



woman, a very intelligent woman who guided us as women and men...I believe that she was a woman who taught us not only to work but also how to sell our products. And, of course, we learned a lot from her.

***When did the girls in your family learn to weave?***

I began right away...yes, speaking of me, I didn't live the life before, yes, before my two sisters. My two older sisters. I can't tell you ...that is in my life I learned to weave at six years old. I remember I was under my mother's loom playing and bothering her, not helping her, yes, I played. When she was weaving the photo of some presidents on the loom, I was busy cutting threads.

***For you what does your Mayan heritage mean?***

Well first of all I feel appreciative to God for letting me be born in such a relevant culture. I believe that it is a culture that it is among the five great cultures. And it is something very special to have been born with Maya heritage. I feel that many times we are discriminated against...but we have had a life of discrimination here in Guatemala, yes...I believe that the discrimination isn't important because I have achieved, yes, eh, to be where I am, but I have transmitted this to a lot of people, to many more women...eh, yesterday at an event that we had many women came from around Guatemala. They were women from the Guatemalan villages. Exactly four years ago in 2001 I founded Asociación Primal de Artesanos de Guatemala. We began with 300 women in order to support them, yes, in the selling of their products. Between 2001 and 2006 we have 900 women who belong to our network...Last night I shared with the President of the World Bank the work we have accomplished without any support from anyone because a lot of times it becomes too political. Yes, when they want to politicize a project and the information doesn't get to the people who need it...Well it has been difficult but it hasn't been impossible because the important thing is when we meet. We meet with a lot of people and we share...it's something very important in our lives. I believe I have achieved this.

***What things define your identity?***

I think that I am a woman created by God...I continue being a Maya woman and I believe that I am a woman with a great deal of human potential.

***What does wearing your traditional dress mean to you?***

Well, it is my identity. Yes, it's my identity. That's why my mom was always telling us that she didn't want us to wear another *traje* from another village but that we should appreciate our *traje*. It is the only one we should wear. Well, my *traje* represents my identity. I believe that is the most important thing about where I go, they know where I am from. I only wanted to say that yes, we need any manner of support here in Guatemala. I often see, yes, people and they don't give the necessary support.

*"When she was eighty-six my mother told me, 'Weaving is the only thing you will inherit. Sometime, it will make you money.' Those were her last words." (Olivia Asij, as cited in Giantureo, P. and Toby Tuttle, p. 28)*

Olivia Asij of Santo Domingo Xenacol, Guatemala is known as the best weaver in town. She has been chosen to participate in a project sponsored by the Ixchel Museum

in Guatemala City. The museum provides the *cuyuscate* (natural cotton) in neutral colors to the project weavers. She weaves on her backstrap loom on the cement of the courtyard of her home. She laments that men, weaving on foot looms brought by the Spaniards, can weave their cloth more quickly and sell it for a higher price.

Olivia tells the interviewers/authors that when she was a child, women didn't use cottons (*chemises*) because the women only owned one *huipil* (blouse). "When we washed it, we tied on dinner napkins for modesty." (p. 29) She describes other changes she witnessed, "I remember wearing sandals made out of car tires. I remember the days before fertilizer when we couldn't grow enough corn for tortillas, so we bought bread, four pieces for five cents. And I remember when we used to get ten cents a day for working five square yards of land. That's what my husband made when he was doing farm work." (p. 29). She describes that back then marriages were arranged. "I didn't know my husband-to-be, so I was scared and resisted for years while my father insisted I marry this man...my father explained that if I did not marry his choice I would be disowned. So I got married at twenty-five." (p. 29) When her husband died five years later Olivia was responsible for the care and education of her two sons. She began selling her weavings in Antigua, Guatemala City, and other smaller market villages.

Albertina Patunayche and Irma Bajan are "superstar" weavers from the village of Patzun. Albertina is worried that the weaving tradition in Guatemala may eventually be lost. "Some women don't know how to weave; they buy used *huipiles* from other villages instead of making their own in Patzun style. A few women even buy Western clothes. Some mothers want to teach their daughters to weave, but the girls must do homework instead. Men use to wear the woven shirts and pants their wives made, but not now" (p.30). Having learned to weave on a child-sized backstrap loom when she was seven Albertina has been practicing her craft for a long time. She was very happy to sell her first piece for thirty-two cents. She made enough to buy ribbons for her hair.

Albertina's four children go to primary school. The school expenses are hard on her as she is a single mother. "School expenses are thirteen dollars a month. I can barely give the children money for anything except school...When Albertina can't afford books, supplies, and uniforms, her parents contribute." (p. 31). Her daughters already know how to weave at ages seven and nine. "For fun they pretend that they have orders. They cut leaves into strips and weave the pieces together."

Halfway up Albertina's hill is Irma's house. She has three daughters, Irma Leticia, Gladys Maribel, and Brenda Lorena. They live in a one-room home without windows. The furniture in the house includes a cabinet and two beds. At four in the morning Irma starts her day. She and two of her daughters buy eggs at the market, visit the girls' teacher, fetch water from the town spigot and place the striped plastic water jugs on their heads for the walk home.

Eusevia Guerra lives in the village of Pachay Las Lomas. She has been weaving since she was twelve. At age eighteen she sold her first *huipil* for \$50 dollars. "It took six months to make that *huipil*. Today that much work should bring a hundred and fifty dollars." (p. 42.) Eusevia also begins her day at four in the morning. She makes coffee, then

tortillas, washes the dishes, straightens the house, and, finally, begins to weave. Her boys come home at eleven o'clock. They eat lunch and go to the fields to help their father. Eusevia goes to the mill in the afternoon to have her corn ground. She does the laundry and the dinner dishes and goes to bed with the darkness, as there is no electricity in the village. When asked what makes her happy, Eusevia answers, "Having weaving to do. What would we do without work? If you don't have money you can't eat."

"I have returned to the Mayan religion. My family is both Mayan and Catholic, so they understand—we have never lost our Mayan beliefs." (Francisca cited in Gianturco and Tuttle p. 46). Although Francisca does not weave anymore her daughters María and Soila are still weaving. Francisca is a healer who also is the leader of the weavers. "When we are ready to deliver our work, we all go out and buy incense to make a ceremony so that our weaving will sell." (Francisca cited in Gianturco and Tuttle p. 46). She and the other weavers sell their work at a store called Colibri in Antigua. She has been told that their work "flies out the door the minute they bring them into Colibri—they sell like hotcakes." (Francisca, cited in Gianturco and Tuttle p. 46).

Weaving has been the mainstay for many Guatemalan women through time. It has allowed them to support their families and define their identities as weavers. Many of the weavers were widowed during the terrorism of the 1970s and 1980s. Their weaving became their identities and their way out of poverty. The weavers work hard to care for their homes and their children. Weaving happens when the women have a little time to spare in their busy domestic schedules. The weavers are passing their skills down to their own children, as well as other children in the neighborhood who don't know how to weave. The high price of materials though, is making weaving into a very expensive endeavor for the weavers to buy the cotton thread. The three Guaran women all talked about what they are doing to preserve the older textiles, as well as how they are helping the girls in the community learn to weave. They wear their *traje* proudly and go on with their busy lives of weaving and selling their work, of meeting with other weavers and sharing their stories and of making ends meet as they provide for their families. There is hope for a peaceful time in Guatemala now and for a resurgence of the traditional arts that support a way of life that has been going on for centuries.

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## Unit Introduction:

This unit on Guatemala was written for a 4th grade class taking Spanish as a second language. Students in 4th grade are ready to look beyond their families and neighborhoods and expand their knowledge to other countries in the world. The rich Guatemalan culture provides many ways in which the students can work with geography, history and culture of the Maya, cultural similarities and differences, and defining identities—a perfect 4th grade topic. The students are asked to research some of the topics suggested in the unit.

This unit could be adapted for younger or older students by asking the students to complete simplified or more advanced tasks.

## Preguntas Esenciales

- ¿Dónde está Guatemala? (Where is Guatemala?)
- ¿Cómo es Guatemala? (What is Guatemala like?)
- ¿Dónde vivían los maya precolombino? (Where did the pre-colombian Maya live?)
- ¿Cómo eran las ciudades? (What were the cities like?)
- ¿Qué profesiones habían? (What professions were there?)
- ¿Cómo eran/son los mercados maya? ¿Qué venden? (What were/are the Mayan markets like? What did/do they sell there?)
- ¿Cómo definen su identidad los maya? ¿Por qué era/es tan importante el tejer en la vida de los maya? (How did the Maya define their identities? Why was/is weaving so important in the lives of the Maya?)

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### Lesson 1: ¿Dónde está Guatemala?

[Where is Guatemala?]

- Divide the class into pairs.
- Print out the two maps and write the names of three or four different countries on each map [Belize, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Costa Rica on map A and Guatemala, Honduras, Panama on map B. Give each partner either an A or a B map of Central America [Appendix A]
- Write the following phrases on the board or on chart paper: *El Salvador está al sur de Honduras. Panamá está al sureste de Costa Rica. Honduras está al sur de Guatemala.* Etc. [Teach the cardinal directions if necessary.]
- Ask the students to give their partner a clue about the location of a country using one of the phrases above or their own phrase, and to write the name of each country on the map.
- Give the students some TPR commands, such as *toquen Costa Rica en el mapa. Tracen Guatemala en el mapa. Colorean Belize azul en el mapa.*
- Ask students to write different commands to give their peers.

Standards:

1.1 Communication:  
Students engage in conversations, provide and obtain information when they tell each other where certain countries are.

3.1 Connections: Students reinforce and further their knowledge of geography through the foreign language.

Language Functions:

- *Describing* the location of countries on the map: *El Salvador está al sur de Honduras. Panamá está al sureste de Costa Rica. Honduras está al sur de Guatemala.* Etc.

**Lesson 2: ¿Cómo es Guatemala?**

[What is Guatemala like?]

- Look at a map of Central America such as the one at: [http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/americas/centralamerica\\_ref01.pdf](http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/americas/centralamerica_ref01.pdf)
- What physical features do you see on the map? Draw the physical features on your copy of the map of Central America. Make a key to go with the features.
- Ask the students to compare the features on the map of Central America with physical features where they live. Use the following sentences for the comparison: In *New Mexico* there are *mountains* and *volcanos* and in *Guatemala* there are *mountains* and *volcanos*. *Central America* is surrounded by water but *Colorado* is surrounded by other states. Etc.
- Ask for volunteers to present some of their sentences to the class.

Standards:

1.1 Communication: Students compare physical features of Guatemala with those of their own State.

3.1 Connections: Students reinforce and further their knowledge of geography through the foreign language

Language functions: Students compare physical features in Guatemala and in their state:

- *En Nuevo Mexico hay montañas y volcanos y en Guatemala hay montañas y volcanos. América Central está rodeada de agua pero Colorado esta rodeada de otros estados.*

**Lesson 3: ¿Dónde vivían los maya precolombino?**

[Where did the pre-colombian Maya live?]

- What was the ancient city of Tikal like?
- Have the students research the precolumbian site of Tikal in Peten, the Northern Jungle of Guatemala. Go to: <http://www.travelsinparadise.com/guatemala/tikal/pictures/pb030098.html> to see a recreation of what Tikal looked like many, many years ago.
- Also take a virtual trip though Tikal at: <http://www.destination360.com/tikal/guide.htm>
- Ask each student write the interesting information about what s/he has learned about Tikal in a Tikal journal. They can write in Spanish if appropriate or in English. Have pairs of students tell each other which part of Tikal is the most interesting to him or her. Divide the class into groups according to their interests. Have each group share their information with each other and then have one student from each group form another group (a jigsaw activity). Ask each student in the mixed group to summarize her or his information into one or two sentences and then have the group read their summaries.

Standards:

1.1 Communication: Students obtain information about the ruins of Tikal in Guatemala.

2.1 Cultures: Students demonstrate an understanding of the products and practices of the Guatemalan culture.

3.1 Connections: Students learn about the ruins of Tikal in Guatemala.

1.1 Students obtain information and write a summary of it (in English or Spanish) in a Tikal journal.

2.1 Cultures: Students create a 3D map of Tikal using boxes and other materials.

**Lesson 3** (Continued)

The students could also add an illustration to their summary.

- Using the map of Tikal at: <http://www.travelsinparadise.com/guatemala/tikal/pictures/pb030098.html>
- Have the students use different sizes and shapes of boxes to make their own diorama of Tikal.
- Give the students the following information about professions the ancient and modern Maya practiced. Ask them to make a list of the professions below and other professions they learn about in their research. Have them compare the Maya professions to professions of their parents or people in their towns using a T-chart. Are any of the professions the same for the two groups? *Los maya eran chicleros y tejedoras pero la gente en California son bomberos, abogados, maestros, etc.*
- The girls helped their mothers grind corn, pick herbs, care for the younger siblings. The boys fetched water, watched the live stock.

<i>Los maya</i>	<i>Los norteamericanos</i>
chicleros	bomberos
curanderos	abogados
abejeros	maestros
tejedoras	artistas
futboístas	

*“My family cultivated honey. Honeycombs, brimming with bees, hung from the trees outside, and from them we would get honey. At first we had a big tree trunk full of honey. A queen bee in charge of the other bees was in the trunk.”* (Menchú, p. 44).

*“If I were ill, my mother would force me to drink herbal teas made from the wierdest plants. If I couldn’t fall asleep, I’d be given a drink of chipilin, a sweet-tasting plant. If I had a stomachache, she’d make me a hot broth from the altenxa plant. Soon my stomach would stop hurting... My mother inherited this plant knowledge from her grandparents.”* (Menchú, p. 29)

Does anyone in your family use herbs to cure stomach aches, sore throats, etc. What happens in your family when you are sick?

Standards: (Continued)

**1.1 Communication:**

Students obtain information about Tikal and the ancient and modern professions.

**4.2 Comparisons:** Students compare professions in Tikal with those in their towns using a T-chart.

**Lesson 3** (Continued)

“Ballcourts are found in the center of nearly every Maya city. As in soccer, players had to keep the ball in the air without using their hands. The ball was solid rubber and weighed eight pounds or more (that’s at least eight times a soccer ball)... Although it was played for sport, the game was also a mythic struggle. It reenacted contests of life and death, war, and sacrifice.”

Have students go to: <http://www.ballgame.org/main.asp> to see an animated, interactive ballgame

Have the students go to: <http://www.ancientworlds.net/aw/Thread/124709> to read information and take the quiz about the Maya ballgame.

How is the Maya ballgame the same or different from the game of soccer (fútbol)?

*Chicleros* collect *chicle* or chewing gum from trees in the Northern jungles of Guatemala.

*Chicle* gum is the tree latex of the *chico zapote*, *chicle*, or *sapodilla* tree (*Manilkara zapota*). Traditionally, the Mayan Indians of Mexico and Central America chewed the raw *chicle* latex, but more recently it is used as the elastic ingredient for chewing gum.

“The *chicle* tree is the most abundant in the jungle of Petén. In some places it is possible to find over 30 trees in a single hectare. *Chicle* harvesters or *chicleros*, collect the latex during the rainy season from July to February because the latex flows more easily. Using a sharp-edged machete or small pocket knife, *chicle* collectors make zigzag cuts from the base of the tree trunk up to its first branches. The latex drips down these grooves and is collected in a bag attached to the tree at the bottom. Tapping wounds are generally placed at 16-inch (40 cm) intervals, and usually require between two and five years to heal.” (<http://www.tve.org/ho/doc.cfm?aid=890> )

What do you think is added to *chicle* when it is sold as chewing gum in the USA? What kind of gum that sounds like *chicle* is sold in the USA today?

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#### Lesson 4: ¿Por qué era/es tan importante el tejer en la vida de los maya? [Why was/is weaving such an important part of Maya life?]

- What is a *huipil*?
- What symbols were used in weaving designs in pre-Columbian as well as present times?
- Give the students the following paragraphs to read:

*“A huipil is a blouse or loose dress that consists of three lengths of cloth woven on a backstrap loom. The lengths are stitched up, leaving one hole for the head and the sides open for arms.”* (Reese, L. 1993, p. 23).

*“In Guatemala when a weaver pulls on her huipil and settles it on her shoulders, she walks around surrounded by woven designs revealing her world. The designs and colors announce her village, her social standing within the village, and her skill as a weaver. They also may reveal her work and spiritual beliefs. For example, the image of a certain kind of bat indicates a link to the moon goddess. A woman wearing a huipil with these designs is most likely a midwife. Although a woman’s huipil has certain shared elements with others in her village, her own designs, her ‘signature,’ make the weaving very personal to her.”* (Reese, L. 1993, p. 1/Designs tell a story).

- Have the students research *huipil* designs and use the designs in Appendix B to design their own *huipiles*. They could also design their own symbols for their *huipiles*. Ask them to write a description of the design on an index card. Put the designs up around the room. Then read the descriptions to the class and see who can match the design with the description.
- Show the students how to make a cardboard loom. They can warp the loom with cotton thread and begin a weaving project by weaving yarn over and under the warp. They can also use grasses and flowers and other materials found outside.

Standards:

- 1.1 Communication: Students obtain information about *huipiles* and symbols used in weaving.
- 2.2 Culture: Students demonstrate their understanding of weaving by making and using a cardboard loom.

**Lesson 5: ¿Cómo definen su identidad los maya?**

[How do Mayan people define their identities?]

- What is a *nahual*?
- What is the Mayan *traje*?
- Have the students read this passage by Rigoberta Menchú about *nahuales*.

“Grandfather ...told us that each thing had its *nahual*, it’s shadow, its double. The earth, the tree and the mountain all have their own spirits. The earth has its *nahual*, the rocks have theirs, all people have *nahuales*, –the sun, the animals, the winds and the air have *nahuales*... That’s why you have to talk to the earth, the river and the flowers. That’s why you have to respect them.” (Menchú, p. 32)... When we are born a little creature is born with us. This creature is just like us. If we sneeze, it sneezes as well, in the forest where it lives. If we sing, it also sings, in its animal language... Sometimes that creature is wiser than we are... I know mine, but I can’t reveal it. ... You can have a tiger, a lion, a coyote or a bear as a *nahual*. You can have a puma, a wild boar or a robin redbreast.” (Menchú, p. 39)

- Ask the students to think about what their *nahuales* might be. Have each student draw a picture of their *nahual* and write a paragraph about its characteristics. Compile the pictures and paragraphs into a class book. Let students take turns taking the book home to read with their families or put it on the web for all to read when time permits.
- Maya women weavers often say that their identity is their *traje* or their traditional dress.
- Ask the students if they have a favorite piece of clothing that helps define their identities. Have them photograph the clothing.
- Hang a “clothesline” in the classroom and clip the photos to the line. Have the students practice saying the names of each piece of clothing on the line and why it defines their identities. For example: *Mi suéter azul define mi identidad porque es el color de mis ojos y es muy suave.*
- Ask the students what other interests or skills help to define their identities. For example: *Soy pianista. Me gusta esquiar. Soy alto y flaco con pelo rubio.* Etc.

Standards:

I.1 Communication:  
Students obtain information about *nahuales*.

**Language functions:**

Students draw a picture of their *nahual* and describe its characteristics in writing.

**Lesson 5** *(Continued)*

- Have the students walk around the classroom to try to find someone who has one or more of the same characteristics or skills in common. They can then report back to the class the characteristics or skills they have in common.

**Lesson 6: Los Mercados Maya**

[The Mayan Market]

- Go to the following websites to see some Guatemalan products.

<http://www.mission-guatemala.org/shopping/pottery.html>

<http://store.gxonlinestore.org/all-guatemala-3.html>

<http://www.artemaya.com/traje.html>

Have the students look at the pictures and decide what they will sell at their market.

- Have the students research the market at Chichicastenango and other smaller regional markets. Show them what a quetzal bill looks like and tell them how much one quetzal is worth. Ask them to bring in small boxes for the market wares and popsicle sticks for price signs. Give them blank checks to write for a certain number of *quetzals*. They will need to use Maya numbers when they write their checks.

Standards:

1.1 Communication:

Students obtain information about markets in Guatemala.

2.2 Cultures: Students demonstrate an understanding of products and practices in Guatemala.

- Students learn about Guatemalan money (the *quetzal*) and the number system.
- Students create a 3D map of Tikal.

**Language Functions:**

Students learn vocabulary and phrases related to selling and/or buying at the market, such as:

*¿Cuánto vale/cuesta?*

*Cuesta 10 quetzales. Es*

*muy caro/barato.* (How

much does it cost? It

costs 10 quetzales. It is

very expensive/cheap.)

Students role-play having a market in Guatemala.

**Lesson 7**

- Have the students write about or draw pictures of how they think their lives would be the same or different if they lived in pre-Colombian Guatemala.

Standards:

4.2 Comparisons: Students demonstrate understanding of the concept of culture through comparisons of the Guatemalan and their own.

**Language functions:**

Students *describe* pre-Colombian Guatemala and their own lives.

**Lesson 8: Baked Plantains**

- Present the following Gouin Series to the class. Use props or gestures for each sentence.

Let's make baked plantains!

- First preheat the oven to 350°.
- Peel the two plantains and cut them in half lengthwise.
- Put them in baking dish and sprinkle them with butter, sugar and allspice.
- Drizzle with the honey.
- Bake them for 20-30 minutes or until the plantains are soft and light brown.
- Serve them warm with fresh cream and more honey.
- Yum, yum they taste delicious!

1. First say the sentences and do the actions or show the pictures to the students.
2. Next, have the students do the actions with you.
3. Third, have the students do the actions and say the sentences with you.
4. Finally have the students say the sentences and do the actions on their own.

Standards:

1.1 Communication: Students obtain information about making the Guatemalan dish, Baked Plantains.

**Language functions:**

Students *provide information*, in the form of a Gouin series, about making baked plantains.

## Appendix A

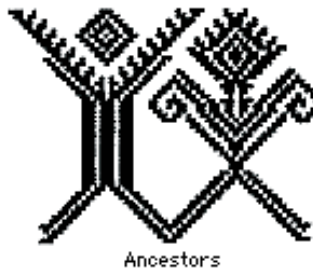
### Outline map of Central America



[www.worldatlas.com](http://www.worldatlas.com)

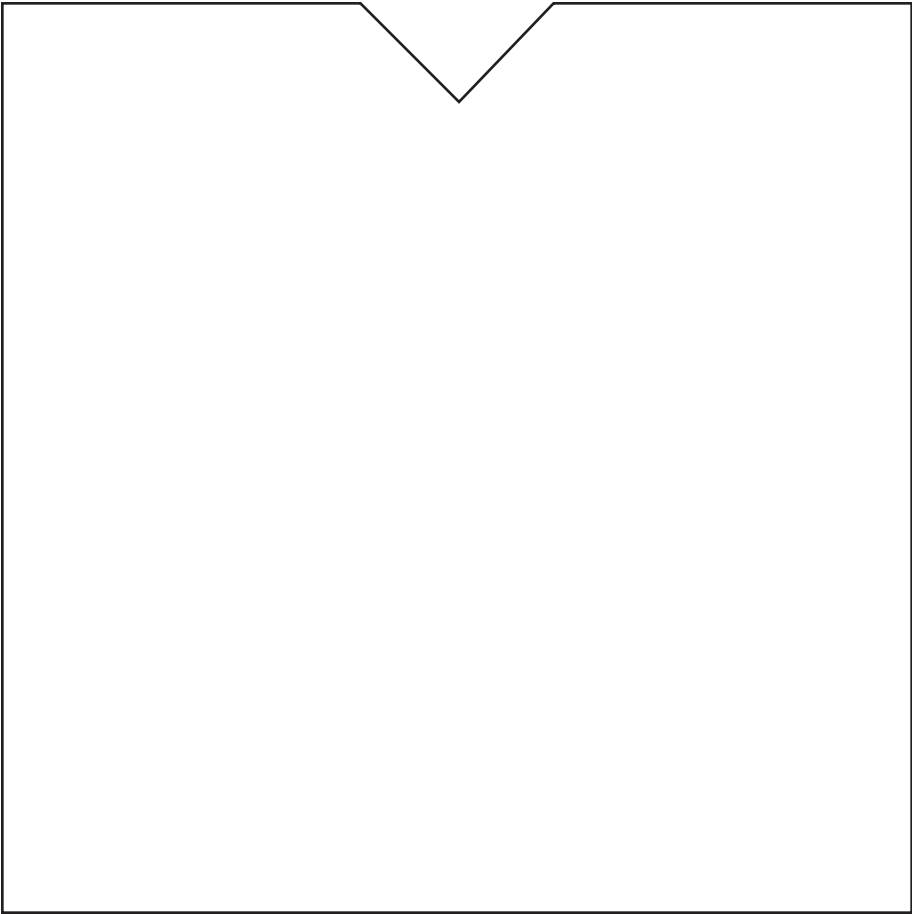
## Appendix B

### Guatemalan Weaving Symbols



## Appendix C

### Design a Huipil

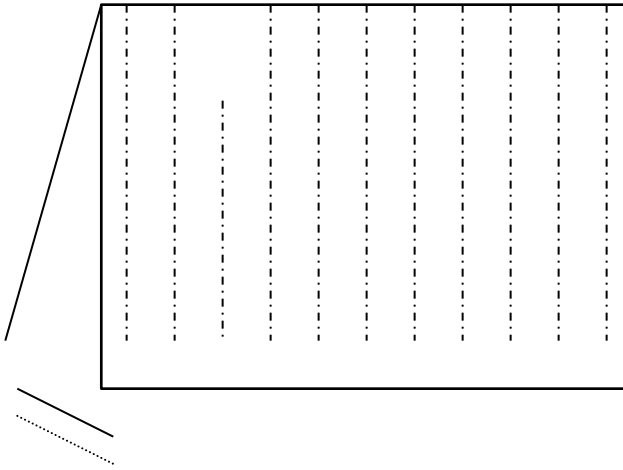


## Appendix D

### Make a market basket

















Fold a piece of construction paper in half. Show the students how to cut vertical lines in the folded paper, leaving  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch at the bottom of the paper. Ask the students to open the paper and give each student strips of multicolored paper to weave under and over through the cut lines in the construction paper. They can glue the ends of the strips to the inside of the paper.

To finish, have the students glue handles of paper or string to the open end of the bag.



## Appendix E

Instead of ten digits like we have today, the Maya used a base number of 20. (Base 20 is vigesimal.) They also used a system of bar and dot as *shorthand* for counting. A dot stood for one and a bar stood for five. In the following table you can see how this works.

	●	● ●	● ● ●	● ● ● ●
0	1	2	3	4
	● 	● ● 	● ● ● 	● ● ● ● 
5	6	7	8	9
	● 	● ● 	● ● ● 	● ● ● ● 
10	11	12	13	14
	● 	● ● 	● ● ● 	● ● ● ● 
15	16	17	18	19

As you can see, adding is just a matter of adding up dots and bars! Maya merchants often used cocoa beans, which they spread out on the ground, to do these calculations.

From: <http://hrcweb.nevada.edu/museum/Education/mayaMath.html>



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# Teaching Diverse Learners

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*Barbara Pope Bennett, M.A., Middlebury College*

## Abstract

Today's foreign language classroom is no longer a homogeneous grouping, which can be taught using one programmed method that is appealing to the entire group. Now, the instructor must present lessons which not only adhere to the national standards, but which also touch each and every student in a special and unique manner. Languages also must be an integral part of the school curriculum, and not only reserved for "handpicked" clients. If one has learned to speak their native language, they can also learn another with effective methods and a caring concerned teacher who is willing to delve into the minds and hearts of the clientele. The instructor must present materials which are bias-free and which will reach all students, whether they be male, female, American, foreign-born, heritage learners, high or low achievers, physically challenged, or possessors of a unique learning style. While planning and preparing materials, thought must also be given to the student's sexual orientation as well as to his ethnicity, implementing sensitive instruction so that no student feels isolated. Materials, especially visuals, must allow the student to see himself, as well as others, in as many presentations as possible. Serious thought must be given to creating an all-inclusive classroom that is multi-modal. Effective tools will also include all disciplines, and must relate the language to as many careers as possible. Individual and personal interests of each student are extremely important as well. Special consideration must also be given to the financial obligations and limitations of today's classroom. With ever-decreasing budgets, and limitations involving both large and small numbers in today's classrooms, the world language instructor must be able to adapt to a classroom that might consist of a semi-blended configuration of two or more levels.

"THE 5 Cs" of Communication, Cultures, Communities, Comparisons, and Connections can be realized in almost every activity whether the lesson has as its nucleus In music, dance, art, travel, technology, literature, magazine excerpts, competitions, specific disciplines, food, surveys, career choices, or any other area in which students are genuinely interested.

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**Barbara Pope Bennett** graduated from Howard University with a Bachelor's degree in Spanish and holds a Master's degree, also in Spanish, from Middlebury College. Her entire teaching career has been with the District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS), where she taught all levels, and served a short time as an instructor at Howard University. She was named D.C. Teacher of the Year, is a Disney Award recipient, and a finalist in the National Teachers' Hall of Fame. Barbara retired from DCPS, the Benjamin Banneker Academic IBO School on June 30, 2006 where she taught grades 9-12, Spanish I-IV, AP and IB classes, served as Department Chair, and led groups for several years on an annual European Study Tour. Her students were also involved in Community service-learning programs, The Experiment in International Living, Youth for Understanding, and The Amigos Program.

The activities which follow will encompass all of the above with the idea of simply using these as points of departure which will serve as an impetus for even further development, with the creativity and individual input of the wonderful world language instructors who have devoted their lives to the love of languages and who hope that this same love is being instilled in their students. This article will speak specifically to techniques such as the Spanish notebook, oral presentations, the Amigo Latino, experiences abroad, international night, volunteer opportunities, technology, group dynamics, professional development and the multi-level classroom. Specific references will also be made to examples presented by the author in the Annenberg tapes.

## Introduction

The world language classroom has changed considerably since I began as an instructor in 1960. As a successful teacher, I have found it necessary to continually adapt and change as the classroom has changed. It is mandatory that the World Language (WL) instructor continually engages in professional development that will allow for contact with new procedures as well as for the dynamic changes in the current school population that occur from year to year. Our clientele now incorporates a plethora of religions, cultures, and social backgrounds. The instructor must not only be sensitive to these, but also make certain that this sensitivity is reflected in the cognitive and affective presence of the classroom.

## Incorporating “THE 5 Cs”

I have found that placing “THE 5 Cs”: Communication, Cultures, Communities, Comparisons and Connections on display in a prominent place in the classroom, along with specific examples of each, has assisted me in creating stimulating activities which are ever reflective of the ACTFL standards. Students are also given the standards with specific examples to place in their notebooks in order that they might use these as stimuli for adhering to the rubrics that have been given for activities.

### Communication

Students must be mindful of the fact that the primary goal is that of concise, clear communication, and that this communication must be practiced in many modalities: introductions, casual conversation, relaying information, descriptions, narrations, hypothetical situations, literary analyses, and persuasion. They should not be constrained by constant corrections on the part of the instructor, but encouraged to achieve the primary goal of the respective modality.

### Cultures

The instructor must present the language as spoken by as many areas of the Spanish-speaking world, for example, as possible, without particular preference for any one location. This must also be reflected in the literary selections and cultural venues that are selected for presentation. A complete panorama of Spanish and Latin-American culture should also be evident in the materials, realia, speakers, destinations for field trips, and religious topics. In my teaching situation, many religious practices are reflected as the student body includes Buddhists, Catholics, Protestants, Muslims,

Atheists and Agnostics. This diversity has offered me a unique opportunity to allow students to reflect upon religious practice from a very personal perspective, as well as affording us opportunities to present multi-disciplinary lessons with colleagues who teach in several other subject areas in the school. Students who are otherwise disinterested in the language are usually anxious to share, explain, or clarify misconceptions as they relate to their individual preferences. I, myself, have learned so much as a result of this type of inclusion.

### **Communities**

The Washington, D.C. area is constantly in the process of change as well as that of regentrification in many areas of the city. Many cultures are represented throughout the city, therefore, students are also living in neighborhoods with diverse populations. These diverse communities have been extremely influential in providing opportunities for students to interact with a potpourri of nationalities, points of view and perspectives as they go about their daily lives, and as they immerse themselves in their assignments.

### **Comparisons**

In the Spanish classroom, comparisons are made reflecting on the fact that people are more alike than different. The cognitive and affective domain is present in all of us; we simply have unique and interesting ways of expressing these areas. We have compared the “quinceañera” with the “sweet sixteen party”, the “cotillion” and the “beautillion”; the “hip-hop” with the “bachata”; the “telenovela” with the “soap opera”; the “dirty rice” with the “arroz con pollo”; the “shrug” with the “poncho”. We have also examined the differences among the Spanish-speaking countries themselves. What an enriching activity it is when one student from Mexico interacts with another from Peru, and explains the family and daily activities. The autobiographies that the students present in class highlight these differences in a beautiful manner that has caused the students to bond even more. This is emphasized in an even more graphic manner as my students have engaged in travel to many different countries.

### **Connections**

Connections is one of “THE 5 Cs” which has enabled me to influence those students who, at the beginning, are only interested in the language as a required Carnegie unit which will enable them to graduate. By relating the language to every discipline that is taught in the school, I have been able to inspire, take out — to a degree — that student who could not really care less about the target language, and may have even built an imaginary block to becoming successful in Spanish. Since our school requires 270 hours of community service for every graduate, I have encouraged students to complete those hours in the area of their prospective careers. This will be discussed in greater detail in the article.

### **The Spanish Notebook**

Our students report to school prior to the official start of the year in order that they might receive information regarding materials in advance; therefore, on the first official school day, they are ready to actually begin work. Teachers are required to submit course outlines for approval by the principal. Each instructor must require a sig-

nature from the parents, as well as the student, indicating that they have read and understand the mandates of the course. On the first day of school, the student has a Spanish notebook with 10-12 sections clearly defined.

The required sections are as follows:

- A. Plan y Requisitos del Curso G. Cultura
- B. Tarea (easy to locate) H. Exámenes IB/AP/Nat. Spanish Exam
- C. Exámenes y Rúbricas I. Geografía
- D. Literatura J. Orales (Presentations by classmates)
- E. hola/Hoy Día K. Notas (Careful listing of grades)
- F. Univisión L. Vocabulario

Students place these sections in a loose-leaf binder with a unique and individual computer-generated, culturally significant graphic and proper identification of the owner. These remain in the classroom on a special shelf during the week and are taken home on the weekends and during holidays. Many students test into upper levels as they sit for placement examinations in college, and use these notebooks as a supplement to their university studies.

## Oral Presentations

All students are required to present a series of four prepared oral reports in each level of Spanish, including level I. The first oral in Spanish I is a detailed "Autobiografía". This enables me to become closely acquainted with the student, his/her career choice, the members of the family, likes and dislikes, and aspirations for the future with respect to college. Students use the present tense, preterite and simple future tenses. The oral is presented at the end of the first grading period, during which students have been in class for approximately 8 weeks. Students select their own dates for presenting with only two orals schedule for any given day. The number of points allowed for each category may vary:

- Papel  
100 puntos
- Memorizar  
100 puntos
- Pronunciar  
100 puntos
- Vocabulario  
100 puntos
- Conversar  
100 puntos
- Realia  
100 puntos

Each student prepares a handout for the class consisting of at least 10 lines, 12 Font, Times New Roman. The paper must include a photograph of the student, 10 new vocabulary words, and at least two graphics relating to the content of the paper. Each

member of the class receives a copy and keeps the same in the Spanish notebook. After several drafts that are corrected in group sessions, the student then memorizes the text of the Autobiografía. Since each oral has been corrected in group sessions with teacher assistance, the student has a correct text that is then memorized. With this series of at least 10 sentences, the student is able to construct further statements during the year, using the oral as a model. After the text has been memorized, another group activity is initiated which allows the student to engage in peer evaluation of correct pronunciation. During the oral, therefore, points are deducted for incorrect pronunciation; however, the instructor does limited correction during the oral. This section allows even the weaker student to receive at least one good grade, since the only requirement is that the words are new and included in the primary text. For levels 2 and above, the student must also include a definition in Spanish, using the Larousse Pocket Dictionary. This also is a means of alleviating anxiety. The new words are also used by the instructor in the conversation portion. The instructor forms questions that are related directly to the text. Classmates are also required to direct questions to the presenter. Extra points are given for answers that require inferences and opinions. Students must show, describe and discuss an actual object related to their Autobiografía. (Realia has included trophies, karate garb, prepared dishes, pets, ballet slippers, instrumental solos, tailoring, sewing and crochet samples, original poetry, etc.) Quite often, I receive new students in the advanced classes, and the autobiografía is also required, but with more stringent rubrics.

The second oral involves an explicit description of the career choice including one paragraph giving the rationale for the selection. Another paragraph describes the materials needed and the third includes the specific preparation required for the career, and the best colleges for that career choice. The realia for this oral includes an actual tool that is used in the career of choice, and a detailed explanation of its use. The third oral requires that the student select a cultural practice of the target language, give its historical background, indicate the areas in which the custom is practiced, and make an original reproduction of an item related to the practice. Here I discourage food preparation, since that is done in a separate lesson. This activity has produced a potpourri of cultural items, some of which are entered in local contests. Others are placed in the hall adjoining the classroom or in the lobby cases with small “tarjetitas” attached including the name of the realia as well as the name of the student. For the last oral, students form groups of no more than four, and produce a conversational video, CD or DVD in which they must demonstrate mastery of the work learned for that year. The technology must reflect three different venues, and one native speaker of Spanish must be a participant. The presentation must last for at least fifteen minutes.

For the AP and IB classes, the last oral must be a videotaped dramatic presentation of one of the literary works that we have read during the school year. I have been amazed by the precise representations which students have submitted, which include costuming, construction of sets, superb sound effects, surprising mastery of technology, and rolling graphics and documentation.

A few of the literary works which have been especially popular with students are “La Casa de Bernarda Alba”—Federico García Lorca, “El Delantal Blanco”—Sergio

Vodanovic, “Las Medias Rojas”—Emilia Pardo Bazán, “Dos Caras (featured in the Annenberg tapes)—Sabine Ulibarri, “El Alacrán de Fray Gómez”—Ricardo Palma, and “Chac Mool”—Carlos Fuentes.

## Amigo Latino

Each student is also required from the beginning of the year to interact continually with an Amigo Latino throughout the school year, and share aspects of that interaction in a journal which is completed in class each month. It is shared in a group conversational setting at least once during each advisory.

The initial introduction of the Amigo Latino is presented in the form of a photograph in which both the student and the native speaker must be present, along with one page of biographical data on the speaker. Also, the student must include a map of the native country, a color reproduction of the flag of that country, and at least two computer-generated graphics reflective of that country’s culture. Much more detail is required of the IB and AP classes. Extra credit is given if the student converses with the Amigo Latino in class, or if a five-minute video, CD or DVD is presented in which the student converses with the native speaker.

Members of the community have been especially generous in this regard. One member of the community, una amiga madrileña, who is the proprietress of a churrería in the Adams-Morgan community of Washington, D.C., not only came to class, but also brought two large trays of churros for the entire class to enjoy. Another amigo dominicano, who is a superior court judge, appeared in a video and also agreed to be the graduation speaker for that school year. This activity allayed many of the fears of students who are reluctant to engage in dialogue outside of class. It has also been an influential factor in encouraging student participation in experiences outside of the United States.

## Cultural Exchanges in Other Countries

In addition to interaction with native speakers in the city, students have also chosen to engage in travel and home stays abroad in order to enhance their classroom experiences. Since our school enjoys 100% college acceptance, many students have decided to combine their Spanish with their career choice and either minor or major in the language. Many have engaged in semesters abroad during the college matriculation. “Amigos de las Américas”, Youth for Understanding, the Experiment in International Living, and the annual European Study Tour, have afforded students the opportunity to engage in international travel that has been a definite asset to class interest and participation. These experiences have truly changed their lives. “Amigos de las Américas” is a volunteer program that allows the student to work in a miniature Peace Corps experience in the Américas. Selected students assist physicians, coach children in hygiene, assist families in building ovens, plant vegetable gardens, establish good eating habits, etc. Through this program students have traveled throughout Mexico, Central and South America during the summer for periods of four -six weeks. The program is open to rising sophomores and juniors. Most of the expenses for this venture come from a joint fundraiser consisting of fruit sales. The

program is international and can be reached at ([www.amigosdc.org](http://www.amigosdc.org)) The Experiment in International Living (EIL-[www.usexperiment.org](http://www.usexperiment.org)) is also an excellent opportunity for students to live with a family in the country of their choice for an entire summer. EIL, based in Brattleboro, Vermont, provides an Ambassador Scholarship that covers all expenses except for organizational fees of \$600.00 and includes transportation, lodging, food and other expenses for the entire summer in 29 countries of the world. Students are asked to indicate their 1st, 2nd and 3rd choice. Students have returned from this experience anxious to pursue study of their chosen language, expressing a strong desire to enter the international arena, and also to volunteer throughout the world. Of course, the enthusiasm of these students is highly contagious in the language classroom, thereby encouraging peers to work more diligently and to enjoy the same experience. My students have traveled to Australia, Kenya, Spain, Italy, Germany, France, Thailand, Great Britain, Ireland and several other destinations. The China Exchange has allowed eight students to engage in two, three-week exchanges with our sister school in Beijing, China. Students from our school attended the Beijing Middle School (actually a high school attached to Beijing University) for three weeks, and their counterparts in China visited with us in the USA for the same period. By engaging with yet another group of diverse learners, both student groups removed stereotypes, learned to appreciate another culture and enhanced their performance in other subjects such as social studies, science, mathematics and humanities. I was pleased to share my residence with a Chinese administrator, a Chinese teacher of English, and two Chinese students. This was truly a learning experience for me as well.

## **Annual European Study Tour**

Our school's annual European Study Tour has given students the opportunity to spend a period of from ten-seventeen days during the spring break in the countries whose language the students have studied for three or four years. All students at Banneker High School must experience three-five years of a modern language if they are in the International Baccalaureate (IB) program, and one year of Latin if they are not matriculating in IB. This tour is open only to juniors and seniors and is conducted during the months of March or April during the spring vacation period. Students, therefore, do not miss class for the time of the tour. When our school opened in 1988, the European Study Tour was an integral part of the school curriculum. Since the school offers Spanish, French, German and Latin, we normally travel to Spain, France, Italy and Germany.

Many parents prefer that their offspring travel with designated chaperones in a much more structured setting instead of engaging in the aforementioned travel programs. For several years, we have traveled with EF Tours, based in Lucerne, Switzerland. The tour is a multi-disciplinary effort in conjunction with all departments of the school. Colleagues, therefore, give assignments, related to the specific countries, in lieu of the work that is missed. Some assignments include finding the grave of Oscar Wilde in Père Lachaise Cemetery in Paris, photographing ten memorable monuments throughout the tour, mapping the exchange rates throughout the tour, producing a 25-item annotated photographic journal, preparing a power point pres-

entation with annotations of the tour, videotaping conversations with the local gen-try, etc. This tour requires an enormous amount of planning. We always choose the “customized tour” which allows us to select our destinations. EF Tours maintains an excellent web site ([www.eftours.com](http://www.eftours.com)) with links that allow the teacher to communi-cate online with student participants, access passport information, engage in auto pay to avoid late charges, secure phone and discount cards, be informed about money exchanges, and a bevy of other pertinent information. College and high school credit is also available for teachers and students. This year some of our experiences will include a tour of the Royal Palace in Madrid, a visit to El Rastro, visits to El Museo del Prado, a stroll to El Museo Reina Sofia to view Picasso’s “Guernica”, a flamenco evening, a visit to the beautiful city of Toledo, walks along the Gran Vía, the Eiffel Tower, the Palace of Versailles, Montmartre, walks along the Champs-Élysées, a guided tour through Notre Dame Cathedral, an evening cruise along the Seine River, a visit to the Coliseum and other ruins in Rome, a contemplative visit to the Vatican, photo opportunities on the Spanish Steps, and an exciting cable ride to the top of Mount Pilatus in Switzerland. Of course, there will be numerous opportunities for conversa-tion and cultural exchanges for the entire duration of the tour. First, permission must be secured from the school district, preferably by June of the preceding year prior to travel. Next, several parent and student meetings must be held to explain the trip and the definite requirements. Some students have never shared a room with another person, for example. Strict guidelines must be established with regard to behavior. Thorough explanations must be given regarding passports, money exchanges, antici-pated intercultural exchanges, packing, new airport restrictions, instructions for those who have never flown, proper attire for special venues, anticipated delays, fund-rais-ing activities, etc. All of these, however, allow the student to engage in “real world” experiences, and hypothetical situations can be recreated in class to encourage con-versation and adherence to the ACTFL standards. Expenses for this tour are approx-imately \$2500 and are covered through individual payments, fund-raising, corporate donations and receipts from our annual International Night.

## International Night

One of our out of class activities, which always attracts the largest contingency of our diverse population, is our annual International Night. This event occurs in mid-November and usually coincides with American Education Week. Our auditorium accommodates 450-500 persons and tickets are sold for \$5.00 each. Since everyone knows that the proceeds are used to assist students with expenses for the European Study Tour, and also to provide a scholarship for a graduating senior who anticipates a major in International Studies, we receive many donations in addition to the entrance fee. A one-hour talent show is presented, followed by an international feast that includes food donated by families who represent 35-40 countries of the world. We also receive donations from local ethnic restaurants. Talent has included a parade of countries with entire families attired in ethnic clothing, folkloric dances, duets on the steel pan, accomplished tap dancers, instrumental solos, singers (who can mimic almost to perfection Edith Piaf, Shakira, Monchy y Alexandra, Daddy Yankee, Alicia



Keys), poetic recitations in various languages and dialects, and artistic demonstrations of artifacts from around the world. Competition for this portion is extreme since we have only one hour for the talent portion. There is usually standing room only.

## **Volunteer Opportunities**

Our school requires a total of 270 hours of volunteer service in order to complete the curriculum for graduation. My students are encouraged to volunteer in sites that will enable them to pursue their career choice, and also use the language in which they are matriculating. In the Washington, D.C. area there are numerous opportunities for students to realize this goal. Several schools, in close proximity to Banneker, have a large enrollment of students who have recently arrived in the United States and who primarily speak Spanish in the home. Our students have been able to assist them, especially with reading and the humanities, by focusing on the areas of adapting to lectures and taking adequate notes. Other students have volunteered at the Oyster Bilingual School, an elementary school where classes are offered bilingually in all disciplines. AYUDA is an organization that offers legal assistance to Spanish speakers. Students have volunteered here to assist clients with filling out forms, applying for work, securing work documents, applying for citizenship and improving their standard of living. LA CASA is another organization which requests the assistance of bilingual volunteers, and which assists native speakers in all areas. The numerous embassies in our city afford my students excellent opportunities to volunteer and practice the language. Additionally the Mayor's Office of Latino Affairs has many offices in which students can provide vital services. Recently, our representative in congress, Eleanor Holmes Norton, advertised for a bilingual assistant to work directly in her office. Students have also worked so well in the volunteer mode during the school year, that businesses have offered them paid employment during the summer as a result of their dedicated service.

## **Teaching the Physically Challenged**

Three of the most rewarding experiences which I have had are the opportunity to teach a young man who was blind, serve as cooperating teacher for a student teacher from Gallaudet University who could neither hear nor speak, and instruct a student with cerebral palsy. I was able to work with the young student with impaired vision with a computer that printed in Braille and also provided me with a hard copy. The student teacher from Gallaudet, was assisted by two signing interpreters (one from Peru and the other from Nicaragua) who assisted by interpreting in Spanish as the student teacher signed for the class. The student with cerebral palsy is a very self-assured young woman who never expected to be treated differently. The student with impaired vision had an unusual knack for accurate repetition and a phenomenal memory. During the summer prior to his enrollment, we arranged to have all of his books printed in Braille, and made special arrangements with the Smithsonian Museum to have three-dimensional maps delivered to the school. I learned so much with this student. He even accompanied me along with his father on the European Study Tour. He was also an accomplished pianist and gave concerts to raise money for the excursion

for himself as well as for his father. My student teacher from Gallaudet has since graduated and is teaching elementary students like her. Like the class, I learned fundamental expressions by signing. One of my students had a brother who was “sordomudo” and he also taught many expressions to the class. The student with cerebral palsy who enrolled her niece at our school surprised me. The niece is now enrolled at Middlebury College and the aunt is a prominent practicing probate attorney in the D.C. area. No student deserves to be turned away due to physical challenges if he has the desire to learn. This experience seems to always become as rewarding for the instructor as for the student.

## A Multi-Modal Approach

The project approach to learning allows the instructor to use a variety of techniques to tap into the learning style of the student. Through music, dramatic presentations, imaginative visual realia, descriptive tasting, power point presentations, video productions, and artistic representations of scenes in literary works, the student is able to use more than one of his senses to become infused with the language. In the Annenberg tapes, the class used the story “Dos Caras” by Sabine Ulibarrí to demonstrate almost all of the techniques mentioned. We began by reading the story entirely in Spanish, pausing with questions to clarify the story line and the content. Students were asked to select ten sentences from the story that encompassed the main ideas of the story and to use either power point or computer-generated graphics to make those sentences come alive. This eliminated the need for direct translation. Those who were especially artistically talented drew portraits of the two main characters—Ambrosio y Beltrán. Conversation was stimulated by encouraging the students to reiterate in Spanish situations in their own lives that were similar to those of the main characters. Group discussions were held to assist students who may have been experiencing difficulties with interpretation. Group discussions were also held to create a different ending to the story. Almost all of the students created a very happy ending as opposed to one that was sad. Short dramatizations portrayed several scenes in the story. Those who were timid regained assurance through the non-challenging encouragement of their peers. One student decided to portray the theme of good and evil by creating a painting in the style of the artist Somarriba since this was the modality that she particularly enjoyed and with which she felt most comfortable. At the conclusion of this unit, students were easily able to summarize orally, in written form, and graphically, the essence of the story. They were also able to verbalize the connection of the story with their own individual experiences.

## The Multi-Level Classroom

Enrollment in classes at the higher levels of Spanish is usually much smaller. Scarcity in the number of teachers allotted to a school, therefore, sometimes requires that two or more advanced levels be scheduled for the same class period. This is the circumstance with which I have been confronted year after year. During the past year, I taught International Baccalaureate Standard Level 2 (IB SL2), Spanish 4 and AP Spanish language during the same class period.

The AP chat room was very helpful with concrete suggestions for the advanced students. Experienced teachers share methods and techniques, and give assistance for mutual problems and concerns. (<http://apcentral.collegeboard.com/spanlit> and <http://apcentral.collegeboard.com/spanlang>) are the sites for this assistance. At the beginning of the year, I assign each level to a separate section of the room, simply for my own sanity. We work together, for the most part, since all are advanced students. I have different requirements, however, for each level. All AP students must take the AP Spanish language examination. All IB students must take the IB internal and external examinations. Spanish 4 students are encouraged to take the AP exam, but are not mandated to do so. The objectives for all three levels are distributed to each student and placed in their respective notebooks. Spanish 4 students are required to complete 30 minutes of homework each night (15 minutes written and 15 minutes oral). AP and IB students are required to complete one hour of homework (30 minutes written and 30 minutes oral). All students are required to converse in Spanish for the duration of the class. Oral presentations differ for each level in length and rigor. Students in the AP and IB classes also receive extra credit due to the rigorous standards. A student who receives a B in the AP or IB class, actually receives credit for an A credit on the transcript. AP and IB students are also required to attend special classes during our advisory period (2x per week) in order to receive greater exposure to conversation. Two or three times per advisory (9 weeks), I will assign detailed independent study and research to the AP and IB students, while I work directly with level 4 students.

This has proven to be highly effective for our situation and, in this manner, all of my students receive the same amount of instruction. Also, this prevents having the more advanced students literally serve as instructors for the lower levels. The largest class that I have had with this arrangement is nineteen. Although it is very demanding, I feel that I am being fair to my students with this configuration, especially since I would not have been able to have the advanced classes if they were much smaller.

## Conclusion

Most classrooms today are heterogeneous groupings that reflect the realistic society of the 21st century. In addition to the heterogeneous groupings, there are also financial constraints that require unique solutions and a wide panorama of approaches to learning. The instructor must sincerely believe that all children can learn, provided that their particular learning style has been tapped, and the tools necessary are placed at the students' disposal. It is the obligation of the instructor to continually engage in professional development by remaining in constant contact with professional organizations and by sharing with colleagues in order that every student might benefit from instruction that accommodates the beautiful diversity of the classroom of the 21st century.

# Planning, Implementation, and Evaluation in my Diverse Classroom

Nancy Gadbois, Springfield, MA Public Schools

## Abstract

As mentioned in the Annenberg Media **Workshop 6 video: Valuing Diversity in Learners**, the term diversity means different things to different teachers. Middle school teacher Deb Terry described her Springfield, MA classroom perfectly. Many students are third language learners, have varying special needs, come from many corners of the world and include the talented and gifted. When Deb's students enter high school, many arrive at my doorstep, room 319, at the High School of Science & Technology, a few miles away. Let me assure you that eleven years ago, my high school was "state of the art," but has had no improvements related to foreign language technology since that time. Teachers in my department await their proverbial "turn in line" to use one of the two laptop carts available to the entire faculty. The Springfield, MA public schools operate at a 70% poverty rate, and students come to us with many challenges and needs. I have been in the classroom for 30 years, and my teaching has changed significantly from the "drill and kill," "precise response" exercises which prevented students from showing their ability to use the language effectively. Then again, at that time, I assumed that all my students would become foreign languages experts. How could the language **NOT** excite them as much as it did me?

## Introduction

My teaching changed when I began to empower the students in front of me. My lack of technology skills eleven years ago was embarrassing. In order to survive, I came to rely on my students who often became my mentors. As I listened to their explanations, I realized that I had to alter my approach and engage the students more in planning and carrying out the rigors of a foreign language class. Gradually, those first few steps involving students became more assured, and about that time I became aware of the theory of multiple intelligences. I realized that my students included learners who were smart in different ways: word smart, number/reasoning smart, picture smart, body smart, music smart, people smart, self smart, and nature smart. That fact prompted me to reflect on how I was teaching and to try out new approaches.

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**Nancy Gadbois** is a veteran teacher in an inner-city urban district in western MA, where the poverty level is higher than 70%. She teaches French at the current time, but has also taught Spanish. She became a certified Intel Teach to the Future a few years ago, and learns technology from her students on a daily basis. Professional development, locally and nationally has helped her keep active and enthusiastic in her career.

## The First Steps

It all starts that first week of school. Just as Barbara and Deb probe into students' interests, I do the same on a simple query form. This sheet asks for names, ages, phone numbers, emails, and also: "What are your hobbies? What do you do on weekends, after school, and who's your favorite musical artist? Have you a pet?" This info informs my semester curriculum, as Rick Donato mentions in the video. Rarely does a child refuse to answer any of these questions, but that option is explained to them in advance. I explain to them that their answers will help me choose topics of discussion and allows me a peek into "their culture."

By gaining the trust of the students those first weeks of school, a stage has been set for a disciplined but embracing environment which respects difference, allows for trial and error (student and teacher) and fosters positive teaching and learning. Rick Donato asked about meeting the needs of 35 students in one classroom, and that's always a challenge, but all the more reason for gaining the confidence of students early in the semester. To further complicate matters, it's not at all uncommon to have 35 students in several different levels in one class. Anyone who reads the FLTeach listserve has seen the stories and the pleas for help in classroom management, especially in combination levels in one class period. I currently teach on the 4X4 semester schedule and each class is 90 minutes in length. At least one class includes 2-3 levels of one language. I remind my students almost immediately upon meeting them that our classroom is a mini United Nations. Geographically, my students are from many world countries. The rich cultural heritage that comes in the backpacks of my students influences my lessons daily. The United Nations metaphor also includes a discussion of employee career options as explained on the UN web site. The reason the UN exists is reviewed: (<http://www.un.org/aboutun/basicfacts/unorg.htm>) The purposes of the United Nations, as set forth in the Charter, are to maintain international peace and security; to develop friendly relations among nations; to cooperate in solving international economic, social, cultural and humanitarian problems and in promoting respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms; and to be a centre for harmonizing the actions of nations in attaining these ends. Students are often unaware of the official languages of the UN: Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish. Most are not informed as to the variety of careers open to the interested: administration, civilian police, finance, legal and social affairs, conference services, etc. They are reminded that the cafeteria staff, the lawyers, the guards, the boutique vendors, etc, all have different functions but must coexist professionally for the UN to operate effectively.

## Sharing Tips

Which activities engage ALL learners? What I propose to do next is to describe certain activities, and then to actually show the steps involved including assessment along the way. Textbooks and ancillaries today are excellent, and provide a wide range of options to the teacher as he/she tries to reach all learners. When I reflect on what I use to supplement the required, sequential curriculum map in Springfield, and how I assess with an eye on engaging all learners, several categories emerge:

- Web sites which provide information to interest both the “locals,” and the students from other countries. Case in point: the Paris-Dakar race which takes place every January. Cars, motorbikes, quads, and trucks compete for titles in this huge media event. The countries of France, Portugal, Spain, and the areas of northern, western and central Africa are targeted. My NASCAR fans were thrilled two years ago when American Robby Gordon first became involved in this grueling rally. Because there are often West African students in the classroom, it’s not difficult for a teacher to search out the daily reports, both on Robby’s site and Yahoo France to get accurate reports of what’s happening. When my African students add in their personal accounts of the event, the interest grows. I usually print out a summary of the event, thanks to Yahoo France, and we jumpstart the class with this reading. The readings are recycled into all levels of the language classes. Beginners can grasp the cognates, underline what they think they recognize, and momentum builds from that basic step. Geographically, the stages of the race as outlined on web maps are priceless. Desert terrain, seaside clips, images of baobab trees and oases interest the class reading *Le Petit Prince* as well as the students who are finishing their initial semester in level one on the 4X4 block. Teacher generated worksheets are in themselves an assessment of what has been learned. But for the student who is photo smart and/or visual-spatial, designing a target language brochure or advertisement to promote the road race is another assessment option.
- Authentic documents in the target language are critical. Twice a year, I receive class sets of *Contact Costco* from Quebec. Those magazines are free, and can be requested in any Costco store in that province. I’ve been fortunate to have a good relationship with the company and often email the CEO both teacher and student-created lesson plans for surveillance. The publication is not a translation of the US version, and can challenge my AP class and any other levels. I often look for the pages that highlight Canadian provinces and the goods/services available there, from gas stations, rugs, delicatessens, hearing aids, pharmaceuticals, etc. The more able students create personalized treasure hunts for the earlier language learner. The students include page numbers to facilitate tasks, because this publication is written for heritage speakers of French. There’s always a Canadian debate on topics such as minimum wage, mandated immigration limits, stem cell research, national health care challenges, etc. Then, there’s a survey as to how readers feel, and when pertinent to my teens, we do in class “sondages” on the topics at hand. The “photo of the year” issue and the frequent emphasis on *la nourriture québécoise* never fail to impress the classes. The release dates in Canada of current DVDs and the changes in title of favorite movies are of interest as well. Despite the fact that students love technology, there’s nothing quite like a “hands-on”, personal copy of any francophone map. Like the Costco magazines, these maps enable paired or grouped students to refine their investigative skills by answering questions based on actual maps. My Paris (*Galeries Lafayette*) maps are several years old, but as students of all abilities try to negotiate meaning by discussing *arrondissements*, locations of train stations and famous cemeteries, the paper map becomes a valuable teaching tool. Holiday Inn in France laundry lists, Cairo newspapers in Arabic and French

announcing the times of morning and evening prayer, for example, are other recent aids that fascinated and engaged my learners. For 25 years, I have used McDonald's placemats, often double-meaning, to initiate discussion, and the French website (<http://www.mcdonalds.fr/>) offers innumerable options for teachers and students. The official home site of McDonalds restaurants worldwide (<http://www.mcdonalds.com>) allows readers to select their country of choice and compare and contrast global food and services. The verbal/linguistic learner may be assessed by correct answers to teacher/student generated lesson plans involving precise answers, or becoming spokespersons for a topic related to any of the authentic documents. The auditory/musical student will enjoy listening to the fast food rhymes on the McDonald's web site and develop his/her own version. The bodily-kinesthetic learner, working solo or in pairs might choreograph a simple dance event to compliment a jingle. The logical-mathematical students enjoy designing tables on the computer for any tasks, including plotting graphs on data received.

- Scholastic magazines in target languages are in many teachers' toolboxes, and the listening CDs which now accompany them, along with lesson plans and suggested ideas for teachers, are excellent. There's always a musical selection, in various genres, which interests the class. These magazines also encourage student "buy in," by highlighting appropriate teen culture in fashion, music, food, cosmetics and accessories. I ask students to report out orally to the class on one topic which interests them. The intrapersonal student will prefer to work alone and develop his/her language skills by comparing what the magazines offer as leisure-time activities, for example, and quickly point out whether or not he/ she agrees.
- Musical CDs in the target language appeal to most learners, and provide an outlet for exercises which appeal to different learning styles. The late Carole Fredericks, a musical icon known and celebrated in Europe and Africa, was born in Springfield, MA, and attended schools there. However, until her untimely death in 2001, her music was virtually unknown in this country. Thanks to a series of coincidences, leading to interactions with the family of the late Carole Fredericks, my classes were able to develop projects that involved many types of intelligences. The link <http://cdfmusiclegacy.com/program/project.html> has those projects available for viewing. Because the students worked in pairs, moved around the classroom, designed clip art or used existing options, chose photos from the web, and sang Carole's songs while working, the project was quite popular.
- Student ambassadors as co-teachers, whenever possible, enhance the learning in my classroom. Any heritage language learner, French, Creole, Wolof or Arabic, current or former students who are in the building, often make 10-minute "spotlight appearances" to captivate the attention of my regular students. Faculty cooperation in this matter is critical, and most often, those students are released at the discretion of their teachers, to come to room 319 to inform both teacher and student.

## Assessment

How do I assess the diverse student population in front of me? Alternative assessment strategies which involve performance assessment are integral to the student showing his/her best ability. After studying the lyrics to a song in the target language (interpretive mode of communication), students interview each other regarding the sense and/or rhythm of the selection (interpersonal mode), and determine how to introduce the artist/song to another audience (presentational mode). If feedback is given, both individually and/or to the entire class, with the intent to improve scores on the next mode, this is an example of an Integrated Performance Assessment (IPA). To see this example “in action,” go to <http://learner.org>, select foreign language, and scroll to the link at the bottom of the page, Teaching Foreign Languages K-12: A Library of Classroom Practices. The Assessment Strategies video and resources available there are intended to clearly demonstrate examples of evaluation. The online video, rubrics and teacher-created lesson plans are available at no charge.

### Strategy One: Performance Assessment

My tool box always includes study of a popular poem by Jacques Prévert, *Déjeuner du Matin*. This poem is of interest to both student and teacher for a variety of reasons, including intrigue and structure using simple vocabulary. The poem is universally appealing, and the tasks will be recycled and reformatted according to the knowledge base of the learner. Any poem, in any language can be presented in this format. It is understood, however, that rubrics will be provided to the students in advance. Refer to: [http://www.education-world.com/a\\_curr/curr248.shtml](http://www.education-world.com/a_curr/curr248.shtml)

**Setting the stage.** The class brainstorms (in target language and in English, depending on the level of class) about poetry in general, and how poets express joy and despair. Students are asked to recall a favorite poem, and indicate their feelings about this poem. Students learn about Prévert’s life and his role as the “poet of the people.” (15 minutes)

**Step one:** Introduction to Prévert. (interpretive mode) Students read the poem individually in French, and try to comprehend the meaning. Depending on the class’ ability, “word banks” are available to assist learners with very limited language skills, especially in level 2. They then write a simple sentence or two, paraphrasing the author’s words, to prove they understand the scenario.

**Step two:** Paired work. (interpretive and interpersonal modes) Students are assigned a partner, and read both the original poem and their interpretation of the poem to each other. The paired students then interview each other in the target language about liking or disliking this poem, and poetry in general. At this time, students are asked to read aloud their partner’s comments to the class. Class discussion about the purpose and message of the poem takes place.

**Step three:** Students as Poets. (interpersonal and presentational modes) Students become poets and develop further the original poem. Both a prelude and follow-up verse are required. Students peer edit each other’s work, and then decide how best



to present the “new poem” to the class. Options may include multimedia presentations, dramatic or musical presentations. Artwork in the form of poster displays is another alternative and is encouraged. Students defend their work, answer questions and receive comments from the class audience.

**Step four:** Into the school community. (presentational mode) Students share their work with another target language class and/ or display their final projects on school bulletin boards and websites, if possible. The above alternative assessment has elements which appeal to multiple learning styles, including the verbal linguistic learner, the bodily-kinesthetic learner, the musical and interpersonal learners, as well as the intrapersonal learner.

### **Strategy Two: The John Collins Writing Method**

Two years ago, the administrators at my school hired John Collins as a consultant ([http://www.collinseducationassociates.com/Collins\\_Writing\\_Program.htm](http://www.collinseducationassociates.com/Collins_Writing_Program.htm) ) for all disciplines, to improve students’ free responses in writing. The staff studied his research, and began to implement the program. His program offers 5 writing options, and the type 3 writing has substantive content and meets up to three specific standards called “focus correction areas” (FCA). Revision and editing are done on the original. There is one draft, which is read aloud by the student and reviewed to see if the draft completes the assignment and meets standards set for the focus correction areas. Once students become familiar with how to double check the focus correction areas, their results improve, sometimes drastically. On the other hand, my more able students have failed this task, because they did not meet the FCA’s mentioned. This assessment alternative has made a difference in many students’ scores. Several possible generic foreign language FCA’s, for example, included “underlining five verbs written correctly in the past tense,” “three to five adjectives, used accurately and circled,” or percentages based on “content accuracy” in upper levels. My colleagues in Chinese developed another set of FCA’s: in a Chinese 2 class students will be asked to write a paragraph about themselves by using five pieces of information that they have learned previously with a combination of pinyin and characters. The paragraph should include their name, age, nationality, family, likes and dislikes. Rules for capitalization and punctuation should also be observed when the paragraph is in Pinyin. The pinyin should be spelled correctly. The characters should be legible. The proper use of grammar on adverb 丨 (yě), 丨 (hěn), verb on 丨 (shì) / 丨丨 (bù shì) and 丨 (you) / 丨丨 (méiyǒu) will also be observed. The writing samples are based on a score of 100, and students can see clearly why they did well or not so well. All John Collins writing must be double spaced to allow for teacher correction and student tasks such as underlining, circling or numbering. As John explains, it’s about the learner, and making teachers’ lives easier. Once students (and faculty) understand that this is an expectation of the administration in our school, and begin to practice the format on a regular basis, the “buy-in” is almost universal. The following two examples are samples of actual type three assignments done in 2006, semester two. The number in the middle of the page at the top indicates that this was the first in a series of type three assignments. The FCA’s are in the left corner.

**Le français 2**

- 1 -

5 complete sentences 25 pts nom \_\_\_\_\_

5 accurate verbs circled 40 pts date \_\_\_\_\_

accurate spelling of 3-5 locations, underlined 35 pts

Title: Write 5 sentences indicating where you are going.

(les endroits et le verbe aller)

Nancy J. Gadbois Springfield, MA Public Schools NECTFL 2007

- 14 -

X \_\_\_\_\_

X \_\_\_\_\_

X \_\_\_\_\_

X \_\_\_\_\_

X \_\_\_\_\_

**Le français 3**

- 2 -

Eight facts about Carole 40 pts nom \_\_\_\_\_

Eight accurate verbs underlined 40 pts date \_\_\_\_\_

Correct use of 3-6 adjectives 20 pts

Title: On vient de terminer une étude de Carole Fredericks et de sa famille en classe.

Ecrivez une lettre à un/une amie qui ne connaît pas la musique de Carole, en essayant de la présenter.

X \_\_\_\_\_

X \_\_\_\_\_

X \_\_\_\_\_

X \_\_\_\_\_

X \_\_\_\_\_

X \_\_\_\_\_

X \_\_\_\_\_

X \_\_\_\_\_

## Realia Exercise I: Costco Quebec

The following is a student/teacher effort to acquaint students with Costco Québec magazines. Upper level students created these questions, peer-edited the work and then shared their drafts with me.

\*\*word bank: deviner=to guess at; citation=quote; pub=publicité (ad), recette=recipe; porter=to wear; déguster=to eat; le sens=meaning p. 18

1. Il y a une citation par François Mauriac sur cette page. Ecrivez-la en français.

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2. Regardez cette page. Pouvez-vous deviner le sens de cette citation? Ecrivez-la en anglais.

---

3. Pour mon neveu, qui a 3 ans et ne lit pas, quel titre dois-je choisir à cette page?

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4. Que veut dire “la librairie Costco?”

---

p. 19

5. Quels 2 DVD ont été offerts dès le 19 juillet?

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6. “Vers la lecture” offre des suggestions pour les parents. Devinez plusieurs, et écrivez-les en anglais.

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p. 20

7. Il y a combien de livres sur cette page? \_\_\_\_\_ Le(s)quel(s) vous intéresse(nt)?

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8. Expliquez pourquoi ce livre vous plaît.

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p. 21

9. Regardez la pub. Que dit la jeune fille? (en anglais)

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10. Qu'est-ce qu'elle porte comme vêtements?

---

11. Elle a quel âge, croyez-vous?

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p. 24

12. Regardez le sandwich énorme à la page 24. C'est bien, non? Combien d'ingrédients pouvez-vous identifier? (regardez la recette à gauche) Faites une liste

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p.41

13. Regardez les deux enfants. Décrivez ce qu'ils portent.

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## Realia Exercise 2: Subway

Here's an example of a worksheet based on Subway restaurants in Quebec. Ask for a class set of placemats to use.

NOM \_\_\_\_\_

(le premier restaurant SUBWAY® au Canada a vu le jour en juin 1986 à St-John's, Terre-Neuve. Depuis, SUBWAY® a pris son expansion: des Parcs Nationaux de Banff et de Jasper jusqu'à l'école secondaire Bishop O'Bryne de Calgary—selon le site web)

Word bank: la devise=slogan; les petits trucs=tricks; reconnaître=to recognize; la grille=grid; sous-marin=sub; garantir=to guarantee; réduire=to reduce; croyez-vous=do you think; le miel=honey

1. On parle de quel restaurant 'fast food'?
2. Où se trouve ce restaurant?
3. C'est quoi, la devise de Subway?
4. Regardez la grille. Combien de viandes reconnaissez-vous? Faites une liste.
5. Quel sous-marin a le plus de calories? Pourquoi, croyez-vous?
6. Quel sous-marin a le moins de calories?
7. Quel sandwich est le mieux en ce qui concerne les calories, les gras et le cholestérol?
8. Quelle catégorie reste la même n'importe le sandwich? Combien de fruits et de légumes sont recommandés chaque jour?
9. Expliquez "6 po et 12 po."
10. Pour me garantir beaucoup de légumes, qu'est-ce que je dois choisir? (je déteste le pain!)
11. En général, comment est-ce que je peux réduire les calories et le gras?

## Conclusion

You will note that several of the above sheets include << word banks, >> page references, and on occasion, some English phrases. All are intended to reach all learners. Knowing that most of my classes have at least 30 students, I will often pair students, to facilitate learning and to assure better success. These sheets appeal to ALL learners in ALL levels. Level one students will need extra time on task. Level three students will move along with more ease. AP students and heritage learners will complete the sheets, and sometimes author the work. It's one way of engaging all learners, and diversifying instruction.

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## **Performance Based Assessment: El camping en el mundo hispanohablante**

**Francesco L. Fratto**, M.A., *Spanish Language and Culture, Boston College*

### **Abstract**

This performance based assessment is an activity that impacts all learners in my 10th grade Spanish class. This group has studied Spanish since seventh grade. I decided to create this activity as I reflected upon the essential question in Grant Wiggins' *Understanding by Design* — what could my students do with the material presented at the end of the unit? The unit dealt with extracurricular activities and national parks within the Spanish speaking world. At the end of the unit, I wanted my students to be able to do the following:

1. Research — from investigating national parks to researching the environment/flora and fauna in the target country
2. Technology — from “purchasing” airline tickets on expedia.com to putting together a PowerPoint presentation.
3. Culture — from understanding local customs to the hour in which locals dine.
4. History — The three sites within the capital many selected to “visit” had historical and cultural importance. They had to share this information with the class.
5. Presentational skills/Team Building — Each group had to divide the work equally and they had to present their findings to the class with the assistance of a PowerPoint presentation. Their slides had to include visuals and they could not include full sentences. I instructed them on how to give a presentation. They were not allowed to read from their slides. In addition, I instructed them on how to write their notes on index cards so that they could glance down at their notes and then look up to have eye contact with their audience(classmates). Their classmates gave them feedback on the strengths and weaknesses of their presentation. A rubric was used to grade the project. If a member of the team failed to do his/her work, it would have been evident during their presentation.
6. Writing — after their presentations, they each had to send me a “postcard” telling me about their trip. I even told them that they had to find, cut and paste stamps from the target country to use on their postcards. Each student was provided with

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an opportunity to express him/herself and write me a 100 word letter. Most gave me more than the state requirement of 100 words. I used the New York State Regents rubric for foreign languages to assess their writing.

This project worked well to tap into all learning styles. It gave enough freedom to the highly motivated student to express him/herself at his/her level, but it also set an expectation of what I demanded of all students. Students with learning disabilities enjoyed this experience because it was not a traditional drill activity in which they have difficulty completing. It moved all students, at their level, from the concrete phase of language learning to the abstract phase. Memorized responses did not work for this project. They were expected to give me a series of sentences during their presentations. Mistakes were made, but few impeded communication. The most difficult part for them was when they were asked to stand before their classmates and present their “trip” and to use technology as a tool to help enhance their presentation. Special education students were undetectable when they presented with their classmates. It also allowed those students who were creative to help put together a slide show that was pleasing to the eye, but that did not distract the audience from the presentation. This presentation allowed the diversity of learners in my classroom to bring in their strengths into the project and their weaknesses were minimized by another member of the group. I am a firm believer that performance based assessments help all learners to become proficient in a second language. It requires them to put it all together and to do something with the vocabulary, grammar, culture, history and research that they do within our classrooms.

The activity:

## Capítulo I — Performance Based Assessment

### El camping en el mundo hispanohablante

El propósito: El camping es una actividad de diversión universal y se practica en los EE.UU. como en todos los países del mundo. Ahora su grupo tiene la oportunidad de explorar el Internet y encontrar unos sitios sobre los parques nacionales en varios países hispanohablantes. A la misma vez, van a descubrir la cultura y la naturaleza que existe en los parques. Incluyan lo siguiente:

#### I. Las preparaciones necesarias antes de salir de Ardsley (PowerPoint Presentation)

El país:

El parque nacional:

Las fechas: — Hay que quedarse por lo menos una semana. ¡Ojo! ¿Cuándo es mejor ir?

El clima:

La unidad monetaria es:

¿Cómo van a llegar a su destino? ¿Cuánto cuesta?

Los sitios que se pueden usar: (expedia.com) (orbitz.com) (priceline.com) etc....

Antes de salir de Nueva York, ¿qué necesitan comprar para acampar en el parque nacional y por qué? ¿Se permite acampar?

Incluyan: el mapa del país y la ruta desde el aeropuerto al parque.

## II. La capital (PowerPoint Presentation)

Busquen alojamiento. ¿Cuánto cuesta una habitación doble? ¿Hay un baño privado?

Mencionen tres lugares para visitar durante el día. ¿Por qué son importantes?

¿Dónde van a cenar la primera noche? ¿Cómo se llama el restaurante? ¿Qué tipo de comida sirven? ¿Qué van a pedir? ¿Cuánto cuesta una cena para dos personas?

¿Cuáles son los platos típicos del país? ¿A qué hora se come normalmente la cena?

## III. El parque nacional (PowerPoint Presentation)

¿Hay transportación pública al parque? ¿Cómo van a llegar?

¿Hay que pagar para acampar? ¿y para entrar al parque? ¿Necesitan un guía? ¿Cuánto cuestan el servicio?

¿Hay reglas en el parque?

¿Qué actividades hay en el parque? Mencionen las actividades en que van a participar.

¿Qué tipo de flora y fauna hay en el parque?

¿Hay sitios arqueológicos cerca? Expliquen lo que hay y la importancia de los sitios a la cultura.

## IV. Comunicación con el Señor Fratto (Una tarjeta postal)

Cada miembro del grupo tiene que crear y escribir una tarjeta postal. Incluyan lo que hiciste durante el viaje. Escriban por lo menos 100 palabras.



# Casting a Broad Net: Diverse Learners in the Community College Classroom

Charlotte Gifford, M.A. Spanish from Middlebury College

## Abstract

Greenfield Community College is the only institution of higher education located in rural Franklin County. The College serves an academically, economically, and culturally diverse student population primarily from Franklin and Hampshire counties in Massachusetts, and from southern Vermont and New Hampshire. The smallest of Massachusetts' 15 community colleges, GCC is an open-enrollment institution committed to ensuring access to public higher education. A large proportion of matriculated students transfer to four-year colleges, often to the University of Massachusetts in Amherst, and also notably to others among the Five Colleges, including Smith and Mount Holyoke. Others in career programs are preparing to enter the workforce or to update their skills; still others are studying for personal enrichment.

*“Probably a good working definition of diverse learners in today’s foreign language classroom would be looking at students who learn differently, looking at students who come to the foreign language classroom with different abilities, different needs, different experiential backgrounds, different cognitive ability, cultural and linguistic diverse backgrounds, I think all of those things help us define diverse learners.”*

Marjorie Hall Haley, in Teaching Foreign Languages K-12 Workshop: Valuing Diversity in Learners

*“If we have thirty students in the class there are thirty different places that they are at in their language development. So, by the very nature of our classrooms being language classrooms, where we’re developing their ability in the language, it’s a diverse classroom.”*

Marty Abbott, in Teaching Foreign Languages K-12 Workshop: Valuing Diversity in Learners

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## Introduction

When talking with other members of our field, I am sometimes asked what my typical student at Greenfield Community College is like. It has always been very hard for me to answer, as virtually every class I have taught at the community college has had a truly remarkable array of different learners: different ages, different socioeconomic backgrounds, different life experiences, different employment status, different attitudes and anxieties about the classroom, different motivations for learning another language, and, of course, different learning styles. To illustrate just one aspect of this diversity, my students' ages have ranged from 16 to 87, and almost every age in between!

As a language teacher with more than 25 years experience in the field, I have collected numerous instructional strategies to try to accommodate every learner's needs. Many of these tactics I have gleaned from the research in our field, others from conferences and workshops I've attended. I've also borrowed directly from friends and colleagues in my own and other departments, but a large proportion of these techniques have come, directly or indirectly, from my students. Over the years, as I've watched learners striving, and sometimes struggling, to communicate in another language, I've tried to 'get inside' their heads, and to figure out what approach will best help them get over any obstacles that they encounter. I have to admit that this requires of me a conscious, ongoing effort. I personally tend strongly toward the verbal side in my own learning style and to the linear/logical in my thinking. It has always been an extremely challenging for me to think outside my own learning-style box; I have to constantly remind myself that when something is crystal clear from my perspective, that this is simply not necessarily the case for my learners. I have to remember that if I only develop strategies that resonate for me personally, then only those who resemble me in my thinking will succeed in my classroom. This is inherently difficult for us, to think from a perspective that is *not* our natural inclination.

Nevertheless, I also believe it is up to us as teachers to do just that: to come to understand, to the best of our ability, the reality and experience of learners with radically different learning styles than our own and to find or create ways to address and accommodate that reality. I'll illustrate first with an example of my own bias, and the simple accommodation that has made a huge difference for me and my learners. We human beings process and respond to information at widely varying speeds. I had never appreciated that my own rapid-fire processing and response time was leading me to exclude those students who needed just a few seconds to think before offering an answer to a question of mine. Since these learners always heard some else's answer before they could even formulate their own ideas, their efforts at language processing was being routinely short-circuited, and their frustration was palpable. I was inadvertently allowing the same small group of quick processors, those who shared my learning style, to dominate the group in this situation. As a result, I was valuing speed of response over real ability and getting a false sense of student progress. The solution was remarkably straightforward. By instituting a simple wait-time protocol in my classes — I hold my hand up after throwing out a question and count down with my fingers while students prepare their answers mentally in silence — I have leveled the playing field for everyone.

Those students who needed just a bit more time to process language participate eagerly, and those who don't necessarily need it are not constrained by such a short pause. In fact, some overly quick processors have also benefited by the enforced wait-time; learners who tended to blurt out answers willy-nilly now reflect on them for those few seconds, considerably improving the quality of their responses. My in-class observations have led me to conclude that the practice has also fostered a greater sense of patience and support within the learning community. There is increased awareness of differing needs within the group, and I am not the only one who is trying to see the learning process from another person's perspective. In the following samples of techniques and support materials, I offer a collection of what has worked for me and for my students. In advance, I'd like to thank the many colleagues who have planted ideas and shared inspired teaching. I always encourage and all but require students to try multiple different strategies and multi-modal approaches to language learning. I tell them explicitly that I will be casting a broad pedagogical net in the hopes of finding effective techniques that work for each of them. I also note that when a technique does *not* work for them, they should set it aside and keep looking; they should most certainly not persist stubbornly with what doesn't yield results! Thus, I also must acknowledge my students, who have willingly (for the most part!) tried out every technique I've thrown at them.

## Backward Design — A Departmental Philosophy

“Backward design, also called backward planning, is a pedagogical approach to unit or lesson planning in which the teacher first identifies the desired end task or product, then works in reverse from the assessment task(s) to identify the prerequisite learning tasks.” <http://www.learner.org/channel/workshops/tfl/glossary.html> Our department has found the principles of Backwards design to be an invaluable organizing principle around which to build our curriculum. Admittedly, it took some time for us to become comfortable with the process; we are all classroom teachers, and are used to putting our classroom activities first, not last! However, it now is quite straightforward: in any work with curriculum we first consider our goals and then plan the assessments. Only then do we examine the classroom application, and determine what kind of learning experiences we can offer students in order to help them attain the goal.

## Concrete Performance Objectives

In 1993, as part of a grant with American Association of Community Colleges (AACC), we began drafting performance objectives outlining what specifically students should know and be able to do at each level in the language learning sequence. We have tried to ensure that the objectives represent reasonable performance standards to demand at each level and that they are attainable within the constraints and realities of second language learning. This balance has been key in the 15 years we have been working to refine these curriculum documents. (see *Appendix C: GCC Performance Objectives 2005*, page 76)

At the heart of all the performance objectives is the overarching goal of communication in all three modes: presentational, interpersonal and intrapersonal. It is also

essential to understand that they are built around a spiraling, scaffolded sequence; thus, all performance objectives are cumulative, and include all preceding semesters' items.

Since our assessments and our teaching practice are developed 'backwards,' flowing out of these objectives, by definition we are focusing on what students *can* do, as opposed to uncovering their shortcomings or limitations: what they *can't* do. This mind set has proved liberating for teachers and learners alike: for teachers, it means that we are primarily responsible for setting the stage so that learning to take place and for offering multiple opportunities to learners to show off what they can do in the multiple communicative modes; for learners, it means that we are not seeking to discover their weaknesses, but rather their strengths. Learners know that they will be asked to perform in all areas, and that they will be evaluated in all kinds of ways. Many learners are relieved to know that they will not be assessed exclusively through paper-and-pencil tests, to give just one example.

## Self-Assessment

Consistent with the principles of Backwards design, we make a point of communicating the performance objectives to our students early and often. We have found that it is critical for students to know what our goals are; thus, we want to 'share the playbook' with them. They first encounter the objectives in our official course syllabi, where they show students what they can expect to be able to do as a result of successful completion of the course. This helps establish reasonable expectations from the start, especially for complete novices with no prior experience in language learning. I quote a colleague on the first day of class, pointing out that "no where on this list does it say you will be interpreting at the U.N. after one semester! On the other hand, look at all the cool things you *will* be able to do!"

*"So your curriculum is being informed by students' interests, students' backgrounds. I find that this is fascinating, because although we know lots about multiple intelligences, and we know lots about learning styles and strategies, we first have to know what they are in your classroom. That's a real nice concrete suggestion, Barbara: ask! You know, find out. Do surveys."* Richard Donato, in Teaching Foreign Languages K-12 Workshop: Valuing Diversity in Learners

Over the course of the semester, students are reminded of the objectives for each unit: objectives appear as check-off lists at the beginning of a unit on the assignment sheet. Periodically during a unit, I use a Classroom Assessment Technique (or CAT) called 'Your Ticket out the Door' (see Appendix A: CAT Template, page 222). It is an anonymous survey that gives me a quick snapshot of the students' view of their current abilities. In the last 2-3 minutes of a class, I turn students' attention to the objective that has been the focus of the day's work. For example, after students have spent a class sharing family photos and describing members of their families, I give them a slip of paper on which they write the objective: "I can briefly describe a family member." They rate their ability on this specific objective in the context of the activities they have just done in class. Students often need help in impartially evaluating their abilities; self-assessment needs to be explicitly taught, as students often either under-

rate or overrate their abilities. I help by circulating as they complete their CAT's, pointing out to individual students what I observed in their performance in class that day. It helps students who seem unsure of whether or not they can yet meet the objective to have the instructor say "I just saw you do it — of course you're ready" or "You're still having trouble with \_\_\_\_, but you're nearly there." I then ask them to turn their paper over and write down what specific strategy they will use to improve their own performance. (I do have to insist that they think of a strategy or technique: I have had to tell them that "study more" is just not enough!) When I review these mini-surveys, I gain insight into which of the techniques we've been using are most effective from the students' perspective. The next class day, I often use the first 1-2 minutes of class to summarize sound strategies that students have suggested. Furthermore, some students will offer a new strategy that they plan to try, which serves to build up our repertoire of techniques even further. Just before the end of the unit, I use the objectives one more time as students prepare for end-of-unit assessments (see *Appendix K: Unit Self-Assessment*, page 90). Here, the self-assessment checklist also serves a study guide for students as they prepare for the oral presentation and the performance-based unit exam. It also offers an opportunity to discuss some study skills; I encourage students to use their answers on the self-assessment to budget their study time, addressing the areas where they feel least confident first.

## Visuals and Props

In the initial presentation of language for comprehensible input, I use as many non-linguistic supports as humanly possible to clarify meaning without using English: pictures, props, gestures, theatrics, etc. When confronted by a clear visual image or a concrete object, the human brain processes meaning faster than the language center can parallel process forms in two different languages. At the same time, however, comprehension is virtually assured. Picture files: I have an extensive collection of photos of all sorts, but predominantly of people in action. In a unit where the objective is to be able to express likes and dislikes, I use these pictures for the initial input of many different activities. I use each photo of people in action to bombard students with as many lexical items as possible. I use all kinds of forms, including ones they haven't studied yet, but in this example, I am focusing on the infinitive construction with the verb "to like." I also try to be sure to recycle material from the preceding unit (descriptions, physical and personal characteristics, and clothing). By including lots of questions on "old" material, the group doesn't have to just sit passively in the input phase; they can participate actively even as they reinforce material that is not new to them. On each photo, I put the infinitive form on a post-it note. I point out the written form of the verb from time to time. Since they will get a comprehensive vocabulary list later, they need not take notes; I want them to focus on binding the meaning — form pairs, to really soak up the vocabulary without translating. The best part about this aide is that it can be removed and replaced as needed. For example, to have the assessment reflect the teaching methodology, I will use the same picture for a quiz, but simply take the labels off. I state my likes and dislikes, as well as those of my friends, family and famous people. I intersperse yes/no and either or questions throughout and when I get answers that indicate particularly strong feelings about an activity, I give

the student the corresponding picture. Once everyone has one or more pictures, I expand the questions to ask: “Who likes to play the piano?” Students can respond with only the name, but I try to draw them out a bit. Often, I’ll turn to the student with the picture and get some more details: “So, you like to play the piano? Me, too. Do you play at home or here at the GCC?” Incidentally, in the process, I am in effect conducting a mini-survey on my students’ interests, which I find very helpful later in helping students who are struggling; it certainly helps to be able to use examples that the students are genuinely interested in and are motivated to talk about. We use these pictures over and over in class; they become emblematic of the associated lexical items, and come up again in widely varied activities. Pairs or small groups discuss their respective feelings about the activity of their assigned photos. This obviously requires more than the yes/no answers in the comprehension checks. When combined with feedback to the whole group, it can also prompt more advanced sentences to explain differences of opinion: “I love to ski, but George hates snow.” I make a point of leaving some formulaic support on the board and refer to it as I circulate among the groups, guiding them through their statements: *I like to \_\_\_\_\_ but s/he ...* or *We both like to \_\_\_\_\_*. We use the pictures again in timed-talk activities, where on cue, student pairs pass their photo down the line (or around the circle) and get a new photo; they then must talk about their likes and dislikes without stopping for a set period of time, ranging from just 30 seconds at first up to several minutes.

**Digital images:** It’s true that the laminated pictures of my picture file do have some advantages over the newer technology of PowerPoint slides: for example, I can hand out pictures to pairs and small groups, who can then write on them with dry-erase markers. On the other hand, they are a cumbersome resource to share with a whole department, and it is time consuming to find just the right set of pictures for a given class activity.

With digital photos in presentation software such as PowerPoint, I never lose a photo, and I can easily reuse and modify presentations for different applications at different levels. Obviously, these digital images carry the same advantages as outlined above, and many activities are the same whether I hold up a laminated picture or project a digital image on a screen. However, PowerPoint allows me great flexibility in combining text and images. I can use the software’s animation capabilities to postpone the appearance of the lexical items. First, the photo appears on the screen without the text, and students think of the vocabulary that they associate with the image; to allow for differences in processing time, it is helpful to allow pairs to do this phase first and then ask for the whole group to throw out ideas. With a click, I then offer confirmation of the infinitive forms, and students turn back to their partners for the communicative task: here, it might be to discuss their plans for doing this activity. As ever, the key formulaic support is available on the board: *Tu vas \_\_\_\_\_?* Once I observe that students are working independently of the prompt, I can erase it.

**Déjeuner du matin, by Jacques Prévert:** I use this short poem to give students their very first formal exposure to a past time frame; the poem is a rich narration of

sequential past events (here, using the *passé composé*). In this lesson, I will be asking students to comprehend globally a verb form that they have not yet had to produce, although they have heard me use it in natural discourse within the classroom. Because of the jump in complexity of language seen in multiple time frames, it is essential to ease the vocabulary load ahead of time so that students are not trying to juggle too many balls at once. Thus, in preparation for the study of the poem, I bring to class a bag of all the objects mentioned in the poem (cup, saucer, sugar, spoon, hat, coat, etc.) and explicitly teach the name of each item. I post a list of the objects in the classroom so that they have access to both the oral and written forms, plus the actual object itself. After the initial presentation, students pass objects around as they name and describe them. Once they know and can identify all the objects, students set a table for breakfast in class. As students hear a CD recording of the poem, I go first in enacting the narrative sequence of the poem, pantomiming each action and gesture using the appropriate object. Later, student volunteers will do the same, in addition to Total Physical Response (TPR) sequences, where students perform each action upon my instruction. This kind of visual/tactile vocabulary support is possible in many contexts. For example, I pack a suitcase of props when I first present the concept of the reflexive construction in the context of talking about one's daily routine. As noted above, I first present the vocabulary of all those objects and their associated actions (e.g., 'toothbrush' and 'to brush,' 'soap' and 'to wash') before I narrate my own routine as an initial example.

## Phonemic/Orthographic Association

Since I am working with adults, by definition the sound system is one of the harder first steps in language learning; from research we know that they will probably not achieve a native-like accent, as that window closed before or around puberty. My goal, then, is to help them achieve pronunciation that does not interfere with communication and is not distracting. In introducing the sound system in the very early stages of the novice level, I ask my students to make associations between phonemes and their corresponding spellings, connecting them via mnemonics to other material they have learned. I can then have them call to mind these pairings whenever we need to carefully analyze the sounds in a given word. In Spanish, the word-sound association for vowels is to basic colors; these are words the students have already heard used in context. A poster of the sound-symbol correspondence is permanently mounted in the classroom (see *Appendix E: Spanish Phoneme*, page 85) Here, the letter A is represented by the word for brown: marrón, with the key letter printed in brown. In modeling correct pronunciation, I need only point to the vowel sound in a new word and on the chart: Teacher: (modeling a word) Casa. 'A,' como marrón. In French, the situation is much more problematic; there are many more vowel sounds, with most having multiple spellings. My students routinely express real anxiety about being able to produce the correct pronunciation from the printed word. In this case, I have students associate vowel sounds with numbers that exemplify those phonemes. (see *Appendix D: French Phoneme*, page 84) The procedure in class is as above, but with the

added advantage of easy notation; whenever I offer a new word on the board, I can illustrate graphically the pronunciation of the vowels by writing the corresponding digit right below the underlined letter or letters. (see *Appendix F: French Months*, page 86) At the same time, I use a simple convention to indicate silent letters (a *bête noir* of novice French learners): drawing a light chalk line through the letters one does *not* pronounce and coaching students to therefore pronounce only that which remains. Teacher: (modeling a word) Salle. 'A,' comme 4.

## Color-Coding: Drawing Attention to Form and Function

Time frames — my routine vs. yesterday: To call student attention to the difference in form and function, I compare and contrast my usual routine and moments in the past. The PowerPoint presentation and the handout are color-coded to highlight differences in form. (see *Appendix G: Routine vs. Past*, page 87) This input follows the activities around the poem *Déjeuner du matin*, so it is not the students' first contact with the past time frame. I also use a color-coding convention at the novice level to make the distinction in form and meaning between the simple present tense and the infinitive construction. Thus, from the very start, blue is associated with the forms of the present, reflecting routine activity, and red is associated with the infinitive construction, as seen initially in statements about likes and dislikes. As a mnemonic device, I offer students the rhyme that 'blue' is what you 'do', and that the red represents the 'heart' of liking or loving to do something. I post samples of sentences using these color conventions and refer back to them often. In one game that uses this last color-coding, I give each student a few red and blue poker chips (one could also use slips of paper). I show a familiar picture from my collection and call out a color, either red or blue. Students offer a sentence about the picture using either the present (blue) or the infinitive construction (red). If their sentences are correct, they can get rid of their colored chip; the goal of the game is to get rid of all one's chips. As a result, every student is motivated to offer the same number of comments, and the most vocal students do not dominate the class.

## Symbols and Shapes

At the novice level, it is entirely normal for the learner to function primarily in words and short phrases; they often need support to produce complete sentences. At the same time, English speakers are encountering such ideas as agreement of gender and number for the first time. One objective at the novice level is to briefly describe a person. To represent the very basic elements of a descriptive sentence (subject + BE + adjective), I use visual symbols in three-column chart; simple stick figures represent the subject, an equal sign represents the verb 'to be' and clipart image of a picture frame represents the adjective. (see *Appendix J: Symbol Chart for Descriptions*, page 89) As a group, students brainstorm possibilities for each category. Students then choose elements from each column to create complete sentences, describing themselves, classmates, members of their family, people in the picture file photos, etc. They are guided by the chart of their own making to use complete sentences in their descriptions. In the process, we draw conclusions about the role each one plays in a complete sentence.



## Manipulatives

As a parallel activity for the above objective, I prepare sets of manipulatives on index cards to help students build these basic sentences; students receive sets of color-coded cards in three stacks (e.g., subjects are purple, verbs are green, and adjectives are blue in the masculine form, red in the feminine form). Pairs or small groups move the manipulatives around to form as many complete sentences as possible from their cards. In another activity involving this sort of manipulatives, pairs or small groups of students receive a set of words or phrases on cards in zip lock bags. (e.g., *demain soir / je vais / sortir / à dîner / au restaurant / avec mon mari / si j'ai le temps*) They must experiment arranging the cards to see if there is more than one possible order that makes sense. This activity works well as a carousel; either the student groups move to the next set of cards, or they pass the closed bags to the next group. It is a good idea to print each sentence (each set of cards) on different colors of paper or card stock, as it makes it much easier to reunite them in the correct bags at the end of class. In both these activities, it is possible to display and manipulate sample sentences easily on the board by using small magnets to display each card.

## Posters and Posting

During any given unit, I prepare support posters that summarize the structural and lexical tools necessary for the current objectives. For example, when students are learning to briefly describe people, I post a summary of the key elements of a description, liberally using symbols and stick figures to illustrate the tools. The first section features stick figures and the he/she/I forms of the verb to be; the second section shows graphic representations of eyes and hair (color, long/short, curly/straight) and the he/she/I forms of the verb to have; the third section offers simple drawings of pieces of clothing and the he/she/I forms of the verb to wear. This rough outline is enough to prompt students to use all the tools at their disposal to describe themselves, classmates, members of their family or people in the picture file photos. If students are searching for something to say or write in their descriptions, I can refer them to the visual and get them back on track. The posters go up at the start of the unit, and come down before the assessment phase; by that point, students are ready for independent production and no longer need the support.

## Graphic Organizers

These simple devices help some students enormously in organizing ideas and in sorting out form and function. I like to keep blank copies available for brainstorming activities. Venn diagram: This is an invaluable tool for categorizing commonalities and differences. I use them for presentation of material (see *Appendix N: Venn Diagram (Colors)*, page 93 and *Appendix M: Venn Diagram (Clothing)*, page 92), but students can use them to support their own statements. For example, I have pairs of students discuss what they did over a long weekend using the Venn diagram to take notes. First, each student writes down what s/he did in the leftmost section of the diagram. Next, students discuss their activities, asking and answering questions about their weekend. Each student takes notes on what the partner did in the rightmost section of the dia-

gram. Finally, they decide what elements they can put in the center, activities that they both did.

**T-charts:** These organizers are most helpful for distinguishing between two clearly different functions (see *Appendix I: Sample T-Charts*, page 243). At the novice level, I use them as a brainstorming tool to help establish the difference between *to be* and *to have*. I offer the two headings *I have* and *I am* but it is the students who provide the contents for each list. In the process, it comes clear why the choice changes meaning, and why one should not put ‘nice’ in the *I have* column, or ‘a dog’ in the *I am* column! I post the T-chart with the students’ brainstormed lists, which then serves as a reference and word bank during the unit. At the intermediate level, the T-chart can serve to help sort out the narrative difference in past tenses. After the study of a film, we use T-charts to facilitate discussion of the characters and their actions in the film. On large sheets of newsprint, groups of students brainstorm information on one assigned character; one column represents descriptions and routine activities, the other represents plot actions. All the groups then proceed in a carousel activity, adding new information to each character’s sheet. Each group then present on their character to the whole group, using both past forms as indicated by the position of the notes on the T-chart. I also use the T-chart to support stories that I tell in class: for example, in a unit thematically centered on health and accidents, I relate the story of a past injury I once suffered. Students read along with me on a PowerPoint text: each phrase is color-coded and appears on a T-chart to contrast the kind of narrative function that it serves. I consciously make the story ‘hop the line’ back and forth between the two forms/functions: description vs. plot action. Similarly, student teams later create mini-narrations based on pictures of accidents and mishaps taken from the text. Imitating my story, they write their stories on large sheets of newsprint using a T-chart and two colors of marker to ‘hop the line.’ They must include the following required elements: 1) setting the scene, 2) what was happening, 3) a sudden surprise (i.e. the cause of the accident) and 4) a logical conclusion. Each group gives a dramatic reading of their story to the whole class; half the group stands on the ‘description’ side of the posted T-chart, half on the ‘plot’ side, and they take turns narrating from their respective notes.

**Sentence webbing:** This organizer can help novice learners to be able to express themselves beyond very the simple sentence structure and list-like paragraph structure that is typical of beginning language learners (see *Appendix H: Sample Sentence Webb*, page 243). Using a series of pictures (from a text or simple stick figures), I tell of a character’s weekend plans, being sure to add details (who, what, when, where, why) and to use several sentences for each activity illustrated: “Tomorrow morning, Carla’s going to ... because ... She doesn’t really like to ... She prefers to ... with ... Afterwards, ... she’s going to ... Every Saturday, she ... at the ...” Students read the narration after the initial story telling. I then post large sheets of newsprint around the room with a single, very limited sentence or sentence fragment in a circle in the center of the sheet (e.g., *she’s going to eat*). In small groups, students go to one of the stations. Each group has a secretary with a different color marker (this

helps identify the contributors later); all other students are responsible to be the editors. The group draws a line out from the center and adds one detail to the basic phrase, thus beginning the 'web.' I find it helps to keep the pace quick, so after just a minute, I give the signal to move to the next sheet; students move in a circular pattern around the room from sheet to sheet, adding interesting details to the web that do not duplicate previous entries. The whole group then offers possible combinations of details; sentences are proposed orally and others make counter suggestions. I use the web they've created, pointing to track each sentence as they speak. (Inevitably, someone will try to incorporate *everything* on a sheet into one long sentence. This is where I point out that run-on sentences are not a good idea in any language!) Finally, I send each of the small groups back to a web sheet. They must now incorporate all of the details provided in a series of sentences that flow logically. They write their paragraph on the board beside the original web; as before, the group practices editing their work as they compose their paragraph. This process mirrors the steps I ask them to take individually in drafting a formal composition for this unit, where students will write a few paragraphs on their weekend plans; in it, they must use certain targeted structures (likes, preferences, future), expressions (time and order references) and details (who, what, when, where, why). I urge them to repeat the webbing process in as they prepare their draft and to edit carefully by themselves, as they did as a group, in the final copy.

## Conclusion

*"I've always thought this issue is complex, and it is complex. And it requires a real change of attitude, a real shift in the way that we think about this. Do we dwell in the negatives, or can we see the positives in this?"* Richard Donato, in Teaching Foreign Languages K-12 Workshop: Valuing Diversity in Learners

As I have examined the wide-ranging strategies that I use in my classroom in an effort to reach all my students with all their varied learning styles, I have realized that this eclectic approach of 'casting a broad net' can certainly help individual learners. I'm coming to understand a new twist on an old saying: "Not all great minds think alike!" I love the moment when I see the *aha!* reaction visible on a student's face. I know then that we have hit on something that works for that particular person. But as gratifying as that moment is, I have also come to understand something more important: when the light bulb goes off for that one individual, other light bulbs are flashing around the classroom. In offering varied instruction targeting different learning styles, it is not just the one student who benefits. Rather, I believe that the best practices to accommodate learning differences in fact offer the best environment for all learners. Sound pedagogy of *all* of our students is precisely the varied, multi-modal instruction that will help students with diverse learning styles.

## Appendix A: CAT Template

<p>How well can you do the following? <i>Check only ONE!</i></p> <p>• I can _____</p> <p>___ 1. I'm ready to show my instructor — performance / première.</p> <p>___ 2. I'm ready to show a peer — dress rehearsal.</p> <p>___ 3. I'm ready to practice it with a peer — in rehearsal.</p> <p>___ 4. I'm not yet ready — learning my lines.</p> <p>What <i>specifically</i> will you do now to improve your performance? (over)</p>	<p>How well can you do the following? <i>Check only ONE!</i></p> <p>• I can _____</p> <p>___ 1. I'm ready to show my instructor — performance / première.</p> <p>___ 2. I'm ready to show a peer — dress rehearsal.</p> <p>___ 3. I'm ready to practice it with a peer — in rehearsal.</p> <p>___ 4. I'm not yet ready — learning my lines.</p> <p>What <i>specifically</i> will you do now to improve your performance? (over)</p>	<p>How well can you do the following? <i>Check only ONE!</i></p> <p>• I can _____</p> <p>___ 1. I'm ready to show my instructor — performance / première.</p> <p>___ 2. I'm ready to show a peer — dress rehearsal.</p> <p>___ 3. I'm ready to practice it with a peer — in rehearsal.</p> <p>___ 4. I'm not yet ready — learning my lines.</p> <p>What <i>specifically</i> will you do now to improve your performance? (over)</p>
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## Appendix B: GCC Performance Objectives

### World Language Department GREENFIELD COMMUNITY COLLEGE Course Objectives — 101 level

**Students will be required to demonstrate proficiency in communication: *the expression, interpretation and negotiation of meaning*, in three modes (as defined in ACTFL's national Standards):**

- Interpersonal: listening and speaking; reading and writing\*
- Presentational: writing or speaking\*\*
- Interpretive: listening, reading or viewing\*\*

\*two-way communication

\*\*one-way communication

#### **Students should be able to:**

- understand predictable questions and commands in familiar topic areas
- understand speech on familiar topics at normal speed
- interact orally on familiar topics
- use language for personal communication needs, ask and answer questions and request clarification as needed
- rely on memorized material, especially when asking questions, and recombine and expand these elements to express personal meaning
- understand written documents on familiar topics dealing with basic needs or interests
- meet basic writing and recording needs such as short messages, lists, forms, post-cards, short descriptive paragraphs
- identify certain important people, holidays, nationalities, traditions and geographical areas of the target language's cultures
- compare their own and other cultures, and consequently understand both better

#### **Catalog description:**

Fundamentals of Spanish/French. The course emphasizes acquisition of language functions, vocabulary, structures and culture through contextualized presentations, interactive activities and extensive laboratory practice.

## 101

## Specific Examples:

Familiar topic areas:	Performance objectives:
A. Identity and personal information	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. state and ask name</li> <li>2. perform introductions</li> <li>3. state and ask phone number and address</li> <li>4. state and ask age</li> <li>5. state and ask origin and nationality</li> <li>6. state and ask languages spoken</li> </ol>
B. Social skills and cultural awareness	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. use culturally appropriate greetings and farewells</li> <li>2. use culturally appropriate formal and informal registers</li> <li>3. respond appropriately to simple commands/requests</li> <li>4. show knowledge of where target language is spoken</li> </ol>
C. Family and ownership	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. list family members</li> <li>2. ask* and answer questions on make-up of family</li> <li>3. express ownership/possession</li> </ol>
D. Descriptions and enumeration	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. list presence or absence of common objects</li> <li>2. describe common objects</li> <li>3. identify basic body parts</li> <li>4. briefly describe people</li> </ol>
E. Preferences, likes and dislikes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. communicate likes and dislikes for activities</li> <li>2. state and ask* preferences and desires</li> <li>3. issue simple invitations to do an activity</li> </ol>
F. <i>Time frames</i> : Routines and daily activities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. describe habitual or routine activities</li> <li>2. list/narrate routines in logical order</li> </ol>
G. <i>Time frames</i> : Future plans	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. state and ask about future plans</li> </ol>
H. Questions and information gathering	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. ask* simple questions on the above familiar topics</li> <li>2. record and share the information</li> <li>3. use and understand numbers to the thousands</li> <li>4. state and ask time and date</li> <li>5. state and ask identity/location of people and things</li> <li>6. ask and answer questions about the weather</li> </ol>

\*relying primarily on memorized material, but beginning to recombine and expand to express personal meaning

**World Language Department  
GREENFIELD COMMUNITY COLLEGE  
Course Objectives — 102 level**

**Students will be required to demonstrate proficiency in communication: the expression, interpretation and negotiation of meaning, in three modes (as defined in ACTFL's national Standards):**

- Interpersonal: listening and speaking; reading and writing\*
- Presentational: writing or speaking\*\*
- Interpretive: listening, reading or viewing\*\*

\*two-way communication

\*\*one-way communication

**Students should be able to:**

- understand predictable questions and commands in familiar topic areas
- understand speech on familiar topics at normal speed
- interact orally on familiar topics
- use language for personal communication needs, ask and answer questions and request clarification as needed
- rely on memorized material, especially when asking questions, and recombine and expand these elements to express personal meaning
- understand written documents on familiar topics dealing with basic needs or interests
- meet basic writing and recording needs such as short messages, lists, forms, post-cards, short descriptive paragraphs
- identify certain important people, holidays, nationalities, traditions and geographical areas of the target language's cultures
- compare their own and other cultures, and consequently understand both better

*Note: Students in the second semester of the elementary sequence should continue to expand their control of the objectives from the first semester. Therefore, the second semester's familiar topic areas and the performance objectives are cumulative, including all the preceding semester's items.*

**Catalog description:**

Fundamentals of Spanish/French. The course emphasizes continued acquisition of language functions, vocabulary, structures and culture through contextualized presentations, interactive activities and extensive laboratory practice.

102

**Specific Examples — in addition to those of level 101:**

<b>Familiar topic areas:</b>	<b>Performance objectives:</b>
A) <i>Time frames</i> : Past experiences	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. ask and answer questions about past experiences</li> <li>2. detail past events in logical order</li> <li>3. describe in the past</li> <li>4. summarize past habitual actions</li> </ol>
B) <i>Time frames</i> : Narration	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. relate events, descriptions and routines in the narrative</li> <li>2. use lexical and structural items to order logically</li> <li>3. understand and use lexical and structural references to past, present and future events within simple discourse</li> <li>4. begin to use more than one time frame within simple discourse as needed</li> </ol>
C) Express plans and desires	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. describe possible future plans, wishes and dreams</li> <li>2. ask* and answer questions about them</li> </ol>
D) Obligations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. state general duties and obligations</li> <li>2. ask* and answer questions about them</li> </ol>
E) Food and drink: Shopping and restaurants	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. state and ask about food preferences and dislikes</li> <li>2. read and understand menus; ask for more information</li> <li>3. make menu choices and order meal</li> <li>4. show knowledge of food/meal traditions of the cultures</li> </ol>
F) Making suggestions and invitations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. issue and accept invitations</li> <li>2. give reasons/excuses for refusal</li> <li>3. make suggestions for other activities or times as needed*</li> </ol>
G) Comparisons and preferences	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. compare and contrast (not including hypothesis)</li> <li>2. ask* and state preference for different things/activities</li> </ol>

\*relying to a lesser degree on memorized material, but increasingly recombining and expanding to express personal meaning



**World Language Department  
GREENFIELD COMMUNITY COLLEGE  
Course Objectives — 201 level**

**Students will be required to demonstrate proficiency in communication: the expression, interpretation and negotiation of meaning, in three modes (as defined in ACTFL's national Standards):**

- Interpersonal: listening and speaking; reading and writing\*
- Presentational: writing or speaking\*\*
- Interpretive: listening, reading or viewing\*\*

\*two-way communication

\*\*one-way communication

**Students should be able to:**

- understand questions and commands in familiar topic areas
- understand speech on familiar topics at normal speed
- interact orally on familiar topics
- ask and answer questions and request clarification as needed
- initiate, sustain and close a coherent conversation
- manage a simple “survival” situation related to familiar topics
- negotiate meaning using learned strategies such as circumlocution
- understand written documents on varied topics
- create with language to express their own thoughts and opinions
- write in paragraph length discourse on varied topics
- connect paragraphs in logical composition
- demonstrate basic sociolinguistic competence; use language appropriate to the social and cultural context
- compare their own and other cultures, and consequently understand both better

*Note: Students in the first semester of the intermediate sequence should continue to expand their control of the objectives from the first two semesters. Therefore, the third semester's familiar topic areas and the performance objectives are cumulative, including all the preceding semesters' items.*

**Catalog description:**

The intermediate study of French/Spanish. The course emphasizes continued acquisition of language functions, vocabulary, idioms, structures, and culture through contextualized presentations, interactive activities, video, and selected readings. The class is conducted in French/Spanish.

## 201

Specific Examples — in *addition* to those of levels 101 – 102:

Familiar topic areas:	Performance objectives:
A. Weather	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. understand simple media weather reports/forecasts</li> <li>2. describe the weather (in three time frames)</li> <li>3. ask and state preferred activities in different weather</li> <li>4. understand different climatic conditions where target language is spoken</li> </ol>
B. Travel plans and needs	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. manage/negotiate travel situations using basic vocabulary for car, bus, train, plane and hotel:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) ask questions to obtain information</li> <li>b) request clarification as needed</li> <li>c) understand and use authentic documents</li> </ol> </li> </ol>
C. <i>Time frames</i> : Past experiences and narration	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. narrate in simple discourse; tell a basic story in the past:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) detailing events in logical order,</li> <li>b) describing and</li> <li>c) telling of on-going events.</li> </ol> </li> </ol>
D. Obligations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. detail obligations, requirements, duties</li> <li>2. make culturally appropriate requests</li> <li>3. make culturally appropriate suggestions</li> <li>4. issue culturally appropriate commands</li> </ol>
E. Family: relationships and roles	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. list members of both extended and nuclear family</li> <li>2. describe and define relationships among family members</li> <li>3. compare/contrast role of family in target and native cultures</li> </ol>
F. Health; prevention and emergencies	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. identify most body parts</li> <li>2. describe symptoms and feelings</li> <li>3. give advice</li> </ol>

**World Language Department  
GREENFIELD COMMUNITY COLLEGE  
Course Objectives — 202 level**

**Students will be required to demonstrate proficiency in communication: the expression, interpretation and negotiation of meaning, in three modes (as defined in ACTFL's national Standards):**

- Interpersonal: listening and speaking; reading and writing\*
- Presentational: writing or speaking\*\*
- Interpretive: listening, reading or viewing\*\*

\*two-way communication

\*\*one-way communication

**Students should be able to:**

- understand questions and commands in familiar topic areas
- understand speech on familiar topics at normal speed
- interact orally on familiar topics
- ask and answer questions and request clarification as needed
- initiate, sustain and close a coherent conversation
- manage a simple “survival” situation related to familiar topics
- negotiate meaning using learned strategies such as circumlocution
- understand written documents on varied topics
- create with language to express their own thoughts and opinions
- write in paragraph length discourse on varied topics
- connect paragraphs in logical composition
- demonstrate basic sociolinguistic competence; use language appropriate to the social and cultural context
- compare their own and other cultures, and consequently understand both better

*Note: Students in the second semester of the intermediate sequence should continue to expand their control of the objectives from the first three semesters. Therefore, the fourth semester's familiar topic areas and the performance objectives are cumulative, including all the preceding semesters' items.*

**Catalog description:**

Conclusion of the basic intermediate sequence in French/Spanish. The course emphasizes continued acquisition of language functions, vocabulary, idioms, structures, and culture through contextualized presentations, interactive activities, video, and selected readings. The class is conducted in French/Spanish.

## 202

Specific Examples — in *addition* to those of levels 101–201:

Familiar topic areas:	Performance objectives:
A. <i>Time frames</i> : Future plans and predictions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. ask and answer questions about the future</li> <li>2. narrate and describe future plans in more extended discourse</li> <li>3. make predictions</li> <li>4. discuss plans and possible consequences</li> </ol>
B. Hypothetical situations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. ask and answer simple hypothetical questions</li> <li>2. express hypothetical consequences</li> <li>3. understand different types of hypothetical statements</li> </ol>
C. Giving advice; expressing feelings and emotions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. ask for, offer and receive advice</li> <li>2. give personal and general advice on a range of topics</li> <li>3. express feelings and emotions in a culturally appropriate way</li> <li>4. make culturally appropriate suggestions</li> <li>5. issue culturally appropriate commands</li> </ol>
D. Opinions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. express agreement and disagreement</li> <li>2. exchange, support and discuss opinions</li> </ol>
E. <i>Time frames</i> : Past experiences and narration	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. narrate in more extended discourse; tell a more complete story in the past:             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) detailing events in logical order,</li> <li>b) describing and</li> <li>c) telling of on-going events.</li> </ol> </li> <li>2. understand and use lexical and structural references to past, present and future events in more extended discourse</li> <li>3. logically use more than one time frame within more extended discourse as needed</li> </ol>

## Appendix C: GCC Performance Objectives 2005

### World Language Department GREENFIELD COMMUNITY COLLEGE Course Objectives — 101 level

**Students will be required to demonstrate proficiency in communication: *the expression, interpretation and negotiation of meaning*, in three modes (as defined in ACTFL's national *Standards*):**

- Interpersonal: listening and speaking; reading and writing\*
- Presentational: writing or speaking\*\*
- Interpretive: listening, reading or viewing\*\*

\*two-way communication

\*\*one-way communication

#### **Students should be able to:**

- understand predictable questions and commands in familiar topic areas
- understand speech on familiar topics at normal speed
- interact orally on familiar topics
- use language for personal communication needs, ask and answer questions and request clarification as needed
- rely on memorized material, especially when asking questions, and recombine and expand these elements to express personal meaning
- understand written documents on familiar topics dealing with basic needs or interests
- meet basic writing and recording needs such as short messages, lists, forms, post-cards, short descriptive paragraphs
- identify certain important people, holidays, nationalities, traditions and geographical areas of the target language's cultures
- compare their own and other cultures, and consequently understand both better

#### **Catalog description:**

Fundamentals of Spanish/French. The course emphasizes acquisition of language functions, vocabulary, structures and culture through contextualized presentations, interactive activities and extensive laboratory practice.

## 101

## Specific Examples:

Familiar topic areas:	Performance objectives:
A. Identity and personal information	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. state and ask names</li> <li>2. perform introductions</li> <li>3. state and ask phone number and address</li> <li>4. state and ask age</li> <li>5. state and ask origin and nationality</li> <li>6. state and ask languages spoken</li> </ol>
B. Social skills and cultural awareness	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. use culturally appropriate greetings and farewells</li> <li>2. use culturally appropriate formal and informal registers</li> <li>3. respond appropriately to simple commands/requests</li> <li>4. show knowledge of where target language is spoken</li> </ol>
C. Family and ownership	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. list family members</li> <li>2. ask* and answer questions on make-up of family</li> <li>3. express ownership/possession</li> </ol>
D. Descriptions and enumeration	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. list presence or absence of common objects</li> <li>2. describe common objects</li> <li>3. identify basic body parts</li> <li>4. briefly describe people</li> </ol>
E. Preferences, likes and dislikes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. communicate likes and dislikes for activities</li> <li>2. state and ask* preferences and desires</li> <li>3. issue simple invitations to do an activity</li> </ol>
F. <i>Time frames:</i> Routines and daily activities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. describe habitual or routine activities</li> <li>2. list/narrate routines in logical order</li> </ol>
G. <i>Time frames:</i> Future plans	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. state and ask about future plans</li> </ol>
H. Questions and information gathering	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. ask* simple questions on the above familiar topics</li> <li>2. record and share the information</li> <li>3. use and understand numbers to the thousands</li> <li>4. state and ask time and date</li> <li>5. state and ask identity/location of people and things</li> <li>6. ask and answer questions about the weather</li> </ol>

\*relying primarily on memorized material, but beginning to recombine and expand to express personal meaning

**World Language Department  
GREENFIELD COMMUNITY COLLEGE  
Course Objectives — 102 level**

**Students will be required to demonstrate proficiency in communication: the expression, interpretation and negotiation of meaning, in three modes (as defined in ACTFL's national Standards):**

- Interpersonal: listening and speaking; reading and writing\*
- Presentational: writing or speaking\*\*
- Interpretive: listening, reading or viewing\*\*

\*two-way communication

\*\*one-way communication

**Students should be able to:**

- understand predictable questions and commands in familiar topic areas
- understand speech on familiar topics at normal speed
- interact orally on familiar topics
- use language for personal communication needs, ask and answer questions and request clarification as needed
- rely on memorized material, especially when asking questions, and recombine and expand these elements to express personal meaning
- understand written documents on familiar topics dealing with basic needs or interests
- meet basic writing and recording needs such as short messages, lists, forms, post-cards, short descriptive paragraphs
- identify certain important people, holidays, nationalities, traditions and geographical areas of the target language's cultures
- compare their own and other cultures, and consequently understand both better

*Note: Students in the second semester of the elementary sequence should continue to expand their control of the objectives from the first semester. Therefore, the second semester's familiar topic areas and the performance objectives are cumulative, including all the preceding semester's items.*

**Catalog description:**

Fundamentals of Spanish/French. The course emphasizes continued acquisition of language functions, vocabulary, structures and culture through contextualized presentations, interactive activities and extensive laboratory practice.

## 102

Specific Examples — in *addition* to those of level 101:

Familiar topic areas:	Performance objectives:
A) <i>Time frames</i> : Past experiences	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. ask and answer questions about past experiences</li> <li>2. detail past events in logical order</li> <li>3. describe in the past</li> <li>4. summarize past habitual actions</li> </ol>
B) <i>Time frames</i> : Narration	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. relate events, descriptions and routines in the narrative</li> <li>2. use lexical and structural items to order logically</li> <li>3. understand and use lexical and structural references to past, present and future events within simple discourse</li> <li>4. begin to use more than one time frame within simple discourse as needed</li> </ol>
C) Express plans and desires	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. describe possible future plans, wishes and dreams</li> <li>2. ask* and answer questions about them</li> </ol>
D) Obligations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. state general duties and obligations</li> <li>2. ask* and answer questions about them</li> </ol>
E) Food and drink: Shopping and restaurants	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. state and ask about food preferences and dislikes</li> <li>2. read and understand menus; ask for more information</li> <li>3. make menu choices and order meal</li> <li>4. show knowledge of food/meal traditions of the cultures</li> </ol>
F) Making suggestions and invitations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. issue and accept invitations</li> <li>2. give reasons/excuses for refusal</li> <li>3. make suggestions for other activities or times as needed*</li> </ol>
G) Comparisons and preferences	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. compare and contrast (not including hypothesis)</li> <li>2. ask* and state preference for different things/activities</li> </ol>

\*relying to a lesser degree on memorized material, but increasingly recombining and expanding to express personal meaning



**World Language Department  
GREENFIELD COMMUNITY COLLEGE  
Course Objectives — 201 level**

**Students will be required to demonstrate proficiency in communication: the expression, interpretation and negotiation of meaning, in three modes (as defined in ACTFL's national Standards):**

- Interpersonal: listening and speaking; reading and writing\*
- Presentational: writing or speaking\*\*
- Interpretive: listening, reading or viewing\*\*

\*two-way communication

\*\*one-way communication

**Students should be able to:**

- understand questions and commands in familiar topic areas
- understand speech on familiar topics at normal speed
- interact orally on familiar topics
- ask and answer questions and request clarification as needed
- initiate, sustain and close a coherent conversation
- manage a simple “survival” situation related to familiar topics
- negotiate meaning using learned strategies such as circumlocution
- understand written documents on varied topics
- create with language to express their own thoughts and opinions
- write in paragraph length discourse on varied topics
- connect paragraphs in logical composition
- demonstrate basic sociolinguistic competence; use language appropriate to the social and cultural context
- compare their own and other cultures, and consequently understand both better

*Note: Students in the first semester of the intermediate sequence should continue to expand their control of the objectives from the first two semesters. Therefore, the third semester's familiar topic areas and the performance objectives are cumulative, including all the preceding semesters' items.*

**Catalog description:**

The intermediate study of French/Spanish. The course emphasizes continued acquisition of language functions, vocabulary, idioms, structures, and culture through contextualized presentations, interactive activities, video, and selected readings. The class is conducted in French/Spanish.

## 201

Specific Examples — in *addition* to those of levels 101 – 102:

Familiar topic areas:	Performance objectives:
A. Weather	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. understand simple media weather reports/forecasts</li> <li>2. describe the weather (in three time frames)</li> <li>3. ask and state preferred activities in different weather</li> <li>4. understand different climatic conditions where target language is spoken</li> </ol>
B. Travel plans and needs	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. manage/negotiate travel situations using basic vocabulary for car, bus, train, plane and hotel:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) ask questions to obtain information</li> <li>b) request clarification as needed</li> <li>c) understand and use authentic documents</li> </ol> </li> </ol>
C. <i>Time frames</i> : Past experiences and narration	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. narrate in simple discourse; tell a basic story in the past:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) detailing events in logical order,</li> <li>b) describing and</li> <li>c) telling of on-going events.</li> </ol> </li> </ol>
D. Obligations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. detail obligations, requirements, duties</li> <li>2. make culturally appropriate requests</li> <li>3. make culturally appropriate suggestions</li> <li>4. issue culturally appropriate commands</li> </ol>
E. Family: relationships and roles	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. list members of both extended and nuclear family</li> <li>2. describe and define relationships among family members</li> <li>3. compare/contrast role of family in target and native cultures</li> </ol>
F. Health; prevention and emergencies	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. identify most body parts</li> <li>2. describe symptoms and feelings</li> <li>3. give advice</li> </ol>

**World Language Department  
GREENFIELD COMMUNITY COLLEGE  
Course Objectives — 202 level**

**Students will be required to demonstrate proficiency in communication: the expression, interpretation and negotiation of meaning, in three modes (as defined in ACTFL's national Standards):**

- Interpersonal: listening and speaking; reading and writing\*
- Presentational: writing or speaking\*\*
- Interpretive: listening, reading or viewing\*\*

\*two-way communication

\*\*one-way communication

**Students should be able to:**

- understand questions and commands in familiar topic areas
- understand speech on familiar topics at normal speed
- interact orally on familiar topics
- ask and answer questions and request clarification as needed
- initiate, sustain and close a coherent conversation
- manage a simple “survival” situation related to familiar topics
- negotiate meaning using learned strategies such as circumlocution
- understand written documents on varied topics
- create with language to express their own thoughts and opinions
- write in paragraph length discourse on varied topics
- connect paragraphs in logical composition
- demonstrate basic sociolinguistic competence; use language appropriate to the social and cultural context
- compare their own and other cultures, and consequently understand both better

*Note: Students in the second semester of the intermediate sequence should continue to expand their control of the objectives from the first three semesters. Therefore, the fourth semester's familiar topic areas and the performance objectives are cumulative, including all the preceding semesters' items.*

**Catalog description:**

Conclusion of the basic intermediate sequence in French/Spanish. The course emphasizes continued acquisition of language functions, vocabulary, idioms, structures, and culture through contextualized presentations, interactive activities, video, and selected readings. The class is conducted in French/Spanish.

**202**

**Specific Examples — in addition to those of levels 101–201:**

<b>Familiar topic areas:</b>	<b>Performance objectives:</b>
A. <i>Time frames:</i> Future plans and predictions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. ask and answer questions about the future</li> <li>2. narrate and describe future plans in more extended discourse</li> <li>3. make predictions</li> <li>4. discuss plans and possible consequences</li> </ol>
B. Hypothetical situations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. ask and answer simple hypothetical questions</li> <li>2. express hypothetical consequences</li> <li>3. understand different types of hypothetical statements</li> </ol>
C. Giving advice; expressing feelings and emotions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. ask for, offer and receive advice</li> <li>2. give personal and general advice on a range of topics</li> <li>3. express feelings and emotions in a culturally appropriate way</li> <li>4. make culturally appropriate suggestions</li> <li>5. issue culturally appropriate commands</li> </ol>
D. Opinions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. express agreement and disagreement</li> <li>2. exchange, support and discuss opinions</li> </ol>
E. <i>Time frames:</i> Past experiences and narration	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. narrate in more extended discourse; tell a more complete story in the past:                             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) detailing events in logical order,</li> <li>b) describing and</li> <li>c) telling of on-going events.</li> </ol> </li> <li>2. understand and use lexical and structural references to past, present and future events in more extended discourse</li> <li>3. logically use more than one time frame within more extended discourse as needed</li> </ol>

**NOTE: All performance objectives are cumulative, and include all preceding semesters' items:**

<b>First semester</b>	<b>Second semester</b>	<b>Third semester</b>	<b>Fourth semester</b>
<b>101 objectives</b>	101 objectives, cont.	101 objectives, cont.	101 objectives, cont.
	<b>102 objectives</b>	102 objectives, cont.	102 objectives, cont.
		<b>201 objectives</b>	201 objectives, cont.
			<b>202 objectives</b>

## Appendix D: French Phoneme

### Voyelles

a à â	e eu œ œu	é e ez er et	è ê e ei ai	i y	o ô au eau	o	u
4	2	0	7	6,10	0	14	(fém.)1
an am	en em	in im yn ym ain aim ein eim	on om	un um	ou où	oi oua	ui
	40, 30	15, 20	ll	(masc.) 1	12	3	8

### Consonnes

b	ca co cu k qu	ce ci ça ço çu s ss	d	f ph	ga go gu gui gue	gi ge j	l ll	m
n	p	r	t	v	y ill	z s	ch sh	gn

Appendix E: Spanish Phoneme

A marrón 

E verde 

I amarillo 

O rojo 

U azul 

## Appendix F: French Months

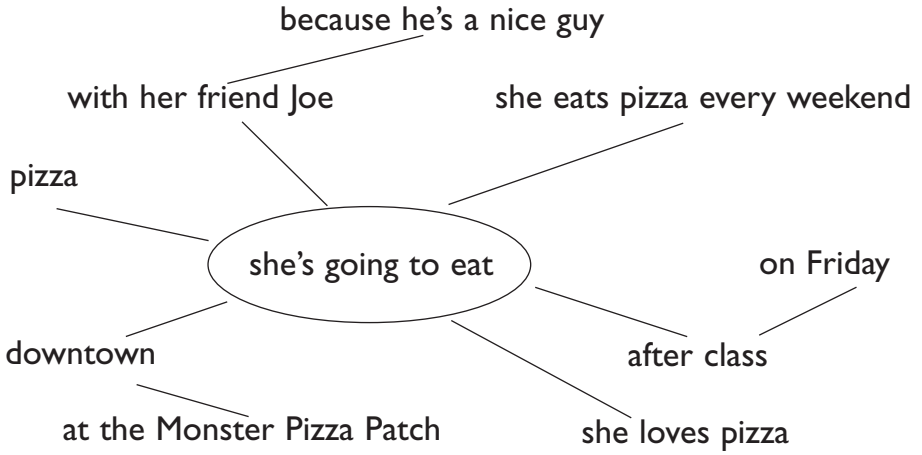
9. décembre 0 30	12. mars 4	15. juin 20	19. octobre
10. janvier 40 6,0	13. avril 4 6	16. juillet 8 0	20. novembre 30
11. février 0 6,0	14. mai 7	17. août 12	
		18. septembre 7 30	
4. décembre 0 30	7. mars 4	10. juin 20	14. octobre
5. janvier 40 6,0	8. avril 4 6	11. juillet 8 0	15. novembre 30
6. février 0 6,0	9. mai 7	12. août 12	
		13. septembre 7 30	
1. décembre 0 30	4. mars 4	7. juin 20	11. octobre
2. janvier 40 6,0	5. avril 4 6	8. juillet 8 0	12. novembre 30
3. février 0 6,0	6. mai 7	9. août 12	
		10. septembre 7 30	
1. décembre 0 30	4. mars 4	7. juin 20	10. septembre 7 30
2. janvier 40 6,0	5. avril 4 6	8. juillet 8 0	11. octobre
3. février 0 6,0	6. mai 7	9. août 12	12. novembre 30

## Appendix G: Routine vs. Past

<p><b>Tout les matins,</b></p> <p>je me <u>lève</u> très tôt.  je <u>prépare</u> mon café.  je <u>prends</u> une douche.  je <u>quitte</u> la maison vers 7h00.</p>	<p><b>Hier,</b></p> <p>je me <u>suis levée</u> vers 6h00.  j'ai <u>préparé</u> mon café.  j'ai <u>pris</u> une douche.  j'ai <u>quitté</u> la maison à 7h15.</p>
<p><b>Chaque dimanche,</b></p> <p>je <u>dors</u> un peu plus tard.  je <u>déjeune</u> avec ma famille.  je <u>vais</u> à l'église.  je <u>chante</u> dans le chœur.</p>	<p><b>Le dimanche dernier,</b></p> <p>je n'ai pas <u>dormi</u> très tard.  j'ai <u>déjeuné</u> avec mes filles.  je ne <u>suis pas allée</u> à l'église.  j'ai <u>fait</u> du ski!</p>
<p><b>En été,</b></p> <p>je passe les vacances en famille.  je vais à la plage avec mes filles.  je fais du vélo.  je travaille dans mon jardin.</p>	<p><b>L'été dernier,</b></p> <p>j'ai passé les vacances en famille.  je suis allée à la plage avec elles.  j'ai fait du V.T.T.  j'ai travaillé un peu dans le jardin.</p>



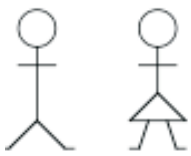

**Appendix H: Sample Sentence Web**



**Appendix I: Sample T-Charts**

Je suis ...	J'ai ...
<p><b>DESCRIPTION</b> = la scène</p>	<p><b>ACTIONS</b> = l'intrigue</p>

## Appendix J: Symbol Chart for Descriptions

	$=$	

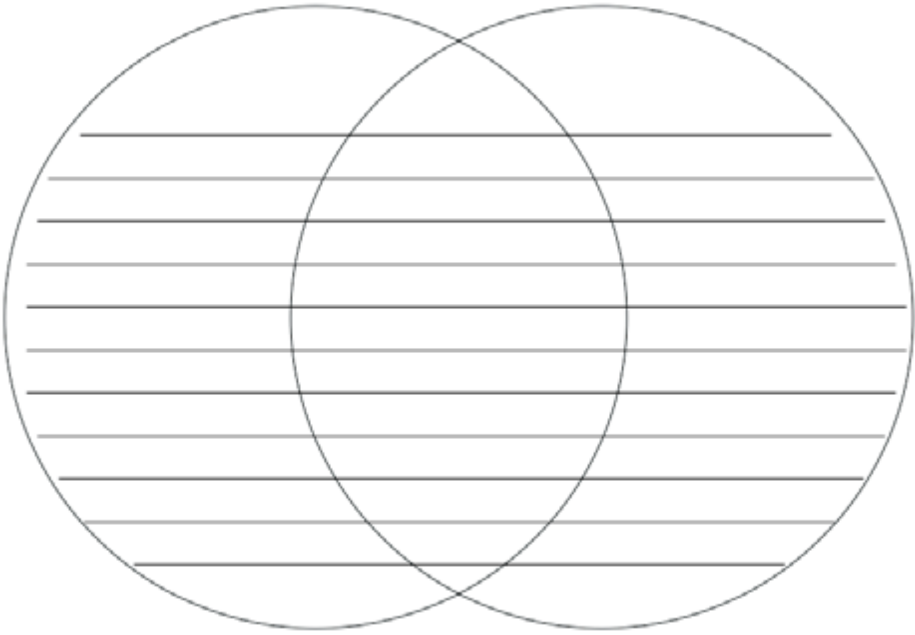
## Appendix K: Unit Self-Assessment

### BILAN — Leçon 4

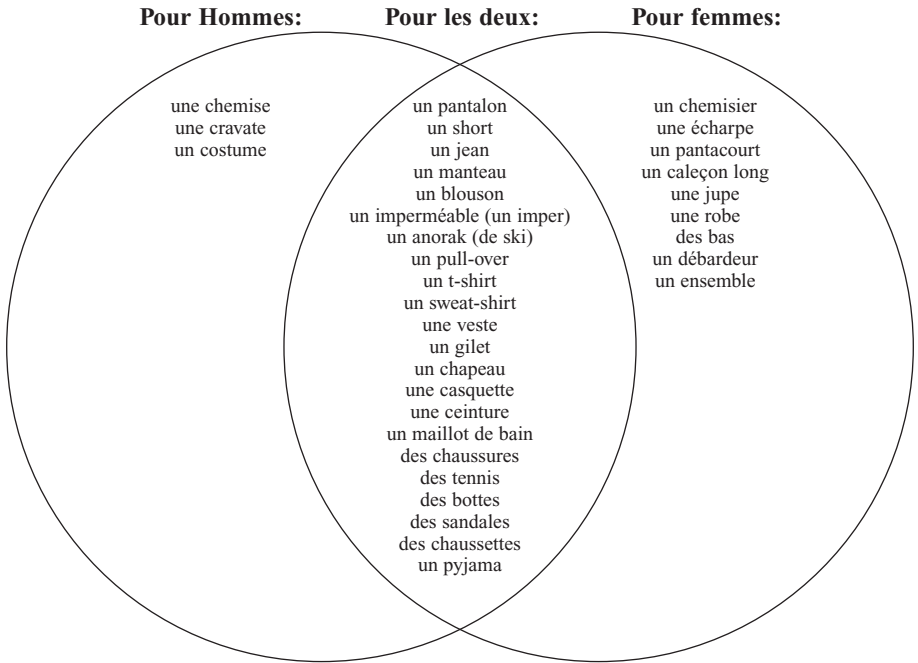
Can you do this in written and/or spoken French?

	yes	yes/help	not yet
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>discuss the activities and chores you do at home; ask / answer questions about same</li> </ul> <p>TOOL: chore &amp; house vocabulary</p>	___	___	___
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>describe duties and obligations; ask / answer questions about same</li> </ul> <p>TOOL: DEVOIR + infinitive</p>	___	___	___
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>describe what you like and dislike to do; ask / answer questions about same</li> </ul> <p>TOOL: AIMER / DÉTESTER + infinitive</p>	___	___	___
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>describe your routine daily activities; ask / answer questions about same</li> </ul> <p>TOOL: present tense, regular and irregular</p>	___	___	___

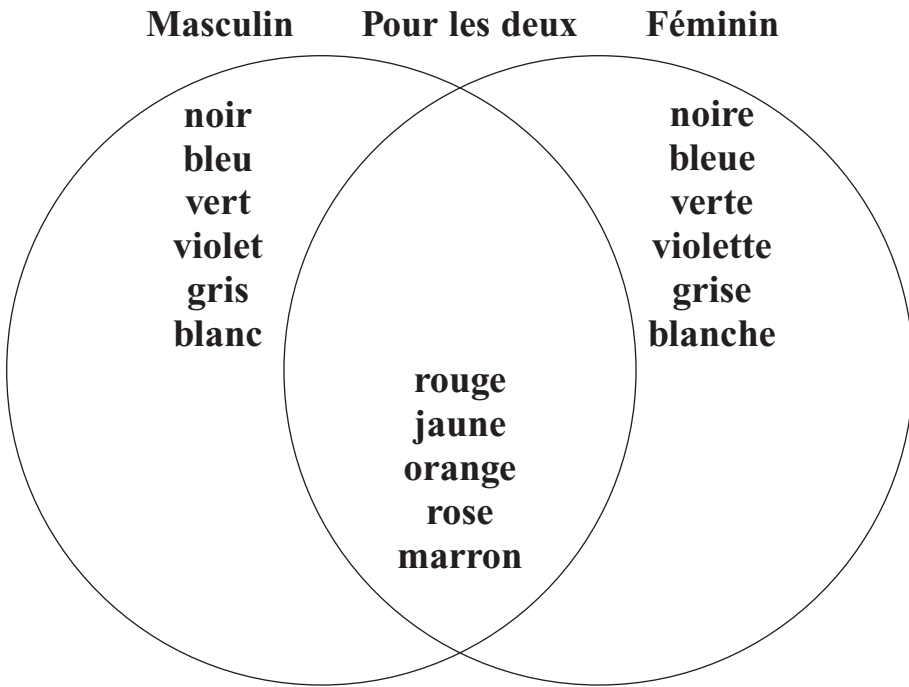
## Appendix L: Venn Diagram (Blank)



## Appendix M: Venn Diagram (Clothing)



**Appendix N: Venn Diagram (Colors)**



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# Los Cinco Sentidos: A Science Unit

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*Amanda Seewald, M.ED. from George Mason University*

## Abstract

Culturally and linguistically diverse learners in elementary school environments need the support of native language instruction and mirroring to reinforce or bolster content area instruction in English. Creating an opportunity for second language learners to develop comprehension in their native language will not only enhance English language learning, but will also give students a feeling of self-confidence and self-esteem derived from the teacher's efforts to place importance on the students' cultures and heritage language. The present article describes a series of learning centers developed to provide early elementary students with a foundation in the area of science, focused on the five senses and their role in the scientific process. The activities are designed for use with heritage language learners in Spanish.

*"Diverse learners have multiple pathways to knowing, multiple pathways to learning."*  
(Richard Donato, "Valuing Diversity in Learners". WGBH, 2004)

## Introduction

According to Hall-Haley, "Students don't divest themselves of their cultural and linguistic background; they bring that with them to the classroom." (Hall-Haley, "Valuing Diversity in Learners". WGBH, 2004.) For this reason, it is essential to provide heritage language learners with the chance to express themselves in their native languages within the context of academic subject areas and curriculum standards.

This very necessary support can be implemented simply by making the experience as interactive and sensitive to learning styles as possible in accordance with current best practices. As teachers, we can achieve this by varying strategies and, "presenting instruction in ways that reflect their (students') own intelligences and learning styles." (Donato, "Valuing Diversity in Learners". WGBH, 2004.) The following series of learning activities were developed to provide early elementary students with a foundation in the area of science, focused on the five senses. There are two activities for each sense. Depending on time available, these activities can be built as a unit, taking each day to examine one of the five senses and culminating in a "Five Senses Fair" that will allow the students to express their knowledge and will give the teacher a chance to

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**Amanda Seewald** holds an M.ED. from George Mason University and is the director of the MARACAS Spanish Program for Young Learners, which she designed for pre-school and elementary level students. She teaches in several New Jersey pre-schools. Prior to developing MARACAS, Amanda taught in the Arlington Public Schools Immersion program in Virginia. It is Amanda's hope that through engaging and dynamic programming, more language programs for young children will grow.

assess student comprehension. If time is limited, each activity can be used independently of the others. The activities are designed for use with heritage language learners in Spanish; however, they can also be used in partial immersion classrooms or with English speaking students who are learning Spanish.

The objectives of these activities are two-fold. Primarily the students will gain a functional understanding of what our five senses are and how we use them. Students will begin to make connections between the use of the five senses and the impact of the use of these faculties on scientific inquiry and processes as defined by curriculum standards. The standard for Scientific Processes in the New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards describes this link.

*“Students best learn science by doing science. Science is not merely a collection of facts and theories, but a process, a way of thinking about and investigating the world in which we live. This standard addresses those skills that are used by scientists as they discover and explain the physical universe skills that are an essential and ongoing part of learning science.”* (N.J. Core Curriculum Content Standards, [http://www.state.nj.us/njded/cccs/s5\\_science.htm](http://www.state.nj.us/njded/cccs/s5_science.htm))

In addition, students will use and learn words in Spanish that they may already know, but they will now have a science context in which to use them. These activities are designed for early elementary school age students and can be scaffolded to meet the needs of diverse levels of native language fluency. Within the activities and as a part of the overarching goals of the following unit, the National Standards in Foreign Language Education are addressed (<http://www.actfl.org/files/public/execsumm.pdf>). At the center of this unit are the standards of communication and connections, as a means to show what students know about language and a way to join the language instruction with content area learning.

## Cinco Sentidos

### Introduction — ¿Cuales son los cinco sentidos?

Brainstorm with the students on the five senses. Next, provide them with the following chart. This visual way of presenting the cinco sentidos will help them understand and match each sense with a part of the body. This task can be completed by the students as a group with guidance. Students will probably know the words to be used in each space, but these can also be provided by the teacher. The fourth column can be used by students who have additional words or pictorial ideas for each sense.



La Vista	Yo _____ con...	Los ojos	
El Oído	Yo _____ con...	Los oídos/Las orejas	
El Olfato	Yo _____ con...	La nariz	
El Tacto	Yo _____ con...	Los dedos	
El Gusto	Yo _____ con...	La lengua	

La Vista - Yo veo con los ojos.

El Olfato - Yo huelo con la nariz.

El Gusto - Yo saboreo con la lengua.

El Oído - Yo oigo con los oídos

El Tacto - Yo toco con los dedos.

### La Vista —

Yo veo colores. First, show the students a large picture of a rainbow. Then, the students put on smocks and paint the colors of the rainbow using presnet paper, brushes, and paint. If you have enough materials to do this all at once, you can assess their comprehension of the colors by telling them which color to paint and to differentiate for more advanced students, you can give instructions as to what shapes to paint as well. Another variation can be to give students instructions on how to mix colors to achieve other shades. When giving instructions, use repetitive phrases like, “¿Pueden pintar... una estrella roja? Use the phrase, “Yo veo...(i.e. rojo, verde)” review the concept of colors. After you have modeled this, call on students to give the color directions, for example, “Yo veo morado”. Discuss the value of the sense of sight (La Vista) and how colors gain their meanings with this sense. Intelligences used: visual, bodily-kinesthetic, verbal, interpersonal.

Yo veo el orden de las cosas. Set up several different groups of items in patterns on tables. Put a divider on the table so that students can only see the group of items from one side. Depending on the age of the students, divide them into groups of 2 or 4 and ask them to look at the pattern for two minutes and then give them two minutes to go to the other side of the table and recreate the pattern they observed using duplicates of the objects. Students can each take a turn with the objects on the tables and

then, if time remains, you can switch the patterns and challenge their sense of sight. Finish this activity by asking why our sense of sight is important. Use the answers to make a group list and help students demonstrate comprehension. Intelligences used: visual, bodily-kinesthetic, verbal, interpersonal, logical/mathematical.

### **El Olfato —**

Huele bien / Huele mal ¿Cómo huele? Students are given happy face labels and sad face labels. Then each student gets to walk to a table and smell an item. After smelling the item, the child has to consider his/her own feeling about it and places his/her label in a corresponding spot on the chart that says Huele bien :) / Huele mal :( . This is repeated with several other items. Upon completion, count with the class the number of students who liked and disliked each “olor”. This activity can be done on several separate charts or with one graph on a large piece of paper with pictures to match the items smelled. Intelligences used: logical/mathematical, visual/spatial, bodily/kinesthetic, intrapersonal, interpersonal

¿Qué hueles? — In this activity students must smell numbered items that are not visible to them (you can use brown paper bags or coffee cans). Then, younger students can be given a page with pictures that could match the scents and must circle the things they smelled. Students can also either write the word for what they believe each smell to be or can draw a picture of the items. At the end of the activity, the teacher can reveal the items and discuss the students’ guesses. Ask students how they could be sure of what the objects were? Can they describe the scents? Be sure to discuss the fact that it is much harder to recognize a scent without seeing the object. Intelligences used: bodily, intrapersonal, interpersonal, logical/mathematical.

### **El Oído —**

Yo oigo instrumentos. At this interactive center, students are able to see several musical instruments and then are asked to close their eyes. The teacher, or a selected student, plays an instrument and then asks the students to tell the class which instrument was heard using the phrase, “Yo oigo...”. You can either tell the students the words for the instruments in Spanish or allow them to say them in English and then give them the Spanish word after they answer. Then give students a chance to test your ears by challenging you to the same activity. Students can complete the activity by taking part in a musical jamboree with the instruments. Intelligences used: musical, verbal, bodily, interpersonal.

Yo oigo sonidos del mundo. This activity can be done with all different types of sounds, not just instruments. During the “Oído” lesson I used sound files on my computer of common “sonidos” to do a similar activity. You may also have printed pictures of the items to which the students are listening so that they can match the picture with the sound on a simple grid or numbered page. This activity gives a great opportunity for discussion and is another chance to explain how the senses work together to give us the best understanding of things around us. In addition, it challenges the students to express themselves in Spanish to explain or describe the sounds they hear. Intelligences used: musical/rhythmic, verbal/linguistic, visual/spatial, interpersonal

**El Tacto —**

Yo toco algo... (suave, duro, áspero, lisa, agudo, frío, caliente) In this center, students are asked to touch items in five different numbered paper bags without looking at the items. Be sure to use several natural items such as pine cones, feathers, and shells. If this is used as review, the students will be able to interact with each other to use the descriptive words above. You can ask the students to tell you “En qué bolsa hay algo suave?” They can work together to find the correct item and then actually look at the items together and describe the way they feel. Be sure to review the words and concepts with students to activate prior knowledge before the activity begins. At the conclusion of the activity, discuss how “El Tacto” can help keep us safe or can signal us to be careful (for example when we come in contact with sharp or hot objects). Intelligences used: bodily/kinesthetic, interpersonal, verbal/linguistic, naturalist

¿Cuántas cosas hay en la mano? — In this activity, students will be asked to count and identify items using only their hands and fingers. You can use boxes with holes cut in the tops for easy access by students’ hands. Inside each box, place 1-10 pieces or objects. It is best for the objects to all be the same so the students can focus on determining quantity. This can be done with several different boxes and students can report verbally or on an answer sheet about their findings. At the conclusion, remove the items from each box so the students can see the items and check their sense of touch. Remind them that by taking the items out of the box they are now activating another sense which allows them to confirm their original findings. Intelligences used: bodily/kinesthetic, logical/mathematical, visual/spatial, interpersonal

**El Gusto —**

Yo saboreo algo... (picante, amargo, dulce, salado). The first activity that can be used to teach the concepts and words is an actual tasting activity using facial expressions as well as body language as reactions to each taste. Go through the four aforementioned tastes and ask the students to help you create a facial expression for each one. Then ask students to taste each item as you give it to them. Using words and/or the facial expressions, they can show you how it tastes. Be sure to show the students what they are tasting to avoid unnecessary apprehension. CAUTION: Be sure to check with parents regarding allergies prior to doing a tasting lesson!! Some great things to use for this activity are: BBQ or flavored chips, lemon, candy or fruit, and pretzels. After completing this activity, ask students to draw a picture of their favorite taste and assist them as they write an explanation for why. Intelligences used: Bodily, interpersonal, intrapersonal, verbal.

**¿Cómo saborean estas cosas?**

The second activity for “el gusto” is a visual activity in which students need to recall the meanings of the descriptive words for taste. Use a bottle of hot sauce or a chili pepper, a bag of pretzels, a lollipop, and a lemon. Create one page for each descriptive word and a matching picture to the items used on it. Cover the pictures on the paper, but not the words. Ask students to organize the items using the words. For preliterate students, read each word. Once the items are matched, students can look at the covered pictures to check their own work. After completing this activity,

students can make their own paper plate taste grids by dividing the paper plate in four parts and drawing items for each taste. Students can take this home and use it as a learning tool with their families. Intelligences used: bodily/kinesthetic, logical/mathematical, verbal/linguistic, visual/spatial

The five senses (*cinco sentidos*) is an exciting and interesting unit to use with heritage language learners to prove to them how much they know and can demonstrate academically in their own language. It is a unit that lends itself well to interactive and fun learning centers. Students' enthusiasm during this unit creates an environment that allows students to truly own the concepts they are exploring. Each student is able to construct his or her own understanding of what the five senses mean to them. Continuous discussions at the conclusion of each activity as a means to compare and contrast or analyze the ways we use our senses will help the students synthesize what they are learning. By teaching this unit or series of activities using learning centers, you are providing a fluid and comfortable class set-up that will maximize your students' willingness to take risks in their native language. "Planning is the pivotal part of being able to accommodate the variety of diverse learners in the classroom." (Haley, "Valuing Diversity in Learners". WGBH, 2004) Ultimately, the basic ideas and emphasis placed on linguistic diversity within this type of learning atmosphere will translate and augment comprehension in heritage learners' science studies and across all academic areas in English.

## References

- Hall Haley (2004) Teaching Foreign Languages K-12, Video 6: Valuing Diversity in Learners. Retrieved from <http://learner.org/resources/series201.html>
- New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards, retrieved on October 1 2006 from [http://www.state.nj.us/njded/cccs/s5\\_science.htm](http://www.state.nj.us/njded/cccs/s5_science.htm)

# 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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We will accept reviews of:

- Software
  - Videos and films
  - Textbooks, instructional packages, and ancillaries
  - Websites
  - Grant opportunities
  - Programs of study, both abroad and in this country, targeting both educators and students
  - Reference materials
  - Other
- 

## ***Ancona, Ronnie, Horace: Selected Odes and Satire I.9. 2nd edition.***

**Wauconda, Illinois: Bolchazy-Carducci, 2005. ISBN: 978-086516-608-0. \$31.00. Workbook, co-authored with David J. Murphy. ISBN: 0-86516-574-2. \$22.00.**

In selecting an AP text for my class, I have certain priorities in mind. They are, in order of importance:

1. A list of vocabulary on the same page as the text.
2. Notes that guide students to discover the meaning of Latin words and expressions without my having to translate for them.
3. Thorough commentary. (Often editors become oddly quiet on the thorniest lines.)
4. Commentary that raises controversial views and makes students ask questions and debate issues.
5. Succinct and relevant historical and biographical information.
6. Clear and usable appendices on metrics and figures of speech.
7. A thorough and current bibliography.

In recent years, many AP texts have become more user-friendly by providing a list of vocabulary on the same page as the text under study and covering the basics of

metrics and poetic figures, but most, still, are sadly lacking in depth, thoroughness, and a desire to create a fuller learning experience for students. Ronnie Ancona is that *rara avis*, a college teacher who is truly interested in the preparation of secondary school students. Her text, while reflecting a depth of knowledge of the subject, is equally concerned with presenting ideas in a language that students can understand.

In her Introduction, Ancona remarks that she has been pleasantly surprised that many college teachers have welcomed her text. Certainly, it displays a degree of sophistication and erudition that elevates it above most AP texts. Her presentation is clear and elegant, showing a keen awareness of the unsophisticated understanding of her student audience.

I remind my students over and over that their class presentations contain much unnecessary information. By contrast, Ancona's background material is written in a lucid, concise prose, giving the students the essentials of Horace's life and works in a language they can understand. At the same time, she introduces them to the Latin lyric tradition, and Horace's unique position within it. She is particularly deft in suggesting the subtle challenges presented by translating Horace's elusive and allusive Latin.

Even though I put bibliography at the bottom of my list of priorities, Ancona's exhaustive bibliography at the beginning of her text is one of its major virtues. Listing both general works and articles on each poem studied, she reminds students that there is a wealth of information available to them as they read. Using the bibliography, students can easily prepare class presentations offering various perspectives on each poem to enrich and enliven their critical appreciation of Horace. Bibliographies are routinely relegated to the "basement" of books, whereas I feel that they should be the centerpiece.

To return to my list of priorities: although Ancona provides abundant vocabulary and guidance, I very much appreciate that she does not translate for students (as so many editors do), a practice that deprives them of the opportunity to think for themselves. On the other hand, her notes are both ample and helpful, illuminating often neglected details. Most texts are content simply to cite a metrical effect or stylistic device; however, Ancona clarifies the aesthetic purposes behind the literary techniques used. Lack of sensitivity to these features is a huge weakness in AP students, which few texts attempt to rectify. Ancona's notes explore these dimensions of Horace's poetry eloquently.

On a more complex level, Ancona provides insight into Horace's prismatic language from the outset. Take, for instance, this comment on line 6 of Ode I, 1:

*Domínos* looks to both the victors in the chariot race and to the gods and can be seen in apposition to another *quos* understood from line 3 or as in apposition to *deos* (6).

While the former is more appealing in terms of the general sense of the poem — victors become masters of the world — it is important when reading Latin, and Horace's poetry in particular, to preserve such ambiguities. This kind of ambiguity concerning what modifies what is typical of Horace and should be understood not as lack of clarity but rather as the poet's attempt to say more

than he could if he narrowed his possibilities to just one option. Notice the position of *terrarum dominos* between *quos* and *deos* (6). Remember that Latin word order is flexible because of the inflected nature of Latin. Horace exploits this flexibility perhaps more than any other Latin poet.

Here, right at the outset, Ancona alerts students to an essential perspective on Horace's style that will, with her continued assistance, enrich their reading of his poetry. Few editors take the time to provide such guidance.

In the area of raising controversial issues, Ancona doesn't back down. For instance, in the troubling Ode I, 13 (Telephus/Lydia), she asserts that *inrupta* may mean "interrupted," rather than having the accepted meaning "unbroken." Who knows? But her note has provoked stimulating debate among my students and has ultimately led us back to her bibliography to seek other critical perspectives.

This second edition, which numbers the pages and puts all useful vocabulary at the bottom of the page, simply adds a bit more clarity to an extremely useful, thorough, and thoughtful book.

As for the Workbook, I'm probably the wrong person to ask. I have to confess to considerable ambivalence — not about this one — but about the notion of using workbooks in a Latin poetry course. I understand that breaking the material down into manageable pieces helps students to master grammar, among other things, and to approach the AP exam with more confidence. But what would Horace think? More than anything (or any test score), I want my students to love Horace's poetry. If a student is utterly lost, a workbook is a valuable aid. Otherwise, I prefer to focus on helping students to love poetry. That said, if you need a workbook, Ancona's and Murphy's is extremely thorough, and will, I'm sure, be a godsend to those who need it.

Over the years (more than twenty!), I have probably used most resources on Horace available to prepare students for the AP exam. Ancona's book is the most useful and well-designed I have encountered in my career.

Betsy Dawson  
Latin Teacher  
East Chapel Hill High School  
Chapel Hill, NC

### **Publisher's Response**

Bolchazy-Carducci Publishers appreciates Betsy Dawson's careful and enthusiastic review of Ronnie Ancona's *Horace: Selected Odes and Satire 1.9*. We approached Professor Ancona to author this book and another AP textbook, *Writing Passion: A Catullus Reader*, precisely because she is an active scholar who has a rare sensitivity to the needs of secondary school students, and who knows, after many years' affiliation with Hunter College's MA program in the teaching of Latin, what kind of textbook helps teachers engage students.

Laurie Haight Keenan  
Senior Editor, Bolchazy-Carducci Publishers  
lhkeenan@bolchazy.com

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## **Bernabe, Marc. *Japanese in Mangaland 3: Intermediate Level***

**Tokyo: Japan Publications, 2004. ISBN 4-88996-187-9. Pp. 216. \$ 22. 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 continue to be popular in North America, but for different reasons than one would expect. 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 knowing 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 a language well enough to be able to use it effortlessly and naturally?) 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* and *anime*, and enroll in a Japanese language course to learn about their favorite comic characters more than anything else; and then gradually, as if by accident, they 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 implemented a test in Japanese for the first time.

*Japanese in Mangaland 3* is the third and final volume in this series.<sup>1</sup> 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* to teach linguistic and cultural topics. Many American students today discover Japanese through *manga* and animation, which have made Japanese popular culture a worldwide phenomenon and inspired followers everywhere in a variety of media. Witness the huge success of the Hollywood film *Kill Bill*, which pays homage to Japanese pop art in clever but not always so subtle ways. 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

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<sup>1</sup> I refer readers to my two previously published reviews of volumes 1 and 2 in *The NECTFL Review* (nos. 57 and 59).



and magazines published annually in Japan. Moreover, *manga* are 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 not OD on violent fantasies and science fiction.

In point of fact, this text does not rely heavily on *manga*. I should hasten to add that — for copyright reasons no doubt — it has been difficult to reproduce real Japanese *manga*. A number of artists have worked as consultants to create the *manga* panels that illustrate the book, so anyone hoping to find authentic *manga* will be disappointed. However, the *manga* reproduced here are realistic in the sense that they are faithful to the general atmosphere of a *manga*, even though they might not be the real thing. I am not a big connoisseur of *manga* myself, but the *manga* in this text look “real” enough to me.

The third volume picks up where volume 2 ended, continuing the numeration of the chapters, and covers the following topics:

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Just as in the preceding two volumes, the chapters are divided between grammar (15 lessons) and conversation (4 lessons). As the term “grammar” suggests, the grammar lessons deal mainly with grammatical points, providing explanations in English, along with sample sentences, clarifying tables outlining patterns, and exercises.

As the author points out by way of introduction (4), students who have not digested volumes 1 and 2 would do well to at least have them handy, since volume 3 contains numerous cross-references and no *romaji*. This is the real thing: a young Japanese reading *manga* would presumably be confronted with the same type of scenario, where not only *kanji* but also colloquialisms and regional dialects are standard fare (though, in all honesty, I must admit that I found a fair number of honorific forms as well). A hard-working foreign student should be able to attain at least the intermediate level by the end of this volume and have a solid base to build on. The conversational lessons, by contrast, try to help students know what to say and do (cultural notes are included as well) once they are in Japan. The author would not want you to feel awkward in a hotel or restaurant, now would he?

The three appendices provide answers to the exercises, a grammar index (a most useful compilation of “all the grammatical expressions studied throughout the 60 lessons of Japanese in the *Mangaland* series’ three books” (5), and a vocabulary list containing almost 2000 words, which, in the author’s estimation, should be sufficient to pass the Japanese-Language Proficiency Test (an internationally recognized test jointly administered by Japan Educational Exchanges and Services and Japan Foundation throughout the world every year in early December). As Bernabe explains: “This test has become standard to assess Japanese knowledge of non-native speakers, and it consists of four levels, the most difficult being level 1 and the easiest being level 4. We have created *Japanese in Mangaland* so it contains all the grammatical patterns, *kanji* and vocabulary required to pass levels 4 (elementary) and 3 (basic)” [6]. In my estimation, students who learn the material contained in these three volumes will have attained approximately the intermediate, i.e., fourth-semester level; however, it is far from certain that they will pass the Proficiency Test. Many topics, e.g., regional dialects (from Kyoto or Osaka), do not figure prominently in the Proficiency Test and, furthermore, the Japanese language that students are exposed to throughout the three volumes of this series is definitely too colloquial to be of much use while preparing for the Proficiency Test.

I like the compact format of the book, however, as well as the inclusion of popular culture. Many, if not most, of my students discover Japanese in the first place through popular culture like *manga* and *anime*, so why not give them something they might like? Still, I wonder how college-age students will react to pages jam-packed with grammatical explanations, which is what they will find at the beginning of each chapter at least. Their preference, if one is to judge by mainstream publishers in the U.S., is for a more user-friendly format with less information on each page and more classroom activities, not only pattern practice exercises but also interactive group activities. There is very little of that in this series, and the student spoiled by the lavish textbooks available on the American market today will feel frustrated: it is difficult enough for anyone to learn

Japanese without having to deal with the additional obstacle of an unwieldy text. Instead of trying harder to accommodate beginning students, however the author acts as if it's no big deal and adds another note to an already overcrowded page. Even though *manga* create a "cozy" feel and gradually seduce readers by drawing them into a fantasy universe, which for all practical purposes is very Japanese, my gut feeling is that this text best serves mature students working independently, as a supplement to a more traditional and user-friendly text teaching the basics.

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## **Bishop, Morris and Kenneth T. Rivers.** *A Survey of French Literature.*

**5 vols. Newburyport, MA: Focus Publishing, 2005.**  
**ISBN: 1-58510-106-0.**

This five-volume series is an updated edition of a classic textbook published way back in the 1950s, long before most of us French professors knew that one day we, too, would be standing in front of a class of unsuspecting sophomores and juniors in an introduction to French literature class. If we had known, though, I think most of us would have felt considerably reassured if we had digested Morris Bishop's original two-volume edition in its entirety before entering the classroom on the first day of the fall semester. Those of us who had not made Bishop's acquaintance and had entered graduate school in the mid-1970s typically were spoon-fed a panoply of more or less esoteric materials, brilliant for the most part, but esoteric nonetheless, in lieu of the "great books" of canonical fame. Left to our own devices, we read up on what we had missed (and learned a lot in the process), so I guess all's well that ends well. At the end of the day, we had acquired a valuable interdisciplinary perspective but also the substance without which literary theory is just mush.

Morris Bishop, a pioneering *grand maître* of French studies in the U.S., died back in 1973, which speaks volumes about the longevity of his grand design of a comprehensive anthology of French literature readily accessible to an audience of American undergraduates. The original work (of which this reviewer still owns an autographed copy, a carry-over from his undergraduate days) has recently been reedited by our good friends at Focus Publishing. This new edition consists of five very manageable paperback volumes (the original work was published in what French students would call two "pavés," two rather intimidating hardcover tomes) and is co-edited by the honorable Kenneth T. Rivers, a well-published Professor of French at Lamar University in Texas and true humanist who has taken it upon himself to update Bishop's classic by including a slew of new authors (mainly women and Francophone writers), as well as a variety of ancillary materials that did not appear in the original edition, including updated and more amply annotated historical time

lines, a somewhat more extensive introduction to each period, text, and author studied — all in English, so as to promote a more immediate and better grasp of the material. For example, in Volume I, on the Middle Ages and the sixteenth century, the selection from *The Song of Roland* (which remains the same as in the original edition) is preceded by a smattering of background material on the burgeoning epic tradition, the Saracens, etc. Another obvious difference is that Professor Rivers has broken down background material and presented it in smaller chunks: “Troubadours and their Epics,” “Roland, Charlemagne and the Saracens,” and “The Story and its Artistry” (Vol. 1, 11-13). Unlike so many other literary readers and anthologies, however, selections are not accompanied by comprehension questions, classroom activities, and topics for further research. Other anthologies such as Lagarde et Michard (which many people in the field still like to trash) and Xavier Darcos’s five-volume masterpiece (which is more interdisciplinary, international, and up-to-date with regard to secondary sources than the former) do this with brio, as does the American duo Peter Schofer and Donald Rice (*Poèmes, Pièces et proses*, 1973). Of course, it goes without saying that most excerpts through Rabelais are rendered in modern French, since few if any readers today can understand Old French.

The introduction to each volume reiterates Morris Bishop’s pedagogy: “the editors of this compilation have been guided by certain principles: to introduce the student to the greatest masters of French literature; to make a Survey of Literature rather than a course in literary history; to choose famous examples rather than obscure ones; to choose examples more for their merit, interest, and present vitality than for their ‘significance’ or importance for other than literary reasons; to present one long selection in preference to a collection of tiny *morceaux*; and to make the entire text as user-friendly as possible for instructor and student alike” (Vol. I, 1). Bishop goes on to argue for a civilizing education that teaches wisdom rather than what the ancient Greeks called *techné*; his is a broad-based, humanistic pedagogy that distinguishes skill from mere competency and teaches the ability to think through “literature,” leading to wisdom. This teaching pedagogy “represents the long effort of man to understand himself and, if youth of today are to guide the world safely through the terrors of the atomic age, they must now serve their apprenticeship to wisdom. If I propose the study of literature as a means to wisdom, it is because I believe that in literature are most clearly written the means for the understanding of man’s nature and man’s world. And I propose that the teacher of literature take up this dreadful burden, not for the sake of literature, but for the sake of humanity” (Vol. I, 146).

Just as in the first two editions, edited by Bishop alone, each century (with the exception of the Middle Ages, which still shares a volume with the sixteenth century) is given a distinct identity but, in this third edition, is rewarded with a volume of its own. The selections remain nearly identical to the original edition and include several near-complete plays and short stories. The table of contents for each volume is as follows with an asterisk indicating a new author:

### **Volume I. The Middle Ages:**

*La Chanson de Roland*; Le Roman Courtois (*Tristan et Yseut*, Marie de France); *Aucassin et Nicolette*; *Le Roman de la Rose*; *Le Jeu d’Adam*; *La farce du cuvier*; *La farce de Maître Pathelin*; Charles d’Orleans; Christine de Pisan;\* Villon.

### *The Sixteenth Century:*

Calvin (*Traité sur la foi*);\* Rabelais; Marot; Labé;\* Du Bellay; Ronsard; Montaigne.

### **Volume II. The Seventeenth Century:**

Descartes (*Le Discours de la méthode*); Pascal (*Pensées*); Corneille (*Le Cid*); Racine (*Phèdre*); Molière (*Le Bourgeois gentilhomme*); Boileau; Perrault;\* La Fontaine; La Rochefoucauld; La Bruyère; Bossuet; Fénelon; Madame de Sévigné; Madame de La Fayette.

In this volume, however, the rubrics housing each author are confusing and sometimes downright bewildering: Perrault and La Fontaine apparently are “for the children” alone, La Bruyère and La Rochefoucauld strictly for “moralists;” Bossuet and Fénelon are “clerics;” as for Madame de Sévigné and Madame de La Fayette, they are “two noblewomen” (hardly an improvement from the rubric “Two Women” in the original edition). Why Descartes and the troika of dramatists mentioned above should not be entitled to a rubric of their own is not immediately clear.

### **Volume III. The Eighteenth Century:**

Fontenelle (*Entretiens sur la pluralité des mondes*); Lesage (*Gil Blas*); Marivaux (*L'île des esclaves*); L'Abbé Prevost (*Manon Lescaut*); Montesquieu (*Lettres persanes, L'Esprit des lois*); Voltaire (*Candide*); Diderot (*Le Neveu de Rameau*); Laclos (*Les Liaisons dangereuses*);\* Bernardin de Saint-Pierre (*Paul et Virginie*);\* Rousseau (*Discours sur l'inégalité, Émile, Confessions*); Buffon (*Discours sur le style*); Chamfort (*Maximes*); Beaumarchais (*Le mariage de Figaro*); Condorcet (*Des progrès futurs de l'esprit humain*); Rivarol (*Discours sur l'universalité de la langue française*);\* Vauvenargues (*Réflexions et maximes*);\* Sade (*Justine*);\* Maistre;\* *La Déclaration des droits de l'homme et du Citoyen*;\* Chénier;\* Bonaparte.\*

### **Volume IV. The Nineteenth Century:**

Chateaubriand (*Mémoires d'outre-tombe, René*); Staël;\* Lamartine; Vigny; Hugo (there is far less of him, though, than in the original edition); Musset; Stendhal; Balzac (*La femme abandonnée*); Mérimée (*Imango*); Sand; Sainte-Beuve (*La méthode critique*); Flaubert (*Un coeur simple*); Zola (*L'inondation*); Gautier; Leconte de Lisle, Heredia; Baudelaire; Verlaine; Rimbaud; Mallarmé; Maeterlinck; Maupassant (*La Serre*). Alphonse Daudet and Anatole France have been dropped.

### **Volume V. The Twentieth Century:**

Not surprisingly, this volume has seen numerous changes. To be sure, the first part still features the very same selections as in the original edition: Verne, Péguy, Claudel, Valéry, Proust, Gide, Colette, Apollinaire, Breton, Saint-John Perse, Cocteau, Sartre, Camus, Michaux, Artaud, Ionesco, Beckett, Genet, Césaire, and Senghor. Authors dropped from this edition include Giraudoux, Mauriac, Malraux, Giono, Michaux, Aragon, Éluard, Prévert, Queneau, Saint-Exupéry, and Anouilh.

Some of these authors probably were too difficult for students, but it is a shame about Malraux, Mauriac, Saint-Exupéry, and Prévert, since it has been my experience that students relate well to these particular authors. However, Rivers has tried very hard to accommodate the changing nature of Francophone literary discourse by including new rubrics that pay attention, for example, to cinema and Francophone literature. In “Rise of the Media,” Volume V looks at French cinema and drama, in particular the *nouvelle vague* movement, and includes contributions by film critic Joël Magny on the so-called *auteur* controversy in French cinema, director Eric Rohmer’s short story *La Boulangère de Monceau* (which eventually made it to the big screen), and Vera Feyder’s radio drama *Démocratie aux Champs*. In the following rubric, entitled *Beyond France*, Rivers introduces students to Québec, French Louisiana, and the Maghreb, giving the floor to Québécois author Anne Hébert, the Cajun poet-singer-songwriter Zachary Richard, and the Maghrebi writer Abdellatif Laâbi. Both of the preceding sections actually make up the second half of this volume, subtitled *The Late Twentieth Century*, which also includes selections by Simone de Beauvoir (who died in 1986 and therefore, by some, may not be considered representative of the late twentieth century since she ended her distinguished literary career long before then), Marguerite de Yourcenar (ditto), Claude Simon, Robbe-Grillet, Michel Tournier, and Amélie Nothomb.

The selections all are pretty much standard fare in anthologies of French literature developed with the American undergraduate in mind and, for the most part, should be familiar to experienced instructors. The editors’ strategy is basically a sound one: students should be familiar with the “best of the best,” by which I mean the best-known works by the most well-known writers. Marginal works by lesser-known writers just don’t make the cut, however brilliant they may be. The editors seem to subscribe to the theory that anthologies should reflect prevailing taste — the consensus, if you will — rather than help create a new canon, which presumably means that they underestimate the normative importance they have as editors. The literary past of France is written in stone. However, with regard to the late twentieth century, it is clear that Rivers has taken a more activist approach and shown considerable initiative by including so many little-known writers who may or may not make it to the hallowed shores of posterity.

As the editors point out, the book aims at “inclusion rather than exclusion” (Vol I, 1). Still, it goes without saying that not every worthy author can be included, but there is more than enough to go around. It is a rare class — even a one-year course — that can do justice to all five volumes in this series. So, instructors will have to pick and choose judiciously to find those authors and texts that seem most appropriate for their particular class. Perhaps they will want to include another play by Molière, say, and can easily find an inexpensive French edition. Perhaps they will want to include a more sophisticated critical apparatus. Perhaps they will want to include study questions and group projects of their own, given the fact that the editors provide little more than vocabulary notes. But the basic fact is that one must start somewhere, and this five-volume set is as good a starting point as any. Until undergraduate students have mastered the basics, they are not really in a good position to challenge any literary paradigm with any degree of credibility, now, are they? Although one might disagree about specifics, the overall design of this project is

very persuasive. There just happens to be such a thing as a body of great French literature which has developed and matured over time and which looks to posterity, that is, to teachers to transmit the wisdom of the *anciens et modernes* to future generations. Granted, some parts of the canon are more worthy of preservation than others, to say nothing of new arrivals who knock on the door of tradition, demanding admission; however, until one has gained some sense of critical perspective, it is difficult to speak with any degree of authority about who should be present or not at the *table ronde* of one thousand years of French literature. It is up to each individual instructor to use this series as a base and teach each text critically to truly fulfill the humanistic potential of literature, which is to graduate students who can think critically about the present after digesting the lessons of the past.

Although this new edition of an old classic has its limitations, as mentioned above, its many good qualities are far more obvious in the mind of this reviewer. *A Survey of French Literature* can be used in a one-year long survey of French literature and, why not, in a century-specific survey of, say, the seventeenth century in which the instructor uses it as a home base, in addition to which students read a variety of other texts. *A Survey of French Literature* is far more *maniable* than either Lagarde et Michard or Xavier Darcos, and better suited to the needs of American undergraduates.

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### **Publisher's Response**

Thank you for this extensive review of the five-volume *Survey of French Literature*, originally published by the venerable Morris Bishop, which Kenneth Rivers has updated. This project was an opportunity to provide a very reasonably priced and flexible solution to covering literature at the second-, third- and fourth-year levels. Any literature survey text requires its editor to make hundreds of choices, all important to someone, and each of them difficult to make. Yet the desire was not to define an exclusive list, but to provide the essentials at a reasonable price, and allow the instructor to make the appropriate selections.

Ron Pullins  
Focus Publishing

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## **Blood, Elizabeth and Yasmina Moarek. *Intrigue: Langue, culture et mystère dans le monde francophone.* 2nd edition.**

**New Jersey: Pearson Education, Inc., 2007. ISBN: 0-13-221378-8.**

*Intrigue: Langue, culture et mystère dans le monde francophone* is touted as a mystery story by its publishers, who state that "this mystery story, however,

is not written in a traditional narrative format. Rather, it evolves through the chapter dialogues, listening comprehension selections, communicative activities, and even grammar exercise in the textbook. With each episode in each chapter, the story progresses, and the students learn more about the characters' motives as they pick up clues related to the twists and turns of the story line." The publishers go on to assure us that the 5 Cs will still be addressed, just as they would in a "normal" textbook.

This is an intermediate-level text and assumes a fairly good knowledge of the language. Each of the ten chapters is structured in a similar way. There is a chapter overview called *Avant-propos*. It serves to introduce the featured cultural content and story. The next section, *Épisode 1*, introduces a new episode of the mystery story. Activities practice all language skills, but the focus is on reading and vocabulary building. *Épisode 2* focuses on grammatical skills while still taking an oral/aural approach for the most part. *Épisode 3* reinforces the grammatical concepts but focuses on speaking and writing. The final section of each chapter is the *Dénouement* where students will find activities that synthesize the material taught.

When I first read the description of the methodology, I feared a rehash of the Spanish *Destinos* series. While *Destinos* had its target audience and its strong points, the level of language soon made it seem fake. The videos quickly became dated. Although students liked *Destinos* for the most part, they often made fun of it as well. So I was pleased to see that this text had a lot more to offer.

All directions are given in French, which one would expect at the intermediate level. The cultural information is well presented and supplemented with maps, pictures and short explanations, where appropriate, of important details. The first chapter launches us right into the story, which begins at a hotel in Louisiana. We meet Claire and Jean-Louis, who are two of the main characters. Their exchanges are authentic and believable. Users are immediately interested and want to know more. I found that the dialogues stopped too soon, and I wanted to keep turning the pages to find out more. Later in the same section we learn a little more about Claire and Jean-Louis in another dialogue. This one is set up differently than the first, though. It is meant to be read aloud with students playing the roles of the characters. For example, the student who plays Claire will have some choices to make, as the dialogue presents options for what she can say. When Jean-Louis invites her to dinner, she can say "(C'est tentant/ J'aimerais beaucoup/ ???)." The question marks call for students to be creative and imagine an appropriate response. This is a quite clever presentation, which this reviewer has not seen before. Although most of the options mean the same thing, students learn more than one pat answer in a given context while also having the option of creating their own response.

Grammar is explained in English in the *Épisode 2* section of the chapter. Although the use of English may be reassuring to students, especially at the beginning of the semester, it probably could have been reduced or phased out by the end of the text. Overall the level of the activities is quite sophisticated. There are simpler activities, such as filling in the blank with the correct form and tense of a specific verb, and then there are more open-ended questions, often linking back



to the film. For example, in Chapter 7 students learn the past conditional and are asked to imagine what the characters' lives would have been like if they had not met each other. Students are asked to write a certain number of sentences on this subject and then to compare them with their classmates' answers. This approach should lead to great discussion, since students will have already thought about the topic and presumably have something to say.

In the final section, students are asked to complete tasks and activities that ask them to synthesize what they have learned in the chapter. Although the link to the topics was clearer in some chapters than in others, this section, for the most part, provides a valuable reading activity. The very first chapter has a small selection from *Les Liaisons dangereuses*, and other chapters draw their selections from a variety of French and Francophone literature, selections that are well chosen.

Overall I was intrigued by this textbook, which I guess is an appropriate response given its name. It has solid grammar and reading activities. I did not get a chance to see the workbook or the videos; however, if they are of the same caliber, I would imagine that they would be a welcome addition to the series.

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## **Borra, Adriana and Ruth Mader-Koltay.** ***German Through Film.***

**New Haven and London: Yale University Press. 2007. ISBN: 0-300-10950-4. \$25.00.**

Finding teaching materials that are contemporary enough to be interesting to students and linguistically appropriate to their language level is challenging at best. Add to this the difficulty of reworking materials to make them pedagogically sound without compromising their authenticity, and it soon becomes clear why there are so few truly excellent classroom materials for foreign language teachers. *German Through Film* addresses both of these potential shortcomings by providing an up-to-date, flexible, and pedagogically sound series of film modules that can be used at various levels of instruction. The target audience is primarily high school and college students of German, though some of the selected films address controversial topics that may not be readily accepted or approved for secondary school use.

That aside, the films were chosen based on their availability both in Germany and the United States, as well as for their portrayal of a number of post-war social issues that affect the daily lives and the collective conscience of contemporary German speakers. The eight film modules cover a range of topics from the Nazi regime (*Comedian Harmonists, Aimeé und Jaguar, Nirgendwo in Afrika*) and the integration of minorities into the national fabric (*Jenseits der Stille, Im Juli*) to reunification (*Good Bye Lenin!*) and post-modern, Euro-global Germany (*Lola rennt; Was tun,*

*wenn's brennt?*). The underlying teaching methodology rests on content-based instruction, letting the content of the films drive the teaching of German.

Each module contains the following items: a film synopsis in German; pre-viewing/schemata-building activities relating the film to students' personal lives; vocabulary lists and exercises; a series of comprehension questions ranging from cloze, true-false questions through extended comprehension questions to more open-ended, inferential/opinion questions; and follow-up activities requiring interpretation of characters, scenes, film quotes, etc. as well as suggestions for group or individual projects. This rich variety allows the films and the accompanying exercises and tasks to be used by beginning through advanced students, though the complexity of the synopses, the films themselves, and the richer and more global activities will require at least intermediate proficiency. The pedagogical strength of this approach is that it thoroughly addresses students' cognitive needs for appropriate activities before, during, and after viewing. Furthermore, the build-up from "intensive" cloze to open-ended, "extensive" analytical/interpretive exercises provides the kind of scaffolding that leads students to higher proficiency and forces increasingly detailed attention to language and culture.

One particular strength of the materials lies in their attention to sociolinguistic concerns and authentic language use. This focus is seen in exercises asking students to attribute film quotes to certain characters, as well as exercises that ask them to analyze language registers by translating from German slang to standard German to standard English to English slang. Special vocabulary sections list items specific to the time frame referenced in the film, i.e., East German words or political terminology of the Nazi party. Students are also exposed to a rich and varied sample of new vocabulary words — particularly adjectives — in compiling descriptions of the film characters. One major concern related to vocabulary is that the awareness of semantic mapping does not carry over into the general vocabulary lists, which are still organized in alphabetical order. However, instructors can and should modify their materials for maximum benefit in the classroom; this is an easy fix.

*German Through Film* is particularly well suited to the needs of post-secondary, undergraduate German programs that constantly face the challenge of maintaining interest in all things German and increasing enrollments. With its comprehensive yet short overview of German cinema since 1945, extensive vocabulary list of film-specific terms, and suggestions for very critical, high-end analytical student projects, this compilation can easily serve as the main text for either a general elective course based on cross-cultural depictions or a more specialized course focused on film as a genre of German expression. Furthermore, its pedagogical approach is both sound and easily replicated, making it suitable to deal with more canonical films as vehicles of language study and easy to add newer films to a course syllabus as they are produced. As German film becomes more popular as a worldwide, mainstream medium, the approach taken here certainly will help grow student interest in German cinema.

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## **Brogni, Patrizia, Antonella Filippone, and Alessandra Muzzi. *Raccontare il Novecento*.**

**Roma: Edizioni Edilingua, 2005. ISBN: 960-6632-16-4.**

*Raccontare il Novecento* is a compact reader designed for students enrolled in high intermediate and advanced Italian language courses. The readings chosen by Brogni, Filippone, and Muzzi are taken from the works of Dino Buzzati, Italo Calvino, Natalia Ginzburg, and Alberto Moravia, who could be considered representative of twentieth-century Italian literature. Buzzati represents the surrealist vein, while Ginzburg and Moravia are considered realists (Moravia's works, however, also exhibit a touch of surrealism, as noted in the excerpts from *Racconti surrealisti e satirici*) and Calvino, though also a realist, represents the "vena fantastica," or fantastic literature, which is also a part of modern Italian literature. The text serves as an excellent introduction to the study of Italian literary language, a component which is often missing from the contemporary approach to language learning. Used alone, or combined with a comprehensive review of advanced grammatical structures, *Raccontare il Novecento* will provide college or university students with a solid preparation for language and literature courses beyond the second-year level.

Written completely in Italian, *Raccontare il Novecento* is divided into sixteen chapters preceded by a brief introduction and ending with a biography of the authors studied. While working with this text, students not only perfect their written and oral language skills, but also refine their reading comprehension and begin to understand what Italian literature is all about and what literary discussion entails. Through the excerpts that make up the body of the text, students are introduced to an excellent sampling of modern Italian literature: Buzzati's *Sessanta racconti*, Calvino's *Palomar* and *Cosmicomiche*, Ginzburg's *Piccoli virtù*, and Moravia's *Racconti surrealisti e satirici*, *Racconti romani*, and *Bob*.

*Raccontare il Novecento* is meticulously organized. Each chapter begins with a reading selection of about two pages, carefully edited, so that it reads like a story. Words or expressions that the authors, always mindful of the students using this text, have determined to be new or more difficult appear in bold within the reading and are explained (in Italian) in the glossary at the end of each selection. The activities and exercises included in each chapter focus on reading comprehension, understanding elements of style, interpretation of language, and oral and/or written discussion of the themes and ideas prevalent in the particular work studied. Although the activities found under the headings *Attività di comprensione*; *Riflessioni narratologiche*; *Riflessioni linguistiche*, and *Attività di produzione orale e/o scritta* are challenging, they are tailored to each selection so that students not only will have a full understanding of what has been read, but also will

deepen their knowledge of literary style, vocabulary, and more complex grammatical structures. Thus, *Raccontare il Novecento* enables students to refine what has been learned previously and actually bring it to a more advanced level. The questions within each activity are varied and interesting. The *Attività di comprensione* tests comprehension of the text through comparison charts, sequence of events questions, true/false questions, and matching columns, as well as general short-answer questions dealing with the content of the reading. *Riflessioni narrative* asks in-depth questions on narrative style, linguistic strategies, character development, the creation of atmosphere, and the function of descriptive language. *Riflessioni linguistiche* deals with the use of language and grammatical structures. It is through this activity that students gain a constructive review of grammar and learn advanced forms of syntax and sentence structure and perfect their knowledge of word formation. The wide-ranging exercises deal with the use of prepositions, synonyms and antonyms, noun changes using suffixes, idiomatic expressions, forming nouns from adjectives, recognizing infinitives from conjugated verbs, past participles, forming nouns from verbs, the use of the conditional, using the *passato prossimo*, the use of subject pronouns, direct and indirect discourse, reflexive verbs, the subjunctive, and sentence order. The last activities section of each chapter, *Attività di produzione orale e/o scritta*, gives the student the chance to put into practice what has been learned by asking questions about the readings that lead to composition work as well as discussion.

*Raccontare il Novecento* fills the need for an upper-level text that introduces authentic literary passages and provides a variety of opportunities to review vocabulary in context and analyze sentence structure. Therefore, it is a valuable and effective tool to teach language and culture that will be much appreciated by instructors and students alike.

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## **Brown, Joan L. and Carmen Martín Gaité.** ***Conversaciones creadoras.* 3rd edition.**

**New York: Houghton Mifflin, 2006. Includes: In-text Audio CDs, Student companion Website ([www.college.hmco.com/students](http://www.college.hmco.com/students)), Instructor resources include: Instructor's HM ClassPrep CD and companion Website ([www.college.hmco.com/instructors](http://www.college.hmco.com/instructors)). ISBN: 0-618-48107-9.**

What if your passport were a bit tattered and you unexpectedly found yourself negotiating your entry through Immigration in Madrid? Or you were watching the national soccer championship with your host family and the correct sports terms eluded you? These scenarios, and many other communicative conflicts and doubts, unfolded for my students during our summer program in Málaga, Spain. Therefore, it was very fitting, indeed, that I was reviewing *Conversaciones creadoras* (henceforth *CC*) while directing our program there. Far too often students will ace a written test or memorize a great presentation stateside, but later fail to thrive

linguistically, and therefore socially and culturally, when immersed in the target culture. While there is no substitute for study abroad, *CC* does its very best to replicate the immersion experience — especially as this pertains to interpersonal communication based upon conflict — within the static space of the classroom. My overall evaluation of *CC* is extremely positive. From its wealth of role-play scenarios, to vocabulary that “works,” to culturally rich contexts and activities, *CC* should be your next conversation textbook (and an absolute must if you are preparing students for a study abroad experience).

Based on national standards behind the 5 Cs approach, *CC* asks students to be active learners in a twofold way. First, they must participate in role play, as well as in paired and group activities, throughout the semester. Second, they must be responsible for their own learning, as described in the introductory “Learning Strategies” section. I should note, too, that *CC* is geared towards the mid-intermediate through advanced ACTFL levels.

Each chapter is divided into carefully designed sections so that the 5 Cs are never mutually exclusive categories. An engaging cultural reading on discrete topics such as tourism, travel, sports, family, health, and the like, opens each chapter. The first reading mentions that, as a tourist destination, Spain is the third most visited country in the world. Given that many of our students will participate in a trip or study abroad program there, it makes sense to include ample information on this country, as *CC* does. Follow-up activities include comprehension questions and Internet activities related to the topic at hand. These activities and additional suggestions can be found on the Student Companion Website. My personal favorites are comparing Ebay España with Ebay in the U.S., and searching for the best (and worst!) apartment rentals in Santiago, Chile.

The material then moves into vocabulary acquisition by providing a basic and manageable list with corresponding activities. Vocabulary practice continues throughout, and a longer *Vocabulario útil* list closes each chapter. The activities often are quite creative and provide plenty of variety from one chapter to the next. One activity asks students to sit in a circle and verbally recall what others in the group bought at the market that day, with each student adding his or her own product to the mix. A perfect fit for a section on buying and selling.

With vocabulary and context setting the stage, *CC* next offers what is perhaps its most distinctive aspect: the *Conversación creadora*. Each one is authored by world-renowned Spanish writer Carmen Martín Gaité and presents an authentic situation that often centers on a contextualized conflict (a stolen purse, a lost reservation, a flat tire). The dialogue remains open-ended so that the student may speculate further on possible scenarios for closure during the post-listening activities. The audio CDs dramatize the dialogue twice: once without pauses, and a second time with pauses for structured practice. The *Conversaciones* present entertaining and convincing slices of life from the Hispanic world. Moreover, they convey a very universal human element through believable characters like bored teenagers, flirtatious truck drivers, and nervous travelers. As these dialogues provide a wealth of cultural content, they also build an effective bridge between cultures.

The grammar sections strategically follow the *Conversaciones*, so that explanations and examples refer to the dialogues and cultural readings. Common trou-

ble areas, such as imperative forms and the subjunctive mood, are described in Spanish with two or three activities provided for practice thereafter. The ClassPrep CD contains answers for these and all other cloze-ended exercises. The grammar explanations are concise, intelligible, and accurate. I was pleasantly surprised, for example, to see that the grammar segment for *gustar* rightly acknowledges the first- and second-person usage of the verb.

The remainder of each chapter is dedicated entirely to interactive scenarios, role plays, native-speaker interviews for listening comprehension, and exposure to realia. An Instructor Companion Website offers suggestions for how best to manage the scenario-based dynamic produced by these sections. Students in the *Escenas* portion of each chapter, or what may be described as kind of conversational capstone activity, form pairs (or groups of three) in order to act out the conflict described. The *Escenas* are explained in English so that students cannot simply repeat the words on the page. From conflicts as varied as watching a bullfight to how to invest a million dollars inherited from a wealthy aunt, these paired activities adeptly call for application and synthesis for their successful implementation.

The *Más actividades creadoras* section reinforces and recycles the material through additional paired work, group work, all-class discussions, and individual reflection. New to this edition, a series of persuasive drawings motivates students to invent stories, and the “Maps and Documents” segments offer a glimpse of realia in the form of an airline schedule or a subway map, for example. The native speaker interviews on the audio CDs expose students to accents from around the Spanish-speaking world. The questions eliciting these interviews make for appealing listening, given their student-centered focus.

*Conversaciones creadoras* recreates the complex daily experiences of living in another country and using a second language. This textbook does not, however, tediously check off the 5 Cs from chapter to chapter in a conceptually dry way. Rather, it weaves them in and out of each section and textual component holistically and authentically. Instead of reaching one uninspiring consensus after another, your students will be engrossed in believable, realistic conflicts as they converse, advise, inquire, negotiate, convince, assist, persuade and, more than likely, greatly improve their proficiencies in multiple linguistic and cultural realms.

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**Donley, Philip Redwine, José Luis Benavides,  
and José A. Blanco. *Aventuras: Primer curso de  
la lengua española*. 2nd edition.**

**Boston: Vistas Higher Learning, 2007. Includes: Instructor’s  
Annotated Edition, Workbook/Video Manual, Lab Manual,  
Workbook/Video Manual/Lab Manual Answer Key, Instructor’s**

**Resource CD-ROM, *Aventuras and Aventuras en los países hispanos* DVD Set, Lab Program MP3s CD-ROM, Textbook MP3s CD-ROM, *Aventuras* Video CD-ROM, Testing Program, Overhead Transparencies, Super Website. ISBN: 1-59334-894-0.**

The second edition of the *Aventuras* series is intended to be a “user-friendly” introduction to Spanish. It owes its conception to the success of its predecessors, *Vistas: Introducción a la lengua española* and *Panorama*, a briefer version of *Vistas*, and follows the same video-integrated approach of the first two. As is the case with *Vistas*, it would take much more space than available here to describe every virtue and facet of the *Aventuras* series, as it is highly comprehensive and includes extensive ancillaries. Therefore, my goal here is to merely highlight some of its most notable features and unique qualities.

Although *Aventuras* borrows heavily from the content of *Vistas* — some of the images, exercises, and ancillary components, such as the overhead transparencies and the *Fotonovela* are virtually the same as for *Vistas* — it does provide its own unique content, original design, and a full line of fully integrated ancillaries, available in hard copy or online. Some notable differences from *Vistas* are the sequencing of the material, the conciseness of explanations and exercises, and some of the cultural content. Another of its unique features is its presentation of grammar and the fact that exercises are presented on facing pages rather than across several pages, which eliminates the need to look elsewhere in the text to reference grammar. Moreover, the size of the images and print used is larger, and the overall design of the text also is more open than in *Vistas*.

The goals of the Standards of Foreign Language Learning in the twenty-first century, also known as the 5 Cs, strongly inform the content and layout of *Aventuras*. Thus, in each chapter Communication, Cultures, Connections, Comparisons, and Communities serve as motivational forces for the types of activities provided. These goals are made evident on each page also by small icons that indicate which standard is satisfied with each activity.

Because of its adherence to the 5 Cs, *Aventuras* follows an interactive, communicative approach to language learning, developing the speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills necessary to equip students to use Spanish in real-life situations. Each chapter provides ample opportunities to practice these skills through diverse vocabulary, grammar, listening, and reading comprehension exercises to be done both individually and in pairs or groups.

The textbook is divided in such a way as to approach each of these four skills separately and yet ultimately cohesively integrate them. The sixteen chapters are divided into sections easily identified by a color-coded bar that runs across the top of each page. The first page of each chapter functions as a lesson-opener, explaining its goals and content. The first section, *Preparación*, introduces the central theme of focus for the chapter in terms of vocabulary, readings, and grammar exercises. Here users will find lots of useful images to illustrate the most common or “high-frequency” vocabulary, Spanish-English lists of theme-related terminology, and variations of terms used in different regions of the Spanish-speaking world. A variety of exercises lead the student through stages of utilizing vocabulary begin-

ning with guided responses to more communicative activities. In addition, this section contains a useful segment on Spanish pronunciation and a list of ancillary resources that will further help students polish their pronunciation.

The next section, *Aventuras*, corresponds to the video series that accompanies the text, which I will discuss later. It provides a shortened version of the script, video stills, and activities from each episode. The third section, *Gramática*, presents the grammar lesson of the chapter, integrating vocabulary and *Aventuras* video segments into explanations. As I mentioned above, one of the unique features of *Aventuras* is that instead of exercises directly following the presentation and explanations of each grammar point on the page, the condensed grammar explanations are arranged on two pages facing each other. Thus, each page is separated into two broad panels, the outer panel containing grammar explanations and the inner panel providing the related exercises. Nonetheless, this unique layout can be both a help and a hindrance. Having all the information presented on two facing pages is more practical, but, at the same time, in order to include everything, the spacing is tighter and somewhat overwhelming visually. The grammar exercises, however, like the vocabulary, are sequentially organized to go from directed, form-focused tasks to more interactive, open-ended activities. The grammar segment of *Aventuras* ends with a new review component that allows for more practice, and a music section called *Ritmos hispanos* that introduces artists and their music, which in some way relates to the themes, grammar, or vocabulary presented in the chapter. The last two sections, *Ampliación* and *Lectura*, contain more listening and speaking activities related to the theme of the chapter, but mostly focus on fine tuning writing and reading skills. *Ampliación* also provides a list of related topics that students may research on the *Aventuras* Super Website.

One of the many merits of *Aventuras* is its emphasis on cultural content. Relying heavily on authentic materials, it exposes students to aspects of everyday life in the different countries and regions where Spanish is spoken. This text is accompanied by two cultural video series: *Aventuras*, which I mentioned above, is the same as the *Fotonovela* found in the *Vistas* textbook, and *Aventuras en los países hispanos*. *Aventuras* follows four college students from different parts of the Spanish-speaking world as they journey together on a bus tour to various parts of Ecuador. In each chapter the students and their bus driver have a different adventure that utilizes vocabulary and grammar studied in that chapter. Although the quality of the acting and dialogues in the series at times is mediocre and forced, the video allows students to practice aurally what they are studying in the chapter and to hear Spanish spoken with different accents. Since the text provides a synthesized version of the script, students can familiarize themselves with the content of each episode and practice reading the script out loud before watching the video. Moreover, each episode contains cultural vignettes that show everyday life in the countries that each of the four travelers is from. *Aventuras en los países hispanos* is a documentary of Hispanic culture in several different areas of the Spanish-speaking world, including Hispanics in the United States and Canada, and a segment on Equatorial Guinea. The video is well done; however, the one drawback is that the episodes are entirely narrated, never allowing the natural sounds of the people and places in the video to be heard.



The ancillary components of *Aventuras* greatly enhance its marketability and facilitate course organization. In addition to the Workbook/Video Manual, the Lab Manual, and their corresponding answer keys, the Instructor's Resource CD-ROM is a helpful tool that provides a test generator, print-ready tests for each chapter, semester exams, and the testing program MP3s, as well as the electronic equivalents of the materials also available in print format such as answer keys, the Instructor's Resource Manual, and overhead transparencies.

Perhaps the most distinctive component of *Aventuras* is the *Aventuras.vhlcentral.com* Super Website. This online resource is a new feature available with the second edition of *Aventuras* and is a fundamental tool for both students and instructors. It provides students with additional explanations of the material introduced in the textbook, extensive tutorials in a range of formats that allow for extra practice with instant feedback, online reference tools, and access to supplemental vocabulary and to the video and audio components of the series. For instructors it functions as a course manager. Here instructors can basically plan out their course, assign homework, receive quiz results, track student progress, obtain lesson plans, send messages to students, and so on. This feature will also make it possible for students to be more pro-active in learning Spanish, more in control of the amount of contact they can have with the language outside of class; also, it will free up class time for more hands-on, practical use of the language in communicative situations.

Overall, *Aventuras* is a wonderful and timely addition to the Vistas repertoire of quality texts. Its conscientious adherence to the national standards, its emphasis on culture, the streamlined design and visual appeal, along with the addition of the Super Website, make this series a practical and valuable tool for teaching and learning Spanish.

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## **Eschenberg-Neisser, Eva. *Abrir Paso: Spanish Levels 1-4 Cultural Series Copy Masters.***

**Montreal: Miraflores, 1997-2006. ISBN: 2-921554-61-5. Each copy master set is \$18.00; the entire set of forty-nine copy masters is \$735.00 (a savings of \$147.00). The average length of each copy master is 20-24 pp. For orders, contact Miraflores at [miraflores@sympatico.ca](mailto:miraflores@sympatico.ca), phone: (514) 483-0722; fax: (514) 483-1212; or [www.miraflores.org](http://www.miraflores.org).**

Eva Eschenberg-Neisser's *Abrir Paso: Spanish Levels 1-4 Cultural Series Copy Masters* is a delightful collection of interdisciplinary thematic units, roughly corresponding to four years of high school study. However, the units can be easily adapted for use at both the middle school and college/university levels.

Eschenberg-Neisser's aim is to provide teachers with effective cultural materials on as wide a range of topics as possible in order to engage all types of language learners as well as their teachers. Teachers can pick the units best suited to their individual curriculum or use the entire series as supplemental material. For *Abrir Paso*, Levels 1-3 comprise thirteen units (A-M), and Level 4 comprises ten units (A-J). A detailed listing of each level's units is found at the end of this review.

The units are regularly updated. For example, units 3H, *Ciencias naturales y turismo*, and 3I, *Dos creadores españoles del siglo XX: Lorca y Almodóvar*, were revised in October 2006. They now include a Teacher's Guide (*Guía del profesor*), quizzes (*Pruebas*), and updated information on Almodóvar. All of the *Abrir Paso*'s copy master units have answer keys. Moreover, some of the *Abrir Paso*'s cultural units contain a "nota cultural" section. For example, 2G: *España: Quinto Centenario* has a nota cultural on *¿Es la siesta el deporte nacional de España?* and 4C: Chile has one on *"la cortesía."*

What I particularly like about *Abrir Paso* is that the grammatical lessons are seamlessly linked with the interdisciplinary topic at hand, as well as the fact that it is all done in Spanish. Level 1 units reinforce the present verb tenses, Level 2 begins with some past tenses, Level 3 includes all past tenses, and Level 4 attacks the subjunctive and conditional moods. Moreover, even at the first level, the units provide suggestions and resources for engaging oral presentations, class projects, and writing assignments. For example, as described in the 2007 Miraflores catalog: "1F: Andalucía — Muslim Spain! Admire the architecture and counter stereotypes and racism. Walk through the Alhambra and practice *gustar*. Choose a place to visit in Andalucía and spend the day in Torremolinos. Deductive thinking skills and important information about Muslim Spain are the cornerstones of three thematic units" (6). And with the emphasis on Standard 3 (Connect with Other Disciplines and Acquire Information) of the National Standards for Foreign Language Learning, who could resist "4I: *Una plantación azucarera* — Sugar and slavery in Cuba can be analyzed from many different points of view. Students research specific questions from one of the following categories: science, art, literature, math, history, geography. For example, the historical assignment deals with Cuban slavery, the scientific with the steps followed to produce sugar from cane" (6). This reviewer had tremendous success in using those units emphasizing ecology, a timely subject given current concerns regarding global warming and the success of Al Gore's 2006 documentary *An Inconvenient Truth*.

Eschenberg-Neisser's *Abrir Paso: Spanish Level 1-4 Cultural Series Copy Masters/Workbooks* is a comprehensive set of enrichment units that are well researched with a breadth of range and culturally appropriate illustrations appealing to students and teachers alike. My only suggestion would be to expand the Level 4 unit offerings to include the ever-growing Spanish-speaking communities of the United States.

***The Abrir Paso Level 1 units (with their latest date of revision) are as follows:***

- 1A: Los países y sus capitales (Mapas de Latinoamérica y España) (1997);
- 1B: Personajes históricos (Miguel de Cervantes y Sor Juana, Pablo Picasso, Juan Carlos I) (1997);

- 1C: Deportes y música (Diego Maradona y Emilio Butragueño, Julio Iglesias, Luis Miguel y Pablo Ruiz) (1997);
- 1D: Preguntas sobre el mundo hispano (La importancia del español, Los nombres de los hispanos, ¿Quiénes hablan bien el español?, Monedas latinoamericanas) (1997);
- 1E: Compara los países (España y el Perú) (Barcelona y Mexico D.F., la regiones de Latinoamérica) (2005);
- 1F: España — Andalucía (“Visita Andalucía,” Granada: La Alhambra, Una ciudad española:Torremolinos) (1999);
- 1G: México (Los ambulantes, El metro de la Ciudad de México) (2005);
- 1H: El español en el mundo (Más mapas de Latinoamérica, Más mapas de España) (2002);
- 1I: México D.F (La Ciudad de México, La calle Madero, Coyoacán) (2006);
- 1J: Más personajes históricos (Carlos V, Moctezuma y Cortés, Simón Bolívar) (2002);
- 1K: Las culturas indígenas (Copán: una ciudad maya, El calendario azteca, Las misteriosas Líneas de Nasca) (2002);
- 1L: Tres artistas españoles (Goya, Rodrigo, Gaudí) (2003); and
- 1M: El nuevo milenio (Adiós peseta, La computadora/el ordenador, El fútbol) (2003).

***The Abrir Paso Level 2 units, with their latest date of revision, are:***

- 2A: México: pasado y presente (Las culturas indígenas, Rivera, Orozco y Sequeiros, tres muralistas mexicanos, Nota cultural: regatear) (2001);
- 2B: México: ecología (La Contaminación en la Ciudad de México, La mariposa monarca, mariposa migratoria) (2001);
- 2C: Guatemala y Honduras (¿Es la marimba un instrumento latinoamericano,? El transporte: autobuses, Nota cultural: La Navidad y el Año Nuevo) (2001);
- 2D: El Salvador y Costa Rica (La ruta maya: ecoturismo, De San José a Puerto Limón) (2001);
- 2E: Panamá, Costa Rica y Nicaragua (Carretas y autobuses; arte popular en Panamá y Costa Rica, El canal de Panamá: entre Atlántico y Pacífico, Nota cultural: los insultos y los piropos) (2001);
- 2F: Puerto Rico y la República Dominicana (El béisbol, Un papá modelo: la rana coquí, Nota cultural: comidas y bebidas del Caribe) (2001);
- 2G: España (Sevilla: Expo '92 y la importancia del Encuentro, Barcelona: ¿para quién son los Juegos Olímpicos, Madrid: 1992, Nota cultural: ¿Es la siesta el deporte nacional de España?) (1997);

- 2H: España: ecología (El parque Nacional de Ordesa y Monte Perdido, La cigüeña blanca) (2001);
- 2I: El mundo natural (El río Amazonas, Los Andes, El desierto de Atacama) (2003);
- 2J: Colombia (Fernando Botero, Cartagena de Indias) (2004);
- 2K: Ecuador (La educación, El mercado de Otavalo) (2004);
- 2L: Bolivia (La llama, La mina de Potosí) (2004); and
- 2M: Perú (El Cusco, El Señor de Sipán) (2004).

***The Abrir Paso Level 3 units, with their latest date of revision, are:***

- 3A: Venezuela: turismo y vida urbana (Isla Margarita: turismo venezolano y extranjero, Caracas: una ciudad latinoamericana) (1998);
- 3B: Venezuela: presente y pasado (El petróleo: mucho más que un producto de exportación, Simón Bolívar: El Libertador) (1998);
- 3C: Colombia: literatura y vida diaria (Gabriel García Márquez, escritor colombiano, La cocaína: problema de nuestros días, Nota cultural: ¿Qué piensa el latinoamericano del norteamericano?) (1998);
- 3D: Ecuador: ciencias naturales y deportes (Las Islas Galápagos: islas extraordinarias, La participación del Ecuador en los Juegos Olímpicos, Nota cultural: de negocios) (1998);
- 3E: Bolivia: ecología (La Amazonía y la ecología del mundo, La papa: comida del pasado y del futuro) (1998);
- 3F: Perú: pasado y presente (Machu Picchu: ciudad mágica, Jacinta Quispe: ambulante, Nota cultural: la ropa) (2006);
- 3G: España: deportes (El fútbol y la tele, Perico Delgado: ciclista, Nota cultural: La España del futuro y las consecuencias sociales) (1998);
- 3H: México: ciencias naturales y turismo (Nace un volcán: el Parícutín, El turismo como industria: Cancún y Huatulco) (2006);
- 3I: Dos creadores españoles del siglo XX (Pedro Almodóvar, cineasta, Federico García Lorca, poeta) (2006);
- 3J: Argentina (La telenovela, Jorge Luis Borges) (2005);
- 3K: España: Galicia (Un desastre ecológico: el *Prestige*, El Camino de Santiago) (2005);
- 3L: Chile (El cielo del sur, El Festival Internacional de la Canción de Viña del Mar) (2006); and
- 3M: Uruguay y Argentina (El mate y la carne; Las cataratas del Iguazú, Nota cultural: La pampa) (2006).

***The Abrir Paso Level 4 units, with their latest date of revision, are:***

- 4A: Argentina (El Tango, Decir Argentina es decir carne) (1998);
- 4B: Chile: ecología (La Región de los Lagos, Chile: ¿maravilla económica o desastre ecológico?) (1998);
- 4C: Chile (Violeta Parra y la Nueva Canción, Carmen Quintana, Nota cultural: la cortesía) (1998);
- 4D: Uruguay (El español de América: el caso uruguayo, El Galpón y el teatro uruguayo) (1998);
- 4E: Paraguay (Treinta comunidades utópicas: los jesuitas en el Paraguay, Paraguay, país bilingüe, Nota cultural: saludos y despedidas) (1998);
- 4F: España (El olivo: el árbol más característico del Mediterráneo, Hace mil años, ¿quién iba a Córdoba?) (1998);
- 4G: España (Felipe II, Las meninas de Velásquez) (1998);
- 4H: Argentina (Mafalda, Buenos Aires: París de Sudamérica) (1999);
- 4I: Cuba (Un galeón: Nuestro Señora de Atocha, Una plantación azucarera: Manaca Iznaga); and
- 4J: México colonial (Sor Juana y la cocina de Nueva España, El Camino de la Plata) (2002).

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**Publisher's Response**

We thank Dr. Angelini for her insightful review of our black line masters: the *Abrir paso cultural series 1-4*. We are especially grateful to her for underlining the fact that our thematic units “engage all types of language learners” while furthering cultural knowledge and understanding of the Spanish speaking world. As she says, the interdisciplinary nature of the series allows students to pursue their own interests (arts, history, sports, science, etc.) and teachers to match the units to their own curriculum.

The copy master format is ideal for many classroom situations. First, for the teachers who concentrate on specific countries in a given year. Because our units are organized by country, the teacher chooses the specific units that will enrich the curriculum. For example, many teachers who work on México love the science unit on the dramatic eruption of the *Parícutín* volcano and the ensuing evacuation and destruction of two entire villages. Second, it is a great solution for those struggling with two or more language levels in one classroom during the same period. By choosing copy masters from different levels, students work on the same country and progress at their own pace. Group A works on *La cigüeña blanca*

and practices the comparative and superlative while Group B works on the *Camino de Santiago* and practices preterits and imperfects. Thus, as the reviewer observes, language and grammar are seamlessly interwoven to further both linguistic and cultural skills. Grammatical and lexical information can be found in our catalog and on our Website. Finally, another group of teachers who delight in our copy masters are those who do not use textbooks or who for budgetary reasons, have out-of-date textbooks. The *Abrir paso* copy masters provide inexpensive supplements that enrich the materials on hand. Since, as the reviewer points out, they are regularly updated, the students get “well-researched” (units) with a “breadth and range” that can “easily be adapted” to the individual curriculum. Please note that the following copy masters have been updated in 2007: El español en el mundo (1H), Más personajes históricos (1J) and España: ecología (2H).

Dr. Angelini’s only criticism is that we do not include units on the Spanish-speaking communities in the United States. Our response is that we are a Canadian publisher that specializes in the countries of the Spanish-speaking world. We leave the task of writing about our neighbor to the south to those with more expertise. We hope other publishers will address this very important issue.

We are very proud to be a leader in supplemental cultural materials, enrichment units clearly anchored on the National Standards for Foreign Language. Please visit our Website [www.miraflores.org](http://www.miraflores.org) for further information on useful cultural materials.

Eva Echenberg-Neisser  
Miraflores

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## **Fukuda, Hiroko. *Jazz Up Your Japanese with Onomatopoeia: For All Levels.***

**Tokyo: Kodansha International, 2003. ISBN: 4-7700-2956-X. Pp.238. \$19.**

Onomatopoeia and mimesis are vital in Japanese communication. *Jazz Up Your Japanese with Onomatopoeia: For All Levels*, previously published in Kodansha International’s Power Japanese series under the title *Flip, Slither, & Bang: Japanese Sound and Action Words* in 1993, is an excellent introduction to Japanese onomatopoeia and mimesis, and is a great supplementary material for students of Japanese at all levels. All the Japanese sentences in this book are written in a mixture of *kana* characters (Japanese syllabary symbols) and *kanji* characters (Chinese characters) with *furigana* (pronunciation aid using *kana*), which are followed by their transliteration in *romaji* (Romanization) and their translation into English.

This book has two major parts. The first is a clear and easy-to-understand linguistic overview of onomatopoeia and mimesis. It starts by revealing to the readers the fascinating unconscious phonological intuitions used in the creation and usage of onomatopoeia and mimesis in language, and gives many English examples such as *plop*, *bop*, *bang*, *splat*, and *squeak* to help the readers understand

the concept. Then it thoroughly explains the phonological uniqueness of Japanese onomatopoeia and mimesis, giving a variety of examples. It discusses how their syllable structures and sound properties such as vowel height, voicing, sonority, nasalization, and manner of articulation are associated with their meanings, how they are shaped into words and placed in sentences, how productive they are, and how they are essential and vital for Japanese communication.

The second part of this book is a collection of eleven situational dialogues, which can be read in any order. Each one is preceded by an inviting illustration that shows the setting of the dialogue. Each situational dialogue is between adults in a real-life context: an office worker and his boss at a bar, a hairdresser and her customer, two married women talking about their husbands at a fitness club. These situational dialogues are all lively and interesting, and some of them are very comical. They reflect a number of modern Japanese cultural, social, pragmatic, and linguistic facts such as bowing, systems of address, negotiation strategies, popular dating venues, drinking customs, and even the Osaka dialect, and all of them are thoroughly explained in notes. Furthermore, these situational dialogues all come in a natural, authentic, and colloquial speech style, containing interjections, sentence fragments, contracted forms, gender-specific sentence endings, and, of course, onomatopoeia and mimesis. Each dialogue includes about ten examples of onomatopoeia and mimesis, and their meanings and functions are explained in detail along with the connotation specification, G (good), N (neutral), or B (bad), to show whether they are used positively or negatively. A few additional sample sentences are provided for each item. A quiz follows that contains about twenty fill-in-the-blank questions. Their answers are provided at the end of all eleven units. A bibliography, an onomatopoeia index, and a general index are provided at the end of the book.

One of the strengths of this book is that the first part (overview of onomatopoeia and mimesis) and the second part (situational dialogues with onomatopoeia and mimesis) complement each other to make this book most effective for learning onomatopoeia and mimesis: the first part offers the phonological and morphological knowledge that students can apply for understanding onomatopoeia and mimesis that are used in the dialogues in the second part, where students can see how vital they are for expressing ideas clearly, vividly, and precisely in real-life contexts. Another strength of this book is the cultural knowledge that students can gain. The dialogues are realistic and fun to read, and notes and explanations are useful for learning Japanese culture, society, and communication patterns. The author does not focus on traditional Japanese culture, which few Japanese nowadays bother with anyway. Instead, she tries to show real-life situations in Japan through lively dialogues. Translation may have some limitations in conveying the precise degree of informality and subtle nuances. Nonetheless, readers can capture these pragmatic subtleties by placing themselves right in the communicative situation provided by the dialogues.

The question is whether this book is truly appropriate for all levels of the Japanese curriculum. The dialogues and sample sentences include advanced grammar such as passive, causative, and conditionals, and advanced vocabulary such as “*dokan desu*” (“I feel the same way”). Perhaps this was inevitable since the author’s intention was to provide real and colloquial Japanese rather than more formal textbook-style Japanese. However, some of the grammar and vocabulary found in this

book is too difficult for beginners to analyze, though they will not have any difficulty understanding the content because all the Japanese sentences are accompanied by their *romaji* transliteration and English translation. They can learn the Japanese speaker's phonological intuition, approximately 200 onomatopoeia/mimesis vocabulary items, and Japanese culture and communication patterns. Due to the fact that the dialogues are mainly between adults, this book is most practical for adult students, but younger students can also enjoy reading this book and can learn from it.

I feel confident concluding that *Jazz Up Your Japanese with Onomatopoeia: For All Levels* is a stimulating, enjoyable, and useful supplementary text for students of Japanese at all levels. With the knowledge and vocabulary acquired from this book, students will learn to describe things, people, feelings, and ideas more naturally, and understand conversations in films, animation, novels, and *manga* (comic books) more easily.

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## **Informatique Services Plus, Inc. *Playing 'N' Learning! — Beginner (5 to 7 years old) / J'apprends en m'amusant — Débutant (5 à 7 ans).***

Computer CD-ROM. Québec: Informatique Services Plus Inc., 2006. ISBN: 2-923442-00-8. Single-user price: \$29.95 CAN (plus shipping and handling). Multi-user computer laboratory price: \$249.95 CAN (plus shipping and handling). For orders and information please contact the publisher: Les Éditions RDL, 102, rue Féré, Saint-Eustache (Québec) J7R 2T5 Canada. Toll Free Tel: (866) 632-1809. E-mail: [info@editionsrdl.com](mailto:info@editionsrdl.com); Webpage: [www.editionsrdl.com](http://www.editionsrdl.com)

Informatique Services Plus Inc. has expanded its *J'apprends en m'amusant 5 à 7 ans (vols. 1 & 2)* [2005] and now offers *Playing 'N' Learning! — Beginner (5 to 7 years old)/J'apprends en m'amusant — Débutant (5 à 7 ans)*. The newly updated computer CD-ROM provides not only fun and challenging activities in French and English but now also incorporates the same activities in Spanish. Therefore, it would be ideally suited for an elementary school (FLES) setting, in both French- and Spanish-immersion classes.

For each language, *Playing 'N' Learning! — Beginner/J'apprends en m'amusant — Débutant* provides thirty different types of educational activities with more than 600 exercises. The activities have two levels of difficulty. Level One activities include: the Alphabet; Professions; the Intruder; Space Concept; A Little Story; the Human Body; Instructions; Alphabetical Order; the Right Number; Who Am I?; Increasing/Decreasing; What Do I Eat?; Large to Small; As Many, More, Less; Logical Orders; Memorization; Emotions; The Right One; and In or Out. Level Two activities



include: Organize the Words; Money; Emotions; Who Am I?; Words to Find; A Little Story; An Action; The Right Number; Large to Small; Instructions; Increasing/Decreasing; Sudoku; Space Concept; Small to Large; Small Problems; Words to Write; Memorization; Alphabetical Order; Find the Rank; and Ordered Numbers.

This reviewer's favorite activity at both levels was probably "A Little Story." In this activity, users can listen to and read a story which they must then recreate with images, whereby comprehension is reinforced as well as assessed. At level one, this activity features ten stories; at level two, it features the same number of stories but includes two levels of difficulty. Also noteworthy are the sections titled "Small Problems," where the user must select the right answer to the problems from among three choices randomly picked for each problem, and "Space Concept," where, in the first part, the user works with ten themes on "up," "down," "to the left," and "to the right;" in the second part, the user works with "above," "under;" "in front of;" and "behind;" and, in the third part, the user works on "up to the left," "up to the right," "down to the left," and "down to the right."

Furthermore, this reviewer particularly likes the fact that this program incorporates multi-tasked activities. In other terms, some of the activities combine language and math skills, such as "As Many, More, Less" and "Ordered Numbers." This Level One activity gives the user the choice to work with images and with the words "as," "more," and "less" and consequently enhances the development of a child's multiple intelligences. It is fairly well known that language and math skills are "left-brain" activities. Thus, to combine both skills in a single computer activity provides a dual benefit to the child's intellectual development as the acquisition of language and development of math skills complement each another.

Teachers who use *Playing 'N' Learning! — Beginner/J'apprends en m'amusant — Débutant* will enjoy the fact that it allows multiple users to access it and that each student has a continually updating score sheet that is easily maintained for the entire school year. Therefore, each time a student logs on, his/her score is automatically recalculated. In addition, students are able to change their "language" even when already engaged in an activity.

The only suggestion that this reviewer would make to the authors at Les Éditions RDL is to have an experienced copy editor review the user's manual as well as its cover art. For example, in addition to minor typographical errors, the manual gives the title in English and French but not Spanish despite the fact that Spanish can be found immediately below the two titles: "Documentation/Manuel/Guía." Moreover, the box cover gives the title in English and French and immediately below states "English, Français, Español," but the Spanish title is still omitted. Since Les Éditions RDL intentionally revised its original offerings of *J'apprends en m'amusant 5 à 7 ans (vols. 1 & 2)* to include Spanish, why not include the Spanish equivalent of the title? After all, as the product is aimed at children ages five to seven and its goal is to improve foreign language skills, consistency and accuracy are imperative.

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## Kershul, Kristine K. *JAPANESE. A Language Map.*<sup>®</sup>

Seattle, WA: Bilingual Books, Inc., 2001. Revised 2006. ISBN: 13-978-0-944502-13-6. \$7.95. Contact information: 1719 West Nickerson, Seattle, WA 98119; phone: 800/488-5068; info@bbks.com, www.bbks.com.

This user-friendly introduction to basic Japanese for everyday life is ideally suited for independent learners on the run, especially frequent flyers whose professional travels take them to Japan, but also traditional students looking for a concise review of introductory Japanese. What makes this guide especially attractive is, on the one hand, its layout — it unfolds into four two-sided, laminated 9" x 3" pages, making it a discreet travel companion easy to stick in a briefcase or backpack along with other guidebooks — and, on the other hand, the fact that it is jam-packed with essential Japanese language survival skills. Topics covered are organized into easily identifiable rubrics: "Meeting People," "Asking Questions," "Money," "Numbers," "Mail," "Telephone," "Dining Out," "Time," "Calendar," "Hotels," "Emergencies," "Sightseeing," "Transportation," and "Shopping." Each section is organized around key vocabulary and short sentences, typically to express a request for basic information or some amenity.

The downside of language guides such as this one, of course, is that they can only take you so far. Greetings and self-introductory phrases included here are formal and will help you break the ice, but where do you go from there? What do you say next? "Good morning;" "My name is Smith;" "I am from the U.S.A.;" "Do you speak English?;" "I do not understand Japanese;" "See you later." Phrases such as these certainly will impress your hosts that you are trying and that you are not a card-carrying "ugly American." It goes without saying that knowing a few basic phrases also can be immensely useful in some situations: "Toire wa doko desu ka?" / "Where is the lavatory?" If you are lucky, your Japanese hosts' English language skills will be good enough for you to be able to carry on a conversation in English.

The very last section is entitled "Essential Signs" and includes the *kanji* for "restroom," "airport," "train station," and "information," among other topics, and will help travelers locate important places in the blink of an eye (if they can remember the *kanji*, which is a very big if indeed, or don't mind walking around with this guide in one hand). On the other hand, one wonders how useful this section really is, since there are already internationally accepted signs (admittedly with a few minor national peculiarities with regard to color or size) for "lavatory" and "exit" that are standard fare in Japan as they are in the rest of the world.

All Japanese items are written in *romaji* accompanied by a layman's phonetic transcription, for example: *asagohan* (breakfast): ah-sah-goh-han. Now, it would be easy enough for the publisher, in fact (not to say immensely useful for first-time learners of Japanese), to throw in a tape recording or CD of all phrases introduced to give ambitious travelers eager to make a good first impression a chance to practice what they learn.

This “language map” is intended for busy people eager to pick up a smattering of real Japanese, but I hope it will inspire some users to go all out and actually learn the language properly, either in a formal classroom setting or independently. Bilingual Books, Inc., which produced this guide, offers a number of additional resources such as *JAPANESE in 10 Minutes a Day* by the author of this manual, which make it possible for independent learners to do just that: study at their own pace and eventually master basic Japanese.

Tom Conner  
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### **Publisher’s Response**

At Bilingual Books, we want to help people learn a foreign language and discover the fun another language can bring them.

Your review has rightly captured the essence of *JAPANESE a Language Map*<sup>®</sup> as a portable resource jam-packed with the most essential words used every day. It offers enough of the language to beginners so they may be polite and get around easily on their travels. And plans are already in the works to offer an audio download (rather than a CD) so that students will have the added benefit of hearing the language as well.

As noted in the review, the *Language Map*<sup>®</sup> Series is specifically designed for those on the go who don’t have time to take a class or for students who need a quick reference guide for everyday words.

For those individuals who do have the time and the desire to truly study the language, you also mentioned our book *JAPANESE in 10 Minutes a Day*<sup>®</sup>. This book is designed for classroom use and is intended as the first step in the process of learning Japanese. Coming this fall, an interactive CD-ROM will also be included with the book so that students will have the additional benefits of hearing the language and practicing on the computer. It has excellent built-in, take-home assignments and will have students speaking Japanese from the very first day.

Kristine Kershul  
Bilingual Books

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## **McVey Gill, Mary, and Brenda Wegmann. *Streetwise Spanish: Speak and Understand Everyday Spanish.***

**New York: McGraw-Hill, 2006. ISBN: 0-07-146087-X (book and CD set).**

This revised edition of *Streetwise Spanish* includes a 75-minute, 30-segment CD featuring native speakers from fifteen different Spanish-speaking countries. It

also introduces a useful section titled *Signature Words and Their Usage*, which explains popular terms from Latin America and Spain.

For those of you unfamiliar with Gill and Wegmann's popular collection of slang and colloquial expressions, *Streetwise Spanish* presents a wide selection of words and phrases organized by theme (weather, love, anger) and situation (asking for information, getting someone's attention). The text is divided into fifteen chapters, each of which includes the same basic ingredients: two brief dialogues (presented in Spanish with an English translation), a discussion of the key phrases used in the dialogues, a list of chapter vocabulary, two or three *chistes* (jokes), and review exercises. Humorous drawings and cartoons add interest and also serve to illustrate usage. Many chapters include an informative essay on *Vocabulary and Culture*.

For example, *Chapter 12: Cuente usted conmigo*, subtitled "Giving Encouragement, Advice, and Emotional Support, Expressing Sympathy," begins with two dialogues between Costa Rican students Nidia and Juan Antonio at a *soda*. In the first dialogue, Nidia offers Juan Antonio her support after learning that his girlfriend has left him; in the second, Juan Antonio comforts Nidia when she tells him about a death in her family. The dialogues are presented in Spanish on one page and in English on the facing page, and each is followed by a section entitled *¡Ojo!* - a description of the key expressions (for example, *tico*, *soda*, *¿diay?*), which includes an explanation of their possible origins. In some cases, the text includes cognate expressions from different countries (for example, *el carro* is used in the second dialogue, and the text explains that *el auto* and *el coche* are used in many other countries, while Cubans normally say *la máquina*). *Vocabulario del capítulo* follows. Chapter 12 includes an essay on *Vocabulary and Culture* relating to superlatives, diminutives, and augmentatives and explains not only the commonly taught suffixes *-ísimo/a* and *-ito/a*, but also *-ón/-ona*, *-ote/ota*, *-acho/-acha*, and the prefixes *re-*, *que-*, and *te-*. The chapter concludes with several review exercises and two *chistes*.

At the end of this edition, the authors have added an appendix, *Signature Words and Their Usage*, in which they describe several typical expressions from Spain and each of the nineteen American countries where Spanish is spoken. Colombian terms, for example, include *el cachifo(a)* (a young person), *el, la cuadro* (boyfriend, girlfriend), and *la verraquera* (a wonderful or marvelous thing). The text also includes a Spanish-English glossary and an answer key for all of the exercises and activities in the text.

The CD accompanying this new edition is the real draw, in my opinion. It offers students recordings of the thirty dialogues (two per chapter) made by native speakers from fifteen different countries. Each dialogue is introduced in English and is followed by a short comprehension review/quiz. The students are encouraged to note and practice the different accents.

Unlike many collections of Spanish slang, *Streetwise Spanish* has always stood out for its careful explanation of the terms presented, the variety of regions represented (twenty countries, in addition to the Hispanic community in the United States), and the care with which it contextualizes colloquialisms. Some dialogues feature speakers from one country, while in others speakers from different coun-

tries meet and experience confusion or embarrassment when they use words that have different meanings in different locales (for example, the text demonstrates the various uses of *pendejo* and *bolas*). The text doesn't avoid vulgar terms, but the dialogues, the *¡Ojo!* sections, and the cultural essays carefully describe the regional differences between these terms as well as their register, and the *chistes* and the cartoons also help students understand the appropriate context for each expression. The addition of the CD is a terrific bonus: students can now hear colloquialisms (for example, *bijole*) pronounced by a native speaker.

Students and instructors alike will enjoy *Streetwise Spanish*. The thematic organization of the chapters, the variety of regions represented, and now the native recordings of the dialogues can be used in and out of the classroom to enhance students' ability to communicate effectively in a wide range of situations and settings. It would be especially useful for intermediate and advanced students who interact with native speakers from many different areas: the text offers them a glossary of terms, detailed descriptions of regional variations and registers, and possible pitfalls. It is less useful for students who live, work, or will study in less diverse situations, since it is difficult to tease out specifically Spanish, Mexican, or Argentine vocabulary.

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### **Publisher's Response**

My thanks to Professor Paul for her detailed review of *Streetwise Spanish*. She does a wonderful job of highlighting the content and approach of this text on everyday colloquial Spanish. Professor Paul also mentions the benefits of the accompanying audio recording; not only does the CD bring the book's dialogues to life, it features authentic voices from the 15 Spanish-speaking countries featured in the book. As the reviewer indicates, this title is most appropriate for intermediate and advanced students, who will benefit from material that highlights, indeed celebrates, the diversity of Spanish spoken across the Hispanic world today.

Christopher Brown  
Publisher, Language & Reference  
McGraw-Hill Professional

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## **McVey Gill, Mary, and Brenda Wegmann. *The Red-Hot Book of Spanish Slang and Idioms: 5,000 Expressions to Spice Up Your Spanish.***

**New York: McGraw-Hill, 2006. ISBN: 13-978-0-07-143301-3.**

*The Red-Hot Book of Spanish Slang and Idioms* is the latest offering by the Gill and Wegmann team, authors of the popular *Streetwise Spanish*. Unlike that collection of colloquialisms, which contextualizes idiomatic phrases and slang in

dialogues, describes them in brief essays, and offers the students review exercises and activities, the *Red-Hot Book* is a straightforward dictionary of slang.

*The Red-Hot Book of Spanish Slang and Idioms* is divided into two sections: a Spanish-English dictionary, and an English-Spanish dictionary. A typical entry in the Spanish-English dictionary includes the Spanish word/expression, a literal translation into English in parentheses, the actual definition in English, the countries or regions in which the term is used, an example of the use, and a translation of that example into English. For example, the entry *Hecho(-a) polvo* is first literally translated—(*made into dust*), and then defined as *worn out, exhausted*. The dictionary notes that this phrase is commonly used in El Salvador, the Southern Cone, and Spain, and then offers the following example of its use: *¡Tanto trabajo! Estoy hecha polvo. So much work! I'm beat*. The dictionary is clearly intended for intermediate and advanced students of Spanish, not the casual traveler: the entries do not offer any guide to pronunciation or to verb conjugation.

The “Red-Hot” in the title is a warning to the squeamish or straitlaced. This dictionary, which promises to “Spice Up Your Spanish,” offers an ample number of merely colloquial entries (the English section, for example, includes *if you snooze, you lose; to leave in the lurch; and right off the bat*), but also covers the gamut of vulgar expressions and bathroom talk (though only dipping into drug terminology). As the authors state in the *Preface*, they have made no attempt to “sanitize the language,” but they have clearly marked possible offenders with the word “vulgar” in parentheses.

The entries provide other useful information aside from the possible *vulgar* notation. The English entry *Holy smoke!* is described as “a bit old-fashioned,” while for the Spanish entry *¡Estás como lo recetó el doctor!* the authors note that it “can be a street compliment.” Many entries also refer the student to other, similar terms. For example, in the English entry *to be nuts* they suggest that the reader “see also: to be off one’s rocker, to have a screw loose, to lose one’s marbles.” Finally, the dictionary is illustrated with humorous drawings that illustrate some of the more colorful phrases.

Gill and Wegmann’s dictionary both entertains and instructs. It is ambitious in scope, well-researched, and clearly organized, and will appeal to instructors and students alike. Professors will find the detailed entries and the regional specificity useful as a resource and as a teaching aid, and students will be able to correctly translate all of those colloquial phrases they want to use in dialogues and compositions (finally! multiple translations of *he kicked the bucket* and *she stood me up*). The dictionary will also prove a valuable aid to understanding native speakers. *The Red-Hot Book of Spanish Slang and Idioms* would be a welcome addition to any student’s shelf of Spanish reference books (and would get more use than any other volume, I suspect), and I would certainly recommend that students buy a copy to take with them when they study abroad. In short, this text is a valuable resource for instructors and intermediate and advanced students.

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## Publisher's Response

McGraw-Hill thanks Professor Paul for her favorable review of *The Red-Hot Book of Spanish Slang*. As she notes, this is more of a reference tool than the author's *Streetwise Spanish* text, also reviewed in this issue. However, the currency of the entries, the inclusion of literal translations, the liveliness of the example sentences, and the precision of the regional usage indicators, should make this a resource that will be too frequently browsed to gather dust on the shelf.

Christopher Brown  
Publisher, Language & Reference  
McGraw-Hill Professional

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## Moneti, Annamaria and Graziana Lazzarino. *Da capo*.

**New York: Thomson Heinle, 2007. Includes: multimedia support material in text audio CD format and companion Website. ISBN: 1-4130-1862-9.**

The 6th edition of *Da capo* is geared toward students at the post-secondary level and high school students enrolled in an advanced placement Italian course. Multimedia course components include a text, an audio program in CD format, a companion Website, and a workbook. The strength of the program lies in the comprehensive approach where the focus is on the acquisition of the four language skills.

These features increase the learner's motivation while providing a solid understanding of intermediate Italian, needed to succeed in eventually acquiring proficiency. Having taught Italian at every level — from elementary to university to evening courses — we fully appreciate the genuine strengths of this program.

In our classrooms, we have used the text, selected activities, and the multimedia materials as complements to the instructional activities of Italian classes. The subjects were engaging for both advanced and intermediate students. Real-life situations were presented while students learned the associated vocabulary. Interspersed throughout were grammar lessons that reinforced the learning of the core components of the specific unit and were paired with the core curriculum content standards.

Each chapter starts with an introductory section, *Per cominciare*, which provides an overview of the topics covered in the chapter. It also includes a list of essential vocabulary words in the *vocabolario utile*, providing invaluable reference.

The cultural reading, *Vivere in Italia*, immediately introduces key grammar and vocabulary concepts through an open dialogue that could be successfully used by students in improvisation and role-playing activities. Follow-up activities providing the basis for cooperative learning are presented in the section *A voi la parola*.

The core of each chapter is represented by the *Struttura* section, which covers the main grammar concepts and related activities, arranged in order of increasing difficulty. Following the grammar portion of each chapter is a reading section that illustrates grammatical elements with respect to Italian culture.

One program component that was particularly impressive was the efficient integration of technology provided by the multimedia material. In our opinion, this feature makes this text superior to others. One might even consider the multimedia package as the core of the course while the useful workbook would provide invaluable support and reference. In *Da capo*, the conventional hierarchy between book and ancillary materials is inverted, with the clear result of creating a revolutionary and unique program of study. In fact, through the interactive virtual activities, the practice discussion questions, and the presentation of key terms and phrases with audio pronunciation and written examples used in the specific context, the learner is fully and comfortably immersed in a realistic Italian-speaking environment. The interactive material not only provides highlights from situations frequently occurring but also addresses the fundamental problems of communication that might arise from such situations, providing many opportunities for further discussion. The focus on grammatical and structural concepts that are particularly difficult for English speakers mastering Italian represents another great strength of the program. In the section titled *Studio di parole*, particular attention is given to idiomatic meanings of certain expressions that might confuse the inexperienced speaker who literally translates into English. Within the specific context analyzed, effective strategies aimed at clarifying the real meaning of those expressions are provided.

The core of the multimedia material allows students to take advantage of another opportunity to review chapter concepts and reinforce listening and speaking skills. In the reference vocabulary, the program goes one step further, providing an invaluable, fully interactive tool: the audio pronunciation of key terms and phrases. The emphasis is on creating an effective, practical course to teach the spoken language rather than the written, more academic, idiom.

The color photo inserts contain culturally relevant images that can be used in an assortment of classroom activities. Students can work with them individually or in groups and at any point during the class.

The *Ricerca* Web section of each chapter engages students in the use of technology to perform research on relevant aspects of the cultural and historical aspects of Italy. Answers and feedback are provided in real time in the interactive exercises of the companion Website, while the quizzes are automatically graded to allow instantaneous assessment of learning. The potentialities of the program surpass the general requirements of a conventional classroom setting. The structure of the program and its versatility allow for its natural application to online distance learning, making it a cutting-edge learning tool.

Overall, we would rate the *Da capo* program as superior, innovative, and extremely versatile. Without hesitation, we would recommend it as a tool to train students at both the advanced high school and university levels.



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## **Publisher's Response**

As Professors Carlucci and Paoletti state in their thoughtful review, *Da Capo* demonstrates the practical application of Italian language in the global community and provides solid preparation of intermediate Italian needed to acquire solid proficiency in the language. Through a communicative approach, *Da Capo* aptly reflects the *ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines* and addresses the *National Standards of Foreign Language Education*, joining acquisition of language skills with exploration of Italian culture.

Perhaps the most valuable aspect of the program, as insightfully expressed by the reviewers, lies in its comprehensive approach, focusing on the acquisition of the four language skills. Professors Carlucci and Paoletti note how the presentation of real-life situations with associated vocabulary is engaging for both intermediate and advanced students, and the incorporation of grammar throughout reinforces core curriculum content standards. They point to the cultural readings, *Vivere in Italia*, as an example of this finely-tuned integration, as students are introduced with key grammar and vocabulary in an interactive manner.

The reviewers were most impressed with the integration of technology and multimedia, going so far as to consider the multimedia package central to the core of the course. The media components are so important because they fully and comfortably immerse the student in a realistic Italian-speaking environment through interactive virtual activities that give students another opportunity to review concepts while reinforcing listening and speaking skills. *Da Capo* is described as a “revolutionary and unique program of study”, because it focuses on the effective teaching of spoken-practical language rather than the written idiom.

Professors Carlucci and Paoletti correctly point out that the multi-media program highlights frequently-occurring situations while addressing some of the fundamental problems of communication for English speakers. The companion Website engages students in Italian culture while giving them the tools to refine their skills with instantaneous feedback on online exercises and quizzes. The reviewers find the focus on grammatical and structural concepts that are particularly challenging to English-speaking students is another great strength of the program.

I would like to point out two additional features of the sixth edition: the inclusion of *Putumayo's Italian café music CD* which students may purchase at a reduced

price through Heinle and then enjoy listening to both classical and contemporary Italian music, and Heinle's online Personal Tutoring service which allows students to schedule a help session with tutors who have advanced degrees.

It is hoped that students using *Da Capo* will further develop their language ability in Italian and gain a broader view of Italians and Italian society. And, it is hoped that instructors will teach from *Da Capo* again and again — each time with a renewed commitment to addressing the differing instructional needs of language learners in their own classrooms.

Lara Semones, Ph.D.  
Executive Editor, World Languages  
Thomson / Heinle

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## **Nagy, Blaise. *A Thucydides Reader: Annotated Passages from Books I-VIII of the Histories.***

**Newburyport, MA: Focus Publishing, 2005. Pp. xiv + 147. ISBN: 1-58510-126-5.**

An important decision for any teacher of Attic Greek is the selection of the first extended text to read following the completion of a basic grammar textbook. Most teachers choose Plato for the beauty of his writing, the intrinsic interest of his content, and the availability of excellent annotated editions. For the teacher or student more interested in Greek history than Greek philosophy, however, Nagy has provided a fine alternative to Plato in his Thucydides reader. He has judiciously chosen 105 passages culled from all eight books of Thucydides' *Histories* and provided annotations appropriate for a third-semester college or fourth-semester high school student of ancient Greek.

Nagy opens with a three-page English introduction to the author and the work. The Greek passages selected cover most of the sections that students of the Peloponnesian War would find most interesting. These include Thucydides' introductory sections explaining why he has written the *Histories* and his methodology (Book I), Pericles' funeral oration and the plague in Athens (Book II), the Mytilene debate (Book III), events at Pylos (Book IV), the Melian dialogue (Book V), and the departure and defeat of the Sicilian expedition (Books VI and VII). Nagy closes with two brief selections from Book VIII on the oligarchic revolution in Athens.

Each passage begins with a brief (four or five sentence) but helpful English introduction. The Greek passages vary in length from 10 to 40 lines, most being around 15-25 lines. Depending on the amount of grammatical depth the teacher chooses to emphasize, most of these passages can easily be assigned for a single class period. Some of the longer passages would probably need to be divided into two class periods. There is, altogether, much more Greek text in this volume than could be read in a single semester. The teacher will need to make choices among the passages.

The annotations focus on grammar and syntax. They stay clear of literary or historical interpretation, and they are deliberately thin in the vocabulary help

they provide. Nor has Nagy provided a Greek word glossary for the student. The expectation is that the student will need to have and to use a real Greek lexicon. The intermediate Liddell-Scott would be sufficient. If students are only using the glossaries from their grammar textbooks, they will be in trouble. Part of the (commendable, I believe) discipline of this text is that it forces the student to develop a comfortable facility with a good Greek lexicon.

Although his notes are lean on vocabulary help, Nagy has made them very friendly for the lexicon user. Most verb forms are parsed, so the student is provided the first principal part for easy location in a lexicon. This is a tremendous time-saver for students, while still forcing them to use their lexicon for unfamiliar meanings. Participles are also parsed in the notes — a very welcome feature for a writer like Thucydides, whose style is participle-heavy. Genitive absolutes and articular infinitive constructions are regularly identified, further allowing the student a real sense of reading the Greek rather than of decrypting a code by having to look up verbal forms in every clause. The one area in which Nagy does provide needed vocabulary assistance is with Greek idioms. This is especially helpful, for students can spend much fruitless time trying to look up these elliptical phrases, whose idiomatic uses can be quite far removed from their literal components.

Another virtue of this collection is that the grammatical annotations of each passage are independent of the grammatical annotations of the other passages. What I mean by this is that the teacher is free to pick and choose passages throughout the book in any order, without sacrificing any grammatical assistance in the notes. Some student texts will annotate certain constructions once or twice, and then expect that the student will have learned them and so will stop annotating them in later passages. This is a good strategy as long as the student is reading continuously from beginning to end. But Nagy continues to note the same difficult constructions in the passages, regardless of how often that construction has appeared earlier. The teacher is therefore free to skip passages at will and not worry that the student will find himself at a loss with a construction only annotated in a previous section that may not have been assigned.

Finally, Nagy states clearly that this text is not designed to replace the teacher — it is not intended to be used as a self-paced independent reading text for the untutored student. The teacher needs to supply context for the selected Greek passages, ideally with a set of good historical maps and English translations of the texts leading into the Greek selection.

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### **Publisher's Response**

At one time we distributed a long list of commentaries saved from oblivion by a publisher in England. It was a grand mission of which we were grateful to be a part. The market for modern commentaries is small, as any publisher in Classics can confirm, so, when that company took over its own distribution, we were not at too great a loss. But we had learned that there is a need not only for commen-

taries at the undergraduate and secondary levels, but also that there was a need for new ones specifically designed for American students of the Classics. We are doing very few of them, but Blaise Nagy's *Thucydides* is the model, and we appreciate this reviewer's insightful analysis of what we are trying to accomplish. We naturally hope that the study of ancient Greek will flourish and that we can make a small but lasting contribution to the field.

Ron Pullins  
Focus Publishing

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## **Nanni-Tate, Paola. *Practice Makes Perfect: Italian Verb Tenses.***

**New York: McGraw-Hill, 2006. ISBN: 0-07-145138-2.**

*Italian Verb Tenses* is an excellent self-study text designed as a useful companion volume for any Italian course from the introductory level through the advanced level and beyond. The book, which is printed in a workbook format, is divided into sixteen units that cover all the tenses of the indicative and the subjunctive, the progressive, reflexive verbs, the passive voice, verb-based idiomatic expressions, and verbs and expressions followed by prepositions. The final unit offers a general review of the tenses through a series of exercises and is followed by a verb table, a glossary of the verbs presented in the text, and an answer key. An important and much appreciated feature of this text is the section titled *Basic Terminology*, which precedes the content units proper and provides definitions and explanations of grammatical terms such as "infinitive," "verb stem," and "subject pronoun," among others, whose meanings students often forget or lose sight of when they are actually working with verbs in oral and written exercises.

Rather than simply providing a list of verbs conjugated in their various tenses and moods, *Italian Verb Tenses* enables the student to learn tenses in context and to use verbs as a tool in building sentences for conversation and communication purposes. The verb is presented as the catalyst that allows language production to occur. Students not only learn the endings of the tenses, but are also given numerous opportunities for written practice which, when reviewed as part of class work, actually becomes oral practice.

Each unit begins with an explanation of the tense studied and a presentation, through copious examples, of its different uses. Next is a list of the endings related to the six subject pronouns connected to the verb, followed by a list of verbs that follow the same pattern within the group. Variations that may occur within tenses, such as spelling changes in *-are* verbs or the *-isc* verbs of the third group, are treated as part of the general discussion of the unit topic. Once the explanation and examples are complete, a list of verbs that follow the pattern studied is provided. All of the material within each unit is reinforced by many exercises, whose format is varied so that the student not only learns how to fill in the tense of a verb, but also understands its meaning and how a particular verb can be applied in a number of communicative situations. Exercises include fill-ins, translation of complete sentences from English into Italian and Italian into

English, changing sentences from singular to plural, putting sentences in the negative, creating and answering questions, choosing verbs from a word bank to complete a paragraph and finally translating a paragraph from English into Italian and Italian into English. One of the many noteworthy aspects of the exercises is that some of the paragraph translations can actually serve as readings dealing with Italian culture, life in Italy, and current events. For example, one of the translation exercises provides information on Venice, another on the arrival of television in Italy, and another on transportation. Exercises of this nature avoid the stagnant repetition and the less productive attempt of working with verbs in isolated, unrelated sentences. In learning the conjugations and uses of tenses, the student also learns grammatical points that are related to verbs such as the use of question words like “quando,” “dove,” “quanto,” “come,” “chi,” “che;” the use of “ci” and “ci sono;” “da” and expressions of time; modal verbs and the infinitive; the difference between “avere” and “essere;” negative expressions; the difference between “conoscere” and “sapere;” “giocare” and “suonare.”

In writing *Practice Makes Perfect: Italian Verb Tenses*, the author has succeeded in combining a comprehensive workbook and a well-organized reference manual into one user-friendly volume. This is an indispensable text for students of Italian because it provides clear and concise explanations concerning the use of tenses; students actually learn why certain tenses work in specific situations and others do not. At the same time, it is an important teaching tool for instructors who will appreciate how students learn to write correctly and speak fluently after using this guide to master verbs. In short, *Practice Makes Perfect: Italian Verb Tenses* is a “must-have” text for anyone serious about learning or teaching Italian.

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### **Publisher’s Response**

We thank Dr. DeGregorio for her review, and we are pleased that she found *Practice Made Perfect: Italian Verb Tenses* effective not only for written practice but also for speaking. In addition to providing numerous and varied exercises, this text provides grammar explanations and examples that make studying highly educational.

Garret Lemoi  
Acquisitions Editor  
McGraw-Hill Professional

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## **Nisset, Luc. *French in Your Face*.**

**New York: McGraw-Hill, 2007. ISBN: 13: 978-0-07-143298-6.**

I like this book. Set aside the fact that my students can learn a lot from it; I like it because it made me laugh while reviewing, well, a textbook. I cannot recall (honestly, I cannot) when I last had so much fun doing my job as a teacher and occasional reviewer. Using gestures and facial expressions to teach colloquial lan-

guage (and some of this stuff is really very colloquial French, if you catch my drift, not the kind of language you want to use around your French mother-in-law), this text delivers what its title promises: “French in your face,” authentic, real-life words and phrases that will open your eyes to a whole new dimension of the language. Again, this is not classical French (I seriously doubt that old Racine would understand, much less appreciate, some of the metaphors); this is street-wise French, the kind of language you would hear spoken in France today, especially by you younger folks out there, though hardly by a mature audience (of which regrettably, I am a part today, by age, if not by choice).

What the author has done is unique: with clever little cartoons he illustrates a variety of real-life situations, and fills in the blanks with all kinds of words and expressions to express a normal person’s reactions. As the preface boldly states: “A face is worth a thousand words... *French in Your Face* is designed to open your receptivity to the other person’s face. The French people are very emotional and sensitive ... this book is your passport to communicating with these wonderful people ... it links French terms, common expressions, idioms, colloquialisms, and even insults to the character, personality, mood, facial appearance, and gestures behind them” (v).

Among the many attractive features of this small volume, one is much impressed by the format (v-vi):

- Each of the 110 key terms in the first two units is accompanied by an illustration designed to provide context, reinforce meaning, and aid memorization.
- Captions provide English translations for the speech bubbles in the first unit and in the *gestures* section.
- Words that are synonymous or similar to each headword are listed, including adjectives, nouns, and verbs. Many of these are cognates or near-cognates of the English words, making them easier to learn.
- Related terms and expressions are listed to provide additional everyday vocabulary and commonly used phrases.
- Opposites are listed for some headwords. Note that in the sections *polar opposites* and *mood swings*, contrasting character types and emotions appear on facing pages.
- The symbol ○ indicates colloquial terms or slang expressions that should be used only in appropriate situations. The French do appreciate the risk you are taking in using slang, since it demonstrates your interest in their culture.
- Feminine forms and endings are indicated in parentheses.

For the most part, the various scenes and exchanges imagined by the author are perfectly realistic and accurate; however, I happened to open the volume quite at random and came upon the following situation: A stingy customer in a restaurant (11) leaves a mere 2 Euro tip, causing sour faces on two waiters standing by, and a bit of a row between this cocky customer and his cantankerous bet-

ter half. Much to his dismay, his wife accuses him of being *radin* (stingy) and, in his defense, he claims that his *quiche* was not quite done (*cuite*). She states emphatically that the tip still ought to be an incredible 15%! Boy, she must be American or something, and a *radine Américaine* at that (since 20% seems to be the norm in this country, at least in big cities) because, as everyone knows, the tip is always included in France; it's even spelled out in small print on every menu: *service compris*! If you are in a fine establishment, I guess it is all right to show your appreciation and leave a small *pourboire* (tip), but certainly not an outrageous 15%. Fortunately, this particular scene proved to be an exception.

Finally, it goes without saying that no one talks only in *argot* (slang); it gets a bit much at times when characters speak solely in slang. Not even my French students or TAs talk like the cartoon characters in this volume! In the author's defense, he wanted to cram as much useful information as possible into a short volume; in this he has succeeded, too bad if the average reader cannot digest the entire thing in one sitting. *French in Your Face* is a veritable goldmine of colloquial French. I imagine students could study a page or two in conjunction with a more traditional text. Next semester I am going to try a few excerpts from *French in Your Face* and see what students say. I am quite sure they will be duly entertained and perhaps learn a thing or two as well.

A word of caution is in order: the non-native speaker of limited ability (and that means most foreign-born students) should refrain from using some of the more *risqué* expressions and choice epithets contained in this volume for fear of offending someone or other. It is one thing for a native French person to say something *carrément* and quite another for a foreigner (and especially an *amerloque*) to try to be funny in polite society. The strange thing is that non-native speakers often miss some non-linguistic, cultural cue or other, so what was meant to be amusing can prove to be inappropriate or, worse, offensive. When in doubt, don't!

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## **Publisher's Response**

McGraw-Hill thanks Professor Conner for his thorough review of *French in Your Face*. I am particularly delighted that the book provided him with such enjoyment, as it reflects my own experience as publisher and as long-time fan of Luc Nisset's illustrative style. As Professor Conner points out, the book brings together a highly distinctive combination of expressive illustrations and a keen ear to contemporary French idiom (though as a French native now resident of Miami, perhaps the author has become corrupted by American tipping habits!).

While the reviewer's caution on the use of *argot* by non-native speakers is valid, I would also draw attention to the wealth of useful vocabulary and standard, everyday expressions contained in the book, all of which are enlivened by association thanks to the illustrative flair of the author. This book contains too much to digest in one sitting, certainly — but I challenge any student not to enjoy dipping into it, again and again.

**Paris-Bouvret, Emmanuel and Ana Pérez-Gironés.**  
***En una palabra: Sevilla, España. A CD-ROM for Exploring Culture in Spanish.***

Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2006. ISBN: 978-1-58901-136-8.

*En una palabra* is a supplementary teaching tool to accompany any intermediate to advanced course text. The program emphasizes the cultural subtleties discovered through language and points out the variety of speech patterns within one community in Spain. The program components include the following: video clips with transcripts, cultural information on Sevilla, a glossary, and a special section on distinct variations in pronunciation in the region. An Instructor's Manual with complementary lesson plans and teaching strategies is also available online. Institutions that purchase the CD for a language lab receive rights to post an electronic copy of the CD-ROM on a password protected site for students and faculty.

The video clips feature fifteen individuals from Sevilla who express their views on a variety of topics using natural speech without a script. The video clips last less than a minute and are all transcribed. All material is in Spanish; nothing is translated. The listener may access the transcript or not during the listening exercise. Participants in the project come from a variety of backgrounds and are of different ages to provide a wide perspective on how individuals interpret the abstract concepts discussed, which are listed below:

- Friends
- Family
- Work
- Country
- Freedom
- Success
- Pride
- Individualism
- Ambition
- Happiness

These topics were chosen not only to assist students in acquiring vocabulary for complex expression, but also to provide insight into another culture and the issues that its population considers significant and important.

In addition to the video clips to practice listening comprehension, there is a file with several subsections that provide an overview of Sevilla. The file contains



photos and text briefly describing the region of Andalucía, Sevilla, and important places to visit. In the subsection that focuses on the variety of accents spoken in Sevilla, there are examples of the different speech patterns found in Andalucía, including “seseo,” “ceceo.” For each, there is a short, sample recording with a phonetic transcript of the phrase spoken.

This program is aimed primarily at intermediate to advanced speakers, but can be used by beginners as well. In the online lesson plans, there are various examples for all levels of instruction, offering ideas on pre-listening exercises, tasks, group work, and classroom discussion.

In summary, *En una palabra* is an easy-to-use resource of short cultural and linguistic vignettes helpful to instructors for group listening exercises and subsequent discussion in class. The CD is also a useful tool for individual learners to practice on their own and prepare for study abroad in Andalucía.

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## **Prior, Richard E. *Latin Verb Tenses.***

**New York: McGraw-Hill, 2006. ISBN: 13-978-0-07-146292. Including the answer key at the back, this text consists of 208 pages, divided into 20 units (what we would normally call chapters), Latin-English and English-Latin glossaries, and an answer key. Second-year Latin students will find the answer key especially helpful.**

The author says he wanted to design a textbook “that would be most useful to the most people studying this ancient language.” To call this a “textbook” may seem surprising to those of us brought up on Wheelock. Latin students at St. Norbert College shared some cursory comments: “Clear information on forming verbs; answer key is nice for those not in a class setting; appears to provide information clearly; this book would be somewhat useful to those struggling with verbs.” The format of this book is that of a workbook, and workbooks mostly accompany and supplement textbooks. However, the concise grammatical explanations at the beginning of each unit do cut to the heart of the matter in a way that few texts do. Therefore, if the explanations are sufficiently illuminating as well as concise, maybe the author can boast of creating something really new: a textbook disguised as a workbook. On the other hand, this is a textbook/workbook of limited scope. The emphasis is on verb conjugation; the assumption is that if one can master the verb system, one can learn the language. *Latin Verb Tenses* is highlighted on the book’s cover, so it is obvious that verbs are key in this author’s mind.

First impressions are that this text is to the point and coherent. Since it mainly provides practice (writing assignments), it makes sense to dispense the grammatical

explanations as expeditiously as is possible. The distinction between tense and aspect (the speaker's point of view of "when") is useful in that it supplants the usual "Present System" and "Perfect System" distinction. As usual, discussion of Principal Parts of verbs follows quickly on the heels of the voice and conjugation section.

The "Practice Makes Perfect" theme is exemplified in Unit 2's Present Indicative Active writing exercises, which follow this format: fill in the blanks, provide the missing form, and translate.

The alphabetical list of common verbs, more than two pages long, recalls the "Living Language" technique first used to acculturate American GIs heading off to Europe during WWII. This reviewer benefited from this technique during his service days in Europe in the seventies; it helped him learn Italian, French, German, and Spanish. This "most used first" philosophy of instruction is a great reinforcer. The alphabetical listing of common verbs in each conjugation is continued to the end of Unit 3, moreover.

Alternating Latin to English and English to Latin enforces literally and psychologically the sense of learning the language forwards and backwards, another reinforcer. Variety and drills, a pattern throughout the book, challenge the learner to become seriously involved, rewarding the learning process with freshness attained by the planned avoidance of monotony. Illustrations (hopefully not puerile in nature) accompanied by instructions to verbalize wherever possible, although not present, would have included two more senses, hearing and speaking. The more senses you involve, the greater your chances of success.

Key irregular forms (e.g., *sum*, *esse*, and several compounds derived from them) are included in the exercises of units 3 to 7. This inclusion, in the midst of regular forms, has the effect of an "*In Medias Res*" immersion. Variety is refreshing and motivational, leading to good learning.

Unit 7, on the passive voice, repeats a winning sequence: introduce the concept; compare English and Latin M.O.'s; deconstruct by showing endings; display examples, fully conjugated with translation; finally, provide written exercises in each tense for "practice makes perfect."

The first three regular conjugations (1st, 2nd and 3rd) are presented, then the 3rd -io and 4th are presented separately. Since the M.O. of the passive voice has already been explained, the passive tense exercises of Unit 7 are followed, quite appropriately, with Deponent verbs in Unit 8. Deponents need to follow passives because deponents are passive in form but active in meaning. Surprisingly, however, the unit begins with a mention of the "Middle Voice" (a reference to possible reflexive interpretations of some deponents; e.g., *vertitur: He is turned*, or *he turns himself*, understood). This distinction is an element of ancient Greek, which also has separate forms to flesh out the concept.

The six separate tenses of a verb, Present and Perfect Subjunctive System (six patterns), follow. Active forms are listed on the left side of the page with corresponding passives on the right. Throw in the infinitive and the imperative, and you get a lovely demonstration of the complexity of the verb. Semi-deponents, variations of the Deponent, are then presented over two pages, thankfully, in

alphabetical order once again. The proclivity to present examples in alphabetical order wherever possible is a great time-saver. Energy saved is energy available for memorization and, thus, more new learning.

The exercises that follow, over the next four pages, alternate single verb translations with fill-in-the-blanks and complete sentence translations. Once again, variety adds sugar to the cod liver oil of grammar, resulting in new learning.

Unit 9's discussion of the Imperative Mood is short (4 pages) and to the point: two pages of presentation precede another pair of written practice pages. The discussions include both regular and Deponent verbs.

Unit 10, on Irregular Verbs, has helpful information on tenses (Present). The statement, however, that the "Perfect System... of irregular verbs is formed in the usual manner" is misleading. The 4th principal part, for instance, of all verbs relating to *sum, esse* (to be) show a future active participle instead of a perfect passive. This unit, in contrast with the short Unit 9, covers 25 pages, quite an extensive treatment of the eight most common irregulars. The impressive body of information is warranted as irregulars in Latin, as in most languages, are some of the most commonly used verbs. Hence, they need to be recognized and seriously addressed. The sequence found in most Latin texts of discussing first participles, then gerunds, gerundives, and supines makes perfect sense; the latter are constructed from participial forms.

The Infinitive of Unit 13 is followed by a lesson on Indirect Discourse (Unit 14). Those of us acquainted with Latin know that Indirect Discourse in Latin involves usage of the infinitive (unlike English which sometimes uses the infinitive, and other times doesn't). While Unit 15 presents the subjunctive mood at face value, the six remaining units deal with grammatical forms that either often or always require the subjunctive. The final six chapters, therefore, are a kind of "applied Subjunctive."

This book will be a great companion to classic college texts like Wheelock. On the other hand, it could introduce and immerse a new learner in the language. It might work best in the latter sense for someone who has already studied another language. Such a person will already be familiar with "conjugations" and noun/adjective "declensions."

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## **Publisher's Response**

McGraw-Hill is very pleased to respond to Dr. Manthey's detailed review of our new addition to the *Practice Makes Perfect* series, *Latin Verb Tenses*. His point that this text is more a workbook than a textbook is well taken; I would agree that it is best seen as a companion to a college text, providing a detailed focus on the Latin verb system that should benefit first and second year students. I thank Dr. Manthey, also, for his appreciation of the book's variety and "freshness," in conjunction with its logical sequence and presentation of content.

**Rosenkrant, Sandra Freels.**  
***Russian in Use. An Interactive Approach to  
Advanced Communicative Competence.***

**New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2007. ISBN: 0-300-10943-1. Includes text and DVD. Instructor's Manual available at [www.yalebooks.com/russianinuse](http://www.yalebooks.com/russianinuse). \$50.00.**

*Russian in Use* is intended for the advanced learner, or as a transition text from the intermediate to the advanced level. It addresses English-speaking, motivated students who can work independently. It consists of six chapters, one introductory and five context-based. Each addresses an important topic in contemporary society: geography, politics, education, ecology, and Russian views of American society. The units are fairly long and follow the same pattern: Vocabulary, Lexical Studies, Readings, Listening, Composition, Research Assignments, and Review.

Each vocabulary section contains approximately two hundred words with English equivalents. Some are obviously review words, or ones not in the student's active vocabulary. This section is accented, whereas the rest of the text is not. There are notes on words potentially confusing to the English-speaking student. The vocabulary is arranged in categories, which are not identified. The principal parts of verbs are included, along with distinguishing marks of nouns and adjectives. The vocabulary provides an introduction to themes and readings. However, since the words are not in alphabetical order, they are almost impossible to locate. The purpose of the list is not clear, although the author indicates in the *Instructor's Manual* that students learn them at the beginning of each unit.

The section on lexical studies, which includes Grammar and Stylistics, is quite lengthy. It reviews basic points and builds on them. The explanations, all in English, are clear and concise, and are illustrated by examples of simple Russian sentences translated into English. The author indicates that she herself chose them from contemporary Russian popular literature. The text places special emphasis on the verbal aspects and on the verbs of motion, normally a challenge to even the most advanced students. Lexical items often follow the theme of the chapter, such as the use of prepositions and cases with place names in the unit on geography. There are exercises after each major part of the grammar presentation, with occasional cumulative exercises, especially good for the verbs of motion. Many exercises require simple one-word answers, often a translation, but consist of unrelated sentences. Others are open-ended and invite creativity. Some take authentic texts and omit specific words related to the lexical explanations. Students can find the complete text in the appendix, and check their own work. There are multiple exercises, so that the instructor can choose or the student can reinforce work done in class.

The section on Readings uses contemporary authentic materials, primarily factual, related to the theme. They range from two to ten pages, with four texts in each chapter. The chapter on ecology presents disasters that have occurred in Russia as a result of environmental neglect. The chapter on geography addresses, among other subjects, the decline of the Russian population. The final chapter, *Америка чужими глазами*, contains a few humorous anecdotes about Russians' visits to America, among them, how Americans are always smiling at others! There is little formal pre-reading other than a brief introduction to the text. The post-reading contains questions about the texts and an exercise based on the reading and listening. On the whole, the readings are interesting and provide authentic cultural background on contemporary Russia.

The listening exercises on the DVD range from lectures given by an individual to conversations and debates. There are no visual aids except for the speaker and a map in the geography unit. However, most presenters speak clearly and distinctly. The chapter on ecology features a debate (audio only) that originally aired on Radio Mayak in 2002 on the ecosystem. The final chapter presents several young Russians who give their opinions about Americans. All had been in the United States or had met Americans. Their speech is rapid and colloquial. Each chapter ends with a cloze passage based on the listening. Because the DVD accompanies the book, students can listen to the recordings several times.

The *Сочинение*, or written exercises, is probably the most creative element. It features real-life scenarios, which students prepare at home, then discuss in groups, and finally present in class after completing their paper assignment. They include a promotional brochure about the student's home state for distribution in Russia, or a comparison of the Russian and American system of education for newly arrived Russian immigrants. The assignments come toward the end of the chapter, an excellent way for students to integrate their knowledge.

The book contains several other features. It directs students to materials from the Web, libraries, and newspapers, as well as to other resources. Also, it gives options for projects to do in and outside the classroom. One directs students to skim Russian newspapers to find articles pertinent to the topic of the unit. Another gives five sets of directions in Russian, such as how to make tea, or crochet. Students then demonstrate one to the class. Finally, there are brief grammatical tables, and Russian-English and English-Russian glossaries.

The Instructor's Manual (61 pages) accompanying the text is available on the Yale University Website. It includes the answers to all the exercises, the text of the listening passages, and pertinent comments by the author, in which she explains how she uses the text. She notes, for example, that she seldom does many grammar exercises in class, instead spending most of her class time on various communicative activities. She also provides the source of some materials. The manual is available on the Web; thus it is easy to make changes and suggest other reading and listening exercises, since contemporary articles become obsolete quickly.

The goal of the text is communication. Although the format does not follow a communicative approach (since it begins with memorization of vocabulary and lengthy grammar exercises), it does emphasize the use of the language in real-life

situations. The National Standards are evident throughout. The text stresses contemporary culture, often comparing Russian and American lifestyles. It also notes differences and similarities between Russian and English usage. By creating links between the Russian language and science, education, and politics, it addresses connections. Finally, it brings Russian into the community and the Russian community into the classroom through such features as the DVD, an ecological readiness survey in Russian, and a survey of Russian friends on current topics. *Russian in Use* should be a great asset in the advanced Russian classroom.

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**Salaberry, Rafael, and Barbara A. Lafford, eds.**  
***The Art of Teaching Spanish: Second Language Acquisition from Research to Praxis.***

Washington, D.C.: Georgetown UP, 2006. Pp. 244. ISBN: 978-1-58901-133-5.

This text examines the relationship between the teaching of Spanish and current research on second language acquisition and is intended for foreign language teachers and applied linguists interested in using the findings from the research to enhance foreign language instruction.

The text consists of a preface and 11 chapters. The first chapter introduces the issues examined in the text. In Chapter 2, Klee and Barnes-Karol review Foreign Languages Across the Curriculum (FLAC) programs. The authors explain how FLAC courses provide students with opportunities to use their developing language skills to explore academic subjects in the target language. The authors outline three models for FLAC, and then discuss the advantages and disadvantages of each one, as well as the challenges that FLAC programs face.

Collentine examines three areas of research and their impact on classroom practice and curriculum design in chapter 3. The three areas of research are: (1) constructivism, (2) psycholinguistics and cognition, and (3) sociocultural cognition. The author states that the constructivist movement in second language education represented a significant shift from teacher- to student-centered practices. Collentine then describes how cognitive perspectives further shaped second language instruction. He discusses how researchers (Schmidt and Terrell) began to recognize that comprehensible input was not sufficient for the acquisition of certain linguistic structures. Subsequent research examined the use of Focus on Form to foster morphosyntactic and grammatical development. Collentine concludes the chapter with a discussion of the role of sociocultural cognition in second language instruction. The author emphasizes the importance of group work and private speech in promoting language development.

Chapter 4 is a review of the important role of input in second language acquisition. VanPatten and Lesser discuss a range of input-based activities in a communicative context. The authors conclude with a discussion of different methods of input enhancement.

In Chapter 5, Negueruela and Lantolf explore concept-based instruction. The authors contrast traditional grammar instruction with concept-based instruction and then demonstrate how concept-based instruction seeks to promote students' awareness and conceptual knowledge of grammar.

In Chapter 6, Lafford and Collentine examine research on the development of students' Spanish in study abroad and classroom contexts. Recent research has found that study abroad has a positive effect on some measures of language proficiency. The authors then discuss how these findings can be used to enhance classroom language instruction. Future research should examine the length of the study abroad program, the living conditions, and the pre-study abroad proficiency level of the students. Further research is also needed in areas such as pronunciation, morphosyntax, and pragmatic competence.

Blake and Delforge evaluate online language learning in Chapter 7. The authors compare the progress of students enrolled in an online course with students enrolled in traditional Spanish language courses. Their findings suggest that online courses are effective in providing language instruction. The authors state, however, that further research is needed to better determine the role of the online format in students' language development.

In Chapter 8, Salaberry and Cohen outline theoretical aspects of classroom language assessment. The authors describe different test formats. After discussing the relationship between assessment and curriculum, the authors offer recommendations for classroom testing.

Gutiérrez and Fairclough address the issue of incorporating sociolinguistic variation into the classroom in Chapter 9. The authors describe how current Spanish textbooks do not take into account the variations of Spanish spoken in the United States. Gutiérrez and Fairclough then discuss strategies for teaching linguistic variation — from the use of authentic materials written in different varieties of United States Spanish to activities and research projects that promote student interaction with Hispanic communities.

In Chapter 10, Valdés argues for a better connection between second language acquisition and the heritage language teaching profession. She reviews the goals and objectives of heritage language instruction as well as theories of heritage language acquisition. Valdés outlines a research agenda that centers on the development of appropriate assessment procedures for heritage language learners and experimental studies examining the role of instruction in the development of heritage language acquisition.

Colina demonstrates how second language acquisition research can inform the teaching of professional translation in Chapter 11. She explains the importance of incorporating research on reading and writing as well as on

pragmatics and discourse into the translation classroom. Colina also argues for the development of advanced proficiency scales to assess the proficiency of translators and interpreters. The author concludes the chapter with recommendations for the integration of translation and interpretation into the second language curriculum.

*The Art of Teaching Spanish: Second Language Acquisition from Research to Praxis* is an excellent collection of studies. The different chapters in this text explore issues critical to the teaching of Spanish as a second language: (1) FLAC programs and content-based instruction, (2) the intersection of second language acquisition research, classroom practices, and curriculum design, (3) the role of input, (4) the relationship between concept-based instruction and other pedagogical practices in the acquisition of Spanish, (5) the effect of study abroad on the acquisition of Spanish, (6) online language learning, (7) assessment issues, (8) sociolinguistic variation in the classroom, (9) the connection between second language acquisition research and heritage language instruction, and (10) the teaching of translation. In conclusion, this volume offers a comprehensive overview of Spanish second language acquisition research. I therefore recommend the text for both undergraduate and graduate courses in teacher preparation.

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## **Sarris, Jim. *Comic Mnemonics*.**

**New York: Alacan Publishing, 2004. ISBN: 0-9749096-3-7.**

Innovative teaching methods are particularly important when it comes to teaching a world language. Many districts do not offer language study until secondary school, usually in the eighth grade. Research clearly shows that the prime time to learn language is during infancy or childhood. As humans grow older, learning other languages becomes more and more difficult. *Comic Mnemonics* presents a method of second-language acquisition that is unique and accessible to secondary school students.

One hundred verbs are listed in chart form, in alphabetical order. Each verb is then given a two-page presentation. The first page includes the verb, its English translation, a keyword, a picture, a sentence demonstrating the mnemonic technique, and conjugation of the verb in both the present and preterit tenses. The following page shows the same picture, along with sentences with the verb missing, to provide practice using both the present and preterit tenses. The pictures are age-appropriate and accurately represent the verbs. Also included in the text are answers for the exercises and a quick reference guide that divides verbs into a variety of groups.

This book engages the reader and provides pictures that are consistent with and related to the sentences that make the mnemonic technique possible. It could effectively be used as ancillary material in a beginning language class. Spanish I and II students could benefit from the pictures, sentences, and conju-



gation practice. Along with classroom instruction, *Comic Mnemonics* can help students properly utilize the verbs necessary for communication.

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Tohickon Middle School  
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**Terrell, Tracy D., Mary B. Rogers, Betsy J. Kerr, Guy Spielmann, and consultant Françoise Santore. *Deux Mondes: A Communicative Approach*. 5th edition.**

**Boston: McGraw-Hill, 2005. ISBN: 0-07-295932-0. Includes: text, *Cahier d'exercices*, Instructor's Manual, Instructor's Resource Kit, Printed Testing Program, Electronic Testing Program, Video on VHS or CD, Online Workbook/Laboratory Manual, Interactive CD-ROM, Audio CD Program (8 CDs), Student Audio CD Program (9 CDs), Audio Script. For ordering information and assistance from a sales representative, contact McGraw-Hill World Languages at (800) 338-3987 or [www.mhhe.com/worldlanguages](http://www.mhhe.com/worldlanguages).**

Reviewing an introductory language textbook is a tricky task since no one textbook can fit every teacher's needs or teaching style; in other words, no one textbook is perfect. The fifth edition of *Deux Mondes: A Communicative Approach* comes with all the standard bells and whistles: main textbook (with four appendices, a "lexique," and an index), *Cahier d'exercices*, Instructor's Manual, Instructor's Resource Kit, testing program (in paper or electronic format) with audio CDs, video in VHS or CD format, online workbook/laboratory manual, interactive CD-ROM, institutional CD-ROM for language laboratory use, audio CD program for language laboratory use, student audio CD program, and audio script. Potential adopters of *Deux Mondes* should be aware that the text is currently under revision and that the sixth edition is expected to be released in late 2007/early 2008. The original copyright for the text is 1988.

*Deux Mondes* comprises two preliminary chapters (*Première Étape* and *Deuxième Étape*) and fourteen chapters, each divided between "Activités" (white pages) and "Grammaire et exercices" (blue pages) for the preliminary chapters and "Activités et lectures" (white pages) and "Grammaire et exercices" (blue pages) for the remaining fourteen chapters. Chapters Four, Six, Eight, Ten, and Twelve also include an "Echelles Francophones" section. The number of chapters to be covered per semester would naturally be determined by the number of class periods (e.g., contact time) per week per semester. Chapter themes are as follows:

- Première Étape: Premières rencontres;
- Deuxième Étape: Le monde étudiant;
- Chapitre 1: Ma famille et moi;

- Chapitre 2: La vie quotidienne et les loisirs;
- Chapitre 3: En ville;
- Chapitre 4: La maison et le quartier (Escalaes Francophones: La France);
- Chapitre 5: Dans le passé;
- Chapitre 6: L'enfance et la jeunesse (Escalaes Francophones: Le Québec);
- Chapitre 7: À table;
- Chapitre 8: Parlons de la Terre! (Escalaes Francophones: Le Sénégal);
- Chapitre 9: L'enseignement, les carrières et l'avenir;
- Chapitre 10: Les voyages (Escalaes Francophones: La Belgique);
- Chapitre 11: Les moyens de communication;
- Chapitre 12: La santé et les urgences (Escalaes Francophones: Les Antilles);
- Chapitre 13: La famille et les valeurs en société; and,
- Chapitre 14: Les enjeux du présent et de l'avenir.

This reviewer was particularly pleased to see that “Chapitre 8: Parlons de la Terre!” had been revised from the fourth edition to reflect the strong interest in environmental issues among people throughout the world. Given the recent success of Al Gore’s 2006 documentary *An Inconvenient Truth*, this chapter will surely be popular with students and instructors alike. Students, for example, will be able to compare their culture’s perspective on global warming with that of Francophone cultures. Also impressive were the range of readings (cultural and literary) for each chapter. For example, included among the readings are “La langue en mouvement — Le verlan” (Chapitre 4) and “Info: Société — Femmes en vue d’hier et d’aujourd’hui” (Chapitre 14).

However, while this reviewer was delighted to see that the text is principally written in French from the very first preliminary chapter on, the layout of the book is bothersome, if not difficult: blue pages, with grammar explanations in English, come after the white pages in French. The blue pages are to be assigned for homework, and the white pages are to be used in class. This is a rather awkward approach, but it must stem from the authors’ belief that students are actually going to learn, or at least study, the material before it is presented in French in class. If this is indeed the case, why not at least provide some grammar explanation in French among the white pages to support what the instructor does in class? In so doing, the act of purging the class of any use of English would be tremendously enhanced. Moreover, including at least some grammar explanation in French among the white pages would reduce the amount of flipping back and forth between the blue and white pages. Or, at the very minimum, put verb conjugation charts, for example, in the margins of the white pages. We all know how, if a student becomes lost in a class where the instructor correctly uses the communicative approach and does not use English in class, the student will naturally flip around to the blue pages in an attempt to figure out what is going on.

For the technological savvy among us, the online workbook/laboratory manual is definitely worth exploring. It promises instant feedback, automatic grading and scoring, the complete *Deux Mondes* audio program, a grade book tracking

feature, and an easy-to-use, interactive format. Furthermore, the interactive CD-ROM provides activities and games that practice vocabulary and grammar, audio and video recordings, simulated video conversations with native speakers of French, a plethora of cultural information about customs, traditions, and French-speaking countries, and a “talking” dictionary, as well as a session tracking and grading feature.

All in all, *Deux Mondes* is a fairly good text. It will, of course, be very interesting to see the changes made in the sixth edition.

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### **Publisher’s Response**

McGraw-Hill is delighted to have the opportunity to respond to Professor Angelini’s review of the fifth edition of *Deux mondes*. In particular, it is gratifying that she has highlighted some important changes to content, including an expanded treatment of the topic of the environment as well as other new cultural and literary selections. Changes of this sort in educational materials are the result of feedback that publishers receive from professors, and the authors of *Deux mondes* have responded to that feedback in ways that keep their materials current and of interest to today’s students and instructors. We also appreciate Professor Angelini’s acknowledgment of the vast array of print and media supplements available with *Deux mondes*. McGraw-Hill World Languages is committed to publishing high-quality foreign language textbooks and multimedia products, and we are proud to include *Deux mondes* and its rich package of ancillary materials among our many titles. As mentioned by Professor Angelini, the sixth edition of *Deux mondes* is scheduled for publication in early spring 2008. We again thank Professor Angelini for sharing her review of *Deux mondes* with the readership of *The NECTFL Review*.

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

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## **Valdman, Albert, Cathy Pons, and Mary Ellen Scullen. *Chez nous: Branché sur le monde francophone*. 3rd edition.**

**Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Prentice Hall, 2006. Includes text, Activities Manual, video, audio CDs, video, CD-ROM, Instructor’s Resource Manual, Testing Program, and Audio CDs to accompany Testing Program. Companion Website: [www.prenhall.com/cheznous](http://www.prenhall.com/cheznous). ISBN: 0-13-192026-X.**

This attractive first-year program begins with a two-part *Leçon préliminaire*, followed by twelve *chapitres*, each subdivided into three lessons. The chapters are the-

matically organized and follow the same pattern. The preliminary chapter focuses on introductions and classroom expressions. Chapter 1 addresses the family, and includes dates, age, numbers, and various practice activities. Another chapter, titled *Métro, boulot, dodo*, addresses daily routine, telling time, and clothing. The final chapter includes the arts, music, and theater. Although the book is basically intended for traditional college students, it is appropriate for students of any age, really.

Each lesson begins with a dialogue or short passage, intended to illustrate the vocabulary and theme of the chapter. Usually very straightforward, it is not “authentic” material, and is somewhat artificial, although it does represent a limited real-life situation. *Sons et lettres* enables the student to assimilate the principal points of French phonetics. The grammar section titled *Formes et fonctions* explains the usages in English, with examples in French. They are followed by communicative exercises, some intended for paired work. They can be done orally, in class, or as written homework assignments. Reading, writing, and listening exercises follow. The readings are all authentic texts, some from literature, such as Jacques Prévert’s *Familiale*. Others are taken from newspapers, Websites, or travel brochures. The early lessons contain discussion questions in English; in subsequent chapters questions are in French. Most materials are well chosen, integrated into the chapter theme, and of interest to present-day students.

The text, the illustrations, and the video emphasize cultural diversity within the Francophone world. There are people from Québec, Morocco, Bénin, Congo, Madagascar, Haiti, Belgium, and different regions of France. Various races and age groups are also represented. Their cultures are reflected through their practices, artifacts, and perspectives.

The video, also available on the student CD-ROM, is new to the third edition. Each unit begins with *Observons*, clips of authentic cultural scenes integrated with the chapter theme. It continues with interviews of one or more key people representing various Francophone countries. The interviewees, mostly non-professionals, speak conversationally and informally with different accents. Although there is a wealth of material in their presentations, the student may have difficulty understanding them. Their articulation is not always clear, and their presentations are spontaneous and unscripted. Evidently this was done intentionally, to provide students with a wide range of native speakers. The cultural clips are not identified; thus the student may not recognize their significance, such as the old city in Québec or the monuments of Paris. The instructor will need to intervene throughout. The video manual and the textbook also help, providing exercises, and links to Websites with supplementary information. The video models diversity by choosing all types of places, rather than simply tourist attractions, so that one visits the fourteenth *arrondissement* in Paris, or the side streets in small villages. The script of the video is printed in the instructor’s edition of the text and the *Instructor’s Resource Manual*, with indications of standard French in places where the speakers use regional expressions.

The *Student Activities Manual* contains supplementary exercises for the text. It includes a workbook with written exercises, a Lab Manual, with oral components, and the Video Manual. The exercises are basically communicative in nature. They are not self-correcting, although an optional, separate answer key is

available. Without it, the instructor must check all the work. This can be a disadvantage for both student and instructor.

The audio CDs that accompany the text are clearly recorded and carefully enunciated. They correspond to sections of the text marked “audio.” They include the dialogue or passage at the beginning of the lesson, the phonetics section, a listening activity, *Écoutons*, not included in the text, which provides a completion exercise, as well as the vocabulary listed at the end of the chapter. Instructions are given in English in the earlier chapters, but gradually pass into French. The student can repeat the exercises as often as necessary.

The *Instructor's Resource Manual* contains suggestions for using the program, along with sample syllabi. *Chez nous* is designed for a two- or three-semester course, each semester consisting of fifteen weeks with 45 contact hours. The first option may be more ideal than practical. According to the authors, it is also suitable for an intensive course, that is, two fifteen-week semesters, with four meetings per week, and 60 contact hours per semester. The second option seems more realistic.

The *Instructor's Resource Manual* also gives numerous suggestions on integrating the National Standards, especially culture, comparisons, and connections, into the program. Since the text and illustrations are culturally oriented, it is almost impossible to miss these opportunities. The manual gives suggestions on making comparisons between American, French, and Francophone practices and perspectives, and between the grammar of English and French. Finally, various resources, answer keys, tape scripts, a number of lesson plans, and activities complete the Manual.

The *Testing Program* contains quizzes and exams for each unit, as well as comprehensive oral and written exams after Chapters 6 and 12, for two-semester courses, or 4, 8, and 12 for three-semester programs. Each quiz or exam has two formats, basically a reordering of the same material. The tests follow a similar pattern: listening comprehension, written exercises, culture questions, a reading based on an authentic text, and a *rédaction*. CDs are provided for the listening exercises. Although the material is clearly presented, the instructor most likely would have to interrupt the recording or replay it to give the students time to complete the exercises. The program contains an answer key and sample rubrics. The tests, while challenging, are comprehensive and address the four skills and the standards, as does the text.

A companion Website, [www.prenhall.com/cheznous](http://www.prenhall.com/cheznous), furnishes many useful links. For example, students can find written and oral practice exercises; and instructors can review sample syllabi, lesson plans, and Web links. The workbook and all supplementary materials are also available through *Onekey*, in collaboration with *Quia*. The exercises can be corrected and the marks recorded automatically. Students have the opportunity to repeat the exercises if necessary. This provides a decided advantage over the paper manual.

In comparison with other first-year college texts on the market, *Chez nous* provides a competitive alternative. It is especially useful to instructors seeking a culturally-oriented text attentive to diversity, one of the distinctive strengths of the program. The themes and sequencing of grammar topics are comprehensive

and typical for first-year texts. There are ample exercises for reinforcement, and the elements of the program are well coordinated. This text surely will enable students to attain the novice high oral proficiency level.

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## **Valette, Jean-Paul and Rebecca M. Valette.** *À votre tour.*

**Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2007. ISBN: 0-618-69315-7.**

*À votre tour* is an intermediate college-level French text and has the following objectives: to “build and reinforce active communication skills; develop reading skills and cultural awareness; build a strong linguistic base; and stimulate students’ interest in French language and culture so that they will want to continue their study beyond the intermediate level.” Also included are a student activities manual and a Video/DVD program. In addition, the authors have incorporated three feature-length films into the text in a section titled *Interludes culturels*. They are *Cyrano de Bergerac*, *Rue Cases-nègres*, and *Au revoir les enfants* and provide students with authentic French, as well as local color. The actual films are not included with the program, though, and must be purchased separately.

Each chapter is structured in the same way. There is a unit-opener followed by an Info Magazine which expands on the general theme of the unit with short readings. Next comes the grammar or linguistic functions section; it is followed by another Info Magazine and a second grammar section. The chapter ends with a reading, generally a short story or excerpt followed by some cultural information.

For those who have used a Valette text before, *À votre tour* will seem eerily familiar. Having used *Discovering French* for 6 years myself, I had a hard time overcoming the feeling of *déjà vu*. The drawings, colors, and general layout mimic those of the *DF* series. They are somewhat childish in appearance, with a lot of cartoon-like drawings and illustrations. Often the grammar lesson is presented in a colored box in columns or rows. Although middle and high school students might like this format, I wonder if college students would not be put off by this text and not take it seriously.

The activities are also similar to what one finds in the *Discovering French* series. There are little conversation starter boxes that set up a scene for students to act out and pattern drills where elements of a sentence are given to students, who then have to put them together. There is not a great variety of activities, nor are the activities that are included very challenging, even in the later chapters. All directions are given in French, as one would expect at this level, and are easy to follow.

The readings and cultural information are nicely presented. The photos of art works and historical information are well presented at an appropriate level of difficulty for intermediate students. Later chapters present important cultural fig-

ures. Also, Francophone authors and cultural information are nicely presented. The aforementioned films are presented with a fair amount of background information and could be covered whether or not you use them in class.

I have the same problems with this Valette text that I had with the other Valette text I have used. It is very simplistic, and the activities do not require much thinking or creativity on the part of students. Although the information is nicely presented, this text leaves a lot to be desired in terms of challenging practice activities. The pattern drills are a component of learning a language, I suppose, but I would really like to see the authors take them one step further and give students more opportunities to speak spontaneously, using what they have learned. With this text, students will generally learn to produce idiomatic expressions and respond to questions according to a certain pattern, but have little opportunity to use French in creative ways. Teachers who adopt this text will have to create their own supplemental activities. The cultural and literary information is nicely organized and well chosen, but I still hesitate to recommend *Á votre tour*.

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## **VanPatten, Bill, James F. Lee, and Terry L. Ballman. *Vistazos: Un curso breve*. 2nd edition.**

New York: McGraw-Hill Company, 2006. Includes: Textbook, Workbook, Video on CD, Instructor's Manual and Testing Program, *Quia* Online Manual (textbook and workbook), Audio CDs, and CD-ROM. ISBN: 0-07-299050-3.

Bill VanPatten's, James F. Lee's, and Terry L. Ballman's *Vistazos* is an abbreviated introductory Spanish program intended for college students. The *Vistazos* program includes a student workbook, instructional video, instructor's manual, and testing program, as well as student and teacher audio CDs, and an online version of the program and supplemental online activities.

The main textbook is divided into a preliminary chapter (which contains vocabulary and grammar), fifteen *lecciones* or chapters (which also cover vocabulary and grammar), and a *lección final*. *Vistazos* is organized in a logical manner, according to topical and structural organizational principles, building upon both vocabulary and grammar in each consecutive chapter.

The workbook, or *Manual que acompaña*, provides activities that not only focus on written vocabulary and grammar, but also on listening and pronunciation. In the first version of the *Manual que acompaña*, the authors included a *Prueba de práctica* at the end of each *lección*, which assessed student knowledge and skill development. However, in the second version, the authors have chosen to remove this component, which was a poor decision since the *Prueba de práctica* offered a student self-evaluation of the *lección*. In general, the workbook activities follow all structured input and output guidelines and also include

a variety of referential and affective activities, such as binary option, matching, supplying information, selecting alternatives, surveys, ordering and ranking, making lists, filling out grids, indicating agreement, determining veracity, responding with a scale, and answering with a question. For the aforementioned reasons, the workbook is the most pedagogically sound of the ancillary materials.

While the *Vistazos* textbook and workbook clearly complement each other, the remaining ancillary materials are not as well integrated. The audio CDs to accompany *Vistazos* contain dialogues that are too advanced for an introductory course, primarily because they do not present one thing at a time, nor do they keep meaning in focus. These reviewers had significant difficulty opening and navigating the first edition's student CD-ROM and the online version of the *Manual que acompaña*. The CD-ROM would not run properly on all platforms, nor were there directions on how to run or trouble-shoot the program. However, in the second edition, the CD-ROM functioned without complications, and in addition, a technical support Website and hotline are included. Although most of the four-part lessons contained on the CD-ROM exhibit a concrete connection to the text, the activities are mere electronic duplications of written workbook and textbook activities. In addition, more than half of the culture is isolated and not presented in a meaningful way because there is no consistent thematic organization of cultural topics in the *Vistazos* program. Most of the output activities are adequate, but the activities should be expanded and diversified to make the CD-ROM more beneficial to students through a variety of output activities. Furthermore, these reviewers encourage the authors to fully utilize the electronic platform to create activities that take advantage of the technology available, through which students may be more inclined to learn. In the new online *Quia* activities included in the second version of the program, these reviewers had hoped to find more technologically engaging activities, but were disappointed to once again discover replications of the written textbook and workbook. Lastly, the video has little educational value to teachers and students because it consists of the same dialogues that are on the audio CDs, merely spoken by a person in a chair. Although the video is now in DVD format, it could be even more useful with additional visuals; these reviewers were surprised and disappointed to discover the unappealing set of a person sitting in a chair and speaking to the camera. Within this video, we suggest more form-meaning connections, direct binding, and extra-linguistic aids to enhance student comprehension.

*Vistazos* wonderfully connects the Spanish language with other disciplines, such as art and literature. However, the presentation of this material in the program is problematic. As mentioned above in the description of the ancillaries, just like the CD-ROM, the textbook also treats the concept of culture as an isolated topic. Although these reviewers were pleased to find newly included opportunities for students to check their comprehension of the cultural information presented through follow-up activities, the text should more adequately integrate cultural information into the presentation of material.

With regard to the content of *Vistazos*, the preliminary chapter is filled with information such as exchanging names, asking about majors, classes and subjects, subject pronouns, gender and number of articles and nouns, numbers, and verbs such as *hay*, *ser*, and *gustar*. Although all of this information is useful and necessary to learn, it is too much material to cover in a preliminary chapter, especially



one that is less than twenty-five pages in length. The text itself should supply adequate activities for the students to practice this material and should include references to where in the supplementary materials more activities can be found. The fifteen *lecciones* and *lección final* that make up the rest of the textbook also possess very few activities after introducing new material. For the majority of the grammatical points introduced, students should be given many more input and output activities to thoroughly grasp and master the concepts presented. The text also lacks activities that would encourage students to interact with each other, such as information gap activities or conversations with a partner. In order to provide students with sufficient practice, the teacher will have to devise supplementary activities that are not found in the textbook or the Teacher's Manual.

Finally, there are some serious issues with regard to the actual design of the student textbook: visuals are few and outdated, the color scheme is visually unappealing, important information is not properly highlighted, and there are not enough visuals to break up the abundant amount of text. Although the second edition of *Vistazos* has shown improvement to the text design, in general, the color scheme, proliferation of text, and poor graphic layout fail to adequately support student learning.

The *Vistazos* program has the potential to be successful with some editing and reworking of the ancillary materials, the visual layout of the text, and the presentation of culture. It would be best used in a high school course or a beginning Spanish course in college in which a lot of material is covered in a short period of time. A high school teacher or elementary Spanish professor who is under time constraints, and who has to strictly follow a syllabus, would benefit from the succinct organization of this program. For future editions, these reviewers suggest a clearer graphic and text layout, better use of the ancillary materials, and a more connected presentation of culture, as well as the inclusion of more varied input and output activities, to truly support the proficiency goals of a beginning Spanish program.

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## **Publisher's Response**

McGraw-Hill is delighted to have the opportunity to respond to the review of *Vistazos: Un curso breve*, 2nd edition, written by Lauren Hartmann and Bethany Pulaski. As noted by the reviewers, *Vistazos* is an abbreviated introductory Spanish program, and, in fact, is a brief version of *¿Sabías que...?: Beginning Spanish*, now in its fifth edition and also published by McGraw-Hill. We are pleased that the reviewers have highlighted certain characteristics of the philosophical and methodological approach of these materials, and in particular the emphasis on structured input and output, which is informed by the authors' considerable body of research on second language acquisition. Likewise, it is also gratifying that the reviewers have noted so many significant changes and improvements in the second edition of *Vistazos*, and we thank them for having taken the time to review so carefully not only the second edition but also the first

edition. Of course, we also appreciate the reviewers' suggestions for further improving *Vistazos* in the next edition, for it is only through this sort of feedback that we are able to respond to changes in the profession and in the market.

McGraw-Hill World Languages is committed to publishing high quality foreign language textbooks and multimedia products, and we are proud to include *Vistazos* and its rich package of ancillary materials among our many titles. We again thank Lauren Hartmann and Bethany Pulaski for sharing their review of *Vistazos* with the readership of *The NECTFL Review*.

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

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## **Zollo, Mike and Alan Wesson.** ***Interactive Italian Grammar.***

**New York: McGraw-Hill, 2005. ISBN: 0-07-146092-6.**

This slightly larger than pocket-size reference book represents an invaluable resource for anyone wanting a solid foundation in the Italian language. Simple patterns replace lengthy grammatical explanations, allowing learners to move at their own pace.

Although the book does not have a specific target audience, it is a useful resource at any level; it would be as valuable to students needing to review grammar as it would to travelers wanting to quickly learn the basics.

The book has seven concise chapters: Verbs; Nouns and Determiners; Pronouns; Adjectives; Adverbs; Prepositions; and Conjunctions and Other Useful Words. Sections are organized according to an intuitive progression, and easy cross-reference is provided throughout. The use of cognates allows learners to expand their vocabulary effortlessly. Shortcuts are indicated by the icon ►► to allow the learner to focus on the precise concept that needs to be learned or reviewed. In each section, there are tables that show English words and their Italian equivalents, allowing for an immediate understanding of the concept and a thorough review. Highlighted boxes with light bulbs contain information blurbs or practice tips directly related to the material previously presented. Attention is also given to the spoken language, specifically to intonation and accents. The complexity of the verb tenses in Italian is easily managed in the same way using tables of comparison.

Many useful examples are given pertaining to practical situations, thereby allowing readers to immerse themselves in Italian culture. The written exercises include fill-in-the blank, matching, and sentence completion. "Fast track" is the short summary presented at the end of each chapter, providing a review of the concepts learned in the current chapter.

An interactive CD-ROM accompanies the text, containing exercises taken from the text recorded by native speakers. For additional clarification, English translations are just a click away, providing immediate feedback.

*Interactive Italian Grammar* is a valuable resource for anyone wanting an accessible resource on the mechanics of the Italian language. Overall, we would rate this text very high for its versatility, compactness, and succinctness.

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### **Publisher's Response**

McGraw-Hill thanks Dr. Carlucci and Professor Paoletti for their review of *Interactive Italian Grammar Made Easy*. Their appreciation of simple patterns, the inclusion of short cuts, the focus on spoken language, and inclusion of audio for native-speaker level pronunciation, as well as the the abundance of culture-rich example sentences, is most gratifying. As the reviewers point out, the benefit of immediate feedback on the CD-ROM makes this title particularly helpful for independent study. In addition, I am delighted to hear that the reviewer's class copies have received such thorough use.

Christopher Brown  
Publisher, Language & Reference  
McGraw-Hill Professional

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## **Zollo, Mike and Alan Wesson.**

### ***Interactive Spanish Grammar Made Easy.* Workbook with PC compatible CD-ROM.**

**New York: McGraw-Hill, 2005. Pp. 199. ISBN: 0-07-146095-0. Price: \$19.95 U.S., \$29.95 CAN. For further information see [www.books.mcgraw-hill.com](http://www.books.mcgraw-hill.com)**

As a lover of languages from an early age, my high school guidance counselor pointed me in the direction of Middlebury College. My desire to become fluent in more than one foreign language was further nurtured by two summer school sessions at Middlebury, one with the École Française and the second with the Escuela Española. It was during my second summer, as a beginning Spanish student, that I learned from *el Señor "A"* that the most important grammatical structure for learning any language is the verb. He justified his position by pointing out, for example, that adjectives come from the past participles of verbs and that adverbs mainly come from adjectives. Essentially, he maintained that the verb is the main building block of a sentence around which the remaining grammatical structures are placed and/or formed. Thus, when asked to review *Interactive Spanish Grammar*

*Made Easy* by Mike Zollo and Alan Wesson, I was extremely curious to see what they did with verbs. I was not at all surprised to see that “Verbs” was not only the first chapter but the longest (110 pages out of a total of 199 pages).

Dominating the text’s cover are four promotional statements: “The essentials to move beyond phrasebook Spanish;” “Helpful tips for the grammar-phobe;” “Self-test CD-ROM includes exercises with audio answers for correct pronunciation;” and “The simplest approach to Spanish grammar — with the most fun way to measure your progress.” Not to be overlooked, the back cover, in an even larger font, promises “Get the grammar monkey off your back and finally feel comfortable speaking and writing in Spanish.” With such bold statements, my initial reaction was to think that *Interactive Spanish Grammar Made Easy* would be good for an Advanced Placement Spanish class doing intensive grammar review (that is to say, as a means of eliminating bad grammar habits) or for an intermediate college/university class that wanted a grammar supplement that would not be the main focus of the course.

In addition to a brief introduction and a simple guide to the parts of speech, *Interactive Spanish Grammar Made Easy* contains seven chapters, each focusing on a particular part of speech, and an answer key. The seven chapters are: Verbs; Nouns and Determiners; Pronouns; Adjectives; Adverbs; Prepositions; and Conjunctions and Other Useful Words. Some of the chapters begin with a brief exercise that asks the student to identify the part of speech in question in the context of the English language. For example, in the chapter on adjectives, the reader is asked to identify all the adjectives in a series of ten English sentences. Hence, the authors want to ensure that before students try to understand how adjectives work in Spanish, they must know what they are in English.

Students comfortable with the grammar lesson at hand are directed to the “Fast Track” grammar section. Those who need reinforcement can practice by doing introductory-level exercises. All grammar explanations are reinforced by a good number of exercises and interspersed with grammar advice boxes that note exceptions to the rules and offer helpful hints. The CD-ROM provides additional exercises complete with pop-up tips and instant scoring. Audio is included on the CD-ROM and features vocabulary and answers to exercises spoken by a “Spanish-language authority” (back cover).

This method of comparing grammatical patterns among languages reminded me of one of my favorite series of all time, Jacqueline Morton’s *English Grammar for Students of XXXXX: The Study Guide for Those Learning XXXXX*. (Please see my previously published review of *English Grammar for Students of French: The Study Guide for Those Learning French*, 4th edition. Ann Arbor, MI: The Olivia and Hill Press, 1977, in *The NECTFL Review* 49 [Fall 2001: 74-75]). To me, Morton’s series is a classic, the standard against which all others are measured. Indeed, the two distinctive features of *Interactive Spanish Grammar Made Easy* are the plethora of exercises and the “Fast Track” approach.

Nonetheless, upon closely examining the chapter on “Verbs” (which is broken down into the following subsections: “Verbs: Talking About What You Do;” “Talking About What You Are Doing Now: the Present Tense;” “Negatives, Interrogatives and Imperatives;” “The Past Tenses;” “The Future Tenses and the

Conditional;”“The Subjunctive;”“Fast Track: Verbs;” and “Useful Expressions Using Verbs”), I was disappointed to see that only five pages deal with the subjunctive. Even more discouraging was the grammar explanation of the subjunctive: “The subjunctive is not used much in English any more (only in expressions such as ‘If I were you ...’), but it has to be used in many expressions in Spanish. You are not likely to need to use those expressions yourself very often, other than the forms used for imperatives, but it is useful to be able to recognize them when you hear them and to understand which verb is being used” (90).

In a nutshell, *Interactive Spanish Grammar Made Easy* is a solid reference tool for students at all levels except for those preparing for the AP Spanish Language examination or doing a thorough grammar review at the third-year college level. It could also be used as a grammar supplement which instructors can draw on when they see that their students need to review the basics. As is true of most computer programs, the CD-ROM for *Interactive Spanish Grammar Made Easy* is ideally suited for those students looking for independent reinforcement.

Eileen Angelini, Ph.D.  
Chair, Department of Foreign Languages  
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Buffalo, NY

### **Publisher’s Response**

I would like to thank Professor Angelini for her informative review of *Interactive Spanish Made Easy*. This book and accompanying exercise CD-ROM were developed for students who may have difficulty in grasping basic concepts of grammar or who have no plans to major in Spanish, and therefore appreciate the focus on concise explanations. I feel that the text is successful in this aim, so I would also agree with Professor’s Angelini’s summary that, while this book is suitable for first or second-year students — both for instruction and review — it does not provide the in-depth coverage (of the subjunctive, for example) that AP students require.

Christopher Brown  
Publisher, Language & Reference  
McGraw-Hill Professional

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# NEWS FROM NORTHEAST

## *A Message from the 2008 Conference Chair*



**Sharon Wilkinson**

Dear Colleagues:

They have been dubbed the Echo Boomers, the Next Great Generation, the Millennials, Digital Natives, the iGeneration. They are today's learners—the most diverse generation that is also the most accepting of diversity. Highly creative and collaborative but also easily bored, they see technology in the same way that previous generations have viewed their pencil: it's what you do with it that's interesting. From elementary school to graduate school, they are in our classrooms. They are our future colleagues. As we seek to learn about and from this unique group, NECTFL invites you to join us for our 2008

theme, "The iGeneration: Turning Instruction Inside Out."

Many "inside out" experiences are already in the works for the 2008 conference, including—

- a technology playground where even the most tech-phobic can feel free to play on the equipment and ask questions of playground "monitors" in a pressure-free environment,
- opportunities to hear from young learners themselves about their generation and learning preferences,
- a crash-course in graphic design—the coming essential literacy of the 21st century,
- a chance to rethink the status quo of our teaching through hands-on workshops with a world-renowned expert on "digital natives."

Our program will include sessions and workshops on the broad range of topics and languages you have come to expect, representing all levels of instruction, but also presentations that—

- explore instructional approaches that appeal to the strengths of the iGeneration (non-linear, graphically rich projects; team work; open-ended creativity; experiential learning; gaming; high-tech, low-tech, and no-tech options, etc.);
- involve iGeneration presenters or co-presenters, such that teacher-attendees learn from student-experts;
- inspire us to overcome technological adversity (maximizing the one-computer classroom, a phobic's guide to offering tech-rich learning opportunities, etc.);
- challenge us to "do and experience" rather than just "sit and get."

Don't miss NECTFL, March 27-29, 2008, at the Marriott Marquis in New York. It promises to turn your thinking inside out in ways that will benefit you and your students for years to come!

*Sharon Wilkinson*

Sharon Wilkinson  
Associate Professor of French  
Simpson College

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- “The conference falls at a time of year when all this professional development helps to rejuvenate me!”
- “I think NECTFL is fantastic!”
- “The Marriott Marquis has great space.”
- “Thanks for a wonderful conference!”
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- “Session Number One was great!”
- “Loved attending sessions in French.”
- “I like having a variety of sessions to choose from and enjoy the shows, stores, and museums.”
- “I appreciate getting materials and seeing new editions at all the publishers.”
- “I loved Session Number One and receiving the DVD!”
- “I like the direction NECTFL is taking right now.”
- “The exhibits are very valuable.”
- “Excellent presentations! Better than ever!”
- “Nice conference — I loved it!”
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- “Awards ceremony was great (as was the champagne!)”
- “I really learned something and can share it with my classes.”
- “I got re-energized!”
- “Thanks for providing more tables.”
- “I found both the workshops and exhibits invaluable.”
- “NECTFL does an incredible job of providing high-quality PD — more please!”
- “I was glad to see some new materials using technology in the exhibit hall.”
- “I appreciated gathering info and making contacts about Chinese and Arabic, as we are going to offer those languages next year.”
- “I found sessions that inspired me directly and sessions that were just fun!”
- “Latin sessions were excellent.”
- “Amazing selection!”
- “I had a wonderful time and I plan to be back next year.”
- “The Try a New Language sessions were great.”

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## Looking Back, Looking Forward: 20 Years of Chinese in Springfield, MA

September 2007 marked the 20th anniversary of the Chinese Language and Culture Program in the Springfield MA Public Schools. The district will mark this impressive 20-year milestone with a year of celebrations. As many districts across the country are just beginning to offer Chinese as part of their foreign language program, Springfield will present activities and programs highlighting current and previous students and their work for the past twenty years.

In 1987, Springfield received funding from the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation Chinese Initiative to partially support a three year project to introduce Chinese into the high school foreign language curriculum. In the twenty years since, Springfield has used federal funds from the Foreign Language Assistance Program, state funds from the Massachusetts Department of Education and most importantly, funds from the Springfield Public Schools district budget to expand and enhance Chinese instruction. Additionally, The Asian Arts and Culture Program at UMASS/Amherst has worked with the Chinese program for over ten years to expose Springfield students to the best of Asian arts and culture both in the schools and on the UMASS campus.

The small program of 1987 has expanded to its current impressive program of Chinese levels 1- Advanced Placement, offered at all four of the district's high schools. Chinese is also offered at two of the district's middle schools. From a beginning with one teacher, there are now eight full-time teachers of Chinese working in the district. From 1987, with one class of Chinese I at two high schools and a total of 34 students, there are now 49 classes at six schools enrolling 1,104 students. Some of the graduates of Springfield's program have gone on to major or minor in Chinese in College and to use their Chinese language skills in their careers. One student worked at the American Embassy in Beijing, China and at a business there, as well. Another student returned to the Springfield Public Schools district as a Chinese teacher, and several students have gone to China to teach English. One student went on to major in music and compose Chinese music. Another student majored in The Arts with a concentration in Oriental painting. And these are just the ones who we know about. Who knows how the study of Chinese has impacted the lives of other students!

The district developed Chinese curriculum has served as a national model for districts beginning programs. The teachers of Chinese are often invited to share their expertise with others at the national level. Spring 2007 was an important date with the first national administration of the Chinese Advanced Placement Exam. One student at the High School of Science and Technology scored a 5 (the highest possible score) on this challenging test. Nine students from the High School of Commerce have passed the difficult International Baccalaureate (IB) Chinese Exam since 2003. The achievements to date are signs of more progress in the future.

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In 2001, a student/parent group of 22 from the High School of Science and Technology visited China during the April vacation. In April 2007, a student/parent group of 30 from Central High School visited China. In these 20 years, a number of Springfield teachers and administrators have traveled to China and Taiwan as invited guests of those governments and Ministries of Education. Officials representing the governments of China and Taiwan have visited the Springfield program and supported the work of the district.

Springfield's 20-year celebration will kick off with a proclamation from the Mayor and presentations at meetings of the School Committee and the City Council. Various cable and public access television and radio programs will highlight the 20th anniversary. Over 400 students and teachers will attend an October performance at UMASS of the shadow puppet show, "The Birth of Monkey King". During the school year, teachers and students will have in-school festivities as part of their regular classroom instruction. The in-school goal is to have all students learn about this important milestone.

In addition to in-school events to celebrate Chinese New Year, there will be a very special district wide evening celebration on Wednesday, February 6, 2008 highlighting student classroom work, and artistic and cultural presentations. Parents and community members will be invited to share in this important occasion and to see the work of the students. All of the teachers and administrators who have visited China and Taiwan will be invited. The Superintendents who have supported the program for these 20 years, national and local legislators, and UMASS officials will be recognized for their contribution to the growth of the Chinese program.

We look forward to a growing awareness of the exemplary Chinese language and culture program offered in the Springfield Public Schools as we celebrate 20 years of growth. We also wish to express our admiration and gratitude to the visionary leaders who had the foresight and commitment to initiate such a program long before it was the popular trend that we see today. We also wish to recognize and thank our lead Chinese teacher who laid the foundation for our program 20 years ago and continues to be instrumental to the success of our growing Chinese program. Our gratitude, as well, goes to the administration that has continued to provide support for the Chinese program.

At the same time we celebrate our 20-year history, we continue to plan for the future. The "world" is no longer the vast territory it once was, and we are able to travel to the other side of the globe in a matter of hours. Via the Internet, we can "travel" the world instantaneously. It is in the spirit of this smaller global community that we move forward to expand and strengthen Springfield's Chinese program. Our students and community, both local and global, will be the beneficiaries. Please join us as we celebrate both the past and the future!

## 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.

### Wilga M. Rivers



The Northeast Conference was deeply saddened to learn of the death of Wilga M. Rivers, Harvard Professor of Romance Languages and Literatures, Emerita, and Harvard Extension School faculty member, on

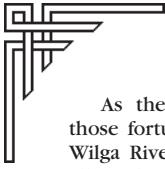
June 23 at the age of 88. Professor Rivers was the 1984 recipient of our Nelson Brooks Award for Leadership in the Profession, and her achievements set the standard for all future honorees.

She was born in Melbourne, Australia, receiving her bachelor's and master's degrees from the university there. Her licence ès letters was conferred by the Université de Montpellier, and she earned her doctorate from the University of Illinois. She taught in public and private schools, at the secondary and postsecondary level in Australia, the U.S., and Great Britain. One of the first women to be appointed to a full professorship at Harvard, Rivers published and presented widely during her career. Following her retirement from Harvard, she taught at that university's extension school for many years. She served as the first president of the American Association of Applied Linguistics, was a member of innumerable boards (both within and outside the profession) and was showered with awards, including ACTFL's Steiner Award for Leadership and Papalia Award for teacher education.

Dr. Rivers honored NECTFL with her presentations at the conference — including a riotously funny but also compelling reading from her autobiography one year — and with a seminal chapter in

the 1979 Northeast Conference Reports. Positing the need to “review ... objectives from time to time with great care,”<sup>i</sup> Dr. Rivers encouraged the foreign language profession to develop goals that would ensure the centrality of our role in the larger “educational enterprise” by considering two questions for students: “What can I do with it in practical domains?” and “What can it do for me as a person and as a citizen?”<sup>ii</sup> To craft answers to these questions and in recognition of the myriad pressures facing foreign language teachers, Dr. Rivers wrote:

*... I decided to draw on the collective wisdom of a worldwide profession, exercising its responsibilities in widely varying circumstances, to clarify the relationship of foreign language objectives to geographical, social, and political situations. To this end, I sent questionnaires to language teachers in many countries on widely separated continents and to all fifty states, asking which of twenty-one objectives frequently mentioned in the literature on foreign or second language teaching constituted the most important goals for language learners in their particular teaching situation. Respondents ranked seven of the items proposed, added extra items they did not find on the list, and wrote short statements, some of which have been quoted in various parts of this Report. Approximately 500 questionnaires were sent out and 580 were returned, because a number of recipients passed the questionnaire on to colleagues or tried it out on teachers and teacher-trainees in summer institutes or orientation programs. Teachers from forty-eight countries and fifty states are represented in the sample. They teach twenty-one languages at all levels, from elementary school through graduate school and continuing education; some teach immigrants and minority-language students.<sup>iii</sup>*



As they read the above quotation, those fortunate enough to have known Wilga Rivers will find themselves in an all-too-familiar situation: wondering which of its many astonishing elements they should respond to — personally, I believe Wilga is best reflected in what must be the only study questionnaire return rate on record of 116%! And yet, always ahead of her time and always willing to take risks, Wilga Rivers simply aimed for the moon, usually achieved what she aimed for and inevitably learned something new to share with us on her journey. We shall miss her.

i Wilga M. Rivers. “Educational Goals: The Foreign Language Teacher’s Response.” In *The Foreign Language Learner in Today’s Classroom Environment*, Northeast Conference Reports, ed. Warren C. Born (Middlebury VT: Northeast Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages), p. 19

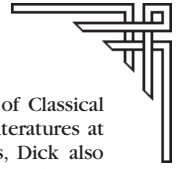
ii Ibid., p. 20

iii Ibid., p. 35

## Dick Williamson

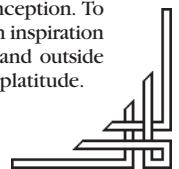
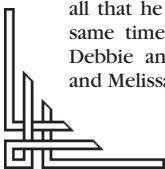


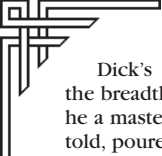
Dick Williamson, one of our most treasured colleagues, passed away in his sleep on June 20, less than two years after retiring from a highly distinguished thirty-year career as a French professor at Bates College in Lewiston, Maine. I was stunned and deeply saddened by this news, just as, I am sure, was everyone else who knew Dick personally. To put it most succinctly, Dick was a *force de la nature*, a man with such energy, vitality, and love of life that his absence is unfathomable. It is no less difficult to grasp how Dick was able to accomplish all that he did in his career, while at the same time devoting himself to his wife Debbie and to their daughters, Vanessa and Melissa, and sons, Dustin and Chris.



Chairing the Department of Classical & Romance Languages and Literatures at Bates for over a dozen years, Dick also rose to Chair of the Northeast Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (1987) and later to President of the Association of Departments of Foreign Languages (1999). He served as well, from 1998 on, as a member of the Editorial Board of the Southern Conference on Language Teaching’s Dimension 2000 and was a reader for the Advanced Placement Exams in French for nearly ten years (1995-2004). He edited newsletters and chaired or spoke on innumerable panels, was a member of many local and national committees, and created and directed French or Francophone study abroad programs for Bates College all over the Western hemisphere. And I’m only hitting the high points here.

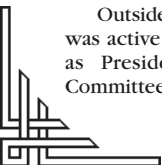
A “force of nature,” yes, but Dick was also *une force qui va*; his energy, enthusiasm, and humor were boundless and contagious. I experienced that “contagion” back in 1987 when Dick was planning his year as Chair of NECTFL. At the conference that year, as we lunched together, he talked to me passionately about the volume they were planning to publish, and somewhere between the *poire* and the *fromage*, as they say, I agreed to serve as co-editor of the book, which was subsequently published as *Toward a New Integration of Language and Culture* (1988). A few years later, Dick invited me and my wife Véronique to come up to Bates to teach in a weeklong French Summer Institute he had created for high school teachers. The experience was so gratifying (and not only the Maine lobster we enjoyed at Dick and Debbie’s home), that I returned to Davidson College and immediately created our own French Summer Institute, modeled on Dick’s program. We will be offering the ninth edition of our Institute in July 2008, and this longevity is a tribute to the intelligence of Dick’s conception. To say that Dick Williamson was an inspiration to his colleagues, both inside and outside Bates College, is not an empty platitude.





Dick's energy was matched only by the breadth of his interests. Not only was he a master teacher (Bates students, I am told, poured into his language, literature, and culture classes), he was an indefatigable contributor of papers and articles on Quebec and on study abroad, as well as on pedagogy and foreign language education in general. In addition to Quebec literature, Dick devoted many years to one of his early loves, Jules Verne, producing a book-length manuscript on his *Voyages extraordinaires*, as well as pieces on a large variety of literary works from the 17th to the 20th century, including a critical edition of Molière's 1672 play *Les Femmes savantes* in 1996.

Dick's multifaceted and highly successful career was widely recognized and honored. He received a special award for "Leadership in Foreign Language Education" from FLAME (Foreign Language Association of Maine) in 1989 and an AATF regional award as the "Outstanding Teacher of French in Maine" in 1994. He was named Chevalier dans l'ordre des Palmes académiques in 1996 and was awarded the Sister Solange Bernier Lifetime Achievement Award from FLAME in 2005.




Outside of his professional life, Dick was active in the community and served as President of the Auburn School Committee (1981-83) after many years as

a committee member. He was a superb athlete, having captained the varsity hockey team when he was a student at Yale University, where he completed an undergraduate and a Master's degree. He would later coach and star on the club hockey team at Indiana University while he was completing his doctoral studies in French and Comparative Literature in the early 70s. Dick and Debbie both nursed a passion for cycling, and they immediately headed for a two-week bike trip in France to celebrate Dick's retirement in 2006. For the past decade, they have been participating in the National Senior Games a couple of times a year and trained year-round for them. While Dick's passing is terribly saddening, there is something poetic and comforting in the thought that he left us peacefully, while en route to a cycling event that he enjoyed passionately, in the company of Debbie, his wife and soul mate, whom he loved and cared for so deeply. When I get on my bike and go for a spin down the beautiful farm-lined back roads of rural North Carolina, as I'm wont to do more often now that I'm retired, I often think of Dick Williamson and feel both wistful and a little happier for having known him.

*Charles Dana Professor Emeritus of French, Bates College*

*Alan Singerman, Richardson Professor Emeritus of French, Davidson College*



## CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR NECTFL "FAMILY" AWARD WINNERS, FALL 2007!

**Laura Franklin, ACTFL/FDP-  
Houghton Mifflin Award**

for Excellence in Foreign Language Instruction Using Technology

**Nancy Gadbois, MaFLA Distinguished Service Award**

**Janet Glass, 2008 ACTFL Teacher of the Year**

**Martin Smith, NADSFL District Supervisor of the Year**

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