DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 355 763 FL 020 874

TITLE	Perspectives on Foreign Language Education in the Soviet Union.
SPONS AGENCY	Defense Language Inst., Monterey, Calif.
PUB DATE	1 Nov 91
NOTE	104p.; Appendix B (17 pages) has broken type throughout.
PUB TYPE	Reports - Research/Technical (143)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC05 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Educational History; Educational Philosophy; Elementary Secondary Education; Evaluation Criteria; Foreign Countries; Higher Education; *Intensive Language Courses; Language Proficiency; *Language Role; *Language Tests; *Learning Motivation; Program Design; Second Language Instruction; *Second Languages; Testing
IDENTIFIERS	*USSR

ABSTRACT

A study of the nature, extent, and effectiveness of foreign language education in the Soviet Union is presented. Research methodology consisted of reading available literature and a panel discussion wiht three Soviet language teaching specialists, then review of a draft report by additional specialists from Moscow and the United States. The report provides a description of the project, its methodology, and details of its findings on Soviet language standards and proficiency measurement, quality and quantity of language training available, philosophy of language education, non-classroom language learning experience, and motivation for language study. Major conclusions include the following: the U.S.S.R. did not have a system of standards for measuring proficiency; a two-track system provides intensive and non-intensive language training in elementary and secondary school; an extensive and organized foreign language community exists in higher education; philosophy and interest in language teaching theory have evolved to place more emphasis on teacher discretion and authentic materials; motivation is high; only students in intensive programs attain appreciable competence; and adherence to public language education policy has been inconsistent. Three appendices contain a reprint of a decree on the improvement of foreign language instruction, syllabic for English language instruction, and guidelines for university entrance examinations. (MSE)

PERSPECTIVES ON FOREIGN LANGUAGE EDUCATION IN THE SOVIET UNION

Prepared for

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November 1, 1991

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FOREWORD

The political events which occurred in the U.S.S.R. during 1991 will no doubt profoundly shape the future of the country in ways as yet unsuspected, particularly in the West. It is probably safe to say, however, that these dramatic changes will stand in stark contrast to the evolutionary history of the decades immediately past, and will penetrate every aspect of Soviet life. Studies of the U.S.S.R.'s recent history cannot therefore truly portray the current scene; they can, however, help one understand the social drama that is unfolding, and perhaps give an inkling of what is to come.

However strong the winds of social change may blow in the Soviet Union, foreign language education in the country will probably continue to play the important role it has for many years. This role will, however, probably not be what we expected it to be when this study was first commissioned by the Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center in 1989. It was then quite reasonably believed that a study of the nature of Soviet foreign language education, its recent history, philosophy, and practice would yield a picture of an evolving system, a picture whose validity would persist for some time. As it is, the current study can only summarize events up to the point our research stopped in 1990, with some important updates furnished by our Soviet reviewer.

The limited resources and scope of the study also required a methodology which limited the depth to which the major areas of investigation could be explored. In another sense, however, the work broke important ground by bringing in experts from both the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. Hopefully, this research can serve as the foundation for additional studies, including broader joint efforts. Such an outcome would be sufficient to justify our efforts.

We would like to thank Dr. Ray Clifford, Dr. John Lett, and Ms. Betty Lou Leaver for the support they provided for this project on behalf of the Defense Language Institute. Their assistance and cooperation, particularly by suggesting and making possible the services of a ranking Soviet language pedagogical specialist, Dr. Alexander Barchenkov, was a major enhancement. Dr. Barchenkov, Pro-Rektor of the Moscow Linguistics University, made significant contributions to the project through data he provided, and by reviewing and commenting on the final manuscript.

Many others also made valuable contributions to the research effort. Alexei Sobchenko, played a key role in reviewing a large number of Soviet documents and selecting those which were most significant. Lisa Choate, our Senior Academic Advisor, provided the subject matter expertise and Soviet contacts to evaluate much of the data, organized the validation panel, and supplied invaluable criticism of the preliminary drafts. Thomas J. Garza supplied much good advice and counsel, particularly with regard to the bibliography and the review of the first draft. The candid thoughts of the validation panel members, Irina Vorontsova, Tatiana Blumenthal, and Alla Belova were essential to completing the work.

Our appreciation also goes to the University of Illinois, Champaign-Urbana, for making available the resources of its Slavic and East European Library, to the American Council of Teachers of Russian, Washington, D.C., for its assistance in communications with Moscow and for many logistical services, and to the Center for Applied Linguistics, Washington, D.C., for its assistance in a search of the ERIC database.

Alexandria, Virginia
November, 1991

Allen I. Weinstein
Harold L. Ladehoff

A Note on Transliteration

The roman transliterations of cyrillic used in this work are those recommended by the Harvard University Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures. Such transliterations are used in Russian titles and certain phrases within the body of the text, as well as throughout the Bibliography. However, Russian terms, such as glasnost and perestroika, which have come into common English parlance, are not transliterated in the text. Similarly, Russian names within the text have been anglicized.

The transliteration system used is shown below:

а = a	и = i	с = s	ъ = "
в = v	к = k	у = u	ь = '
г = g	л = l	ф = f	э = ė
д = d	м = m	х = x	ю = ju
е = e	н = n	ц = c	я = ja
ё = ē	о = o	ч = č	
ж = ž	п = p	ш = š	
з = z	р = r	щ = šč	

PERSPECTIVES ON FOREIGN LANGUAGE EDUCATION IN THE SOVIET UNION

Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Overview of Project

The Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center (DLIFLC) commissioned STAR MOUNTAIN, Inc. and its predecessor, Communications Technology Applications, Inc., to perform research on the nature, extent, and effectiveness of foreign language education in the Soviet Union. This is part of an effort to stay abreast of developments in language pedagogy in other countries. The work was performed pursuant to a U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) contract, number OPM-87-9037.

The first stage of the work consisted of a preliminary investigation of the general research area and resulted first in the development by the research team of a Memorandum for Record, then a Final Detailed Outline of the research methodology and objectives. After the outline was approved by DLIFLC, the research was conducted, and it culminated with a Draft Report. DLIFLC reviewed the Draft Report in detail. After additional consultation and coordination, the present work resulted.

In general, the research methodology consisted of collecting and reading available literature from the Soviet Union and other sources on foreign language education in the U.S.S.R. The data obtained from the literature search were then expanded and validated through discussion with a panel consisting of three Soviet language teaching specialists, who were participating in an exchange program in the United States. A draft report, based on the research and additional data from the panel, was then reviewed and supplemented by experts from the Moscow Linguistics University and from the American Council of Teachers of Russian. The conclusions contained in this report are summarized briefly below:

- The U.S.S.R. does not have a system of standards by which absolute proficiency can be measured; the results of Soviet language education are measured subjectively, on the basis of achievement.

- There is a two-track system for foreign languages in secondary school. Children in "special schools" that specialize in foreign languages receive language training beginning with the second grade. They receive approximately four times as much exposure to foreign languages as do children in "regular schools." For these latter children, foreign language education begins

in the fifth grade. Both groups continue foreign language education at least through secondary school. However, of all Soviet school children, the approximately 40 per cent who attend very small, rural schools get little, if any, foreign language instruction.

- There is an extensive and organized foreign language community among universities and institutes that consists of over 100 foreign language faculties. In addition, there are 12 institutions of higher learning entirely devoted to foreign language and linguistics studies.

- Since 1961, there have been various theoretical movements among Soviet pedagogical specialists, and there has been keen intellectual interest in the theory of pedagogy. A source of debate for many years was the conflict between those supporting the structural approach to learning and those focusing on political lesson content. Currently, the advent of perestroika and glasnost are putting increasing power into the individual teacher's hands and opening previously closed access to authentic materials from overseas.

- Many Soviet citizens are highly motivated to learn and use foreign languages for work opportunities and for sheer pleasure. BBC broadcasts and (recently) American periodicals in English, for example, enjoy great popularity as entertainment, as do young people's social clubs which function entirely in a foreign language.

- Soviet schools devote significant time to foreign language study. However, the evidence suggests that only those Soviet students who attend "special schools" and continue foreign language study in post-secondary institutions attain appreciable foreign language competence attributable to their formal education.

- The Soviet government has had a policy toward foreign language education for many years; the government creates and maintains overall policy in terms of general curricula and textbooks. However, actual adherence to these materials by individual schools and teachers is varied, so the system is far from uniform in terms of quality.

1.2 Research Objectives

In order to achieve and maintain high standards of education to provide a competitive edge, it is necessary to keep abreast of what others are doing. For this reason, the DLIFLC has an ongoing need to know as much as possible about language pedagogy and training policies of other countries. A broad base of such information is necessary to monitor trends in language teaching and to selectively adopt ideas when appropriate. In the

case of the Soviet Union, the era of glasnost has provided an opportunity to learn about the Soviet system. The primary objective of the research has been to develop a detailed report on the nature, extent and effectiveness of foreign language education in the U.S.S.R.

We have designed this report to be read by language specialists as well as those who have a general interest in the area. We have, therefore, included technical information to meet the needs of the specialist and sufficient explanatory text to make it useful for the lay person. The Soviet educational system is, in many respects, not comparable to its U.S. counterpart; for this reason, we have tried to describe it in its own terms, using references to American educational terminology only when demanded in the interest of clarity.

The scope of the study included five major areas of investigation:

(1) Soviet Language Standards and Proficiency Measurement. In order to establish a way to qualify and quantify the data to be collected, this task was to identify the metrics used to describe language ability in the Soviet Union.

(2) Quality and Quantity of Language Education in the U.S.S.R. The objective of this area was to identify qualitative and quantitative aspects of Soviet formal language education, as opposed to informal experience. The scope of the research included primary, secondary and post-secondary education.

(3) Philosophy of Language Education in the U.S.S.R. The objective here was to identify and describe the salient principles of foreign language pedagogy which have characterized the Soviet system from 1961 to the present.

(4) Non-Classroom Language Learning Experience for Soviets. This area of investigation was to explore what factors outside the classroom influence the development of Soviet foreign language competence.

(5) Motivation for Language Study. The purpose of this area of investigation was to seek information on those factors which influence Soviets to learn and practice foreign languages.

1.3 Research Methods and Sources

The research methodology consisted of a four-phase approach:

(1) a literature search of pertinent publications from the U.S.S.R. and other sources;

(2) a supplementation phase, in which our subject matter experts contributed additional, first-hand information;

(3) a validation phase, which used a panel of Soviet foreign language educators to validate the data collected in phases one and two; and,

(4) a review phase, during which a senior Soviet linguistics expert reviewed and commented on the final manuscript.

The research team was aware from the outset that in order to maintain objectivity, we would have to take into account and balance a wide variety of views on what constitutes Soviet foreign language education policy and practice. There were three reasons for this concern:

(1) Central Soviet government agencies control many educational policy areas, but the application of these policies is in the hands of local authorities and individual teachers. Practice (as opposed to policy) may vary widely within the U.S.S.R. Generalizations about Soviet foreign language education must, therefore, be approached with considerable caution and allow for opposing viewpoints.

(2) Soviet attitudes toward foreign language education have evolved considerably since the fifties, so statements about policy and/or practice are best taken in a chronological context.

(3) Finally, there have been wide areas of disagreement between Soviets themselves over what is effective in language education, and over what its objectives should be. Thus, we anticipated considerable differences of opinion, both in printed sources and first-hand accounts.

In order to balance these effects and maintain objectivity, we adopted three safeguards:

(1) First, we obtained the services of Lisa Choate as Senior Academic Advisor. Ms. Choate, whose current position is Assistant Director and Chief Program Officer of the American Council of Teachers of Russian, is a scholar in the area under investigation.

(2) Second, we sought to obtain a wide variety of views in three ways: by using as our Senior Researcher a recent Soviet emigre, Mr. Alexei A. Sobchenko, who learned several languages in the U.S.S.R.; by convening a Validation Panel consisting of Soviet citizens now active in foreign language teaching; and by seeking the advice and constructive criticism of Dr. Alexander Barchenkov of the Moscow Linguistics University.

(3) Third, in Chapter 4, where Soviet linguistic attitudes and practices are viewed in an historical context, we developed our materials to show chronological

sequence. The subsections that follow provide background information on the three phases of the study.

1.3.1 Data From Publications

By means of preliminary inquiries, we first established as the most important U.S. library collections in Russian on Soviet foreign language pedagogy the Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., and the Slavic and East European collection of the University of Illinois, Champaign, Ill. The latter collection has a long-standing agreement with the Soviet Union to act as a direct depository for Soviet pedagogical publications.

The investigation at both locations was conducted by our Senior Researcher, Alexei A. Sobchenko, who was born in the Soviet Union, served in the Red Army, and has a graduate degree in languages from Moscow University. The research team was pleased at the extensive materials available at the University of Illinois. These materials, however, are not always current, and provide only limited information on certain topics such as post-glasnost changes, military and diplomatic training, as well as motivational factors. Additionally, the limited scope of the study did not permit review of all materials.

Additional articles were obtained from Georgetown University and from the ERIC Clearinghouse on Languages and Linguistics files. Two recent doctoral dissertations also supplied valuable data.

1.3.2 Data From Other Sources

This supplemental phase of the research methodology was designed to supply information in areas where the literature was not sufficiently comprehensive. These data consisted of first-hand information provided by the following people:

Ms. Betty Lou Leaver, Dean of Slavic and East European Language Studies at DLIFLC. Formerly head of the Russian Language Section of the Foreign Service Institute, she is an expert in the application of Federal language proficiency standards to Russian. She has been a frequent visitor to the U.S.S.R., where she has many foreign language education contacts.

Lisa Choate, Senior Academic Advisor. Ms. Choate is the Deputy Director of the American Council of Teachers of Russian. She has studied in the Soviet Union, has extensive knowledge of Soviet teaching materials, and maintains frequent and ongoing contacts with Soviet foreign language teachers.

Alexei A. Sobchenko, Senior Researcher. Although his primary role was to summarize the work of others, he also contributed significant amounts of first-hand information which supplemented the literature.

Dr. Alexander A. Barchenkov. Dr. Barchenkov is Pro-Rektor of the Moscow Linguistics University (formerly the Maurice Thorez Institute) and Vice President of the U.S.S.R. Educational and Methodological Consortium for Foreign Languages. He is a frequent traveler to the United States, and is a current participant in a joint Soviet-American effort to create cross-cultural American English teaching materials for Soviets.

1.3.3 Validation of Data by the Validation Panel

The penultimate phase of the research methodology involved validating the findings by means of a validation panel. The purpose of the panel was to confirm or comment on the information derived from the primary research sources already described. Members of the validation panel were selected by Ms. Choate from a group of forty Soviet specialists in foreign language education in residence in the United States. These panelists represent a range of experience and professional responsibility in secondary school foreign language education. Two of the panelists were secondary school teachers, and the other was a "special" school language education administrator. All of the members of the validation panel are themselves products of the U.S.S.R. system of education, and their backgrounds are typical for such specialists. In addition, each of the teachers played a role in helping students enter universities or institutes, and could speak directly to the level of education and examinations students must pass in order to enter these institutions to become either language teachers or translators. Brief biographical sketches of each of the panelists follow:

Irina Vorontsova was Assistant Principal of a Moscow school specializing in English language. Her primary responsibility was overseeing the English language curriculum. She was also a faculty member, teaching English to students in the upper grades. Mrs. Vorontsova's school participates in an annual exchange with a U.S. high school, and at the time the validation panel was convened, she was in the United States as a teacher at that partner school. Graduates of Moscow specialized schools like Mrs. Vorontsova's generally enter universities or institutes upon graduation; a minority of graduates enters the work force immediately. Mrs. Vorontsova is a graduate of the Lenin Pedagogical Institute in Moscow.

Tatiana Blumenthal was an English teacher at a Moscow secondary school specializing in English language. Prior to teaching at this high school, she taught at the U.S.S.R. Ministry of Finance. She has a wide range of experience in Soviet educational institutions. Mrs. Blumenthal is a graduate of the Lenin Pedagogical Institute in Moscow.

Alla Belova was an English teacher at a boarding school in Krasnodar. The English language curriculum at this school is one followed in regular schools across the Soviet Union. Students at this school remain on the premises five days each week, returning to their homes and families on weekends. Most graduates from Ms. Belova's secondary school enter the workforce directly, rather than continuing their

education at a post-secondary institution. Ms. Belova is a graduate of Kuban State University.

The first objective of the validation panel meeting was to have the panel confirm or comment on the results of the literature review. To assist the validation process, a list of questions was developed as an agenda for the meeting. The questions, which were open-ended and designed to address the main conclusions of each research area, were not shown to the panelists in advance. Following full and free discussion of each question, the research team posed additional, specific questions to clarify any points which remained in doubt.

As a second objective, the research team wished to obtain information to augment the data in those cases where the literature had proven insufficient. A separate set of questions was prepared for the panel for this purpose. Discussion of these questions followed the same general pattern as before.

1.3.4 Review of the Report

The final phase of the study was a review of the draft report by DLIFLC and of the final report by Dr. Barchenkov. DLIFLC provided comments on the first draft report, which were integrated into the final report. Once these suggestions were incorporated, Dr. Barchenkov reviewed the final version.

1.4 Presentation of Results

The results of the five major areas of investigation are presented in Chapters 2 through 6: Soviet Language Standards and Proficiency Measurement, Quality and Quantity of Language Education in the U.S.S.R., Philosophy of Language Education in the U.S.S.R., Non-Classroom Language Learning Experience for Soviets, and Motivation for Language Study.

Each chapter incorporates the literature, expert views, and validation panel comments as described in Section 1.3. To clearly relate the comments of the validation panel to the reports of the literature research, we will include panel commentary immediately following each pertinent section or subsection, and show these remarks in italics.

Chapter 7 summarizes our findings. Additionally, conclusions on the effectiveness of the research methodology and on potential areas for additional research are presented.

An extensive, but not exhaustive, bibliography is presented for the reader's use. In addition the following Appendices are included: "Decree No. 468 of the Council of Ministers of the U.S.S.R.," dated May 27, 1961 (Appendix A); detailed information on foreign language syllabi used in the Soviet Union (Appendix B); and Soviet guidelines for university entrance examination construction (Appendix C).

Chapter 2

Soviet Language Standards and Proficiency Measurement

2.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the research findings concerning the philosophy, typology, and use of language standards and academic grading systems in the Soviet Union. It is important to understand in advance, however, the connotations which Soviets give to certain pertinent technical terms. These terms include **pedagogy, methodology, proficiency,** and **testing.**

The Soviet concept of **pedagogy** is that of the profession or discipline of teaching. Thus, there are many Soviet pedagogical institutes, well-regarded institutions of higher education exclusively devoted to the profession of teaching. **Methodology,** on the other hand, is seen by Soviets as a science, specifically that branch of pedagogical science investigating how methods are developed and used.

Thompson [1990] lists *kommunikativnaja kompetencija* as the Russian equivalent for proficiency, although the Russian phrase has other meanings as well, including "communicative competence." The precise Soviet conception of proficiency was still evolving in 1990, as evidenced by the Seventh International Conference of Teachers of Russian Language and Literature (MAPRIAL), where much attention was given to the defining of communicative goals for language teaching.

The term testing is generally used in the literature to mean a diagnostic tool for the measurement of instructional effectiveness, particularly in longitudinal studies of experimental programs. We found many subjective references to performance, but few instances of testing being currently used to assess student language proficiency. At the same time, however, some Soviet teachers are expressing the need to develop testing methodologies. At the VII MAPRIAL conference, testing was a frequent topic of the papers given. An abstract from Kukueva's (1990) paper indicates some idea of the need for testing and the hopes for the usefulness of test results:

> "As a survey of the literature indicates, a whole array of major questions in pedagogical testing remains at this point undeveloped.
>
> "In connection with this, the urgent tasks of pedagogical testing become a) on a theoretical level, to clarify and define the basic understandings of pedagogical testing; b) on a practical level, to create tests for the measuring of productive speaking and writing and a method for measuring understanding; c) on a methodological level, introducing the broad teaching audience to the essence and advantage of testing, providing its introduction in the education process and the achievement of productive results." (p. 536)

The terminological considerations just presented will be helpful in understanding the remaining sections of this chapter. These sections deal in detail with Soviet ideas about modalities, grading levels, testing instruments, and the use of examination results.

2.2 Soviet Language Modalities (Skills)

The literature which we reviewed portrayed the Soviet system of foreign language teaching as recognizing listening, speaking, reading, and writing as the skills upon which academic grades are based. However, the literature indicates that instruction is given in a total of six skills, which do not precisely correspond with these: dialogic speaking (conversation and debate); monologic speaking (narration and rhetoric); listening; reading; translation; and writing.

One reason for the bifurcation of speaking into dialogic and monologic sub-skills, as confirmed by our senior researcher, was that since the sixties a rationale for Soviet foreign language study has been to enable students to read and translate foreign language documents dealing with socialism, and then participate in foreign language discussion of the topic. Although the literature said little about specific career preparation involving language study, it appears that a significant number of students elect foreign language study for specific use in the areas of diplomacy, translation and interpretation, science and technology and international business.

The validation panel affirmed that instruction is given in the six skills mentioned above, but that the grading system recognized only five of these: monologic speaking, dialogic speaking, listening, reading, and writing (which includes dictation, composition, and grammar). The panel indicated that they considered translation to be a skill which might belong to both oral and written skills and did not really belong with the other modalities being graded.

2.3 Soviet Grading Levels

We found references to a specific Soviet system for measuring language skills dating only from the mid-seventies and after. In line with the general pattern of our findings, the literature contained little evidence of a Soviet grading or marking system in terms of language proficiency. However, beginning with the late seventies there has been a movement toward diagnostic testing of an objective nature. Prucha (1985) points out the differences between what he calls "standardized, objective tests" (p. 118) as opposed to "traditional methods of examination," by which he means oral or written demonstration of knowledge of content. We note that Prucha used as primary sources for his information the journals "Foreign Languages in Schools" (Inostrannyje jazyki v Školy) and "Problems of Psychology" (Voprosy psixologii). Prucha generalizes the distinction in terms of the former as "pedagogical diagnostics" and of the latter as "oral and written examinations." More specifically, he cites the contrasts shown in Table 2-1.

Comparison of Advantages and Disadvantages of Traditional USSR Foreign Language Examinations vs. Diagnostic Tests (adapted from Prucha, 1985)

POSITIVE FACTORS	
Traditional Examinations	Diagnostic Tests
* Possibility of approximating real communicative situations. * Possibility fpr tester to add questions. * Possibility of recognizing candidate's motivation. * No special tester preparation required. * Possibility for examinee to be creative. * Possibility for examinee to be guided. * Examinee gets public speaking experience in orals. * Evaluation is integrated. * Contributes to good rapport between teachers and students.	* High objectivity of testing. * Less time-consuming. * Possibility of comparing results. * Precision, reliability, discrimination.
NEGATIVE FACTORS	
Traditional Examinations	Diagnostic Tests
* Grading can be subjective. * Process is time-consuming. * No fixed criteria for comparison.	* Activity is artificial. * Tests primarily mechanical recall. * Does not reflect examinee's attitudes or opinions.

Table 2-1

Prucha also speaks of a five-level system of grading, but he does not establish a clear connection between it and the diagnostic testing we have already mentioned. Although he refers to "criteria for evaluating pupils' knowledge and skills" (p. 119), the criteria he cites are not related to overall ability with the language. Prucha's criteria, shown in Table 2-2, represent a system which stresses the primacy of oral skills. This system appears to be an adaptation of the general Soviet grading system which, according to our Senior Academic Advisor, is as follows:

5 = *otlično* excellent
4 = *xorošo* good
3 = *udovletvoritel'no* satisfactory
2 = *ne udovletvoritel'no* unsatisfactory (in school grades *ploxo* poor)
1 = *ploxo* poor (in school grades, *očen ploxo* very poor)

Criteria for Evaluating Foreign Language Achievement
(Adapted from Prucha, 1985)

A. Specific criteria grades (practical evaluations) in three modalities: oral production, aural comprehension, and reading comprehension.

B. Criteria for oral grades:

Level 5: (Not shown).

Level 4: Expresses thoughts with only "non-significant deviations from correct usage (e.g. articles in English, or prepositions) [sic!] but in other respects . . performance is in correspondence with goals defined by the syllabus."

Level 3: Similar to level 4, but with some significant errors, which do not, however, prevent understanding.

Level 2: Significant errors which prevent understanding.

Level 1: (Not shown).

C. Overall grade for foreign language: Result of "integrating" practical evaluation grades, for example:

Level 4 is the overall grade if –
All three partial grades are 4, or
Oral competence is 4, other two are 5, or
Oral competence is 5, other two are at least 3.

Table 2-2

STAR MOUNTAIN's Senior Researcher, who studied under this system, confirmed its general use in the Soviet Union, and added the following comments:

> "Five" (5) is the best possible grade; it is normally awarded to the top 5-10% of a class.
>
> "Four" (4) represents generally superior performance; at the post-secondary level, it is the minimum required to justify scholarship assistance.
>
> "Three" (3) is considered the minimal passing grade; at the post-secondary level, it is not considered sufficient to justify scholarship assistance to a student.
>
> "Two" (2) is considered a failing grade, and will usually require repeating a course in which it was received as a final grade.
>
> "One" (1) is considered such a poor grade that it is usually given only as an interim mark for motivational purposes; two such grades as finals constitute grounds for expulsion from school.

Our Senior Researcher pointed out that this system is in use throughout the Soviet educational system, and that the grades represent the individual instructor's evaluation of student performance. He believes that there is a great deal of subjectivity in grading by individual teachers and institutions.

The validation panel confirmed that there are five grade levels, and that level one is rarely used, especially as a final grade.

2.4 Testing Instruments

The literature reviewed does not support a relationship between formal ("diagnostic") testing in the Soviet Union and the grading system described in Section 2.3. As Section 2.3 indicated, there is a Soviet numerical system for evaluating student foreign language performance, but this system is not directly related to any particular testing instruments. Indeed, as Prucha (1985) points out, "Though FL testing is nowadays recognized as an important means of assessing FL achievements, in [actual] school practice FL tests are used quite rarely . . . Social pedagogical theory does not reject tests and testing as an instrument of scientific investigation. On the other hand, it [social pedagogical theory] has a critical attitude towards their abuse or the overestimating of their application . . . Didactic tests are therefore considered to be, first of all, a means of educational research and not primarily a procedure applied by teachers in the general everyday practice of school instruction" (p. 117).

None of the panel members was aware of any diagnostic tests currently in use to evaluate either student competence or teaching effectiveness; indeed, the panelists agreed that since perestroika (and even before, for "special" school teachers), teachers have had considerable freedom in their use of examinations, and that in most cases each teacher makes up and grades his or her own examinations. In the secondary schools, such examinations are given at the end of each academic quarter. Results are not exactly comparable between schools, or between teachers, but the teachers pride themselves on the exams being based on solid, pedagogical principles and the teacher's own expertise and experience. As a standardizing influence, the panelists said secondary school faculties meet once a month to compare notes.

The validation panel members also said that to their knowledge standardized tests in foreign languages are not given in most secondary schools. They added that there is a program of experimental testing being conducted by research institutes, but that this was not widespread and involved concepts with which most teachers were not familiar. The panel members asserted further that there are standardized tests in mathematics and history which are regularly conducted at the end of the eighth and tenth grades, but that there are no corresponding language tests. However, as a matter of standardization, language teachers' final grades are reported to regional education committees, which tabulate them for the purpose of making statistical comparisons.

2.5 Use of Examination Results

The literature covered in the library investigation did not establish any specific linkage between levels of secondary school foreign language achievement (as expressed in academic grades) and formal academic requirements, such as university admission. At the same time, we found an official linkage between guidelines for university entrance examinations and secondary school curricula. According to a government publication ("Handbook for Matriculants . . ." [1990]) (see Appendix C), university entrance examinations are to be constructed according to general as well as language-specific rules. Among these are:

- speaking and aural comprehension of normal speech on topics prescribed by secondary school curricula;
- reading without the use of a dictionary of technical material containing no more than three per cent vocabulary not found in the secondary school curriculum;
- comprehending specific oral utterances using grammatical structures contained in secondary school curricula; and,

- carrying on a conversation with the examiner " . . . on the basis of lexico-grammatical information covered by a typical curriculum in English, German, French, and Spanish languages."

However, the literature did not reveal how the guidelines are applied, or to what extent they are actually used as part of the university selection process. In any event, it seemed clear that achievement grades from secondary school played little role *per se*; rather, the criteria for university admission are based upon performance in largely subjective oral examinations given by the admitting institutions.

The government guidelines notwithstanding, we found little information to indicate any formal secondary school preparation for these entrance examinations. Indeed, our validation panel stated that there is little connection between achievement grades in secondary school and post-secondary school admission standards. (There is, however, a connection between secondary school curricular content and post-secondary entrance examinations, as we shall see.)

According to the validation panel, entrance to a university or to an institute is gained through a series of general competitive examinations, most of which are very difficult. Secondary school grades are not considered in awarding entrance to a student. In the case of language, the panelists stated that there is little articulation between the secondary school exit exams and the university entrance exams. The secondary school exit examinations concentrate on monologic and dialogic speaking, reading, and listening, based primarily on the cultures of target language countries. By contrast, the university entrance examinations consist largely of questions involving grammatical analysis, with an oral component consisting of a free monologue on a topic which is closely related to political ideology, such as Great Events of the Soviet Union, Lenin, or Holidays of the Soviet Union. The panel members said they felt these topics are culturally irrelevant. Thus, results of secondary school examinations are useful only as qualifications for promotion and graduation.

Chapter 3

Quality and Quantity of Language Education in the U.S.S.R.

3.1 Introduction

A technical discussion of the relationship between language education and language competence is facilitated by the use of the concepts of **learning** and **acquisition**. These concepts have figured prominently in the works of Stephen Krashen, one of the foremost contemporary authorities on language studies. According to Krashen (p. 10), **acquisition** is a subconscious process by which people internalize the ability to communicate in a language: it can be roughly described as "picking up" a language. On the other hand, Krashen defines **learning** as ". . conscious knowledge of a second language, knowing the rules, being aware of them, and being able to talk about them." While acquisition may be at least partly induced through learning, children acquire most of their language without formal learning. Similarly, adults do not acquire a language solely on the basis of learning - - experience with real communication through the medium of the second language plays a significant role in this, whether that practice takes place inside the classroom or out.

The effectiveness of a formal foreign language course in producing language acquisition depends upon two principal factors, quality and quantity. Quality refers to the methodology, content, and organization of a program of study; quantity, on the other hand, refers to the length of exposure to the target language which the program affords the student. If learning is but a component of the acquisition process, then the quality of education can be judged at least partly on the basis of how far it goes beyond learning. As for quantity, length of exposure to a language class is related to the opportunity for acquisition; the greater the number of classroom hours, the greater the potential for acquisition. However, the ratio of quantity to acquisition depends heavily also upon quality. Finally, since acquisition encompasses much more than formal learning, an individual's ability to use a foreign language depends partly on experience with the language outside the education framework.

Recognizing that both quality and quantity of instruction play important and interdependent roles in achieving student competence, the Soviets have sought to improve the foreign language ability of their citizens by increasing student exposure as well as by replacing and revising language study materials. Our research of the literature reveals that there were major national education policy statements in 1961 and 1984. The 1961 decree mandated sweeping changes in language pedagogy in general. The general educational reforms of 1984 provided the opportunity for innovation in the language area, but stopped short of specifically directing curriculum changes. There has also been a great deal of theoretical interest in foreign language pedagogy which, however, has not always found its way to practical application. On the whole, despite central planning of secondary curricula, the overall picture of quality and quantity of foreign language education at this level in the

U.S.S.R. is typified by local implementation, and hence by some unevenness in application. In post-secondary education, institutional consortia have taken on an increasingly dominant role in normalizing foreign language curricula, but, once again, individual schools are fairly autonomous in their applications of these plans.

The remaining sections of this chapter deal with the quantity and quality of foreign language instruction in the following areas: (1) education from the fifth through seventeenth years of age in "general education schools" (*srednie obščeobrazovatel'nye školy*) and in "special" schools (*specškoly*); (2) post-secondary education; (3) pedagogical institutes; (4) military schools; and (5) diplomatic schools. Special mention is made here of the importance to our research of Thomas J. Garza's "Russians Learning English: An Analysis of Foreign Language Instruction in Soviet Specialized Schools" (Garza, 1987). This dissertation is the most recent and comprehensive work on this subject, since it is based both upon his extensive knowledge of the Soviet literature and on the many interviews he conducted with Soviet English teachers in Moscow, many of whom had backgrounds similar to those of the validation panel.

3.2 Fifth Through 17th Year

3.2.1 Structure of the Educational System

To understand the important role into which the Soviet government has cast foreign language education in primary and secondary schools and the role of the *specškoly* or special schools, it is useful to understand the overall structure of the Soviet school system at this level. "General education schools" (*srednie obščeobrazovatel'nye školy*) admit six-year-olds to the first grade (although some have already attended kindergartens) and keep them through ninth grade (age 14). At this point, students preparing for trade or non-professional technical careers enter vocational schools (*professional'no-texniceskoe ucilisce*), while those students who are preparing for post-secondary education continue through tenth and eleventh grades (Garza, 1987).

The special schools, which were first instituted in 1958 under the auspices of General Secretary Khrushchev (Garza 1987, p. 1, and *Akademia pedagogičeskix nauk*, 1958) and greatly expanded by the Decree of 1961 (see Chapter 4 and Appendix A) are one of two types of Soviet secondary schools, the other being regular schools. A variation of this latter type is the "boarding school" for children with special requirements, such as being handicapped, orphaned, or located in remote areas. Both day and boarding schools feature essentially the same curricula.

The special schools were originally instituted to serve the needs of pupils whose professional or vocational specializations required corresponding academic concentrations, of which foreign language ability was one. Other *specškol* concentrations include mathematics, arts, and sciences (Garza, 1987, p. 47 ff.). In the original conception of the

foreign language specialized schools, the added emphasis on language was to be achieved by regularly conducting academic classes in the target language. According to Garza, however (1987, pp. 29, 55), these *specškoly* no longer do this, because of the lack of qualified instructors. Direct observation by our Senior Academic Advisor in 1991 confirms that this is still the case.

According to Dr. Alexander Barchenkov, the special school program, and indeed secondary school foreign language study in general, has been concentrated in urban areas of the Soviet Union. Dr. Barchenkov notes that the Decree of 1961 focused on "general schools, secondary technical schools, and institutions of higher learning," implicitly excluding the rural schools of 25-30 students which comprise three-fourths of all Soviet schools and 40 per cent of Soviet students. Because of their small size, these schools have only one or two teachers for all grades, and often no foreign language work is provided.

The validation panel confirmed that there is a difference between regular and special school approaches to foreign language instruction. According to the panel, this difference is both quantitative and qualitative, and arises because of the difference in intent. Specifically, the specškoly *continue to fulfill their original purpose of producing students with advanced foreign language ability, whereas the regular schools teach limited foreign language classes as part of the general academic requirement which many teachers in regular schools feel is too limited.*

3.2.2 Quantity of Foreign Language Instruction

Virtually all Soviet school children attending urban schools are exposed to formal foreign language instruction on a regular basis, beginning with the fifth grade for regular schools, and with the second grade for special schools. The difference in overall contact hours between the two types of schools is of the order of more than three to one. Table 3-1 shows this relationship, as well as the total number of actual contact hours. The table reflects the changes made in the overall program in 1987-88, based upon the educational reforms of 1984. The effect of these reforms was to reduce the number of contact hours for foreign language instruction in order to accommodate the mandated increase in hours for other subjects. This adjustment brought about a 50 per cent reduction of foreign language instruction in the last three grades of regular schools. According to Garza (1987), there was in 1987 a proposal to change the total foreign language requirement in special schools to 1505 hours instead of 1610, with the principal reductions being made in the second, third, and fourth grades.

We would like to reemphasize the need for caution regarding the significance of numbers of instructional hours without due attention to the qualitative aspects of this instruction, which will be discussed in Subsection 3.2.3. The ratios of instructional hours between regular and special schools implied by Table 3-1 do not therefore necessarily indicate a corresponding difference in language acquisition or competence.

The validation panel agreed in general with the figures presented in Table 3-1, but added that the reduction of the required special school foreign language hours from 1610 to 1505 was never implemented, mainly in response to widespread protests from parents and teachers. Additionally, the panel observed that the current schedule of foreign language instruction in regular schools during the last three years (that is, only one hour per week) seems to account for a noticeable loss of foreign language competence among these students.

Hours of Foreign Language Instruction in Soviet Secondary Schools
(Adapted from Garza, 1987, p. 54.)

Grade Level	"Regular" Schools		"Special" Schools	
	Hrs. Per Week	Total Hrs.	Hrs. Per Week	Total Hrs.
2	0	0	3	105
3	0	0	4	140
4	0	0	6	210
5	4	140	5	175
6	3	102	5	175
7	2	68	5	175
8	2	68	5	175
9	1	34	4	140
10	1	34	4	140
11	1	34	4	140
TOTAL		480		1,610

Table 3-1

3.2.3 Quality of Foreign Language Instruction

By "quality" we refer here to a combination of several factors in language instruction. Basically, these are the factors which contribute to methodology and content. In a sense,

methodology constitutes the "how" of language education, and content the "what," just as quantity represents the "how much." The "why" of this education, that is the underlying framework or the driving force behind what is going on, is the subject of Chapter 4.

Much of the information to be presented here is owed directly to Garza. Appendix B, which shows samples of Soviet English language curricula collected by Garza, has been reproduced in this report with the kind consent of the author. Appendix B provides detail in support of the summary statements made in the following paragraphs.

Garza's work concentrated on English as the language of instruction, owing at least in part to the fact that English has grown from relative obscurity in the U.S.S.R. in 1961 to its current position as the second most frequently taught foreign language (Russian ranks first). It should be noted that Garza, in making this study, concentrated on the Soviet special schools, since they are charged with more responsibility for developing foreign language skills than are the other schools. Since the mid-eighties, the special schools no longer present instruction in academic subjects through the medium of a foreign language. As a result, the major difference in foreign language instruction between special and regular schools has changed from both qualitative and quantitative to primarily quantitative, i.e. the number of hours of instruction given.

Concerning methodology, Garza (1987, p. 69) stresses the primacy of the centrally-prepared syllabus in determining the emphasis of instruction. This is very much in line with the tradition of central syllabi; the Decree of 1961 gave the Ministry of Education of the Russian Soviet Federal Socialist Republic (R.S.F.S.R.) the authority to develop foreign language syllabi for all the Republics of the Union (see Appendix A, p. A-2). At the same time, the syllabi are not rigidly prescriptive as to specific application in the individual classroom. As Garza's direct observations confirmed (1987, p. 73 ff.), the actual methods used by an instructor to teach the materials seemed to be at the discretion of individual teachers.

These syllabi embody specific requirements for each grade level and in each of the language skills (see Chapter 2, Section 2.2): speaking subdivided into dialogic speaking (conversation and debate) and monologic speaking (narration and rhetoric); listening; reading; and writing. In general, the Soviet curriculum is built around speaking as the primary skill because, as Garza (1987, p. 71) points out, they believe that speech, even "silent speech" (mental performance of verbal utterance) is fundamental to the other skills. There appears to be an emphasis on teaching the student how to learn with as little help as possible, for example, by guessing at the meaning of new words on the basis of context, so as not to have to rely on a dictionary (see Appendix B, p. B-2).

The validation panel concurred that oral communication remains the central focus in contemporary Soviet foreign language teaching. The panel members commented further that there has always been a qualitative difference between regular and special schools concerning the amount of teacher discretion permitted in the syllabus. Before the advent of perestroika,

only the spec̆skol *teachers were permitted any latitude in interpreting the individual lesson plan. Since perestroika, however, regular school teachers have been to a certain extent liberated from the strict adherence to schedule formerly enforced by regular visits from school inspectors. As one result, some of these teachers have even eliminated homework to enhance student motivation, and substituted reading materials from abroad for the textbook reading passages. Nonetheless, the special schools enjoy even greater liberty; they may interpret the textbook, and are allowed to use it in ways other than those specified in the syllabus.*

It should be noted that the special school syllabi in Appendix B represent Soviet requirements before and after the 1984 Reforms. The 1986 version covers eleven grades instead of ten, and carries with it increased expectations at all grade levels. (The extent to which these expectations are being met is a matter of some disagreement, however, as is explained in Chapter 4).

To summarize the overall expectations of the special school system as proposed in the 1986 draft syllabus for English, eleventh grade graduates are to have an active English vocabulary of 2,800 words and to actively control all basic grammatical features of the language, including all of the morphology and most sentence types.

Concerning regular schools, Litvinov (1971) clearly indicated that at least ten years into the restructuring of foreign language education after the Decree of 1961, very little progress had in fact been made in terms of overall results. His survey of university applicants indicated that the average applicant had a foreign language vocabulary of only 300-500 words. It should be noted, however, that "average" can be a misleading term, and that Litvinov's statistical population consisted of a broad sampling. It must be at least considered that some of these students come from rural schools, and therefore had no foreign language background.

The validation panel members indicated that this draft syllabus had never been implemented. At the same time, they seemed uncertain about current established requirements for grammar or vocabulary. At most, they felt each teacher tried to accomplish as much as possible given the time and materials available. Pressed for details, one spec̆skol *teacher said that in 1980 the vocabulary requirement for 11th grade English students was 1600 active words and 2800 passive words. In fact, she said, contemporary 11th grade Soviet students have an active vocabulary of about 800 words, less than the 1,000 she believes to be minimally adequate.*

Content is regulated by the same mechanisms (and is subject to the same irregularity) as is methodology. In the case of content, however, it has been apparent throughout our research that the Soviets consider a major purpose, and perhaps the primary objective, of foreign language instruction to be to bolster the student's self-reliance. Before the advent of *perestroika*, this was interpreted in terms of the student's place in the Socialist world. This self-reliance was to be achieved by inculcating Communist Party slogans and phrases expressing current trends in dialectical materialism. Some examples of basic English

material for student memorization which turned up in our research include the following, which were taken from *Izućenie materialov XXVII s'ezda KPSS: anglijsky jazyk* (1983):

- "the political report sets out the main directions in the Party's foreign-policy, economic and social strategy"
- "the Guidelines for the Economic and Social Development of the USSR for 1986-1990 and for the Period Ending in 2000"
- "in the quarter of a century the national income has gone up by nearly 300 per cent, industrial production 400 per cent and agricultural production 70 per cent"
- "on the basis of scientific and technological progress"
- "the role of the Soviets of Peoples Deputies, public organizations and work collectives"
- "Everybody should take an active position in life to be a worthy citizen of our socialist country. You cannot stand by and merely watch what is going on in our country and in other parts of the world. You must be ready to fight for communist ideals, to develop your abilities, to study well."

Obviously, these examples constitute only a small part of the English language content. They come, however, from sources as recent as 1986, and may be judged more or less at face value considering the limited extent to which they represent contemporary English usage.

The validation panel commented that a regular secondary school graduate applying for a post-secondary course not requiring language concentration would have only minimal competence, given the level of instruction of only 45 minutes per week for the last three years of secondary school. The regular school panel member added that "You can't teach English in only 45 minutes a week--you can only teach the love of English." Questioned about graduation standards and university entrance requirements, the panel agreed in general that it is not the task of the secondary schools to prepare students for university admissions; they see themselves purely as language teachers. The panel members characterized the university entrance requirements as tough and highly competitive (one available place for every 15 applicants) and, with regard to language, based largely upon skills and knowledge not part of the secondary school program. One panel member stated that is common for a university applicant to obtain an individual tutor during the last three months of secondary school to supplement his or her language skills in the particular ways needed to pass the entrance exams.

3.3 Post-Secondary Level

3.3.1 Structure of the Post-Secondary System

The Soviet system of higher education encompasses three types of institutions: universities, institutes, and academies. Universities are multi-disciplinary, degree-granting institutions which emphasize comprehensiveness in the subjects studied. Institutes also grant undergraduate and graduate degrees, but their programs, according to Dr. Barchenkov, are designed to emphasize specialization in one particular field or area of industry, commerce, technology, or culture, (e.g. the Mining Institute, the Teacher Training Institute, the Transport Engineering Institute). Academies differ from both universities and institutes in that they do not award degrees; instead, their purpose is to provide intensive programs which enhance or refresh professional skills. Examples of such institutions are the Academy of Foreign Trade and the Diplomatic Academy.

All three types of institutions feature an organizational structure of a hierarchical type. The chief official is called the rektor, and he or she is administratively supported by two or more pro-rektors in charge of such areas as research, academic affairs, and logistics. The institutions are divided into organizational units called *fakultets*, which are roughly equivalent to American schools or colleges in the sense of university divisions. Each *fakultet* has a dean and possibly one or more assistant deans, who preside over the chairpersons of the lowest organizational units, called *kafedras* or departments.

In the past, universities have been more prestigious than institutes, but recently the distinction between them is becoming blurred; in fact, several institutes are being re-named universities. Since institutes are by definition specialized, this process of conversion is creating specialized universities as well.

Of particular interest here are the institutions of higher learning devoted to foreign language education. Dr. Barchenkov says that as of summer 1991 there were 12 foreign language institutes in the Soviet Union, at least some of which were becoming or have become universities. Most famous of these is the former Maurice Thorez State Foreign Language Institute, which is now the Moscow Linguistics University. Beyond the 12 foreign language institutes, however, are more than 100 foreign language *kafedras* located within pedagogical institutes throughout the country. These institutions offer professional preparation for foreign language teachers, including intensive study of the languages to be taught.

These various institutions, along with some 800 foreign language departments in other schools, are tied together by means of the U.S.S.R. Educational and Methodological Consortium for Foreign Languages, one of 40 such consortia devoted to specific disciplines. According to Dr. Barchenkov, who is the Consortium's Vice President, the organization's purpose is to protect the interests of foreign language teachers – salary and benefits,

departmental funding, and research opportunities – by lobbying the U.S.S.R. State Committee for Public Education (Ministry of Education).

The Consortium dates from perestroika, the decentralization of power which among other things gave university administrations the authority to band together. The Ministry of Education originally issued the decree allowing the formation of academic consortia, in order to involve academic professionals in the process of creating curricula, and to maintain academic quality. However, the Ministry soon sharply curtailed the funds originally supplied to support consortium administrative costs. In response, the consortia supplied their own funds, each member school making a contribution. As a result of this developmental history, consortia are now to a large degree independent of government support and control. An example of this new independence in the case of foreign languages is the Consortium's 1988 creation of new standard curricula for post-secondary instruction.

According to our information, all Soviet universities and institutes have had foreign language requirements at least since the fifties and possibly earlier. The Decree of 1961 and subsequent policy papers reinforced this requirement, so that today virtually every Soviet undergraduate student is exposed to foreign language classes. Students preparing for careers in linguistics, language teaching, translation, and certain other fields study in "linguistic" *(jazikovy)* programs; other students are said to be in "non-linguistic" *(nejazikovy)* programs. The major distinction between "linguistic" and "non-linguistic" programs is in quantity, rather than quality, although the respective *kafedras* adjust their course offerings and methodologies to achieve academic goals established by the institutions.

The Soviet state exercises less control over the post-secondary educational system than it does over the secondary one. Universities are regulated by the state; every republic has a Ministry of Education, which gets its authority from the U.S.S.R. State Committee for Public Education (Ministry of Education), which in turn sets general curriculum. These national standards need to be interpreted at republic level to account for ethnic and other differences. The literature indicates that beginning at least with the sixties, many institutions were either designing their own foreign language curricula and standards or adopting those designed by other schools. Indeed, it is from the literature dealing with post-secondary education that one gets the distinct impression of ongoing intellectual disagreement and debate over foreign language instruction. As already noted, the Foreign Language Consortium has played a major role in standardizing curricula since the late eighties.

To be sure, certain institutions have taken the lead in creating foreign language instructional models. One of the earliest of these was Voronezh University, a school which concentrates on foreign languages and foreign language-related subjects. More recently, universities in Moscow, Gorki, Minsk and Kiev have taken the lead. The role of Voronezh is discussed elsewhere in this chapter and in Chapter 4.

Creation of foreign language methodologies and materials is also supported by research departments and institutes devoted to research and development of pedagogical

materials, including syllabi and textbooks. Among these organizations, the U.S.S.R. Academy of Pedagogical Sciences is pre-eminent. It encompasses a network of 15 institutes and 1,600 staff members performing research in: general pedagogics; general and educational methods of instruction; child and teenage physiology; preschool education; special education; vocational education and occupational guidance; aesthetic education; vocational pedagogics; teaching Russian in non-Russian schools; information and computer science; and administration and economics in public education ("Public Education in the U.S.S.R.," 1989).

Subsections 3.3.2 and 3.3.3 detail the results of our research on the quantity and quality of language education at Soviet universities and institutes in general. For information on institutions dealing with foreign languages on an intensive basis, see Section 3.4 (Linguistic Institutes and Universities), Section 3.5 (Military Schools), and Section 3.6 (Diplomatic Schools).

3.3.2 Quantity of Foreign Language Instruction

As indicated in the preceding subsection, the Soviet state has been increasingly sharing its power of academic control with academic consortia. Such nationally coordinated policies have led to substantial agreement between post-secondary language programs concerning course length. G. E. Vedel (1963) characterizes the program at Voronezh University as a leading Soviet school devoted to subjects requiring language education. Vedel's statement corresponds with our Senior Researcher's own language education, which took place in Moscow in the seventies and which closely resembled Vedel's 1963 description.

According to Vedel, Voronezh University increased its required hours of foreign language instruction in partial response to the Decree of 1961. Whereas pre-1961 levels of foreign language education had ranged from 140 to 300 hours for a four-year course, Voronezh instituted new language requirements of approximately 675 to 950 hours over four years. (This is based upon Vedel's figures of six to eight hours per week during the first three years, and two to four hours per week during the fourth year.) Our Senior Researcher, who received his foreign language education during the eighties, says this agrees with the schedule he followed at Moscow University.

Language requirements in 1991 were made available by Dr. Barchenkov. He said that

> "... since all university students are required to have some FL courses, there are over 800 university FL departments. However, there is considerable variation in the number of contact hours, ranging from 150 to as much as 450. Most non-technical universities and institutes require a minimum of 150 hours, which may be expanded to 240 by the addition of electives. However,

such technical schools as the Petroleum Institute and about eight others in Moscow require as much as 450 contact hours."

The range of hours represented above reflects the quantitative difference between "linguistic" and "non-linguistic" students. These figures represent required courses only; elective foreign language courses are available to all students, although it is probable that more "linguistic" than "non-linguistic" students enroll in them.

3.3.3 Quality of Foreign Language Instruction

The quality of post-secondary foreign language instruction has historically resulted from the interplay of the academic world with central government policy. The literature contains numerous indications of more or less independent activity on the part of the universities to shape their instruction to conform with perceived national interests.

Several Soviet universities have, in turn, served as centers for language development. One of the earliest curriculum development and reform organizations, according to our Senior Researcher, was Voronezh University. In 1963 a major conference was held at Voronezh, including methodologists and teachers from all over the Soviet Union, who met to exchange ideas concerning implementation of the 1961 Decree at the level of higher education. According to the proceedings of that conference, "Problems Concerning the Restructuring of Foreign Language Teaching in Universities *(Obščie problemy perestroiki prepodavanija inostrannyx jazykov)*" (1963), its purpose was to restructure Soviet post-secondary foreign language teaching; this conference was the first of many which have been held since at pedagogical institutions throughout the Soviet Union. Many of the ideas which are developed in the following paragraphs appear to have been originally published as a result of this conference, and again according to our Senior Researcher, persisted well into the next two decades.

There was general agreement at Voronezh that the then-current grammar-translation system of language teaching needed to be replaced with a system featuring oral-aural concentration and "practical" work in all aspects of foreign language work. "Grammar-translation" referred to cognitive learning of formal rules, followed by corresponding translation exercises. This was first introduced by Shcherba (1974) in Stalin's time as the "conscious-comparative method," which, while based on modern linguistic theory, ultimately "... succumbed to the traditionalist-based philological orientation" (Pitthan, 1986, p. 192a). According to Vedel (1963), this method did not allow students to achieve true mastery of foreign languages. Experiments going back as far as 1960 had proven to her satisfaction that

> "The poor results of foreign language study, even with 4-6 hours per week on the non-linguistic faculties (philological, historical, chemical and others) strengthened our conclusion that this lack of success is explained first of all by the unsuitability of the method. We were convinced that the grammar-

translation method is discredited not by individual teaching methods, but because it contradicts a number of didactic principles; for example, it does not provide practical mastery of the foreign language and does not promote an active relationship between the learner and the learning activity."

Therefore, Vedel contended, foreign language methodology should incorporate some new principles, some of which are paraphrased as follows:

1. The reading, translation, paraphrasing and discussion of sociopolitical articles, based on oral-aural principles.

2. Grammatical principles taught on the basis of pattern practices.

3. Vocabulary learned through practice in sentences, not in lists.

4. Students taught to think in the target language by means of untranslatable exercises.

5. Teaching processes involving activities shared in common by teachers and students; these activities, which are devised by the teachers, should not stick to one methodology, but should combine those methodologies which are most likely to motivate and challenge the students. Such methods of teaching should include visual association techniques, to assist in internalizing vocabulary.

According to Vedel (1963), Voronezh University had developed a foreign language curriculum for "non-linguistic" departments, i.e., for university programs in subject areas not requiring foreign language competence. This system was divided into three stages:

1. First five semesters (2.5 years). First two semesters devoted to "pronunciation of foreign language phonemes and sound variants of target language." Basic grammatical patterns are taught to the point that they are automatic. Under the Voronezh system, every university-level foreign language course began with a "remedial pronunciation segment," teaching correct pronunciation for 50 hrs. in "linguistic" departments and 36 hrs. in "non-linguistic" departments. A special textbook of articulatory phonetics was developed for this course by the German department of Voronezh University.

   Following the "remedial pronunciation segment," the main segment, called "practical foreign language," began. For German, this consisted of two hours each of work on text and thematic conversations, one hour of home reading, and one hour of lab work (written dictation from an audio source).

2. Sixth semester. Continued the work of the first stage, but at progressively more complex levels; in addition, introduced "special literature" for reading, including Marxist documents from countries of the target language, edited for students.

3. Fourth year. Given by "linguistic" departments only. Speaking on profession-related subjects, and translation of professional literature. Also, attention was paid to reading without translating.

Gvozdovich (1963), as well as Udartsova and Peshkova (1963) echoed Vedel's repudiation of the grammar-translation method, describing what became essentially one of the principal characteristics of Soviet university foreign language courses: the use of oral-aural skills to achieve mastery of reading and translation skills thought to be required by professional careers. Gvozdovich emphasized the use of free, unstructured conversation to get the student to internalize grammatical patterns, while Udartsova and Peshkova stressed the relationship between conversation and reading skills. The latter authors firmly believed that a radical restructuring of the language departments themselves would be required to achieve the objectives they sought: the ability to read technical articles without the use of a dictionary, and the ability to freely translate the content of such material.

There can be little doubt that the oral-aural approach taken at the time was strongly tied to, if not driven by, the overall objective of Soviet foreign language education, that is, the ability to read and translate technical material related to the student's profession. In particular, the influence of Beliaev was evident in Soviet teaching, creating as it did a fusion between various modalities instead of trying to train them as separate skills (see Pitthan [1988], p. 202ff.).

One logical outcome of this direction in Soviet language teaching, however, was the issue of how to address the problems of students with differing specialized technical vocabulary needs. This became even more of a problem in the "non-linguistic" departments, as Postoev pointed out in 1974. He noted that the principles of Voronezh had failed to address this problem, relying instead on reading materials using "general-technical" vocabulary, which really did not correspond to the needs of "non-linguistic" students. Postoev argued for the development of "microlanguages" for each special field, to be used for readings at each "non-linguistic" university department. Our research did not indicate whether Postoev's suggestion was ever implemented (although there appears to have been sufficient university autonomy for this to have happened), but we may infer from him that the overall system of teaching proposed at the Voronezh Conference in 1963 was still very much in evidence 11 years later.

This is not to say, however, that the use of oral-aural instruction was reserved solely for the purpose of facilitating reading. Bogin (1971) was one of those who supported A.A. Leont'ev's principle of conversational skills as an end in themselves, at the post-secondary level in general (for a fuller description of Leont'ev's ideas, see Chapter 4). Bogin noted

that the use of "literary" vocabulary present in many contemporary textbooks and curricula produced students with "unnatural" speech, inappropriate to social or professional situations. He was among Leont'ev's followers who called for the consideration of spoken style as part of the objectives of foreign language curricula.

This is not to say that lexical style was the only factor criticized; contemporary statistical studies of lexical inventories were among the valuative statements we found which indicated dissatisfaction with the state of university foreign language education. Litvinov (1971) indicated that secondary school education was producing university applicants with foreign language vocabularies of only 300-500 words (see Subsection 3.2.3). He also noted that this lexical inventory did not show much improvement during three years of required university foreign language courses, increasing by only several hundred words.

Litvinov's view was supported by Folomkina and Ulanovskaya (1972), who determined in closely-controlled studies of students of English that fewer than 10 percent possessed minimal reading ability, i.e., the ability to skim at the rate of 600 words per minute. Of this small number, virtually all students attributed their ability to factors other than formal classroom instruction, including particular interest reinforced by independent study, or high level of prior language ability (p. 27).

As recently as 1987, Bim noted that the reforms of 1984 provided the impetus necessary to correct the weaknesses still prevalent in the post-secondary foreign language education system. One may infer from her suggestions for change the problems which continued to persist in the university system. Bim said that most of the difficulties arose from lack of teacher direction and organization, suggesting the following remedial measures:

1. Clearest possible statements of goals and objectives.

2. Rational organization of lessons in terms of goals.

3. Reinforcement of "communicative" aspects of training, with abolition of mechanical drills.

4. Organization of material according to specific use, e.g., reading, speaking.

5. More rational teaching of students, with a view toward improving their ability to understand new items without aids.

6. Clearer descriptive statements, to help students make better grammatical generalizations.

7. Combining individual and class work into a cohesive program.

8. Improved individuation for student programs.

9. Improved distribution of hours of instruction.

To be sure, Bim's arguments were not a general indictment of the existing system, nor were they simply a rehash of older qualitative statements. Bim was arguing for a system featuring more attention paid to individual student communicative needs, on a global basis, with the emphasis placed on oral-aural skills. Nevertheless, she continued to relate the ideal of this kind of learning to the ultimate objective of reading and translating ability.

It should be borne in mind that the foregoing criticisms were aimed primarily at "non-linguistic" programs. The "linguistic" programs conducted at specialized institutes and universities have been significantly more concentrated and effective. For a discussion of them see Section 3.4.

The validation panel neither objected to nor added significant information to the foregoing. Panel members remarked, however, that with the exception of the Pedagogical Institutes, post-secondary foreign language education is primitive. According to the panel, foreign language classes in "non-linguistic" departments are limited to two hours per week for the first two years, with the emphasis on technical translations at a relatively low level of complexity.

3.4 Linguistic Institutes and Universities

3.4.1 Structure

In Subsection 3.3.1 we referred to the respective roles of "linguistic" and "non-linguistic" programs. There are many technical/professional institutes and universities in the Soviet Union which offer four- or five-year programs within well-defined career areas. Several of the specializations represented by these institutions are "linguistic," i.e., have an intensive foreign language requirement for graduation. These specializations include language pedagogy and diplomacy, among others. Language pedagogy is by far the largest of these programs: there are 12 foreign language institutions and 114 foreign language *fakultets* located at pedagogical institutes, all of which are devoted to training teachers.

Among the most prominent of the 12 language-oriented institutes in the Soviet Union are the Moscow Linguistics University (until recently called the Maurice Thorez Institute), the Moscow State Pedagogical University (formerly the V. I. Lenin Pedagogical Institute) (in Moscow) and Russian Pedagogical University (formerly the G. Herzen Pedagogical Institute) in Leningrad. Information on these, summarized in the following paragraphs, was supplied by our Senior Academic Advisor on the basis of first-hand knowledge:

> The Moscow Linguistics University is a complete, linguistic institution, with 48 academic divisions and a population of 6,000 undergraduates and over 4,000 graduate students. According to a 1990 brochure, its more prominent departments

are lexicology and style, applied and computer linguistics, foreign language teaching methodology, pedagogics, psychology, theory of translation, and general linguistics. The brochure adds that teacher training is provided for English, French, and German specializations. There is a separate school which is devoted to the training of foreign language interpreters. In addition to specializing in each of these departments, students may also elect a multidisciplinary course of study. All of these courses are designed to lead to a masters degree. However, the University also offers a number of language refresher courses, as well as courses in new language skills for professionals; according to a recent brochure, students in these courses are drawn from 42 universities, 22 industries, and 27 ministries of the Soviet Union. The brochure also states that in the last several decades its research has earned national recognition: it is now

> " . . . a leading member of the national consortium of 12 foreign language institutes, 98 foreign language colleges, and over 800 foreign language departments in various university-level institutions. The consortium, known as the U.S.S.R. Educational and Methodological Association for Foreign Languages, constitutes an important body which shapes strategies and policies in language programs on a national scale . . ."

According to our Senior Academic Advisor, the university is responsible for the training of most Soviet translators and interpreters assigned to missions to foreign countries and to the United Nations.

The Moscow State Pedagogical University (until August 1990 the V. I. Lenin Pedagogical Institute) is one of the finest pedagogical institutions in the Soviet Union. It offers courses in more than 50 traditional academic disciplines and has departmental buildings and academic facilities throughout Moscow. The foreign language departments train students from all over the world in Russian as a foreign language. This university has had an English language exchange program with Great Britain for approximately 15 years.

The Russian Pedagogical University of Leningrad is one of the largest and oldest institutions of its kind in the Soviet Union. Founded in 1918, the institute enrolls approximately 18,000 students, primarily future teachers, in all the traditional disciplines.

3.4.2 Quantity of Foreign Language Instruction

According to the literature we reviewed, the number of hours of required foreign language study is not affected by whether they are taken at an institute or at a university. On the contrary, quantitative requirements at both types of institutions are similarly determined by whether the student is enrolled in a linguistic program or in a non-linguistic

one. Our Senior Researcher believes the distinction between universities and institutes is largely a matter of prestige, universities ranking higher. We have already seen in Subsection 3.4.1. that institutes have been renamed universities. See Subsection 3.3.2 for a description of the "linguistic" and "non-linguistic" course requirements in terms of class hours.

The validation panel stated that there is a five-to-one ratio in hours of foreign language instruction between "linguistic" and "non-linguistic" departments. According to the panel, "linguistic" students receive two hours of instruction per day, while "non-linguistic" students get only two hours per week.

3.4.3 Quality of Foreign Language Instruction

As we have seen, the government and consortia exercise considerable normalizing influence over university and institute language programs. Thus, it is possible to generalize somewhat, based on descriptions of programs at individual institutions. An especially significant report of this kind is therefore that of Borodulina (1985). As former Rektor of the (then) Maurice Thorez Institute, she has been in a position to influence post-secondary language education generally, and she has a reputation as a leading scholar and contributor to language pedagogy. Borodulina's (1985) remarks concerning language training at the Maurice Thorez Institute are validated by comparison with Betty Lou Leaver's (1986) direct observations (see Section 3.3).

Reflecting prevailing trends, Borodulina sees the oral-aural skills as the foundation of language acquisition. In addition, she has been a leading proponent of (if not a pioneer in) the integration of cultural materials into language curricula. It should be noted, however, that she views the emphasis on real-world, contemporary material as a contributing factor toward the objective of being able to defend the ideals of Socialism to foreigners. This objective, she says, is to be attained by having students analyze the content of foreign articles and then debate them actively in the target language, in the process forming correct attitudes concerning Marxism-Leninism, patriotism, and internationalism. In this way, students also learn the rhetorical techniques necessary to defend Soviet ideals in a foreign language.

3.5 Military Schools

The literature we surveyed contained no references to Soviet schools which conduct foreign language training for military personnel. In fact, according to Dr. Barchenkov, there is only one such institution in the country, the Red Banner Military Institute in Moscow. This institute trains cadets in all sorts of specialties, of which foreign languages, and in particular interpretation and translation, are two. According to Dr. Barchenkov, admission standards for this prestigious school are very high, and graduates command high levels of language ability.

According to our Senior Researcher, foreign language competence is a requirement to become an officer in the Soviet armed forces, but the standard for this requirement is not very high. All officers are encouraged to maintain foreign language ability, but enlisted personnel are given few if any opportunities for such training. An exception to this are communications personnel and special forces *(specnac)*, who receive foreign language training as part of their military specialty preparation.

According to the validation panel, graduates of the Red Banner Military Institute may serve as official interpreters and translators once they become officers. Apparently, the quality of the Institute's training is very good. In contrast to Dr. Barchenkov, the panel's perception of the Institute was that it is elitist in nature, and that the political "connections" of applicants' families facilitate admission.

3.6 Diplomatic Schools

3.6.1 Structure

Although our library research turned up no Soviet publications dealing with language training for civilian government service, we obtained information from various informal U.S. publications, from our Senior Academic Advisor, and from Dr. Barchenkov. According to these sources, there are two institutions involved in language training for diplomatic personnel: the Moscow Institute of International Relations (until recently MIMO, now changed to MGIMO) and the Soviet Academy for Diplomacy (also in Moscow).

MGIMO is an institution featuring five-year and five-and-a-half-year academic programs leading to degrees corresponding the B.A. and the M.A. respectively. According to Leaver (1986), ". . . most of the students have attended the Soviet special foreign language schools during their primary school (K-10) years." Stearns (1986) notes that ". . candidates for the Institute are usually identified in secondary school and enter after passing the Foreign Service examinations, which include . . . oral language" (p.6). This requirement, of course, is little different from university-level foreign language entrance requirements anywhere else in the Soviet Union.

The Academy, by contrast, is not a degree-granting school. Like other Soviet academies, it offers a two-year program for students who already have degrees. One takes academy courses in order to sharpen or refresh language skills which are needed for specific work or career assignments (see also Section 3.3.1.) According to Dr. Barchenkov, Academy students are employees of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and such other Ministries as Trade, Finance, and Science and Technology.

In addition to these two institutional language programs, several government ministries present intramural language classes for employees, using teachers "borrowed" from

nearby instructional organizations. These off-duty classes may lead to pay increases or opportunities for desirable assignments.

The validation panel added to this information that the Academy for Diplomacy is a program of study for MGIMO graduates, and that it serves students with high political and social standing. The panel concurred that foreign language training is provided for government officials through internal courses given by Soviet government ministries. The ministries of Foreign Affairs, Finance, International Insurance, and Foreign Trade, among others, have positions which require foreign language competence. In order to encourage employees to aspire to these positions, the agencies provide their own on-site training programs. Although the training is obviously not intensive, it does have some effectiveness, since successful completion of one year of training results in a five per cent salary increment, while passing examinations in two languages at the end of two years can result in an increase of 15 per cent.

3.6.2 Quantity of Training

According to Leaver's (1986) account, approximately 45 per cent of the course work at MGIMO centers around two required foreign languages, with a total of approximately 1,400 hours being spent on each language over the course of five years. The two languages are usually chosen so as to complement each other. The concentration of foreign language study at MGIMO is significantly decreased during the fifth year when, as is the case in the senior year at all Soviet universities and institutes, there is a major paper which each student must write.

Although most MGIMO students are graduates of *specškoly*, the fact that the age of admission ranges from 18 to 30 implies that admission directly after secondary school is not easy. According to Leaver, classes are typically small, ranging from three to five students.

Leaver (1986) and Stearns (1986) both state that the MGIMO program requires that all students study two languages. According to Leaver, one of these is a "world" language (i.e., a relatively easy one to learn) and the other is a "hard" language. The two languages are usually selected so as to complement each other (e.g., French and Vietnamese), and the student may have a limited voice in the selection. Ultimately, however, the choice is determined by ". . . the needs of the Soviet Foreign Service" (Stearns, 1986, p. 7).

3.6.3 Quality of Training

According to Leaver, the courses of training, as embodied in the printed textbooks, show a traditional, grammar-explanation approach rather than a proficiency orientation. However, there is a wealth of supplementary material available, including extensive audio laboratories which offer independent study or teacher-mediated practice. Additional technological support came from videotape rooms with many films made in target countries as well as in the Soviet Union.

"Specific western methodologies, such as natural approach and functional-notional syllabi, were not particularly favored, the methodology of the classroom being more traditional; however, the interest in using authentic and simulated laboratory (video, audio) materials was strong. The sophistication of the audio lab and the extensive supply of tapes was impressive." (1986, p. 2).

According to our information, the MIGMO language programs are very successful. Stearns (1986) reports that "Judging by the proficiency of fourth and fifth year students, whose classes we attended . . . the results of the Soviet program are excellent" (p. 7). Leaver concurs in this, saying that

> "The emphasis in these classes appears to be on developing listening comprehension skills, communicative competence in discussing the [video] programs, and a sophisticated and perceptive understanding of the mentality (or national *Weltanschauung*) and social customs of the people of the country in which the programming originated" (p. 2).

Chapter 4

Philosophy of Language Education in the U.S.S.R.

4.1 Overview

From our research into trends in Soviet language education philosophy since 1960, two salient points emerge. First, there have been two distinct turning points in overall policy, respectively in 1961 and in 1984, with a less marked change of direction occurring in 1975. Second, there has been a great deal of interest in the U.S.S.R. in the application of linguistic science to foreign language pedagogy, but much of the resulting work has remained at the theoretical level. This chapter describes the principal periods of philosophical development as follows: 1961-1975, 1975-1984, and 1984-1990.

4.2 1961-1975

The publication of the Decree of the Council of Ministers of the U.S.S.R. of May, 1961 effectively set the stage for the first major reform of Soviet foreign language teaching since the thirties. The complete text of this decree, as translated from Schiff (1966), is shown in Appendix A. The principal points made in the decree were as follows:

- There were two "serious shortcomings" in the "important subject" of foreign language instruction: (1) students' oral and translation skills at all levels were considered inadequate; and (2) there were serious gaps in the education of foreign language teachers.

- The distribution of foreign languages being learned was not "internally rational," the majority of students were studying German, with a small number studying French. This did not correspond to actual needs for specialists with knowledge of a foreign language.

- To remedy these shortcomings, the following steps were required and ordered:

  - Publish new textbooks emphasizing translation and oral skills.

  - Reduce class size in secondary schools by splitting groups larger than 25.

  - Open within four years at least 700 schools in which academic instruction is given in a "suitable" foreign language. (NOTE: This marks

the general expansion of the "special" schools, which had their genesis three years earlier [see Chapter 3].)

- Prohibit foreign language instruction by teachers who possess an inadequate knowledge of the foreign language.

- Introduce and expand existing foreign language correspondence courses for adults.

- Make fundamental reforms in the education of foreign language teachers at all levels.

- Centralize within the Ministry of Education of the Russian Soviet Federal Socialist Republic (R.S.F.S.R.) the writing of foreign language textbooks for the secondary schools.

- Establish the basic minimum foreign language requirement for university students as 240 class hours; a greater minimum requirement is to be established for students specializing in subjects for which a knowledge of a foreign language is considered essential.

- Establish two-year advanced training courses for university-level foreign language teachers, for which only the best qualified candidates are to be selected. Graduates of these courses are to replace less-qualified university teachers.

- Make plans for a better distribution of languages studied within the U.S.S.R..

- Make plans to produce audio-visual instructional aids for foreign languages, including phonograph records, tapes and sound films. In addition, arrange to acquire such aids from foreign countries.

- Make plans for the publication of a wide variety of foreign language reference books and literary works, in annotated as well as in unexpurgated versions, for distribution to schools and to the general public.

This decree came as a reaction to the "conscious-comparative" method which had been in vogue since Shcherba introduced it in the thirties. Shcherba's methodology featured intellectual study of the traditional grammar of the target language, in order to understand differences between it and the native language, then practice through extensive translation. In view of Soviet isolation from other cultures at the time, this was in line with contemporary Soviet Marxist doctrine (Pitthan, 1988, p. 191). Indeed, a consistent feature

of Soviet language pedagogy has been direct linkage of teaching objectives and methodologies to perceived future work requirements of the students as well as to current Soviet political ideas.

Against this backdrop, the forces which underlay the Decree of 1961 arose from two relatively new schools of thought: first, the so-called "direct method," which is virtually the opposite of the cognitive approach, and which features "total immersion" in the target language with no explanatory mediation; and second, Beliaev's "conscious-practical" method, which is actually an attempt to merge the conscious-comparative and direct methods. According to Pitthan (1988, p. 201 ff.), Beliaev's method -- which incorporated psychological theories of Vygotsky, the Marxist "materialistic theory of reflection," and even the epistemological theories of Whorf -- sought to create a pedagogy which would remedy the observable deficiencies of Soviet language students, while adhering to the Marxist tenets of materialism. Therefore, according to Pitthan, it was no accident that the 1961 decree identified translation (from the conscious-practical approach) and oral skill (from the direct method) as the two salient areas for improvement.

Beliaev's approach, a cornerstone of Soviet language teaching for at least a decade, was built on two stages of language learning. In the first or translation stage, students are to acquire basic, theoretical knowledge of the target language through structural comparison with the native language. In the second stage, students learn to communicate in the foreign language using listening, speaking, reading, and writing. At the same time, they learn to perceive a new cultural reality through the medium of the target language. As we have already seen in Subsection 3.2.3, however, the central authorities interpreted this "new cultural reality" in Soviet ideological terms, rather than in terms of the culture of the target language.

The 1961 decree received strong support from a number of Soviet linguists and pedagogues. At a conference held at Voronezh University in 1963, they strongly decried the conscious-comparative method's emphasis on reading and translation, in favor of active oral control of the target language.

The influence of A. A. Leont'ev was prominent in the evolution away from the classical component of Beliaev's methodology and toward a structuralist view of language teaching. Leont'ev's approach, which dominated through the sixties and seventies, featured active oral skills. This development was contemporary with and parallel to the linguistic work of the American linguist Charles C. Fries. Leont'ev's methodology represented a real departure in that it focused on student goals, rather than teacher goals; the method took into consideration a variety of psychological and social factors which were felt to influence a student's ability to learn in the classroom context. Leont'ev stressed that speech was one part of a continuum of human communicative media, so that ". . . if we consider speech activity not as an independent, imminent process, but as a unified blend of communication and generalization . . . we reject in principle the notion of 'speech teaching' (not to mention language teaching), and attribute a central relevance to the

problem of teaching communication in a foreign language and the use of foreign language in distinct types of intellectual and practical activity" (cited by Pitthan, 1988, p. 210 ff.).

This "communicative" approach to foreign language pedagogy, which was related to the American structuralism of the fifties and sixties (i.e., not to the more recent philosophy of "communicative competence"), was not an isolated phenomenon within the realm of linguistics. In fact, the late sixties and early seventies witnessed a powerful movement in the Soviet Union in support of structuralism, driven to no small degree by developments in technology.

It is only in the Soviet literature of the last ten years that prominent scholars such as Bim and Leont'ev have cited Western linguistics in connection with ideas influencing language teaching trends in the U.S.S.R. However, traces of American and European structuralism is clear in Soviet thinking throughout the period we examined. For example, Udis (1972) was among the few authors we found who actively sought numerical scales by which to measure student proficiency. He used a series of carefully controlled experiments to determine reading speed, based on what he called "units of meaning," of English and Russian texts at what he judged to be the same order of difficulty. The results (Russian : English = 2.5 units : 1.5 units) are not as important as the effort he made to establish a foundation for objective criteria.

The development of telecommunications and computer technology in the seventies led to the applications of the analytical techniques of structural linguistics to machine-assisted translation. This and other technology-related areas drew economic support from the Soviet government for numerous projects involving applied linguistics. This did not occur without opposition, however, as Pitthan points out (p. 91 ff.). A strong neo-traditionalist movement, spearheaded by R. A. Budagov, engaged the structuralists in vigorous debate over what he asserted to be their support of form to the exclusion of substance.

A pedagogical issue which surfaced in the seventies and has continued to be a problem was the lack of relevant topical material in language courses. A Kazan University publication of 1972 for example, actually cites the results of a student questionnaire indicating discontent over Lenin's life as the subject of conversational classes in French, and expressing a corresponding preference for conversations about "miniskirts, cars, and resorts" in that language. Our Senior Researcher, a former language student at Moscow University, says this kind of complaint frequently arose because teachers wished to avoid topics which might be interpreted as ideologically unacceptable. According to him, lesson plans contained three types of topics: abstract communist ideology; target culture conversational situations, ostensibly authentic but based on Soviet life (for example, two Frenchmen converse about life as a tractor driver on a collective); and, narrative descriptions of target country society, appearing to be balanced but actually presenting a distorted view of the role of communism.

It is thus clear that through the early seventies there was in the Soviet Union a healthy and enthusiastic interest in the application of scientific principles to the teaching of language and in the measurement of proficiency. But at the same time, counterforces of political conservatism actively prevented the implementation of these ideas in ways which could successfully effect change in the actual teaching system. A balance between the two opposing sides was maintained in an arena of relatively free exchange of ideas until 1975.

None of the three panel members recalled the advent of the 1961 decree. They were not aware of having been taught to use a methodology bearing the stamp of any particular theoretician.

4.3 1975-1984

The year 1975 saw the beginning of the erosion of structuralism in Soviet linguistics, brought about by the forces allied to "spiritualism" (*duxovnost'*). In Soviet terms, this word refers to intellectual understanding of Marxist-Leninist doctrine. In this sense, "spiritual" means "ideological," and therefore clearly relates the standards for linguistic theory and practice to current Communist ideology.

Pitthan (1988, p. 92 ff.) points out the key document in which this new political relationship to language teaching was defined, an editorial called "The 25th Congress of the CPSU: Some Tasks of Soviet Linguistics" (*XXV s'ed KPSS. Nekotorye zadači sovetskogo jazykoznanija*"), in which the "allegedly new" (i.e., structural) linguistics was seen as hindering the relationship of man to man, as opposed to man and machine. The Soviet-style traditionalists behind this article, in Pitthan's words, wished to " . . . curtail the pending danger of the growing application of formal methods in Soviet linguistics, seeking to return the study of language to its actual subject, man, placed in a wider societal and 'spiritual' (ideological) context" (Pitthan, 1988, p. 93). Thus, Soviet structuralism began to fade in favor of language study as a means for teaching Marxism-Leninism.

Structuralism appears from the literature to have come to an end in part as the result of a largely bureaucratic action. On April 12, 1984, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union ratified a series of overall school reforms which were intended to be some of the most sweeping since the Revolution. These reforms were primarily organizational in nature, dealing with such matters as the age for school entrance, class hours, and the respective roles of the general and technical/vocational schools. While foreign languages and their study were not explicitly addressed by the Reforms, those advocating the "traditional" approach were quick to take advantage of the opportunity offered them to re-establish a system more in keeping with their ideological concepts of the function of foreign language instruction: the achievement of "communicative competence" on the part of the student, so as to be able to verbally interact in an effective way on matters affecting his life in Socialist society.

The general intent of the Reforms appears from the literature to have been new curricular objectives and their embodiment in new textbooks. Garza (1987, p. 105) states that the major objectives to be striven for by foreign language teachers in terms of the Reforms included the following:

- "Practical mastery by school students of the fundamentals of speech activities in a foreign language.

- The formation of the students' communist morality based on the material used in the learning process, their upbringing in the spirit of Soviet patriotism, proletarian internationalism, and the respect for other peoples.

- The broadening of the students' horizons, enriching them with information about the geography, history, literature, art and way of life of the country in which the language being studied is spoken."

Garza (1987, p. 107) further records documentation of the application of the 1984 guidelines to specific curricula:

> "The role of labor in the life of man is emphasized in the themes for oral speech and reading in the fourth through seventh grades, including the sub-themes 'Man's Labor Activity' and 'Socially Useful and Productive Labor of Schoolchildren.' The theme 'Our Country' has been expanded to include the sub-themes 'The Emblem, Flag, and Anthem of the U.S.S.R.,' 'Day of Knowledge,' 'Soviet Army Day,' 'The Birthday of the Komsomol and Pioneer Organizations,' 'Cosmonaut Day,' and 'International Women's Day.'"

Thus, the period ending in 1984 with the Educational Reforms saw the completion of a transition in foreign language education which moved away from structuralism and toward an approach in which content, rather than method, became the dominant factor. The development of the "communicative competence" philosophy which, in large measure, built upon the idea of foreign language education as a teaching tool for socialist philosophy, will be seen in developments since 1984, which are discussed in the next section.

The validation panel members were very much aware of the 1984 Reforms. Their comments on the Reforms are found at the end of Section 4.4. An interesting note on the erosion of structuralism was the comment of the teacher from the regular school. She said that her textbooks, which date from before 1984, are based on "pattern drill and habit formation," but that the individual teacher in her school system at least is now free to use alternative methodologies. Her practice, and that of most of her colleagues, is to use a content-based approach founded on communicative competence, thus disregarding the structuralism inherent in the textbooks.

4.4 1984-1990

The philosophy of Soviet foreign language education since the Reforms of 1984 has been notably marked by two trends, one linguistic and the other political. On the linguistic side, the idea of communicative competence has played the dominant role in teaching. A fortunate political correlate to this has been the advent of glasnost, which has allowed a greater exchange of ideas between Soviet and Western scholars and teachers than has ever been possible in the past. Subsections 4.4.1 and 4.4.2 respectively describe the effects which the philosophy of communicative competence and the policy of glasnost have had on recent foreign language pedagogical developments.

4.4.1 Communicative Competence

Throughout the philosophy of the 1984 Reforms runs the theme of communicative competence. This refers to the goal of oral command of the language after graduation, a goal to be attained through the use of topical material required by the new Socialist philosophy. Garza (1987, p. 108 ff.) cites a typical statement of such objectives:

> "In light of the resolutions of the 1984 Plenary of the CPSU Central Committee and the positions of the "Basic Guidelines for the Reform of the General Educational and Vocational School," the teaching of English, German, French, and Spanish languages should secure the unity of the education and upbringing of the students, a solid mastery by them of the fundamentals of a foreign language and the ability to use it in practice. In the secondary general educational school is formed the basis of a practical knowledge of a foreign language by students on which they are able to master further the foreign language after finishing school. The educational process for a foreign language in secondary school should be founded on an oral base that determines the teaching of all aspects of speech activity."

The plan for achieving these objectives had been in existence at least since 1981, when Skalkin described the idea of methodological arrays, based upon empirically determined needs. He emphasized a five-step approach to developing methodologies to relate teaching materials to the students' needs:

(1) Determination of student's "communicative sphere" for teaching purposes,

(2) Establishing a system of methodological principles,

(3) Selecting and organizing a body of material for instruction,

(4) Developing a system for writing appropriate oral exercises, and

(5) Developing the appropriate lesson plans for each lesson.

These considerations, Skalkin concluded, posed the question as to whether a specific, ready-made methodology should be used, or whether a more eclectic approach was required. He differentiated between **methods**, which include only the selection and organization of materials to be taught, and **goals and objectives of the instruction**, which dictate the actual procedure of teaching.

Approach, Skalkin asserted, is a series of mutually related, axiomatic assumptions about the nature of language and how it is learned. Communicative competence as an approach, therefore, has its own set of assumptions. But approach is neither a method nor a methodology, but rather a way of finding out which methods and methodologies should be used to achieve certain goals and objectives. Skalkin gave credit for these ideas to a number of Western linguists, including Lado, Anthony, and Berlitz.

It was clear to teachers in 1984, however, that it would be very difficult to attain in practice the ideals of Skalkin and others like him. The requirements of the 1984 Reforms were interpreted and incorporated into proposed new foreign language syllabi. These syllabi affirmed the goals of communicative competence and freed teachers to a certain extent from the rigidity of the structuralist curricula. However, they also increased the amount of material to be taught in each school year, without increasing the available instructional time (an eleventh year of secondary school was added). To illustrate this, we have included as Appendix B a selection of such syllabi, which appear with the kind permission of Thomas J. Garza. Had these new syllabi been fully implemented, foreign language teachers would have found themselves competing for time to teach their courses. What the reforms did, however, was to permit foreign language teachers to follow more pragmatic and flexible programs of instruction than ever before.

4.4.2 Glasnost

Perhaps the greatest driving force behind developments in Soviet foreign language teaching of the last five years has been the changing political climate in the country. We were fortunate that our Senior Academic Advisor, based on recent personal experience, was able to supply current information on the ideological effects of President Gorbachev's political initiatives on the teaching of foreign languages in the U.S.S.R.

The entire picture of teacher and student exchanges has expanded to include the United States and most of Western Europe. In contrast with the exchange programs of the fifties, sixties, and seventies, which for the most part concerned small numbers (often less than 50) of senior scholars and lecturers per year, recent exchanges have concentrated on high school and undergraduate students. For example, in 1988, then-President Reagan and then-General Secretary Gorbachev signed an agreement for an exchange of high school students, to reach approximately 100 secondary schools and 1,000 students in each country during the three-year term of the agreement. This exchange has allowed large numbers of Soviet foreign language students to study the language in an "immersion" environment.

Additionally, undergraduate students with foreign language competence have been afforded the opportunity to continue studying their second language abroad, while simultaneously pursuing other academic subjects in the foreign language. Thus, Soviet students are for the first time becoming exposed to other cultures and ideas in their natural settings and languages.

In addition to this overseas travel, glasnost has brought about greater access to culturally authentic native language materials within the U.S.S.R. For example, until the last few years the only readily available English language publications from outside the country were communist newspapers, such as the British *Morning Star* and the American *Daily World*. Now, *Time, Newsweek*, and *USA Today* are all easily obtainable in the U.S.S.R.

Still another effect of glasnost has been the greater number of American English language specialists working in the Soviet Union. The American Council for Collaboration in Education and Language Study, a sister organization of the American Council of Teachers of Russian, has been sending English as a Second Language specialists to the U.S.S.R. for the last four years. These specialists help prepare language teaching materials for use in Soviet schools and institutes, as well as serving as language models. Similarly, the United States Information Agency (USIA) has supported American English language study in the U.S. by facilitating travel by Soviet foreign language specialists to America, and by providing materials for teachers and institutes in the Soviet Union.

Perhaps the capstone to these activities has been the collaboration of U.S. and Soviet specialists on the development of English language teaching materials for use in Soviet schools. Intended for both school and institute students, joint textbook projects now underway will incorporate the Soviet authors' understanding of their classrooms with the Americans' understanding of their own language and culture. Corresponding Russian language materials, developed for school programs in the United States, have been reasonably successful, incorporating strengths from each country's language teaching community.

These cooperative English materials aim at overcoming some of the failures of earlier Soviet textbooks. Many of these were unsuccessful in teaching authentic English because they employed as reading materials English translations of Russian texts and original English language texts with Soviet themes. By contrast, the new materials will present American popular culture and contemporary language in a combination which could not have been achieved by either U.S. or Soviet authors working alone.

Finally, recent events indicate that there is an increasing Soviet interest in Western concepts of proficiency and proficiency testing, as well as in the individualization of student requirements and, consequently, learning programs. At the 1990 Seventh International Conference of Teachers of Russian Language and Literature (MAPRIAL), noticeable methodological themes included teaching specific audiences and for specific purposes, communicative tasks and teaching, lexical groups, testing, and motivation.

The validation panel added to the preceding discussion some significant thoughts concerning the effects of perestroika on foreign language teaching. The panel noted that since President Gorbachev's political reforms, the individual regular school teacher has been liberated from the formerly strict curricular controls, which dictated the activities of virtually every school hour. (Special school teachers had been allowed some flexibility before perestroika.) At the same time, the panel felt that all teachers are now concentrating on what they most want to do -- teach the students to appreciate and actively use foreign languages to communicate with foreigners and to learn to understand the cultures of foreign countries.

The panel felt that the reforms of 1984 contained few, if any, new ideas, and that the reforms had little actual effect on classroom teaching, either on the number of hours taught or on methodology. At the same time, there were two administrative effects: a slight increase in teacher salaries, and the addition of an 11th grade to the secondary school system.

Chapter 5

Non-Classroom Language Learning Experience for Soviets

5.1 Introduction

Training in a skill may be thought of as a process in which an individual learns the rules by which certain information is used, and then learns to apply this theory in real-life situations. In the case of foreign language study, the process is frequently exemplified by formal, classroom study followed by active use to achieve real-life objectives. This may happen in two different ways: (1) during the period of study, reinforcement of class work by participation in social or other activities involving the language; and (2) after the completion of formal study, work-related or other active use of the language. In either sense, however, this non-classroom language experience plays a significant role in the student's ability to independently continue acquiring and using the target language.

In Chapter 3 we noted the distinction between **learning** and **acquisition** as concepts involved in foreign language training (Krashen, 1982). We distinguished between learning, the conscious knowledge of facts and rules, and acquisition, which is the unconscious, automatic ability to communicate through language. Based on this distinction, it should come as no surprise that language acquisition may take place both inside and outside the classroom, and that informal language exposure can mediate acquisition as surely as formal training can. Hence, it makes sense also that an individual's competence in a second language represents the sum of that person's formal study and experience using the language.

Stephen Krashen (1982, p. 20 ff.) posited that acquisition takes place through a process he termed the Input Hypothesis. Stated simply, the input process operates when an individual succeeds in comprehending a linguistically encoded message containing data or arrangements of data not already in the individual's linguistic inventory. In Krashen's terms, if an individual's inventory in a language is *i*, then comprehending an utterance containing an element not present in *i* implies an increase in the inventory to *(i + 1)*. Such successful communication takes place when the message contains sufficient information beyond *i* to permit comprehension. As a result of such experiences, Krashen says, an individual adds to his or her active inventory of foreign language material and grows increasingly competent. Thus, he says, ". . . speaking fluency cannot be taught directly. Rather, it 'emerges' over time, on its own . . . Accuracy develops over time as the acquirer hears and understands more input" (p. 22).

This theory, however, operates only with the mediation of another factor which is called the "affective filter," a complex of the learner's attitudes toward language learning. If the filter is strong, the learner will resist accepting *(i + 1)* messages; if the filter is weak,

the learner will accept these messages more easily. Thus, according to Krashen, the combination of a high exposure to *(i + 1)* messages and a low filter will produce optimum language acquisition.

Of course, none of this is necessarily concerned with the language classroom. In fact, except for the facilitating effects of learning (as defined by Krashen), this theory holds that beyond the very elementary stages of language acquisition, the contribution of the classroom vis-a-vis other language experience decreases rapidly over time.

In Chapters 3 and 4 we show the development of the theory and practice of foreign language pedagogy in the Soviet Union. As we have just discussed in this Section, classroom study alone is not responsible for language acquisition. One must therefore be careful not to ascribe second language ability entirely to classroom work, but rather to characterize such ability on the basis of formal study, followed by real-world use.

In this chapter, we will get a glimpse of Soviet extra-classroom foreign language experience, as was related by our panel and our researchers. Since all three members of the validation panel are teachers of English, the information presented here relates primarily to that language.

5.2 Informal Influences on Soviet Learning of English

The validation panel felt in general that the extent to which Soviets are fluent in English is based primarily upon formal learning of grammar and vocabulary in the classroom, plus additional exposure in less formal situations. One panel member said that "most [students] who learn well do something else outside the classroom; school only gives the initial basis [for speech]." In the case of English, the panel agreed that those Soviets who become fluent do so because of a deep-felt need for it. Indeed, as we shall see, less structured approaches to learning, such as Lozanov's suggestopedia, are currently in vogue outside the Soviet school system.

There was consensus among the panelists that student success with language depends on practice, and correspondingly that progress with language acquisition is inhibited by lack of practice. The regular school teacher went so far as to say that she observed diminution of student language ability during the last three years of secondary school, when instruction is limited to 45 minutes per week. She indicated that many students subsequently entering post-secondary courses had lost prior language ability through disuse. She added that in her limited student access time it was only possible to teach "the love of the language," to encourage students to practice on their own.

Given the panel consensus that the foundation of foreign language acquisition is formal study, the panel members went on to enumerate some activities and other factors

through which unstructured situations of language use reinforce the acquisition process begun in school. These factors include jobs, cooperatives, clubs, media, and glasnost; they are described in the following subsections.

5.2.1 Jobs Using Foreign Languages

In addition to the teaching profession, many official jobs in the U.S.S.R. expose their incumbents to foreign language on a regular basis. These are positions dealing with foreigners either at home or overseas, and are found in such government ministries as Foreign Affairs, Finance, International Insurance, and Foreign Trade, to name a few. In addition, there are what are termed joint ventures with governments of other countries, whose Soviet participants are required to, and in fact do, speak the language of the venture partner country. (We are aware of at least one joint venture involving the United States; it is producing English teaching materials for use in the U.S.S.R.)

5.2.2 Cooperatives

In the Soviet Union, the cooperative is a relatively new form of enterprise, which has appeared only since perestroika. Essentially, it is a capitalist small business, started and operated by one or more individuals, often with the aid of loans, for the purpose of earning profits. In the case of language study, cooperatives have sprung up in many Soviet cities, and they abound in Moscow. Many of them concentrate on English study, which is conducted not in formal classrooms but in the relaxed atmosphere of the suggestopedia system of Lozanov (1978). These comfortable, relaxed environments use a therapy-like adaptation of Lozanov's method, as developed by G. Kitajgorodskaya (1986a, 1986b), and are now extremely popular among Soviet citizens.

5.2.3 Foreign Language Clubs

The validation panel emphasized the importance of foreign language clubs, or "International Friendship Clubs," whose members are secondary school students, and which are located all over the country. They are designed to encourage real contacts between young Soviets and citizens of other countries, using foreign languages as appropriate. Typical activities encouraged by the clubs are the formation of pen-pal relationships.

5.2.4 Media

Our panel members agreed that communications media were not only an excellent source of material for formal language lessons, but an end in themselves as far as post-training language acquisition is concerned. The panel indicated that Soviet fascination with foreign languages in general, and English in particular, played a role in the development of government broadcast jamming policy. Until glasnost, American Russian-language broadcasts by the Voice of America (VOA) were jammed because the Soviets objected to their political content. At the same time, the English-language VOA and BBC broadcasts were allowed to come through,

because interest in the language outweighed objections to the content. This testifies to the lively interest in English language and culture, particularly in popular music, which has flourished in the Soviet Union for some years.

Media cultural events are also popular with the foreign language clubs already mentioned, some of whose activities include lively discussion groups which debate the literary and other merits of the productions they have seen or heard. For example, one panelist reported her fascination at seeing an American television production of Chekhov's "Three Sisters," in which the actors were permitted to embrace and even kiss, something that would not be permitted in a Soviet theatrical company or television production. This panelist felt she had received an entirely different, and fascinating, perspective on Chekhov by seeing his work, as it were, through American eyes.

We found it significant that these reports coincided with those of our Senior Researcher. He said that in contrast to the United States, whose principal form of entertainment is popular television, the Soviet Union is a nation of readers. He said he could familiarize himself with many languages just by buying and perusing the heavily annotated versions of foreign language literature which are available everywhere in the Soviet Union, and that a great deal of his knowledge of English had been acquired in this way.

5.2.5 Glasnost

Finally, all panel members agreed that the effect of glasnost upon cultural interchange between Soviet citizens and foreigners has been of such far-reaching importance that, as one remarked, ". . . things can never again go back to where they were." This is true not only because of the number of Americans and other foreigners now allowed into the country, but also through the liberal exchange programs by which both students and teachers visit each other's countries, often living with host country families.

Chapter 6

Motivation for Language Study

6.1 Introduction

The term motivating factors is frequently used to refer to instructional activities, institutional attitudes, and other factors **intrinsic** to an education system which encourage and stimulate students to absorb formal classroom material. But motivating factors also include **extrinsic** factors, circumstances which are independent of the school, but which nonetheless impact on student attitudes toward formal study. There are, of course, positive as well as negative motivating factors within the intrinsic and extrinsic domains. In this chapter we discuss the factors which we have found influence Soviets in their study and use of foreign languages.

6.2 Soviet Motivating Factors

The literature we reviewed contained references to motivating factors in foreign language pedagogy, but this material dealt entirely with psychological elements of classroom presentation, rather than with the broader concept of motivation discussed in Section 6.1. Our panel and researchers, on the other hand, gave us information along a much broader spectrum, including extrinsic as well as intrinsic elements and falling into three general categories: national policy, local policy, and individual attitudes.

(1) National policy. Impetus for study provided by the central government, for example central direction for educational agencies, as well as means for encouraging individual participation in language studies.

(2) Local policy. Factors in local schools which influence attitudes toward language study among students. Results of such policies might be highly motivated teachers, high-quality materials, and technological support.

(3) Individual attitudes. Personal goals and aspirations; interest in foreign culture.

The effects of national policy have been evident in the Soviet system, as we have documented in preceding chapters. Beginning with the Decree of 1961, we have found nothing but firm central government support for nationwide foreign language education, and at increasingly higher levels of quality. Provision has been made for special institutes for foreign language teachers, and for central standardization of textbooks. In addition, a

system of pay incentives for government workers who learn foreign languages is in place. On the surface at least, the government has also provided for clear philosophical connections between foreign language study at all levels and patriotic goals intended for all citizens.

The foregoing notwithstanding, the local educational area has not always implemented broad government policy; if anything, local implementation of central government policies appears to have had a negative effect. Garza (1987) reports poor materials (pp. 64, 78), unqualified teachers (p. 55), insufficient training time for mandated courses (p. 111), and lack of needed audio-visual materials (p. 79). Kozik (1971) also reported in his study of university students that the enthusiasm shown by many freshmen waned in the second year when they realized that the goals of communicative ability which they had been promised turned out to be illusory.

Although the literature we surveyed was silent on the factors of the individual area, there was, nonetheless, some implicit evidence that well-motivated students do succeed, sometimes in spite of the system. For example, Folomkina and Ulanovskaya (1972) point out that the slim ten per cent of university students who managed a satisfactory level in English reading did so because of individual efforts with private tutors, not solely with the learning they did in the formal classroom.

In summary, information we drew from the literature indicated that the Soviet government has supplied positive motivation for foreign language study at least since 1961. However, local teaching at all levels is uneven, due to varying quality levels of management, planning, teacher qualifications, and equipment. Nevertheless, strong personal motivation on the part of many citizens has caused them to seek alternate means to excel in their language study.

The panel members consistently recognized motivation (in the broader sense) as an essential, if not critical, component of Soviet foreign language acquisition at every level. The panel also contributed the following information:

(1) National policy factors

The panel felt that central government policies make a deep impact on what is going on inside the schools. In the panel's opinion, the most significant of these factors arise from glasnost and from monetary reward systems to encourage language study. Some of these factors are listed below:

- *Access to native speakers and authentic materials. Because Soviets are generally intrigued by contact with the world outside the U.S.S.R., glasnost is having a positive motivating effect on the foreign language classroom. The policy of openness is making more available than ever before contacts with exchange*

teachers who are native speakers, exchange students, and authentic reading and cinematic materials.

- *Opportunities for overseas travel. Glasnost has opened up many opportunities for Soviets to visit other countries. The possibility of visiting the United States as an exchange student or as a tourist is proving a powerful motivator for Soviets to learn English.* (Our Senior Academic Advisor points out that during 1991 Soviet exchange students are arriving in the United States with high TOEFL scores matched with, by her own observations, "a high degree of proficiency." This, she says, shows improvement over prior experience, an improvement which may be attributable to more stringent Soviet screening of applicants. This, in turn, may be due to greater numbers of applicants and, hence, greater competition.)

- *Monetary rewards. As mentioned in Chapter 5, several central government agencies pay salary differentials to employees who study foreign languages. Such monetary benefits can amount to as much as 15 percent of base salary.*

(2) Local policy factors

The extent to which secondary school students are encouraged in their study of a foreign language depends on many factors arising from every level of local school administration, from the classroom teacher to the procurement of teaching aids. Some of the factors cited by the panel are shown below:

- *Teacher attitudes and cooperation. Much of the quality of foreign language instruction at local levels depends upon teacher unity, interest, and willingness to share ideas with one another.*

- *Availability and use of materials and technology. Authentic materials and technological devices for presenting them, such as computers and video tape equipment, are becoming more common. However, there are many problems connected with this kind of classroom material, including gaps in authentic material and teacher training in the use of the equipment. Efforts are being made to overcome these problems.*

- *Limited choices for students. While in theory every Soviet child is free to select a foreign language to learn, in reality this choice is often restricted and sometimes non-existent. Outside of the Russian Republic, everyone must study his or her ethnic language plus Russian and one foreign language. In many cases this load, plus the paucity of qualified teachers, has resulted in poor motivation by teachers and students.* (Jagodin [1988] points out that 75 percent of Soviet secondary schools, which serve 40 percent of the students, are rural. Dr. Barchenkov has indicated that many of these schools have little, if any, foreign language

instruction.) *The panel member from a regular school said that in her Russian Republic community, students are required to study Russian plus one foreign language. Here, the choice is limited to only two foreign languages, English and German. However, the demand for English is so great that local school administrators and teachers are often forced to arbitrarily assign pupils to German, thus practically eliminating the element of student choice.*

- *Foreign language extracurricular activities. Many secondary school students are interested in extracurricular activities such as the Drama Circle, which sometimes focuses on foreign plays.*

- *Encouragement for scholastic achievement. One panel member cited school grades as a motivating factor for language study. Although this might sound at first like a truism, it must also be mentioned that foreign language grades in Soviet secondary schools are not considered factors in university admissions, for which special examinations are required. Rather, the panelist implied in her statement that good grades in school are a matter of individual pride in accomplishment, and achieve their motivating power in this way. As an additional reinforcement, local schools award certificates of merit to students who achieve particularly well in foreign language study.*

- *International youth activities. As mentioned in Chapter 5, many Soviet cities have one or more "International Friendship Clubs," youth organizations which focus on a particular foreign language and culture. Such clubs are welcome opportunities to exercise one's foreign language communicative skills in the framework of foreign cultural events or and contacts with foreigners by letter.*

(3) Individual attitude factors

Personal goals and intellectual curiosity about other cultures are motivating factors as important as local and national policy. International career opportunities and a desire to experience Western culture and interact with Westerners are important factors in the desire of many Soviets to learn foreign languages, particularly English. Specific panel comments are listed below:

- *Career opportunities. Many types of careers for Soviets demand foreign language competence. Professions involving contacts, such as diplomatic service, are prestigious in Soviet society. Hence, the study of foreign languages has practical as well as social appeal.*

- *Foreign living. Some Soviets are motivated to learn a foreign language because they want to visit or accompany a spouse who is working overseas. Very often, this occurs in the case of a person who is selected to work on a "joint venture," in which no provision is made for concurrent overseas employment of a spouse.*

- *Western pop culture. Soviet young people, especially boys, have a lively interest in English because of American and British popular music, whose lyrics they want to understand and sing.*

- *Curiosity about the West. An additional motivating factor stemming from the media is BBC informational and other non-musical programming, which has been popular with Soviets for many years.*

- *Intellectual stimulation. Many Soviets have a strong desire for information about other peoples, literatures, and national art forms, for reasons of pure intellectual curiosity. The availability of books (and recently of current Western periodicals) makes such information easily available if one has reading ability in the foreign language of the publication.*

- *Language as a hobby. Some Soviets like to use foreign languages purely as a hobby, and seek every opportunity for passive or active use of their foreign language of choice, just for the sake of enjoyment.*

- *Emigration. The desire to emigrate, particularly to a Western country, has shown up increasingly since glasnost. For those Soviets who wish to do so, emigration brings with it an important impetus to acquire and practice the appropriate language.*

Chapter 7

Conclusions and Recommendations

7.1 Introduction

This chapter summarizes the findings in the order in which the research is presented in Chapters 2 through 6. At the conclusion of this summary, recommendations are made for additional investigation.

7.2 Conclusions

In the following subsections, we summarize the conclusions reached in the five principal research areas. These conclusions represent the information developed in our readings, together with the additional information contributed by our senior staff, Dr. Barchenkov, and the validation panel.

7.2.1 Standards and Measurement

Foreign language training education throughout the Soviet Union generally recognizes four language skills or modalities: speaking (subdivided into monologue and dialogue modes), listening, reading, and writing. For purposes of quality grades, each of these skills and sub-skills is rated separately, although combination grades are also given.

The system by which these skills are measured is subjective. The concept of communicative competence is recognized, and there has been extensive, recent interest in language proficiency testing. However, there does not yet exist any national system of standards by which absolute proficiency can be judged. Rather, individual competence is rated primarily on the basis of the rater's informed but personal judgement.

One reason for this is the use for which grades are intended, namely as indicators of academic achievement. They are not used as data upon which subsequent academic admissions are based. Rather, decisions regarding these latter are based upon admissions examinations, which are not necessarily related to academic exit exams. The admissions examinations are, however, as subjective as the academic ones.

The concept of proficiency testing is known in the U.S.S.R., but up to now it has been employed mostly on an experimental, diagnostic basis, to measure teaching effectiveness rather than student performance. School teachers (as opposed to students of the science of pedagogy) are generally not trained in concepts of proficiency or its measurement.

Examination results are expressed in terms of the nationwide, five-level (five-high, one-low) grading system. These grades are awarded on a norm-referenced scale, so that they are not comparable between schools, or even between teachers. In general, "five" is awarded to the top five to ten percent of a class, "four" is satisfactory, "three" is minimally passing, and "two" is failing. "One" is also a failing grade, but is considered so poor that it is generally given only as a warning.

Articulation between secondary school and post-secondary courses is expressed in principle by a series of government guidelines for the preparation of university entrance examinations, based upon the curricular content of secondary school syllabi. We were unable to ascertain to what extent these guidelines are actually implemented, however, and the secondary teachers to whom we spoke did not see it as their mission to prepare students for university-level entrance examinations. They felt that the secondary schools often teach communicative skills which are not tested in the university entrance examinations.

7.2.2 Quality and Quantity

It is clear that Soviet exposure to foreign language early in life capitalizes on the child's strong facility to acquire language. Particularly in the case of the special schools, the Soviet system's allotment of time for foreign language study from second through eleventh grades provides a large potential language capability. These numbers continue to accumulate in the post-secondary system. As a result, there is a broad pool of students with language exposure to select from at every level of development.

Since the early sixties, all Soviet students in urban schools and larger rural ones have been required to learn a foreign language from the second grade for special school students and the fifth grade for regular school students. This population comprises some 60 per cent of Soviet students. However, some students receive more than three times the amount of classroom work, and at higher quality levels, than others. This pattern develops early, and may continue in post-secondary study, with some students attending special schools which emphasize foreign language. Here, certain career preparatory courses, such as diplomacy, language teaching, and translation, are designated "linguistic," and feature intensive study of one or more foreign languages over an entire four- or five-year course of study.

In the secondary schools, this dual concept is realized by the system of special schools, many of whose students come from families which are members of the elite social class. These schools provide over 1600 hours of foreign language instruction in grades 2-11, and turn out students with active foreign language vocabularies of approximately 800 words. Teachers and equipment in these schools are superior to those in regular schools, and the faculties have had considerable flexibility in regard to the centrally-mandated syllabi.

By contrast, the regular schools deliver only 480 hours of foreign language instruction during the same ten years of school, and during the last three years are permitted only 45 minutes per week. In general, equipment and available materials have not been good, and

certainly not at the levels available in the *specškoly*. But since the advent of perestroika, the situation has been improving, and the amount of freedom the individual teacher has to digress from or to modify the central curriculum has been increasing. The literature suggests, however, that graduates of regular school language courses have poor functional command of their languages, and it may be some time before the effects of the new liberalism can be judged. As things stand now, if graduates from this system require real foreign language competence for work or advanced study, they often go to "cooperatives," privately owned and operated language schools.

The Soviet post-secondary system is organized among universities, which rank as the leading centers of higher learning, and institutes, which are slightly less prestigious than universities. The purpose of an institute is to prepare students for a specific occupation. Admission to both institutes and universities is gained via highly competitive examinations. There is also a system of two-year academies, which provide professional skill enhancement courses for university and institute graduates. Academies do not grant degrees, and are not research-oriented.

The Soviet undergraduate foreign language instructional system is very extensive, owing primarily to the universal (less small rural schools) academic foreign language requirement. There are more than 800 foreign language departments among Soviet institutions of higher learning, but for students involved in programs designated as "linguistic" – language pedagogy, diplomacy, and the like – there are 12 major institutions devoted entirely to language, as well as 114 *fakultets*, or departments for language majors, in the country. Among the best known of the schools featuring linguistics and language concentrations are the Moscow Linguistic University (formerly the Maurice Thorez Institute), the Moscow State Pedagogical University (formerly the Lenin Institute), the Russian Pedagogical University (formerly the Herzen Institute), the highly prestigious Moscow Institute of International Relations (MGIMO), and the Red Banner Military Institute.

Uniformity of course content for primary and secondary schools is controlled by the U.S.S.R. State Committee for Public Education and by the Education Ministries of the various republics of the Soviet Union. At the university level, course content has recently come under the control of the Foreign Language Consortium, a council of the various institutions of higher education.

The Decree of 1961, which reformed language education throughout the country, also gave impetus for research and development in language pedagogy in a number of universities, among which Voronezh was an early leader (Universities at Moscow, Gorki, Minsk and Kiev have since overtaken and even surpassed Voronezh in this area.) However, much of this academic activity appears to have had little effect upon actual teaching, particularly at the secondary level. The literature strongly suggests continuing disagreement between scholars concerning how languages should be taught, and also complaints about alleged failures of the system to encourage study. Until perestroika, there seems to have

been a philosophy of using foreign language classes as vehicles to inculcate communist ideology, a practice which students found increasingly irrelevant.

7.2.3 Philosophy

Prior to 1961, the Soviet language teaching system had been based almost entirely upon the "conscious-comparative" method of instruction – Shcherba's combination of cognitive grammar explanation and translation practice. In 1961, however, the Council of Ministers of the U.S.S.R. published a decree which recognized that this system was unsatisfactory, and declared that foreign language training must be improved by upgrading teacher qualifications, providing better and more modern materials, creating a broad network of special secondary schools in which academic subjects would be taught in foreign languages, obtaining audio-visual aids and equipment for using them, and establishing minimum class hour requirements in foreign languages for students at all levels.

Implemented at all levels, this centrally-mandated reform led to a movement toward linguistic structuralism, which featured memorization of target language material, to be drilled using pattern practice with more or less abstract sentences. The initial success of this approach, however, came into conflict with the widely-held political principle that language training should be a vehicle for communist indoctrination of students. This clash between linguistic science and political idealism came most sharply into focus at the 1975 Party Congress, after which structuralism began a gradual decline in favor of a return to a more traditional system which supported communist ideals.

In 1984, the central government enacted a major reform of the entire educational system, which would have greatly increased academic requirements at all levels. Although reform was only partly implemented, it did result in teachers having increased freedom from formerly rigid syllabi. Perestroika, which reached down to the level of the individual classroom teacher, has produced a system in which central policy is essentially applied in a decentralized way. With the classroom teacher attaining greater control over the curriculum, the idea of communicative competence has become the dominant philosophy. This concept states essentially that the ability to interact with speakers of a foreign language is the basis upon which all other language skills rest. Glasnost has greatly helped to facilitate this interaction by permitting the introduction of foreign materials and people, as well as by facilitating overseas travel by Soviet students and teachers.

The Soviet system is oriented toward providing central direction to language education. Reforms such as those promulgated in 1961, and direct involvement in curriculum development are clear examples of high-level government commitment to language learning. The establishment of a system of special schools may be the most significant manifestation of this commitment. Another important policy is the Soviet government's provision of incentives for language learning by establishing highly sought-after government jobs utilizing foreign language competence, and rewarding incumbents with additional pay.

7.2.4 Non-Classroom Language Learning

Soviet teachers seem to feel that it is formal training which forms the basis upon which useful acquisition of language competence rests. At the same time, however, they recognize that without additional practice, the skills acquired in the classroom will soon wither. Fortunately, many Soviets desire to learn foreign languages for reasons only indirectly associated with academic work, such as expanded work opportunities, and the desire for contact with other countries and cultures. Because of this, several avenues for foreign language study were present outside the school system, even before glasnost greatly improved access to foreigners and foreign language materials. Some examples of these avenues are International Friendship Clubs for young people, private-enterprise cooperatives which function like commercial language schools, inexpensive and easily available annotated foreign language editions of classic literature, and broadcasts from such sources as the BBC.

Together with these "popular" sources of foreign language practice, there have been a large number of work opportunities which demand language competence. These include positions in such government ministries as Foreign Affairs, International Insurance, and Foreign Trade. In addition, there are numerous, highly desirable, foreign language positions to be found in so-called "joint ventures" with foreign governments and industries, which create opportunities for overseas work. In order to satisfy these requirements, the government ministries have instituted their own internal language training programs, staffed by teachers from local universities and institutes.

7.2.5 Motivating Factors

Factors which motivate Soviets to learn foreign languages appear to fall into three general categories: national policy, local policy, and individual attitudes. Into the first of these fall major policies of the Soviet government, chief among which are perestroika and glasnost. Perestroika has encouraged the foreign language teachers to instruct students with the aim of understanding cultures they have heretofore considered exotic. Glasnost has brought about the infusion of materials and talent to facilitate such study. At the same time, glasnost has encouraged exchange programs which motivate Soviets to go abroad to study and work, thereby increasing the need for foreign language competence.

In the second category, local policy, belong such influences as the International Friendship Clubs, extra-curricular cultural activities planned by teachers and schools, and a system of awards for excellence in foreign language study, also carried out by the school system. It appears that the success of such undertakings depends heavily upon the commitment of individual foreign language teachers.

The third category, individual attitudes, is illustrated by the motivation of individual Soviet citizens toward foreign language study by such factors as job opportunities, foreign travel, attraction to things Western including popular music, and even the desire to emigrate. Many Soviets avidly read foreign literature for pure enjoyment. Others want to emulate

what they think of as desirable Western trends in music and drama. In addition, many Soviets want to learn foreign languages simply for pleasure.

7.3 Recommendations

We conclude with some observations concerning the methodology used in the study, and some recommendations for areas of further investigation. These are taken up below.

7.3.1 Methodology

We developed the methodology for this study with the cooperation and approval of the Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center. The following paragraphs indicate to what extent we found the methodology successful, and what further uses could be made of it.

Extensiveness of the literature. We found that the Soviet literature on foreign language education, particularly that in the periodicals *Inostrannye jazyki v vissei škole* [Foreign Languages in Higher Education] and *Inostrannye jazyki v škole* [Foreign Languages in School] was much more extensive than we had imagined. We note also that this literature covered a very broad spectrum of Soviet teacher opinion concerning the educational system, ranging from full support to severe criticism. As extensive as the literature was in these respects, we did not find a great deal of Soviet writing on certain aspects of our investigation. Chief among these were training courses for military personnel and diplomats and motivating factors other than pure classroom psychology. We also noted that our validation panel did not appear to be familiar with this professional literature, particularly with that of the sixties. Therefore, a review of the literature more extensive than our resources allowed for would appear beneficial, particularly in order to improve our historical perspective, and to better understand military and diplomatic training. On the basis of our experience, an extensive review would best be performed in the Soviet Union, at the libraries of linguistic institutes and universities. Such library research could be augmented and validated by on-the-spot interviews with trainers and trainees alike.

Selection of Personnel. The combination of research personnel utilized in this study was, we feel, well balanced. The presence of both a Soviet emigre and current Soviet citizens was of help in minimizing the effects of political bias. As the same time, the study was greatly enhanced by the objective and scholarly viewpoint of our Senior Academic Advisor and by Dr. Alexander Barchenkov, a recognized Soviet expert on foreign language education. We were surprised that the validation panel agreed as much as it did with our findings from the literature, and that its members often expressed points of view quite genuinely akin to those we frequently hear from American school teachers. At the same

time, we believe that a larger panel, possibly one including some university-level teachers and also some students, would have provided a broader perspective on our subject.

7.3.2 Areas for Further Investigation

The conclusions based upon the limited scope of this study make it clear that many additional lessons could be learned by exploring this subject in greater depth and breadth. Some of the dimensions that should be considered are discussed below.

Proficiency Metrics. As we have mentioned, the lack of a proficiency measurement system in the Soviet Union makes it difficult to assess the absolute proficiency Soviet language students in a uniform and objective manner. It would be worthwhile to perform a joint U.S.-Soviet longitudinal study of proficiency of foreign language students, in both countries. The basis for the study would be the use of a recognized set of language proficiency standards and a valid, reliable testing methodology. In order to minimize the effects of extra-curricular motivating factors on the test populations, a course in a foreign language common to both populations, for example German, could be used.

Joint Study. Given the current era of American-Soviet cooperation, we believe a joint comparative research effort to study foreign language educational systems in both countries would be beneficial. We would envision a two-phase methodology: In the first phase, a U.S. team would build upon the present study by gathering additional data through study in the U.S.S.R. At the same time, the Soviet Union would initiate a similar and parallel study in the United States. These studies should employ a methodology that would emulate the methodology we have used, but on a greatly expanded basis. The second phase of the study would include comparison of the two systems through joint discussion and analysis. Through this comparison, both countries could gain by adopting useful elements of the other's system.

As a final note, we believe that the rapid pace of current changes in the Soviet Union will soon render our picture of contemporary foreign language teaching there obsolete. We should expect methods, technologies, philosophies, choices of languages, and quality and quantity of results to change quickly over the next decade. Therefore, we would recommend that if the United States is truly to stay abreast of developments of this kind in the U.S.S.R., studies such as this must be kept current. Only in this way will our understanding reflect contemporary developments elsewhere.

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Key to Abbreviations

FLHE = *Inostrannye jazyki v vysšej škole* [Foreign Languages in Higher Education]. Moscow.

FLS = *Inostrannye jazyki v škole* [Foreign Languages in School]. Moscow.

PCR = *Obščije problemy perestrojki prepodavnija inostrannyx jazykov* [Problems Concerning the Restructuring of Foreign Language Teaching in Universities]. Voronežh.

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APPENDIX A

On the Improvement of Foreign Language Instruction

Decree No. 468 of the Council of Ministers of the USSR, Dated May 27, 1961

The Council of Ministers of the USSR affirms, that knowledge of foreign languages has achieved particular significance for specialists in various branches of science, technology, and culture, as well as for broad areas of the workforce of our country as the result of a significant widening of the international relations of the USSR.

In recent years foreign language instruction in the general schools, secondary technical schools, and institutions of higher learning has been improved somewhat. Nevertheless, this important subject continues to exhibit serious shortcomings.

Graduates of secondary general schools, secondary technical schools, and institutions of higher learning have only insufficient mastery of foreign languages. They cannot translate a foreign language text without a dictionary, because they have only a formal knowledge of the grammar and a limited foreign language vocabulary. Particularly inadequate are their capabilities in the area of the spoken foreign language. Serious gaps exist also in the training of foreign language teachers.

The Council of Ministers of the USSR has decided upon measures for the improvement of foreign language instruction in the general schools, secondary technical schools, and institutions of higher learning, as well as for the dissemination of the knowledge of foreign language among the population, as follows:

1. In order to remove deficiencies in the area of foreign language instruction and accomplish fundamental improvements in it at secondary and post-secondary schools, the Councils of Ministers of the Union Republics, the Ministry of Higher Education and Secondary Trade Schools of the USSR, as well as the Ministries and Agencies which maintain schools, are to undertake measures whose chief purpose is to ensure practical mastery of foreign languages by the pupils.
2. The Ministries of Education of the Union Republics and the Academy of Pedagogical Sciences of the Russian Soviet Republic are to be authorized to improve foreign language curricula in the schools and in this connection to publish new textbooks during the next 3-4 years, with particular emphasis on the maximum improvement of oral proficiency and of the translation of foreign language texts without the aid of a dictionary. In addition, provision is to be made for the publication of editions of foreign language literature for both teachers and pupils, and for this literature to be adapted to the new textbooks.
3. It is to be arranged, that in those general schools which have at their disposal qualified instructors and the required space, foreign language classes of more than 25 pupils will be divided into two groups. The splitting of classes into groups is to commence during the 1961-62 academic year in the fifth grade, and

be completed over the course of seven years. For grades 9-11 of the evening (shift) secondary schools, two hours per week of additional optional foreign language instruction are to be introduced, to the extent that these schools have at their disposal qualified teachers and corresponding student populations.

4. The Ministries of the Union Republics are directed:

a) To open between 1961 and 1965 not less than 700 general schools with instruction in a series of subjects conducted in a foreign language suitable to the installation.

b) To take steps to achieve fundamental improvement in foreign language instruction at boarding schools. To permit boarding schools, beginning with academic year 1961-62, to provide instruction in a foreign language given by suitable faculty personnel of a series of subjects.

c) To determine the minimal requirement for pieces of equipment and instructional materials necessary for the implementation of foreign language instruction in the schools, and to calculate their production in such manner that during the coming year every secondary school and every elementary school which is granted foreign language instruction will have the necessary equipment, teaching supplies, and visual materials.

For this purpose, the State Planning Committee of the USSR (Gosplan) and the Councils of Ministers of the Union Republics are to provide in their annual plans for the availability of pieces of equipment required for foreign language instruction in the schools.

d) Delivery of foreign language instruction by teachers of other disciplines who possess an inadequate knowledge of the foreign language is to be prohibited. Those foreign language teachers who have not attained a sufficient level of education are to be sent to continuing education classes or relieved of their duties after their employment elsewhere has been arranged according to applicable legal considerations.

e) The network of local instructional arrangements and correspondence courses for adult learning of foreign languages is to be expanded. Regulations governing these courses are to be prepared and implemented. The number of participants in classes for adult courses is not to exceed 20.

Instructors for these courses are to be treated on an equal footing with teachers in the secondary school with regard to working hours, salary, privileges, and retirement benefits.

The Ministry of Education of the Russian Republic is to be responsible for the publication of instructional materials for students of the foreign language courses taking into account the needs of the Union Republics.

f) In consideration of the wishes of the parents and at their expense, the formation of foreign language learning groups in kindergartens and in the lower grades is to be permitted. The teachers of these groups are to be

treated on an equal footing with elementary school teachers with regard to salary, retirement benefits, and other privileges.

The Ministry of Education of the RSFSR and the Academy of Pedagogic Sciences of the RSFSR will have the responsibility of developing, by September 1961, curricula for foreign language instruction in kindergarten and, by 1963, curricula for foreign language instruction in grades 1-8, all in addition to the publication of methodological aids for foreign language instruction for these groups.

5. The Councils of Ministers of the Union Republics and the Ministry of Higher Education and Secondary Trade Schools of the USSR will be responsible for the implementation of the following measures:

a) To make fundamental improvements in the training of foreign language instructors for the schools. To this end the curricula, instruction plans, and textbooks of the universities and pedagogical institutes (faculties) which train foreign language instructors are to be perfected. The pedagogical practica for the students and the exercises for their practical mastery of the foreign language are to be strengthened, [and] the institutions of higher learning are to be provided with the requisite furnishings and visual aid equipment.

b) The education of schoolteachers of general subjects is to be so organized as to include a series of subjects given in a foreign language, beginning in academic year 1961-62 at the universities and pedagogical institutes. The Ministry of Higher Education and Secondary Trade Schools of the USSR is empowered to extend this training up to one year as required.

c) The minimum number of hours of required foreign language classes at universities – with the exception of universities and faculties specializing in foreign languages – is to be established as 240. For interested students, additional elective foreign language classes are to be established.

In order to achieve fluent mastery of foreign languages by university graduates, the Ministry of Higher Education and Secondary Trade Schools is directed to undertake the corresponding changes in instruction plans at the universities within two months. For this purpose the humanities are to be given priority. Liberal tendencies in the valuation of knowledge of foreign languages are to be eliminated. Beyond the required class hours, measures are to be taken to encourage foreign language exercises suitable for raising the students' foreign language proficiency.

University Deans are to be allowed to initiate additional foreign language courses for those students wishing to complete their foreign language education.

d) The workloads of university foreign language instructors at the universities and at departments of foreign languages are to be arranged with due

regard for the relative significance of these subjects at the named universities. Overloading of instructional personnel is to be avoided.

e) The number of participants in practical language exercises conducted at the pedagogical foreign language institutes and in the in those departments of universities and pedagogical institutes which train foreign language instructors is to be 7-10 per group, and 12-15 per group at all other institutions of higher learning -- with the exception of special institutes.

f) Two-year post-graduate courses in pedagogy for the training of highly qualified university foreign language instructors are to be established at a series of leading foreign language pedagogical institutes. At the same time, the number of candidates for foreign language positions is to be correspondingly reduced. Persons may be admitted to these courses who are university graduates and who have a foreign language command equivalent to the foreign language institute curriculum requirements. Acceptance will be determined by competitive examination. The courses will conclude with a civil service examination. Graduates will be accorded the title of University Foreign Language Instructor. Stipendia for course participants are to be comparable to the level of income of instructor aspirants of the same level of qualification. Course graduates are to be sent to the universities, there to be employed as regular faculty members. The end of the course is to be recorded at the time the title of Instructor is conferred.

6. It must be recognized that the proportions of the foreign languages being studied in the schools are not internally rational. The majority of the pupils are studying German, a small number French; Spanish and other widely used languages are not being taught at all, which does not correspond to the requirements for specialists with foreign language proficiency. The peculiarities of the Union Republics are not adequately taken into account in the selection of foreign languages for instruction in the schools and institutions of higher learning.

The Councils of Ministers of the Republics of the Union and the Ministry of Higher Education and Secondary Trade Schools of the USSR are directed to devise within three months a more practical scheme for the distribution of foreign language instruction in schools, secondary trade schools and institutions of higher learning.

7. The Ministry of Culture of the USSR, the Ministry of Higher Education and Secondary Trade Schools of the USSR, and the Ministry of Education of the RSFSR are directed:

a) To increase production of foreign language instructional films for schools, secondary trade schools and universities, and with the consent of the Soveksport [program] of the Ministry of Foreign Trade, discuss the question of purchasing foreign instructional films for foreign language

teaching, which can be used in Soviet schools, secondary trade schools, and universities.

b) Those films which are most suitable for the purpose of foreign language instruction are to be selected from among the foreign entertainment films now available and to be purchased. The possibilities for their introduction in schools, secondary trade schools, and universities are to be determined more closely.

8. The Council of Ministers of the RSFSR, the Ministry of Culture of the USSR, and the Ministry of Higher Education and Secondary Trade Schools of the USSR are to have the responsibility for the production of ordinary and long-play records as well as sound films, which contain foreign language lessons for schools, technical academies and universities. They are also responsible for producing records and sound films containing foreign language songs and poems, as well as narratives and excerpts from literary works, all accompanied by printed text enclosures, which are intended for use with children as well as adults who are participating in foreign language instruction.

9. The State Committee for Radio and Television at the Council of Ministers of the USSR is directed, along with the Ministry of Higher Education and Secondary Trade Schools of the USSR and the Ministry of Higher Education of the RSFSR, to devise and implement measures with the objective of broadening the use of radio and television in support of all people who are participating in foreign language instruction.

10. The Ministry of Culture of the USSR and the State Committee for Foreign Cultural Relations at the Council of Ministers of the USSR are to have the responsibility for publishing additional dictionaries, language guides, books and readers containing stories and other works of fiction of classical and contemporary English, French, and Spanish literature -- not only in adapted text but also in the original format.

The Deputy Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR, A. Kosygin
The Managing Director of the Council of Ministers of the USSR, G. Stepanov

APPENDIX B

Syllabus for English Language Instruction in Specialized Foreign Language Schools

[Excerpted from Korsikova, 1983.]

Approved by colleagues
of the RSFSR Ministry of Education

Explanatory Notes

The goal of studying foreign languages in schools which teach a series of subjects in a foreign language is the practical mastery of the language studied by the students. The educational, formational, and developmental tasks of study are solved in the process of the practical mastery of a foreign language. In light of the resolutions of the XXVI Congress of the CPSU, the teaching of a foreign language, as well as other subjects, should be directed to increasing the quality of study, work ethic, and moral upbringing of the students and to the mastery of profound and incidental knowledge and skills by the school children. It should also promote the development of cognitive interest in the students and their acquisition of habits of independent reinforcement of knowledge.

The study of a foreign language is carried out on the basis of cognitively rich and ideologically saturated material, which broadens the horizons of the students, enriches them with information about geography, history, art and literature, daily life and traditions of the country of the studied language, and acquaints them with the accomplishments of scientific/technological progress. This material allows for the education of students in the spirit of Soviet patriotism, loyalty to the Motherland and Communist Party, and in the spirit of socialist internationalism and respect of other peoples.

The study of a foreign language enriches the students' conception of language as one of the most important of social phenomena and helps school children to better understand their native language.

By the end of their studies, students should be able to freely transmit and receive information in the foreign language, both in oral and written form.

The study of a foreign language includes the mastery by students of such kinds of language activities as listening comprehension, speech, reading, writing, and translation. The requirements of practical mastery by the students of such types of language activities are outlined in the syllabus [*programma*] by grade and are the same for all foreign languages.

The educational process for a foreign language in middle schools should be built around an oral base that determines the teaching of all types of language activities on the basis of that oral speech. In this way, in the beginning of study, an oral introductory course is foreseen, which provides for the further mastery of language material in oral form, which is essential for the study of reading. In further study, the preliminary oral familiarization of language material gradually decreases in time, and at the advanced level, oral speech, reading, writing, and translation function independently on the previously established base.

The mastery of listening comprehension in schools which conduct a series of subjects in a foreign language presumes the ability to understand the speech of other speakers, both in spontaneous discourse and in audio recordings. Taking into account various styles of speech, character of the text, degree of difficulty of the language material and the conditions for perceiving speech (the number of performances of the aural material, the length of its playing), the requirements for being able to understand it aurally at various levels of study are determined.

By the time they finish school, the students' mastery of dialogic and monologic speech should be at the level which allows for free and impromptu usage of programmed language material in new situations within the confines of themes specified in the syllabus. Students oral speech should be characterized by semantic completeness within the confines of a given situation, by logicality, by appropriateness of the situation of conversation, by structural diversity depending on the year of study, and by the correctness of the linguistic formulation.

In dialogic speech, the following are taken into account in relation to the level of study: type of dialogue, the nature of the exchange [replika]* of each speaker – both initiative and responsive, their interaction, development, and number. In monologic: the logic of the exposition, preparation or lack of preparation of the utterance in various forms of speech (description, narration, opinion, information, presentation, oral paper) and the number of utterances.

The tasks of the school in the area of reading lie in teaching students to read to themselves with understanding of texts seen for the first time; in this way, reading aloud appears as an auxiliary means and method. By the end of their studies, the students should be able to read original socio-political material (including newspapers), and artistic literature.

Texts for reading, in succession from grade to grade, become more difficult and differ in character, scope and degree of difficulty of language material; ability in the area of reading develops by taking into account the completeness of understanding of what is read and the speed of reading.

In the study of reading, students master three kinds of silent reading:
1) reading of a text in order to become familiar with its basic content ("familiarization" reading);
2) reading with maximally complete and accurate understanding of the content of the text ("study-in-depth" reading);
3) reading of a text to get a general idea of its content ("skimming").

Depending on the level of study, the difficulty of the language material, and the amount of information to be learned, the students may read the text with or without the use of a dictionary.

The reading of texts, accessible without a dictionary, is provided for on all levels of study. In this way, students should learn to guess the meaning of unfamiliar words by the context, on the basis of similarity to words in the native language (international lexicon), and by elements of word formation.

In reading texts which contain certain places that are difficult for immediate understanding, the students consult dictionaries. In such texts, they may encounter specific sentences, whose structure is not clear enough, necessitating consultation of grammatical or other reference books. The students should be able to read more difficult texts with the aid of a dictionary and to use reference books beginning in the sixth grade.**

Included in the course of study is the expressive reading of poetry and passages from artistic prose toward the goal of esthetic education of the students.

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*The term "exchange" [*replika*] here means a sentence or a group of sentences that make up a complete utterance of each speaker in an exchange.

**The number of unfamiliar lexical items is given in syllabus guidelines for each grade.

The syllabus also provides for teaching students how to use a bilingual dictionary. (School children studying English become familiar with and use transcription.)

Out-of-class reading, which is introduced in the third grade, has great importance.

Writing in schools which teach a series of subjects in a foreign language is one of the goals of study, therefore the syllabus provides for both the establishment of habits of calligraphy and spelling as well as the ability to express one's thoughts in writing. Besides that, writing serves as an important means of study which facilitates the development of oral speech and reading.

In schools which teach a series of subjects in the foreign language the study of translation (from the foreign language into the native and from the native into the foreign) is introduced in the upper grades as a particular aspect of speech activity which also includes elements of technical translation taking into account a professional orientation.

The necessity of the students' mastery of each aspect of speech activity including elements of technical translation takes into account a professional orientation.

The necessity of the students' mastery of each aspect of speech activity outlined in the syllabus by grade is the same for all languages.

Sample themes for oral speech and reading -- the same for English, German, French, and Spanish -- are presented by three generalized themes: "The Student and His Immediate Surroundings," "Our Country," and "The Country of the Studied Language," each of which is assigned separately according to the level of study, in order to organize the mastery of these themes in new situations with their incremental broadening and deepening.

From grade to grade the amount of information conveyed increases, an even broader generalization of events is given, the evaluation of facts is deepened. Spontaneous unprepared speech is possible within the parameters of a theme which is familiar and close to the student; the prepared statements may be related to more complex questions, which emerge from the personal experience of the students, and demand from them a prior collection of necessary information from various sources. For this, a differential approach to the selection of themes for separate aspects of speech activity taking into account the cognitive interests of school children is essential. Therefore, sample themes for reading include a series of supplementary subthemes, which contain both questions of general social/culture [*stranovedenie*], reflecting the social organization and natural peculiarities of the countries of the studied language, language, culture, daily life and traditions of the peoples of these countries, as well as questions of linguo/culture [*linguostranovedenie*], which characterize peculiarities of the speech of native speakers of the language in the conditions of typical situations. In upper grades, the choice of topics is influenced by the professional orientation of the students, so that there should be in the selection of the literature both some popular scientific and technical literature in the foreign language which takes into account the professional interests of the upperclassmen.

Language material selected for each grade is presented separately in the syllabus under English, German, French, and Spanish. Work using text materials, indicated for each grade follows each.

The training of the students' pronunciation is provided for in the beginning level of study. However, work on perfecting pronunciation, especially intonation (stress, rhythm, melody), should continue throughout the course of foreign language study.

The general amount of lexicon that the students should master in speaking and which they should understanding in listening and reading, as well as use in writing and translation, is specified as 2200 lexical units." In the syllabus the number of words is specified by grade.

Mastery of passive lexicon and potential vocabulary accomplished in the process of listening to and reading texts is an essential component part of the learning process. By the end of study, the total amount of students' active and passive vocabulary should comprise not less than 4000 lexical items.

In the process of mastering a foreign language, the students study various forms of word formation (word building, creating new words using suffixes and prefixes, and so on).

The grammatical material, intended for use in oral speech as well as in reading, translation, and writing, is mastered by the students with the help of structures (models, model phrases). In the process of mastering grammatical phenomena, rule-explanations are used and generalizations on the learned language material are made. In the upper grades, students become familiar with grammatical phenomena which they should recognize and understand in reading. In addition, on the advanced level, systematization of the grammatical material, mastered practically by the students in the previous years of study, is provided for.

The syllabus does not regulate the order of study of the language material, the amount of time spent on each topic, the use of textual and visual aids, or teaching methods, etc. All of these questions are addressed by sample lesson plans and methodological recommendations in the "Teachers' Guides." The process of studying a foreign language in school is provided for by workbook/study guides, which make up the methodological teaching unit for each class.

During the entire course of study, significant attention should be given to the organization of independent work on the language by the students. This is especially important on the advanced level, where students have sufficient linguistic preparation.

An important role in the foreign-language learning process is played by inter-subject connections. Connections between the foreign language and courses in literature, history, geography, and other school subjects has a two-fold purpose. On the one hand, they allow for the use of knowledge obtained in the study of other subjects in the study of the foreign language. On the other hand, the socio-cultural information learned in the foreign language lessons significantly enriches and broadens the students' horizons.

Extracurricular activities in the foreign language (clubs, special events, competitions, international friendships organizations, etc.) should promote a practical mastery of the foreign language and the solution of educational, formational, and developmental problems.

The content of extracurricular activities should develop the interest in mastering the foreign language, raising the level of proficiency in oral speech and reading, stimulate independent work on the language, acquaint the students with the social-economic and cultural life of the peoples of the world and have an educational influence on the participants.

SAMPLE TOPICS FOR SPEECH AND READING

LEVEL ONE (Second Grade)

Situations for study within the parameters of programmed language material are taken from the environment of the student's home and school.

LEVEL TWO (Third through fifth grades)

Themes for Speaking and Reading

Theme: The student and his immediate surroundings.

Man, his appearance, state of being, clothing and personal things, daily life.
The family, family life, occupations of family members, daily schedule, helping the parents and younger members of the family.
The apartment, home, neighborhood; housework.
Shopping in grocery and other stores.
The school, school life, study of a foreign language, clubs; Pioneer work in school, Pioneer camp.
Leisure time, sports, entertainment.

Theme: Our country

The USSR, the capital of our country, the capital of the republic, hero cities.
The childhood and school years of V.I. Lenin.
National holidays and celebrations: The Great October Revolution, May Day, Victory Day and others.
The deeds of Pioneers.
The native region, city, village.
The collective farm (kolxoz, sovxoz), agricultural work.
Seasons of the year, nature, flora and fauna.
A trip to another city (village).

Theme: The country of the foreign language

Specific information about the countries in which the foreign language is spoken.

Themes for Reading

The life of children in the countries in which the foreign language is spoken.
Fairy tales. Stories about nature and flora and fauna in those countries.

LEVEL THREE (Sixth through eighth grades)

Themes for Speaking and Reading

Theme: The student and his immediate surroundings

Man, character traits, interests, hobbies, tastes.
School, school traditions, school subjects, study groups and clubs, school activities.
Induction into the Komsomol.
Social work of students.
Socially beneficial work of students.
Correspondence with friends.

Health.
Rest. Travel, tours and excursions.
Sports. Sports competitions.
Movies, theater, television, museums. Impressions of performances, films and programs seen.

Theme: Our country

Geographic location, flora and fauna, climate of the country (republic).
Points of interest in the city (village).
V.I. Lenin's youth.
Famous revolutionaries and political figures. Famous wars. Komsomol heroes.
Rights and duties of citizens of the USSR.
Famous writers and poets.
Workers in industry and agriculture.
Famous sports figures.
Events in the political and cultural life of the country. Festivals.

Theme: The countries of the foreign language

Geographic features of the country.
Episodes in the history and contemporary life of these countries.
Points of interest and historical places.
Important people in these countries.

Themes for Reading

Important events in the socio-political and cultural life of the country of the foreign language (from newspapers and magazines).
Life, culture, daily life and traditions of the peoples of these countries (from artistic works).

FOURTH LEVEL (Ninth through tenth grades)

Themes for Speaking

Theme: The student and his immediate surroundings

Points of view and convictions of students.
School social life. Komsomol work at school.
System of education in the USSR. Choice of profession and preparation for that future profession.
Cultural life of the student
Events in sports life, other students' interests.
Impressions and opinions of students about events, people, literary heroes, places of entertainment and trips.

Theme: Our country

Life of the youth.
Lenin's komsomol, its history and works.
The Constitution of the USSR, rights and obligations of citizens of the USSR.
Lenin's peaceful policy for the USSR, the fight for peace and the lessening of tension.
Current political events.
Historical events and dates.
Industry and agriculture in the USSR, the building of communism. Heroes of labor.
Scientific-technical progress, the mastery of the cosmos. Famous scientists and cosmonauts.
The preservation of nature.

Arts, theater, painting. Famous artists, musicians, artists.
Events of cultural life.

Theme: Country of the foreign language

Geographical location, economy and political system of the country of the foreign language.
Life and work of V.I. Lenin. V.I. Lenin in the country of the foreign language. Life and work of K. Marx and F. Engels.
The most important events and outstanding people of the country of the foreign language.
The fight of the workers for peace and for their political and economic rights.
Youth organizations.
Science, literature and art of the country of the foreign language.
System of education in countries of the foreign language.
Customs, habits and traditions of the peoples of the countries of the foreign language.

Themes for Reading

Economics, the political system, science, art and literature of the country of the language studied.
Events of the socio-political life (from newspapers and journals).
Life, culture, daily life and traditions of the peoples of the countries of the foreign language (from literary works).
Questions of economics, science, technology, art and literature (by choice of the students, taking into account their interests and preparation for work).

Demands for Practical Mastery of the Foreign Language

Second grade (105 hours)

Listening

The student must understand aurally foreign speech at normal speed spoken by the teacher or heard from recordings, structured within the program of language material, as well as explanations by the teachers as part of the teaching of the class.

Speaking

Dialogic speech

Students must without prior preparation be able to form various types of questions and answer questions in connection with situations within the confines of the material of the language program. Expressions of each participant in a conversation must contain no less than 3 statements [*replika*], correctly formulated linguistically.

Monologic speech

Students must be able without prior preparation to express themselves in the context of a situation within the confines of the language material of the program. The content of the utterance should be no less than five sentences, correctly formulated linguistically.

Reading

Students must know the letters of the alphabet, have mastered in practical terms the sign-sound correspondence, be able to read aloud with full understanding from the first presentation sentences and short texts, structured on materials already mastered in spoken speech in the language program.

Writing

Students must acquire the habits of calligraphy of written letters, words, and sentences and master the orthography of words mastered in oral speech and used in written exercises.

Third Grade (140 hours)

Listening

The student must understand aurally foreign speech at a normal speech as presented by the teacher or from a recording, structured on the language material of the program from second and third grades, as well as instructions by the teacher at the first articulation.

The length of passages of text which can be presented twice is up to 1 minute.

Speaking

Dialogic speech

Students must be able to without prior preparation carry on a discussion, form questions of various types and appropriate responses, both short and expanded, in connection with situations within the confines of the themes of the material of the language program of the second and third grades. Each participant must make no less than four statements [*replika*], correctly formulated linguistically.

Monologic speech

Students must be able without prior preparation, to express themselves logically and appropriately in the context of the situation, to relate orally and describe things within the confines of the themes of the language program material of the second and third grades. The content of these utterances should contain no less than seven sentences, correctly formulated linguistically.

Reading

Student must be able to read aloud with full understanding, noting pronunciation norms, beginning with prepared short texts, structured on materials mastered in oral speech in second and third grades of the program.

Writing

Students must be able to take dictation of single sentences or simple connected text of approximately six sentences.

Fourth Grade (210 hours)

Listening

Students must be able to understand aurally foreign speech at a normal tempo presented by the teacher or by a recording, structured on the language materials from the second through fourth grades.

Length of the passages of descriptive and story texts which may be presented twice is up to 3 minutes.

Speaking

Dialogic speech

Students must be able to carry on a discussion without preparation, answer questions of various types, execute commands and requests and answer cues of agreement, objection, regret, and so on with additions and elaboration within the confines of the linguistic material of the program from the second through fourth classes in the context of thematic situations, as well as the context of materials heard, seen or read. Utterances of each participant in the conversation should contain no less than five responses [*replika*], correctly formulated linguistically.

Monologic speech

Student must be able to express themselves without prior preparation logically and consistently in the context of a situation, to make oral expanded explanations and descriptions with elements of storytelling on a theme, including both individual values as well as retelling in the students' own words the basic content or a spoken or written text within the confines of the linguistic material of the program from the second through fourth grades. The content of the utterance should be no less than nine sentences, correctly formulated linguistically.

Reading

Students must be able to read aloud and to himself with full understanding from the first reading short texts, based on the linguistic material of the program; these texts should hold up to 2% unfamiliar words, explained in reference material or understood by inference. The speed of the reading aloud and to himself should be no less than 350 written characters per minute.

Writing

Students must be able to write a description of a situation (containing no less than 8 (sentences) and write a letter to a friend.

Fifth Grade (210 hours)

Listening

Students must be able to understand aurally foreign language speech at a normal speed as presented by the teacher or by a recording, structured on the language material of the program from second through fifth grades and including up to one percent unknown words and individual grammatical elements, the meanings of which the student can construe from context. Length of the passages which may be presented twice is up to four minutes.

Speaking

Dialogic Speech

Students must be able to carry on a discussion without prior preparation, using questions of various types, orders, requests, invitations and corresponding answers with expansion and clarification with the purpose of exchange of information and opinions within the confines of the linguistic material of the program from the second through fifth grades in conforming with thematic situations as well as in connection with the content of materials heard, seen or read. The speech of each participant in the discussion must contain no less than six sentences, correctly formulated linguistically.

Monologic Speech

Students must be able without advance preparation to express himself logically and sequentially in connection with situations, information and description in a theme, with narrative elements, including both personal evaluations and clarifications within the confines of the linguistic material of the program from the second through fifth grades as well as be able with preparation to retell something heard, seen or read with elements of personal evaluation. Content of the expression should be no less than twelve sentences, correctly formulated linguistically.

Reading

Students must be able to read to themselves with full understanding from the first reading texts built on the linguistic material of the program and may contain up to two percent unfamiliar words, the meaning of which would be clarified in a handbook or surmised. Reading speed is no less than 400 written characters per minute.

Writing

Students must be able to write short stories on themes already covered containing about ten sentences) and be able to briefly retell the content of something heard or read.

Sixth Grade (175 hours)

Listening

Students must be able to understand aurally foreign language speech at a normal tempo, descriptive and narrative texts in single presentations by the teacher or by a recording, built on the linguistic material from second through sixth grades; texts may hold up to two percent unfamiliar lexicon, the meaning of which the student may infer. Length of the spoken text is up to five minutes.

Speaking

Dialogic Speech

Students must be able without preparation to carry on a conversation, including questions to increase precision, obtain supplementary information and encourage the continuation of the conversation within the confines of the linguistic material from second through sixth grades in connection with situational themes as well as in conjunction with the content of something heard, seen, or read. The speech of each participant in the discussion should contain no less than seven statements [replika] correctly formulated linguistically.

Monologic Speech

Students must be able without prior preparation to make logically and sequentially a detailed presentation of a descriptive or narrative character by theme or situation in connection with aural or written texts as well as a prepared report in the form of information or developed story on the basis of something heard, seen or read. Content of the expression cannot be less than fourteen sentences, correctly formulated linguistically.

Reading

Students must be able to read to themselves with full understanding from the first presentation of adapted literary texts, based on the linguistic material of the program, and can hold up to three percent unfamiliar words, understood by conjecture or with the help of a dictionary. Reading speed is no less than 400 written characters per minute.

Students must also have the ability to use a dual language dictionary independently for reading.

Writing

Students must be able to write a description of past events or write a story about them within the confines of a mastered theme (containing approximately twelve sentences).

Seventh Grade (175 hours)

Listening

Students must understand foreign speech at a normal tempo, including the teacher's explanation of the material being studied, as well as descriptive and story texts in a single presentation by teacher and by recording, based on the linguistic material from second through seventh grades; texts may contain up to two percent unfamiliar words, the meaning of which the student can guess as well as up to one percent words whose meaning is impossible to guess, but not knowing does not hinder understanding the text as a whole.

Length of aural texts: up to six minutes.

Speaking

Dialogic Speech

Students should be able, without prior preparation, to conduct a conversation that includes responding with additional information, motivating prolonged conversation, expressing his point of view, and making a judgment within the confines of the linguistic material of the syllabus for the second through seventh grades in agreement with the situation by theme and also by the content of what he has heard, seen or read.

Monologic Speech

Students should be able, without prior preparation, logically to make a presentation of a descriptive and narrative character on a theme or situation and in connection with what he has heard or read; this presentation should contain a judgement and personal appraisal.

Students should also be able to make a prepared presentation in the form of information or retelling of a story based on what he has heard, seen, or read. The presentation should contain a personal appraisal and argumentation. Total utterances: no fewer than sixteen sentences correctly formulated linguistically.

Reading

Students should be able to read to themselves (without the help of a dictionary) adapted texts at first reading, based on the linguistic material of the program and containing up to three percent unfamiliar words the meaning of which the students can guess. The goal of such reading is general familiarity with the basic content. Reading speed: not less than 450 typed characters per minute.

Students should be able to read to themselves (with the help of a dictionary) with maximum complete and exact understanding of the content uncomplicated texts at first reading from socio-political and artistic literature, containing up to four percent unfamiliar words. Length of text: at the rate of 1200 printed symbols in one academic hour.

Writing

Students should be able to make an outline of a text either read or heard (a length of about 15 sentences) and write a small comment for a bulletin board.

Eighth Grade (175 hours)

Listening

Students should be able to understand aurally foreign language at a normal tempo, inclucing explanations by the teacher of the materials studied, as well as descriptions and story texts at the first presentation by the teacher or by recording; texts may hold up to 2 percent unfamiliar words, the meaning of which the students may guess and up to two percent words whose meaning is impossible to guess, but not knowing does not hinder understanding the text as a whole.

Length of the aural text: up to 7 minutes.

Speaking

Dialogic Speech

Students should be able, without prior preparation, to conduct a conversation that includes responding with additional information, as well as evaluating the communication and expressing his attitude toward the information, arguing his point of view within the confines of the linguistic material of the syllabus for the second through eighth grades in agreement with the situation by theme and also by the content of what he has heard, seen or read. The length of expression of each participant in the conversation should contain no less than 9 responses, correctly formulated linguistically.

Monologic Speech

Students should be able, without prior preparation, logically to make a developed presentation of a descriptive and narrative character on a theme or situation and in connection with what he has heard or read; this presentation should contain a judgement and personal appraisal. Students should also be able to make a prepared presentation in the form of information or retelling of a story based on what he has heard, seen, or read and prepare an abstract about something read and be able to analyze and come to conclusions and argue them. The presentation should contain a personal appraisal and argumentation. Total utterances: no fewer than eighteen sentences correctly formulated linguistically.

Reading

Students should be able to read to themselves (without the help of a dictionary) with the purpose of general acquainted with the basic content at first reading simple texts of a popular scientific style or artistic text, based on the linguistic material of the program and containing up to three percent unfamiliar words the meaning of which the students can guess. Reading speed: not less than 500 typed characters per minute.

Students should be able to read to themselves (with the help of a dictionary) with maximum complete and exact understanding of the content uncomplicated texts at first reading from socio-political (including newspapers) and artistic literature, containing up to six percent unfamiliar words. Length of text at the rate of 1500 printed symbols in one academic hour.

Writing

Students should be able to write a business letter

Ninth Grade (140 hours)

Listening

Students should be able to understand aurally foreign language at a normal tempo, as well as texts for listening of various types at the first presentation by the teacher or by recording; texts may hold up to three percent unfamiliar words, the meaning of which the students may guess and up to two percent words whose meaning is impossible to guess, but not knowing does not hinder understanding the text as a whole.

Length of the aural text up to eight minutes.

Speaking

Dialogic Speech

Students should be able, without prior preparation, to conduct a conversation and participate in a discussion based on questions, demanding prior collection of facts. In doing so, an exchange of all types of dialogic expressions should alternate with adequately developed monologic expressions. The speech of each participant should contain no less than 10 responses, correctly formulated linguistically.

Monologic Speech

Students should be able, without prior preparation, to give a developed speech on a theme in connection with what he has heard, seen, or read and which would include all qualitative indicators of the previous years of study, to be able to polemicize and also to be able to make a prepared speech on a theme in the form of a report on something he has read and a speech based on various sources of information. The presentations should contain a personal appraisal and argumentation. Total utterances: no fewer than twenty sentences correctly formulated linguistically.

Reading

Students should be able to read to themselves (without the help of a dictionary) with the goal of general familiarization with the basic content at first reading uncomplicated original texts from socio-political (including newspapers), science fiction, and artistic literature, containing up to three percent unfamiliar words. Reading speed: not less than 600 printed characters per minute.

Students should be able to read to themselves (with the help of a dictionary) with maximally complete and precise understanding of the content at first reading original texts from socio-political (including newspapers), science fiction and artistic literature, containing

up to eight percent unfamiliar words. Length of text at the rate of 1800 printed symbols in one academic hour. Students should be able to use a monolingual dictionary.

Students should be able to quickly, without a dictionary, become familiar with texts from socio-political (including newspapers) and science fiction literature, in order to get a general impression of their contents. Speed of reading: not less than 1000 printed characters per minute.

Writing

Students should be able to write a commentary to what they have read (in general based on material from science fiction literature), and also an outline for an oral presentation.

Translation

Students should be able to orally translate without the help of a dictionary from the foreign language into the native and from the native into the foreign within the parameters of the linguistic material of the program which has been mastered in oral speech.

Students should be able to translate in writing from the foreign language into the native and from the native into the foreign short texts from socio-political and science fiction literature using dictionaries and other kinds of reference materials. Length of the text at the rate of 1000 printed characters per academic hour.

Tenth Grade (140 hours)

Listening

Students should be able to understand aurally foreign language at a normal tempo, as well as texts for listening of various types at the first presentation by the teacher or by recording; texts may hold up to three percent unfamiliar words, the meaning of which the students may guess and up to three percent words whose meaning is impossible to guess, but whose unfamiliarity does not hinder understanding the text as a whole.

Length of the aural text up to eight minutes.

Speaking

Dialogic Speech

Students should be able, without prior preparation, to conduct a conversation and participate in a discussion based on questions, demanding prior collection and grouping of facts, establishing his position with the help of a developed argument and criticizing the position of opponents in an argument. The speech of each participant should contain no less than 10 responses, correctly formulated linguistically.

Monologic Speech

Students should be able, without prior preparation, to give a developed speech on a theme in connection with what he has heard, seen, or read and which would include all qualitative indicators of the previous years of study, to be able to polemicize and also to be able to make a prepared speech on a theme in the form of a summary report or paper from several sources. The presentations should contain a personal appraisal and argumentation. Total utterances: no fewer than twenty sentences correctly formulated linguistically.

Reading

Students should be able to read to themselves (without the help of a dictionary) with the goal of general familiarization with the basic content at first reading uncomplicated original texts from socio-political (including newspapers), science fiction, and artistic literature,

containing up to four percent unfamiliar words. Reading speed: not less than 700 printed characters per minute.

Students should be able to read to themselves (with the help of a dictionary) with maximally complete and precise understanding of the content at first reading original texts from socio-political (including newspapers), science fiction and artistic literature, containing up to ten percent unfamiliar words. Length of text: at the rate of 2000 printed symbols in one academic hour.

Students should be able to quickly, without a dictionary, become familiar with texts from socio-political (including newspapers) and science fiction literature, in order to get a general impression of their contents. Speed of reading: not less than 1200 printed characters per minute.

Writing

Students should be able to write a paper using sources from both the foreign and native languages.

Translation

Students should be able to orally translate (acting in the role of a translator) from the foreign language into the native and from the native into the foreign within the parameters of the linguistic material of the program which has been mastered in oral speech.

Students should be able to translate in writing from the foreign language into the native and from the native into the foreign short texts from artistic, socio-political and science fiction literature using dictionaries and other kinds of reference materials. Length of the text: at the rate of 1200 printed characters per academic hour.

LINGUISTIC MATERIAL
English Language

Second Grade

Phonetics: Mastery of all sounds of the English language in the flow of speech, intonation of narration (affirmative and negative) and questions.

Lexicon: Mastery of 250 lexical items.

Grammar: Mastery of the structure of the verb *to be*, to have and the structure of given verbs in the Present Indefinite and Present Continuous tenses.

Mastery of the affirmative, negative and question forms (general, yes/no and special questions) as indicated by structure.

Expression of singular and plural number in nouns. Expression of ownership with the help of the possessive form of nouns. Use of the definite and indefinite articles; absence of articles. Use of personal, possessive, demonstrative and question pronouns. Use of adjectives and positive degree. Use of collective numbers up to 30. Use of prepositions.

Third Grade

Phonetics: Mastery of the rhythm and logical stress. Mastery of intonation of compound sentences.

Lexicon: Mastery of 500 lexical items.

Word formation: suffixes of numbers *-teen, -ty, -th.*

Grammar. Mastery of the structure with given verbs in the past indefinite and future tenses; structure of impersonal sentences in the present indefinite, structure with modal verbs *can, may, must,* with the phrase *there is,* structure of the type *It's difficult to do it.*

Mastery of the affirmative, negative and question forms of indicative structure.

Compound sentences.

Use of indefinite pronouns of the type some, any, no. Use of qualitative adjectives in comparative and superlative degrees. Use of collective and ordinal numbers to 100. Use of conjunctions.

Fourth Grade

Phonetics: Mastery of emphatic intonation and intonation of distributive questions.

Lexicon: Mastery of 800 lexical items.

Word Formation: word building, noun suffixes *-er* (*-or*), (*t*)*ion, -ing,* adjectives *-y,* adverbs *-ly.*

Grammar: Mastery of the structure of named verbs in the Present Perfect and Past Continuous, with the verb *let* and with the phrase *to be going to.*

Mastery of the affirmative, negative and question forms shown by structure, as well as the structure of distributive questions.

Use of reflexive, indefinite and possessive pronouns in absolute form. Use of numbers greater than 100. Use of adverbs in comparative and superlative forms.

Fifth Grade

Phonetics: Mastery of the intonation of complex sentences.

Lexicon: Mastery of 1100 lexical items.

Word Formation: Antonyms, noun suffixes *-ness,* adjectives *-ful, -less, -able* (*-ible*); prefixes *un-, (in-, im-) re-.*

Grammar: Mastery of the structure of indirect speech (in the present tense). Mastery of the structure of named verbs in the Present Indefinite Passive, Past Indefinite Passive, Future Indefinite Passive, Past Perfect, Future-in-the-Past.

Mastery of affirmative, negative and question forms in indicated structures.

Complex sentences.

Use of the expression *to have to, to be to* . Use of the Present Indefinite for future action after the conjunction *if, when.* Tense agreement.

Sixth Grade

Lexicon: Mastery of 1,350 lexical items.

Word formation: noun suffixes *-ment, -ist, -ism*, adjectives *-ic, -al, -ical;* prefixes *mis-, dis-*

Grammar: Mastery of the structure of named verbs in the Present Perfect Passive, Present Perfect Continuous.

Mastery of the structure with complex object, for-complex.

Mastery of affirmative, negative and question forms indicated by structure.

Use of gerund, infinite, Participle I, Participle II.

Seventh Grade

Lexicon: Mastery of 1600 lexical items.

Word formation: noun suffixes *-ance* (*-ence*), *-ant* (*-ent*), *-hood*, verbs *-ize* (*-ise*), *-ate, -ify.*

Grammar: Mastery of the structure of named verbs in the Future Perfect, Future Perfect Passive, Past Perfect Passive.

Mastery of affirmative, negative and question forms indicated by structure.

Use of modal verbs and their equivalents. Use of Perfect Infinitive, Perfect Participle, Perfect Gerund.

Eighth Grade

Lexicon: Mastery of 1,850 lexical items.

Word formation: adjective suffixes *-ive, -ous*, verbs *-en;* prefix *anti-*.

Grammar: Mastery of the structure with named verbs in subjunctive and conditional moods.

Use of the modal verbs with the Perfect Infinitive.

Ninth Grade

Lexicon: Mastery of 2,050 lexical items.

Grammar: Acquaintance with the forms and use of the Past Perfect Continuous, Future Perfect Continuous, with the structure of the complex subject, with gerund forms and with participial forms, Absolute Participle Constructions and with inversion.

Tenth Grade

Lexicon: Mastery of 2200 lexical items.

Translated by Thomas J. Garza
and Lisa C. Garza

APPENDIX C

Guidelines for University Entrance Examinations in Foreign Languages

Programs in Foreign Languages

Those entering higher education must have mastered the following body of knowledge, skills, and abilities in foreign languages.

Oral speech: Understand foreign speech in the limits of themes coverec in secondary schools, answer correctly questions on a given text and carry on a discussion within the confines of topics defined in the curriculum for secondary schools.

Reading and translation: Be able to read correctly, know the bases of grammar and word combination in the studied language, master the lexical minimum necessary for understanding foreign texts of moderate difficulty (oral translation at the rate of 1100 printed symbols in an academic hour: during translation use of a dictionary is allowed.)

Pronunciation skills, mastery of a lexical minimum, knowledge of grammar, and the rules of reading are examined in the process of reading a text and oral discussion.

Those entering an institution of higher education must be able to:

1) Read without use of a dictionary with the goal of obtaining information adapted texts from artistic or popular scientific prose, based on basic typological sentences and grammatical material, containing up to 3% unfamiliar words, the meaning of which can be discerned on the basis of knowledge of word formation elements similarities between lexical items in the native and foreign languages or context with the speed of reading approximately 400 symbols per minute. Understanding of the text is verified by the use of questions about the basic facts of the text and selective translation.

2) Read silently with the help of a dictionary with the goal of getting information socio-political literature (newspaper articles, highlighting current events in the political, social, and cultural life in the country and abroad), as well as adapted artistic prose and literature of a scientific-popular style, containing 6-8% unfamiliar lexicon at a reading speed of 1000-1500 symbols per academic hour. Understanding of the given text is evaluated by answering questions.

3) Understand spoken language the length of which is 1-2 minutes with the length of sentences in the text being 7-8 words; the texts must be built on the basis of linguistic material covered in the secondary school curriculum. Understanding of the spoken text is verified with the help of questions on the text

and retelling in the foreign or the native language.

4) Carry on a discussion/dialogue with the examiner, for the purpose of an exchange of factual information, using for this question-answer formats, invitation-answer format, expressing agreement or disagreement, and inquiry to clarify information.

5) Logically and sequentially express ones thoughts in correspondence with a proposed situation within the confines of a theme from the curriculum especially lexico-grammatical material. The content of the utterance consists of 8-10 sentences properly constructed grammatically.

It is required for these abilities listed that the skills are based on the basis of lexico-grammatical information covered by a typical curriculum in English, German, French and Spanish languages.

English Language

Lexical material: For the active/passive (two sided) mastery: 700 lexical units for the understanding of a text when read with a dictionary no less than 1000 lexical units. Words, formed on the basis of known rots with the help of affixes: noun suffixes -er, -ing, -ment, -tion (-sion), -ness, -ity; adjective suffixes -less, -ful, -able, -y; number suffixes -teen, -ty, -th; adverbs -ly; very prefixes -re; adjective prefixes un-, dis-.

Grammatical material:

A. For oral speech:

Syntax. Use of simple (extended and non-extended) sentences with verbal, noun, and combined verbal predicates.

Use of impersonal sentences of the type: It is warm. It is raining. It is late. Use of complex continuations of the type: I want him to help me.

Morphology: Nouns. Use of nouns in the plural, possessive case.

Articles: Basic instances of use of the indefinite, definite, and null article.

Adjectives. Use of adjectives in comparative and superlative degrees, form with the help of suffixes or helping words.

Verbs. Use of the Present Indefinite for expression of usual actions taking place constantly, regularly, as well as for the expression of a series of consecutive actions. Use of the Past Indefinite for the expression of actions taking place in a defined period of time in the past. Future Indefinite for the

expression of actions in the future: Present continuous for the expression of actions taking place at the moment of speech; Present Perfect for the expression of actions completed in the past, the result of which is clear in the present.

Use of the Present Indefinite meaning future action after the conjunction if, when. Use of the Present, Past, Future, Indefinite Passive.

Adverbs: Use of adverbs in the comparative and superlative degrees of comparison with the help of suffixes and helping words.

B. Reading.

Morphology. Those entering must be able to recognize and understand from reading sentences containing Past Continuous Tense, Perfect Tense, Future in the past Indefinite Passive, forms in -ing (gerunds, participles).

Syntax. Those entering must recognize and understand from reading basic sentences, describing non-real, impossible action.

Translated from: Handbook for Matriculants to Institutions of Higher Education in the USSR in 1990. Moscow: Vysshaja shkola. 1990. pp. 422-424.

Translated by: Lisa A. Choate

END

U.S. Dept. of Education

Office of Educational
Research and Improvement (OERI)

ERIC

Date Filmed
August 10, 1993

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI)
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